

PLAN STRATFORD 2023 - 2033

Town of Stratford Plan of Conservation & Development



TOWN OF
STRATFORD



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PLAN STRATFORD 2023

Dear Stratford Residents,

A very special thank you to all who took the time to participate in the discussions and provide feedback for Plan Stratford. Your thoughtful exchange of ideas and feedback were vital to developing this roadmap for the future of our Town. This plan for the next ten years is a true reflection of our community, thanks to your contributions throughout the process.

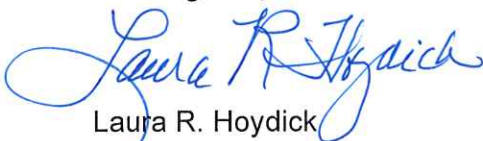
Plan Stratford is the Town's Plan of Conservation and Development for 2023-2033, and addresses the current conditions in our Town while providing guidance for Stratford's next ten years. We are fortunate to be one of the few towns in Connecticut to have an amazing stretch of coastline, a deciduous forest, and hundreds of acres of parks and open space. We have a strong sense of community, one that is incredibly diverse and vibrant, and our Town is home to a wide range of small- and large-scale businesses. All of these wonderful, unique components of Stratford were taken into consideration during the development of the plan.

Plan Stratford is consistent with what our Town believes in – valuing and fostering partnerships between the municipality, businesses, residents, and organizations; balancing built and natural environments in order to keep our Town's small-town charm; continuing to develop a resilient community; and enhancing the many great Town assets already established through sensible growth and development objectives with environmental conservation and sustainability objectives.

We are so fortunate to have such a connected community, from forest to shore. Thank you again for your partnership in developing this ten-year plan to move Stratford forward. We're excited to successfully execute and achieve the initiatives and goals of Plan Stratford together!

Please reach out if you have any questions or thoughts.

Best regards,


Laura R. Hoydick
Mayor

Acknowledgements

Thank you to Mayor Laura Hoydick, the Stratford Planning Commission, the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) members (composed of Town Department Heads and key staff members), members of various Town Boards and Commissions, Town Council members, local/ Regional/State Agencies and institutional partners, and the residents of Stratford who participated extensively in the planning process and helped shape the recommendations of this Plan.

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Plan Your Future

PLAN 
STRATFORD

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Introduction & Plan Development

Introduction & Plan Development

About the Plan

Plan Stratford is Stratford town's Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) for the years 2023 to 2033. The Plan documents the current conditions in town and provides a guide for its future over the next ten years. It is based on the realities of the resources and constraints that are present in Stratford today, and considers projections for Stratford's future. It establishes a vision for Stratford's physical form, economic and social health, and quality of life. That vision provides a foundation for policy and funding decisions and informs the town's zoning regulations, which protect the health, safety and welfare of the people of Stratford. The Plan provides specific objectives and strategies necessary to realize the community vision and guides land use decision-making in Stratford.

Plan Stratford was developed with extensive input from town residents, businesses, and stakeholders, elected officials, and Town of Stratford (hereinafter called "Town") staff. That outreach included continuous public engagement by hosting pop-ups at community events, public workshops, stakeholder meetings, meetings with boards and commission members, and an online community survey in English and Spanish over an 18-month time period. In total, the planning process received input from over **1,500 residents**.

The State of Connecticut requires that communities rewrite or update their plans of conservation and development at least once every ten years to remain eligible for discretionary State funding (C.G.S Sec 8-23). Per this statute, the POCD for each municipality must:

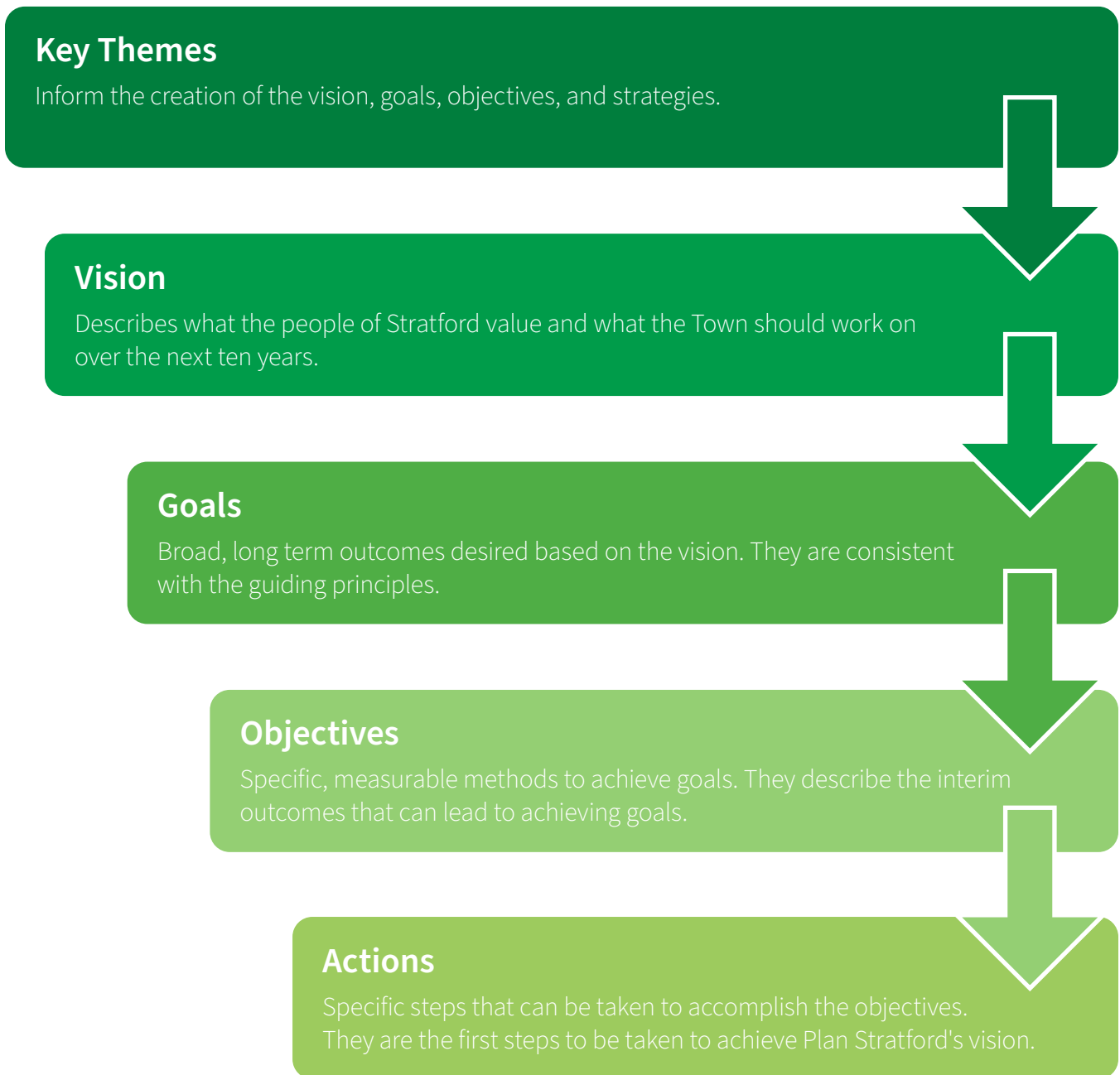
- (A) be a statement of policies, goals and standards for the physical and economic development of the municipality,
- (B) provide for a system of principal thoroughfares, parkways, bridges, streets, sidewalks, multipurpose trails and other public ways as appropriate,
- (C) be designed to promote, with the greatest efficiency and economy, the coordinated development of the municipality and the general welfare and prosperity of its people and identify areas where it is feasible and prudent,
- (D) recommend the most desirable use of land within the municipality for residential, recreational, commercial, industrial, conservation, agricultural and other purposes and include a map showing such proposed land uses,
- (E) recommend the most desirable density of population in the several parts of the municipality,
- (F) note any inconsistencies with the growth management principles outlined in state statute 8-23,
- (G) make provision for the development of housing opportunities, including opportunities for multi-family dwellings, consistent with soil types, terrain and infrastructure capacity, for all residents of the municipality and the metropolitan planning region,
- (H) promote housing choice and economic diversity in housing, including housing for both low and moderate income households, and encourage the development of housing which will meet the housing needs identified in the State's consolidated plan for housing and community development, and
- (I) consider accommodating older adults and persons with a disability in their respective homes and communities whenever possible.

Beyond meeting the State mandate, the planning process provides Stratford an opportunity to:

1. Measure progress that the Town has made towards the goals of the prior plan (i.e., covering 2013-2023)
2. Identify important Town-wide trends or concerns
3. Establish a dialogue with residents and stakeholders
4. Effectively communicate the strategic work and careful investments that the Town has made over the last ten years
5. Provide a foundation for new planning and zoning initiatives. This Plan meets the State of Connecticut General Statutes' plan of conservation and development updated requirements and is consistent with both State Plan of Conservation and Development and MetroCOG's Reconnect 1 Region 2015 – 2025 Regional Plan of Conservation and Development, as discussed in the following pages.

Plan Organization

During the Plan Stratford development process, a broad vision statement was crafted based on public input. This vision statement is guided by five key principles that relate to Stratford’s current and future success. These principles or “key themes” serve as the filter for the vision, goals, objectives, and actions of the Plan. This vision is supported by twelve goals, each specific to its corresponding section of the Plan. The Plan also identifies objectives that provide guidance on how to achieve the goals. Specific strategies are identified in the implementation section of the Plan. These specific actions are step by step strategies for implementing objectives and achieving goals. This is further described in the chart below.



Stratford Vision Statement

Stratford is one of the few towns in Connecticut with nearly 18 miles of coastline, several beaches and islands, a deciduous forest, and hundreds of acres of parks and open space—all located within a dense suburban setting. It is directly accessible by train from New York and Hartford, by both, Interstate 95 and the Merritt Parkway, and is also home to the Sikorsky airport, which facilitates non-commercial air travel. The small-town charm, naturally occurring affordable housing, and diverse community are some of the reasons why many residents choose to live in Stratford. A variety of small and large scale businesses call Stratford their home due to the ease of conducting business in the town. The town's longstanding rich history in both the arts and manufacturing are celebrated and hailed by the present-day residents. Stratford residents are proud of the town assets and hold a strong desire to see the Town preserve and enhance these already established assets through careful balance between physical growth and development objectives and environmental conservation and sustainability initiatives.

At the public events held during the planning process, Stratford residents overwhelmingly expressed their vision for a successful future of Stratford involves prioritizing redevelopment of two well-known properties: the historic former Shakespeare Theater site and former Stratford Army Engine Plant site (where U.S. Army Tank automobiles were manufactured). These two sites are located by the waterfront, and present a great opportunity to reposition Stratford as an arts and cultural destination, in addition to being an economic hub of the state, in the near future. Residents hope the Town will utilize these potential development opportunities not only to boost local economy, but also to expand public access to the waterfront for enjoyment and relaxation by residents and visitors.

To summarize the community vision, Stratford residents envision Stratford as a town with a strong sense of **community**, providing **opportunities** and access to all, valuing and fostering **partnerships, balancing** built and natural environments to maintain the small-town charm, and creating a **resilient** community that withstands natural and manmade changes and disasters.

The vision expressed by residents of Stratford at various meetings and events during the planning process is organized and presented in the following themes:

Community

Stratford supports the social, physical and emotional health of its communities and promotes well-rounded neighborhoods through targeted investments in housing diversity, dependable transportation and infrastructure, vibrant arts and entertainment, adequate community services, and educational opportunities. Longtime residents as well as newcomers to Stratford continue to be embraced by the unwavering sense of community and the unique attributes of the Town. With its extensive network of public parks, over 400 acres of Town-owned forest and opportunities for waterfront activities on the roughly 18-mile coastline, Stratford continues to be a desirable community to live, work and play from forest to shore.

Opportunity

Stratford is a vibrant coastal community that offers its residents a bountiful life through an array of amenities, services, landscapes, and opportunities. It is home to visually attractive, inclusive, healthy, accessible, and equitable communities that are embraced and celebrated for their rich history and diverse residents with varying ages, cultures, and ethnicities.

Partnerships

Stratford encompasses a thriving and cohesive business community supported by municipal efforts and residents alike. It promotes stewardship of town resources through effective and efficient partnerships with residents, schools, non-profits, and outside agencies.

Balance

Stratford continues to retain its small-town charm while accommodating new growth and development in targeted areas that are harmonious with nearby existing developments. It continues to balance the need for new growth and development with the conservation of its natural environment, critical habitat, and environmentally sensitive areas.

Resiliency

Stratford continues to be strong and resilient in the face of natural hazards and new social and economic challenges. The community is self-sustained, responsive, adaptive, and engaged in implementing financially sustainable solutions that help mitigate future risks.

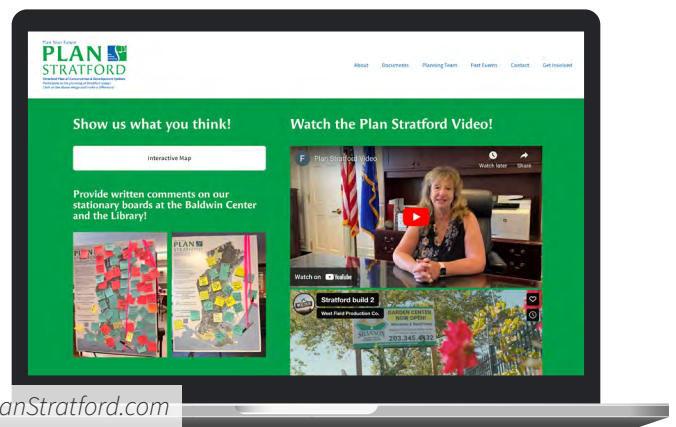
Key Themes

During the Plan development, five “Key Themes” were identified as common themes across the Plan based on public input. For each section, the Plan’s analysis is filtered through the five key themes, which are essential principles to the Town’s current and future success.





Stratford High School Pop-Up board



www.PlanStratford.com



Baldwin Center Workshop

The Development of Plan Stratford

Nearly 1,500 residents offered input through multiple channels over an 18-month time period for the development of this Plan. (Remove previous line here, include that under Demographics chapter)The Town of Stratford's Planning Commission members were actively involved in the planning process and engaged the general public throughout the process, as discussed below.

- **Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Meetings:** The TAC, comprising of Town Department Heads and the Mayor, was formed to guide the Plan's development and ensure its successful implementation in the future. The committee met once every month (total 12 times) to guide the planning process and review/inform plan content.
- **"Pop-Ups" at Community Events:** The project team and members of both the TAC and the Planning Commission attended four "pop-up" events at pre-scheduled Stratford community events. These included the Stratford Main Street Festival, the Paradise Green Farmers Market, the Shakespeare Farmers Market, and the Latin Music Festival. The purpose of these events was to promote the POCD update process, advertise the project website and online survey, and

invite residents to attend the public workshops. These pop ups helped in including the voices of those who normally do not have time to attend hour long meetings during week days. People of diverse age groups and ethnicities participated and provided their feedback.

- **Project website:** A project website, www.PlanStratford.com, was created to provide information about the Plan, advertise events, and to generate interest in the POCD. The project website includes links to an online survey, an interactive mapping tool, and meeting documents and materials.
- **Comment Boards:** Comment boards were placed at the Stratford Library and Baldwin Center. Over two hundred comments were received.
- **Online Survey:** An online survey was conducted between October and December of 2022. Over 1,000 people from all neighborhoods of Stratford participated.
- **Outreach to High Schoolers:** In an effort to engage Stratford's younger residents, the project team visited Stratford High School to talk with students about their thoughts on how the town could evolve over the next ten years. Nearly 180 students participated and



Pop-Up event at the Main Street Festival



Birdseye Municipal Complex Workshop



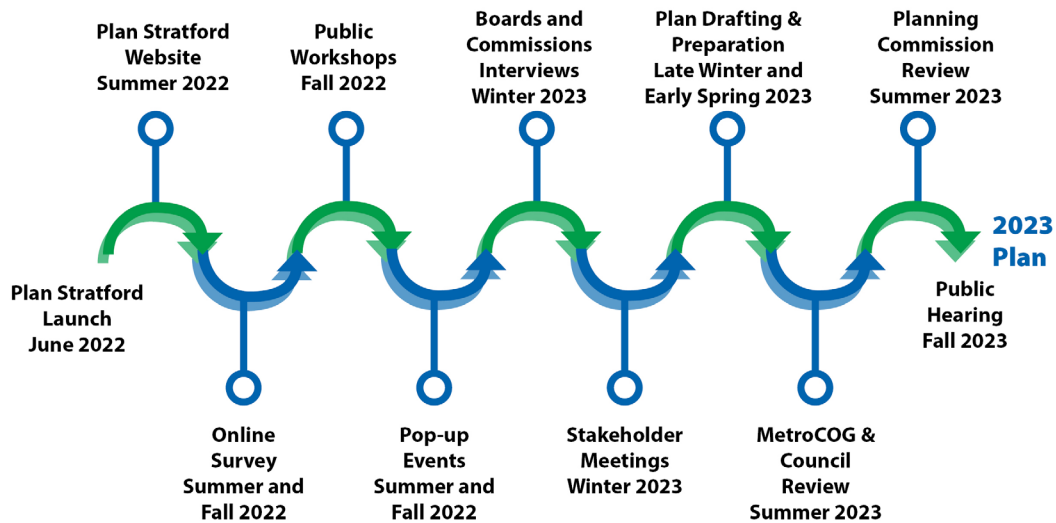
Stakeholder interview notes

provided feedback on what areas/facilities they like in Stratford and what improvements they feel are needed.

- **Public Workshops:** Three public workshops were conducted to introduce the Stratford community to the POCD update process and to gather the public’s thoughts regarding a variety of topics that will be discussed in the Plan. Over 200 people attended these workshops.
- **Older Adults Workshop:** A mini workshop was also conducted exclusively for older adults at a time suitable for them and was held at the Baldwin Center. Approximately 40 people were in attendance.
- **Promotional Videos:** Two promotional videos were created and published in social media and Town website to advertise the POCD. The first video provided an overview of Plan Stratford and encouraged residents to get involved. The second video, developed at the end of the process, discussed the vision, goals, and content of Plan Stratford.
- **Boards and Commissions Interviews:** Members of various Town boards and commissions were grouped by planning topics and ten meetings were conducted with these groups during the winter of 2022/2023.

- **Stakeholder Meetings:** Five Stakeholder meetings on various topics were conducted with interested parties during January and February of 2023. These stakeholders included representatives of local businesses, and local and state agencies that play a major role in the implementation of the Plan.
- **Mayor’s Newsletter and Town’s Social Media:** Information on upcoming planning events, milestones, and how to participate in the planning process was disseminated regularly through Mayor’s newsletter and Town’s Facebook and Instagram accounts.
- **Drafting the Plan:** The project team worked together in the preparation and drafting of Plan Stratford. The draft plan was made available for a period of two months online on the Plan Stratford website by enabling general public to provide their comments directly in the document. Hard copies were also placed at Stratford Library and Town Clerk’s offices along with feedback forms.

Please see Appendix A: Community Engagement Summary for a detailed community engagement summary.



The Role of Plan Stratford

Plan Stratford is intended to guide the future actions of the Town. It also presents a vision for the future with long-range goals for activities that affect how Stratford operates. This includes guidance on how to make decisions on public and private development proposals, the expenditure of public funds, and issues of pressing concern (such as housing affordability). The Plan will guide Stratford over the next decade and will assist in decision making that will have impacts over the next several decades. Plan Stratford serves the following functions:

- It provides continuity across time and gives successive administrations a common framework for addressing land use and other municipal responsibilities.
- Plan Stratford seeks to strike a balance among the many competing land use demands by recommending development patterns that are orderly and rational and provide the greatest benefits for individuals and the community as a whole.
- Plan Stratford identifies environmental features like wetlands, waterbodies, open space, and steep slopes, and recommends strategies for protecting those resources. It allows the Town to plan development in a way that protects these resources.
- It recommends policies that foster a distinctive sense of place to help shape the appearance of the Community.
- It promotes economic development. The Plan contains valuable information that will assist Stratford in making policy and zoning decisions in response to changing economic conditions.
- It promotes and protects the health and wellbeing of residents through the recommendation of policies that support the social determinants of health and foster healthy lifestyles. It provides healthy built environment criteria for plan users to consider during decision-making processes and review of land use proposals to ensure neutral or beneficial impact on community health outcomes.
- It provides justification for decisions. The Plan provides a factual and objective basis to support zoning decisions and can be used by the Town to defend decisions if challenged in court.
- It provides a collective vision for the future that was developed through extensive community engagement. This process establishes a foundation of support for the policies and actions that will result from Plan Stratford.
- It is used by Town departments and divisions to guide decision making and to assist in the development of annual capital improvement plans.
- It is used by boards and commissions to guide their activities.
- The planning process provided a platform for residents and representatives of various agencies/boards/committees to interact with one another on issues of concern and brought to the forefront, the key partnerships and collaborations that should happen to transform community vision into a reality.
- For any municipality that is contiguous to Long Island Sound, such plan shall be (A) consistent with the municipal coastal program requirements of sections 22a-101 to 22a-104, inclusive, (B) made with reasonable consideration for restoration and protection of the ecosystem and habitat of Long Island Sound, and (C) designed to reduce hypoxia, pathogens, toxic contaminants and floatable debris in Long Island Sound.

Stratford believes health and equity should be prioritized in all decision-making, policies, and planning processes. The Town recognizes the impact of place and built environment on health outcomes and the importance of promoting health when making decisions about where people live, learn, work and play. The success of Stratford is directly related to the health of its residents and using land-use as a tool to create healthy environments will allow the community to thrive. The chapters of Plan Stratford, including Housing, Transportation, and Economic Development, are strongly interconnected and have direct impacts on the social determinants of health and community resilience.



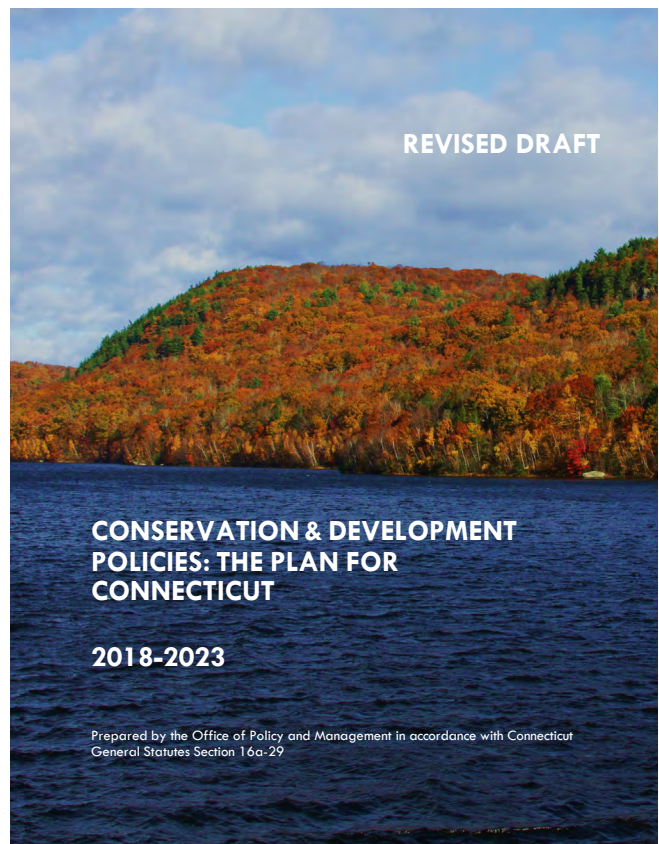
Consistency with the State Plan

The recommendations of this Plan were compared with the current State Conservation and Development Policies Plan (2018-2023) for consistency. The State is currently updating the plan for the 2025-2030 timeframe, however the existing plan is currently effective. The State Plan provides a framework for municipal plans of conservation and development. It is organized around six growth-management principles. Municipalities must consider these principles as they update their plans of conservation and development:

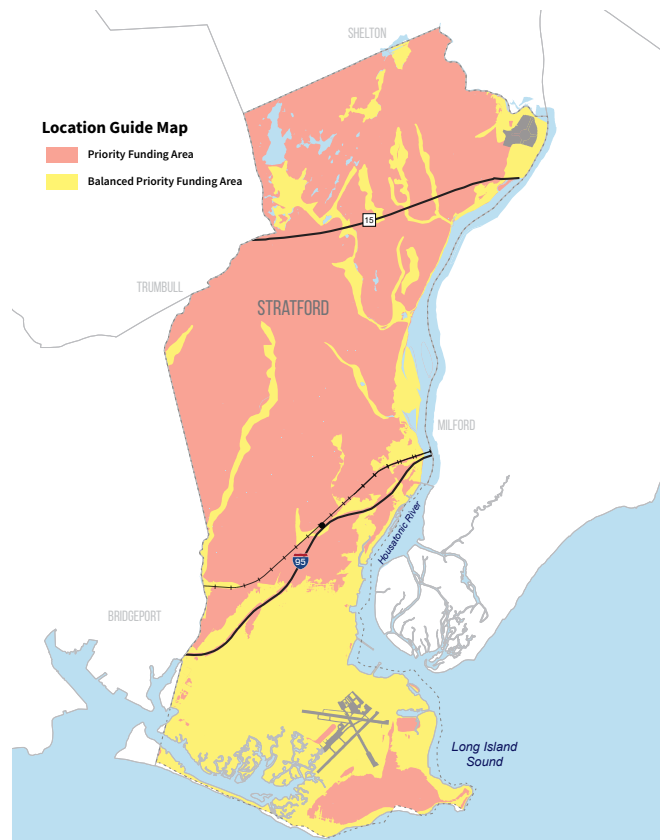
1. Redevelop and revitalize regional centers and areas with existing or currently planned physical infrastructure.
2. Expand housing opportunities and design choices to accommodate a variety of household types and needs.
3. Concentrate development around transportation nodes and along major transportation 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.

Stratford was not identified as a Regional Center in the State Plan so therefore does not directly align with the first principle of the State plan, however, Stratford's POCD does emphasize the investment in infrastructure in locations where public water and sewer infrastructure currently exists and encourages transit oriented development (TOD) through its TOD overlay zone in town center. Stratford's POCD is consistent with the other five principles as it establishes goals and identifies strategies related to expanding housing choice, concentrated development in proximity of transit and transportation infrastructure, conserving and protecting environmental and cultural resources, and promoting a regional approach to planning.

The 2018-2023 Locational Guide Map (at right) provided within the State plan identifies Priority Funding Areas, and Balanced Priority Funding Areas within Stratford. Funding areas are areas that are prioritized for State grants and investment. Approximately two-thirds of Stratford



Source: State Conservation and Development Policies Plan, 2018 – 2023



Source: State Conservation and Development Policies Plan, 2018 – 2023

is identified as a Priority Funding Area. Those areas are primarily located in the center of the town and northwards. These areas are densely developed and have convenient access to State highways and other infrastructure. Balanced Priority Funding Areas mostly correspond to Stratford's coastal residential, industrial, and commercial areas and are primarily located in the southern end of the Stratford and along the Housatonic River. These areas meet the criteria of both Priority Funding Areas and Conservation Area. Plan Stratford also recognizes, maintains, and updates policies as needed to reaffirm Stratford's commitment to a thriving waterfront and ensure consistency with the Connecticut Coastal Management Act (CCMA).

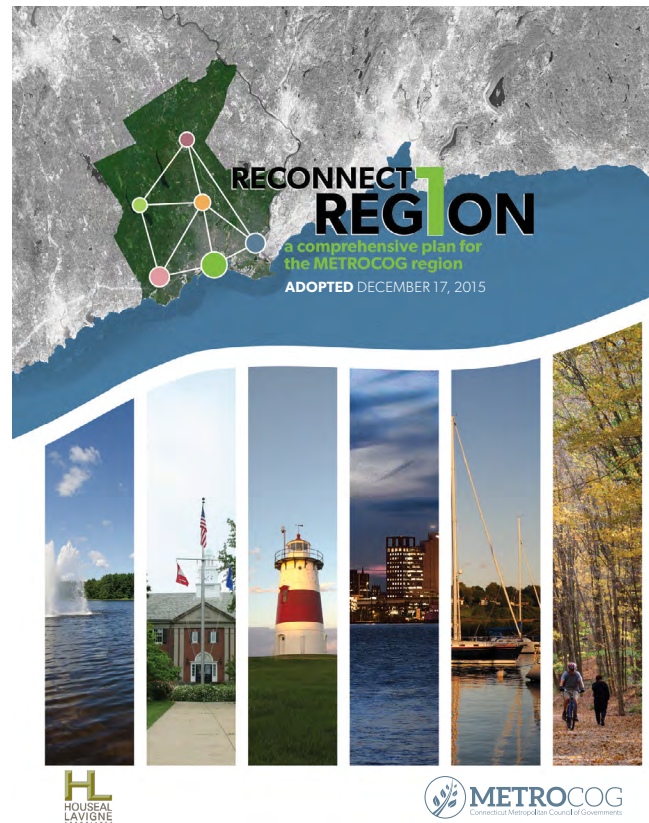
Consistency with the Regional Plan

MetroCOG's *Reconnect 1 Region 2015 – 2025 Regional Plan of Conservation and Development* provides guidance for a region of six municipalities including Stratford. The Region's Plan is intended to be an advisory document for regional-level decision making and for both state and local level planning. MetroCOG's plan recommendations are guided by three global-scale guiding principles that are expected to influence life and provide a clear vision for the Region. These include:

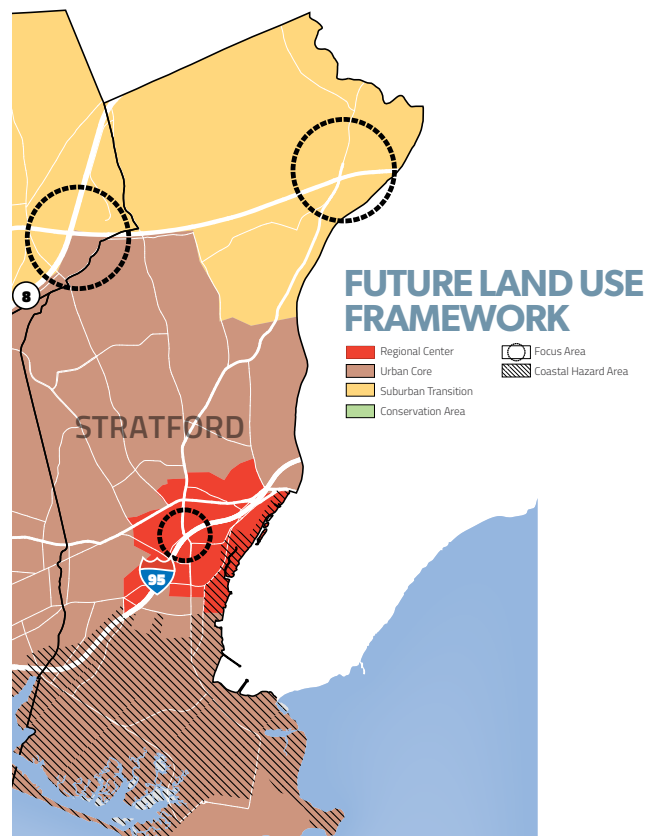
- Reconnected
- Revitalized
- Resilient

The MetroCOG plan advocates for a regional approach to addressing these issues, including directing development in the region to locations that have infrastructure to support development and the sharing of resources. In this plan, Stratford Center was identified as a Regional Center. These are locations where major employers are located and where institutions that serve the greater MetroCOG population are found. Underutilized sites in these areas should be targeted for redevelopment that maximizes development potential.

The Region's plan also identifies potential growth areas where commercial and residential development should be prioritized. Within Stratford, these areas correspond with locations that are currently serviced by water and sewer. The plan calls for future growth and development to be directed to the Town Centers, Urban Core, and portions of the Suburban Transition area where sufficient capacity



Source: MetroCOG's *Reconnect 1 Region 2015 – 2025 Regional Plan of Conservation and Development*



Source: MetroCOG's *Reconnect 1 Region 2015 – 2025 Regional Plan of Conservation and Development*

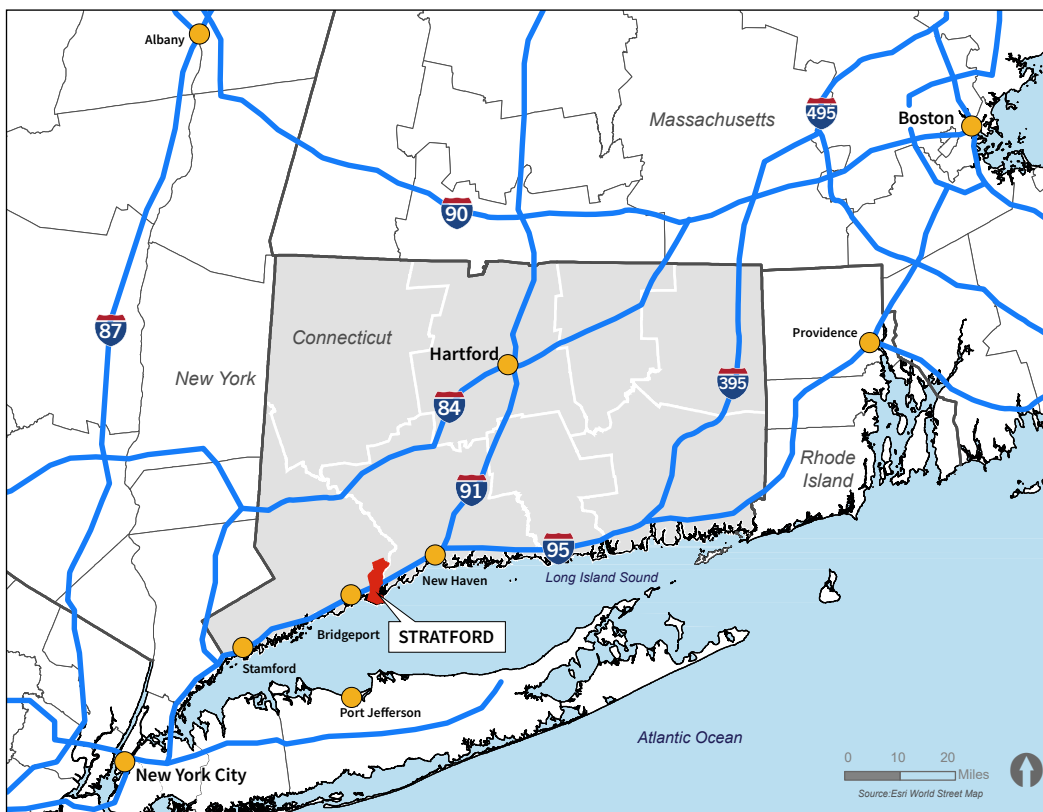
exists relative to roadways, transit services, sewer infrastructure, water service, communications, and other public services and facilities.

The Region's plan also calls for transit-oriented development (TOD) within a ¼ to ½ mile distance from a train station. Moderate to high-density development should be promoted in these areas to emphasize convenience and efficiency by encouraging compact, concentrated, mixed-use development in conjunction with transit access. This is consistent with the goals of Stratford's TOD overlay zone that was adopted in 2015.

Stratford's 2023 POCD follows the guidance of the MetroCOG plan by directing growth to areas within the Regional Centers and Urban Core as indicated in the map on the previous page, which is sourced from the MetroCOG plan. The MetroCOG plan also identifies 23 objectives for the region that include objectives for: stormwater and floodplain management, riparian corridors, communications infrastructure, greenways and trail networks, renewable energy infrastructure, affordable housing, transit-oriented housing, economic development, historic preservation and tourism, water supply, protected open space and forests, air quality, and agricultural resources. Stratford's 2023 POCD directly addresses most of these goals and includes recommended strategies and actions that are supportive of all of these goals.

Regional Context

Stratford is a coastal community that has been intrinsically tied to the water and shoreline resources of Long Island Sound and the Housatonic River since the first settlement. Today, the coastal area is Stratford's most important natural resource, providing a variety of environmental, economic, and cultural benefits and opportunities. It requires, and therefore addresses the municipal coastal requirements of the CCMA, pursuant to Chapter 444 of the Connecticut General Statutes. The town is located in the southeast corner of Fairfield County, Connecticut, directly east of the City of Bridgeport. Stratford is part of the Connecticut Metropolitan Council of Governments (MetroCOG) Planning Region, which includes the towns of Easton, Fairfield, Monroe and Trumbull, as well as the City of Bridgeport. Stratford is 60 miles from New York City and is in the New York Metropolitan Area. Boston is 120 miles east of the town. The Metro-North commuter railroad has a stop in Stratford. Both I-95 and Merritt Parkway (State Route 15) traverse the town. Stratford serves as a bedroom community for both Bridgeport and New York City. Stratford also has its own industrial base and commercial center.



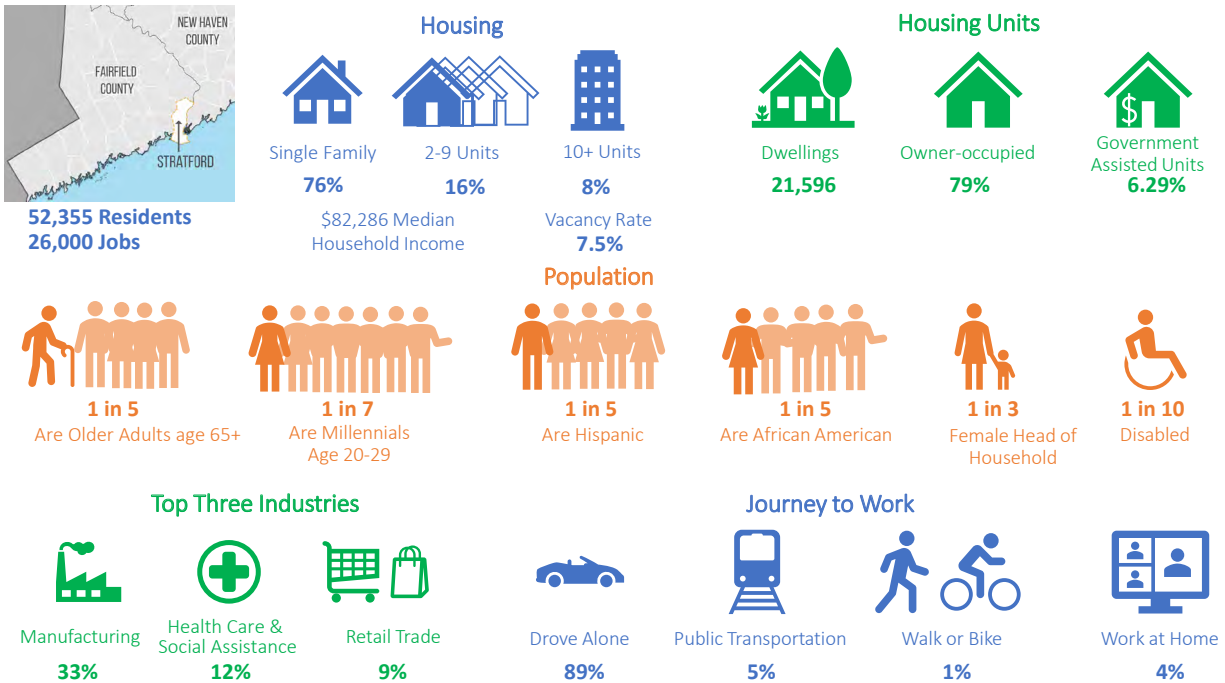
Source: FHI Studio



Demographic Trends

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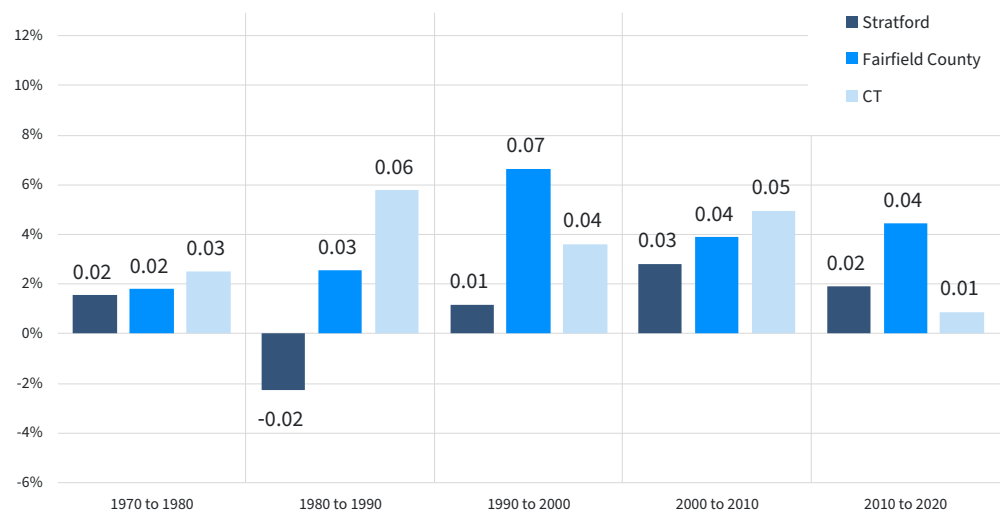
Analysis of socio-economic and housing data provides a basic understanding of where Stratford is today, what changed over the past decade, how Stratford compares with other communities in the region and the state, and an estimate of what lies ahead with respect to physical growth and development. Community conversations held during the planning process have aided in uncovering the gaps in the data gathered, and provided the planning team with useful information which helped shape the recommendations in this document. A brief summary of key data trends and planning issues are summarized in this chapter. More detailed topic based data is discussed in subsequent chapters.



Population Growth

Stratford has a population of approximately 52,300 residents. Population has increased since 1990 but growth has lagged behind both Fairfield County and the State, with exception of the period from 2010 to 2020 when Stratford exceeded the State's growth rate. Stratford only lost population during one decade (1980-1990) in the past fifty years. Since then, growth in Stratford has exceeded 1% per decade and growth is projected by the State over the next two decades.

Figure 2.1. Population Growth vs. Region

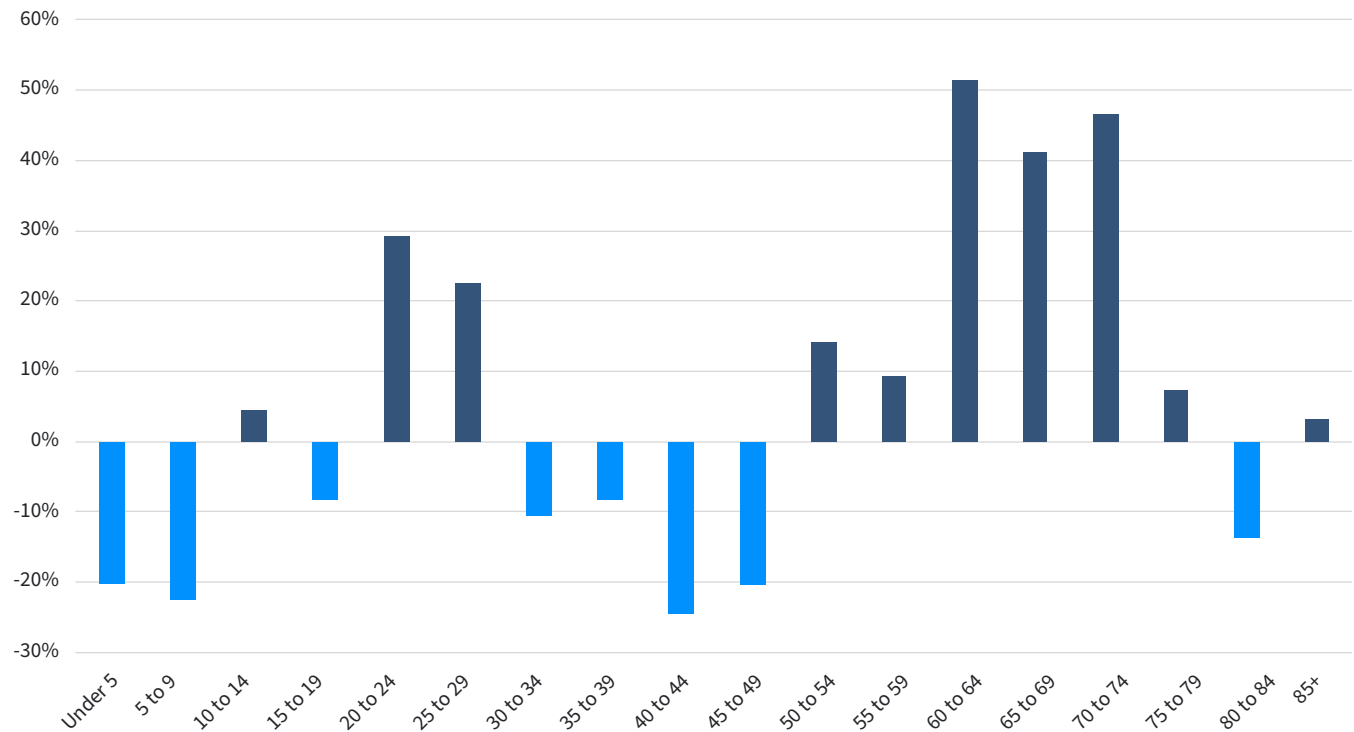


Source: United States Census Bureau, 1970 – 2020 Decennial Census

Stratford’s population is growing the most in those between the ages of 20 and 29 and between the ages of 55 and 75. These demographics include younger adults and those residents nearing or entering retirement age. Stratford’s population has shrunk in residents under age 20 and between age 30 and 55. Shifting demographics in Stratford towards older and smaller households suggest the need for a greater diversity of housing stock.

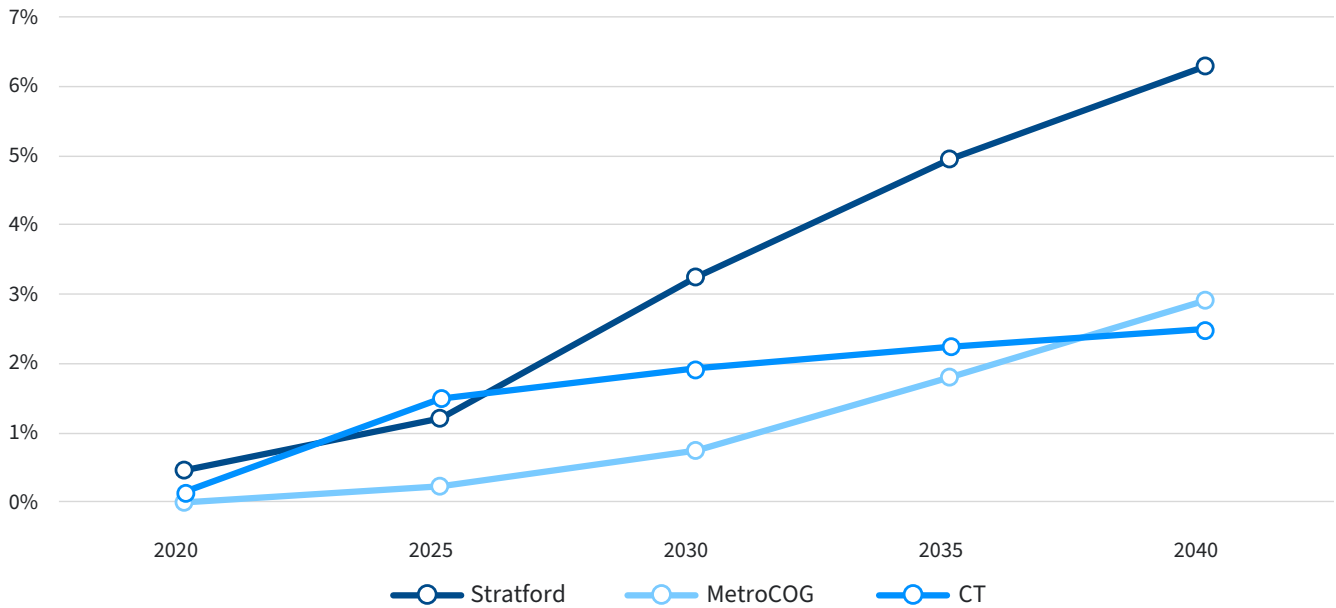
According to population projections conducted by the State, Stratford’s population is expected to remain positive through 2040 and is expected to outpace the growth in both the MetroCOG Region (the six-town planning region that Stratford belongs to) and the State. With the exception of Fairfield, Stratford is projected to grow more than any other municipality in the Region. Stratford’s population is projected to grow nearly 7% over the course of the next 20 years. School-age residents between the ages of 5 and 19 are expected to contribute most towards growth over the 20-year period, countering trends that have occurred over the past decade.

Figure 2.2. Stratford Population Change by Age Cohort (2010 to 2021)



Source: American Community Survey – 2021

Figure 2.3. Projected Population Change 2020-2040 vs. MetroCOG Region and State



Source: CT Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD), 2016 Projections

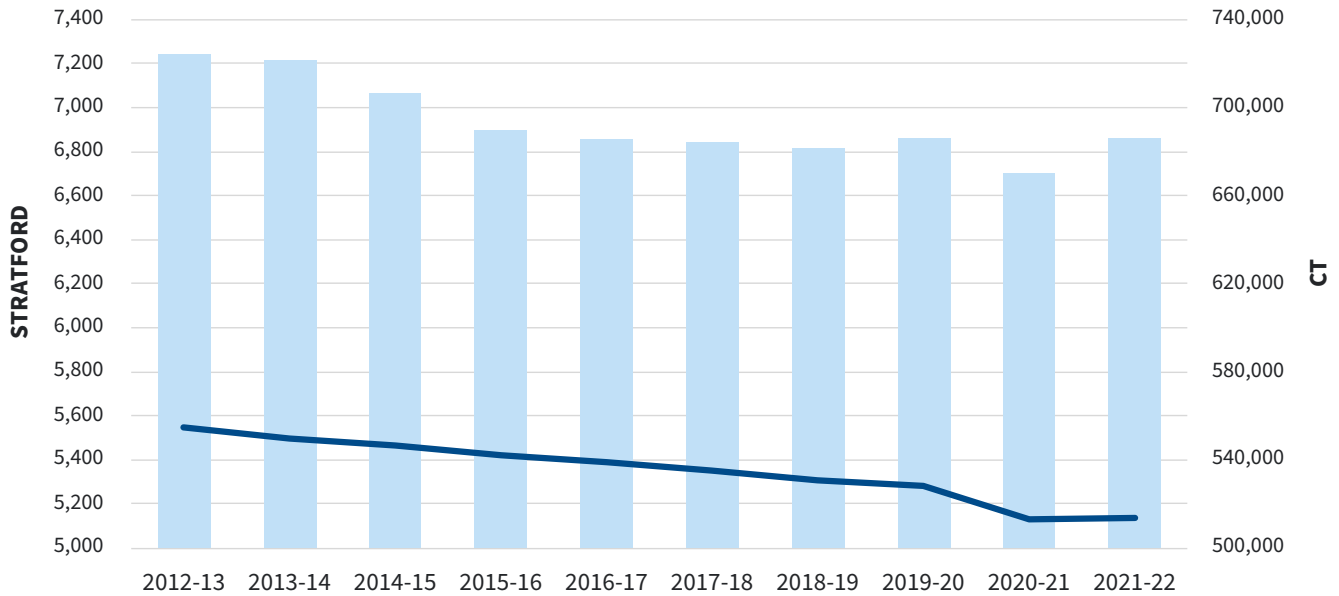
Table 2.1. Projected Population Change 2020-2040 vs. MetroCOG Region and State

	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
Stratford	0.45%	1.20%	3.25%	4.94%	6.70%
Bridgeport	-0.43%	4.23%	5.79%	6.47%	6.19%
Easton	-0.44%	-15.63%	-20.26%	-24.51%	-28.57%
Fairfield	0.35%	-5.47%	-4.13%	1.32%	8.68%
Monroe	-0.28%	-21.08%	-28.36%	-33.99%	-38.81%
Trumbull	-0.47%	-4.35%	-6.42%	-7.80%	-7.84%
MetroCOG	-1.30%	-1.07%	-0.56%	0.47%	1.58%
CT	0.15%	1.50%	1.93%	2.25%	2.49%

Source: CT Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD), 2016 Projections

School Enrollment

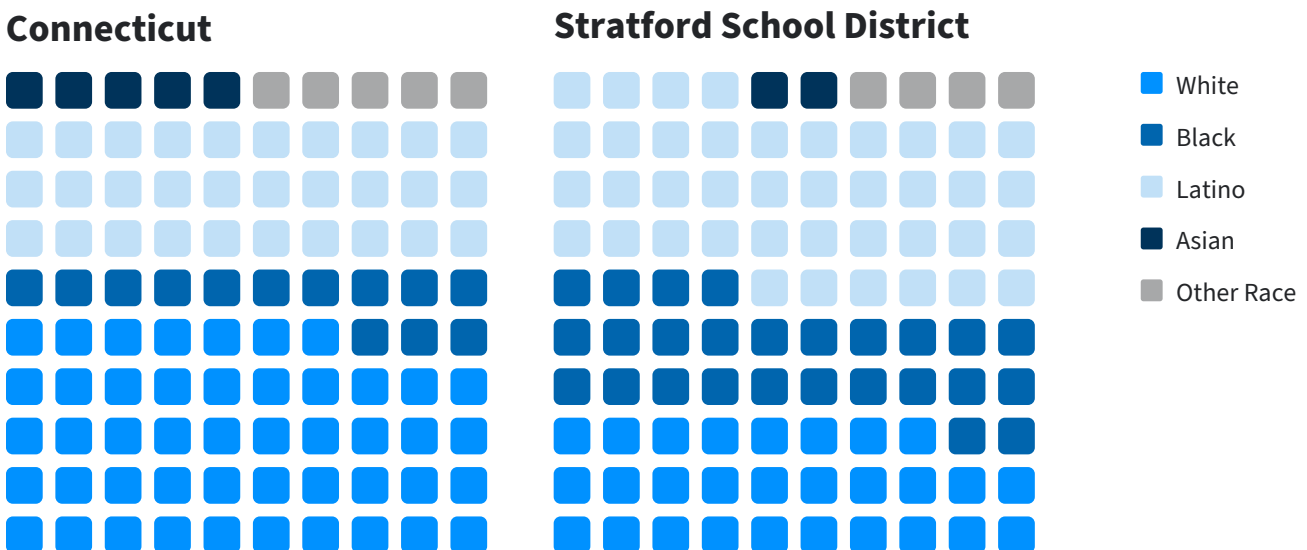
Figure 2.4. Stratford Public Schools Enrollment vs. State 2012-2013 to 2021-2022



Source: CT Department of Education, Stratford Public Schools

Stratford’s public school enrollment has mirrored the State’s enrollment trends over the past ten years. During the 2021-22 school year Stratford’s public schools experienced a small bump in enrollment with 6,860 students enrolled that year, but this is a nearly 400 student decline since the 2012-13 school year. With population projections anticipating growth in Stratford’s school age children, it is reasonable to expect that the school’s enrollment numbers will stabilize or potentially increase. While the Town’s school enrollment has shrunk over the past decade, it has also become more diverse. Stratford’s public school students are more racially and ethnically diverse than those in the average school district across the State.

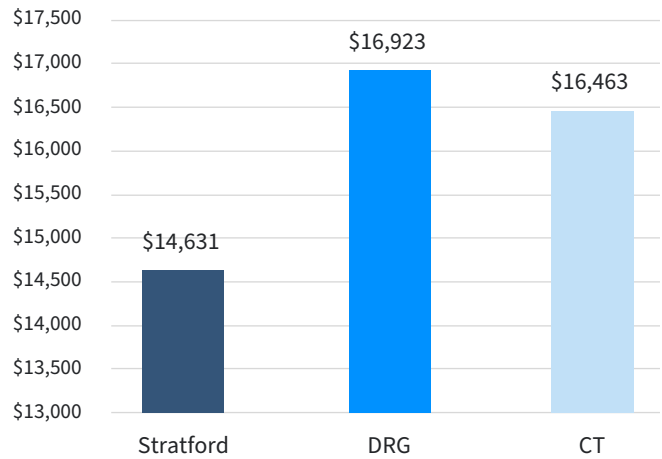
Figure 2.5. Public K-12 Student Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity per 100 Students, 2022-23



Source: 2023 Equity Profile, Datahaven and CT Department of Education

When analyzing per pupil expenditures compared to the State and the District Reference Group (DRG), Stratford is in Group G, which includes 17 municipalities. Stratford spends over \$2,000 less per student than the DRG which is a classification system in which districts are grouped based on similar socioeconomic conditions, and over \$1,800 less than the State.

Figure 2.6. Per Pupil Expenditures - 2016

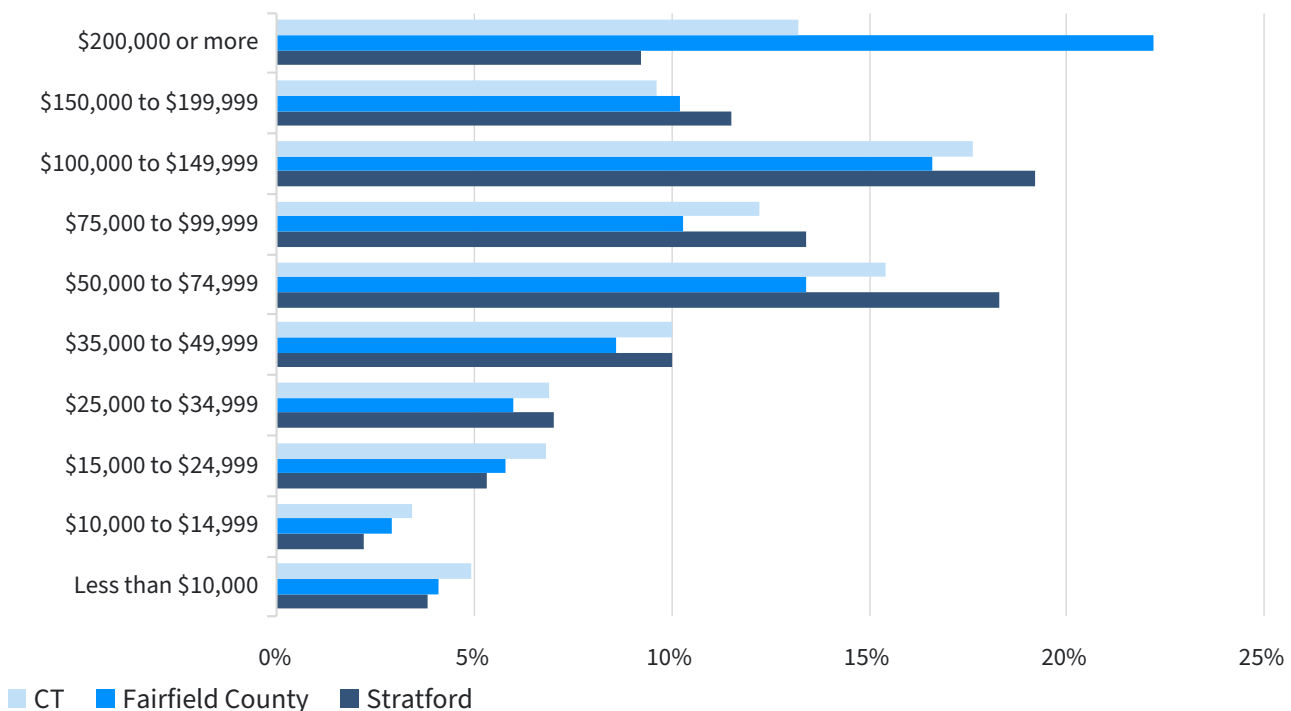


Source: Stratford Board of Education, 2016

Income and Education

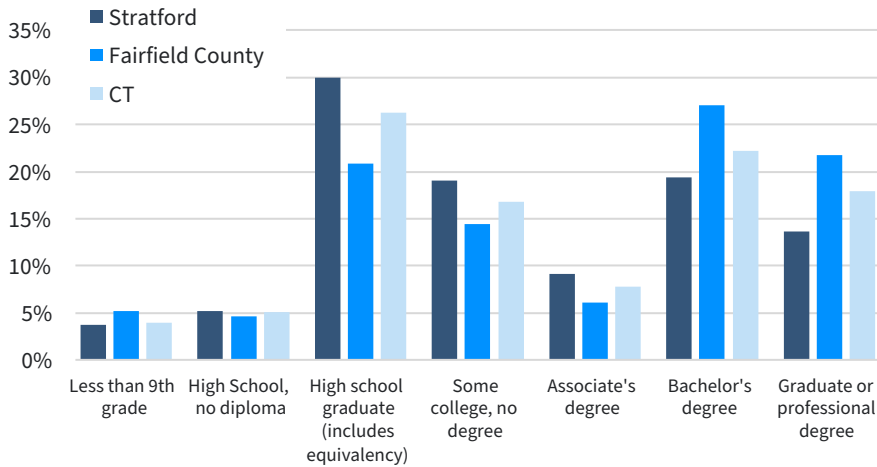
The median household income in Stratford was over \$86,000 in 2021, an increase of nearly \$20,000 since 2015. This is above the State's median but is about \$15,000 less than the median income of Fairfield County. Stratford has a higher share of households earning between \$50,000 to \$200,000 than both the County and State and has a lower share of households in income brackets below \$25,000.

Figure 2.7. Percentage of Households by Income (2021)



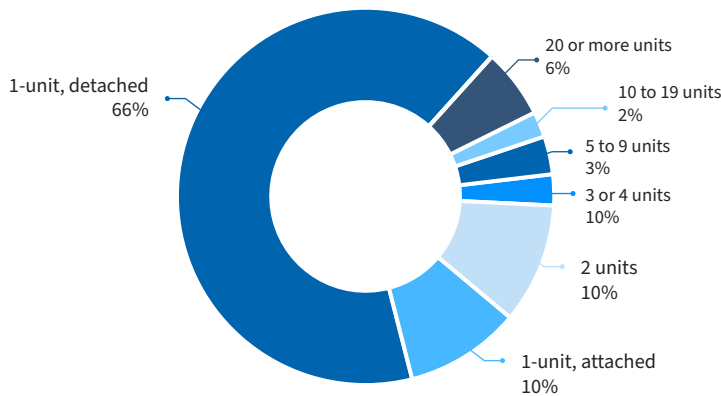
Source: American Community Survey – 2021

Figure 2.8. Educational Attainment



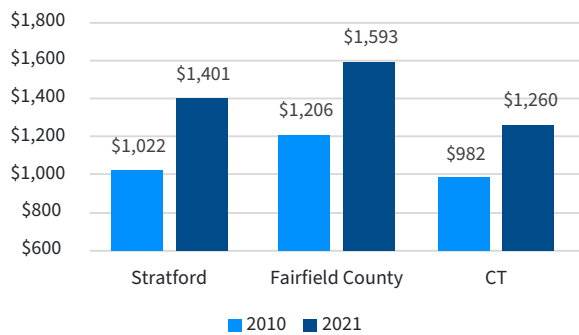
Source: American Community Survey - 2021

Figure 2.9. Stratford Housing Type (2021)



Source: American Community Survey - 2021

Figure 2.10. Median Gross Rent 2010 vs 2021



Source: American Community Survey - 2021

Figure 2.11. Percent of housing units by number of bedrooms



Source: American Community Survey 2020, 5-year estimates

Stratford's residents hold proportionately fewer bachelor's and graduate degrees than residents of the Region and State. Many of Stratford's residents are employed in manufacturing industries within the Town, these industries have historically provided well-paying jobs that don't require a college degree. Educational attainment of Stratford's residents is changing as well. It has improved between 2010 and 2021 with more residents holding bachelor's and graduate degrees and fewer residents with less than a bachelor's degree.

Housing Trends

Stratford has a diversity of housing types, although a majority (two-thirds) of housing is single-family (1-unit detached). Duplexes (homes with two units) account for 10% of the Town's multi-family housing. Only 6% of the Town's housing is found in buildings with 20 or more units.

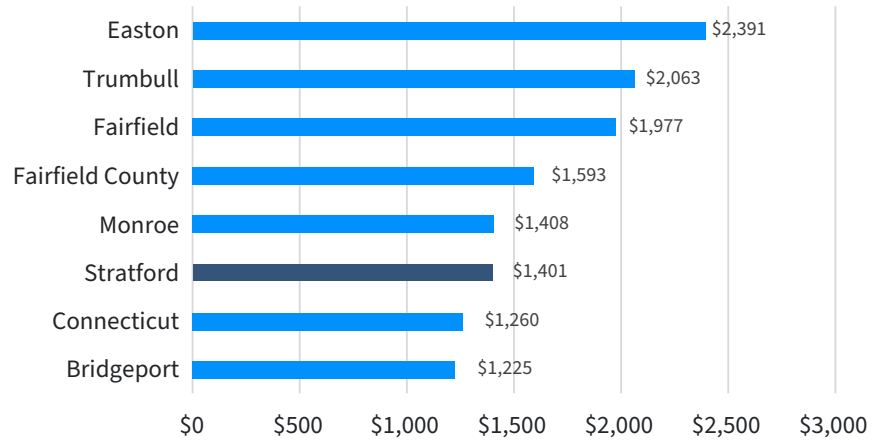
Median gross rent in Stratford rose nearly 40% between 2010 and 2021 to \$1,401. This exceeds median rents for the State. Stratford saw greater rent increases than both Fairfield County and the State over the 2010 to 2021 period.

Compared to neighboring Towns, Stratford has lower rental prices than the other MetroCOG communities with the exception of Bridgeport. A significant share of rental households (nearly 60%) spent more than 30% of their household income on rent, which is considered housing cost burdened.

Residential construction activity has fluctuated in Stratford over the past decade. 2013 experienced the highest number of permits issued, but annual permits issued since then have not exceeded 84 per year. Housing permits issued do not correlate directly with units built as some projects may be in progress, delayed, or abandoned.

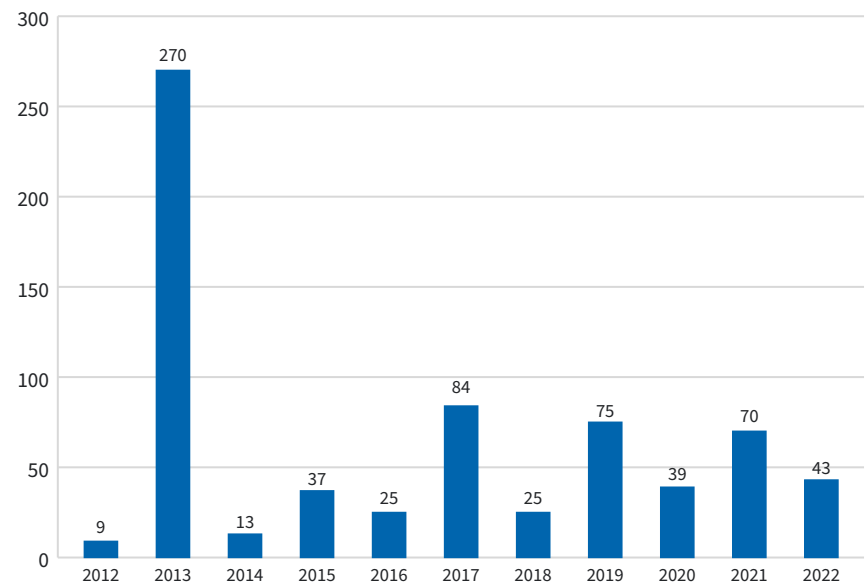
Stratford's population density is significantly higher than both the State and County. Population density in Town is 2,631 residents per square mile compared to 1,143 residents per square mile in Fairfield County and 648 residents per square mile statewide.

Figure 2.12. Median Gross Rent (2021)



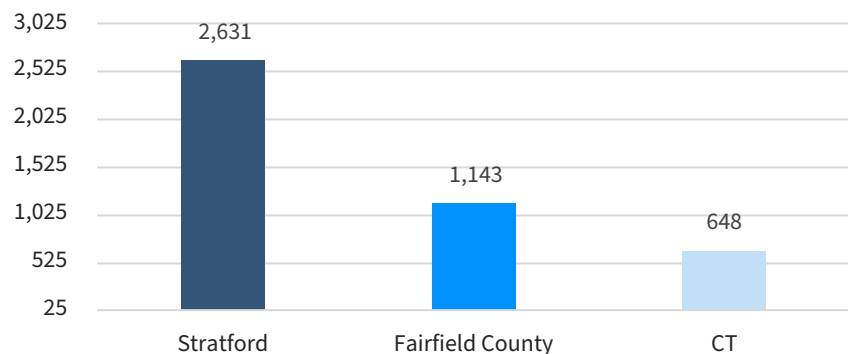
Source: American Community Survey - 2021

Figure 2.13. Stratford Housing Permits (2022)



Source: Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development 2012 - 2022

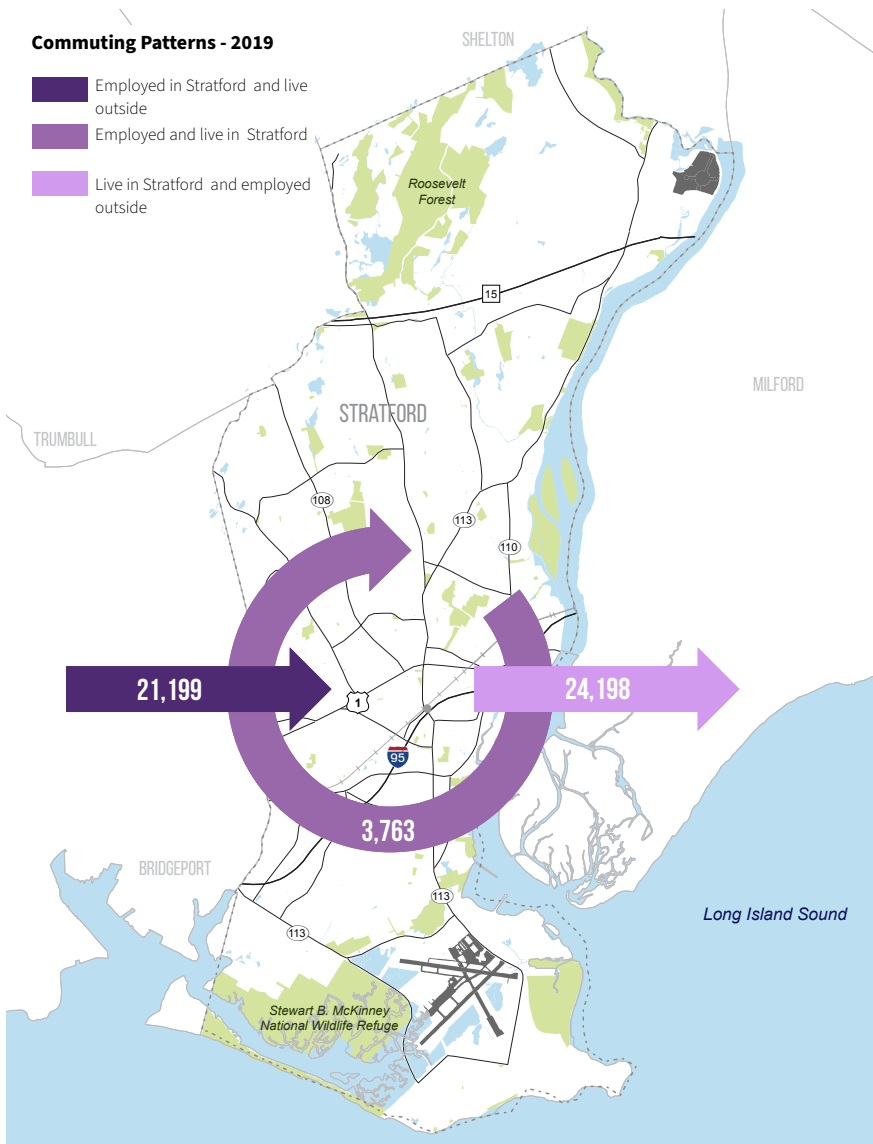
Figure 2.14. Population Density 2021 (residents per square mile)



Source: American Community Survey - 2021

Employment & Industry Trends

Figure 2.15. Commuting Patterns - 2019

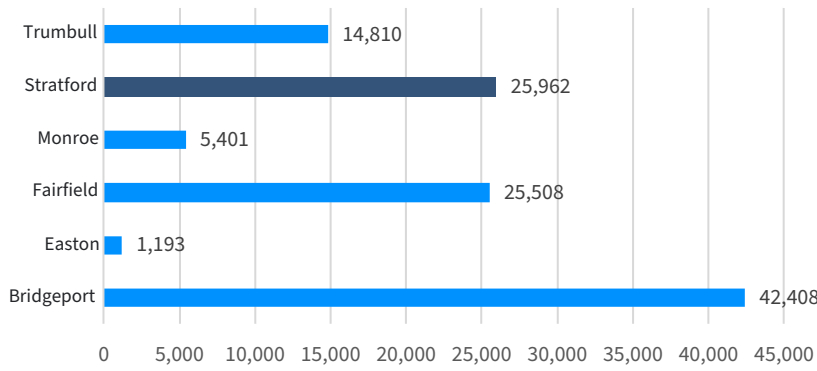


Stratford had a total of 25,962 full and part-time jobs in 2019 (most current data available). Of those jobs, approximately 3,763 (15%) were held by Town residents. Most of Stratford’s residents (24,198) commute to other towns and cities for work. While only 15% of residents work in Stratford, the town is the most common work destination of Stratford’s residents. Other common work locations for Stratford’s residents include Bridgeport, New York City, Stamford, and Milford. The average commute for Stratford’s residents is 30 minutes.

Between 2010 and 2019, Stratford experienced a 3.6% contraction in the number of jobs in town. Both the number of workers commuting into town and the share of residents working in town decreased.

Source: US Census Bureau Longitudinal 2019 Employer-Household Dynamics Origin Destination Employment Statistics

Figure 2.16. Jobs in the Region by Town or City (2019)

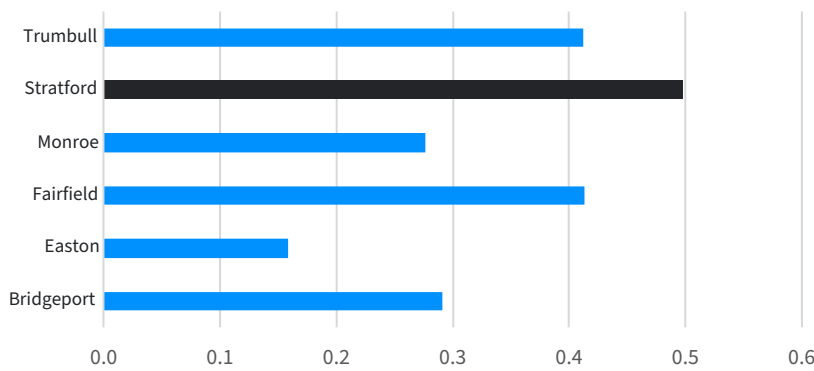


Source: Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development 2012 - 2022

With the exception of Bridgeport (a major employment center), Stratford has a greater number of jobs than surrounding towns and cities, although it has a comparable number of jobs as Fairfield.

When adjusted for residential population, Stratford has more jobs per resident (0.5) than any of the surrounding communities, including Bridgeport.

Figure 2.17. Jobs in the Region by Town or City (2019)



Source: Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development 2012 - 2022

Stratford’s top industry, employing nearly 8,000 workers, is Manufacturing. Manufacturing accounts for over twice the employment amount of the next top industry, which is Health Care and Social Assistance, which has just over 3,000 employees. Retail Trade, Transportation and Warehousing, and Local Government also made the list of Stratford’s top industries in 2019, according to the CT Department of Labor.

	Employment	Employers	Avg. Wages
1 Manufacturing	7,961	73	\$108,089
2 Health Care & Social Assistance	3,024	153	\$47,793
3 Retail Trade	2,064	146	\$33,444
4 Transportation & Warehousing	1,882	48	\$52,739
5 Local Government	1,658	20	\$72,768
All Industries	24,431	1,428	\$70,373

Source: CT Data Collaborative, 2021 Stratford Town Profile

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Aerial view of the Housatonic River, Source: Geoffrey Steadman



Land Use & Zoning

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Land Use & Zoning

Goal

Promote balanced physical growth and development that fosters livable/inclusive communities, economic vitality, and healthy lifestyles while preserving the small-town charm and natural resources within the community.

Baseline Conditions

Stratford's land use is dominated by single-family residential development, industrial development and parks and open space. Stratford is a densely developed community, the densest areas being located generally to the middle and south areas of town.

While the Town's residential development is primarily single-family, Stratford has multiple properties and areas with multi-family development throughout town. Residential densities also vary with small lot homes generally to the middle and south and larger lot homes to the north.

In addition to residential development, Stratford has a diversity of other land uses including commercial, industrial, community services and parks and open space. Approximately fourteen percent of Stratford is occupied by commercial or industrial land uses and about twenty percent of the Town is occupied by various types of parks and open space. The Town's open space includes Roosevelt Forest, public parks and private recreation areas. A priority of this Plan is to ensure that Stratford continues to balance its diversity of land uses as properties are developed, redeveloped, or rezoned. The physical layout of the community is fundamental to sustainability. In mature, nearly fully developed communities such as Stratford, existing land uses become one of the most important considerations in determining future land use policy. Reviewing and evaluating land use within a community is one of the most important tasks in determining its physical plan and ultimately its community character and quality

of life. Land use options must be carefully analyzed to ensure new uses support and complement the existing land use patterns throughout Town. The relationship between uses such as residential, commercial, industrial, recreational, and the expanse and intensity of each use, directly impacts the Town's character and quality of life. Considering the limited availability of land and the desire to achieve sustainable community growth, future growth should be thought of in terms of appropriate density, mixed land uses, and redevelopment within existing industrial and commercial districts. Due to the importance of Stratford's neighborhoods, the impact of any change deserves diligent review. The quality and appeal of Stratford's unique neighborhoods and their importance to the Town's future cannot be minimized. When opportunities for positive change emerge, the Town should encourage creative ideas and adaptive reuses and guide change to enhance the quality of the neighborhoods.

The Town should prioritize redeveloping/revitalizing brownfields and focus new developments in already developed areas, while leaving existing "greenfields"/ open space for conservation purposes through adequate management.

The Connection Between Zoning and Equity

Zoning code is a tool with incredible potential to create healthy communities and ensure equity in access to resources. However, outdated zoning code can be a major barrier to fostering inclusive communities and can directly cause health inequities. Recognizing that historical zoning practices in the US have contributed to inequities in quality of neighborhoods, access to resources, exposure to environmental pollutants, and health outcomes, Stratford continues to include zoning revision in its POCD goals. Stratford is dedicated to identifying and eliminating barriers to fostering equitable communities and continuously updating its zoning code to meet the evolving needs of its population.

Existing Land Use

Residential

Stratford’s residential neighborhoods are a cherished part of the community, which give the Town its unique sense of place and small-town atmosphere despite having a population of over 50,000. The Town’s neighborhoods are the foundation of the community with respect to accommodating residents, attracting new residents, and providing a substantial share of Stratford’s tax base. Neighborhoods vary in character from “suburban” style single-family homes to “urban” neighborhoods with small lot homes and multi-family buildings. The Town’s diversity of neighborhoods is highly valued as it allows residents to choose from a wide range of lifestyles, price ranges, and neighborhood character. Priorities for neighborhoods differ based upon neighborhood type. Single-family neighborhoods are valued for their quiet lifestyle while neighborhoods that are denser and more urban are valued for their connectedness. Any future development in Stratford’s neighborhoods should be sensitive to the unique attributes of those neighborhoods.

Residential – Low Density

Nearly half of Stratford’s land area is occupied by residential land uses, with low density residential development comprising most of that area. Low-density residential land uses include individual lots with three or fewer family dwellings. Approximately forty-two percent of Stratford’s residential areas are low density. Most of this development occurred prior to 1980. While mostly built out, the Town has

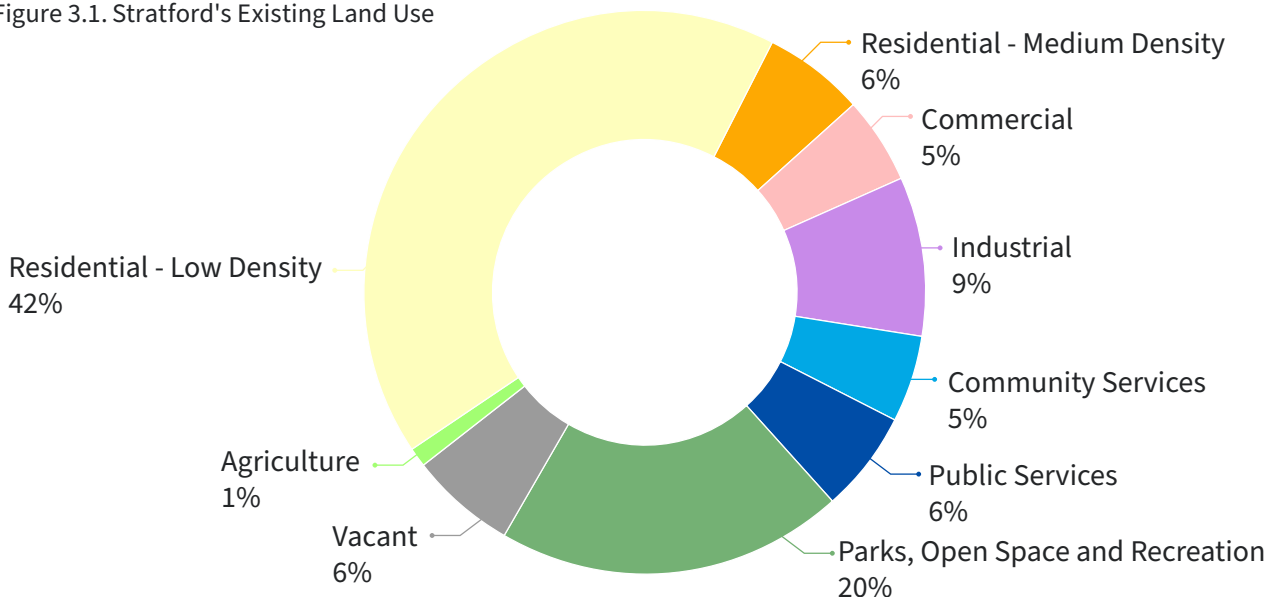
undeveloped vacant parcels, located along James Farm Road, Beaver Dam Road and Cutspring Road. Those vacant parcels are in single family residential districts and many of them face significant development challenges related to topography, and access. Wetlands are present on some of these parcels, which should be protected as they provide habitat for several plant and animal species.

Low density residential land uses are concentrated in the central portion of the town between Interstate 95 (I-95) and the Merritt Parkway (State Highway 15). There are also low density residential developments located south and east of I-95. There is an isolated low density neighborhood south of the airport along the shoreline. Single family homes on larger lots are found north of the Merritt Parkway.

Residential – Medium Density

Medium density residential land uses include condominium developments and apartment complexes, which account for over six percent of Stratford’s land area. Closely grouped dwellings with a shared open space are typical in these developments. Medium-density developments are located throughout Stratford. The largest of these is Oronoque Village, a 55+ age restricted condominium complex that surrounds Blackhawk Golf Course, which is located north of the Merritt Parkway. The 1111 Stratford Avenue complex is a recent example of medium density housing that contains 112 units. It was built in 2013 and is located within the transit-oriented development (TOD) zone, with access to transit services and within walking distance of commercial businesses and municipal services. Another example is the 335 Ferry Boulevard complex, which is comprised of 71

Figure 3.1. Stratford's Existing Land Use





Sikorsky Aircraft Company, Source: Town of Stratford

units, also located within the TOD zone, in close proximity to goods and services. Public housing developments are concentrated on Woodend Road north of Sikorsky Airport.

Commercial

Commercial land uses include retail sales and service, auto sales and service, hotels, food and beverage establishments, financial institutions, and offices. Land devoted to these uses account for over five percent of the Town's land area. Commercial properties are located primarily along Barnum Avenue, Stratford Avenue, Ferry Boulevard and Main Street. Stratford Crossing/Stratford Square is a regional commercial destination located on Barnum Avenue at the interchange of I-95. Office and warehouse uses are found in the southwest portion of the town.

Stratford has prioritized transit-oriented development and mixed-use development in its commercial districts as a means of encouraging smart growth, providing a diversity of housing types and price points, and protecting existing residential neighbors from commercial creep. Permitting residential uses on the upper stories of ground floor commercial uses in TOD zone and targeted locations creates a sense of community, increases pedestrian activity during and after business hours, and contributes to the creation of vibrant neighborhoods.

Industrial

Industrial land uses make up nearly nine percent of Stratford's land area and include uses such as manufacturing, warehouses, storage yards and production establishments. Industrial development is primarily clustered in the southern portion of Stratford along Lordship Boulevard and along the rail corridor. The largest industrial property is the Sikorsky Aircraft Factory that is located north of the Merritt Parkway and has been established in Stratford for a century. Many of Stratford's industrial properties are inactive brownfields that are in various stages of remediation. The Stratford Army Engine Plant (SAEP), located near Sikorsky Memorial Airport, is proposed to be remediated after the property is transferred to the preferred developer. At this time, a development agreement is in place to redevelop the property as a commercial property with opportunities for public access to the waterfront.

Community Services

Nearly five percent of Stratford's land area is dedicated to community service land uses. These include Stratford's schools, churches, cemeteries, government facilities, library and medical facilities. The largest of these properties is St. Michaels Cemetery, located in the western portion of Stratford, along the town's border with Bridgeport. Stratford has two high schools, two middle schools and nine elementary schools that are spread out geographically across the town. The community's churches and civic uses

such as the Town Hall, Library and Baldwin Center are located near the Town center on Main Street.

Public Services and Utilities

Public services and utilities account for nearly six percent of Stratford's land area and include the transportation network and land that is dedicated to public utilities and infrastructure such as Stratford's Water Pollution Control Facility, located along the Housatonic River. Although owned and operated by the City of Bridgeport, the Sikorsky Memorial Airport, located in the southeast portion of the town, makes up a significant portion of this area.

Parks, Open Space and Recreation

Stratford's parks, open space network, and recreational facilities make up nearly twenty percent of Stratford's land area. These areas are dedicated to both passive and active recreational uses as well as environmental preservation. The Stewart B. McKinney National Wildlife Refuge and Roosevelt Forest are the largest of these land areas. The Stewart B. McKinney National Wildlife Refuge, also known as Great Meadows, is one of the largest coastal wetlands left in the state and accounts for over 420 acres of open space and habitat for migratory birds and wildlife. It is a unit of the Stewart B. McKinney National Wildlife Refuge and the Refuge is composed of many units along the CT coastline. Roosevelt Forest, located in Stratford's northwest corner, is owned by the Town of Stratford and includes over 400 acres of hiking trails, camping areas, and a municipal dog park. Roosevelt Forest was established to provide recreational opportunities for the community, and to protect the watershed, wildlife, and beauty of the mixed deciduous forest. Although not public, the Mill River Country Club also makes up a large part of Stratford's recreational land use.

As a coastal community, Stratford is fortunate to have public beaches such as Long Beach and Short Beach, which contribute to the Town's open space and recreational resources. Other municipal parks such as Boothe Memorial Park, Paradise Green, and Longbrook Park contribute to Stratford's network of open spaces and recreational amenities. Every neighborhood in Stratford has access to a public park within approximately a quarter of a mile.

Agriculture

Agriculture is not the primary use of any one parcel in the town. However, several parcels were identified that have a significant share of land devoted to agricultural uses. Collectively these parcels occupy 129 acres of land within the town. Parcels with agricultural uses are located in

Health in all Planning

A healthy community is vibrant, active, and inclusive. Through a Health in all Planning approach, communities can use a number of tools to pursue upstream efforts that create healthy places. Sound, efficient, and implementable plans and policies have the ability to create places where health-promoting activities are the easiest choice. A Health in all Planning approach takes health beyond the comprehensive plan and integrates health into a plan's next steps, strategies, actions, and tools. These tools (sometimes known as the planner's toolkit) include zoning, code amendments, permitting, environmental requirements, and design standards. Using such tools to ensure our communities are places where we can walk, bike, work, play, and gather is crucial for individuals and families to live healthy lifestyles.

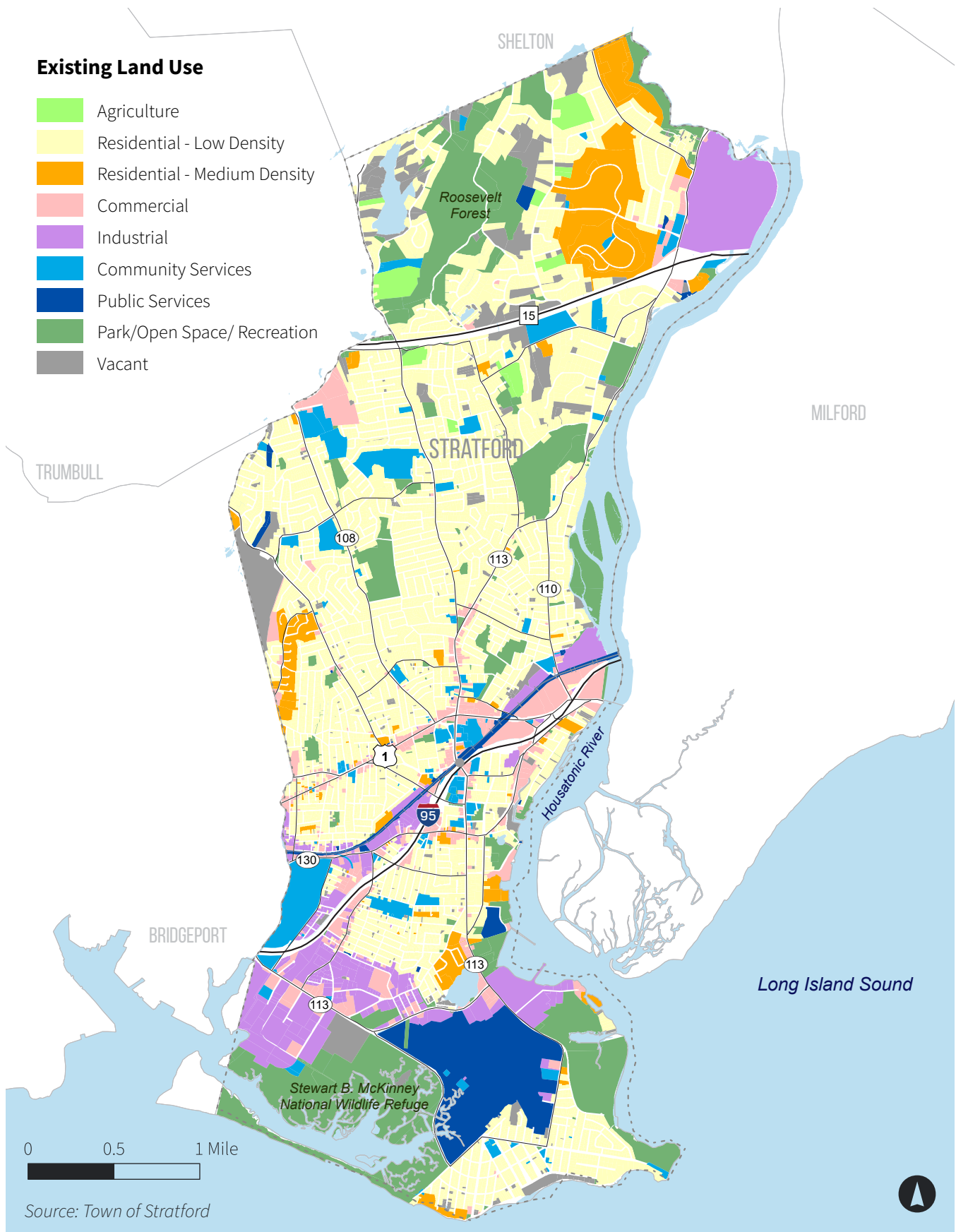
Source: [Health in the Development Review Process, American Planning Association](#)

the northern section of the town. These parcels were designated as agriculture for the purpose of demonstrating that there is some agricultural activity within Stratford. These parcels do not necessarily qualify for agricultural assessment under Public Act 490. Pirhala Farm, rededicated as the Terry Backer Community Farm, is a community garden located in the northern section of town where Stratford residents can grow their own produce. Nourish Bridgeport, a hydroponic farm, also exists on Stratford Avenue.

Vacant Land

Vacant land is land that is not utilized or designated as open space. This land use makes up nearly six percent of Stratford's land area and has the potential for future development. A large area of vacant land is located adjacent to Success Lake open space to the northwest of Stratford; the property is privately owned and the area is designated to be developed as a business park and has the potential for future conservation. There are several larger undeveloped parcels located around Beaver Dam Lake and Roosevelt Forest. There are many other smaller vacant parcels scattered throughout town, many of which have not been developed due to environmental factors such as wetlands or steep grades.

Figure 3.2. Existing Land Use Map



Source: Town of Stratford

Zoning

Stratford's zoning regulations guide the Town's land use and are a critical tool for controlling the type, density, and design of development within the town. Most of Stratford was developed prior to the adoption of zoning regulations in 1927. Since that time, Stratford's regulations have been amended on a regular basis. The latest amendment took place in 2015 when the Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) overlay district was established in the Town Center. Zoning regulations establish permitted uses, minimum lot sizes, minimum front, side and rear setbacks for principal and accessory buildings, maximum building heights and maximum building and lot coverage. Zoning regulations can also dictate the preferred construction material and architectural design.

The Town is divided into Zoning Districts where common uses and bulk regulations are permitted in order to achieve a compatible development. The districts are designed to separate incompatible uses. The districts are established into a hierarchy where each lower district is included, "nested," within the other. The Town's TOD Overlay Zoning District recommends design guidelines for multifamily developments in the TOD zoning district. The Town's Architectural Review Board (ARB), established in 2018, created and adopted commercial design guidelines for any rehabilitation of existing residential developments or new developments of three units or more and for all commercial buildings in the town. Design guidelines are also recommended to establish a desired character surrounding the Shakespeare Theater. The Theater District is an overlay district that was established in 1996, however it is no longer applicable right now due to the absence of the Shakespeare Theater.

However, there are no design guidelines catered to facilitating mixed use developments along prime commercial and industrial corridors in the town such as Barnum Avenue or Lordship Boulevard to promote a pedestrian-oriented design and a distinct visual character on these corridors based on the community vision. There are regulations to protect environmentally sensitive areas particularly coastal areas. Figure 3.3 presents the distribution of zoning districts.

Residential Districts

There are four single family (RS) districts in Stratford that make up over sixty percent of the Town's zoning. The RS Districts, numbered 1-4, permit single-family dwellings

and some community services use with a special permit. Minimum lot sizes vary among the districts from 40,000 ft² (RS1) down to 7,500 ft² (RS-4). Typically, these districts are distributed in the town from north to south with the larger lot sizes occurring in the north. The RM District permits two-family houses along with uses permitted in the RS zones on lots with a minimum size of 7,500 ft. This zone is generally located south and west of the R-4 zone. The Lordship Beach neighborhood, located south of the airport, is zoned RS-2, RS-3 and RS-4. There are no zoning districts for apartment complexes, except in the Town Center where there is Transit-Oriented Overlay District Zone (TOD). While there are regulations for developing residence apartments (three units or more), this regulation is obsolete as there is cap on maximum bedroom units allowed in each neighborhood, defined by former school district boundaries from the 1980s. The Town has already exceeded the maximum cap of apartments that are allowed in each neighborhood based on this regulation. Thus, it is currently limiting residents from developing any three family homes or multifamily homes anywhere outside the TOD zone.

The current zoning regulations also include standards for affordable housing development. Affordable housing developments are permitted in all residential, commercial, and industrial zones of the town as long as they have a minimum lot area of 120,000 s.f. and a maximum lot area of 400,000 s.f. Density requirements vary depending on the zone in which the complex is located.

Commercial Districts

There are nine different commercial districts divided into four categories. The Limited Business category includes the LB and LBB Business Districts and the OP Office Park District. The LB District is the Civic Center District located on Main Street surrounding the Town Hall. The District has a maximum building coverage of 25% with a maximum height of 30 feet. The LBB differs in that it is located in areas where there are special topographic considerations. The district is located opposite of the Sikorsky Aircraft facility and allows building heights of up to 60 feet. One area on Hawley Lane is zoned for Office Park. The District allows building up to 60 feet, but only has a Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 25%. This means that a five story office building can only take up 1/20 of the lot.

The Retail Commercial Districts include the CA, CF, CNC, and TH (Theater) Districts. The CA District allows all uses permitted in the Limited Business District with the addition of retail uses. The CA district is the predominant commercial

district found along the major commercial corridors of Barnum Avenue, Stratford Avenue, and Ferry Boulevard. The District allows a 50% building coverage with heights up to 35 feet. The CF district permits a few more uses while focusing on professional business/office uses than the CA District, and all uses in the CF district are required to be heard by the Zoning Commission as a special case. The CF District is designed for larger lots, but only has a FAR of 25%. The CNC District is a neighborhood retail commercial district with maximum building heights of 30 feet. The Theater District is functionally an overlay district encompassing four different underlying districts. The Theater District provides design standards and is designed to create a village atmosphere for the area surrounding the Shakespeare Theater property. There is also a Waterfront Business District designed for marine-oriented uses.

Industrial Districts

There are three industrial zones in Stratford that make up over fifteen percent of the Town’s zoning districts. The Light Industrial District (MA) is the predominant industrial district located primarily on the north side of Lordship Boulevard and along the I-95 Corridor. The District permits up to 60 feet tall buildings and mandates 20% open space. The Coastal Industrial District (MC) is designed for more waterfront dependent industrial uses and is located in areas that are subject to frequent, occasional, or potential flooding or contain or border on sensitive coastal resources or coastal flood hazard areas. The District permits building up to 40 feet, but only two stories and with a maximum building coverage of 30%. Stricter limitations on the development and use of land in the MC zone are in place to preserve and protect these sensitive coastal resources while reducing hazards to life and property as outlined in the Connecticut Coastal Management Act. This transitional district allows less intensive development than existing industrial districts yet recognizes the environmental sensitivity of the area. The General Industrial District (MB) is designated for more intense industrial uses. The District is located on the south side of Lordship Boulevard.

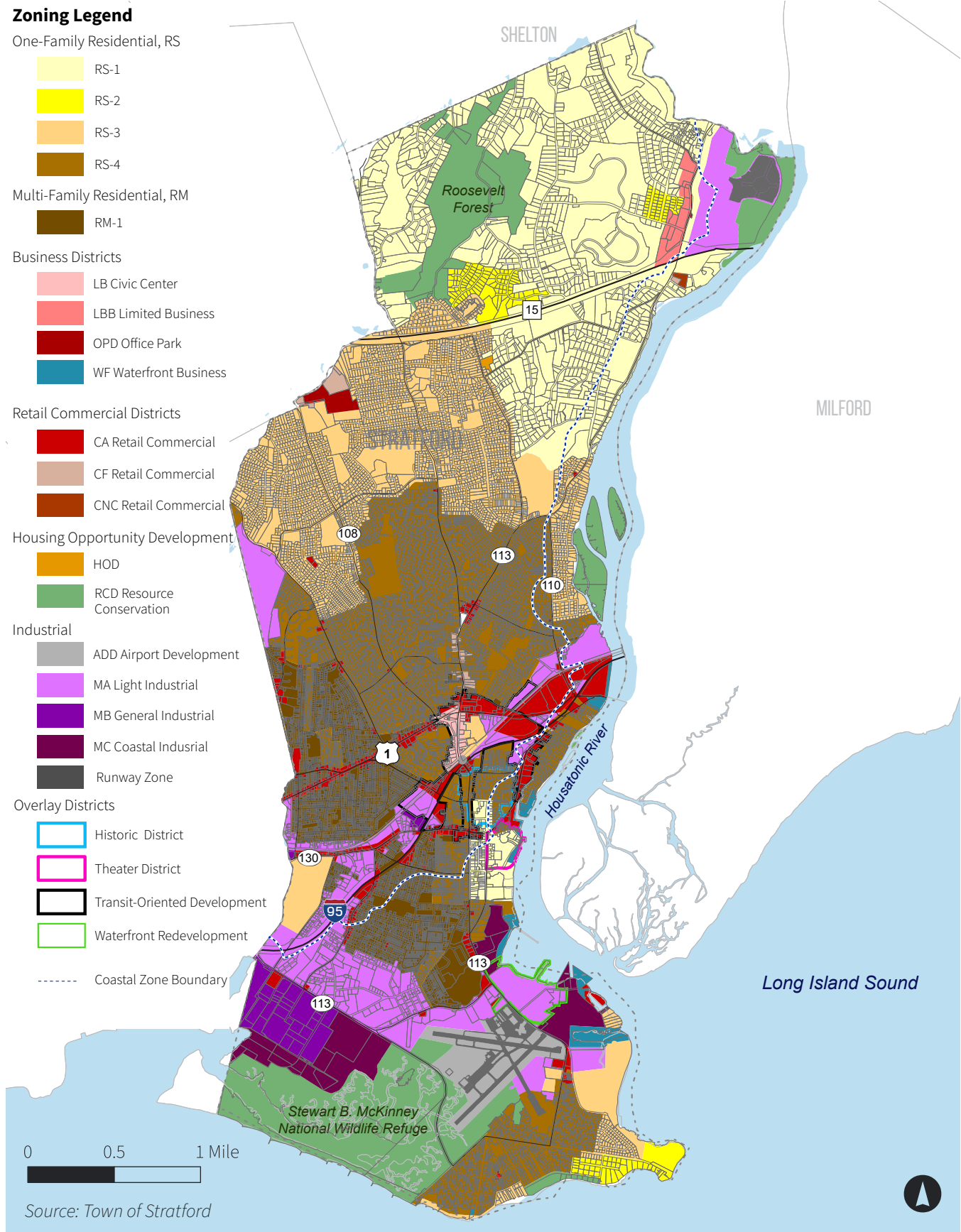
Resource Conservation

The Resource Conservation District makes up over nine percent of Stratford’s zoning and encompasses areas that contain unique and important environmental qualities, and contribute to significant development constraints, including but not limited to freshwater and tidal wetlands, coastal bluffs and escarpments, and beach and dune systems. This District was created to promote appropriate treatment, protection, and conservation of large contiguous tracts of environmentally sensitive areas; to promote uses which are generally compatible with and will serve to enhance such areas; and to promote the general public health, safety and welfare of Stratford's residents. The Great Meadows Marsh (roughly 400 acres), the largest federal reserve located in south end of Stratford, is located in this district. It also comprises Roosevelt Forest to the north and some tidal wetlands to the east.

Figure 3.3. Stratford's Existing Zoning

Zone	Acres	Percentage
ADD	207	1.35%
CA	404	2.64%
CF	35	0.23%
CNC	4	0.03%
HOD	4	0.03%
LB	36	0.24%
LBB	57	0.37%
MA	1099	7.18%
MB	182	1.19%
MC	277	1.81%
OPD	27	0.18%
RCD	1356	8.87%
RM-1	869	5.67%
RS-1	2503	16.35%
RS-2	214	1.40%
RS-3	2003	13.09%
RS-4	2139	13.98%
RUNWAY ZON	34	0.22%
TCDD	4	0.03%
WF	78	0.51%

Figure 3.4. Zoning



Overlay Districts

Stratford has six overlay districts that are layered on top of other existing zoning districts and impose further restrictions on how land can be used.

- The **Airport Development District** and the Runway Zones allow uses related to and directly incidental to a municipal airport.
- The **Academy Hill Historic District** is a local, State, and National Register historic district aimed at the preservation of the heritage, aesthetic quality, and character of the Town.
- The **Theater District** was designed to guide land uses in a way that will promote the economic viability of the former Shakespeare Theater while maintaining important controls on health, safety and welfare conditions affecting residents of the Town, especially those in the immediate vicinity.
- The **Transit-Oriented Development District** was established to enhance Stratford's residential neighborhoods, to revitalize Stratford Town Center and commercial areas and to promote mixed-use development that increases employment and the Town's tax base.
- The **Waterfront Redevelopment District** was established to guide land uses to enable the significant renewal and revitalization of the waterfront along the Housatonic River and to appropriately and sustainably utilize the extraordinary shoreline assets located there or protect these assets, as appropriate. This District encourages the development of enhanced waterfront access and utilization opportunities for residents and businesses.

36 Connecticut coastal towns, including Stratford, have a delineated Coastal Area Management boundary. Stratford's coastal boundary as defined by Section 22a-94(b) of the CCMA is the continuous line delineated by the one-hundred-year frequency coastal flood zone as defined and determined by FEMA, or a one-thousand-foot linear setback measured from the mean high-water mark in coastal waters, or a one-thousand-foot linear setback measured from the inland boundary of tidal wetlands, whichever is farthest inland.

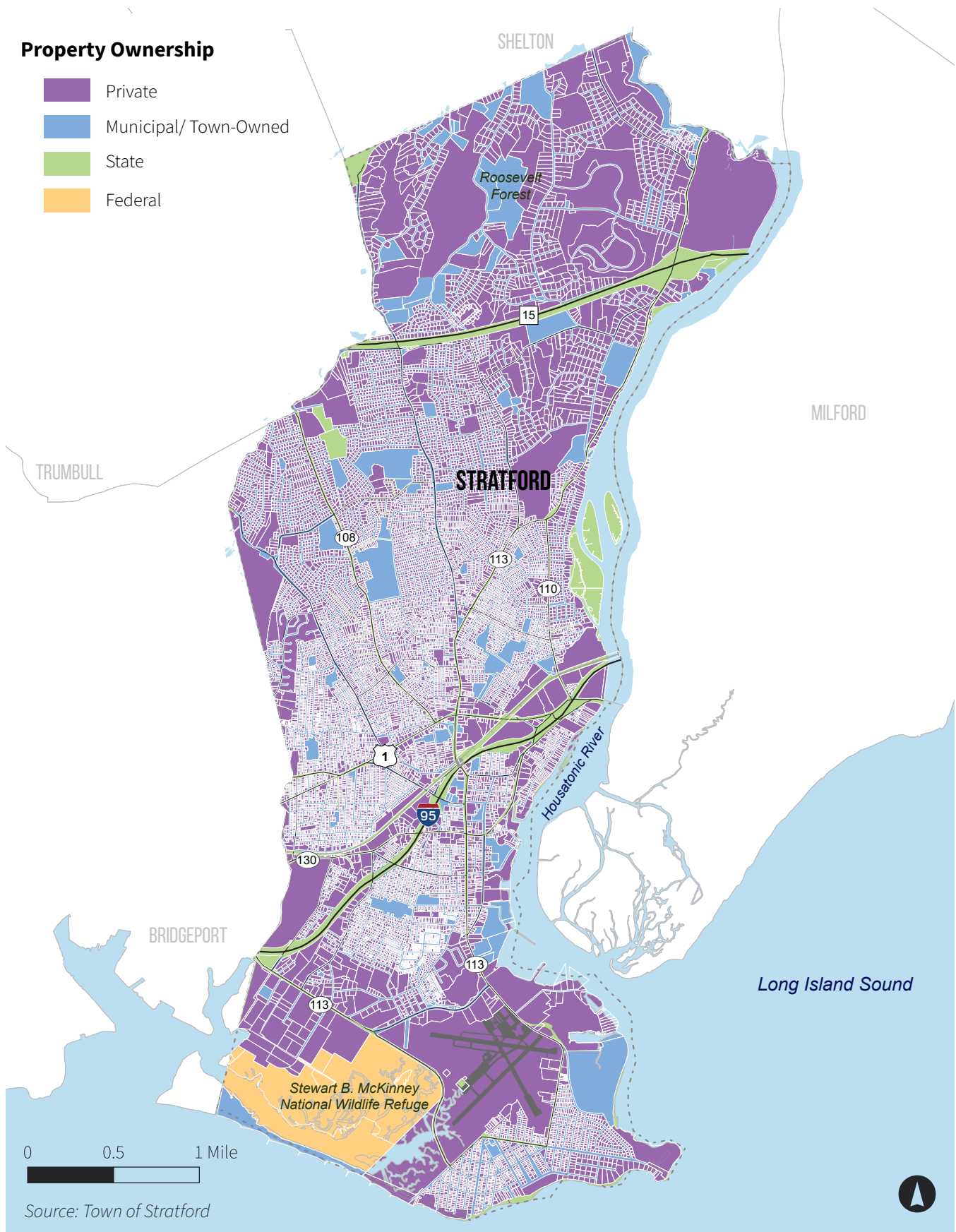
Ownership

Ownership patterns are important to determine the potential for access in order to best develop some projects. It is much easier to gain access on public land for creating trails and other public amenities. Gaining access to private property for these purposes requires acquisition or establishment of easements. One quarter of the town is owned by public agencies. Municipally owned parcels include Stratford's beaches like Long Beach and Short Beach, Roosevelt Forest, and public parks and schools. The Stewart B. McKinney Wildlife Refuge (aka Great Meadows Marsh) is federally owned, while the State owns many of the major transportation corridors within town. While there are large parts of the waterfront in public ownership, there are sections that are privately owned. These parcels present a challenge to establishing a complete waterfront trail promoting public access.



Great Meadows Marsh, Source: Town of Stratford

Figure 3.5. Property Ownership





What We Heard From the Community

During the planning process, a variety of community engagement strategies were deployed to gather input from the Stratford community. One method, the online survey, provided great insights into the opinions of Stratford's residents related to land use and zoning in the town. When asked about future growth and change, 40% of respondents felt that Stratford should continue to grow and change, but incrementally. Another 30% felt that Stratford should be open to significant growth and change. Under 20% said they thought Stratford should be kept as is.

When talking to residents about things they would like to see in Stratford, common themes such as more restaurants, thriving businesses, and more activities for teens and children were discussed frequently. Protecting Stratford's coastal and natural resources was a need that was also emphasized, as was the need to continue to expand the greenway network while maintaining waterfront access to coastal properties that are in the redevelopment process (such as the Stratford Army Engine Plant property).



Paradise Green Farmers Market



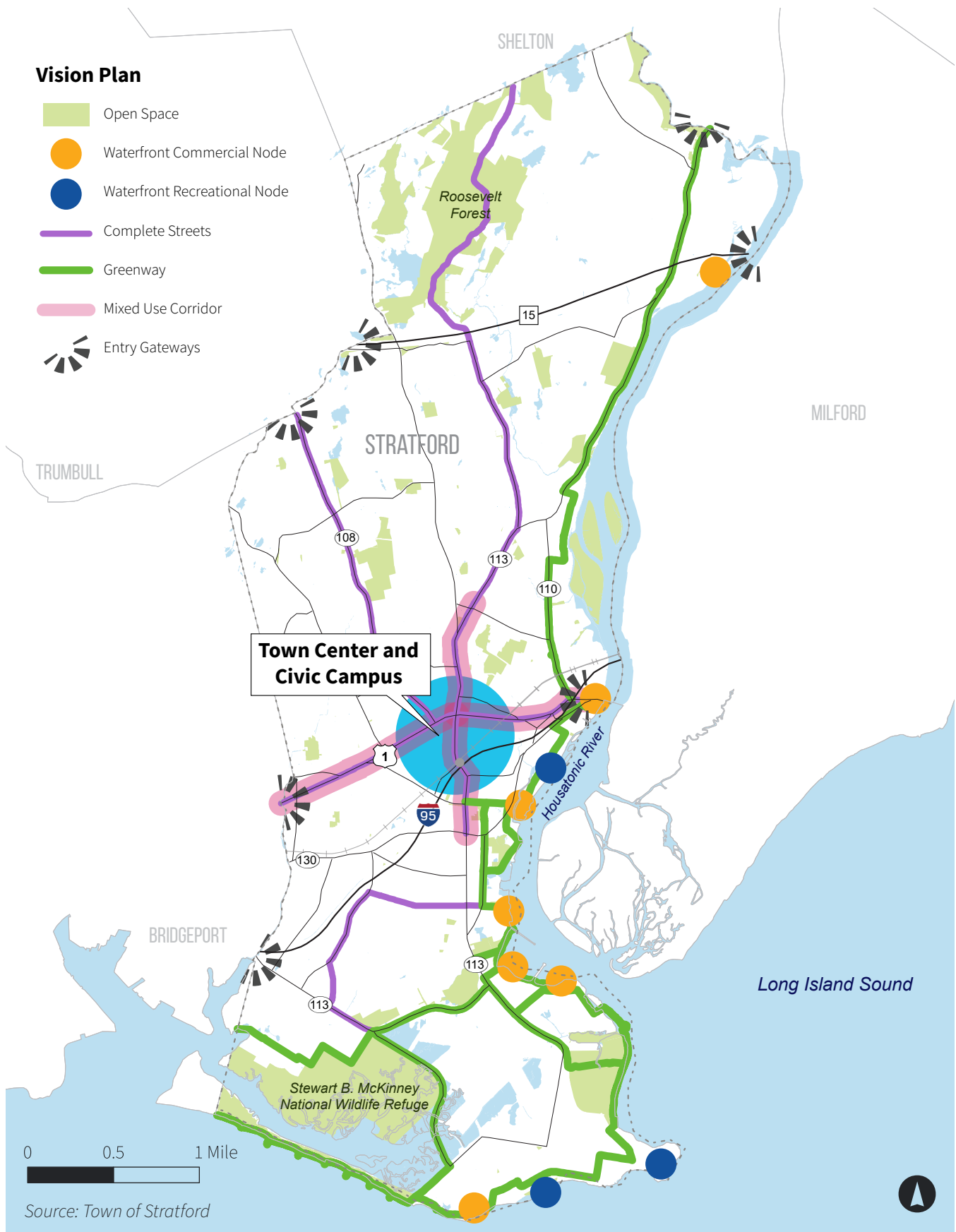
Stratford Army Engine Plant

Stratford Vision Plan

The Vision Plan is the graphic expression of the goals, applied spatially to the town and its distinct neighborhoods. The plan serves as the conceptual rationale for defining future land use and better organizes the town. The spirit of the Vision Plan is for Stratford to prevail as a premier residential community of choice, employment and recreation within the state. The vision promotes healthy, active lifestyles where residences, places of work and commerce are integrated into a dynamic coastal recreation network, connected by a greenway network, and anchored by a walkable, historic urban center.

The vision plan depicts areas for development, connectors, streetscape improvements, trails, and signature corridors. The vision plan outlines a future in which the natural landscape is preserved to the greatest degree possible by limiting developments in open space areas. The Vision Plan sets the context for the Future Land Use Plan.

Figure 3.6. Vision Plan

















Future Land Use Plan

Section 8-23 of the Connecticut General Statutes requires that POCDs recommend the most desirable use of land within the municipality for residential, recreational, commercial, industrial, conservation and other purposes. The most effective means of meeting this requirement and conveying this information is through the use of a future land use map.

The future land use map represents the community's preference for land use, based upon findings and information received during the POCD planning process. The map is intended to provide a guide for policy decisions that have land use implications. The map is also intended to provide a foundation for a municipality's zoning regulations by guiding the location of districts and the types of land use and intensity of use within those districts. The map may take various forms ranging from a generalized map that identifies broad groups of land use to a parcel-specific map that is closely aligned with the current zoning map. The future land use map is not a regulatory tool, and it does not restrict or enable land use or development that is otherwise prohibited or permitted by a municipality's zoning regulations. The map is intended to be used as a guide or reference when considering zone changes and text amendments to a municipality's zoning regulations. Because a community's needs change over time, the future land use map is not intended to be effective in perpetuity. The map is typically updated or redrawn during the POCD update process and may also be revised as needed independent of a plan update should conditions warrant such an update.

Based upon consultation with the Technical Advisory Committee, and in response to findings from the POCD update, the future land use categories that follow are shown in the future land use map. These categories, and the corresponding designated areas, support the goals of this Plan and will help Stratford achieve its vision.

-  **Residential Open Space:** The Residential/Open Space future land use is characterized by larger residential lots and residential developments with ample open space components. Some community services could be permitted. The designation does not preclude small commercial nodes along major corridors. Some parcels could be acquired for forest preserve. The land uses features approximately one dwelling unit per acre.
-  **Medium Density Residential:** Medium Density Residential Areas incorporate predominantly single family homes, in addition to some multi-family structures that promote diverse housing options. Generally, these areas have 2 to 4 dwelling units per acre. Community services are essential within this future land use. Infill development on vacant developable lots should be incentivized and adaptive reuse of large parcels and notable buildings should be encouraged. The designation does not preclude small commercial nodes along major corridors.
-  **High Density Residential:** High Density Residential is similar to Medium Density Residential, except development patterns are approximately 5 to 11 dwelling units per acre.
-  **Transit-Oriented Development:** The Transit-Oriented Development land use is located surrounding the train station. A relative higher density of residential development is allowed in this area through vertical expansion typically up to four floors. The intent of the intensification of residential units is to support commercial uses on ground floor in a walkable environment. This area would be an ideal location for commuters in an environment of rising gas prices and increasing concerns of climate change. Historic structures within this designated area should be preserved.
-  **Commercial:** Commercial land use areas are designated for specialized commercial uses that take advantage of their location along major transportation corridors such as Interstate 95 or the Merritt Parkway. These areas are located in proximity to employment centers. These are areas that serve as regional shopping destinations.
-  **Commercial Mixed Use:** Commercial Mixed Use areas are located along major transportation corridors and are located within sewer and water service areas. These areas are typically served by a range of transportation options including sidewalks and access to transit service.
-  **Neighborhood Commercial Mixed Use:** Neighborhood Commercial Mixed Use refers to designated areas within neighborhoods that combine commercial and residential activities. These areas feature a mix of small-scale commercial establishments, such as shops and restaurants, alongside residential units. The goal is to create a walkable and vibrant neighborhood where residents have convenient access to essential goods and services close to their homes.

-  **Waterfront Development:** The Waterfront Development area encompasses the former Stratford Army Engine Plant property. The intent is to redevelop this area as a mixed use area featuring a mix of commercial, entertainment, public and/or marina uses. This property should maintain continuous access along the waterfront and provide public-oriented uses such as plazas, greenspace and a marina. The property should also function as a connection between Main Street and the Housatonic River.
-  **Institutional:** Institutional land use areas are those that are occupied by institutional uses such as Stratford's two High Schools, Town Hall, Baldwin Center, the Library and other Stratford schools.
-  **Industrial:** The industrial land use designation is reserved for the expansion of Sikorsky Aircraft Corporation.
-  **Industrial Mixed Use:** Industrial Mixed Use areas are characterized as areas of existing industrial uses or areas that are zoned for industrial uses and may include mixed commercial, residential and industrial uses along limited access corridors. Residential, certain types of retail, and neighborhood services such as grocery stores or pharmacies are allowable. These areas are mostly located within water and sewer service areas and are typically served by arterial roadways with good access to State highways and along rail lines.
-  **Parks and Open Space:** Parks and Open Space areas include municipal parks, the Greenway and recreation areas such as Roosevelt Forest which are intended as permanent or long-term open space areas. These open spaces should be protected through deed restrictions, where appropriate.
-  **Cemetery:** Cemetery land uses are those where existing cemeteries are location.
-  **Transportation :** Transportation land uses include the Sikorsky Airport property as well and airfield and runway located at the Sikorsky Aircraft Corporation factory.

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Source: Town of Stratford

Figure 3.7. Future Land Use Overview

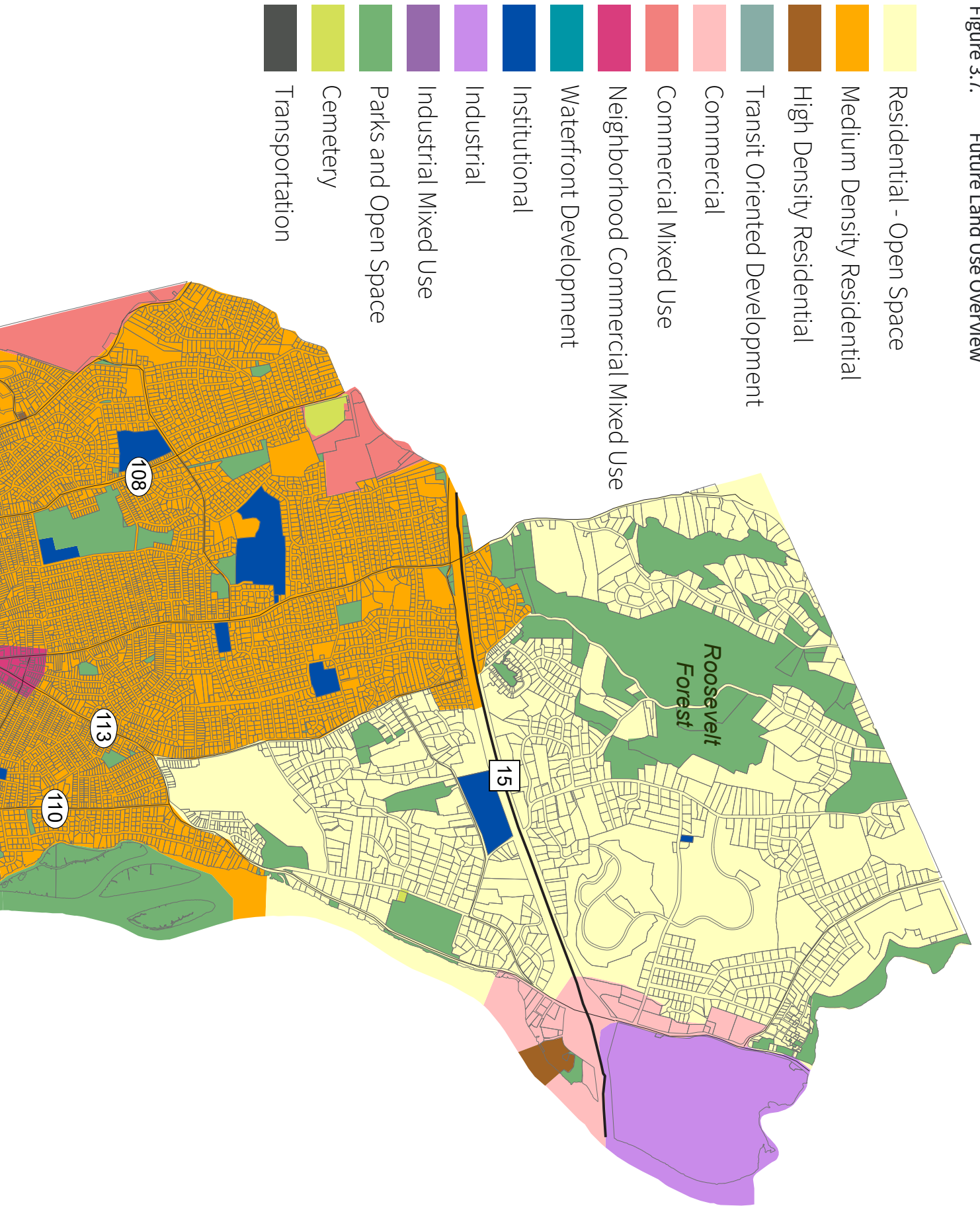


Figure 3.8. Future Land Use - Northern Section of Stratford

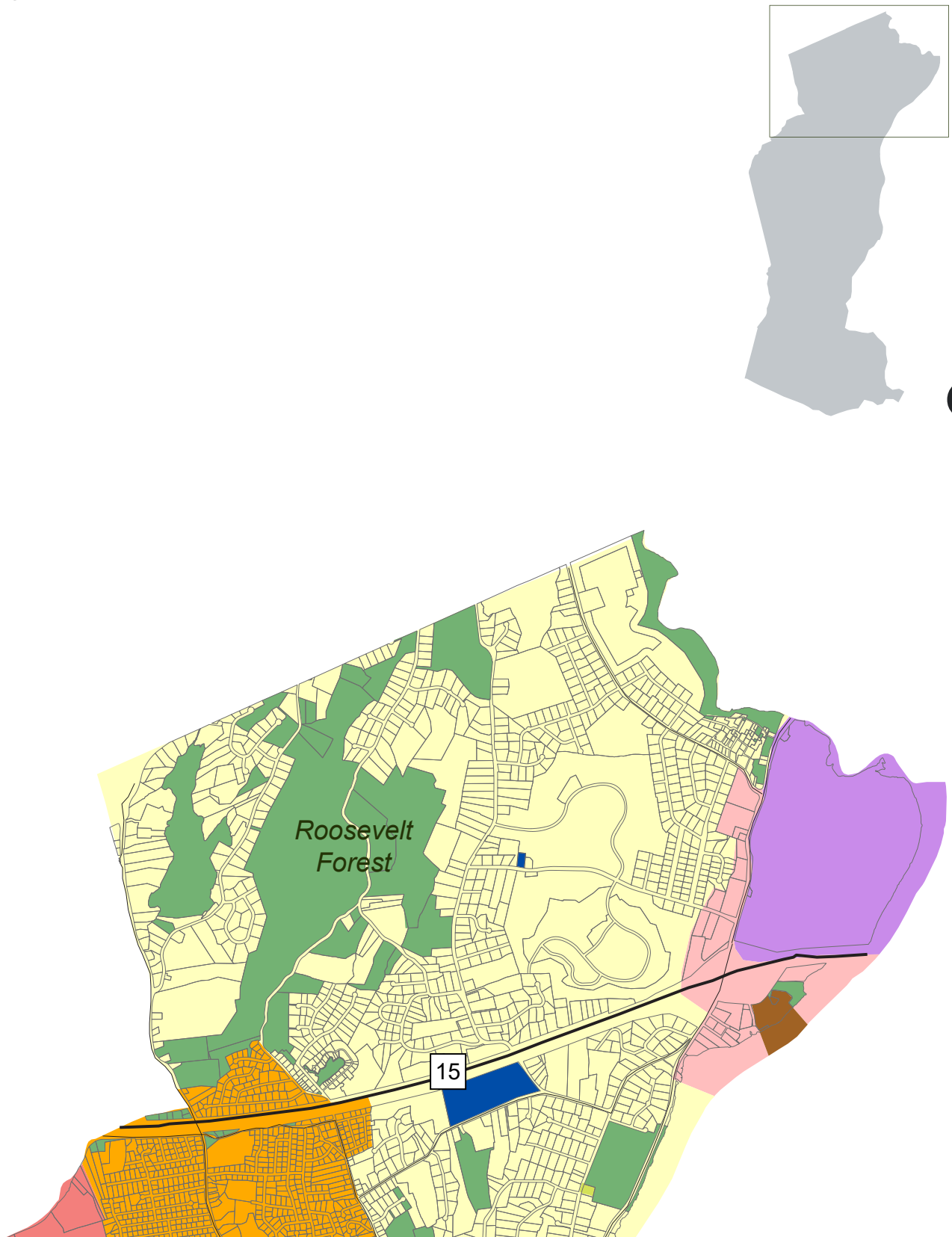


Figure 3.9. Future Land Use - Central Section of Stratford

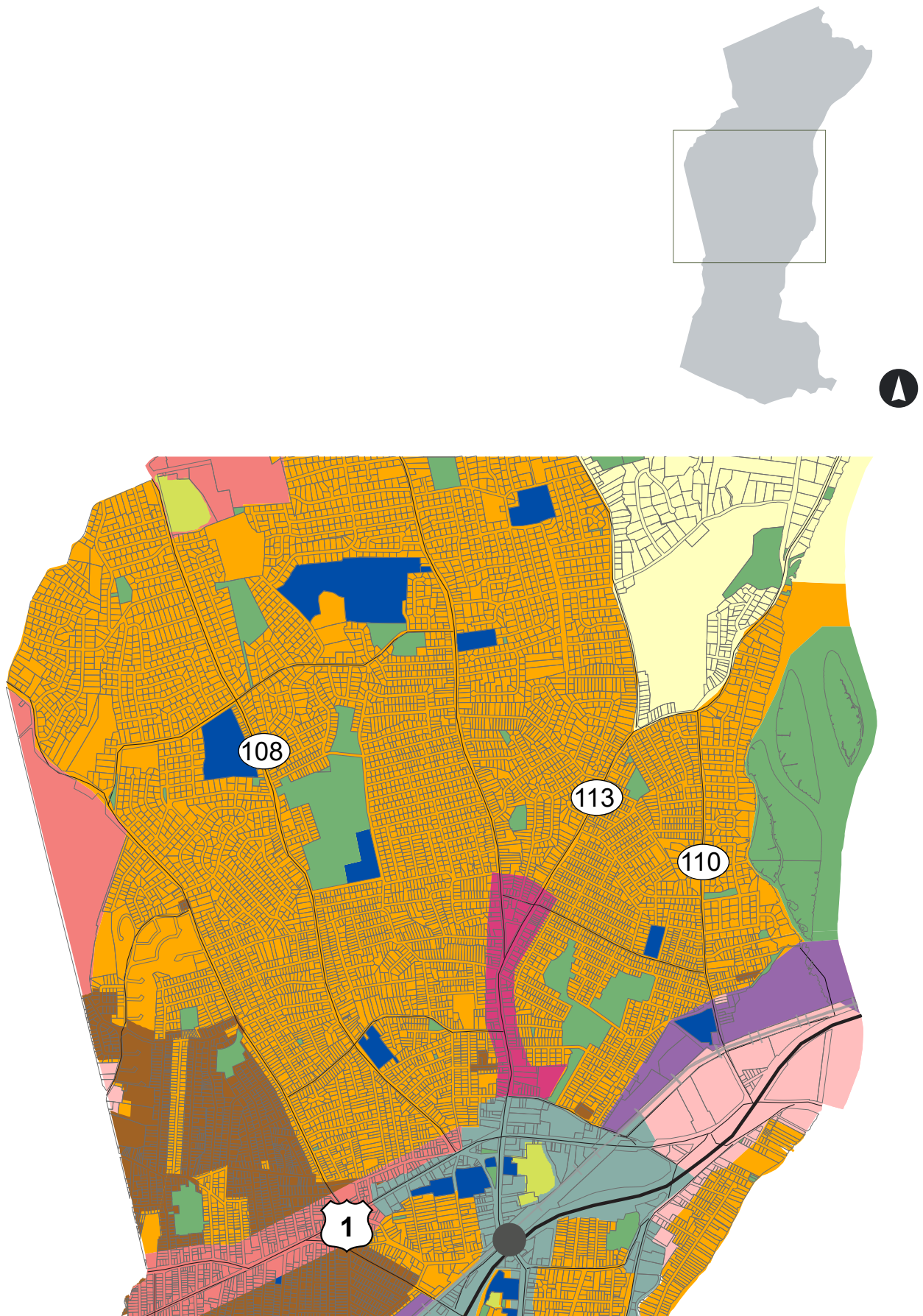
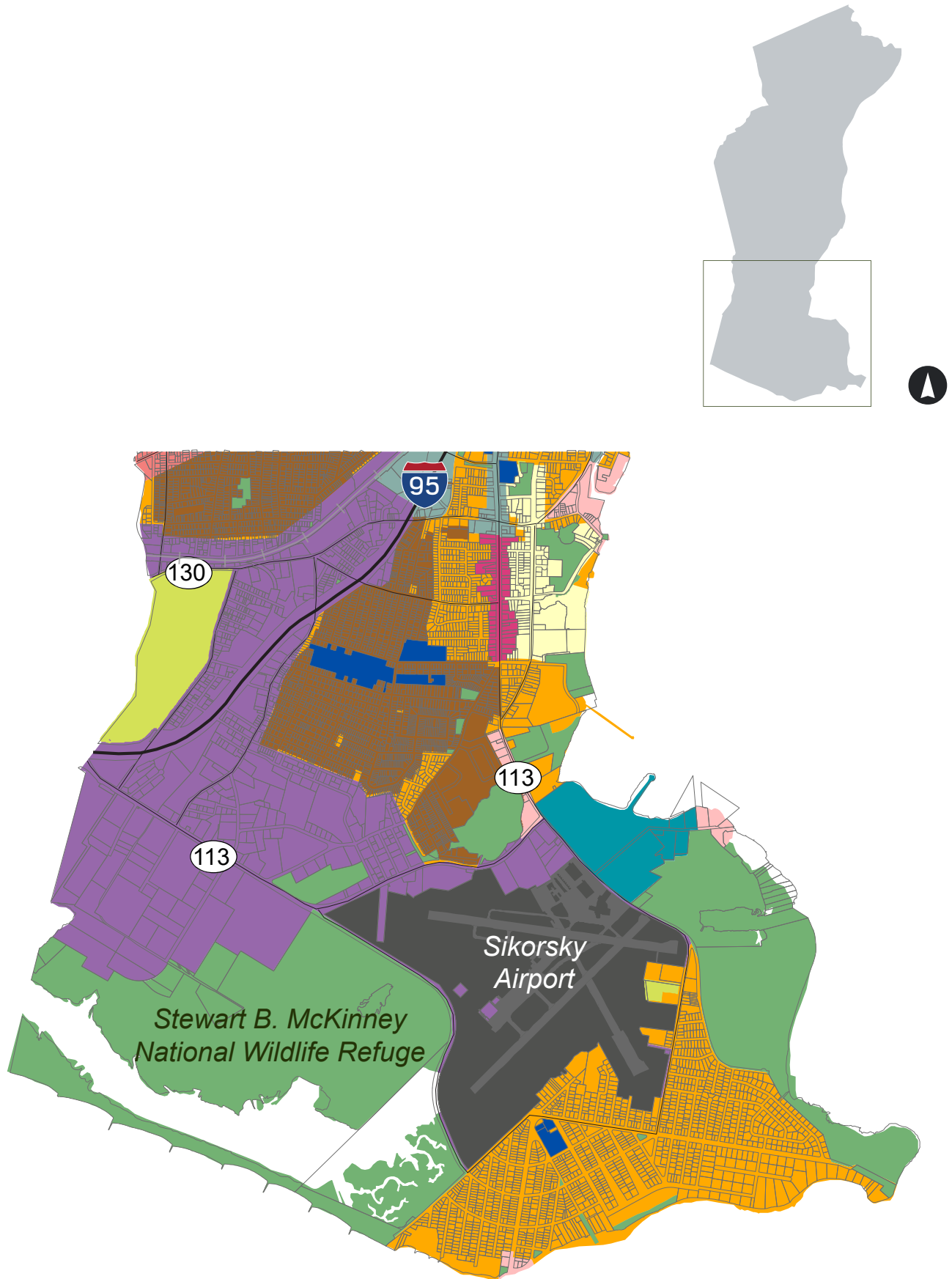


Figure 3.10. Future Land Use - Southern Section of Stratford



Goal

Promote balanced physical growth and development that fosters livable/inclusive communities, economic vitality, and healthy lifestyles while preserving the small-town charm and natural resources within the community.



Objectives & Action Steps

Objective 1. Simplify the zoning code to increase its usefulness and understandability, and meet the needs of changing socio-economic conditions.

1. Update the Town of Stratford zoning regulations to reflect the Future Land Use Plan that will provide for increased development opportunities in appropriate areas, protect the unique attributes of neighborhoods, minimize impacts to Town infrastructure such as the sanitary and storm sewer, transportation infrastructure, and maintain the Town's important waterfront and open spaces.
2. Comprehensively review and evaluate current zoning regulations on definitions, uses permitted, setbacks, frontage, lot area, parking, impervious areas, and other such dimensional requirements and any redundant and confusing standards.
3. Revise the current subdivision regulations to align with zoning updates, as needed.

Objective 2. Encourage a mix of land uses that promote sustainable land use practices and healthy lifestyles.

1. Evaluate the zoning ordinances and zoning map with focus on modernization to ensure equitable, innovative, sustainable techniques that are used in accordance with the goals and strategies of this Plan.
2. Incorporate standards for bike parking and electrical vehicle charging stations into zoning regulations.
3. Promote high density developments in areas adequately served by transit and community services, and **in locations that have dry land access out of the development at the 100 year flood elevation.**
4. Update the zoning regulations to facilitate planned developments (mixed-use) where appropriate.
5. Update the Town's existing regulation on accessory dwelling units to support aging in place, accommodate young residents, and attract startup families.
6. Review and update Town's waterfront zoning regulations where appropriate to facilitate the implementation of community's waterfront vision.
7. Zone mixed-use commercial nodes along the waterfront according to the Future Land Use Plan.
8. Continue to accommodate the expansion of commercial and industrial uses in a manner consistent with the community vision for the town's commercial and industrial corridors.
9. Expand the town's open space network and promote opportunities to interconnect these open spaces through the implementation of greenways and complete streets.
10. Continue to mandate 10% open space requirement in the town's subdivision regulations.
11. Provide new community facilities within or closer to Town Center, to the extent possible, so that they are accessible residents from all parts of the town.
12. Preserve and protect environmentally sensitive areas and critical habitat by strictly regulating development in these areas and utilizing low impact development strategies.
13. Update zoning code to promote opportunities for community gardening and farming.
14. Consider a [Health in All Planning](#) approach to the Town's review process. Continue to involve the Stratford Health Department in reviewing applications.

Objective 3. Implement design standards to increase the aesthetic appeal of the town's business districts and create a cohesive environment.

1. Develop design guidelines for Town's primary commercial corridors i.e., Barnum Avenue, Lordship Boulevard, and Honeyspot Road; waterfront; and Town Center to promote redevelopment opportunities that support walkability and create a sense of place.
2. Update the Zoning Code to provide development incentives to property owners to remove non-conforming billboards.

Objective 4. Streamline the development approval process to assure that developments which are consistent with the town's development regulations are approved in an efficient and prudent fashion.

1. Review development proposals with respect to their consistency with the POCD vision, current zoning, and to meet the following additional objectives:
 - Preservation and enhancement of Stratford's quality of life.
 - Enhancement of community sustainability and reducing carbon footprint.
 - Diversification of transportation system.
 - Protection of natural resources, conservation areas, and environmentally sensitive areas.
 - Enhancement of the visual appeal of the community.
 - Physical growth with little impact to Town's infrastructure.
2. Evaluate current time taken for reviewing and permitting large scale land development applications and figure out ways to expedite these review and permitting processes.
3. Continue to support the implementation of Stratford's MCP. Update it as necessary for effective coastal site plan review process in accordance with CCMA.

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4

Housing

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Housing

Goal

Continue to provide diverse and healthy housing options to meet the needs of current and future residents during all stages of life, while maintaining a sense of community and the unique attributes of existing neighborhoods.

Baseline Conditions

Stratford's housing supply was built over multiple decades and consists of a variety of densely populated single-family neighborhoods, rural single-family neighborhoods, and larger apartment buildings and complexes. The Town's land use is dominated by residential development, with residential properties occupying almost half of the Town's land area. Stratford has approximately 22,000 housing units, two-thirds (66%) of which are single-family units.

Stratford is mostly associated with older single-family neighborhoods, although the majority of recent residential development has been multifamily (no need of hyphen between multi and family) complexes or buildings. These developments have occurred primarily within the Town Center, in and around the Transit-Oriented Development Zone (TOD), which was established in 2015 and includes a mix of civic uses, the Stratford Train Station, and existing residential neighborhoods.

Home ownership is valued by the Stratford community and many of Stratford's residents have called the Town home for many generations. Homeownership has been historically valued for the stability it brings to communities but throughout the state there has been an increasing demand for rentals and multifamily units, similar to Stratford. People's housing needs and desires change over the course of their lives. For instance, millennials and young adults, in age ranges of 20-35, are looking for places to rent. Older adults (over the age of 55) are looking to downsize so

that they do not have to maintain large homes. Providing a diverse mix of housing choices helps to ensure that people of all ages and characteristics are able to find housing that meets their needs.

The demand for missing middle housing in Stratford increased in Stratford in the past five years with nearly 754 multifamily units approved within and closer to the TOD zone.

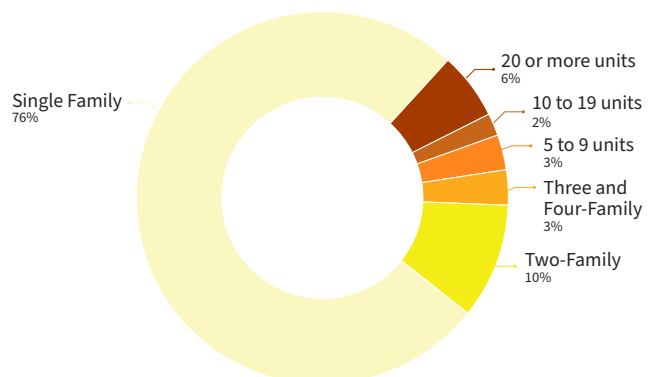
Of these, 231 units would account for government assisted affordable housing units pursuant to the requirements of Connecticut General Statutes (CGS) 8-30g, once occupied.

Stratford is also one of the very few towns in Fairfield County with naturally occurring affordable housing with median sales price of \$363,404 and median rent of \$1,401 as of January 2023. However, statistically, half the people in Stratford earn less than the median income (\$98,000 in 2020), which makes it challenging to meet their housing needs.

Housing Type

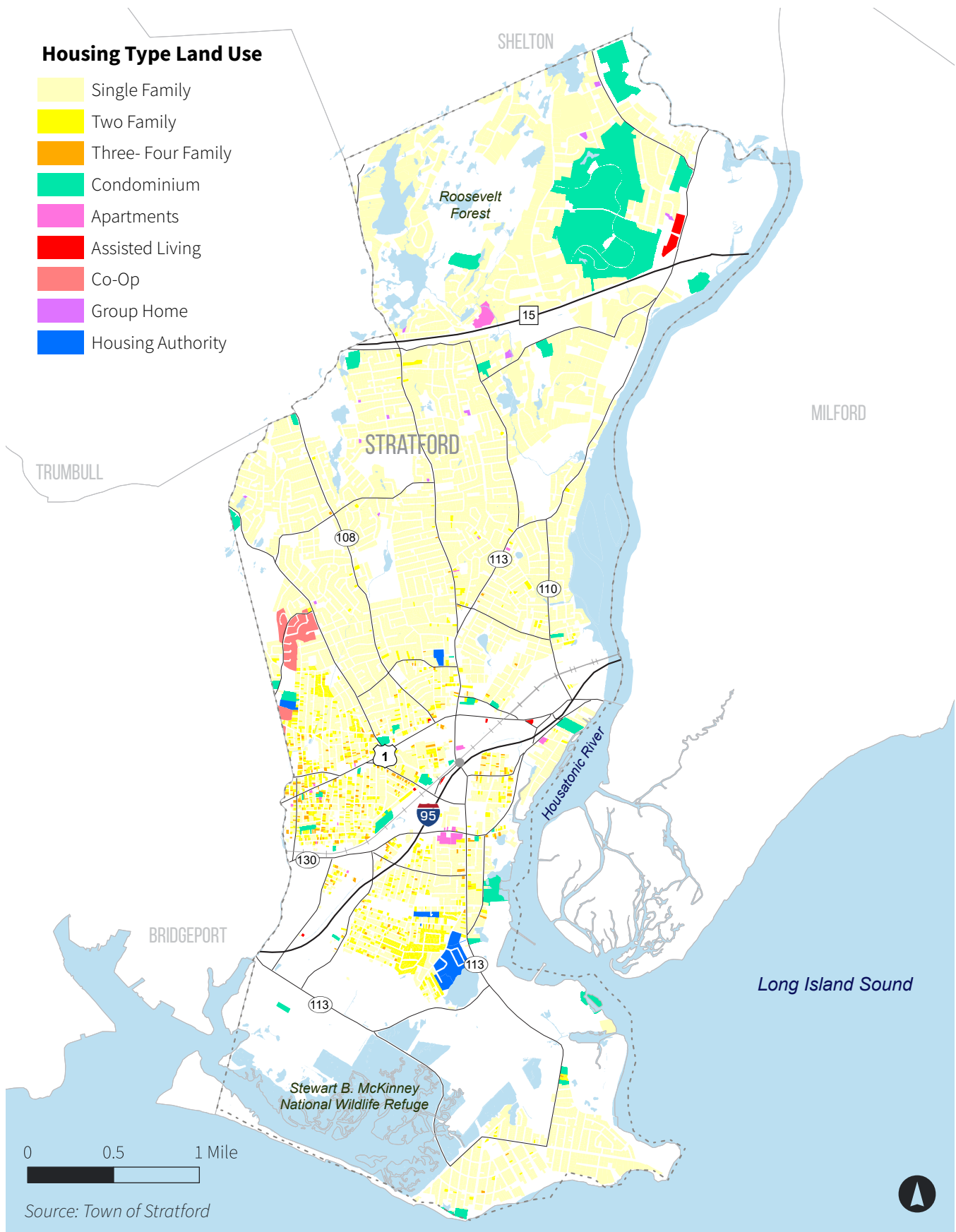
While the majority of Stratford's land area is occupied by single-family residences, there are clusters of multifamily housing units in town. About one-third (34%) of the Town's housing stock is non-single-family detached housing. This includes townhouses, duplexes, two- to four-family homes, apartment buildings, assisted living facilities, and nursing homes. The age composition of Stratford is changing, as discussed in demographics section; therefore Stratford may need a different mix of housing in the future to meet those needs.

Figure 4.1. Housing Type (2021)



Source: American Community Survey - 2021

Figure 4.2. Land Use by Housing Type





Conceptual rendering of proposed Temple Court TOD project at 2590 Main Street

Transit-Oriented Development

Stratford’s housing is dominated by single family residential housing that cover most of the town’s geography with the exception of commercial areas in Town Center, by the Dock Shopping Center and along commercial/ industrial corridors i.e., Barnum Avenue, Stratford Avenue, Honeyspot Road, and Lordship Boulevard. Multifamily housing is primarily concentrated to the west of the town between Broadbridge Avenue, Barnum Avenue, and Main Street. In 2015, the Stratford Zoning Commission adopted a transit-oriented development (TOD) Overlay Zone District in the town center. The goal of this district is to accommodate growth and mixed-use development in a centrally located area in the Town Center in proximity to Stratford’s train station and in an area served by public sewer, water, and other infrastructure. Over the past decade, the Town approved **754 multifamily units**, most of which were approved after the adoption of the TOD zone in 2016. Of these, 231 units would be government assisted (compliant with 8-30g CGS) affordable housing units. These developments are now in various stages of permitting and construction with none being occupied yet. In order for these units to be counted as affordable units per CGS 8-30g, the certificates of occupancy must be issued.

Table 4.1. Multifamily Units Approved Over the Past Decade

Address	Units	Affordable Units	Other	In TOD
211 Ferry Blvd	45		5,679 s.f. retail space	Yes
335 Ferry Blvd	71			Yes
382 Ferry Blvd	119			Yes
608 Ferry Blvd		20	2,500 s.f. office space	No
164 Hamilton Ave	8			No
225 Lordship Blvd		127		No
170 Oronoque Lane	11			No
520 Success Ave	7			No
24 Surf Ave		45		No
2009-2019 Main St	103		5,500 s.f. of residential amenities	Yes
2590 Main St	38			Yes
3044 Main St		39		Yes
1111 Stratford Ave	112			Yes
55 Washington Pkwy	9			No
Total	523	231		

Source: Town of Stratford

Figure 4.3. Stratford, CT Transit-Oriented Development Opportunities

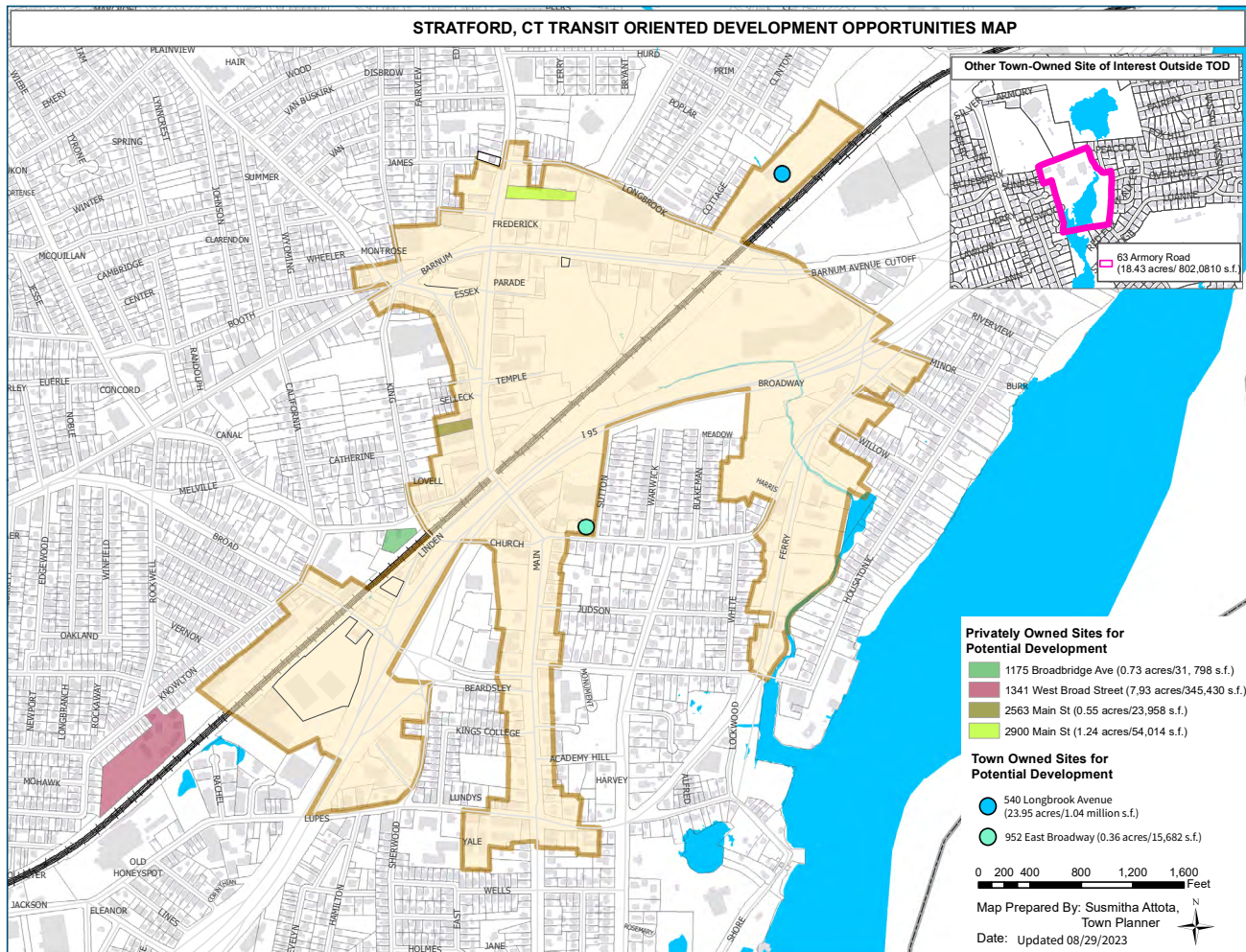


Figure 4.4. Multifamily Units Approved Over the Past Decade

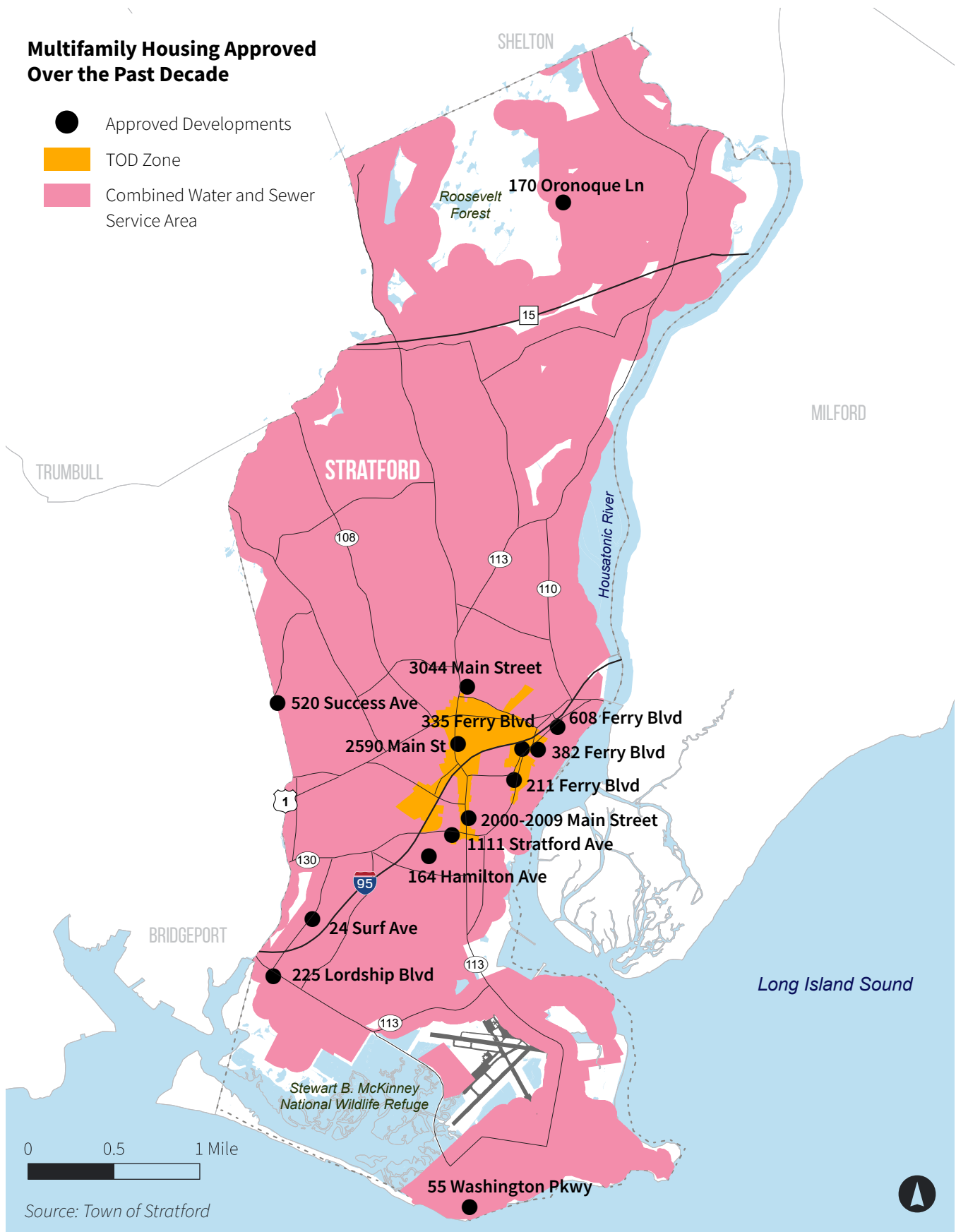


Figure 4.5. Housing Supporting Zoning

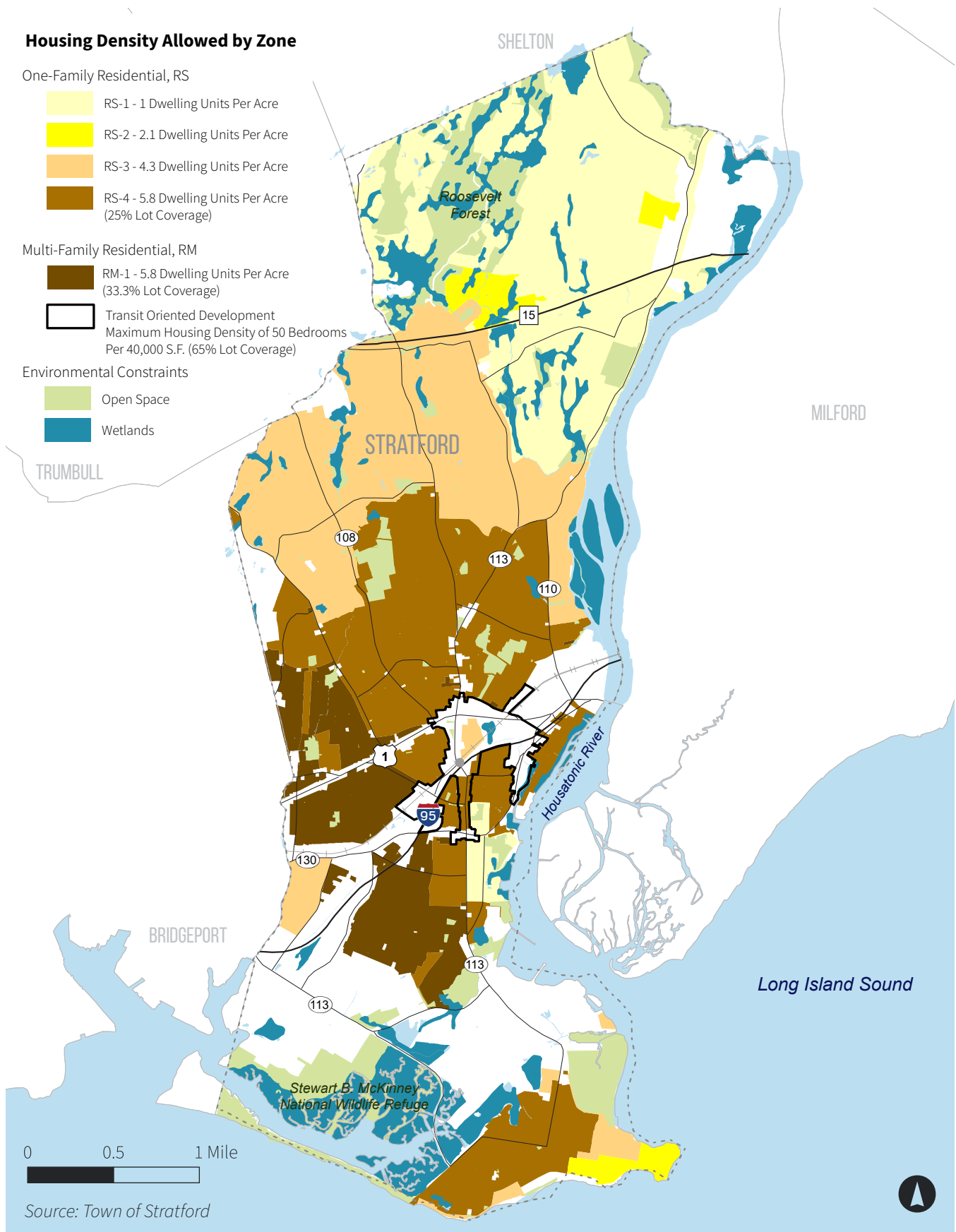
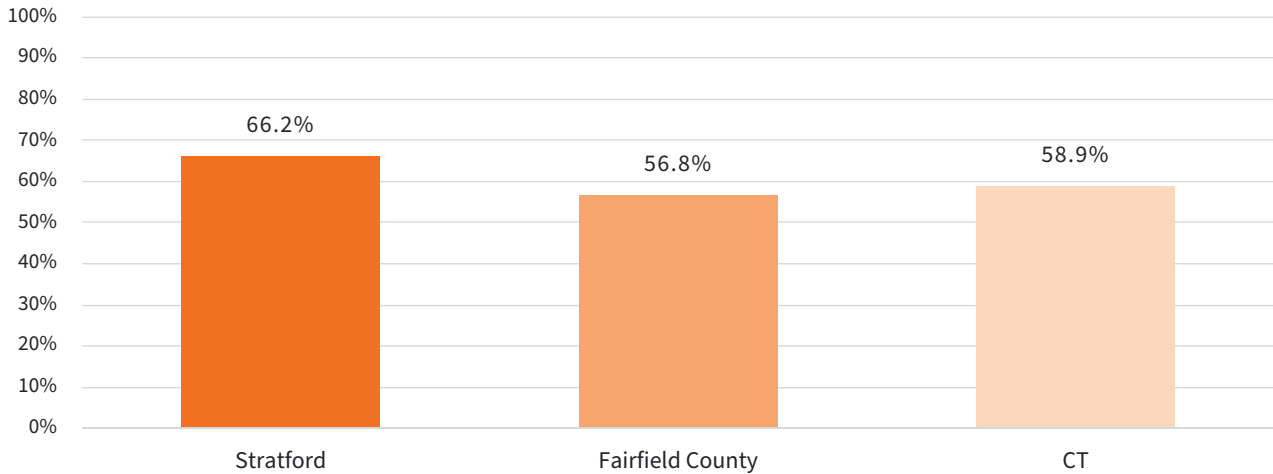


Figure 4.6. Single Family Detached Housing (2021)

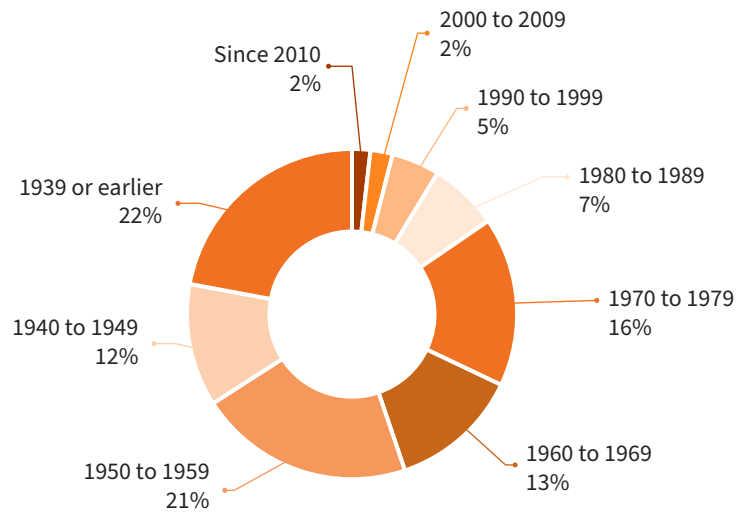


Source: American Community Survey - 2021

Housing Stock

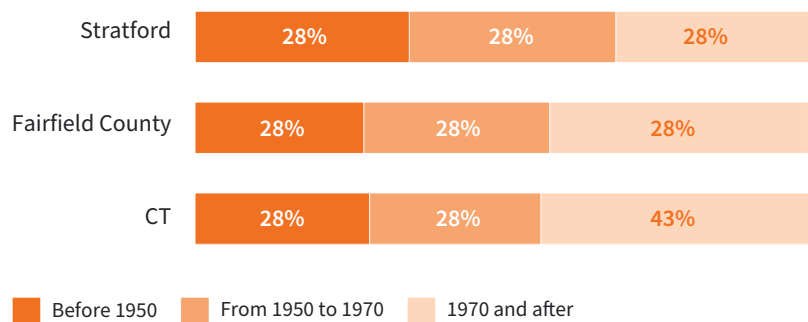
Stratford has 21,675 housing units (according to the 2021 American Community Survey). The Town’s housing stock was largely constructed prior to 1980 with 84% of units built before that year. Older homes require more maintenance than new homes, are typically less energy efficient, and may carry environmental risks such as contamination by lead paint, all of which may increase the cost of occupying these homes and may also pose health hazards. Housing construction in Stratford was strong between 1950 and 1980 with more than one-third (34%) of Stratford’s current supply of housing being added during that period. Single-family housing construction has since slowed with only 4% of Stratford’s single-family housing stock constructed since 2000. However, the Town approved several multifamily developments over the past decade, as discussed earlier in this chapter.

Figure 4.7. Housing by Year Built (2021)



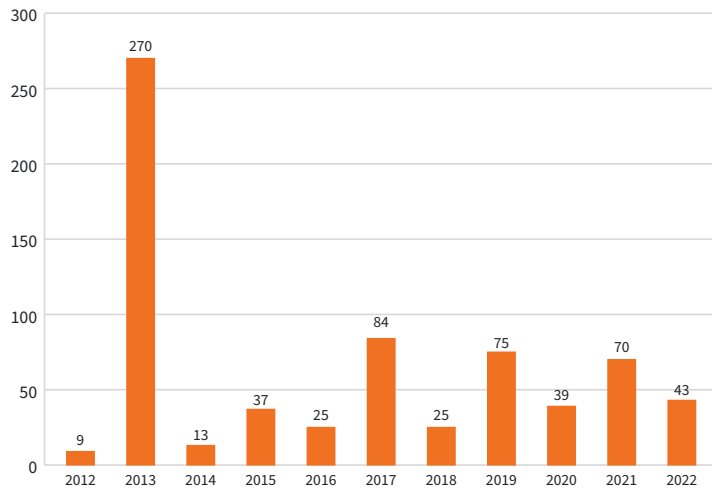
Source: American Community Survey - 2021

Figure 4.8. Age of Units



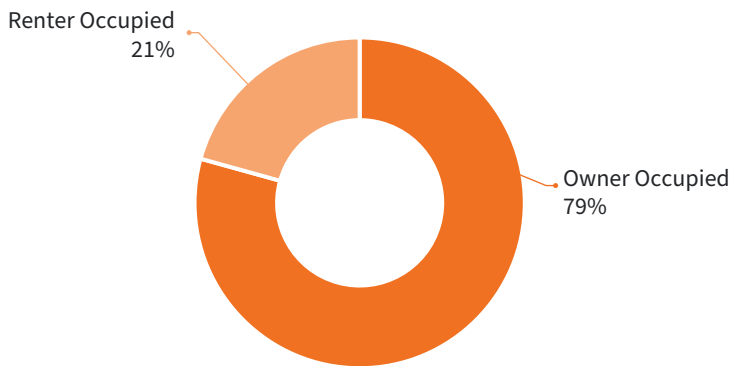
Source: Partnership for Strong Communities 2022 Housing Data Profile Stratford

Figure 4.9. Housing Permits (2022)



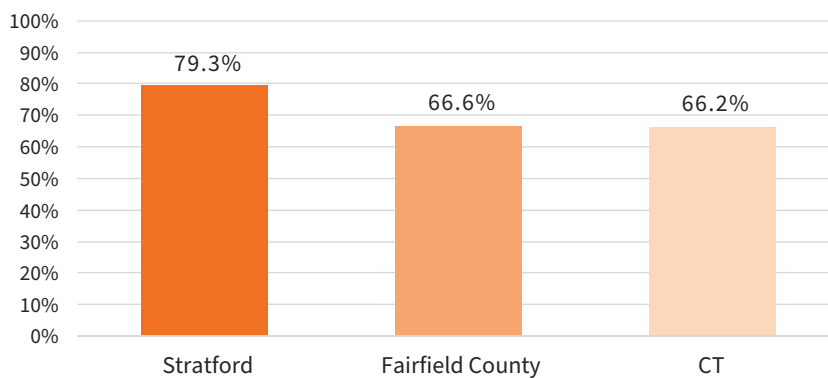
Source: Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development

Figure 4.10. Owned vs Rental Housing (2021)



Source: American Community Survey - 2021

Figure 4.11. Home Ownership Rate (2021)



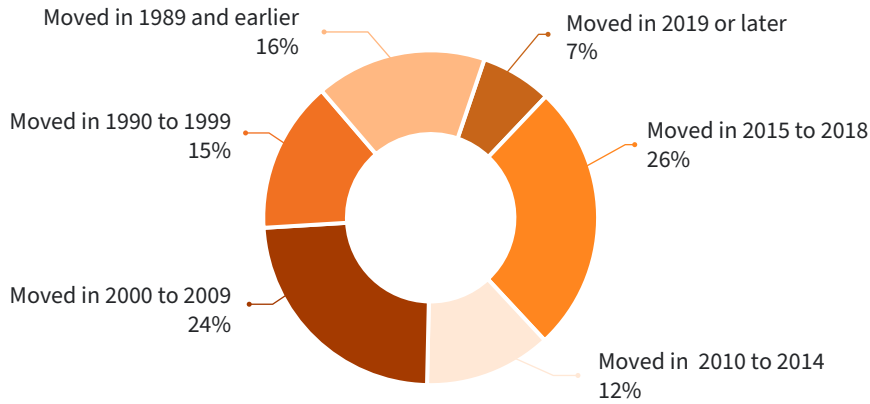
Source: American Community Survey - 2021

New housing permit activity over the period from 2012 to 2022 reveals a significant spike in permits in 2013. Since 2013 (when the previous POCD was adopted), 411 housing permits have been issued. Permit activity did not slow down even during the peak of COVID 19 pandemic i.e., between 2020 and 2022. The issuance of a building permit does not affirm that the unit was constructed within the same year or at all. Hence, housing permits issued over the past decade exceed units added to the Town’s supply (as documented by census data). Permit data includes all housing types including single family and multi-family.

Home Ownership

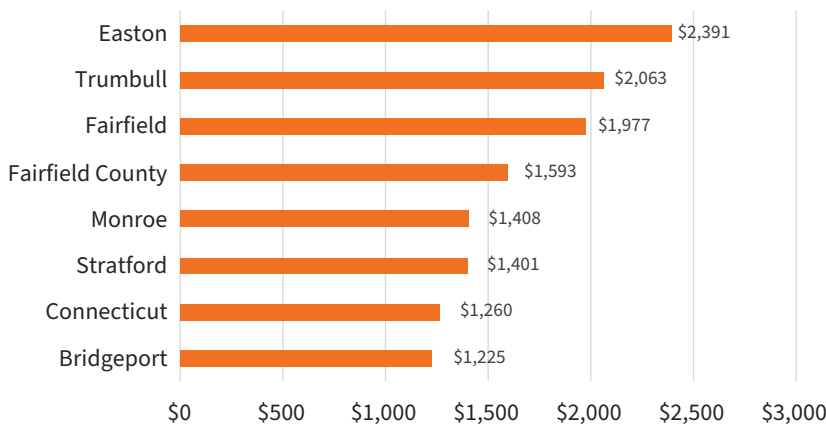
Owner-occupied homes comprise 79% of Stratford’s housing stock with 21% of homes being renter-occupied. Data is not available regarding the share of single-family homes that are owned but rented, yet, Stratford’s single-family homes are predominantly owner-occupied. Stratford’s home ownership rate is several percentage points higher than home ownership rates in both Fairfield County and the State. This is directly related to the Town’s higher share of single-family detached housing, which is associated with higher ownership rates than multifamily housing.

Figure 4.12. Tenure in Housing (2021)



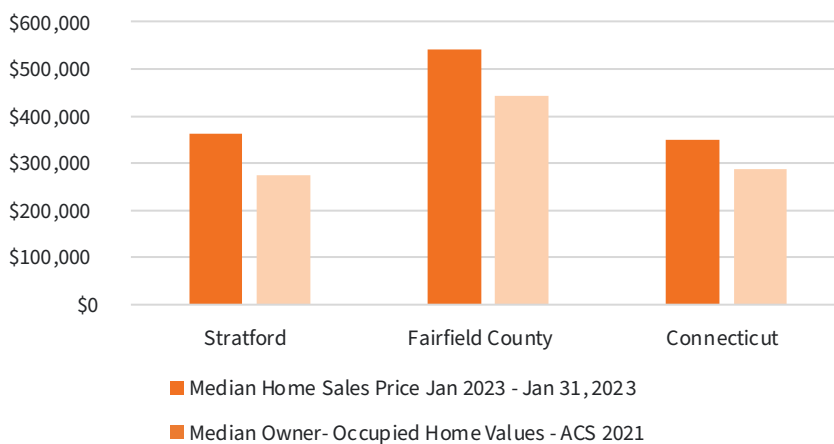
Source: American Community Survey - 2021

Figure 4.13. Median Gross Rent (2021)



Source: American Community Survey - 2021

Figure 4.14. Median Home Sales Price and Value



Source: American Community Survey - 2021

Housing Tenure

Stratford's housing tenure is comparable to both Fairfield County and the State. Almost one-third (31%) of residents have lived in their homes since 1999 or earlier, about a quarter (24%) of residents moved into their homes between 2000 and 2009. Stratford saw a significant turnover of housing occupancy between 2015 and 2018, when 26% of households moved into their current housing. These figures suggest a healthy turn-over in housing, which affords diverse housing choices for existing and new residents in the town.

Housing Cost

On average, housing in Stratford costs less than housing in Fairfield County but more than housing across the State. The Town's median gross rent of \$1,401 is about 12% lower than the County but 11% higher than the State. With the exception of Bridgeport, Stratford's housing is more affordable than surrounding towns in Fairfield County.

Home sales prices have seen a sizable increase since the beginning of the COVID pandemic, with Stratford seeing a median home sales price value of \$363,404 as of January 2023. This is above Connecticut's median home sales price of \$350,658, but below Fairfield County's median sale price of \$540,827 during the same time period. Stratford saw a 10% increase in home sale prices in 2022, with the average listing being on the market for twelve days before going to pending status. This is a shorter on-market period than the average in both Fairfield County and the State.

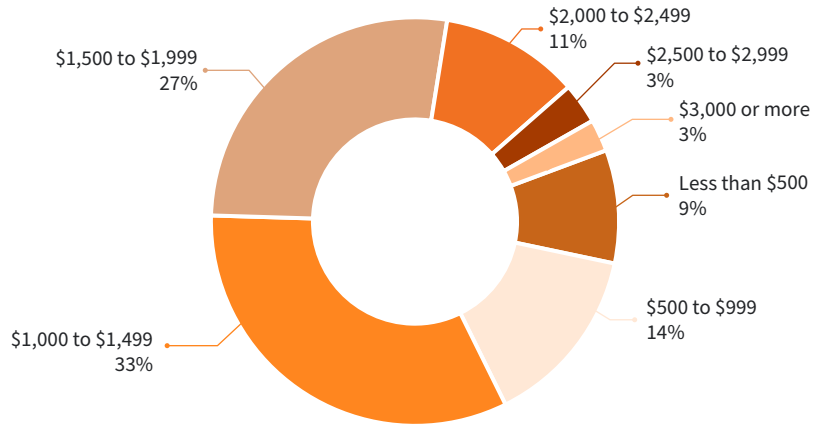
Median owner-occupied home value in Stratford is lower than the median sales price. According to the

American Community Survey, the median owner-occupied home value in Stratford was \$274,400 as of 2021. This value is lower than median across the County and the State. The age of Stratford’s housing stock plays heavily into the median value with older homes typically being smaller and often valued less than newer housing stock.

Stratford’s housing stock varies considerably in cost as measured by both rental cost and housing value. Over half of the Town’s rental housing (56%) costs less than \$1,500 per month, with 23% of rental housing costing less than \$1,000 per month. Approximately 27% of rental housing in Stratford falls between \$1,500 to \$1,999 per month. Only 17% of the Town’s housing stock costs \$2,000 per month or more. When compared to other towns in Fairfield County and the State, rents in Stratford are more affordable than other Fairfield County communities, and are slightly higher than the state’s median gross rents.

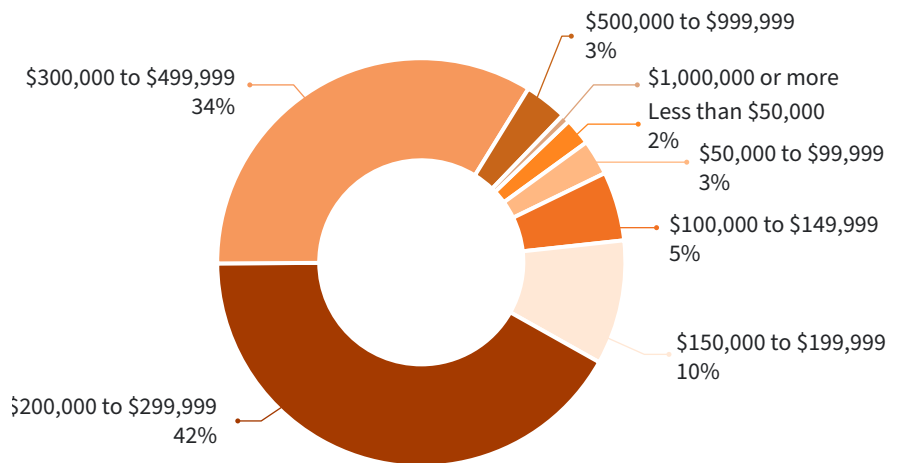
The largest share (42%) of Stratford’s owner-occupied housing is valued between \$200,000 and \$299,999 and 20% of the Town’s owner-occupied housing is valued at less than \$200,000. This distribution in values suggests that the Town’s housing stock is affordable to a wide spectrum of households with varying incomes, although this does not imply that sufficient housing is available for purchase to meet the needs of lower-income buyers. Nearly half of Stratford residents earn less than the median household income and therefore may still be unable to afford to buy a home despite housing values being lower when compared to other Fairfield County towns.

Figure 4.15. Gross Monthly Rent (2021)



Source: American Community Survey - 2021

Figure 4.16. Owner-Occupied Housing Value



Source: American Community Survey - 2021

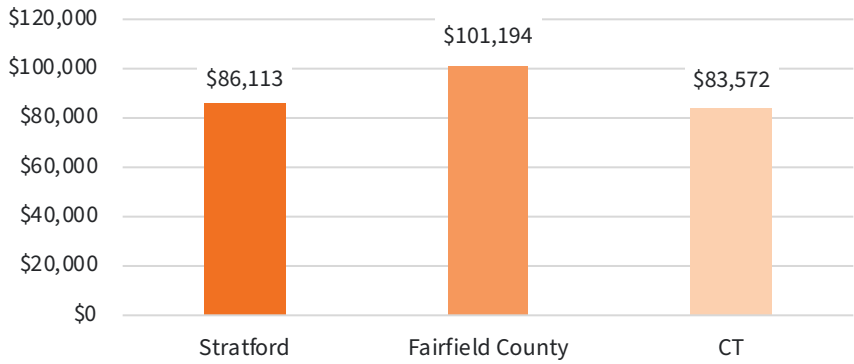
Housing Affordability

The median household income in Stratford in 2021 was \$86,000, which is slightly more than the State’s median income, but below that of Fairfield County’s. Since 2010, median household income in Stratford increased by nearly \$20,000. This household income increase is consistent with the increase experienced in the County and across the State.

Households that are housing cost-burdened spend more than 30% of their income on housing. In Stratford, approximately 38% of owner households are considered to be cost burdened. This is higher than the State’s rate (30%) and the County’s (35%). Over 60% of rental households in Stratford spend 30% or more of their income on housing compared to 54% in Fairfield County and 51% in the State. The share of housing cost burdened homeowners without a mortgage in Stratford is consistent with the County and slightly higher than the State.

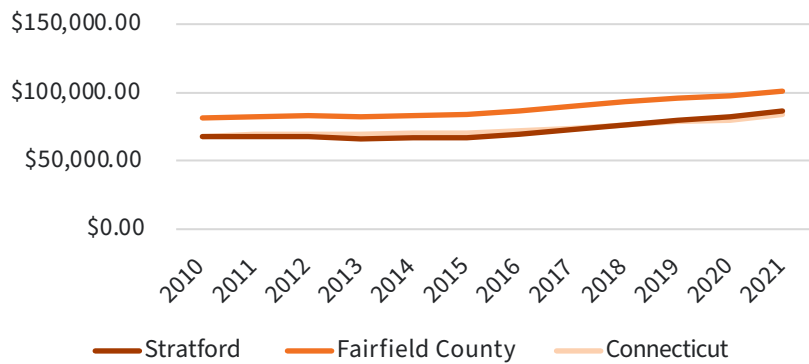
Stratford’s share of affordable housing, as classified under C.G.S. Section 8-30g, is **6.18%** of its housing stock as of 2022. Affordable housing as defined by 8-30g is comprised of government assisted housing units, tenant rental assistance households, CHFA/USDA mortgages, and deed restricted units. These combine for a total of 1,303 affordable units in town. The share of affordable housing units in Stratford has been relatively stable over the last several years although it has decreased slightly since 2020. Because Stratford does not have an affordable housing stock of at least 10%, it is not exempt from the State’s affordable housing appeals process.

Figure 4.17. Median Household Income (2021)



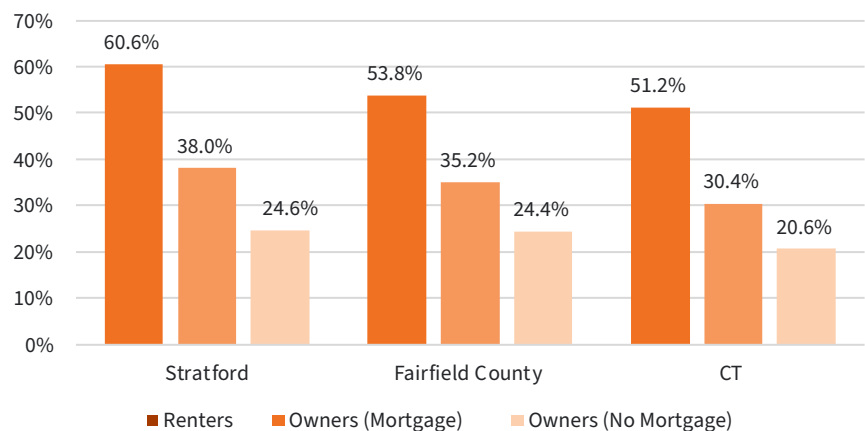
Source: American Community Survey - 2021

Figure 4.18. Median Household Income (2010-2021)



Source: American Community Survey - 2021

Figure 4.19. Median Home Sales Price and Value



Source: American Community Survey - 2021

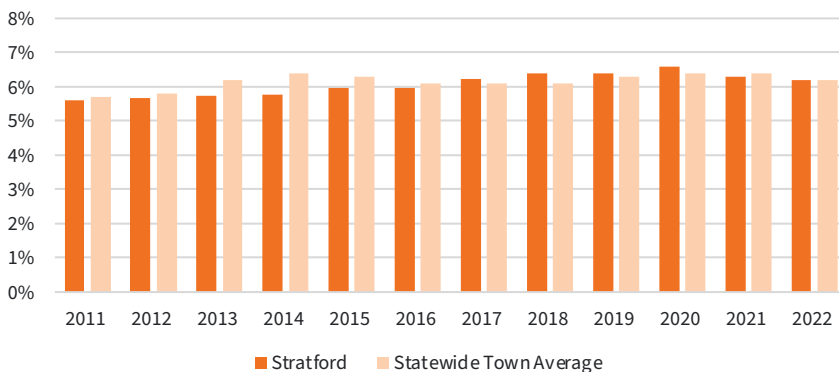
Stratford’s share of affordable housing is, and has been, consistent with the Statewide town average for several years. Stratford has a greater share of affordable housing than all surrounding towns and cities with the exception of Bridgeport. Thus, even though the Town’s housing stock has lower median sales price relative to other communities throughout Fairfield County, the Town continues to face issues of affordability.

Table 4.2. Percentage of Affordable Housing (2022)

Bridgeport	21.22%
Stratford	6.18%
Trumbull	5.44%
Fairfield	2.89%
Monroe	1.21%

Source: American Community Survey – 2021

Figure 4.20. Share of Affordable Housing (2011-2022)



Source: American Community Survey - 2021

Accessory Apartments

Stratford currently allows accessory residential apartments (ranging between 400-800 s.f. of 25% or 25% of livable floor area, whichever is smaller) that are attached to the principal residence through existing doorways or from the rear of the structure and are owner-occupied. In 2018, the State of CT mandated an accessory dwelling unit (ADU) regulation for all communities in the state that essentially removed the owner-occupancy and connection to principal residence requirements on the lots they are located. Like most municipalities in the state, who chose local control of their ordinances and developments, the Stratford Zoning Commission as well as the Town Council have “opted out” of this requirement. The decision to opt-out was to enable Stratford to promulgate its own new regulations that meet the needs of its residents. Because accessory apartments have the potential to contribute to Stratford’s affordable housing stock and promote housing diverse housing choices in largely built out communities like Stratford, the Town should revisit this issue and consider updating the current regulation to meet the needs of Stratford’s aging population who expressed a desire to age in place yet are unable to maintain large lots and to meet the housing preferences of younger/individual renters who are unable to afford the high rents associated with living in an apartment or a condominium. It is important to note that the rental asking price for a market rate studio in Stratford’s newer housing stock is currently around \$1,895 per month.



Key Issues & Trends

- Shifting demographics in Stratford towards older and smaller households suggest the need for a greater diversity of housing stock.
- Stratford has little vacant land suitable for housing development. It is likely that redevelopment within existing neighborhoods will be necessary to meet the housing needs of the future.
- As a result of land scarcity and economic factors, single-family housing growth in Stratford has slowed. Older housing stock may not adequately meet current or future needs or preferences. Some of the older housing stock may pose health hazards due to the presence of lead paint.
- The demand for multifamily developments has increased significantly over the past decade with 754 multifamily units approved, of which 231 units are going to be government assisted (8-30g compliant) units.
- Similar to the trends across the nation and state, the increasing housing demand due to underproduction of housing from 2008-2010 following the housing mortgage crisis coupled with changing housing preferences during the COVID 19 pandemic has resulted in an increase in housing costs and prices across the state including Stratford.
- Since less than 10% of housing units in Stratford meet State affordability guidelines as defined by C.G.S. 8-30g, the Town is subject to affordable housing appeals, which allows the developer of affordable housing in Stratford to circumvent the town's zoning regulations. This has caused out of scale affordable housing developments being proposed within or near conservation areas of the town stirring neighborhood resistance concerning affordable housing.
- Stratford's older adults would like to remain in Stratford, but often feel they are getting priced out or cannot afford to stay. Most older adults would like to downsize and yet maintain the same quality of life in Stratford but there are very few market rate older adult housing options in the town that cater to their lifestyles.
- Accessory dwelling units should be considered in the future to promote aging in place and to



Plans of Conservation and Development (and other studies) in Stratford over the past two decades have recognized housing issues and challenges summarized in this section. While the Town has been actively working towards many of these issues through the reinvigoration of Stratford Housing Partnership in recent years (which developed the Town's first Housing Plan), more can and should be done to address the diverse housing needs of aging residents and young adults.

continue to accommodate the needs of younger residents in Stratford.

- While housing in Stratford is generally affordable compared to other towns in Fairfield County, there is still a pressing need to promote government assisted affordable housing as there are a large number of residents whose incomes are presently much lower than the area median household income. Stratford needs to accommodate roughly 800 or more government assisted housing units to become an exempt community per the affordable housing statute C.G.S 8-30g.
- Some residents strongly feel that no additional housing is needed as they value the small-town charm of Stratford, while others are in favor of more housing choices in specific areas of the town. Residents are generally opposed to apartment complexes being built in or adjacent to existing single-family neighborhoods.
- Opportunities for adaptive reuse of existing properties and historic structures for housing may be an option; the Ella Grasso property (300 Armory Road) and the Stonybrook Gardens Co-Op (55 Singer Court) were discussed as potential locations.
- Coastal resiliency and coastal flood hazard management will play an important role in identifying suitable locations for multifamily housing. Most recently, the State of Connecticut also conducted a study to protect historic structures in special flood hazards areas in the state, including Stratford, which laid an emphasis on preserving historic housing in floodplains.
- Resiliency in coastal flood zones will play an important role in identifying suitable locations for multifamily housing. Most recently, the State of Connecticut also conducted a study to identify and protect historic structures in special flood hazards areas in the state, including Stratford, which laid an emphasis on preserving historic housing in floodplains.
- Resilient Connecticut, funded by Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and administered by the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program is aimed at making housing and infrastructure more resilient. Currently in Phase III, the program is focused on flood mitigation in Stratford's south End neighborhood, to make residents and housing more resilient.

Relevant Housing-Related Initiatives in Stratford

Stratford Housing Partnership

The Stratford Housing Partnership was created in 1990 with the charge of advocating for and facilitating the development of affordable housing in Stratford. This committee was reinvigorated in 2018 to help identify housing needs and opportunities within the town; to identify available public land for affordable housing; to advise the Town Council on housing matters; to review and update zoning regulations; and to implement a plan to satisfy housing needs in Stratford.

2021 Affordable Housing Plan (aka Housing Strategies for Stratford)

In 2021, the Town Council adopted a Housing Plan for Stratford. This Plan recommended strategies to help Stratford increase the number of affordable housing units in Stratford. Since statutes require that this Plan be updated every five years, it will be a companion to this element of the POCD in term of housing strategies.

Transit-Oriented Development (TOD)

Following the adoption of 2014 POCD, the Town prepared a plan to support transit-oriented development near the Train Station in 2015 and subsequently adopted TOD overlay zone regulations to enable denser, mixed-use development near train station and create a vibrant Town Center.

Architectural Review Board

In 2018, based on the recommendations of the 2014 POCD, the town's Architectural Review Board (ARB) was set up to review and offer advisory recommendations on the design of all commercial buildings and residential developments of three units or more that are subject to a special case review by the Town's Zoning Commission or variance review by the Town's Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA).

Housing Authority

The Stratford Housing Authority, established in 1943, is an independent organization which receives State and Federal funding to provide government assisted housing in Stratford to low- and moderate-income persons and families. The Housing Authority owns and manages 313 units for elderly/disabled persons and 201 units for families. There are lengthy waiting lists for these units and limited funding is available to build more units. The authority also assists an additional 280 families with Housing Choice Vouchers residing in private apartments, mostly in Stratford. The Housing Authority recently prepared its Strategic Plan in 2020 and adopted it in September of 2020. The primary objective of the plan was to guide future actions concerning government assisted housing in Stratford and to expand the Authority's housing stock and to consider other options for properties located in the flood zone.

CDBG Funding

As an entitlement community, Stratford receives formula based funding from the federal government each year to help provide decent housing, a suitable living environment, and economic opportunities, for very-low, low- and moderate-income households as defined by Housing and Urban Development (HUD). This funding is part of the nationwide Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program and Stratford receives approximately \$600,000 each year. The Town hired a new CDBG Grants Administrator to oversee funded activities through this program and to expand housing reach in underserved communities in the town.

Commission on Aging

The Stratford Commission on Aging is a volunteer group that advocates for the needs of older residents in Stratford and coordinates older adult programs and services. The Commission has learned that housing issues (cost, maintenance, etc.) are becoming more prevalent among older Stratford residents in recent years. The Commission has been working on a strategic plan to ensure that Stratford flourishes as a vibrant, dynamic, livable community for people of all ages and means. The strategic plan was adopted in early 2023.



What We Heard From the Community

Through the Plan’s community engagement process, the community expressed a number of ideas and desires regarding neighborhoods and housing. “Balance” was the term most heard when discussing housing issues and needs. Residents want to maintain Stratford’s small-town community atmosphere while balancing additional growth and development. The need to maintain the unique attributes of the Town’s residential neighborhoods was emphasized.

Residents also expressed concerns about weaknesses and threats to the Town’s neighborhoods and housing. These include high property tax rates, lack of adequate housing choices and rising housing costs, particularly for older and young adults, and the need for more healthy housing options. Flooding and sea level rise were also concerns in light of recent major storm events and anticipated impacts associated with potential sea-level rise.

Many ideas and opportunities regarding neighborhoods and housing were identified by residents and stakeholders including the need to promote a greater diversity in housing options and prices, and focusing on mixed-use development to provide greater residential options in appropriate locations. A complete detailing of the community’s perspective on housing is available in the POCD community engagement summary.



Housing Workshop, January 2023

Healthy Housing

Hazardous conditions found in unsafe housing can lead to lead poisoning, asthma and other respiratory illnesses, cancer, and unintentional injuries or death, resulting in poor school attendance and performance for children, missed workdays for parents, and the loss of loved ones for all. These hazards and their health impacts disproportionately affect communities of color and low-income communities, making the need for healthy housing a significant environmental and racial justice issue. The COVID-19 pandemic has revealed, urgently, our need for safer, healthier, and affordable housing: The increased time spent at home and challenges to healthy housing service delivery have not only affected health negatively but also displayed—in sharp contrast—the longstanding crisis of inequitable access to quality housing and healthcare. In addition, climate change and the associated increase in both incidence and severity of extreme weather events are expanding the scope of policies contributing to healthy housing.



69% of Connecticut housing was built prior to 1978 and may contain lead-based paint; 20% was built in 1939 or earlier.



In 2020, **1,042 Connecticut children tested had an elevated blood lead level** (5 µg/dL or more); EBLL rates were at least **two times higher for Black, Asian, and Hispanic children** compared to non-Hispanic White children.



Almost **11% of adults** and **almost 12% of children have current asthma** in Connecticut (2020).

Source: National Center for Healthy Housing, https://nchh.org/resource-library/fact-sheet_state-healthy-housing_ct.pdf

Housing Workshop

A housing focused workshop was conducted with Stratford's land use boards and commission members in early 2023. The intent of the workshop was to identify common themes which could be used in the future as location guidelines for additional housing choices and options in Stratford. Participants worked in groups to place "housing points" on a map broken up into grid cells. Each group was given colored dots with each color representing a certain number of points. Green dots were worth 10 points each, blue dots were 25 points, and red dots were worth 50 points. Each table had to use two or three colors of dots to get to 1,000 points. Tables were asked to try to place dots in at least two general areas. If the table felt a location might have really strong locational attributes, they were allowed "stack" up to two dots on one square and write the number "2" on the top dot. Figure 4.21. Housing Workshop Suitable Housing Locations Summary Map, created by synthesizing the results from all four groups, highlights areas where housing development was identified by the participants.

As can be seen from the map, participants generally expressed the viewpoint that:

- Areas near the train station and Stratford Center were felt to have the best locational attributes for housing density and for providing housing options and choices.
- Other areas which were identified as having positive locational attributes included:
 - Areas along and near Stratford Avenue west of Stratford Center
 - Ella Grasso Center on Armory Road
 - Some areas near the Merritt Parkway
 - Some areas near Lordship Lane
 - The Army Engine Plant

Figure 4.21. Housing Workshop Suitable Housing Locations Summary Map



Source: Glenn Chalder, Planimetrics



In May 2023, a Habitat for Humanity of Coastal Fairfield County home was dedicated with a ceremony on Goodwin Place in Stratford. Source: CTPost

Goal

Continue to provide diverse and healthy housing options to meet the needs of current and future residents during all stages of life, while maintaining a sense of community and the unique attributes of existing neighborhoods.



Objectives & Action Steps

Objective 1. Support the Housing Authority in its efforts to expand housing availability for elderly residents.

1. Increase the number of elderly/disabled units.
 - Support Housing Authority efforts to Increase the number of elderly/disabled units (Housing Authority/Town).
 - Consider modifying the Zoning Regulations to allow more density/height/coverage for Housing Authority redevelopment projects on the sites they currently occupy (Zoning Commission).
2. Increase the number of “family” units.
 - Support Housing Authority efforts to Increase the number of family units (Housing Authority/Town).
 - Consider modifying the Zoning Regulations to allow more density/height/coverage for Housing Authority redevelopment projects on the sites they currently occupy (Zoning Commission).
3. Pursue federal funding to elevate or replace buildings in designated special flood hazard areas of the town.

Objective 2. Develop and implement inclusionary zoning principles that promote affordable housing.

1. Require affordable units in new residential development.
 - Consider adopting a zoning regulation requiring that a percentage of any new residential development meet State affordability criteria.
 - Consider allowing for a density bonus for developments which provide affordable units in excess of the basic inclusionary requirement.
2. Allow/require payment of a fee in lieu of affordable unit.
 - Consider modifying the Zoning Regulations to allow payment of a fee in lieu of providing affordable units that can be utilized to fund Town initiated affordable housing projects.
 - Consider modifying the Zoning Regulations to require payment of a fee for any fractional remainder.
3. Establish a zoning permit fee.
 - Consider establishing an affordable housing fee as part of issuance of a Zoning Permit.
4. Remove zoning barriers to promote the development of workforce housing opportunities in the town.

Objective 3. Enable more housing choices and options than what exist currently and to address current and future housing needs/desires.

1. Legitimize existing two-family dwellings.

- Modify the Zoning Regulations to legitimize existing two-family homes and remove roadblocks for people who want to maintain/improve these units.

2. Revisit accessory dwelling unit regulations.

- Consider allowing an addition to the dwelling as part of establishing the accessory apartment.
- Consider allowing occupancy by a caretaker or caregiver in a health-related situation.
- Consider eliminating the requirement to be “freely accessible” to the principal unit (but require an operable door on a common wall).
- Consider allowing a unit larger than 800 SF/25% of floor area as a “special case” review.
- Consider eliminating the restriction on conducting a home-based business within either unit.
- Consider eliminating the limitation on occupancy by a family member and/or the affordability restriction.

3. Review/revise multi-family regulations.

- Undertake a comprehensive review/revision of the various multifamily provisions in the Zoning Regulations.
- Revisit and update specific provisions which may not reflect current market realities/lifestyles or accomplish what Stratford desires.
- Consider repealing Zoning Regulation Section 5.3.5 which contains limitations on multi-family units based on “apartment unit equivalents” and is based on a 1964 map of elementary school districts.

4. Guide multi-family locations.

- Consider **discouraging** multifamily housing in established single-family neighborhoods not near transit stations or bus lines (i.e., town-wide), or in coastal flood hazard areas.
- Revisit the locations where multifamily housing is permitted in order to facilitate appropriate redevelopment along Route 1 and in other commercial areas, reflect existing land use patterns, and enhance transit ridership.

Objective 4. Promote housing design reflective of and sensitive to community design preferences.

1. Improve design guidelines.

- To ensure that new developments fit into the overall character of Stratford, **prepare written and /or illustrated design guidelines** with regard to key design elements to guide developers, architects, engineers, staff, commissioners, and the community about design approaches to be encouraged (and discouraged) and maintain and/or enhance the character of Stratford (could use the TOD design guidelines in ZR Section 7.10.8 as a starting point for this effort).
- Conduct a visual preference exercise to understand acceptable parameters for height, scale, mass, articulation, and other design factors in different areas.

Objective 5. Support/facilitate “aging in place” for older residents.

1. Provide supportive municipal services.

- Maintain and/or expand services provided by the Town (Social/Recreational/Nutrition/Health/Education/Counseling/Screening/Transportation, etc.) which can help older residents age in place.
- Do more outreach with social workers, visiting nurses, and other services to address social isolation and enhance older adult living experience.
- Investigate ways to provide home handyman services with volunteers (or a referral service).
- Update 2012 Impediments to Fair Housing Analysis.

2. Continue to provide tax relief for older adults.

- Continue to offer tax relief for lower income older adults.
- Consider whether there may be ways of offering additional property tax relief.
- At higher income levels.
- Capped at a fixed amount.
- Indexed to inflation.
- In exchange for volunteer services.
- In exchange for an affordability restriction.

3. Investigate other options.

- Investigate whether there may be ways of acquiring existing homes occupied by older adults (who may be “house rich” but “cash poor”) and leasing it back to them and to other elderly people to help address a need. Depending on the funding source (such as “Housing Choice” vouchers), it might be possible to focus exclusively on elderly persons rather than elderly/disabled. Consider undertaking a demonstration project to see how this could work.

4. Conduct a housing conditions assessment in low income census tracts to demonstrate the need for housing improvements related to condition and accessibility and pursue federal funding to implement accessibility related improvements accordingly.

Objective 6. Explore funding opportunities that support the implementation of Housing Partnership’s priorities.

1. Establish a Housing Trust Fund to fund Town initiated affordable housing projects and/or support public-private partnerships.
2. Revisit CDBG funding priorities/process.

Objective 7. Enhance the housing toolbox by guiding the locations of affordable housing development and reviewing the affordability period for deed restricted units.

1. Extend the affordability period for deed-restricted units.
 - Require that affordable units in a set-aside development be restricted for 40 years or the life of the development, **whichever is longer**, to:
 - Avoid affordable units coming off the list in the future.
 - Avoid a financial windfall for whoever may own the unit after 40 years.
 - Consider requiring an “affordability easement” or other encumbrance (including a right-of-first refusal) so affordability restrictions do not get foreclosed out without notice to the Town.
2. Adopt a “standard” Housing Affordability Plan.
3. Identify potential Sites for affordable housing.

Objective 8. Obtain an exemption or moratoria on C.G.S.8-30G statute on affordable housing.

1. Seek relief from CGS Section 8-30g.
 - Create 766 or so additional “affordable housing” units meeting State criteria to become exempt from the Affordable Housing Appeals Procedure.
 - Demonstrate that Stratford has obtained 420 or so housing unit equivalent points (since 1990) to get a four-year moratorium and then establish additional housing in the future to get additional moratoria.
 - Seek to have “naturally occurring affordable housing” be considered in the tabulation of affordable housing units in a municipality.

Objective 9. Continue to educate/collaborate with Stratford residents on the need for promoting housing diversity and choice.

1. Continue to educate the community about housing needs.
 2. Continue to collaborate with other agencies and organizations.
- Continue to collaborate with housing partners including:
- Local (Town departments, Housing Authority, faith-based, etc.)
 - Regional (MetroCOG, non-profit organizations, shelters, Operation Hope, Center For Family Justice, Bethlehem House, etc.)
 - State (Department of Housing, Connecticut Housing Finance Authority (CHFA), Partnership For Strong Communities, etc.)
 - National (US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), US Department of Agriculture (USDA), etc.)

Objective 10. Explore other innovative housing strategies for creating healthy, affordable, and livable communities.

1. Pursue available grants through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program for healthy and accessible housing options.
 - Use a portion of this grant money to train Health Department and other appropriate departments/partner agencies on Healthy Homes Approach.

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Conservation, Open Space, & Recreation

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Conservation, Open Space, & Recreation

Goals

- Conserve, protect, and enhance open space and natural and recreational resources while managing responsible growth and development.
- Deliver responsive municipal services to ensure a safe, welcoming, and vibrant community now and in the future.

Adapted from the Parks Master Plan

Baseline Conditions

In largely built out communities such as Stratford, balancing growth with conservation and enhancement of important environmental resources is critical to achieving a sustainable community. The Town's open space and environmental resources are diverse. They include Roosevelt Forest, Longbrook Park, the Town's beaches, the Housatonic Greenway, privately-owned open spaces, wetlands, floodplains and, in addition to other Town-owned parks and open spaces. The Town owned open space and recreational properties account for nearly 8% of the total land area of Stratford, excluding federally owned Steward B. McKinney National Wildlife Refuge. If this Refuge is included in this number, it increases to about 12.5%. The open space inventory is summarized in Table 5.1. Currently, the Town organizes its parks into large (greater than 10 acres), medium (5-10 acres) and small (less than 5 acres). There are 12 large parks, 13 medium parks and 16 small parks for a total of 41 parks (McKinney Wildlife Refuge, is federally owned and managed). The total open space and park acreage owned by the Town (excluding the McKinney Wildlife Refuge) is roughly 890 acres. The total open space and park acreage of all lands within the Town (excluding school grounds, cemeteries, and recreational lands such as golf courses, gymnasiums, and yacht clubs) is 1,435 acres. The total land encompassed by the Town, including rights of way, is about 11,500 acres.



Ladies Bocce, Source: Miosoti Vázquez Ramos

Table 5.1. Parks, Playgrounds, and Open Spaces in Stratford

	Town Parks and Playgrounds	Size	Acres	Features
1	Roosevelt Forest	Large	400	Large tract of forest with trails and pond
2	McKinney Wildlife Refuge	Large	399.38	Natural salt marsh, birding area, parking and trails
3	Short Beach (Edward Yeomans Park)	Large	107.28	Beach, picnic areas, playground, golf course, baseball fields, soccer fields, softball fields, courts for basketball, paddleball, tennis, volleyball, and concession stand
4	Long Beach	Large	62	Public beach with parking area (no facilities); birding, and fishing opportunities
5	Wooster Park and Pond	Large	53.66	Natural habitat of Wooster Pond, Bruce Brook, woods, trails, playground, and multi-use fields
6	Far Mill River Park	Large	38.78	Natural area along Far Mill River, gorge, dams, trail
7	Boothe Memorial Park	Large	32.99	Boothe Memorial Museum (including various historical bldgs and structures), telescope/astronomical society, HAM radio station/club, Boothe Family Home, playground, picnic areas, historical gardens
8	James Farm Road Open Space	Large	32.3	Natural habitat of wood and streams
9	Longbrook Park	Large	30.17	Park bldgs, historical stone masonry, Brewster & Longbrook Ponds, Long Brook, trails, picnic areas, ball fields (football, soccer, baseball/softball), turf field, splash pad, playground, tennis courts
10	Pecks Mill Pond	Large	14.57	Natural Area with Peck's Mill Pond and woodland, Housatonic River access, car top boating access
11	Former Shakespeare Theater Property	Large	12.07	Former theater site, open fields, sculptures, pond, wetlands, parking
12	Veteran's Park	Large	11.91	Wetland area and largely inaccessible; Bruce Brook runs through it
13	Spring Pond Park	Medium	9.42	Natural habitat of wood (woodland), wetland and streams
14	Birdseye Boat Launch Ramp & Fishing Pier	Medium	9.25	Boat ramp , dock, deck fishing platform, parking
15	Clover Field / Janosko Park	Medium	9.16	Softball fields, basketball courts, Athletic/concession bldg, playground, walking path, pond, Bruce Brook, parking
16	Pirhala Farm (Community Garden)	Medium	8.63	Apple orchard, building, parking, compost bins and community garden plot land, field
17	Stratford Greenway	Medium	8.14	About 3 miles of asphalt paved multiuse trail along Housatonic River
18	DeLuca Field	Medium	7.53	Softball field, bleachers, press box, concession stand
19	John Chanda (North End/Wigwam) Park	Medium	5.76	Ball field, basketball court, pond, wetland, trails, playground, parking
20	Stonybrook Park	Medium	5.06	Playground, trail, woods, Bruce Brook, parking

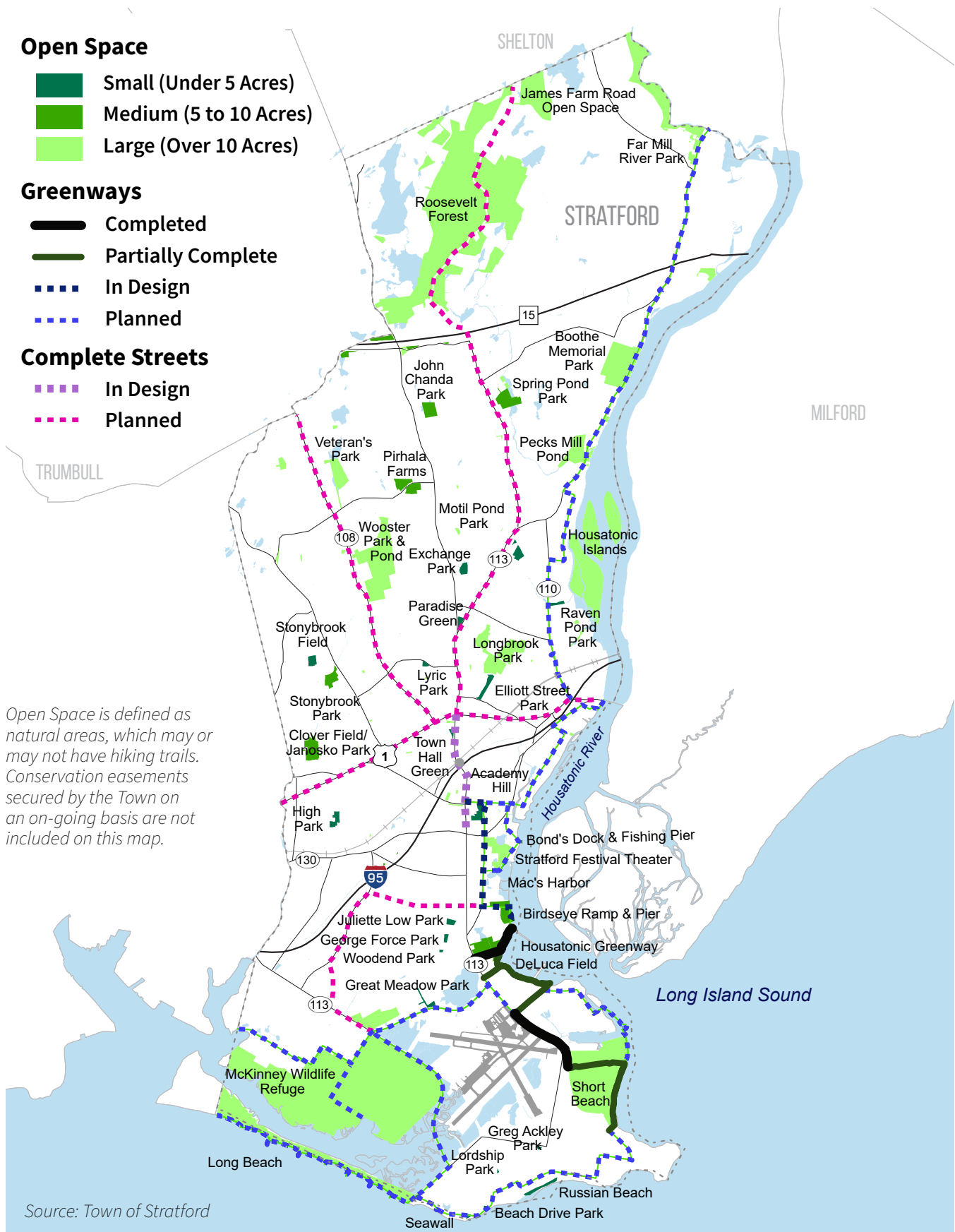
	Town Parks and Playgrounds	Size	Acres	Features
21	Academy Hill	Small	4.04	Veteran's Memorial, trees and lawn
22	Elliott Street Park	Small	3.52	Trees, lawn, channelized Long Brook
23	Motil Pond Park	Small	3.3	Motil Pond, playground, parking, basketball
24	Russian Beach	Small	3.1	Sand beach on Long Island Sound
25	High Park	Small	3.03	Ball fields, basketball courts, playground
26	Exchange Park	Small	2.55	Woods, playground, basketball court
27	Stonybrook Field	Small	2.53	Softball field, parking, basketball
28	Great Meadows Park	Small	2.06	Trees, lawn
29	Paradise Green	Small	1.48	Trees, lawn, gazebo, path, plantings
30	Juliette Low Park	Small	1.43	Trees, lawn, gazebos, trails
31	Raven Pond Park	Small	1.4	Pond, monument
32	George Force Park	Small	0.94	Basketball and handball courts
33	Town Hall Green	Small	0.83	Trees, lawn, paths, benches, flag pole, monument
34	Lyric Park	Small	0.76	Playground, seating
35	Seawall	Small	0.48	Sand beach, benches, riprap revetment, wall, sidewalk, and parking area
36	Mac's Harbor	Small	0.48	Memorial, bench
37	Greg Ackley (Rose Park) Park	Small	0.36	Trees, lawn, arbor, benches
38	Beach Drive Park Green	Small	0.33	Lawn, benches, roadside parking
39	Bond's Dock and Fishing Pier	Small	0.27	Car-top boat launch, fishing pier, parking area
40	Woodend Park	Small	0.25	Playground
41	Lordship Park	Small	0.17	Trees, lawn, WWII memorial

Source: Town of Stratford



Source: Town of Stratford Parks Master Plan

Figure 5.1. Open Space & Greenways



Data Findings

As discussed earlier, Town owned open space and recreation lands account for about 8% of the total land within the Town. If the federally owned McKinney Wildlife Refuge and all other privately held conservation land are included, the percentage increases to about 12.5% (Note: the analysis in the land use chapter of this POCD is not comparable to this one; the two are done using different underlying assumptions, each appropriate to the task at hand but not to the other. Also, this percentage does not include conservation easements data.)

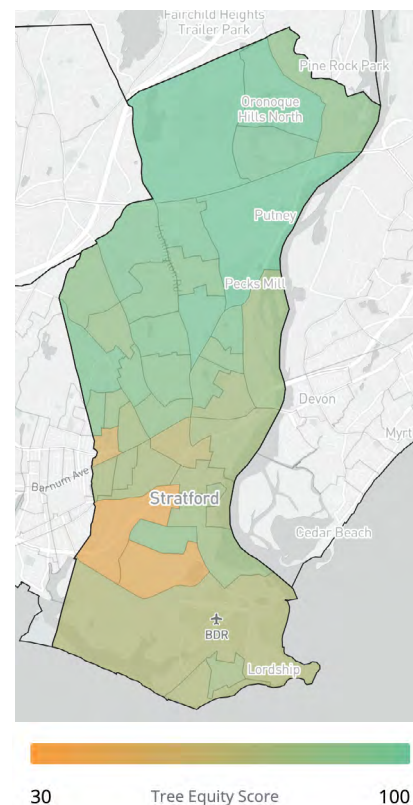
The most recent open space acquisition plan of Connecticut was prepared in 2015 aka 'Connecticut's Comprehensive Open Space Acquisition Strategy: The Green Plan 2016-2020'. It is a statewide planning document developed by CT DEEP in partnership with municipalities and conservation organizations to guide land acquisitions in the state in order to achieve the state's open space goal. The Green Plan gives priority to the acquisition of lands (1) that serve to protect high-quality natural waters and drinking water sources, (2) that are significant to the coast, (3) that are characterized by natural heritage resources, and (4) that bring people of all ages, abilities, and socio-economic makeups into open space nature.

This is also implemented through Section 23-8 of Connecticut General Statutes (CGS) that requires a goal of conserving 21% or 672,210 acres of Connecticut's land base as open space by year 2023, of which, 10% (320,576 acres) is to be held by the State and 11% (352,634 acres) is to be held by municipalities, non-profit land conservation organizations, its partners (municipalities, non-profit land conservation organizations, and water companies. **The term "open space land" means any area of land, including forest land, land designated as wetland under C.G.S. Section 22a-30, and farmland, the restriction of the use which would (1) maintain and enhance the conservation of natural or scenic resources, (2) protect natural streams. Currently, at 8% the Town meets neither the Partners goal, nor the 2003 POCD goals.** It meets the state's goal for open space and recreation lands. However, it has yet to meet the mark set forth by the 2003 POCD, which recommended increasing the goal to 11%.

Tree canopy coverage plays an important role in conservation efforts as well as in public health initiatives. Urban forests consist of a diversity of tree species that provide numerous benefits to the community, including

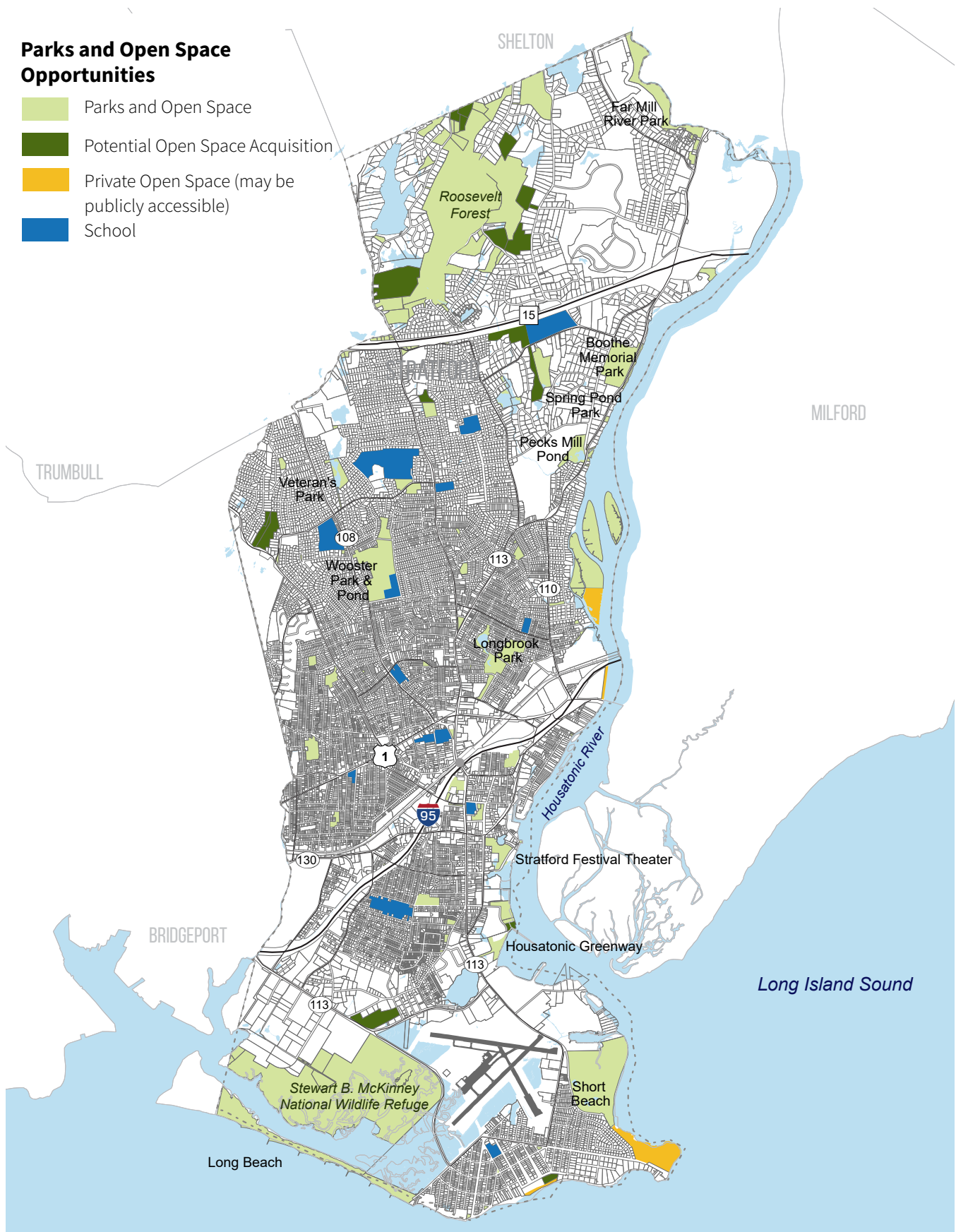
improving air and water quality, boosting mental and physical health, addressing climate change, and enhancing the economy. Expanding the tree canopy throughout Stratford plays an important role in reducing flooding impacts, mitigating and renovating stormwater, increasing air quality, and improving mental health while minimizing the urban heat island effect. A Tree Equity Score is a metric that helps cities assess how well they are delivering equitable tree canopy cover to all residents. The score combines measures of tree canopy cover need and priority for trees in urban neighborhoods (defined as Census Block Groups). It is derived from tree canopy cover, climate, demographic and socioeconomic data. For Stratford, the tree equity target score is 75, based on the metrics discussed above. Townwide, Stratford's tree equity score is 81, but 9 block groups in Stratford have a tree equity score that is below 75. In order to increase the town's Tree Equity Score, and better manage urban forest, a master plan should be prepared to understand and inventory current resources and provide planning for the future. Having a realistic tree planting goal within such a plan, after carefully reviewing current inventory, would assist in enhancing the urban tree canopy in Stratford.

Figure 5.2. Stratford Tree Equity Score



Stratford's Tree Equity Score Number, Source: www.treeequityscore.org

Figure 5.3. Parks and Open Space Opportunities





What We Heard From the Community

At the various events held to receive input on the POCD update, residents expressed that parks and facilities are in need of maintenance and improvements, upon which the Town is steadily acting. They felt connections among the parks and the waterfront are lacking. Particularly, providing Stratford's residents with access to the waterfront including the Long Island Sound and the Housatonic River was a top priority for residents.

Residents also stated a desire and need for more neighborhood parks to make recreation easily accessible to all communities in the town. All neighborhood parks should include activity areas not only for the young, but also for

older adults. The town's aging population needs to provide facilities to adequately suit their needs as well.

Residents acknowledged and valued the importance of well-managed, properly maintained, and accessible open spaces and the need to continue to support these places. Overall, the community noted that the Town should do more to promote, protect and expand open space, and maintain and enhance its environmental resources. Maintaining existing open space and recreational resources while looking to expand the Town's inventory was a common theme.

The Town's Waterfront Vision Plan and Greenways and Pathways Study both emphasize the need for public access to the waterfront along the Housatonic River through various conceptual routes. Implementation of these plans has begun, and advanced design and analysis is underway for the Greenway Phase III route along the waterfront, which will connect the Water Pollution Control Facility (WPCF) site to the former SAEP site.



Clower Field/Janosko Park, Source: Town of Stratford

Goals

- Conserve, protect, and enhance open space and natural and recreational resources while managing responsible growth and development.
- Deliver responsive municipal services to ensure a safe, welcoming, and vibrant community now and in the future.

Adapted from the Parks Master Plan



Objectives & Action Steps

Objective 1. Promote ample opportunities for recreation and exercise and improve access to parks and open spaces, which also enhance public health.

1. Inventory parks and open spaces townwide and maintain a central database that is continuously updated with information on the total amount of parks, open spaces, trails, and recreation facilities, identify underserved areas, analyze threats due to natural hazards and development, mitigate impacts, and select metrics to track progress.
2. Aid the Conservation Commission in capitalizing on smaller areas of open space to conserve and restore our forested natural areas, which are becoming increasingly threatened with development and public pressure to maintain more park space.
3. Enhance access to Roosevelt Forest through trail improvements to make trails safe and passable for all residents. ADA compliance is needed on the trails.
4. Conduct survey of Roosevelt Forest, and other open space parcels, and enforce the property boundaries.
5. Continue to seek grants and funding for trail maintenance and expansion on select trails (as appropriate), as well as the acquisition of parcels that are adjacent to Roosevelt Forest in order to create a larger, contiguous forest network.
6. Promote greater access to trail mapping - both paper and interactive digital versions.
7. Commission a Boothe Park Master Plan & Feasibility study.
8. Program and implement a variety of activities in parks so that they are widely used.
9. Implement necessary public safety and security improvements, and public infrastructure such as toilets, garbage cans, recycling bins etc., so that the town's parks and open spaces are welcoming to residents/visitors and utilized by all age groups successfully.
10. Identify and take advantage of potential opportunities to advance the town's open space network as a way to promote residents' health and well-being.
11. Redevelop Morgan Francis Property at 576/600 East Broadway with a recreational end use (after site remediation).

Objective 2. Expand open space network in the town.

1. Pursue state and federal funding to promote the acquisition and management of open space properties and corridors to connect open spaces with each other, with schools, important town facilities, etc., and to promote protection of watersheds.
2. Set an open space goal of 15% (roughly 300 additional acres) and continue to strive to reach this goal.
3. Continue to require a 10% open space set aside in new subdivisions and require homeowners to maintain the land or pay a fee to the town to increase the open space fund, as allowed by current subdivision regulations.
4. Create a cohesive network of parks and open spaces in the town by coordinating parks and open space planning with the objectives of land use, transportation, historic preservation, disaster mitigation, and capital facilities planning.
5. Develop zoning standards that require new developments to increase the amount of landscaping, open space, and tree canopy in all neighborhoods. New developments should preserve existing mature trees whenever possible.

Objective 3. Increase access to the waterfront and waterways for leisure, recreation and education.

1. Continue to look for opportunities to provide waterfront access while also balancing the need for riparian and wetland buffers. This includes development agreements or public access easements when waterfront parcels are redeveloped such as the former SAEP site and others.
2. Implement the vision of the town's Waterfront Vision Plan (2023) by facilitating public access to the waterfront at the public access locations identified in the vision map, which was developed by the Waterfront Harbor Management Commission (WHMC)
3. Require development along the coastline and riverfront to provide public access and connect to the greenway network and require the creation of and management of riparian and wetland buffers.
4. Prioritize funding the implementation of Phase III and Phase IV of greenway connecting WPCF to former SAEP site by the waterfront.
5. Actively promote public access to, as well as use and enjoyment of the town's extensive waterfront coastline through public outreach via Town's social media and print/digital media.
6. Promote awareness of Stratford's rich waterfront history through interpretive signage displayed at historic waterfront locations.

Objective 4. Maintain the town's parks, open spaces, and recreational fields at existing or improved levels.

Adapted from Parks Master Plan

1. Increase funding for playscapes, athletic field, and athletic court replacement and refurbishment to ensure better conditions.
2. Establish and promote formal volunteer groups and "friends of the parks" to help maintain parks and open space.
3. Allocate adequate staffing and capital resources to ensure high quality maintenance and improvements to parks and open spaces throughout the Town.
4. Facilitate community gardening and/or farming on vacant, under sized or oddly shaped/ undevelopable open space parcels in residential neighborhoods through adequate zoning measures to aid in blight reduction, social cohesion, and food sustainability. Some of these parcels should be maintained as forested natural areas.
5. Develop administrative, fiscal, and programmatic resources to ensure ongoing, long-term maintenance and management of town-owned urban wilds and other natural areas.
6. Implement site improvements and programming for outdoor events at former Shakespeare Theater site.



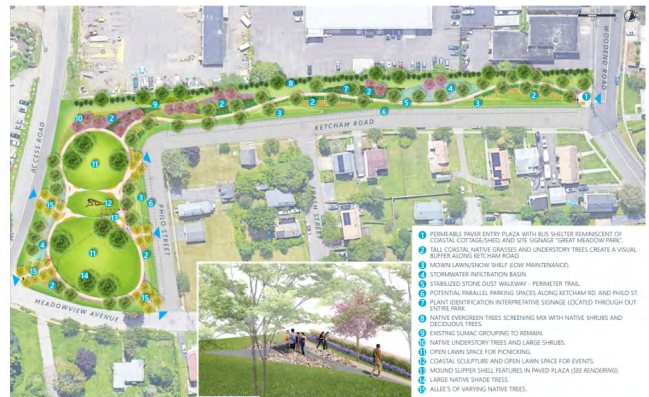
Outdoor entertainment space envisioned at former Shakespeare Property

Objective 5. Develop an interconnected network of trails/greenways linking Stratford destinations to one another and to neighboring communities.

1. Collaborate with neighboring communities to become a central hub of the regional greenway network; expand East Coast Greenway link to connect Housatonic River Greenway to coastal areas of Milford and New Haven via Ferry Boulevard.
2. Continue to expand the Stratford Greenway and support Complete Streets initiatives to expand connectivity throughout Stratford; prioritize funding to implement the subsequent phases of these projects.
3. Nominate the Housatonic Greenway as a National Scenic Coastal Byway to improve marketability and provide new funding options.
4. Pursue bicycle friendly community designation to market Stratford as a bicycle friendly community and demonstrate the town's commitment to invest in bicycle and pedestrian trails that enhance access to various land uses.
5. Develop a Trails Master Plan to aid in the further development of trails/greenways.

Objective 6. Highlight Stratford's parks and open space, including beaches, forests, trails and marshes for tourism purposes and promote ecological values, where feasible.

1. Consider creating an interactive website with a map of Stratford's parks, open spaces, beaches, forests, trails, and marshes, with descriptions on each park/open space/trail and continuously update this site with information on various programs and activities planned at these locations.
2. Increase public awareness of the Town's extensive parks, open space and recreational opportunities through print brochures and the development of digital applications that can be easily downloaded on mobile phones such as a matrix barcode (QR code) posted at various locations that leads to descriptions and additional information on these sites.
3. Continue to update information on CT Visit website—Connecticut's Office of Tourism website with current information on events and activities planned in the town parks and open spaces.
4. Continue to promote educational programming in natural open spaces, wilds, and marshes and promote their use for passive recreation, environmental education, and other uses in keeping with their natural character; encourage community stewardship in preserving these places for future generations.
5. Pursue funding to implement the arboretum project conceptualized by the Conservation Department on the vacant parcels along Access Road as a way to introduce more greenery at Great Meadows Park in South End neighborhood (which is one of the underserved communities in the town with lower tree equity score); to promote ecological education; to promote tourism opportunities. Options for underground flood storage at this location should be further explored.



STRATFORD COASTAL BOTANICAL GARDEN AND ARBORETUM CONCEPTUAL PLAN

A conceptual plan for the Stratford Coastal Botanical Garden and Arboretum was developed in 2022. The concept, prepared for an undeveloped parcel located in a coastal industrial area north of Sikorsky Airport, includes stormwater management elements such as permeable pavers and an infiltration basin. It also includes native plant species, lawn space and pathways, and public artwork.

Objective 7. Advocate for long-term protection and stewardship of non-town owned public and private-owned urban wilds and other natural areas.

Adapted from Parks Master Plan

1. Support the efforts of conservation organizations to purchase and protect land with priority placed on properties with wetlands and floodplain areas.
2. Support the efforts of conservation organizations to manage the land for invasive species, habitat diversity, critical habitats, and listed species.
3. Continue to work collaboratively with residents, neighborhood groups and other stakeholders to address open space or environmental needs or concerns throughout town.
4. Explore Federal, State and Town funding opportunities to purchase open space, conservation or recreational lands with a priority on properties with ridgelines, wetlands, watercourses and floodplain areas or that provide connections between environmental resources.
5. Create a Community Forest Plan for Stratford; explore grant funding opportunities through the CT Urban Council for Urban Forestry Management.
6. Grow environmental stewardship throughout the Town.
7. Partner with Connecticut Audubon Society, Audubon Connecticut, CT DEEP, and others to protect nesting shorebirds and their habitats, particularly in Stratford's coastal areas.
8. Prioritize the redevelopment of brownfield properties and adaptive reuse of properties over development on greenfields and previously undeveloped parcels.

Objective 8. Expand tree canopy in the town in a responsible manner.

1. Develop and implement an urban tree and forest management and development plan, which identifies municipal trees as a part of the capital infrastructure to replenish and plant new trees in the town, responsibly and prioritizing areas with the lowest tree equity index, and ensure high quality streetscapes and aesthetically pleasing built environment, and to realize the myriad of natural resources services that trees provide.
2. Design a planting and maintenance program to manage trees in parks and open spaces, and forested natural areas; and add to the tree inventory. Educate residents on the many health and environmental benefits of expanding tree cover.
3. Promote the use of LID practices where possible when planting trees, such as the use of tree box filters, which consists of a tree placed in an in-ground container to which stormwater runoff is conveyed and filtered before it enters a catch basin



Economic Development

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Economic Development

Goals

- Foster a vibrant economic climate that attracts both large and small businesses to create a thriving community that benefits businesses, their employees and residents.
- Grow the commercial and industrial property tax bases through active recruitment of diverse businesses in order to lessen the tax burden on residents.
- Enhance arts, cultural, and entertainment opportunities that strengthen Stratford’s position as a local and regional tourist destination, thereby improving the quality of life in Stratford.
- Prioritize waterfront access and activity as an economic development strategy by utilizing the existing access points and creating new ones between the waterfront and Town’s commercial areas.

Baseline Conditions

Stratford supports a diverse, thriving and growing base of successful businesses, ranging from the iconic Sikorsky, A Lockheed Martin Company (manufacturer of helicopters for the military and commercial markets) to two award-winning craft beer breweries and a mix of new ventures and businesses that have been calling Stratford home for over 50 years. Throughout the twentieth century and to date, Stratford has been a bastion for manufacturing, which is the highest performing industry in the town. Sikorsky alone employs over 6,000 workers.

Table 6.1. Top Industries (2019)

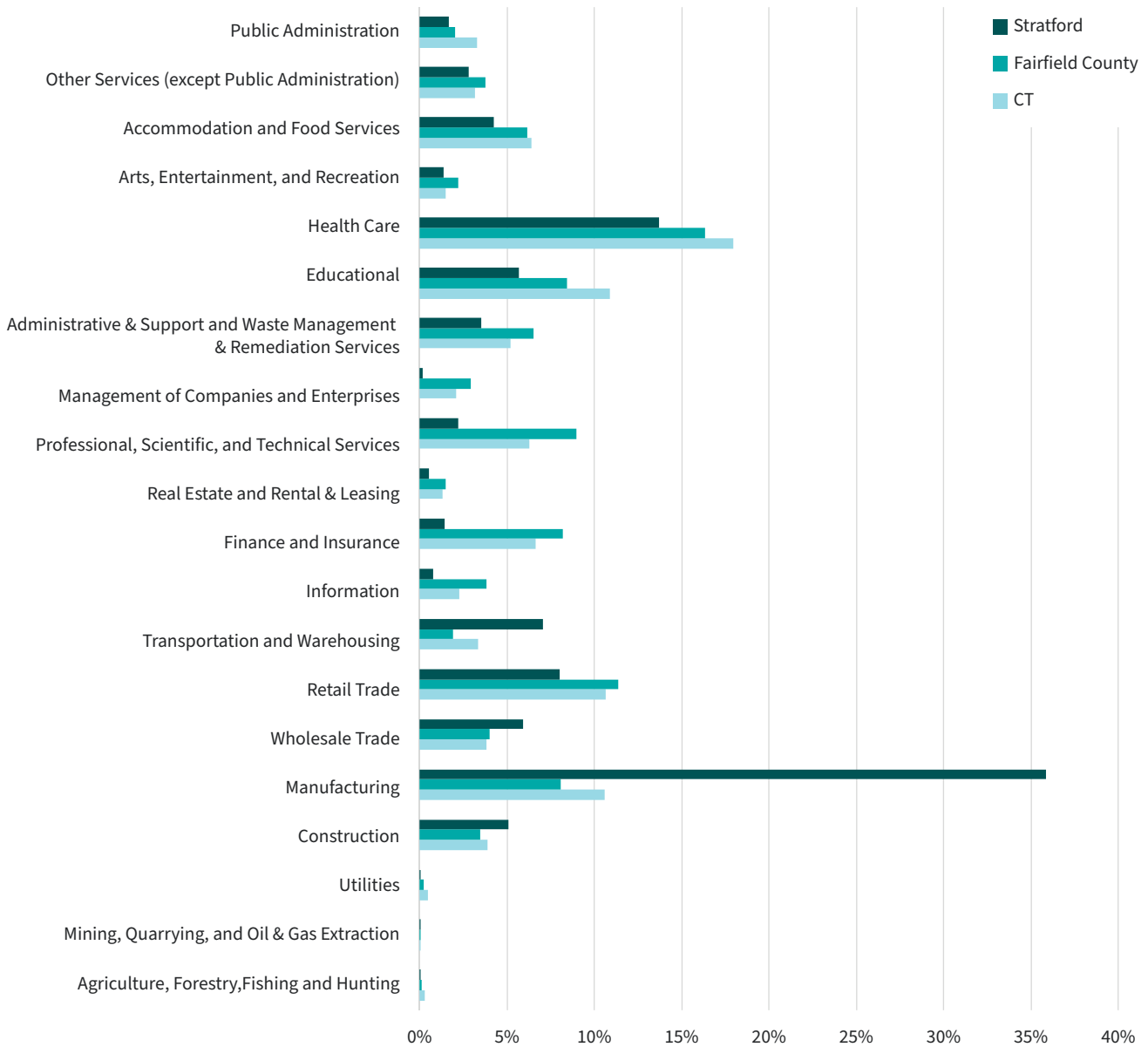
	Employment	Employers	Avg. Wages
1 Manufacturing	7,961	73	\$108,089
2 Health Care & Social Assistance	3,024	153	\$47,793
3 Retail Trade	2,064	146	\$33,444
4 Transportation & Warehousing	1,882	48	\$52,739
5 Local Government	1,658	20	\$72,768
All Industries	24,431	1,428	\$70,373

Source: CT Data Collaborative, 2021 Stratford Town Profile

Additionally, Stratford has higher percentage of transportation and warehousing, wholesale trade, and construction jobs than the County and the State, as can be seen in [Figure 6.1](#). Much of Stratford’s land area is zoned for industrial uses, aiding in the development of these types of businesses.

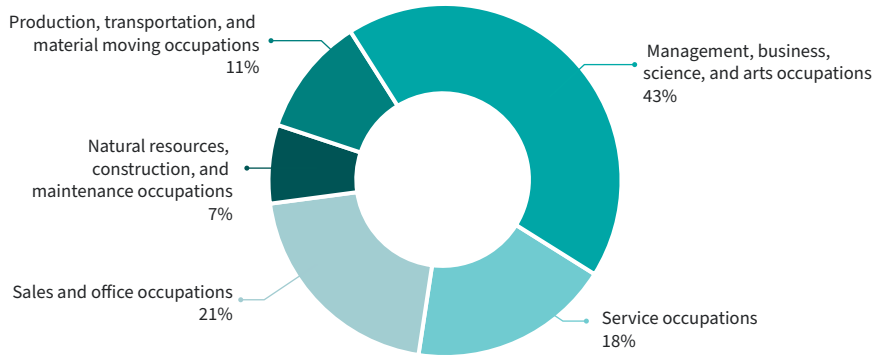
Stratford slightly lags behind the County and State in its share of health care, educational, and finance and insurance jobs.

Figure 6.1. Jobs in Town by Industry (2020)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap Application and LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics, 2020

Figure 6.2. Occupations (2021)



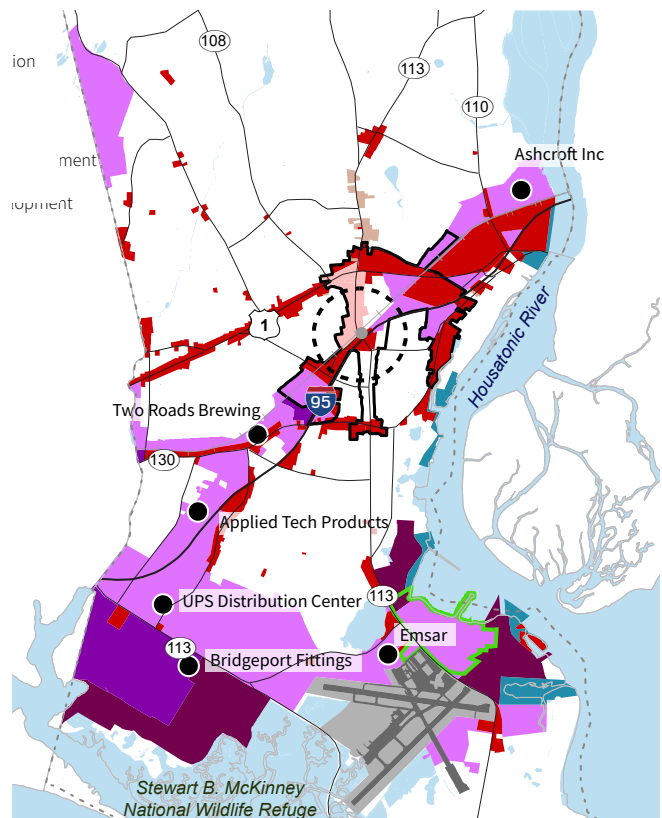
Source: American Community Survey – 2021

Of Stratford’s employed population 16 years and over, approximately 43% of workers are employed in management, business, science, and arts occupations. Over 18% are employed in service occupations, over 20% are employed in sales and office occupations. Nearly 11% are employed in production, transportation, and material moving occupations. About 7% are employed in natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations.

Stratford’s major employers include Sikorsky, A Lockheed Martin Company, Two Roads Brewing Company, Connecticut Distributors, Bridgeport Fittings, Ashcroft, Inc., and Lord Chamberlain Nursing & Rehabilitation Center. There are a total of 5,689 active businesses in Stratford. Since 2001, the Town has seen a steady stream of new business registrations, with an all-time high of 520 in 2020 despite the COVID-19 pandemic. Convenient access to major highways such as I-95 and the Merritt Parkway, in addition to Metro-North rail service, makes Stratford an attractive location to establish a business. Businesses along the Lordship Boulevard value the presence of both UPS and FedEx nearby.

Stratford’s major job centers are primarily at the Sikorsky Aircraft Corporation north of the Merritt Parkway, within Town Center (Barnum Avenue and Main Street), and in other commercial and industrial areas such as Stratford Avenue and Lordship Boulevard area, south of I-95. These are located in areas that are zoned for commercial and industrial uses.

Figure 6.3. Job Concentration (2020)



Source: Town of Stratford GIS

Table 6.2. SOTS Business Registrations

New Business Registrations by Year

2001	254	2006	312	2011	309	2016	318
2002	291	2007	351	2012	285	2017	376
2003	279	2008	320	2013	273	2018	411
2004	309	2009	279	2014	290	2019	396
2005	353	2010	262	2015	334	2020	520

Total Active Businesses 5,689

Source: CT Data Collaborative, 2021 Stratford Town Profile

Labor Force

As of March 2023, Stratford had a total labor force of 26,767 workers and accounts for roughly 6% of Fairfield County's labor force, which totals 473,231. Stratford's labor force (including both employed and unemployed residents) has shrunk since 2019, a pattern which is also reflected in both Fairfield County and the State. This could be due to the removal of a segment of the unemployed population from the labor force and unemployment rate statistics, if they are not actively looking for work. Several other factors may be contributing to this decrease, including an aging population, early retirement, lingering COVID apprehension, increased childcare responsibilities, and discouragement.

Stratford is a major employment center for the region, and when adjusted by population, Stratford has more jobs (per capita) than the surrounding municipalities of Trumbull, Monroe, Fairfield, Easton, and even the City of Bridgeport.

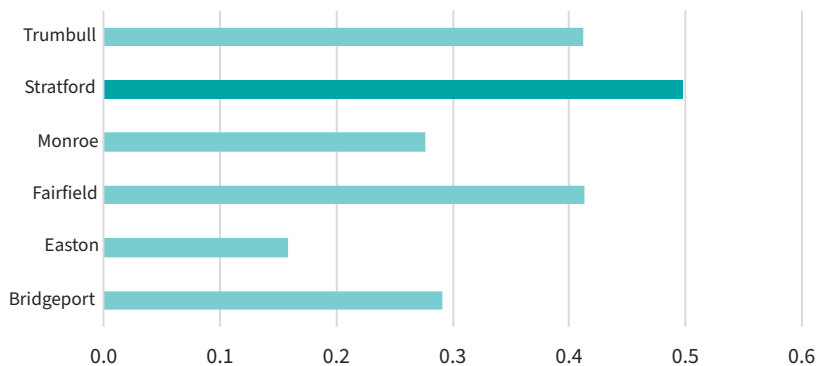
Stratford's unemployment rate has declined nearly 4% since 2013, when it was 8.7%. There was a spike in 2020 when the unemployment rate was a 9.4%, but that can be attributed to COVID-19 and is consistent with the unemployment rates of Fairfield County and the State. Despite decreasing since the high in 2020, Stratford's unemployment rate has consistently been above that of the County and State.

Figure 6.4. Labor Force and Unemployment Rate (March 2023)



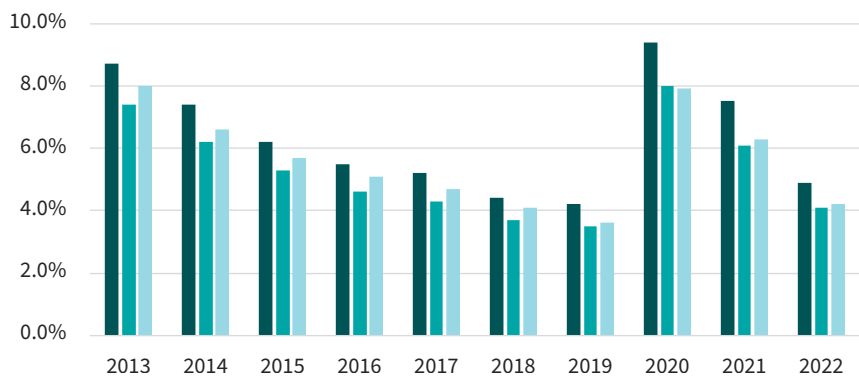
Source: CT Department of Labor, 2023

Figure 6.5. Jobs per Capita by Town or City (2020)



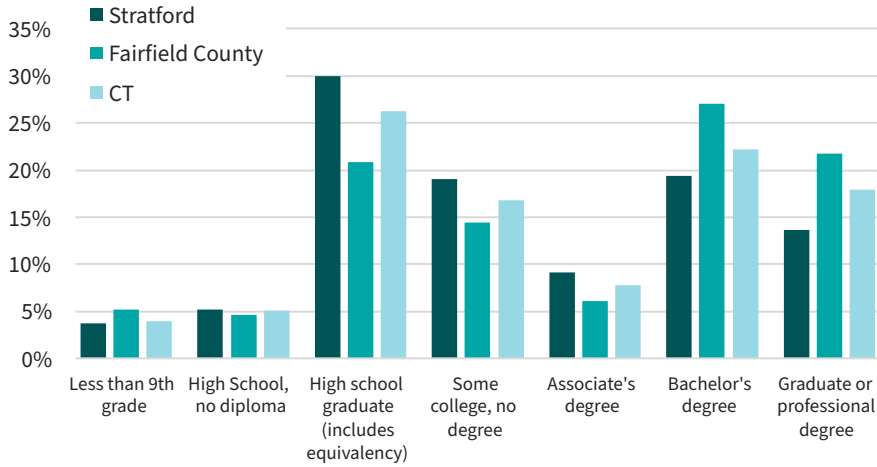
Source: US Census LEHD OnTheMap, 2020

Figure 6.6. Unemployment vs County and State



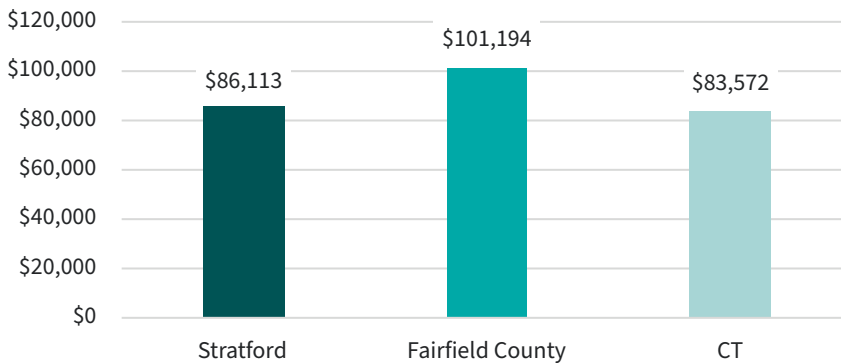
Source: CT Department of Labor, 2013-2022

Figure 6.7. Educational Attainment (2021)



Source: American Community Survey – 2021

Figure 6.8. Median Household Income (2017-21)



Source: American Community Survey – 2021

Education & Income

Education attainment of Stratford’s population shows more people with high school degrees compared to Fairfield County and the state. As of 2021, the majority of residents aged 25 and older held at least an associate’s degree and 33% had obtained a bachelor’s degree or higher. Fewer residents hold bachelors and graduate degrees than residents of the Fairfield County and state. Many of Stratford’s residents are employed in manufacturing industries within the Town; these industries have historically provided well-paying jobs that don’t require a college degree.

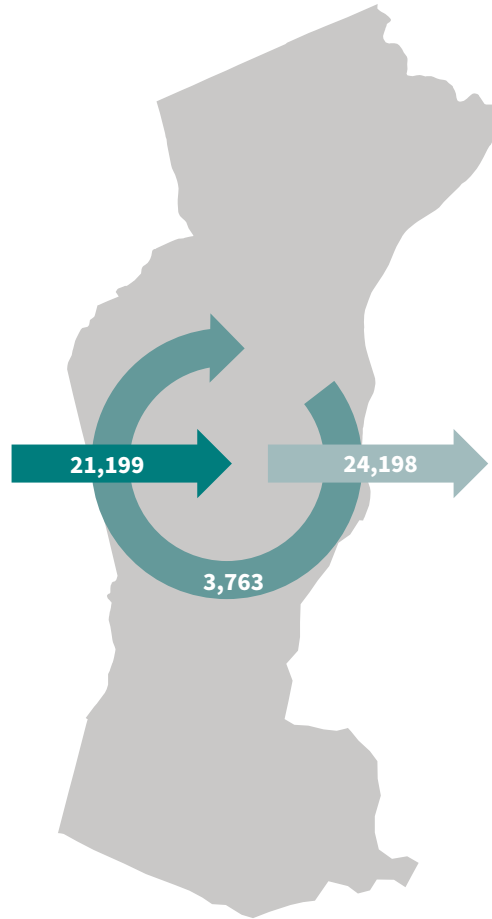
Household incomes are lower in Stratford than in Fairfield County but are higher than Statewide household incomes. Census data indicates that the largest share of Stratford households earns between \$100,000 and \$150,000 annually. 4,106 households fall within this earning bracket, equaling 19.2% of the Town’s total households. Nearly 40% of Stratford’s households earn \$100,000 or more compared to 49% in Fairfield County.

Job Locations & Commuting Trends

The majority of Stratford’s residents commute out of town each day, more than the number of workers who commute into town. Over 22,000 working residents commute to locations outside of Stratford while over 21,000 people who live elsewhere commute into the Town for work each day. Approximately 3,222 of Stratford’s labor force works within the Town. Stratford’s residents, who commute outside the town for work, commute as far as New York City or as close by as Bridgeport. The five leading work destinations outside of Stratford include Bridgeport, New York City, Milford, Stamford and Shelton.

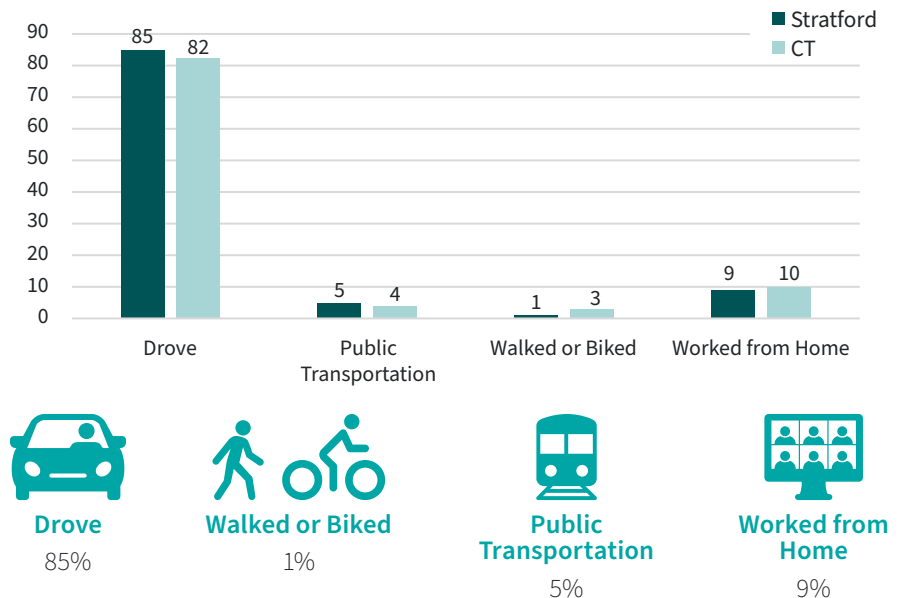
Nearly 85% of Stratford’s residents drive to work, while about 5% take public transportation, and about 1% walk or bike. Approximately 9% of residents work from home, which has doubled since 2019 pre-pandemic numbers. These commuting trends closely resemble those of the State as a whole.

Figure 6.9. Commuting Patterns (2020)



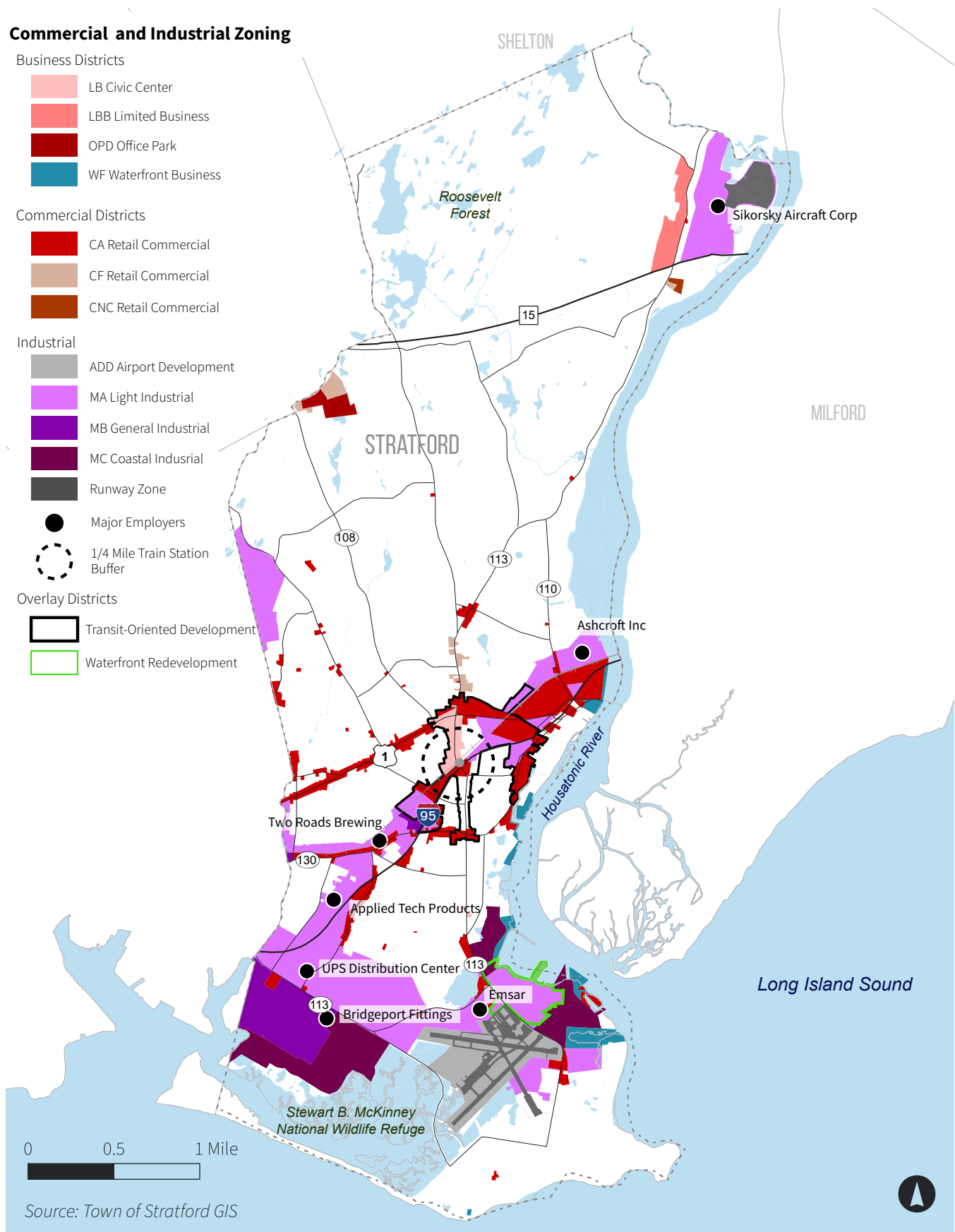
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap Application and LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics, 2020

Figure 6.10. Journey to Work (2021)



Source: American Community Survey – 2021

Figure 6.11. Commercial and Industrial Zoning





Riley's Restaurant, Source: FHI Studio

Business Districts

Stratford has four business districts including two limited business zoning districts, LB and LBB, an Office Park District (OPD) and a Waterfront (WF) Zoning District. The LB district includes the Stratford Town Hall and other civic uses. LBB district is located in the northern portion of Stratford, near the Sikorsky Aircraft Corporation. This area has close and irregular contours and topography where limited business uses are appropriate. The OPD consists of one or more buildings, each with one or more office units, which may be owned by the sponsor and/or occupants thereof under a cooperative or condominium arrangement created in a park-like environment. The WF District's purpose is to preserve and enhance existing water-dependent uses, encourage new water-dependent uses where appropriate and encourage development which is compatible with the coastal resource characteristics. Access for the general public along the water's edge and the development of complimentary uses and activities on the waterfront helps to integrate this District with surrounding districts.

Commercial and Retail Districts

Stratford has three retail commercial districts that vary by location and allowed uses. General commercial retail areas are those found primarily along major roadways such as Barnum Avenue and Ferry Boulevard in the CA zone. These include Stratford's shopping centers such as

Stratford Crossing and Stratford Square. Stratford's CF Retail Commercial District allows for professional and business offices and financial institutions as well as retail services and stores. CF districts can be found along Main Street and Hawley Lane. Stratford's CNC Retail Commercial districts or neighborhood shopping centers include retail services, restaurants, and other food service establishments and are located at Parkway Plaza (6540 Main Street). The Office of Economic Development maintains a list of all existing businesses in Stratford and communicates with them routinely to offer technical support as needed. The Office also coordinates local festivals and events such as Main Street Festival, Blues on the Beach, and Restaurant Week to

support small businesses in the town. Since 2019, the long vacant former Shakespeare site has also been re-opened to the general public to host outdoor farmers markets and events.

Industrial Districts

Stratford has five industrially zoned districts, most of which are concentrated in the southern portion of Town, along Stratford Avenue, Surf Avenue, Honeyspot Road, and Lordship Boulevard. Other pockets of industrially zoned properties include the Sikorsky Aircraft Corporation, as well as an undeveloped parcel between Broadbridge Avenue and the Bridgeport town line. These districts include the Airport Development District (ADD), the MA Light Industrial District, the MB General Industrial District, the MC Coastal Industrial District, and the Runway Zone. The ADD includes portions of the land areas within the airport property boundaries of the Sikorsky Memorial Airport, but excluding the area within the Runway Zone.

Light industrial uses are allowed within the MA zone, while heavier industrial uses are allowed in the MB zone. The MC district focuses on the areas that are subject to flooding or contain or border on sensitive coastal resources or open water, estuarine embayments or coastal flood hazard areas. Stricter limitations on the development and use of land in these areas is necessary to preserve and protect coastal resources. The former Stratford Army Engine Plant (SAEP) site is part of the MA District (47.6 acres), which

has a preferred developer in place. Demolition of existing structures and environmental remediation will begin once CT DEEP and US Army convey this site to the developer. Potential development on this site would create roughly 300 new jobs in Stratford. The SAEP site is also part of the Waterfront Redevelopment overlay district. The purpose of this District is to guide land uses to enable the significant renewal and revitalization of the waterfront along a unique section of the Housatonic River in Stratford and to appropriately and sustainably utilize the extraordinary shoreline assets located there. This District encourages the development of enhanced waterfront access and utilization opportunities for residents and businesses and provides flexibility in the administration of land use regulations, while fully protecting and advancing the health, safety and welfare of Stratford residents. Land uses within the industrial districts are characterized by older industrial buildings and properties that are home to a mixture of commercial services, auto repair and sales, machine shops, construction yards, storage, and manufacturing facilities. Start-up spaces are also a sought-after use in the industrial area. The industrial area is anchored by major establishments such as Sikorsky Aircraft Corporation, Ashcroft, and Bridgeport Fittings. Recognizing the value that an industrial presence adds to Stratford, the Town has actively promoted the adaptive reuse of industrial properties and seeks to balance shifting market trends that favor mixed-use development with the importance of preserving key industrial sites.



Surfside Hotel, Source: FHI Studio



GFI Partners, LLC Distribution Center, Source: Town of Stratford

Residential Districts

Residential development directly impacts economic development by providing a customer base for businesses such as restaurants, grocery stores, and service-based businesses. Additionally, residential development can increase the number of available workers in the town. Since the formation of the Transit Oriented Development (TOD) zone, a total of 754 apartments have been approved either within or closer to TOD, of which 231 would be government assisted affordable units (pursuant to 8-30g) once occupied. Many of these units are located near commercial areas, which provide foot traffic and patrons to the surrounding businesses.

Data Findings

The Town's priority should be to identify new economic development opportunities which focus on redeveloping former industrial and brownfield lands, as well as transit-centered development that will enhance the vitality and quality of life in Stratford's historic Town Center. Moving forward, the Town should continue to incorporate policy

and recommendations items that make Stratford a more livable community, financially and physically.

Economic Development Initiatives

As discussed earlier, a variety of initiatives are spearheaded through the Town's Office of Economic & Community Development such as providing monthly updates to residents, hosting Celebrate Stratford community events, offering information on new business and restaurants, and promoting the Town through "Why Stratford?" a series of economic development videos that highlight Stratford's local businesses and other unique assets. Most recently, the Town was able to implement an exit 33 full interchange on Ferry Boulevard in coordination with state DOT (exiting from I-95 north) to promote direct transportation access to the businesses at Dockside where major retailers such as BJ's, Walmart, Home Depot, and Shop Rite are located as well as opening up economic opportunities along Route 1.

Following are the on-going major economic development initiatives in the town:

Former Stratford Army Engine Plant (former AVCO Plant at 550 Main Street)

The Town continues to schedule regular meetings with the developer of the project, Point Stratford Renewal (PSR), and individual Town departments to ensure that the first phases of the project, abatement and demolition go smoothly. The Town is also accessing an Urban Action Grant to design a waterfront Linear Park and a Sanitary Sewer System. The Town wants to ensure that the public has access to the waterfront of this 77 acre property. The Town awaits the conveyance of this property.

Former Center School Property Redevelopment (1000 East Broadway)

The Town Council selected the proposal of Romano Brothers Builders in December 2022 to construct a 154-unit housing development at the former Center School Property in the TOD zone. The Town has agreed to sell the 3.6 acre property to Romano Brothers for \$1.69M. (Property size: 3.6 acres).

Former Contract Plating Site Redevelopment (540 Longbrook Avenue)

The Town is looking for a developer for this 10+ acre site. Once a commercial/ industrial end use is chosen, DECD has put aside additional funds to continue remediation of the property. (Property size: 10.5 acres).

Parkway Plaza Redevelopment (at former Leslie Street – 6540 Main Street)

Construction is well under way for a mixed use development, with completion of Starbucks anticipated by the end of first quarter in 2023. Phase II will include a hotel overlooking Housatonic River and two other retail/ office space uses totaling 14,000 sf and 4,000 sf respectively. (Property size: 1.7 acres).

Former Raymark Site Superfund Cleanup (100 Frog Pond Lane)

The remediation is on schedule and is currently taking place along the Ferry Boulevard Corridor. The project will culminate with a cap on the now abandoned Raybestos Memorial Field, which once hosted roughly 12,000 people at the Stratford Brakettes Woman’s softball games. This project is earmarked for completion by mid-2024. (Property size: 13.5 acres).



Conceptual site plan design of Parkway Plaza redevelopment at 6540 Main Street, Source: Town of Stratford

Former Shakespeare Theatre site redevelopment (1880 Elm Street)

The State Bond Commission approved \$3M for the redevelopment of the former Shakespeare Theatre site in April 2022; the funding will be utilized to redevelop this site partially as an arts and entertainment venue and retaining a portion as open space for hosting community fairs and festivals, as envisioned by the residents in the visioning workshops in 2019 (Property size: 12.3 acres).

Covid-19 Resources for Stratford Businesses

Stratford’s Economic Development Department continues to provide resources and counseling services to Stratford’s businesses. Many initiatives have been spearheaded by the department which include Economic Development videos (funded by the Economic and Community Development Commission) highlighting local businesses and Celebrate Stratford events, which bring the community together through the year. The Stratford Strong long-term recovery task force was initiated in the summer of 2020 through a partnership between the Economic and Community Development Office and Office of Community Services. It offered community recovery assistance with a focus on identifying community needs and leveraging financial and volunteer resources to address those needs.

Key partners include Sterling House Community Center, South End Community Center, Stratford YMCA, Stratford Visiting Nurse Association, Stratford Police Activities League, Stratford Hispanic Heritage Committee, Stratford Library Association, Older Adult Services, Community Services, Stratford Chamber of Commerce, Stratford Rotary Club, the Stratford Interfaith Clergy Association, Access Independence, United Illuminating, Stratford Public Schools, the Metropolitan Council of Governments (MetroCOG), Stratford Housing Authority, and area small businesses.

Grand List Changes

Stratford’s Grand List has changed over the past ten years. Single family residential properties still contribute to over three-quarters (76%) of Stratford’s total real property, but this number has decreased since 2011 when it was at 79%. Commercial and industrial properties have increased, and apartment complexes have nearly doubled in the amount of their share of Stratford’s Grand List.

Long Range Planning Programs

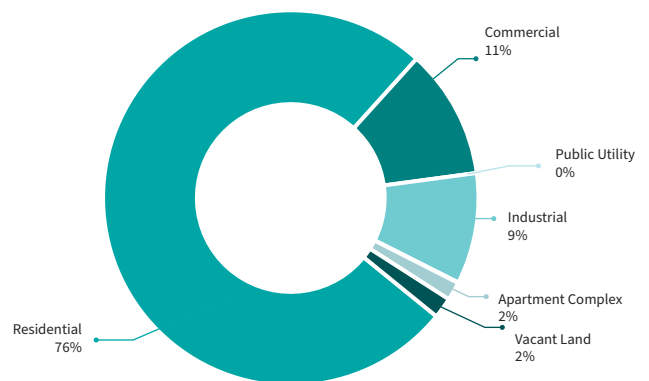
The Town has also been investing in long range planning programs that will ultimately support economic efforts. Although not directly tied to the creation of jobs or enhancement of tax base, Complete Streets implementation initiatives currently undertaken by the Town in the Town Center would increase foot and bike traffic to local businesses and aid in creating a vibrant, pedestrian scaled Town Center in Stratford. The Town is also currently investing in a zoning regulations re-write so that they are efficient, and easy to read and comprehend for residents, businesses, developers, and investors.

Table 6.3. Town Grand List 2021

	2021	2011
Real Estate Totals	\$4,584,675,784	\$4,424,713,800
Personal Property	\$681,118,728	\$453,322,754
Motor Vehicle	\$494,214,415	\$320,711,877
Grand Totals	\$5,760,008,927	\$5,198,748,431

Source: Town of Stratford

Figure 6.12. Grand List by Real Property Type (2021)



Source: Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development, 2011 and 2021 Grand Lists by Town



What We Heard From the Community

When discussing economic development concerns during POCD workshops, many residents felt that Stratford could benefit from having more restaurants spread out geographically throughout the Town. Mixed use developments that include restaurants, services businesses like salons, and commercial businesses are needed. Quality businesses, with owners who care about Stratford and employ Stratford's residents, are desired. Many residents said they would like to see a movie theater or other types of activity centers come into Town so that kids and older adults have things to do. The former Bally's Gym property (411 Barnum Avenue Cut-off) was discussed as a great location for businesses as well as a structured parking facility. Uses such as coffee shops, or a bike shop to support users of the Greenway were also cited. Many residents felt that Stratford does not need any more storage facilities, tobacco shops, pawn shops, or auto industry uses.

It is important to note that the Economic and Community Development Commission petitioned for a temporary moratorium on self-storage facilities in the town, which was granted by the Zoning Commission in 2022.

Many of Stratford's business owners discussed the ease of conducting business in Stratford, complementing the Town on its straightforward permitting processes and ongoing support of the business community. They described Stratford as being a business-friendly community, and cited Stratford's location and connectivity to the region and employee base as main factors they consider when locating their business in the Town. Some business owners expressed a desire for more streetscape cleanup and improved aesthetics of some of the Town's commercial areas such as Paradise Green, Barnum Avenue, and the Town Center. The Town's Architectural Review Board (ARB) members are concerned about the design of as-of-right developments in historical commercial areas such as Paradise Green.

Many business owners said that the Town's numerous community events help to promote their businesses and the Town should continue hosting such events. Residents mentioned redevelopment of waterfront, particularly SAEP site, and former Shakespeare site as top priorities for the next decade.

The redevelopment of former Shakespeare site and former SAEP site are top priorities for residents.

Architectural Review Board

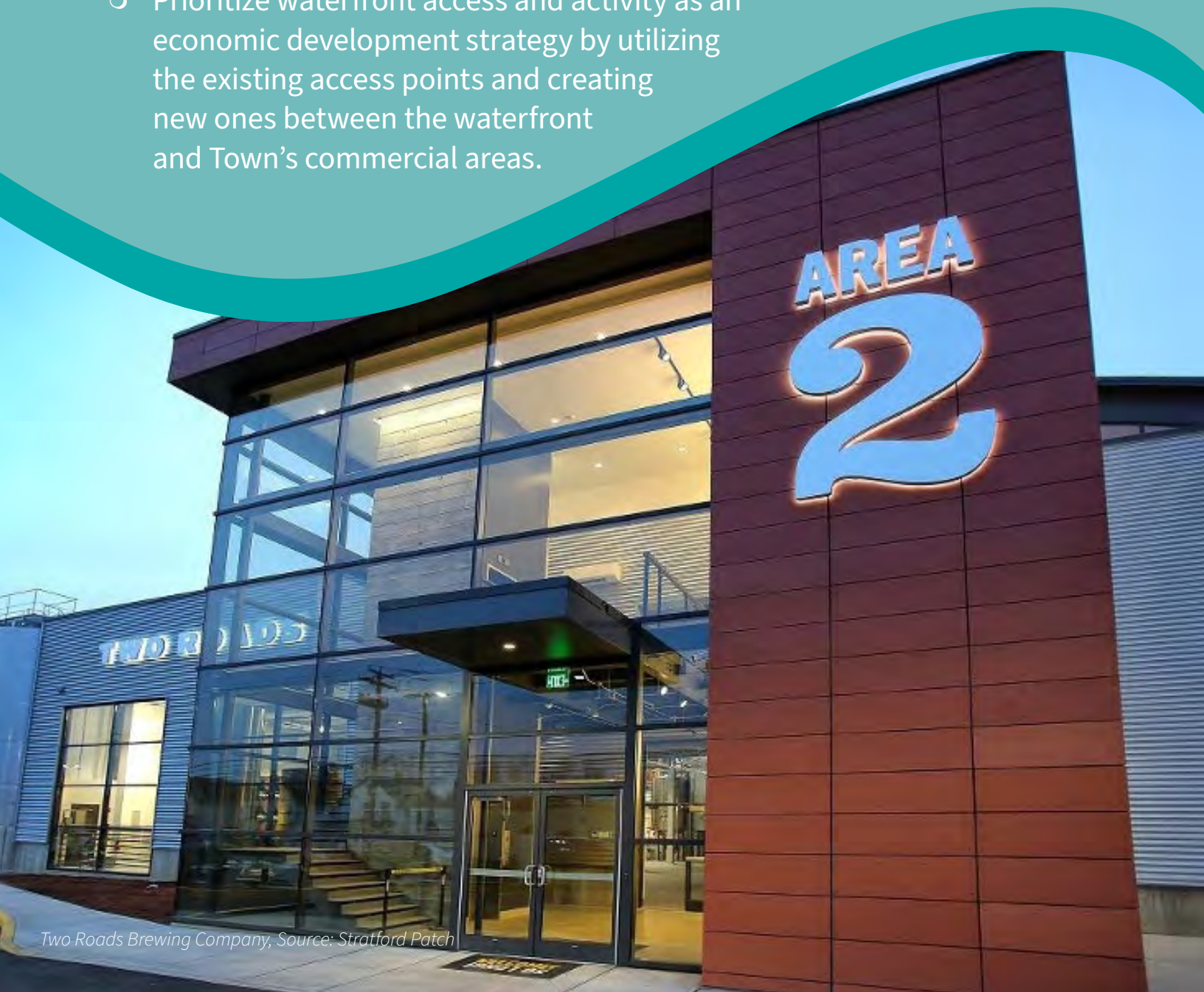
The Architectural Review Board (ARB) was established in 2018 to review and recommend design guidelines for special case and variance applications subject to review by the Zoning Commission and the Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA). To date, the ARB has reviewed 31 applications since their inception.



Rendering for Christ Church property on 2009-2019 Main Street that was approved by the ARB in 2020; construction to commence by 2024.

Goals

- Foster a vibrant economic climate that attracts both large and small businesses to create a thriving community that benefits businesses, their employees and residents.
- Grow the commercial and industrial property tax bases through active recruitment of diverse businesses in order to lesson the tax burden on residents.
- Enhance arts, cultural, and entertainment opportunities that strengthen Stratford’s position as a local and regional tourist destination, thereby improving the quality of life in Stratford.
- Prioritize waterfront access and activity as an economic development strategy by utilizing the existing access points and creating new ones between the waterfront and Town’s commercial areas.



Objectives & Action Steps

Objective 1. Retain existing businesses and grow new businesses.

1. Ensure that the Office of Economic Development has the resources needed to engage in the strategies of this Plan and meet the ongoing needs of economic development in Stratford.
2. Work with area legislators to increase funding assistance through state and federal grants.
3. Diversify housing choices in the town to expand the pool of local employee base for existing and potential employers.
4. Continue to invest in Complete Streets, Greenways, and encourage other multimodal options such as ridesharing, carpooling, etc.
5. Work with local employers to educate and promote safe bicycling in town such as share the road campaign, bike to work week, forest to shore weekend rides, etc.
6. Enhance connectivity between anchor institutions and major employment and commercial districts through targeted public infrastructure improvements.
7. Continue to host events and festivals that connect residents with local businesses and artists.
8. Encourage the development of artist housing guidelines that promote flexible live-work spaces in commercial and industrial districts for local artists and artisans.
9. Invest in transformative placemaking opportunities that create a business environment where residents stay longer and spend more money, and developers/investors are more open to invest in new businesses due to the quality of the place.
10. Conduct a Town Center parking study and parking study of all commercial areas in the town to identify surface parking lots that are underutilized and encourage shared parking, where feasible; modernize Town's commercial parking requirements.
11. Revitalize and enhance Stratford Center and commercial corridors in town as unique destinations for residents and shoppers, and commuters through successful implementation of the Town's commercial design guidelines developed by the Architectural Review Board (ARB).
12. Encourage stewardship of the Town's commercial corridors through the creation of special service districts (SSDs)/ business improvement districts (BIDs) as permitted by state statute; educate businesses on the impact of BIDs to their business and local economy.
13. Consider investing in a commercial façade improvement grant program to facilitate the implementation of preferred design of commercial properties in the town.
14. Implement the recommendations of Stratford's Affordable Housing Plan to promote housing diversity.
15. Explore the feasibility of redeveloping Sikorsky Airport as a commercial airport that enhance the economic competitiveness of Stratford.
16. Advocate for frequent high speed rail service from New York to Washington D.C. with a potential stop location in Stratford, which has the highest jobs per capita in Fairfield County.
17. Prioritize redevelopment of older industrial areas into new, attractive developments for businesses and industries.
18. Incentivize development projects which revitalize underutilized and brownfield sites.

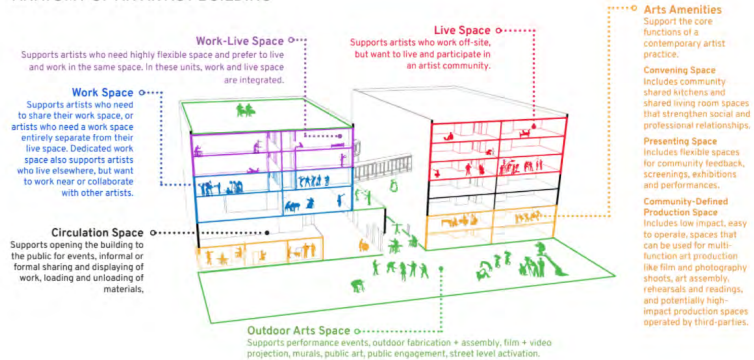
City of Boston's Artist Housing Guidelines

The City of Boston has helped create work-live space and retain existing spaces for artists in the city through a collaboration with city departments and agencies including the Mayor's Office of Arts and Culture, the Boston Planning & Development Agency, and the Department of Neighborhood Development. Like all development across the city, ADA compliance and innovation is a priority for artist spaces.

The City of Boston is particularly interested in projects which create spaces that 1) are permanently dedicated to artists 2) are located in zones between industrial and residential neighborhoods, 3) are located in zones that do not support traditional family housing, and 4) offer work-live spaces or work-only spaces for rent and for purchase at a variety of prices.



BUILDING COMPONENTS ANATOMY OF AN ARTIST BUILDING



17

Source: [Boston's Artist Housing Guidelines](#)

Objective 2. Encourage the diversification and growth of the Town's tax base.

1. Continue to maintain a current list of developable properties in town and publish this list on Town website with zoning, site, and ownership information.
2. Facilitate new development that bolsters the local tax base.
3. Continue to invest in a marketing campaign highlighting Stratford's strengths and assets through print and digital materials.
4. Partner with the Bridgeport Regional Business Council (BGBC) and the Stratford Chamber of Commerce (SCC) to actively promote Stratford and distribute campaign materials and information.

Objective 3. Make development decisions that are predictable, fair, and cost effective.

1. Continue to streamline the Town's business permitting and licensing processes.
2. Conduct a build out analysis of Town Center to analyze the redevelopment potential of underutilized sites within the TOD zone and incentivize mixed use developments proposed on such sites.
3. Continue to update zoning regulations as necessary to include new uses and to reflect current conditions and needs.

Connecticut's Legalized Recreational Marijuana (Cannabis) Law

Public Act 21-1, An Act Concerning Responsible And Equitable Regulation Of Adult-Use Cannabis, took effective in Connecticut in October 2021. In January 2023, purchasing legal marijuana was made available in designated sites throughout Connecticut. These recent regulations per state statute have facilitated the approval of a cannabis facility on Stratford Avenue. In March 2022, the Stratford Zoning Commission voted to amend Section 15B of zoning regulations thus integrating adult-use cannabis sales into the existing medical marijuana regulations.

Objective 4. Identify areas in Stratford that are suited for redevelopment and adaptive reuse for industrial, commercial, retail, and office businesses.

1. Continue to encourage infill development on vacant and underutilized lots.
2. Include wayfinding signage, appropriate streetscapes and landscaping, and enhancement of gateways to historic neighborhoods of the town.
3. Encourage the creation of coworking spaces in commercial districts.
4. Continue to encourage mixed-use and higher density development in proximity to existing and planned transit stations and existing commercial districts.
5. Continue to work with the preferred developer of former Stratford Army Engine Plant site to expedite the redevelopment of this property and to promote public access to the waterfront at this site.
6. Coordinate economic development initiatives with the recommendations contained in the Waterfront Section of this plan.
7. Encourage the expansion of high-speed broadband coverage and gigabit internet access along the Lordship Boulevard business corridor in order to attract high tech, precision & supply chain manufacturing that bring townwide broadband and wireless facilities/infrastructure.

Objective 5. Grow the town's tourism industry.

1. Expand the marketing plan aimed at attracting visitors to the town's landscapes, historic properties, museums, waterfront, and other land marks, including Housatonic River Greenway, Long Beach/ Great Meadows Marsh, Roosevelt Forest, and Short Beach Complex.
2. Consider creating an interactive town based website that advertises Stratford's businesses and historic sites, provides a brief history of these sites, and is regularly updated.
3. Strengthen the connections of the pedestrian and bicycle facilities routes to commercial districts and historic sites.
4. Prioritize the redevelopment of former Shakespeare Theater site into a local and regional arts and entertainment destination.
5. Connect visitors to Stratford's history, cultural, and natural resources through audio tours, brochures, historic plaques, and other marketing materials, utilizing distribution outlets such as CT Welcome Centers, CTVisit, etc. Continue to publicize Stratford's Hidden Gems website and museum month.

Objective 6. Strengthen existing partnerships and form new partnerships aimed at workforce development.

1. Continue to partner with Stratford Chamber of Commerce (SCC) to identify skill gaps, encourage workforce development, training, employee pipelines, and the potential for innovation or entrepreneurial activity.
2. Support the Stratford Chamber of Commerce in conducting annual and semi-annual Stratford (or regional) job fairs and match new businesses with existing skill sets/education levels of Stratford residents.
3. Continue to support businesses in promoting career pathways in whole sale and retail trades, and manufacturing.

Objective 7. Encourage targeted waterfront commercial development that is resilient to natural hazards and sensitive to conservation of critical environmental areas.

1. Continue to implement the vision of the Waterfront Plan (updated in 2023) to protect existing water dependent uses and to direct the location of new water dependent uses in strategic locations.
2. Ensure that waterfront commercial developments do not adversely impact wetlands and other natural resource areas.
3. Incorporate design standards for waterfront commercial sites that are resilient to coastal flooding and sea level rise, and restrict the use of contaminated materials that may discharge pollutants into the water.
4. Remove any barriers to access the waterfront from the town's commercial areas through necessary zoning amendments and infrastructure investments in missing sidewalks and bike lanes.
5. Support commercial developments by the waterfront that minimize potential adverse impacts to nearby uses.
6. Continue to work with the preferred developer of former SAEP site, and state and federal agencies to maintain adequate public access to the waterfront at this site.

Source: Town of Stratford



Cultural & Historical Resources

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Cultural & Historic Resources

Goal

Preserve, promote, and protect cultural and historic resources for current and future generations as well as encouraging the stewardship of historical landmarks and properties.

Baseline Conditions

Stratford enjoys considerable cultural and historic resources that contribute to its quality of life and sense of place. First settled in 1639, Stratford is historically important as one of Connecticut's first-settled places. Much of Stratford's history, growth and development, from the first settlement in 1639 to the present day, is tied to the town's coastal location on the Housatonic River and Long Island Sound. Native Americans called this location Cupheag, meaning "sheltered place," and Housatonic, meaning "land beyond the mountains." Dutch explorer Adriaen Block, sailing in Long Island Sound in 1614, observed Stratford Point's remarkable prominence at the mouth of the river. English colonists followed, establishing the first settlement at Mac's Harbor about two miles upriver from the Sound. Soon afterward, the town was named Stratford. At that time, the town included lands that would later become the communities of Monroe, Shelton, Trumbull and Bridgeport. Stratford's coastal location prompted ship-building and maritime trade. By 1702, the town was one of Connecticut's eight colonial ports of entry. The town's original port was located in the area now known as Bond's Dock. Maritime trade with New York, Boston and the West Indies flourished in the 18th and 19th centuries. River traffic increased when steamboats arrived in the 1820s.

The historic former Stratford Army Engine Plant (SAEP) site located on the Housatonic River was formerly the site

of the Sikorsky Aviation Corporation established in 1929. This property has seen the manufacture of "flying boats" for the first trans-oceanic flights, the first helicopter flight, and the production of Corsairs for essential service in World War II and the Korean War. Later, AVCO Lycoming, one of the nation's major manufacturers of aircraft engines, established a manufacturing facility on this property. Also, considered by many to have been "first in flight" and recognized by the State of Connecticut as such, Gustave Whithead conducted his test flights nearby. Today, Sikorsky Aircraft is the largest manufacturing facility in the Town, one of the biggest producers of helicopters in the world, and operates a manufacturing facility on the Housatonic River just upstream of the Merritt Parkway/Route 15.

Stratford is also a center of recreational boating and commercial shellfishing. Presently public attention is focused once again on opportunities for economic growth and community development presented by the town's waterfront. The Housatonic River and Long Island Sound continue to provide Stratford's citizens with vital economic, environmental and cultural opportunities and benefits as it has throughout the Town's history.

National Register of Historic Places and Districts

Stratford has many historic resources that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places, which is administered by the National Park Service. The National Register is the official Federal list of districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects significant in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture. The town's historic resources include individual homes and properties as well as districts that are comprised of multiple properties and landscapes that contribute to each district's historic significance.

The National Register is the official listing of the nation's cultural resources that are worthy of preservation. A listing on the National Register is a prestigious recognition of the importance of a site but does not affect the owner's rights to make use of the property as they wish.

Protection and preservation tools available include the following:

- Provide for review of federally funded, licensed or sponsored projects which may affect listed historic properties.
- Make owners of historic properties eligible to apply for federal grants-in-aid (when available) for preservation activities.
- Encourage the rehabilitation, through tax incentives, of income-producing historic properties that meet preservation standards.
- Provide protection from unreasonable destruction of historic/cultural resources through use of the environmental protection provisions of the Connecticut General Statutes.

Stratford’s properties, sites and districts currently listed on the National Register are shown on the Historic Resources map (Figure 7.1) and summarized in the table below.



Historic Toll Booth from Merritt Parkway, Boothe Memorial Park, Source: FHI Studio

Table 7.1. Stratford National Register Sites

Resource	Type	National Register	Local Historic Property of District	Date Listed
Academy Hill Historic District	District	●	●	1987 & 1996
Boothe Homestead	District	●		1985
Captain David Judson House	Building	●		1973
Ephriam Wheeler House	Building	●		1992
Housatonic River Railroad Bridge, Devon Bridge	Structure	●		1987
Isaac Lewis House	Building	●		1991
John Benjamin House	Building		●	2012
Merritt Parkway National Scenic Byway	Road	●		1991
Nathan B. Booth House	Building	●		1992
Nathaniel Curtis House	Building	●		1982
Sterling Homestead	Building	●		1976
Stratford Center Historic District	District	●		1983
Stratford Point Lighthouse	Structure	●		1995

Table 7.2. Non-Residential Historic Resources

Type	Number	Era
Commercial Buildings	9	1700s
Schools and other public buildings	8	1800-1830
Factories	9	1830-1860
Churches	3	1870-1910
Bridges and engineering features	3	1860-1880
Social halls	1	1880-1910
Apartment buildings	5	1910-1930
Railroad stations	2	1905-1930

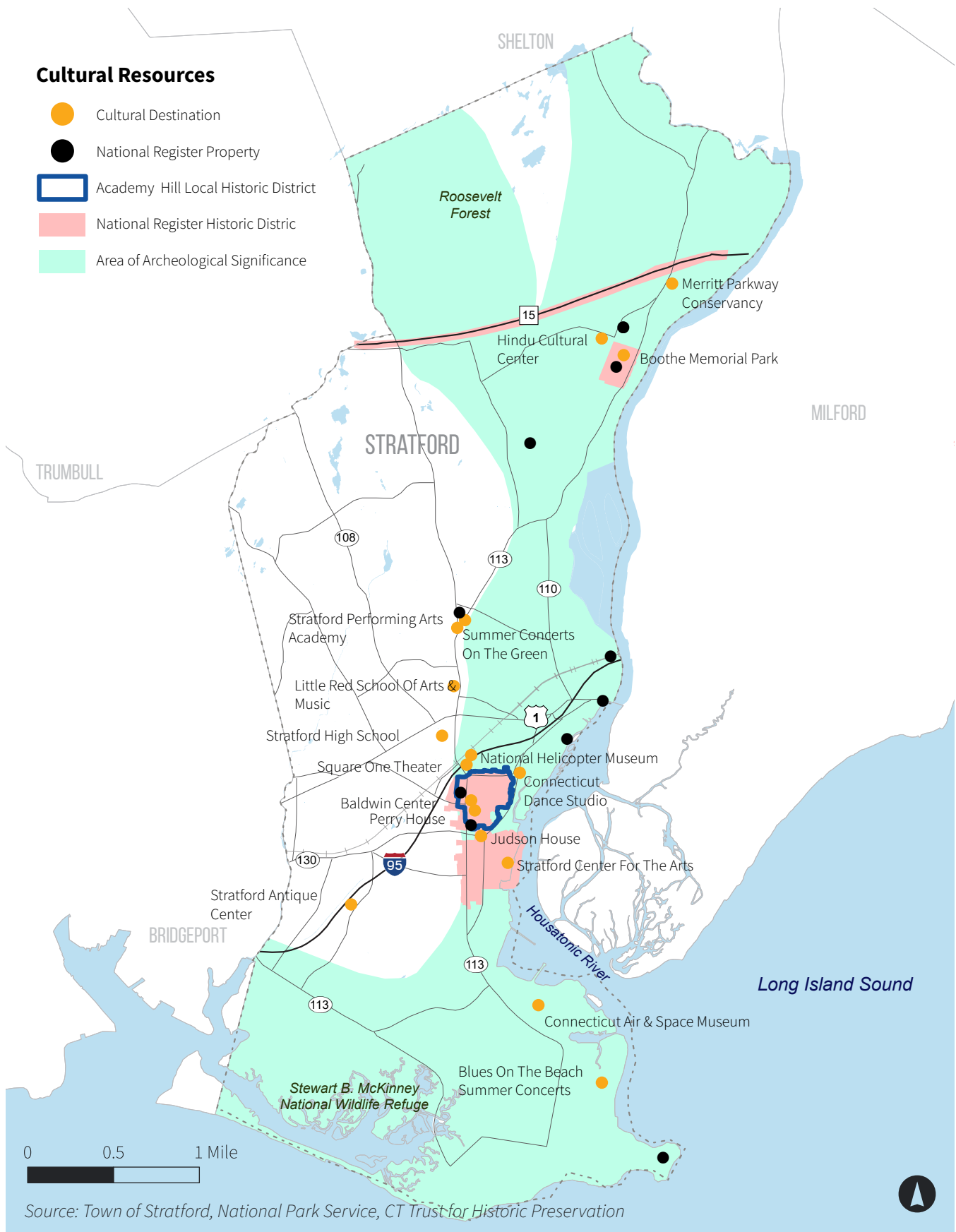
Source: 1986 Town-Wide Historic Resource Survey

Table 7.3. Historic Residential Inventory

Descriptive Name	Number	Era
18th Century Vernacular	45	1700s
Federal	12	1800-1830
Greek Revival	15	1830-1860
Victorian Vernacular	43	1870-1910
Italianate and Other Victorian Styles	4	1860-1880
Queen Anne	12	1880-1910
Bungalow	32	1910-1930
Foursquare	15	1905-1930
Colonial Revival	47	1890-1930
Other 20th Century Revival Styles (Tudor, Spanish Colonial, Neo-Classical, Neo-Gothic)	7	1910-
Total	232	

Source: 1986 Town-Wide Historic Resource Survey

Figure 7.1. Cultural Resources



State Register of Historic Places

A listing on the State Register gives honorary recognition. The listing is an additional way to recognize the historic nature of a site or structure so that consideration is given to land use decisions which may impact upon these sites or structures. Special consideration is also available under the State Building Code for State Register-listed buildings. All of the sites on the National Register are also recognized on the State Register; currently there are no sites or structures in Stratford listed separately on the State Register. However, because the listing process is generally quicker than that for the National Register, State Register listing can be used as an interim recognition for sites and structures while National Register recognition is being prepared or is pending. Stratford currently has 36 properties listed on the State Register of Historic Places. Most of these properties are concentrated near town center and in close proximity to the Academy Hill local historic district.

Stratford Local Historic District

Local historic designation carries with it the strength of the law as it applies to the regulation of the exterior appearance of sites and structures as viewed from public streets or places. The responsibility for regulation of local historic districts and historic properties rests with the Stratford Historic District Commission. The designation of a local historic district or property is intended to preserve and protect the distinctive characteristics of buildings, places of architectural and historical significance and streetscapes.

The districts that are located primarily or entirely within Stratford include the Stratford Center Historic District and the Boothe Homestead Historic District that includes the buildings and property located at Boothe Memorial Park. The Merritt Parkway National Scenic Byway is also a National Listed roadway. Stratford's local historic district is the Academy Hill Historic District (both local and national) which is located entirely within the Stratford Center Historic District.

An important part of historic preservation is identifying and listing all structures and sites of architectural and historical significance. The resulting inventory of resources can be used by the Stratford Planning and Zoning Commissions and the Historic District Commission as a tool to set preservation priorities.

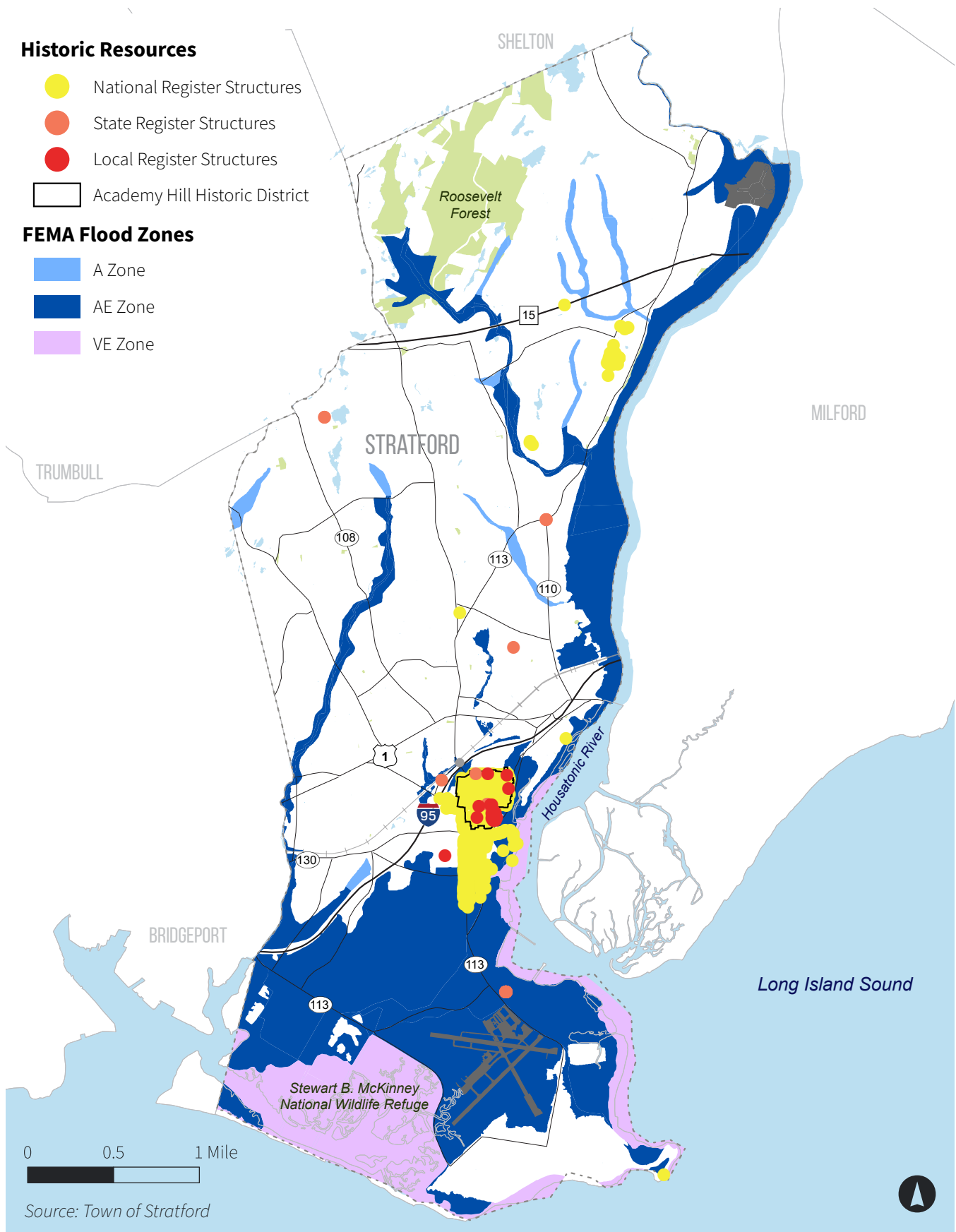
Existence of the Academy Hill local historic district creates community pride, fosters neighborhood stabilization, and enhances the appearance and authentic historic character of an area which contributes to Stratford's unique sense of place. There are 17 local historic district properties in Stratford. A strategy to speed up the review process of the local Historic District Commission for large scale developments is to have a programmatic agreement in place with the State Historic Preservation Office. This agreement details the design standards for approving exterior rehab of historic properties and mandates the hiring of an architect as staff to guide the local historic district commission.

There are a total of 416 historic structures that are documented in Stratford. Of these, 97 structures are located within the FEMA special flood hazard area. [Figure 7.2](#) on the following page highlights locations of the National, State, and Locally listed properties in relation to the FEMA special flood hazard area.



Historic Saltbox in Stratford, Source: Stratford Patch

Figure 7.2. Historic Resources





Baldwin Center

Cultural Resources

Stratford has many cultural resources such as museums, art centers, and community programs. Descriptions of these resources are provided below:

- **Baldwin Center (1000 West Broad Street)** – Provides opportunity for older adults to socialize, interact and participate in social, physical, and recreational activities. Delivery site for an array of older adult services and programs. Community meeting hall and exhibit space.
- **Boothe Memorial Park (5800 Main Street)** – A house museum and collection of historic structures moved here from around Stratford including the original Merritt Parkway toll booth at Sikorsky Aircraft, miniature lighthouse and windmill, planetarium operated by the astronomical society, landscaping.
- **Captain David Judson House and Catharine Bunnell Mitchell Museum (967 Academy Hill)** – Judson House, a National Register of Historical Places listed house built in 1750, is home of the Stratford Historical Society. It features artifacts and exhibits. Next door, the Catharine Bunnell Mitchell Museum features exhibits of Stratford history and genealogy library.
- **Connecticut Air and Space Center (225 B Main Street)** – Collects and restores rotary and fixed-wing aircraft, engines and other artifacts; celebrates, educates and preserves the legacy of air and space pioneers of the state of Connecticut.
- **Connecticut Dance Conservatory (279 Ferry Boulevard)** – Dance instruction for children.
- **Hindu Cultural Center of Connecticut (96 Chapel Street)** – Social, cultural and religious events celebrating Hindu festivals and holidays, promotes awareness, offers religious and cultural education programs, community service projects.
- **Little Red School of Art and Music (2979 Main Street)** – Arts and music instruction for children.
- **Merritt Parkway Conservancy (P.O. Box 17072, Stamford, CT)** – Works to preserve this historic roadway through education, advocacy and partnership.
- **National Helicopter Museum (2480 Main Street)** – Photo essays, photos and models documenting the development of rotary-winged aircraft, special exhibits, bookstore.
- **Perry House (1128 West Broad Street)** – 1680 home of one of Stratford’s founders, Benjamin Beach (Perry was a later owner). Hosts programs and events aimed at educating and celebrating Stratford’s unique history.
- **Sister Cities Chorus (Volunteer organization, location undisclosed)** – Multi-generational community chorus. Registration and fee required. Rehearses Monday evenings at Stratford High School.

- **Stratford Antique Center (400 Honeyspot Road)**– Multi-dealer facility with 16,500 square feet of antiques and collectibles from 200 dealers.
- **Arts Alliance of Stratford (at Sterling House Community Center- 2283 Main Street)** – Membership organizations of artists, designers, jewelers, musicians and other to support growth of arts and cultural experiences in Stratford.
- **Ruby & Calvin Fletcher African American History Museum** – Ruby & Calvin Fletcher African American History Museum is a museum of African History, which depicts the period of slavery and Civil Rights movement of African Americans through a collection of artifacts. It is located at 952 East Broadway in Stratford and opened in 2021.
- **Stratford Veterans Museum** – The Stratford Veterans Museum is located at 5952 Main Street in Stratford. It has been established to recognize Stratford veterans, who served the United States. The major goals for its establishment is to encourage school field trips to this site to educate school children on Stratford's veterans.
- **Stratford Community Concert Band (Volunteer band, location undisclosed)** – Community band established in 1961. It has no fee and no requirements beyond a passable ability and reasonable tendency to show up; plays in the gazebo at holiday time and other selected events. Rehearses Tuesday evenings at Stratford High School.
- **Stratford Performing Arts Academy (3550 Main Street)** – Dance instruction for children and adults.
- **Stratford Library Association (2203 Main Street)** – Public lending library with programs, services and instruction for children and adults; special events and exhibits. Offers volunteer services on Stratford history & genealogy, city directories, high school yearbooks, Stratford newspapers 1873-present, Stratford newspaper clipping file, local authors collection, Town reports, census microfilm loan program, and genealogy databases.
- **Summer Concerts (Paradise Green/Short Beach)** – Held at Paradise Green on Tuesday evenings and weekends at Short Beach all summer. Sponsored by the Stratford Recreation Department.



Stratford Library



Boothe Memorial Park



What We Heard From the Community

Through Plan Stratford’s community engagement process, the community expressed a number of ideas and desires regarding cultural and historic resources. Residents acknowledged and valued the great cultural and historic assets of the Town. Overall, the community noted that the Town should do more to promote its cultural and historic resources. The redevelopment of the historic former Shakespeare property by the waterfront as a local and regional arts and cultural destination was mentioned as a high priority for most residents. A complete detailing of the community’s perspective on cultural and historic resources is available in the POCD Community Outreach Summary.

Key Issues and Trends

- Because the Academy Hill Historic District falls within the Transit-Oriented Development overlay zone, there are some design related issues between the compatibility of the two districts.
- Stratford has many great historic and cultural resources, but many residents are unaware of their existence. The Town could do more to highlight, promote and celebrate all of its assets.

Goal

Preserve, promote, and protect cultural and historic resources for current and future generations as well as encouraging the stewardship of historical landmarks and properties.



Source: Connecticut Post

Objectives & Action Steps

Objective 1. Promote the preservation of Stratford's historically and architecturally significant resources.

1. Develop and adopt design guidelines to protect the distinct character of the Town's character areas/neighborhoods (as defined in this POCD).
2. Designate districts under Connecticut's "Village District" legislation to protect historic neighborhoods through zoning regulations- this would help the Town address revitalization of Main Street as expressed in the 1993 and 2014 POCD.
3. Continue to update and maintain a list of town's historic properties, including national and state register properties and historic resources inventory (survey of the state), which can be easily accessed and updated on Stratford's Town website.
4. Ensure publicly owned properties (sites, artifacts, structures and buildings) of historical and architectural significance are protected and preserved.
5. Encourage adaptive re-use of existing historic sites, buildings, and structures.
6. Examine best practices and innovative zoning ordinances that encourage adaptive re-use of former residential and industrial properties for new commercial, business or multiple uses, especially in transitional areas.
7. Consider the expansion of the Academy Hill Historic District to include State survey properties that are in close proximity to this District.
8. Pursue funding for a sensitivity analysis program for archaeological preservation from the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO).
9. Support the Historic District Commission in performing its duties to protect locally designated historic districts and properties.
10. Review historic properties recommendations for floodplains and work with SHPO during review process.
11. Incorporate design guidelines for rehabilitating historic properties into the Commercial Design Guidelines developed by Architectural Review Board (ARB).
12. Develop Zoning Regulations to create incentives for private property owners to preserve historic buildings.
13. Commission a master plan for Boothe Memorial Park- a key historic destination of the town.

Objective 2. Support and promote arts, entertainment, and cultural organizations.

1. Become a Certified Local Government to access grant funding and technical assistance for historic preservation projects – this will require an active architectural review board.

Objective 3. Promote historic and cultural resources as tourism destinations.

1. Consider establishing a cultural arts center at the Shakespeare property and create stronger linkages between the Park, waterfront, Boothe Memorial Park and other historic destinations of the town.
2. Link the Town's historic and cultural resources through the trail and greenway system.
3. Develop a system of coordinated interpretive signage, possibly along the greenway and complete streets routes, to identify and explain historic and cultural resources in Stratford to the users of these routes.
4. Link the Town's historic and cultural resources to those of neighboring Towns for the creation of regional level interpretation of history.
5. Link museums of the industrial era – Air and Space Center, Helicopter Museum, Merritt Parkway Museum -- with other heritage interpretation sites.
6. Investigate potential designation of State scenic byways in town to bring visitors to enjoy the natural and historic resources of the Town.

Objective 4. Educate residents and visitors about Stratford's importance as a historic community.

1. Promote public awareness and appreciation of local historic resources through user-friendly brochures on how to protect, preserve, and enhance historic properties in the town.
2. Consider distributing plaques to the owners of historic properties as a way to identify historic properties in the town and to promote community pride and stewardship of private historic resources.
3. Promote stewardship of public historic resources by establishing "Friends of historic places" groups and through community guided/audio tours of historic places in the town.

Source: Town of Stratford



Mobility

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Mobility

Goals

- Improve and expand transportation options to support mobility and access for people of all ages and abilities.
- Promote sustainable, reliable, multimodal transportation network within the Town and to regional destinations.

Baseline Conditions

Stratford's transportation network is composed of a robust system of Town, State, and Federal roadways, interconnected bus routes, extensive sidewalks, a commuter rail corridor, an airport, and the Housatonic River Greenway. Stratford is easily accessible to neighboring destinations such as New York and Boston, and enjoys strong connections to major State employment centers such as Downtown Bridgeport and New Haven. A transportation network with these qualities unifies a community, links places together and creates an organized and recognizable urban pattern that is easily understood and navigated.

To further enhance this network, Stratford adopted a Complete Streets Plan in 2017 that established facility recommendations and an implementable network of on- and off-street bike routes. Stratford continues to embrace an efficient transportation system that supports its thriving local economy and recognizes it as a defining characteristic of a community in which people want to live and conduct business. Following this, a Complete Streets policy was adopted by the Town Council in 2020 to serve as a guide, aiding Stratford in its efforts to provide safety and accessibility for all users of the Town's roadways, trails and transit systems, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, motorists, commercial vehicles, and emergency vehicles for people of all ages and of all abilities. In 2017, Stratford completed a Complete Streets Plan that established facility recommendations and an implementable network of on- and off-street bike routes. Stratford continues to embrace an efficient transportation system that supports its thriving ages and abilities.



Conceptual Illustration of Phase I of Complete Streets to be implemented along Main Street in Stratford in fall 2023. Source: Town of Stratford

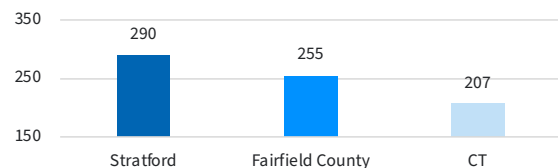
Street Network

There are 220 miles of Town and State roads in Stratford, the majority of which (82% or 181 miles) are maintained by the Town. Stratford has 290 residents per mile of Town maintained roadway, which is more than the average for Fairfield County (255 residents per mile) and the statewide average (207 residents per mile). More residents per mile of roadway means that the cost of roadway maintenance is spread across a larger population, which reduces the per capita cost of maintenance. Larger towns typically have a more residents per mile of roadway than smaller towns due to population density.

In addition to local roadways maintained by the Town, Stratford is traversed by nearly 40 miles of roadways and highways maintained by the State. These include:

- Interstate 95
- U.S. Route 1
- Route 8
- Route 108
- Route 110
- Route 113
- Route 130
- The Merritt Parkway (Route 15)

Figure 8.1. Residents per Mile of Town Maintained Roadway (2021)



Source: CTDOT, Stratford and Statewide GIS Datasets

Figure 8.2. State and Local Roadways

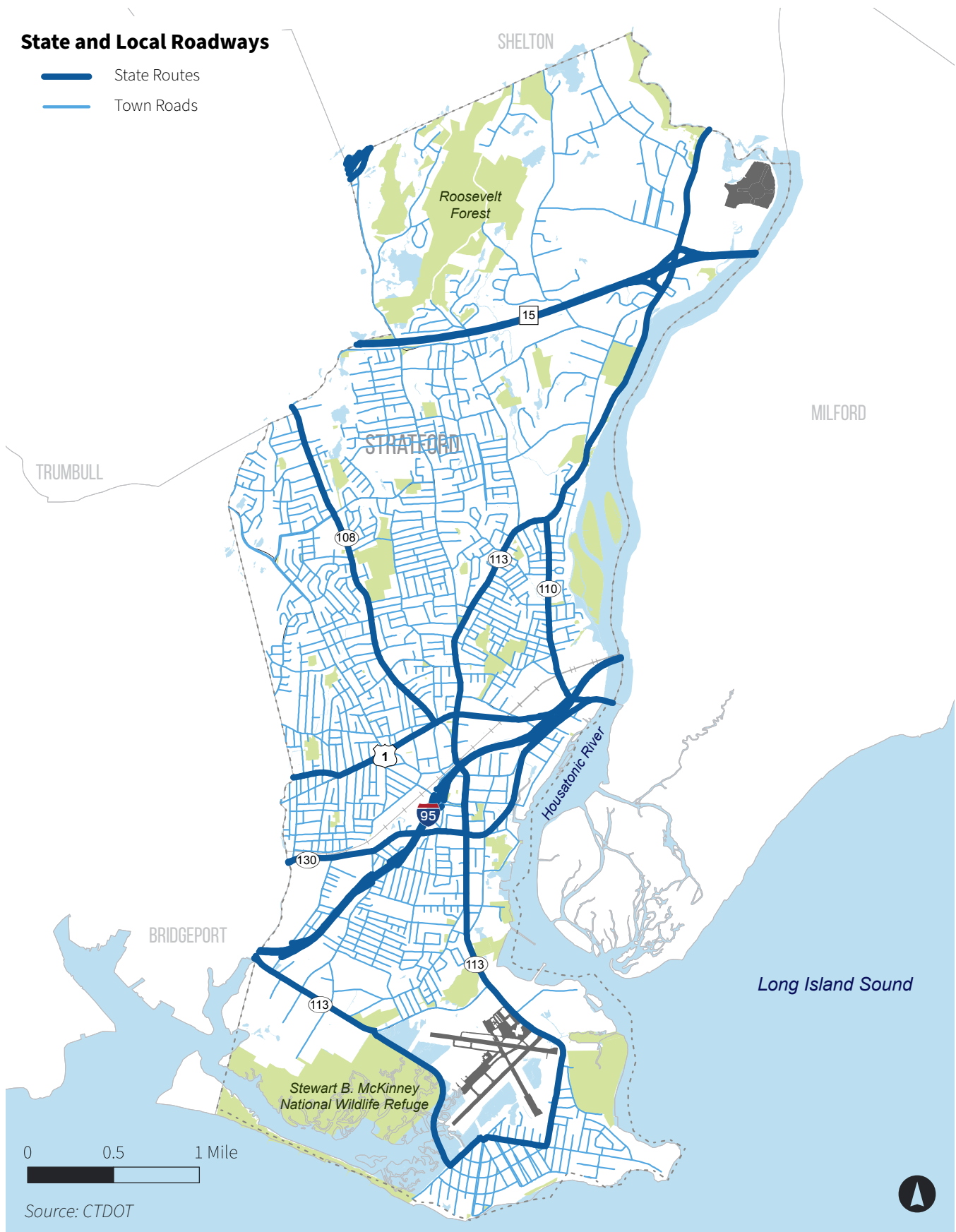
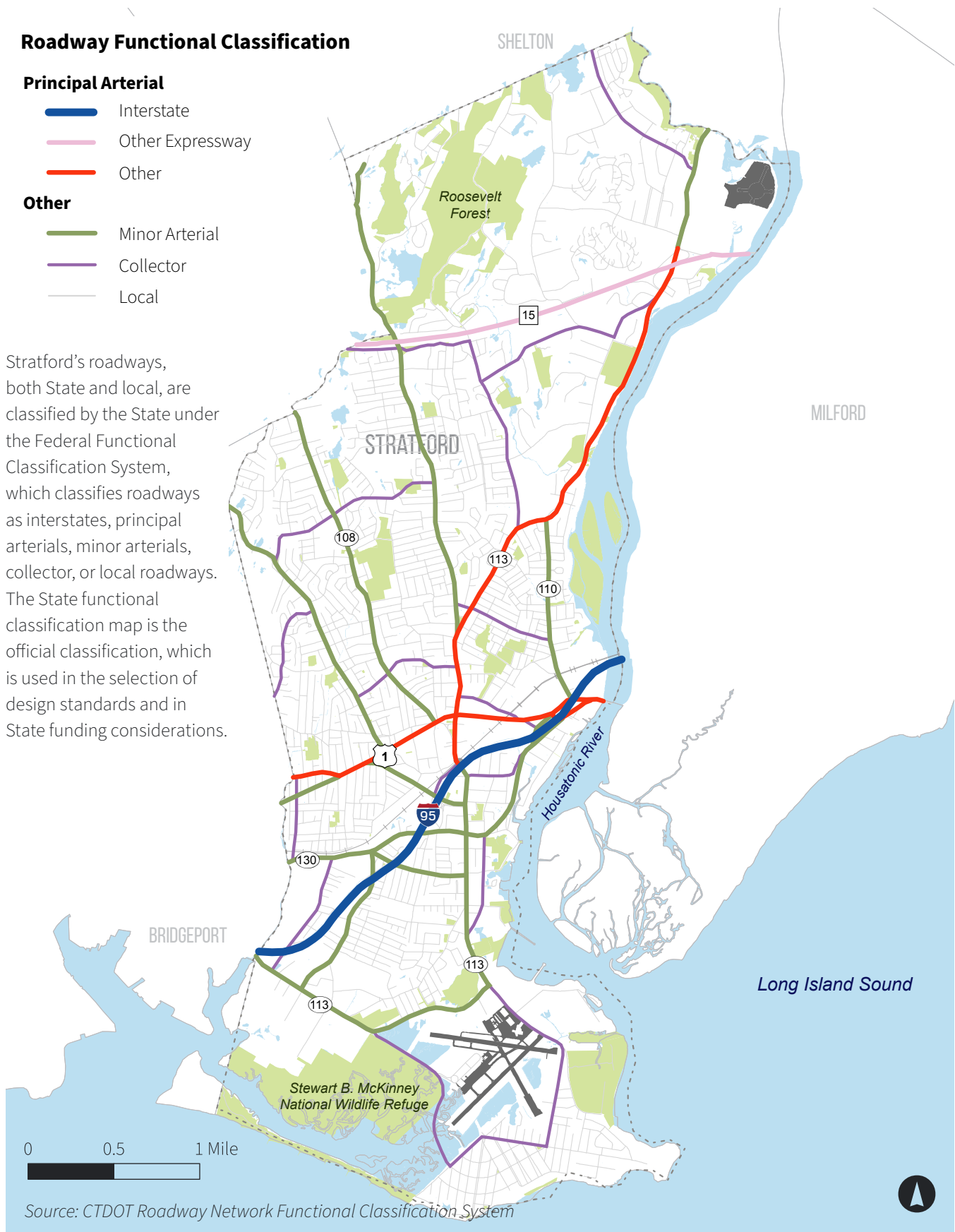


Figure 8.3. Roadway Functional Classification



Rail Transit

Stratford is centrally located along the MTA rail corridor and is located on the New Haven Main Line approximately 60 miles from New York City. Average travel time to Grand Central Station in Manhattan is about 90 minutes. A bus connection to neighboring Bridgeport is provided from the station. The station has limited parking for fewer than 300 vehicles, and parking permits are available to Stratford's residents. At this time, the CTDOT does not have any plans to expand this parking or construct a parking structure. There is bicycle parking available at the train station, although the bike racks are heavily utilized and are uncovered, exposing them to inclement weather. Upgrades are needed to expand the train station platform and install overhead canopies.

Bus Transit

The Greater Bridgeport Transit (GBT) provides transit service to the Greater Bridgeport Region with local bus service to the cities/towns of Bridgeport, Stratford, Trumbull, Fairfield and Monroe. There are currently seven GBT routes that provide service throughout Stratford, primarily along State

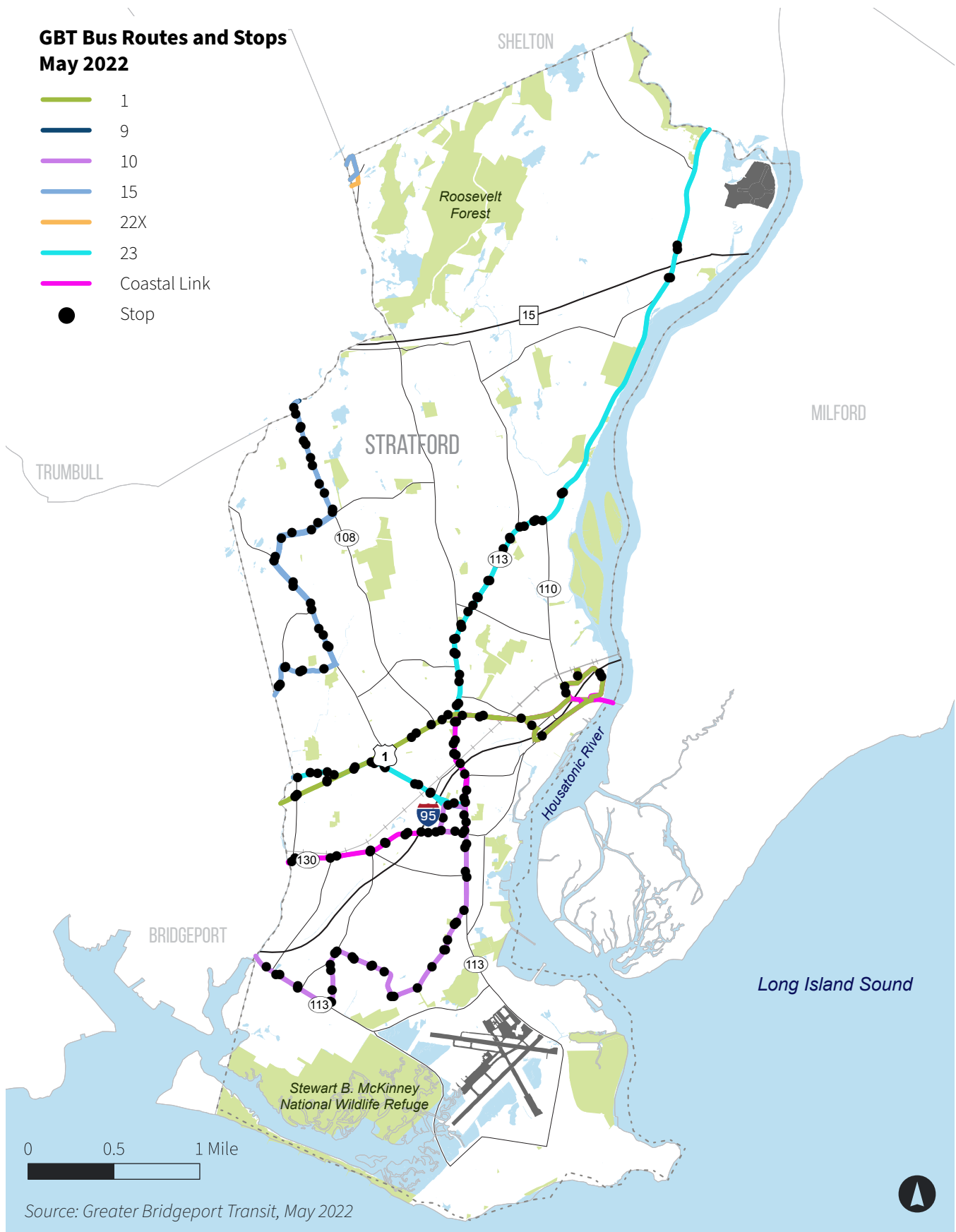
roadways, stopping at regional shopping destinations and the train station and recreational areas. GBT's Coastal Link route provides service between Milford and Norwalk and has a stop in Stratford. There are currently no CT Transit bus routes that stop in Stratford. GBT is in the process of applying for a State micro transit grant application to study and pursue micro transit options throughout the region. If awarded the funding, Stratford could work with GBT and the program to explore options to enhance north to south connectivity in the town, which would be especially beneficial to older adults and those residents without access to a personal vehicle.

Sikorsky Airport

Stratford has always embraced its rich history with the aviation industry. Stratford became the birthplace of the American helicopter industry, when in 1939, a Russian immigrant, Igor Sikorsky, successfully flew the first helicopter at his Stratford-based aircraft plant. More than a half-century later, Sikorsky Aircraft, the world's leading helicopter manufacturer, still designs and produces state-of-the-art helicopters for both military and commercial applications at its manufacturing facility on Stratford's north



Figure 8.4. GBT Bus Routes and Stops



side. The Igor Sikorsky Memorial Airport, located in the Lordship section of Stratford, remains a hub of corporate and recreational aviation activity and provides commuter service to other cities in the northeast.

Although located in Stratford, Sikorsky Memorial Airport is currently owned and operated by the City of Bridgeport. In 2021, an Airport Master Plan was completed for the Airport. The purpose of the study was to evaluate the utilization and operational characteristics of the airfield, general aviation and support facilities, ground access, and land development considerations. The Plan identified recommendations to the airfield such as runway expansion and improvements that would enable it to become a commercial airport in the future. It also highlighted the need for flood mitigation, drainage improvements, and a future sustainability study for the airport.

Sidewalk and Bicycle Facilities

Stratford has a robust sidewalk network that covers much of the Town. However, the condition of pedestrian infrastructure varies considerably and there are several gaps

in the network, particularly in locations further away from Town Center. The provision of sidewalks along Stratford's streets is challenged by narrow rights-of-way, the presence of mature trees, steep grades, and utility structures such as utility poles. The Town has continued to improve pedestrian connections by constructing or reconstructing sidewalks in and surrounding Stratford Center. Stratford has consistently allocated funding for sidewalk improvement projects in both its capital improvement program and bond initiatives. The town could further benefit from a study on pedestrian connectivity that includes consideration for sidewalk repair or new sidewalks which are proposed in a manner that prevents conflict between existing street trees and new sidewalks.

Facility improvements and recommendations such as the addition of street furniture, pedestrian scale lighting, landscape buffers, street trees, and curb extensions could greatly improve the pedestrian experience. Continued investment through local Capital Improvement (CIP) program and the identification of new grant funding will be required to maintain, improve, and expand the Town's bicycle and pedestrian network.





MEDIUM

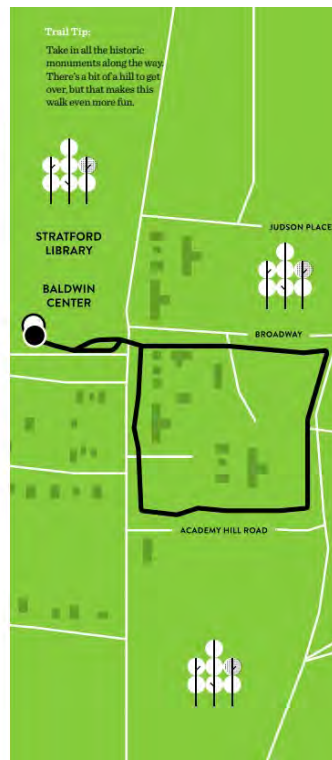
Academy Hill

Academy and Elm Street, Stratford, CT 06615

Fun walk in Stratford's historic neighborhood. Be sure to stop and check out the monuments.



PARKING AVAILABLE & SEATING BENCHES ROAD WALKING PET FRIENDLY HISTORICAL LANDMARKS TRAIL DISTANCE 0.7 miles



Excerpt of Stratford Walks Brochure Created by Stratford Community Services Department in 2022

Stratford Greenway Committee's Summer Bike Rides. Source: Harold Watson, Stratford Greenway Committee Chairman

Over the past five years, the Town has also made meaningful progress in planning for and implementing complete streets and greenways. As discussed earlier, a Complete Streets Plan was prepared and adopted in 2017. Upon completion of the Complete Streets Plan, the Town secured \$2.5 million in State funding to implement Phase I of Complete Streets from Barnum Avenue to Harvey Place (south). Currently, the Town is in the process of planning for Phase II of Complete Streets from Barnum Avenue to Paradise Green (north) using municipal funds. Funding for construction of this project has been set aside through Local Transportation Capital Improvement Program (LoTCIP) in the amount of \$2.75 million. The Town is also in the process of implementing Phase II of Greenway from Bond's Dock to West Broad and Main Street intersection using municipal bond funds. Planning of subsequent phases of greenway connecting existing Housatonic River Greenway to former Army Engine Plant Site and Water Pollution Control Facility is also underway.

Although there are very few bike lanes in Stratford, the Town implemented bike racks at various public interest locations such as the train station, Town Hall, parks, etc. There is an active bicycling community in Stratford and an active Greenways and Complete Streets committee

that meets once every month with a goal to expand safe bike and pedestrian connectivity in the town. This is an advisory committee to the town's Planning Commission. Over the past 20 years, the Committee has been focusing on implementing Stratford's portion of the Housatonic River Greenway. Development of the Town's Greenways and Pathways study and implementation of Phase I of Greenway along the Housatonic River are some of the initial successes of this Committee. In 2022, the Greenway Committee was re-established as Greenways and Complete Streets Committee with a goal of implementing the Greenways and Pathways study and the Complete Streets Plan.

With continued funding commitment from the State, such as those committed for implementing Phase I (from south of Barnum Avenue intersection to Harvey Place) and Phase II of Greenway from Bond's Dock to Town Center (near Perry House), bike and pedestrian routes can be expanded to other top priority routes such as Ferry Boulevard, Stratford Avenue, and Nichols Avenue, as identified in the Complete Streets Plan (2017).

The two most immediate opportunities for improving Stratford’s bicycle network include the expansion of bicycle parking and the installation of bicycle transit facilities. Short- and long-term bicycle parking should be available given the Town’s investment in planning and infrastructure. As Stratford expands its bicycle parking, key destinations, such as Stratford Center, Paradise Green, and schools, should be prioritized. The installation of bicycle transit infrastructure should be prioritized along the East Coast Greenway and Housatonic Greenway routes. Bicycle infrastructure connecting residential areas to schools should also be prioritized. Further, the Town should also develop and adopt bike parking regulations to seamlessly integrate bicycle infrastructure in all private developments. Regular sidewalk repair and maintenance, ADA accessibility, efficient lighting, and education are all critical to enhance safety and comfort of the pedestrians (including older adults and disabled) who prefer walking to their destinations.

A parking and circulation analysis of the Town Center is needed to improve general traffic circulation, access to parking, and encourage pedestrian scale developments that contribute to an overall sense of place and aesthetics of the Town Center.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Activity

To get an overall understanding of existing bicycle and pedestrian activity, a review of Strava data was utilized. Strava is a web-based program that uses mobile applications to enable users to record their bicycle and running trips anywhere in the world. Strava compiles recorded trips and makes this information publicly accessible through an online map viewer.¹ Strava provides quantitative data that shows where people are walking and biking in Stratford. Not all trips are accounted for, as users of Strava self-select by logging in their trips, so people not utilizing the Strava app are not counted. Despite this limitation, Strava is able to provide a telling snapshot of desire lines where people are currently traveling. The following is a summary of findings from the Strava analysis.

Bicycle activity is prevalent throughout town, and riders recording trips utilize major north to south roadways such as Huntington Road, Nichols Avenue and Main Street. Scenic routes, such as the coastal loop between Lordship Boulevard, Stratford Avenue, and Main Street are also popular.

Pedestrian activity shows a different pattern, with activity most prevalent throughout the town’s neighborhoods, commercial areas, and park spaces such as in the vicinity of Paradise Green, Roosevelt Forest, the Town Center, and in Lordship near the beaches.

Figure 8.5. Bicycle Activity

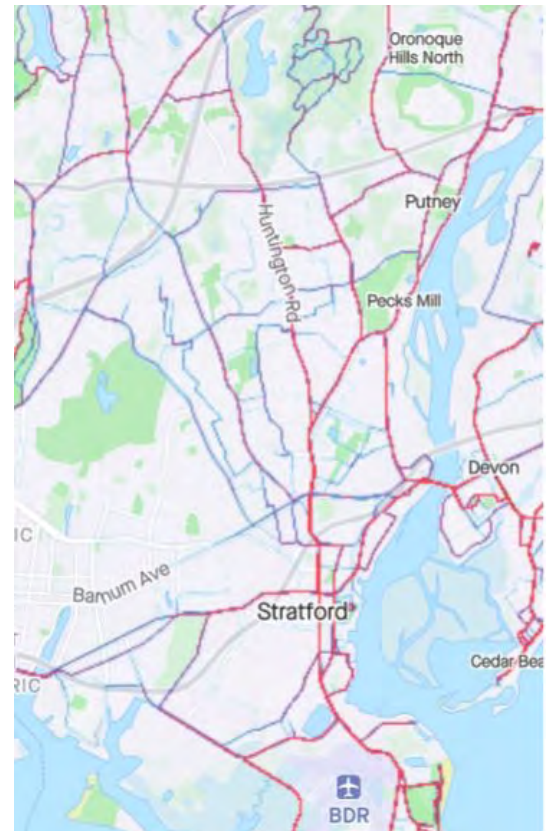
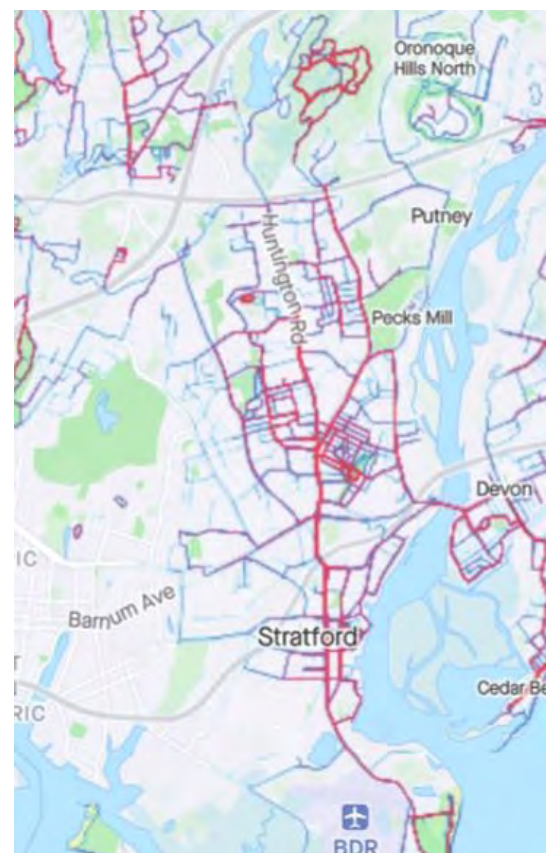


Figure 8.6. Pedestrian Activity



Activity Level



1 <https://www.strava.com/heatmap>

Low

High

Source: Strava Heatmap, 2023



Existing View of Main Street and Barnum Avenue Intersection; (Northern Boundary of Phase I of Complete Streets)

Planned and Ongoing Transportation Projects

Following is a short summary of key transportation projects in the town.

Complete Streets Phase II

The Town is currently in the process of developing technical designs for Phase II of Complete Streets from north of Barnum Avenue intersection to Paradise Green (up to Wilcoxson Avenue). The planning and design stage of this project is being funded through municipal bonds in the amount of \$250,000. Funds have also been committed to implement this project, conditional upon DOT's approval of the design, through the state LOTCIP program in the amount of \$2.5 million.

Greenway / Bikeway Extension North

This project will provide bike lane markings and other improvements from the northerly terminus of the current Hunter Haven Greenway to West Broad Street. A pedestrian sidewalk is planned on Beacon Point Road. On road sharrows and/or bike Lanes will be installed along the route. A spur will be provided from Elm Street to Mac's Harbor on Shore Rd. The project will join with the Main Street

Complete Streets project and then continue to its terminus at the Perry House on West Broad Street near the Baldwin Center and the Stratford Library.

A future expansion project is envisioned from Elm Street along Ferry Boulevard / Housatonic Ave to bring the Greenway to the Dock Shopping Center. This project would enhance the East Coast Greenway route. The road width and sidewalks planned along with the Broad St bridge project will be installed to facilitate this future extension.

Greenway / Bikeway Extension South

This project will provide a shared off-road path through a linear park fronting the Housatonic River, along the former Army Engine Plant property, from the southerly terminus of the current Hunter Haven Greenway to Sniffens Lane. A trail is anticipated from Sniffens Lane along the southern part of the property and join with the existing off road paved trail on the east side of Main Street to Short Beach Park. Combined with Complete Streets, these planned projects will provide a continuous bike route from Short Beach to Paradise Green.



Rendering of Proposed Complete Street along South Main Street. Source: Town of Stratford

Metro North Overpass Bridges Reconstruction

In an effort for Metro North to provide high speed rail, the CT DOT has initiated project 300-214 TIME-1, which will improve the bridge overpasses to support the new train traffic and upgrade the overpasses in general. The DOT plans to increase the clearances and width of the overpasses to provide better pedestrian access, adequate shoulders, and improved traffic flow on the underlying road at Bruce Avenue, West Broad Street, King Street, Main Street (Route 113), East Main Street (Route 110). Clearances on the two state roads will meet the preferred design criteria, while the local roads will also see improved clearances. Drainage improvements will also be made at the state roads to reduce flooding at these depressed roadways.

Broad St Bridge over Ferry Creek

The Town plans to replace this triple barrel culvert with tidegates in-kind. As part of the project, the road profile will be raised to eliminate a low point where coastal flooding can overtop the road. This will also necessitate the raising of the road profile at Ferry Boulevard as well. The intersection of Ferry Boulevard and Broad Street will be reconstructed with a new traffic light and pedestrian improvements. A 5' shoulder will be accommodated on both roads to facilitate bike lanes and sidewalks will be provided on Ferry Boulevard at Lockwood Avenue and Broad Street toward Housatonic Ave.

Townwide Trails Master Plan

After an unsuccessful attempt this year, the Town intends to reapply for a CT DEEP Trails grant next year for the creation of a town-wide Trails Master Plan. The goals of this Master Plan are: to create a central database for Town owned trails and open spaces managed by the Public Works staff; to expand the existing trail network; to develop a plan for regular maintenance and upkeep through the formal utilization of third party volunteers such as civic groups, businesses, etc. with assistance from the Town; to educate and motivate public usage of existing trails through robust community outreach.

On Demand Older Adult Transportation Service

Stratford's Baldwin Center is working with GBT to explore options to provide on demand older adult transportation services that would accommodate trips to doctor's appointments, personal errands and other locations of interest.

Stratford Ave, Honeyspot Road Intersection

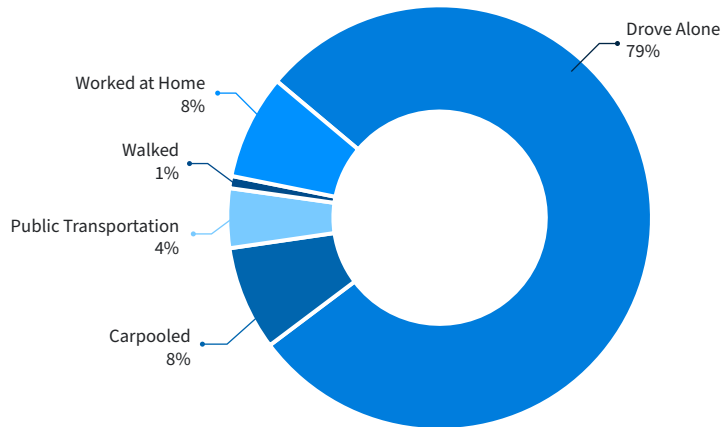
This project will replace the existing traffic light controlled intersection with a modern roundabout intersection. The plan will accommodate 10' shared use paths for

bicycles and pedestrians around the roundabout and will have streetscape components including new sidewalks and pedestrian scale lighting. A future Complete Street project along Stratford Avenue from the Bridgeport line to Elm Street will also be planned in the future.

Commuting Patterns

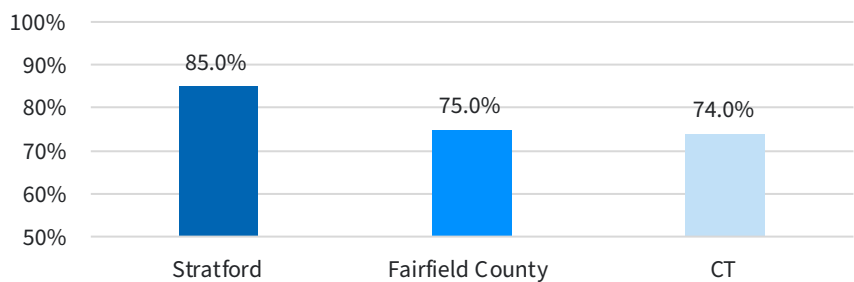
Most of Stratford’s residents (79%) commute to work by driving alone or carpooling (8%). The remaining Stratford’s workers either use public transportation (4%) or walk (1%) to commute to work. As of 2021, over 8% of Stratford’s employed workers worked from home. This number has doubled since pre-covid numbers in 2019 which were 4%. This high share of workers driving alone to their place of employment (above both Fairfield County and the State’s shares) results in a heavy demand on Stratford’s roadway network and local highways such as Interstate 95 and Route 15. The average commute time for Stratford’s workers is about 30 minutes, which is slightly longer than the average commute statewide. Bridgeport, Stratford, and Milford are the primary commuting destinations for Stratford’s workers. This shifted slightly between 2010 and 2019 with more residents commuting to Bridgeport in 2019 and less working in Stratford. Approximately 7% of Stratford’s residents do not have access to a private vehicle.

Figure 8.7. Means of Transportation to Work (2021)



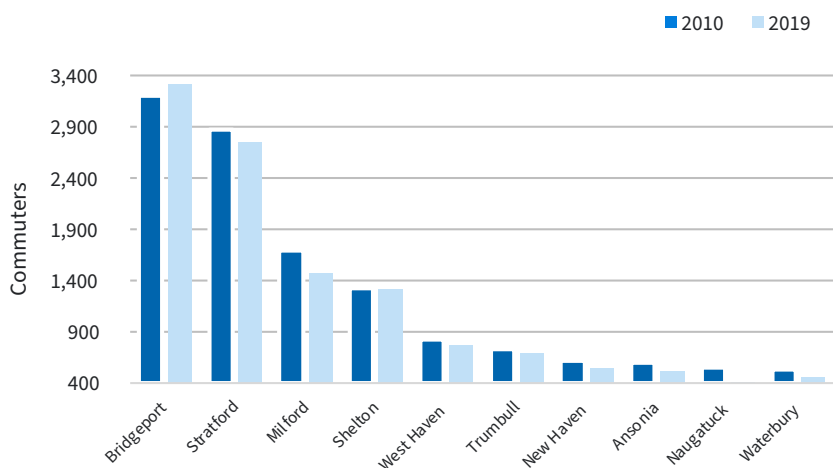
Source: American Community Survey – 2021

Figure 8.8. Drove Alone to Work (2021)



Source: American Community Survey – 2021

Figure 8.9. Top Work Destinations (2010 vs 2019)



Source: US Census Bureau Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics, 2010 and 2019 (Latest Available Data Year)

Figure 8.10. Sidewalk Network

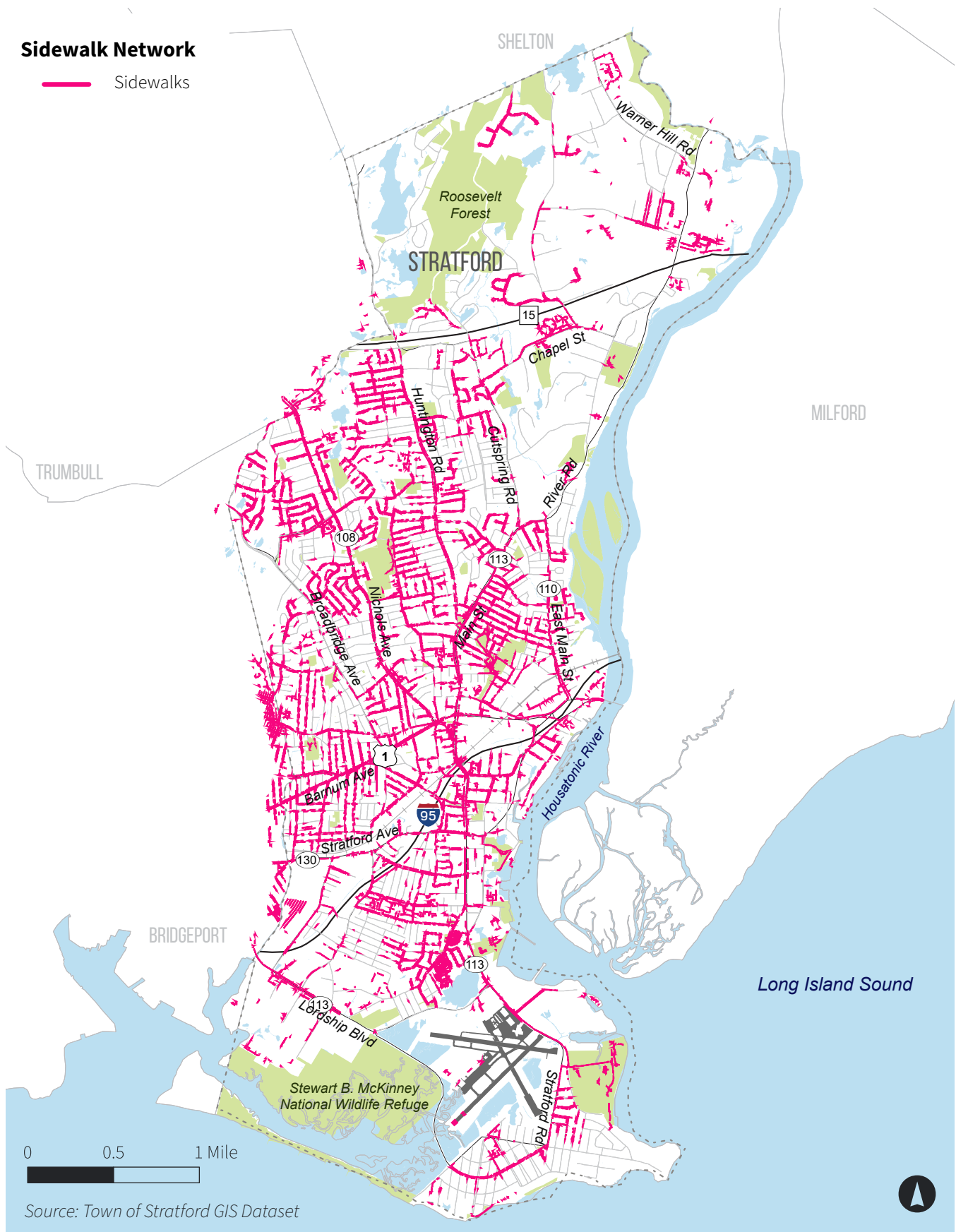
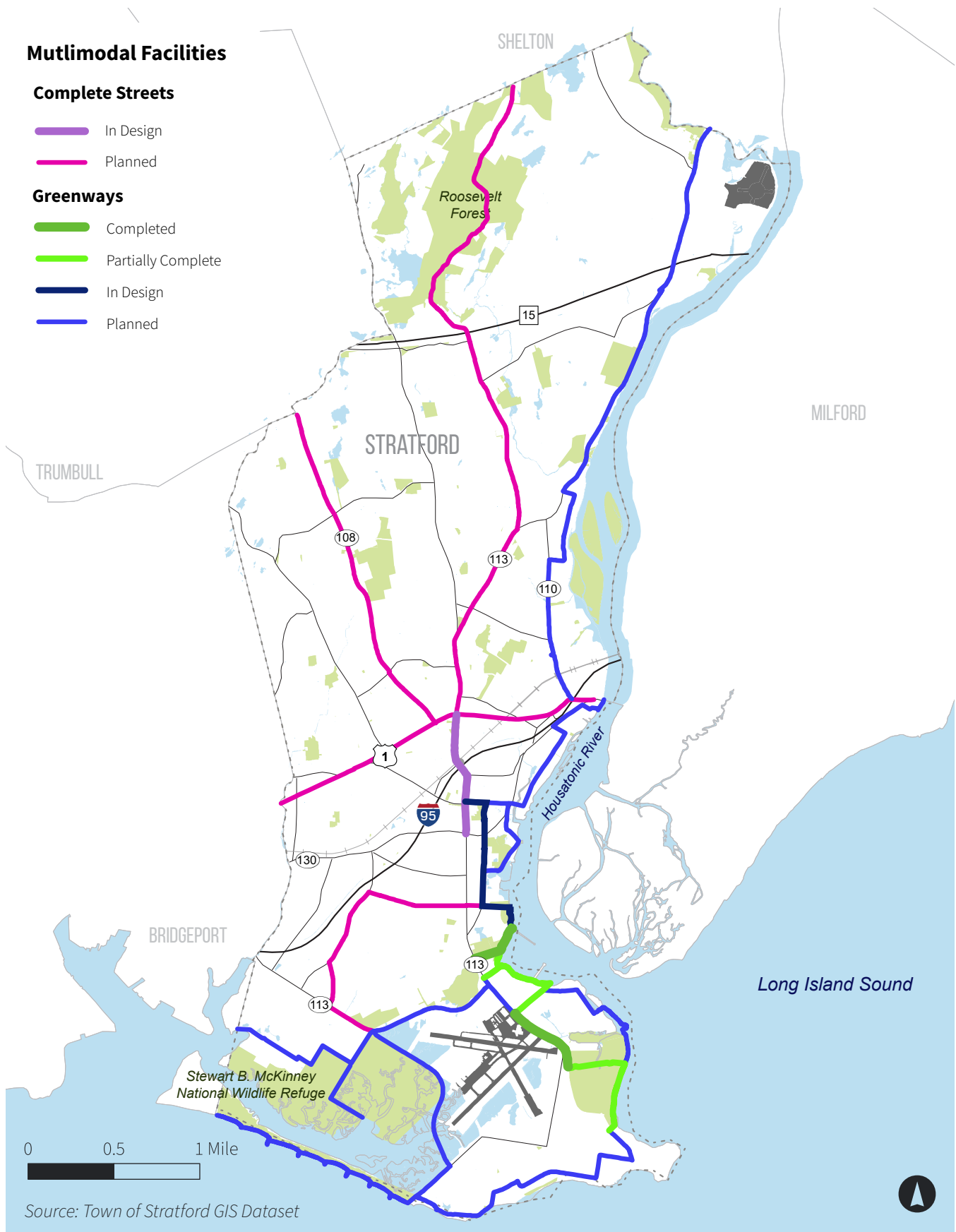


Figure 8.11. Multimodal Facilities

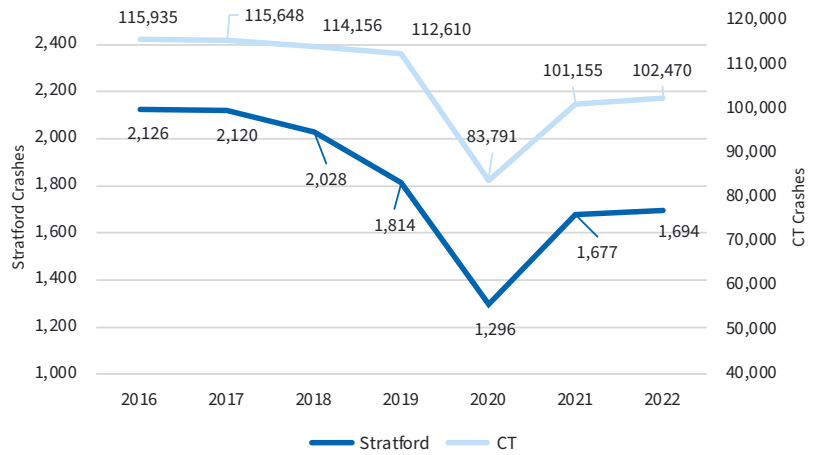


Crash Analysis

The number of vehicle crashes in Stratford has decreased since 2016, where the high was 2,126 crashes that year. Crashes dropped precipitously in 2020 and remained suppressed in 2021 likely as a result of less travel due to the COVID pandemic. In 2022, there were 1,694 crashes in Stratford—a reduction of nearly 10% from 2019. These trends very closely mirror trends across the State.

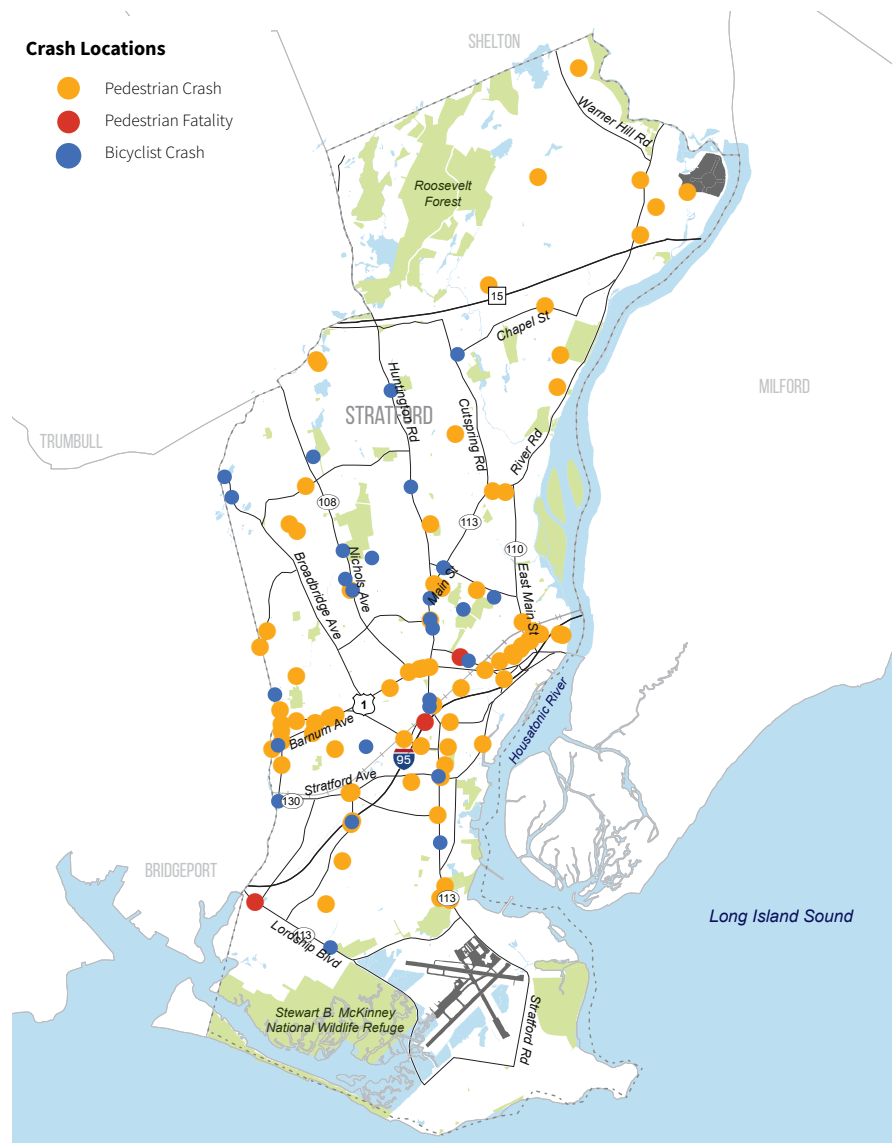
Stratford’s vehicular crashes are strongly associated with areas and corridors that have the highest traffic volumes and the greatest density of intersections. These areas and corridors include Stratford Town Center, I-95, Route 1, and Route 110. Bicycle and pedestrian involved crashes are primarily concentrated in Town Center with a few hotspots located at intersections spanning along Route 1. In the past five years, (2018 – 2022) a total of three pedestrian fatalities occurred at different locations in Stratford, as shown in [Figure 8.13](#). Most recently (in Feb 2023), a pedestrian fatality occurred closer to Paradise Green at Main Street and Garden Street intersection.

Figure 8.12. Stratford vs Statewide Crash Trends



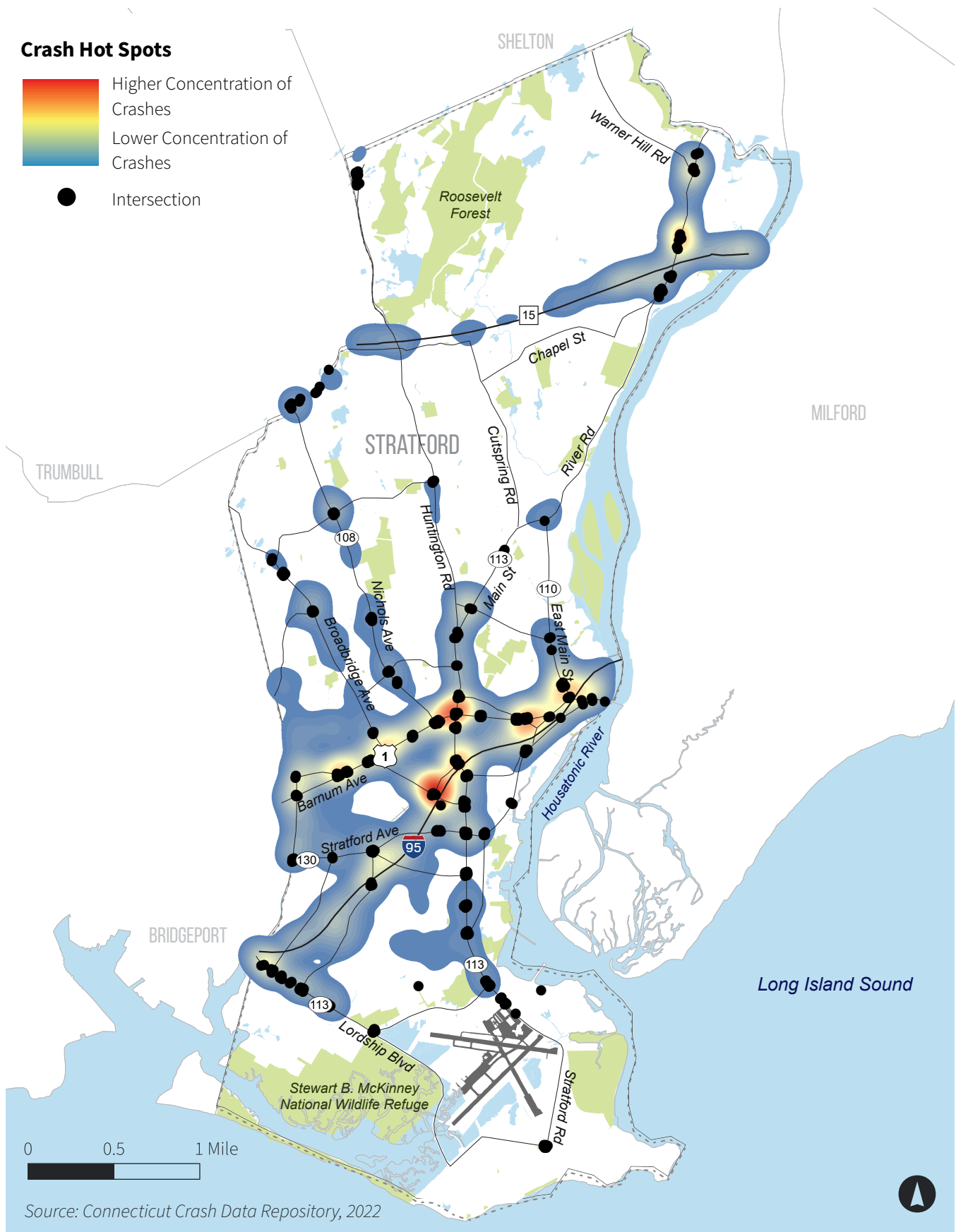
Source: Connecticut Crash Data Repository

Figure 8.13. Crash Locations



Source: Connecticut Crash Data Repository, 2022

Figure 8.14. Crash Hot Spots



Source: Connecticut Crash Data Repository, 2022



What We Heard From the Community

Through Plan Stratford’s community engagement process, the community expressed many ideas and preferences regarding mobility in Stratford. In general, residents are very supportive of efforts to expand the Stratford Greenway and implement the design recommendations in from the Complete Streets Plan.

Residents and stakeholders expressed concerns about weaknesses of the transportation system. These include traffic congestion in specific locations such as Barnum Avenue and Ferry Boulevard at peak commuting hours, limited public transportation options; particularly for locations in northern Stratford and for older adults who do not drive, and the need for improved roadway and sidewalk maintenance.

Many ideas and opportunities for transportation were identified by residents and stakeholders. Notable ideas included traffic calming strategies such as street trees and pedestrian scale lighting, access management particularly at busy commercial destinations such as Dock Plaza and Stratford Crossing, and a Town-wide trolley service that is available to residents as needed. A complete detailing of the community’s perspective on transportation is available in Appendix A: Community Engagement Summary.

Key Issues and Trends

- Transportation options can be a challenge, particularly for older adults and residents without access to a vehicle. Approximately 7% of Stratford’s residents do not have access to a vehicle.
- Traffic congestion, particularly at key intersections and roadways such as Barnum Avenue, Main Street, Hawley Lane, Ferry Boulevard, and Stratford Avenue can be challenging, particularly at peak commuting hours.
- Sidewalk conditions vary and opportunities exist for maintenance and pedestrian amenities such as benches, lighting, and transit shelters.
- Increased demand for bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure exists due to the increasing number of cyclists and pedestrians in the town.



Greenway/Complete Streets Committee

The Greenway is part of a broader Complete Streets plan to make Stratford’s streets more friendly to multimodal transportation, cars, bicycles, and pedestrians. A very active and dedicated committee, the Greenway/Complete Streets Committee offered a series of public group bicycle rides in the summer and fall of 2022, co-sponsored by the Stratford Recreation Department.



Greenway group bike ride along Long Beach, Source: Harold Watson



One of Stratford’s most popular bike routes, Source: Town of Stratford

Goals

- Improve and expand transportation options to support mobility and access for people of all ages and abilities.
- Promote sustainable, reliable, multimodal transportation network within the Town and to regional destinations.



Objectives & Action Steps

Objective 1. Encourage transportation infrastructure improvements that improve the accessibility and safety for all users and enhance transportation sustainability.

1. Improve streetscapes designated in the Vision Plan to transform them into multi-modal greenway linkages, incorporating bicycle lanes, improved pedestrian accommodations and enhanced landscaping.
2. Increase designated bike lanes in the town and coordinate with DOT to require low-cost bike lane markings during road improvements on major DOT owned roadways.
3. Improve waterfront connector streets with landscaping according to the Vision Plan to improve connectivity to the water.
4. Develop a comprehensive plan to evaluate the pedestrian access network throughout the Town and complete segments of missing sidewalks.
5. Ensure that sidewalks and pedestrian crossings are ADA accessible and remove any barriers to accessibility through ongoing maintenance.
6. Maintain a careful balance between the need for the construction of new sidewalks and preservation of existing street trees by not requiring new sidewalks in areas where they may seem excessive (such as residential streets where there are no existing sidewalks to connect to).
7. Provide improvements to pedestrian crossings as needed including crosswalk markings, signage, signal enhancements, and lighting enhancements.
8. Continue with implementation of the Complete Streets Plan and greenways and pathways to include new routes in the town that provide direct connections to various destinations.
9. Continue to expand and promote walking routes for older adults and students to schools in the town.
10. Invest in low-cost pedestrian and bike infrastructure through continuous and dedicated funding stream.
11. Improve overall transportation system efficiency through improvements to signal coordination and optimization, monitoring of real time traffic data, installation of pedestrian and bicycle signals and bike boxes, bus shelter upgrades, and other similar measures.
12. Determine vulnerable transportation routes and transportation options that may adversely impact the Town's natural resources and human mobility needs under future climate change projections.
13. Work with State and airport partners to implement flood mitigation and access management strategies for the long-term sustainability of Sikorsky airport.
14. Continue to foster strong partnerships with CT DOT, DECD, Sikorsky Airport Authority and the Connecticut Airport Authority, the City of Bridgeport, Metro North, MetroCOG, and other local and regional partners to implement a well-balanced and sustainable multimodal transportation system in Stratford.
15. Facilitate economic development at Sikorsky Airport while ensuring climate resiliency.
16. Update parking regulations in the zoning code to promote the right balance of automobile and bike parking based on development type and to include standards for pedestrian-oriented developments and other sustainable transportation modes such as electric vehicles.
17. Support efforts by Greater Bridgeport Transit (GBT) and other transportation providers to increase age-friendly transportation options and transit amenities like bus shelters, benches, lighting, etc., that facilitate access and comfort for all users and abilities.

Objective 2. Support the expansion and improvement of transit service across the Town and region.

1. Prepare a feasibility study to identify and evaluate potential routes for micro transit service from the train station to various neighborhoods in the town.
2. Facilitate the implementation of coordinated traffic signals throughout major corridors that efficiently moves vehicular traffic.
3. Work with GBT to implement micro transit service in Stratford to boost north south connectivity in the town.
4. Work with GBT to identify improvements to increase accessibility and service on intra and inter Town transit routes, and to upgrade bus shelters with real time travel information on bus arrivals and departures.
5. Offer necessary support to GBT to maintain and expand transit and paratransit services and access, particularly to older adults and disabled population in the town.
6. Continue to support the provision of on demand transportation services to Stratford's aging population.
7. Investigate potential options for expanding ferry service to Long Island Sound currently located in Bridgeport to include Stratford.
8. Work with State DOT to upgrade and extend the existing platform at the train station and redevelop the train station site as a potential TOD site.

Objective 3. Strive to achieve a balance between fossil fuels and other sustainable forms of energy for transportation.

1. Consider traffic calming initiatives in commercial corridors, near local schools, and at frequent crash locations in the town.
2. Continue to pursue funding opportunities to enhance access management through the implementation of roundabouts and bicycle/pedestrian infrastructure and minimizing curb cuts, where needed.
3. Continue to invest in streetscape and placemaking projects in the Town Center and other prime commercial areas in the town to increase bicycle and foot traffic to various commercial and retail uses in these areas.
4. Continue to proactively manage public parking through a Town Center parking analysis to support commercial districts and protect surrounding neighborhoods.
5. Review and update current parking standards to increase the development potential of underutilized sites.
6. Work with major employers in the town to avoid the use of single occupancy vehicles through carpooling, ride sharing, biking/walking to work, and using transit service.

Objective 4. Encourage development within the TOD zone to promote walkability and mixed-use development in Town Center.

1. Continue to promote transit-oriented projects in the TOD overlay zone to minimize reliance on automobiles.
2. Re-analyze mid-term and long-term strategies outlined in the TOD Pilot Program (prepared in 2015) to understand their relevance in current market conditions and consider expanding TOD boundary to include new areas as suggested in the Pilot Program.

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Community Facilities, Infrastructure, & Utilities

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Community Facilities, Infrastructure, & Utilities

Goal

Provide high quality community facilities, services, and infrastructure that are both fiscally and environmentally sustainable while also meeting the evolving needs of the community.

Baseline Conditions and Existing Services

The Town of Stratford provides a range of services and facilities to its residents, property owners, and visitors. Town services are provided from many facilities across the community. These include municipal buildings such as Town Hall, Birdseye Municipal Complex, the Department of Public Works complex, the Baldwin Center and Stratford Library, public facilities such as fire stations and police stations, parks and recreation facilities, schools and school grounds, and the Town's beaches. Planning for the continued and future delivery of these services is an important function of this Plan, particularly in a growing community like Stratford.

Civic Campus

Stratford's Civic Campus largely comprises the Town Hall, Birdseye Municipal Complex, Public Works, Emergency Services, Police Department, and Fire Station properties stretches from the south of Paradise Green until the train station. The Town Hall and Fire Station properties with a central green space, where public events are routinely held, create a civic identity in the center of the on Main Street. The newly renovated Stratford High School is located to the rear of the Town Hall.

Below is a brief overview of the various facilities and services offered within the Civic Campus:

Local Municipal Services

- A full K-12 education system
- Broad Public Works functions including an extensive sewer coverage area and wastewater treatment facilities; household waste collection, disposal and recycling service; parks and recreation; conservation; and road and public building repair and maintenance
- Full-time Fire and Police Departments
- A robust Library and multiple Community Centers spread out across Town
- Extensive inventory of parks, beaches, forest, and open space properties with varied activities programmed by the Recreation Department
- A Health Department that promotes general health and well-being of the Town's population
- Animal Control Department and animal shelter
- A Land Use Department that reviews the development of Stratford's commercial and residential structures, protects certain regulated resources (e.g., wetlands and coastal features), and
- General financial, legal and other administrative government functions

A review of the Town's fiscal operating budgets from 2013 through 2023 reflects a local government that has proactively managed and improved Town operations in the midst of a stagnant state economy. The budget looks towards the future in both its capital expenditures, expectations for growth, and efforts to attain cost savings for taxpayers.

Stratford's adopted operating budget for fiscal year 2023 was \$247,995,500. This budget represents an increase of over \$57 million since 2013. As with most Connecticut municipalities, the largest share of Stratford's budget is spent on education (49.5%). The Town recognizes that a high-quality education system is crucial to its quality of life, especially in a community where the school age population (ages 5-19) is projected to grow over the next 20 years.

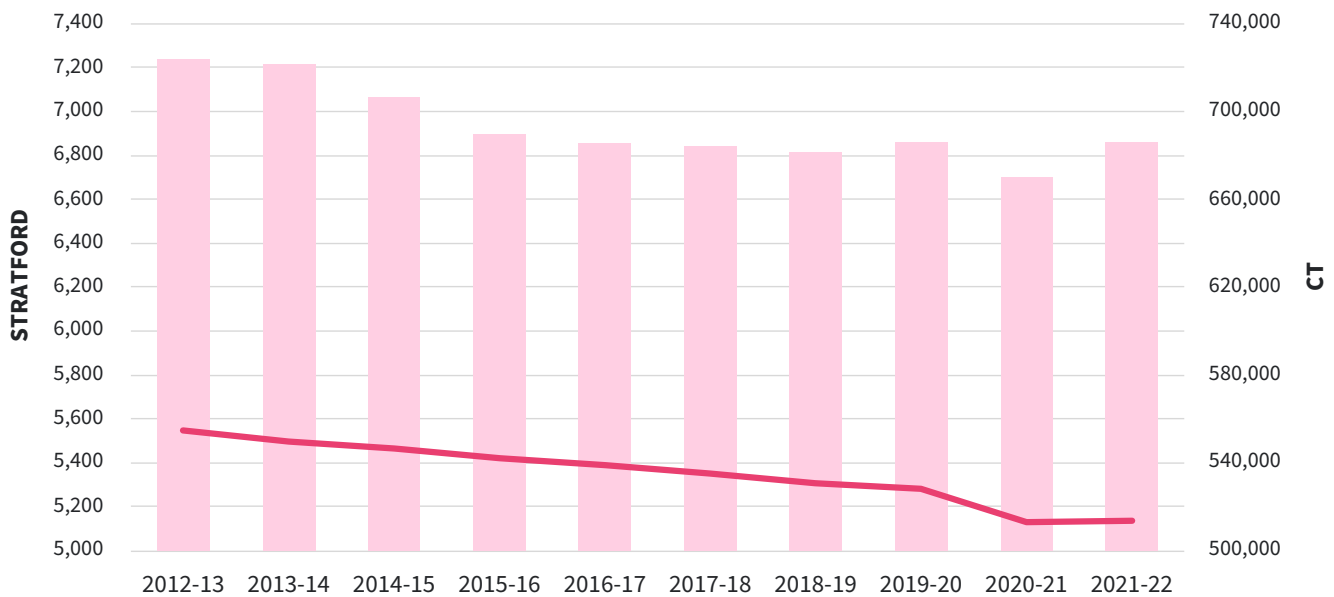
Municipal expenditures comprise the other half of the Town’s budget (roughly 50%). Of those expenditures, the largest portions are allocated to debt/capital (14.0%), employee salaries and benefits (10.1%), Public Works (6.3%), Police (5.5%), and Fire (5.1%).¹ Paying down municipal debt has been a focus for the Town, with the share of budget allocated towards municipal debt doubling since 2013. Moving into the future, the budget stresses the need to focus on economic development that will result in new commercial and industrial growth for the Town. Redevelopment of contaminated sites such as the former Stratford Army Engine plant and remediating brownfield properties for reuse will shift some of the tax burden off of Stratford residents and support funding for improved delivery of services. The creation of new development opportunities will strengthen the Town’s financial standing and lessen the economic strain on individual property owners.

Stratford Schools

Stratford is home to a large public school system that includes seven elementary, two middle, and two high schools. The Stratford School district has an enrollment of approximately 6,860 students and employs more than 634 full-time equivalent employees. This system is among the largest in the region. School district enrollment in Stratford has been on the decline since 2013, a trend that is prevalent across the State.

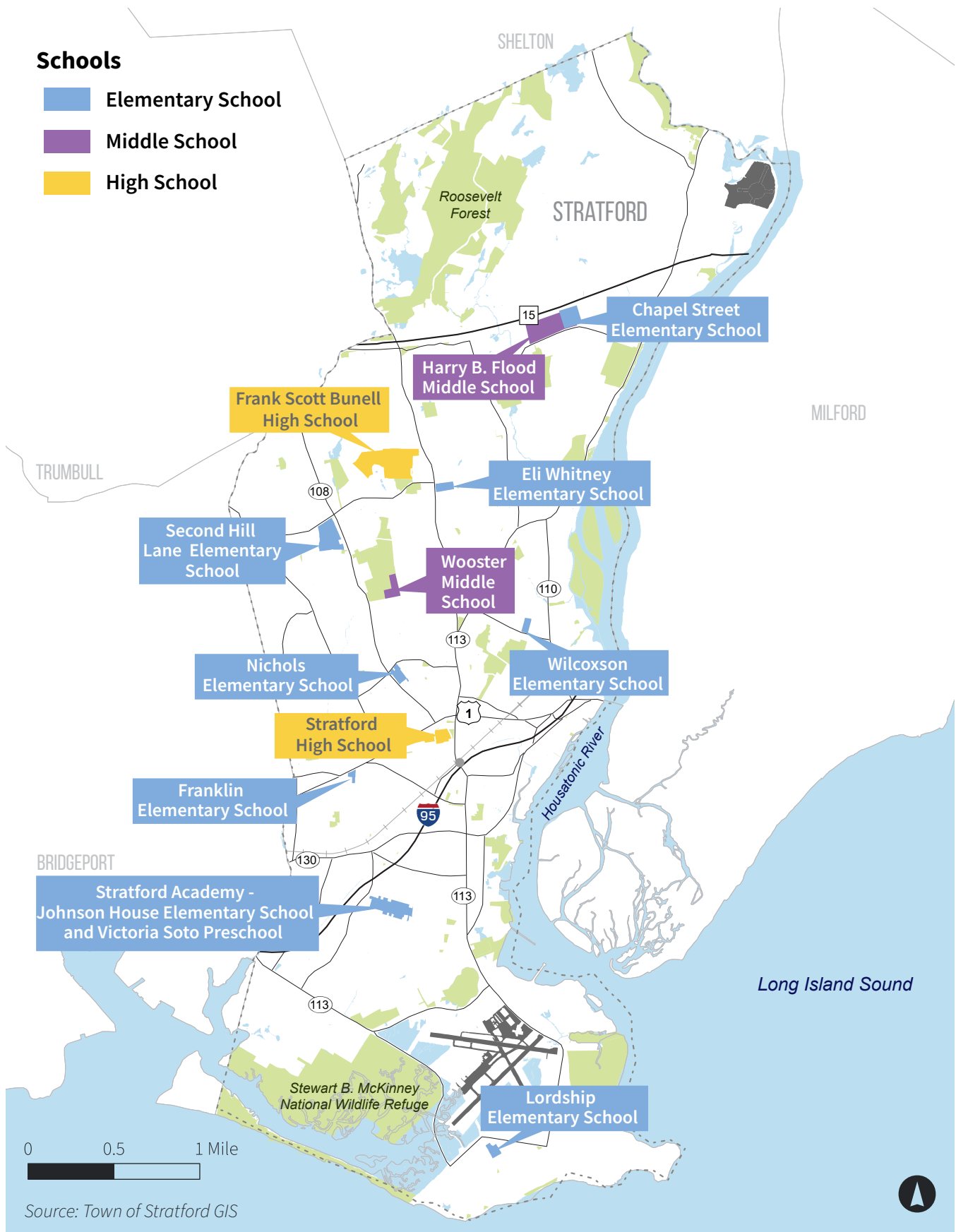
In 2021, the Town undertook a major school improvement project at Stratford High School located in Town Center. The project consisted of comprehensive renovations and additions to the building and improvements such as a reconfiguration of existing spaces to maximize efficiency, additional science classrooms, gym facilities, media center, auditorium HVAC, energy efficiency and related site improvements. Since 2013, new roofs have been installed on every school, and new boilers have been installed in all but two schools in the town, with plans in place to replace the remaining boilers in the near future.

Figure 9.1. Stratford Public Schools Enrollment vs. State 2012-2013 to 2021-2022



Source: Edsight, <https://public-edsight.ct.gov/>

Figure 9.2. Stratford Schools



Police Department

The Town of Stratford Police Department officially began in 1917 from the local constabulary. At that time, the Department had 10 officers and 1 patrol vehicle. By 1959 the Department had more than 60 officers and was located Downtown on Main Street. Today the Police Department is located at 900 Longbrook Avenue, one block north of Town Hall. This facility, at more than 18,000 square feet, has hosted the Department since 1970. The Department consists of 112 officers, inclusive of 1 Chief, 1 Deputy Chief, 4 lieutenants, 9 sergeants, 11 corporals, 15 detectives, 71 patrol officers and 4 clerical staff. Within the Department, there are several specialized units including the Detective Bureau, Traffic, Patrol, a K-9 Unit, a Marine Unit, Training, Records and Animal Control. Due to its coastal location, the Marine Unit protects the Town's 13-mile coastline and five islands as well as the marshes of the Stewart B. McKinney National Wildlife Refuge.

Fire Department

Stratford's first volunteer fire protection company was established in 1875 as the "Mutual Hook and Ladder Company" located Downtown on Main Street. A second fire company; the "Chemical Hose Company" was also established around that time. In 1909 these two companies merged to form the Stratford Fire Department. By 1930, the Town had 3 fire stations, 4 fire apparatus and 23 career firefighters. Currently 4 fire stations are strategically located throughout the town with 22 firefighters on duty around the clock. The fire stations are located in the North District at 200 Oronoque Lane, in the North-West district at 1415 Huntington Road, in the Downtown Central District at 2750 Main Street and in the southern Lordship district at 20 Prospect Drive. The Fire Department operates five engine companies out of these four fire stations. The Fire Marshall/ Life Safety Division, Fire Department administrative offices, 911 Center and Emergency Management Operations Center are all co-located at Fire Headquarters in the Downtown District fire station. Stratford has diverse fire and rescue services needs because of its proximity to the Long Island Sound, the Housatonic River along with the hundreds of acres of tidal marshes.

Stratford Police Activities League (PAL) Program

The Stratford Police builds and maintains positive relationships with residents, especially youth, to make Stratford a more united and safer community. PAL focuses on sports, youth enrichment, education and leadership.

Stratford Police Activities League (PAL) is an organization of law enforcement officers and civilians who work together towards the positive development of Stratford youth. Every dollar they raise is used directly for the benefit of the many programs sponsored by the organization



Source: <https://www.stratfordpal.com/>

Stratford Emergency Medical Service

Stratford Emergency Medical Service (SEMS) is a municipal emergency medical service and is the Primary Service Area responder at the Basic and Advanced Life Support level for the Town of Stratford. The SEMS was established in 1977 by the Town of Stratford to provide high quality, emergency medical services. SEMS provides 24-hour coverage, 7 days a week, 365 days a year primarily within Stratford but extending to surrounding areas. SEMS responds to approximately 7,000 calls each year. SEMS is a “mixed” agency employing both paid and volunteer staff consisting of approximately 50 paid staff members and over 100 volunteers. Volunteers cover over 25,000 hours a year on average.

Department of Public Works

Stratford’s Public Works Department provides many important functions that have a direct impact on the welfare and quality of life of its residents. The Department is comprised of: Building Maintenance, Engineering, Highway Conservation, Parks, Refuse and Recycling, Recreation Programming, the Town Garage, and the Water Pollution Control Facility. Public Works maintains transportation systems, essential infrastructure, and open space. It also provides sewage treatment and emergency response operations.

The Department operates under a budget allocation averaging 6.3% of the City's budget. The Department maintains all public buildings and schools, parks, greenways, beaches, playgrounds, school grounds, right-of-way grass islands, all roads and bridges, decorative lights in the Town Center espalandes and Barnum Ave, trees, and a fleet of more than 300 vehicles and heavy equipment that includes fire trucks, police cars, ambulances, dump trucks, pickup trucks, backhoes and many other vehicles used in the daily operation of the Town. The Building Maintenance Division of Public Works is responsible for maintaining and making repairs to equipment and facilities in forty-four municipal buildings and structures totaling approximately 2 million square feet, as well as maintaining Town-owned traffic lights. Building maintenance also provides support to the Town's recreational events.

Cultural and Innovation Campus Stratford Library

The Stratford Library Association was organized in 1885 and the Town’s first public library was completed in 1896 in the Town Center. This historic structure has endured for over a century and remains an iconic landmark in the Town of Stratford. Today, the library is a 14,000 square foot facility located at 2203 Main Street. The facility serves as a resource for the entire town, offering an array of programs for children and adults. It is a public lending library offering programs, services, and instruction for children, teens, and adults. Events include story hours, craft programs, computer classes, lectures, music, film, theater, and special events throughout the year. It also provides exhibit space, makerspace, digital video editing studio, computers, public wifi, and technological assistance. Housed collection includes popular titles, Stratford history and genealogy, city directories, high school yearbooks, Stratford newspapers (back to 1873), and Town reports. Online collection includes databases, down-loadable books, videos, audiobooks, and music. The library plays host to initiatives such as the CT Works Career Coach program, a robust Teen volunteer program, and workshops which also provide basic computer skills training and assistance. The library has seen a dramatic increase in the number of residents utilizing work spaces and offices within the library as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.



Stratford Library

Sterling House Community Center

Sterling House is a multi-service community center located at 2238 Main Street in the center of Stratford. Since its opening, Sterling House has been available for residents of all ages and provides affordable social, educational and recreational activities. Programs services offered at the Center include a child development center, youth development services, adult programs and community services. Approximately 13,000 individuals utilize the numerous programs, services and functions of the Sterling House on an annual basis. Sterling House's summer programs are currently at capacity, and the food pantry supplies over 5,000 meals each month to its 450 patrons. Over 100 deliveries are made to homebound older adults in Stratford each month and over 65 Stratford students visit Sterling House daily for breakfast and lunch.

Albert C. Cioffari South End Community Center

The South End Community Center (SECC) is located at 19 Bates Street. This facility hosts many special programs and classes for kids and adults. The center hosts dance classes, tutoring services, a kids' campus, health screenings, and income tax assistance. The facility also operates a food pantry. The Center's low-lying location makes it susceptible to storm events and flooding is a challenge for both the building as well as the parking lot. Transportation options between the Community Center and other areas of Stratford are limited. In May 2023, SECC was awarded \$2.4 million state grant through Community Investment Fund 2030 for renovations that include expanding building capacity and office space, and for expanding after-school programs.

Birdseye Municipal Complex

The Stratford Health Department and Community Services are housed in the Birdseye Municipal Complex located at 468 Birdseye Street. The Health Department provides public health services including restaurant inspections, childhood immunization and chronic disease monitoring. Community Services offers youth and family services and programs. Also located within the Birdseye Municipal Complex are the Probate Court and the Stratford Public Schools alternative high school program. The Recreation Department sponsors a multitude of programs at the Center utilizing the gymnasium, outdoor basketball courts, athletic fields and baseball diamonds.



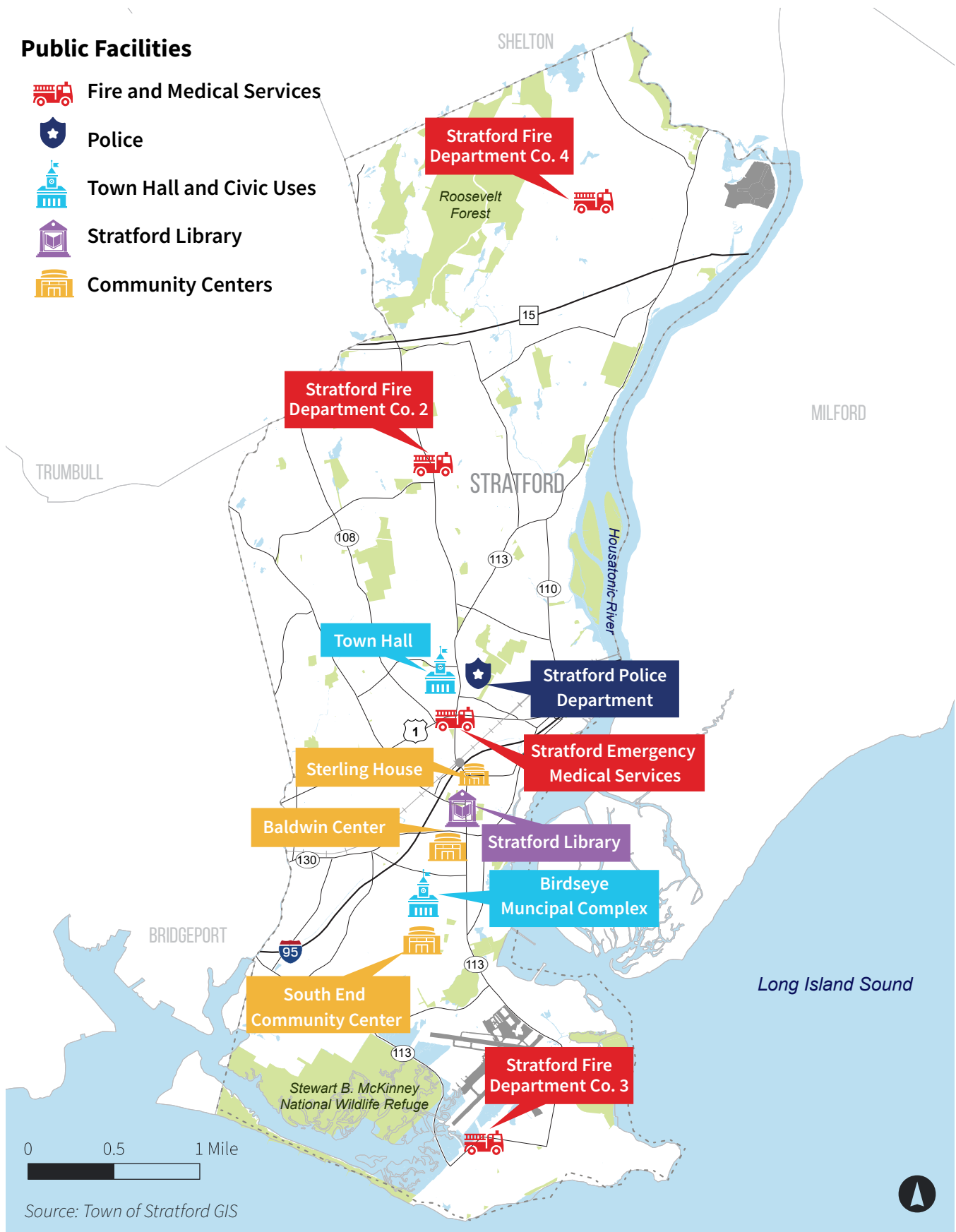
Breakfast on the beach, Source: Miosoti Vázquez Ramos

The Town recently received Community Investment Grant in the amount of \$ 2 million for major renovations to this property.

The Baldwin Center

The Baldwin Center, located at 1000 West Broad Street in Stratford is the Town's older adult center, offering community facilities, programs and services, primarily geared towards older citizens. The Center provides a home for the Town's social services program and is open to the public from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Programs such as bingo, art classes, athletic classes, and brain games and trivia are provided at the Baldwin Center. The Center's mission is to enhance the quality of life within Town of Stratford and the older adult community by providing services with professionalism and a commitment to excellence.

Figure 9.3. Public Facilities



Infrastructure and Utilities

Stormwater Infrastructure

Stratford has a stormwater infrastructure system that includes 10 major storm drainage inlets/outlets, 3 storm water pumping stations, 5,000 drainage structures (e.g., catch basins, stormwater treatment units, manholes, culverts), and 400 miles of sanitary and storm sewer pipe. There are also 8 tidal gates maintained by the Town that protect outfalls from high tides.

Since 2005, Stratford has participated in the General Permit for the Discharge of Stormwater from Small Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4

General Permit) under mandate of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The permit requires Stratford and other municipalities to take measures to improve water quality at outflows to local bodies of water. As a requirement of the permit, the Town is guided by a Stormwater Management Plan as all stormwater ultimately discharges to Long Island Sound. One important element of the Plan is a public education program to make residents aware that stormwater pollutants emanate from many of their everyday living activities, and to inform them of steps they can take to reduce pollutants in stormwater runoff. Other ways in which the Town

maintains MS4 compliance includes updating infrastructure, adopting and enforcing land use regulations that aid compliance, and proper operations and maintenance of contributing sites to the stormwater system.

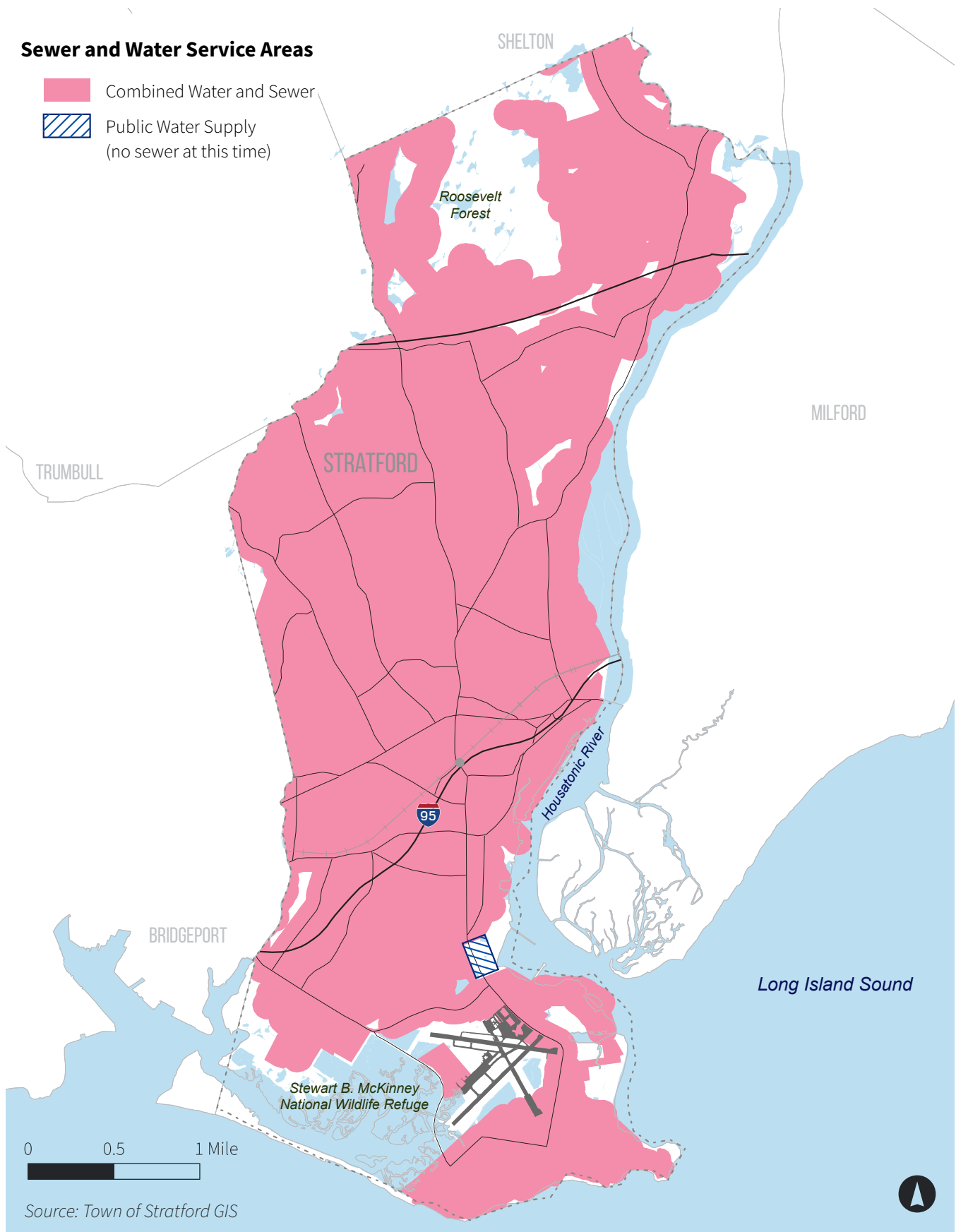
Key Elements of Low Impact Development (LID)

1. Minimizing site disturbance and clear cutting;
2. Working with existing site elevation contours and hydrology;
3. Minimizing and disconnecting impervious surfaces (i.e., disconnecting a gutter downspout that discharges to a driveway which then drains to the street, and redirecting that downspout to a rain barrel, rain garden, or other vegetated area to allow infiltration onsite); and
4. Applying small-scale water quality controls as close to the source of runoff as possible.



Proposed greenway/flood protection along eastern shoreline. Source: Town of Stratford

Figure 9.4. Sewer and Water Service Areas



Public Water Supply

All developed areas in Stratford have access to public water supply serviced by Aquarion Water Company of Connecticut. Public water supply covers over 90% of the Town's area with the exception of Roosevelt Forest on the northwest border of the Town and the Stewart B. McKinney National Wildlife Refuge at the southern end of Town. Because all developed and developable areas are served by public water supply, there is no need for expansion of this system. Improvements to the system, regularly conducted by Aquarion, primarily involve water main repair and replacement. There are also a few private wells in the town.

Sanitary Sewer and Sewer Service Area

The Town's Water Pollution Control Facility is located at the east end of Birdseye Street, adjacent to the Town's Boat Launch Ramp on Beacon Point Road. The facility is staffed and operated 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Presently the facility is designed to process 11.5 million gallons of sewage per day to parameters established by the EPA. Most of the Town is serviced by the sewer system; with the largest non-served areas in the northern section of the Town. The Water Pollution Control also operates and maintains 13 sewage pumping stations. The original facility dates back to 1919. Since 1919 the Facility has received several upgrades with the last major upgrade completed in 2009. Despite upgrades, Stratford has an aging sewer system with most of the system built between 1920-1965. Rehabilitation of the system is not happening at a rate commensurate with the need. In 2020, the Town was awarded a FEMA grant (roughly \$2.75 million) to build a flood wall along the perimeter of the property to mitigate flooding impacts. Additionally, \$4.1 million in federal funds were awarded to upgrade the stormwater pump station and pipes in 2023. These upgrades would proactively help to remove treated wastewater from sewage pipes and prevent backing up of sewage during storms. The Town is also seeking funding opportunities to restore wetlands near this site and build a living shoreline and greenway berm to the north and south of this property to provide continuous flood protection to this facility and residents nearby.

Solid Waste

Stratford's Sanitation Department manages garbage, yard waste, and recyclables collection. All are picked-up at curbside; garbage collection on a weekly basis, yard waste collection is seasonal and is made every other week and

recyclables collection is made every other week. Residents may also use the Transfer Station to get rid of household refuse (up to 250 lbs per month free of charge). In the public realm, over 300 trash cans have been placed throughout Town to deter littering. Despite this, the Town has seen an increase in litter in Stratford's public spaces as well as the dumping of bulky items at certain locations throughout the Town.

Roadway Infrastructure

Stratford's Highway Division maintains the Town-owned public roadway system. This network includes approximately 200 road miles spanning from Lordship in the south to Warner Hill Road in the north end of Town. In addition to roadway pavement, the system is comprised of the following Town-owned and maintained facilities: storm drain facilities, sanitary sewers, pavement markings, street and directional signs, traffic control devices, curbing, sidewalks, and guardrails. The Division is also responsible for removing snow and ice from public roadways roadway. Each year, \$3 million is allocated to maintain Stratford's roadways, while another \$250,000 per year is devoted to sidewalk maintenance. Street trees along the roadway are managed by the Conservation Department.



Image of one of the nine fire apparatuses maintained by Town of Stratford. Source: Molly Ryan, Town of Stratford

Findings

- The Town has an array of community facilities serving many different ages and in different areas of the Town. Many of these facilities are at capacity.
- Due to its age and condition, the Town's infrastructure warrants a methodical review and upgrade or replacement as identified by a review.
- The Town faces challenges with maintaining its infrastructure and the level of services that residents are accustomed to.



The Baldwin Center

Stratford's Baldwin Center provides a variety of programs for the community. Activities such as cardio drumming (shown in the image above), line dancing, and the weekly walking club are just some of the offerings provided to the Baldwin Center's members.



What We Heard From the Community

Through the Plan's community engagement process, Stratford residents expressed many ideas and desires regarding community facilities and infrastructure in the Town. Stratford is recognized by its residents as having a variety of high-quality facilities and public infrastructure. Other strengths identified by residents and stakeholders include good parks with services, good community centers, and a great library. Residents also expressed concerns about weaknesses of and threats to Town facilities. Many residents felt that additional maintenance was needed at some of the Town's facilities. Residents also expressed concern about the age and condition of many school buildings. During interviews with Stratford's Boards and Commission members, challenges such as ongoing maintenance and available funding were identified. Stratford's community facilities are heavily used and flooding issues, particularly in the south end were noted. Limited space, particularly at the Library was also discussed. Many ideas and opportunities for Town facilities and infrastructure were identified by residents and stakeholders. A complete detailing of the community's perspective on community facilities and infrastructure is available in Appendix A: Community Engagement Summary.

Goal

Provide high quality community facilities, services, and infrastructure that are both fiscally and environmentally sustainable while also meeting the evolving needs of the community.



Source: Molly Ryan, Town of Stratford

Objectives & Action Steps

Objective 1. Ensure that Stratford continues to adequately serve its residents and businesses with public infrastructure and utilities.

1. Ensure methodical review and upgrade of the town's aging infrastructure.
2. Continue efforts toward upgrading the Town's infrastructure with regard to potential impacts of climate change.
3. Promote the shared use of public spaces and facilities.
4. Incorporate high quality design standards, including environmentally friendly green design standards, into newly developed buildings and spaces.
5. Facilitate a partnership between cultural and community anchors related to Culture & Innovation campus to offer education and innovation programming to Stratford residents and visitors.
6. Conduct a space utilization study of the community anchors located in Stratford Center to understand current and emerging needs with regards to meeting space, events, and parking.
7. Develop a maintenance schedule to assure that all Town buildings and properties undergo regular repairs and maintenance to minimize the dramatically high costs brought on by years of postponed repairs.
8. Collaborate with neighboring and regional municipalities and organizations to consolidate duplicate services where feasible.
9. Facilitate public composting of yard waste, food scraps, etc. through site selection and necessary investments to implement a townwide public composting program.

Objective 2. Prioritize improvements to the Town's stormwater infrastructure that reduce flooding and improve water quality in the Town's surface waters.

1. Increase management of town's urban canopy to reduce urban heat island effect due to large tracts of asphalt parking lots and to combat climate change.
2. Require that new development must manage all stormwater on site; encourage low impact development.
3. Work to reduce pollutants in stormwater flow to the Long Island Sound and the Housatonic River.
 - Consider and prepare for the use of alternatives to winter sanding and salting on roadways and parking areas.
 - Adopt an ordinance that limits the application of fertilizers and broad-based pesticides, particularly in months with historically high or low average precipitation such as April and August.
 - Regularly schedule street sweeping and catch basin clean- outs to minimize the amount of sediment, contaminants, and floatable debris entering coastal waters and other waterbodies through the municipal stormwater management system, and recommendations to amend the zoning regulations to require similar maintenance of private parking lots and streets.
4. Perform engineering studies to determine the best way to protect infrastructure subject to extreme flooding and allocate funding to implement the recommendations.
5. Perform an update to the 2001 Sewage Facility Plan to identify sewer capacity issues, including identification of problem areas that would impact future development. Identify improvement plans to increase capacity that may be needed to fully implement the POCD, including plans to reduce inflow and infiltration into the sewer system.
6. Implement the Best Management Practices of the 2022 Stratford Stormwater Management Plan.
7. Address inflow and infiltration issues that arise during storm events across the wastewater collection system; mandate drainage calculations for private developments to include impacts due to 25-, 50- and 100-year storm events.
8. Develop and adopt a stormwater ordinance that includes green infrastructure and promotes highest water quality in public and private developments.
9. Facilitate undergrounding of utilities to avoid downing of utility lines and threats to life and properties during major storm events.
10. Consider updating zoning regulations to require or encourage the retrofitting of existing stormwater systems during redevelopment to minimize flooding and potential adverse impacts to coastal water quality

Objective 3. Educate residents about the importance of protecting the quality of water resources by preventing substances such as fertilizers, other contaminants, and debris from entering the storm water and sanitary sewer systems.

1. Continue to provide educational documents on the importance of protecting water quality by implementing an year round public education program.
2. Consider the creation of an educational program for stormwater management in schools.
3. Distribute educational materials to developers discussing MS4 requirements related to construction.
4. Educate residents about using green infrastructure such as rain gardens, permeable pavements, rain barrels, green roofs, and other rainwater harvesting systems on private properties.
5. Educate residents regarding efficient power usage, waste reduction, efficient use of fertilizers and improved recycling habits.

Objective 4. Ensure that the Town's finances are professionally and carefully managed to deliver the highest level of services and programs as efficiently as possible.

1. Monitor future public investments in acquisition, new construction/ additions and improvements in relation to the delivery of service to the maximum number of Stratford residents and businesses and for the highest priority public service needs.
2. Institute a process of review of the Capital Improvement Plan and Annual Capital Budget by the Planning Commission to discuss municipal projects during the planning stages before substantial investments have been made.

Objective 5. Prioritize improvements to the Town's facilities to meet diverse program needs.

1. Conduct a Town Facilities Master Plan to assess capacity to meet current and anticipated program needs, to identify energy and other efficiency improvements, and to explore opportunities for consolidation and reuse.
2. Address accessibility needs of the physically disabled population in utilizing Town facilities and services.

Objective 6. Prioritize improvements to the Town's school facilities to meet program needs.

1. Recommend the Board of Education complete an enrollment and space utilization study of all schools to determine current and projected facility needs.
2. Expand the capacity of existing schools with priority given to Stratford's most highly utilized schools as identified by Stratford Board of Education.
3. Improve school facilities to ensure that high quality, modern, and fully accessible facilities are available to Stratford's students.
4. Continue to invest in its education system to improve Stratford as a desirable place to raise a family.



Left: South End Community Center Staff, Leaders-In-Training and Summer Soiree youth participants along with Police Officers enjoy a hands-on learning about heroes and safety. Right: Student artists show their work created as part of their participation in the 21st Century After School Program. Source: Tammy Trojanowski, Director of Community & Older adult Services



Student artwork on display at Stratford Town Hall, Source: FHI Studio



10

**Energy, Environment &
Sustainability**

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Energy, Environment & Sustainability

Goal

Ensure that Stratford is a sustainable and thriving community that benefits from and supports clean energy, preserves and cares for its ecosystems, prioritizes environmental cleanup and protection, fosters community and ecosystem resiliency and prepares for any coastal changes in fiscally and environmentally sustainable ways.

Baseline Conditions

Stratford's location, as a coastal community, positioned along major water resources such as the Long Island Sound, the Great Meadows Marsh and the Housatonic River, make environmental stewardship a key priority for the Town.

Roosevelt Forest, with over 400 acres of woodland and wildlife habitat, contributes to the biodiversity and water quality of the community. These unique and celebrated environmental assets are also vulnerable to the direct and indirect impacts of climate change. Planning for climate change is something that the Town has been actively engaged in over the past decade. Due to these efforts, Stratford was awarded the Climate Leader designation from Sustainable CT in its first year of Climate Leader program

(2022). Only four other towns in the state received this designation besides Stratford. The Town was also previously certified Silver certified by Sustainable CT (the highest level of certification offered in 2020) for meeting high standards in nine sustainable impact areas ranging from inclusive community building, thriving local economies, vibrant arts and culture to clean transportation and diverse housing. Stratford also participates in US Environmental Protection



2022 Eunice Newton Foote Climate Leader Award, Source: Town of Stratford



Stratford's 2020 Silver Sustainable CT Award, Source: Town of Stratford



Mayor Hoydick accepting Stratford's Climate Leader award, Source: Town of Stratford



Stratford's 2021 Tree City USA Award, Source: Town of Stratford

Agency's Energy Star, the Connecticut Green Bank's C-PACE, Arbor Day Foundation's Tree City USA, US Department of Energy's SolSmart, and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)'s Community Rating System (CRS) programs.

Energy

As mentioned earlier, Stratford has made great strides towards advancing the Town's overall environmental and fiscal sustainability through energy initiatives and sustainable programs. A summary of these initiatives is provided below.

Sustainable CT

Sustainable CT is a voluntary certification program to recognize thriving and resilient Connecticut municipalities. It is an independently funded grassroots organization focused on celebrating and enhancing municipal efforts on sustainability. It also provides opportunities for grant funding of community activities that promote economic well-being and enhance equity, all while respecting the finite capacity of the natural environment.

Stratford has been participating in the Sustainable CT program since 2020 and is currently a silver certified community and also designated as a Climate Leader. To achieve these designations, Stratford has initiated and championed many sustainable initiatives such as, adopting a Complete Streets Policy and projects, benchmarking and tracking energy use in municipal buildings and schools, and converting Town and utility owned streetlights to LEDs.

Energy Star

Stratford benchmarks and tracks energy usage in all municipal and Board of Education buildings, such as, the Wastewater Treatment Facility. Stratford High School, Flood

Figure 10.1. Comparison of Stratford Town Hall Energy Star Score from June 2010 to March 2023

Metric	Jun 30 2010 (Energy Baseline)	Mar 31 2023 (Energy Current)	Target*	Median Property*
ENERGY STAR score (1-100)	61	75	75	50
Source EUI (kBtu/ft ²)	119.8	95.3	96.9	139.5
Site EUI (kBtu/ft ²)	69.9	51.9	52.8	76
Source Energy Used (kBtu)	4339121.9	3450276.8	3509452.5	5052426.5
Site Energy Used (kBtu)	2530221.7	1879115.5	1911344.3	2751690.4
Energy Cost (\$)	69641.41	51430.64	52312.73	75312.66
Total (Location-Based) GHG Emissions (Metric Tons CO ₂ e)	176.2	114.8	116.7	168.1

* To compute the metrics at the target and median levels of performance, we will use the fuel mix associated with your property's current energy use.

Source: Energy Star Benchmarking (Online)

Middle School, Franklin Elementary School, and the Victoria Soto School at Stratford Academy all utilize solar power. Currently, there are 30 Town-owned properties listed in Stratford's Energy Star portfolio. The Town has also created a street light inventory and lighting needs assessment and has converted the Town-owned decorative streetlights and exterior park lighting to LEDs.

Source: <https://solsmart.org/designee/stratford>

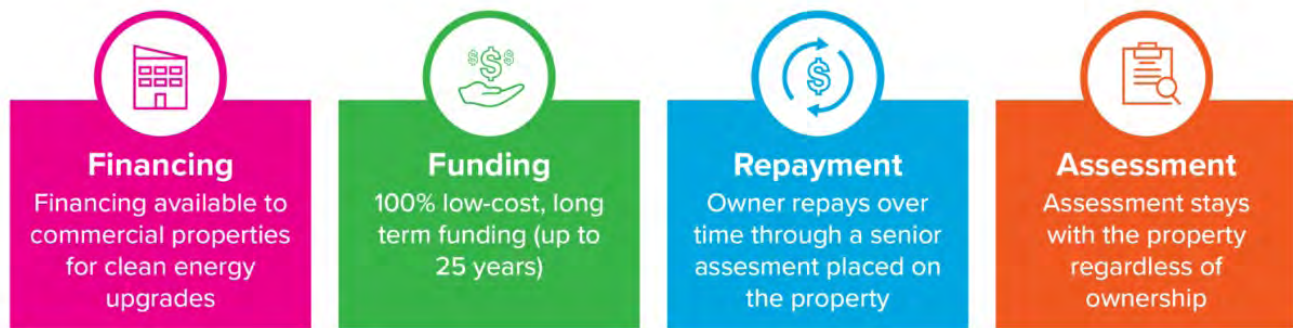
Household Energy Burdens

In 2020, the American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy conducted an analysis on “*How High are Household Energy Burdens*” and concluded that high energy burdens remain a national challenge with a quarter of US households (30.6 million paying more than 6% of income on energy bills) facing a high energy burden and 13% facing a severe energy burden (roughly 16 million paying more than 10% of income on energy. Communities of color and low-income households have disproportionately high energy burdens nationally, regionally, and in metroareas. For example, in the Northeast, the median energy burden by region is 3.5% whereas median energy burden for a low-income household is 10.5%. Communities could benefit from HUD’s weatherization and energy efficiency programs, which could decrease low-income households’ energy burdens by about 25%.

SolSmart

SolSmart is a national program that helps cities, towns, counties, and regional organizations become solar energy leaders. Stratford achieved SolSmart Gold designation in 2017 through initiatives such as allowing solar by-right accessory use in all zones (so solar installations don’t require special permits or hearings) and demonstrating that Stratford’s number of solar installations per capita is above the top 20% of states.

Figure 10.2. Overview of C-PACE Program



Source: <https://www.ctgreenbank.com/c-pace/>

C-PACE Program

Stratford has opted into the Connecticut Green Bank’s Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (C-PACE) program as a participating municipality. Commercial properties can use C-PACE for all types of green upgrades to new and existing buildings. Manufacturing facilities, offices, retail establishments, houses of worship, nonprofits, and other buildings can all benefit from energy efficiency and clean energy updates through C-PACE.

Environment

Wetlands

Tidal wetlands and intertidal flats play an important part in the maintenance of inland wetlands, water quality, and buffering of wave action. They are also considered critical habitat as they support a diverse ecosystem of vegetation

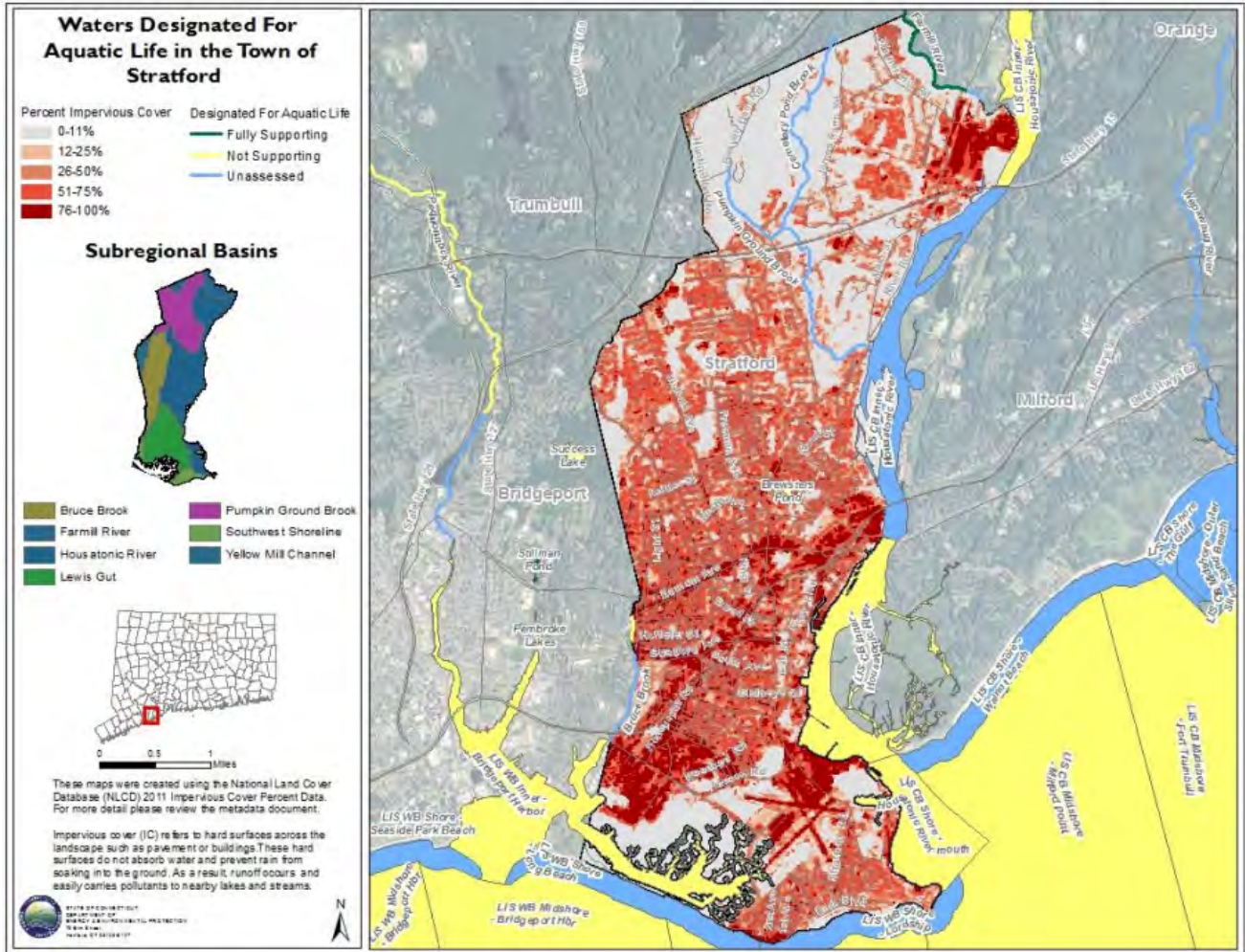
and wildlife. They are areas of high nutrient and biological productivity that provide detritus, decaying organic matter that forms the base of the food chain in tidal wetlands. There are nearly 600 acres of tidal wetlands in the Town of Stratford. These areas include the McKinney Wildlife Refuge, the islands in the Housatonic River, and low-lying areas along the Housatonic River. While the Town’s inland wetland regulations protect vulnerable wetlands from development, the upland areas closer to these wetlands are not subject to the same scrutiny. An analysis of these upland review areas is needed to figure out the best way to limit developments in these areas.

Hydrology

Stratford is located within two major watersheds, the Housatonic River Watershed and the Southwest Coast Watershed. The Housatonic River Watershed runs along

the eastern and northern side of the town and the southwestern third of the town flows directly into Long Island Sound via minor streams. Beside the Housatonic River which flows along the eastern border of the town, major streams in Stratford include Farmill River, Bruce Brook, Black Brook, Cemetery Brook, Pumpkin Ground Brook, Long Brook, Freeman Brook and Raven Brook. The Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (CT DEEP) has rated the water quality of the Housatonic River in Stratford as **Class SB**. This means that the waters are designated for habitat for marine fish, other aquatic life and wildlife, commercial shellfish harvesting, recreation, industrial water supply and navigation. Bruce Brook, Cemetery Pond Brook, and the Far Mill River on the Stratford/Shelton town line are considered to be “impaired” waterways (2022). These are rivers that have been assessed to comply with Sections 305(b) and 303(d) of the federal Clean Water Act.

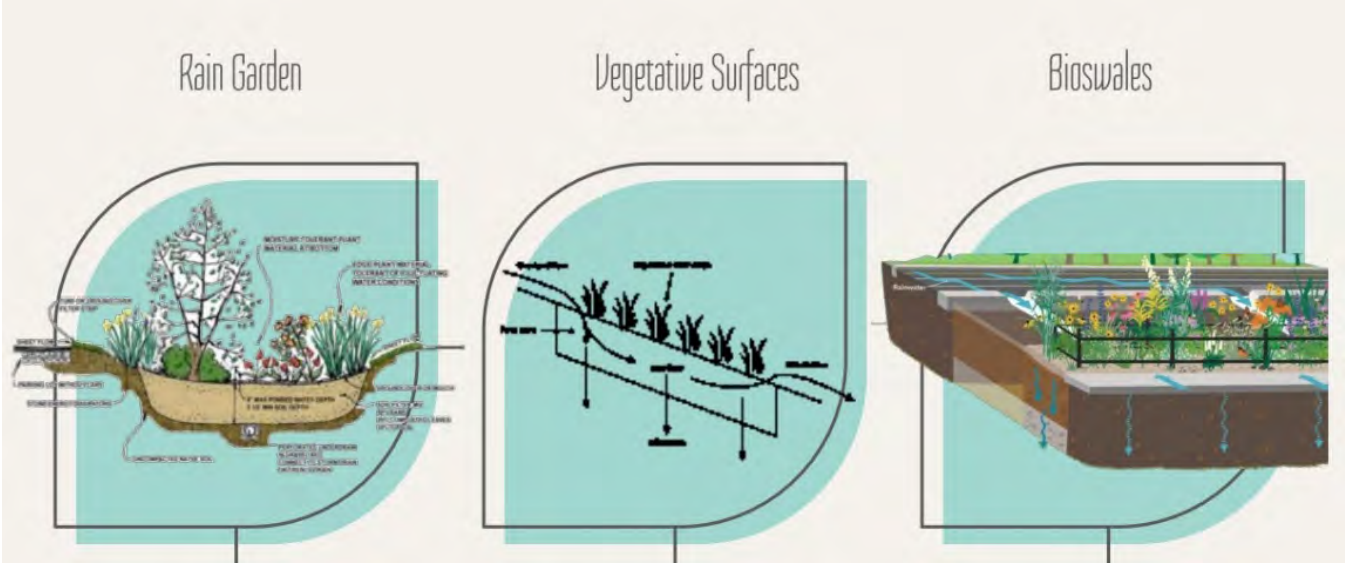
Figure 10.3. CT DEEP Factsheet: Town of Stratford Water Quality and Stormwater Summary



Source: CT DEEP, <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/DEEP/water/IC/StratfordMS4FactSheetpdf.pdf>

Section 305(b) of the Clean Water Act requires each state to monitor, assess and report on the quality of its waters relative to designated uses established in accordance with the State's water quality standards. Further, Section 303(d) of the CWA requires each state to list waters not meeting water quality standards and prioritize those waters for management. The “Impaired Waters List” Chapter of the State of Connecticut’s Integrated Water Quality Report provides a list of all water quality impairments in the state, the causes of the impairment, and the potential sources of those impairments. The amount of impervious cover (IC) in the town is one factor that affects surface water quality. The Conservation Department is currently working on a watershed based plan for Bruce Brook to identify water quality challenges and describe management measures that may be implemented to improve water quality in Bruce Brook watershed.

Figure 10.4. Examples of Best Management Practices (BMPs)



Source: Stratford Stormwater BMP Design Report prepared by Sara Aldarondo, Esther Chang & Alexander Da Silva, UCONN Engineering, 2020

The amount of impervious cover (IC) in the town affects surface water quality. Impervious cover includes roads, sidewalks, parking lots, and roods. When IC exceeds 12%, aquatic life will be adversely impacted. Given below is a map of the amount of impervious cover in various watershed basins of the town.

The Town has been taking proactive steps to reduce its impervious cover to less than 12% through various actions undertaken to comply with the Connecticut Municipal Stormwater (CT MS4) permit such as public education and outreach, encouraging public involvement in stormwater management, illicit discharge detection and elimination, construction site runoff control, pre- and post-construction stormwater management, and incorporation of best management practices (BMPs) for water pollution prevention. The Town prepares an Annual Report of these actions and reports to the state in January each year per MS4 permit requirements.

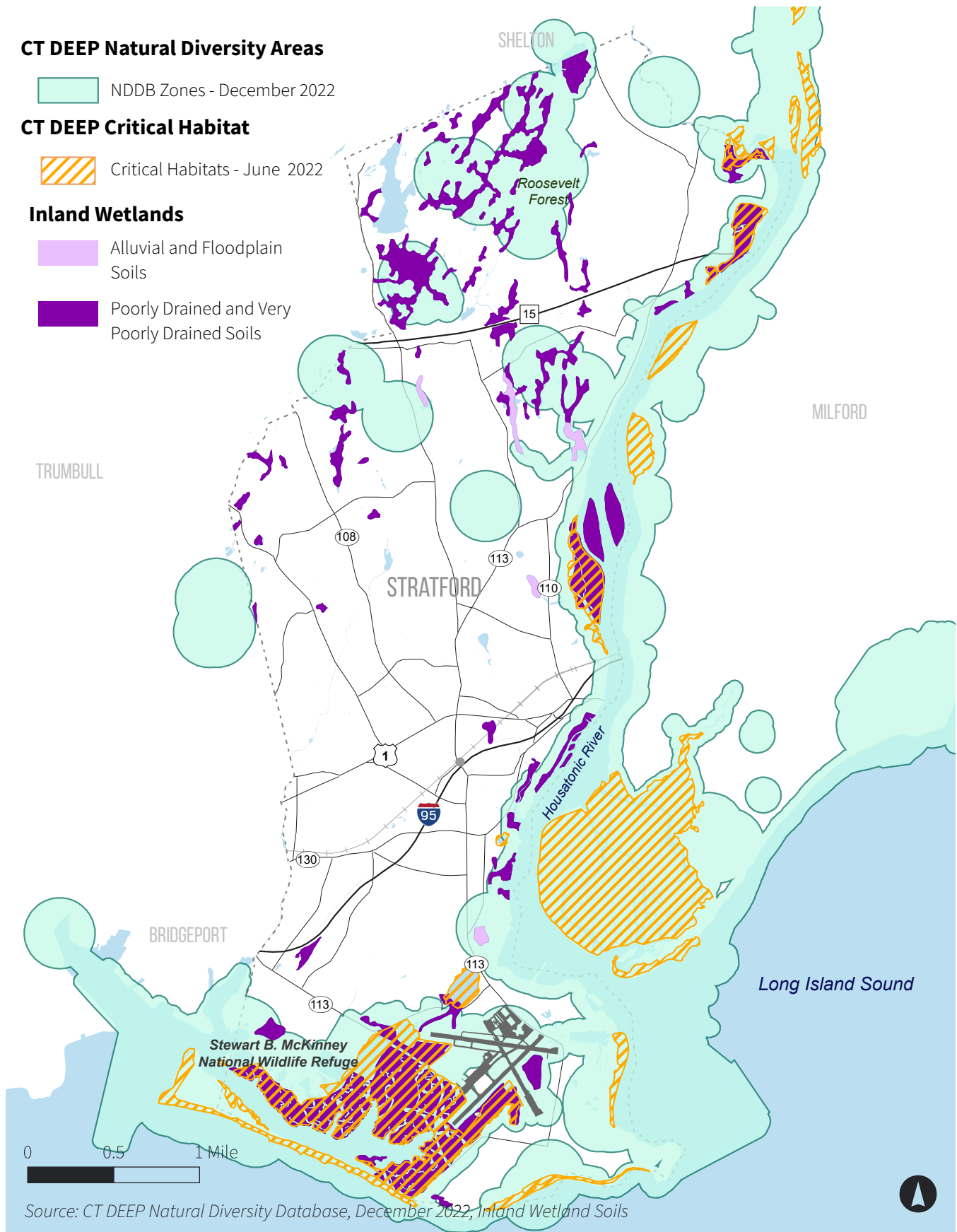
In the absence of a Stormwater Ordinance that addresses green infrastructure needs and enforced by qualified staff, it is difficult to implement site-specific green infrastructure, low-impact development and nature based solutions in private developments that would also help in reducing the impervious cover and overall stormwater quality.

Soils

The majority of soils in the Town of Stratford are classified as urban or some urban complex. This classification occurs in areas that have been so fully developed that the original soil type is unknown. Soil types that are known are found in the tidal wetlands and in Roosevelt Forest where there is no development opportunity.

US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)’s clean up of former Raymark site in Stratford indicated contaminated soils at the surface, which could lead to human exposures to toxins contained in the waste including lead, asbestos,

Figure 10.5. DEEP Natural Diversity Areas & Inland Wetlands



and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs). Human exposure to this waste could occur through breathing of contaminants, ingesting contaminated soil or through direct skin contact. Over the past two decades, the Town aggressively took various actions to remediate several waste sites impacted by Raymark waste and restore them to a safe condition including two public recreation areas, numerous residential properties, and the former Raymark industry site. Work is underway at the Raymark site and to date, 53,000 cubic yards of material has



Image of Typical Fan and Vent Pipe in a Soil Vapor Mitigation System

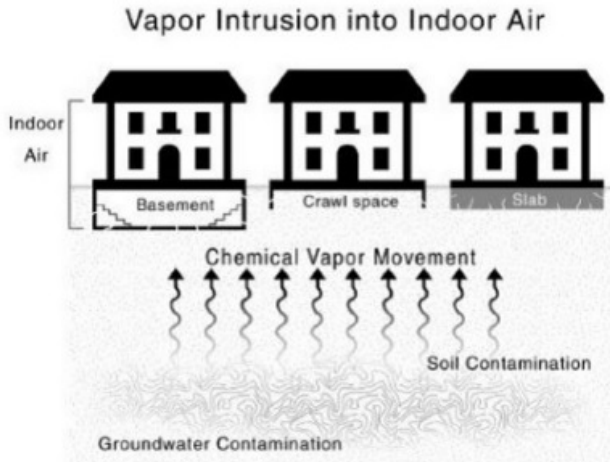
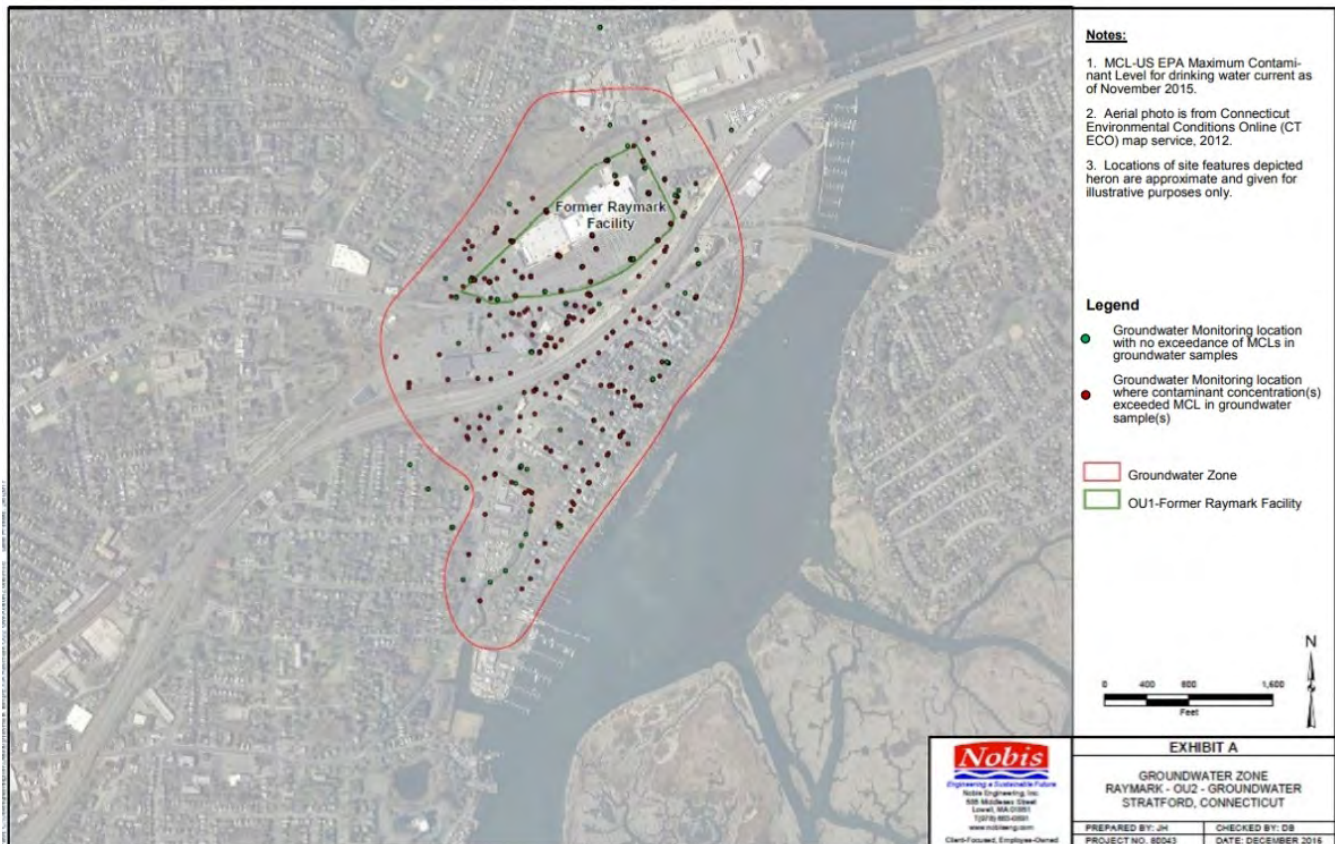


Image of Vapor Intrusion into Residential Homes due to Groundwater Contamination

Figure 10.6. Groundwater Zone delineated by Town Ordinance 17-09 (2017)



The Groundwater Zone is a larger zone under monitoring which encompasses the Vapor Intrusion Zone. There are restrictions in both zones, with mitigation systems required only within the Vapor Intrusion Zone. Source: [https://www.stratfordct.gov/filestorage/39832/39846/39915/40411/40497/GW%26VI_Zones_Ordinance_Fact_Sheet_3-2018_\(FINAL\).pdf](https://www.stratfordct.gov/filestorage/39832/39846/39915/40411/40497/GW%26VI_Zones_Ordinance_Fact_Sheet_3-2018_(FINAL).pdf)

been consolidated, compacted and covered at the site. Additionally, as of May 2023, stormwater upgrades such as a stormwater headwall and channel armoring have occurred. Construction of a new pump station on Platt Street is underway and is anticipated to take approximately 24 months to complete. The site is expected to be capped by the end of 2024.

In 2022, the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) pledged \$23 million to remediate former Raymark industrial site through the federal infrastructure bill funding.

Ground Water

Groundwater in the southern two-thirds of the town is rated GB, which means that it is not suitable for human consumption. GB rated groundwater is presumed to be contaminated by common urban and industrial discharges. The northern third of the town has ground water that is rated GA, or suitable for human consumption without treatment. There are no aquifer protection areas located in the Town of Stratford.

Plants and Wildlife

The Natural Diversity Data Base (NDDDB) is part of the Environmental and Geographic Information Center, Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection. Information from biologic inventories of the state's species and habitats, conducted over the past 100 years by the Connecticut Geological and Natural History Survey, has been incorporated into the NDDDB. Information on rare plant and animal species and significant natural communities is compiled, stored and made available through the Data Base. This database is continually updated with information derived from ongoing field research, universities, biologists, naturalists and conservation groups. Based on the NDDDB maps, state and federal listed at-risk species are located along the Housatonic River and Long Island Sound including Lewis Gut. Significant communities are also found in Roosevelt Forest, along the Far Mill River and Raven Stream, an area southeast of the interchange of Merritt Parkway and State Highway 8, and largely within and near Great Meadows Marsh (34 acres). The Great Meadows Marsh is also listed as a critical habitat area by the State and an important bird area by the Audubon Society, which means that the habitat on this land is needed to support recovery of state or federal listed at-risk species.

In October 2021, roughly \$4.6 million was invested to plant over 155,000 native coastal plants and shrubs; to create a new creek to restore the natural flow of salt water in and

out with the tides; to create grassy mounds to provide an elevated home for nesting Saltmarsh Sparrows; and to add two viewing ADA accessible platforms to the Great Meadows Marsh—a globally important nesting area for birds and part of Stewart B. McKinney National Wildlife Refuge. This project was collaboration between Audubon Connecticut, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection. Additionally, student interns from Stratford and Bunnell



View of Great Meadows Marsh. Source: <https://ct.audubon.org/news/4m-marsh-restoration-project-launches-stratford>



Stratford Point Bird Nesting Area. Source: <https://www.ctpublic.org/news/2023-01-12/connecticut-audubon-society-acquires-stratford-point-a-haven-for-hundreds-of-birds>

high schools and over 150 volunteers (the Salt Marsh Stewards) assisted in making this project successfully. The restored Marsh and its creeks now provide healthy habitat for Horseshoe crabs and Blue crabs, the endangered Marsh Pink flower, Saltmarsh Sparrow and other migratory birds, and for the Atlantic Silverside and Menhaden. Additionally, this project has created over 2,000 linear feet of tidal channels and reduced breeding grounds for mosquitoes. The trails and viewing platforms at this site are now open to visitors from during the day time.

In 2023, Stratford Point—a 28 acre nature preserve located at Housatonic River was donated to the Connecticut Audubon Society by the conservation group Corteva Agriscience. This site used to be home to the Remington Gun Club and shotgun shooting range, which significantly damaged the marshes and shoreline. A living shoreline project was implemented in 2013 to include an artificial reef that helped reduce erosion and increase sediment along the shore thus creating a safe habitat for native plants and animals. This site is also one of Connecticut’s largest birding locations with about 296 species of birds that are found here. This is open for public viewing on weekdays during the day time.

Coastal Water

With roughly 18 miles of coastline, Stratford has one of the longest shorelines in Connecticut. Stratford manages the beneficial use and conservation of its coastal resources in accordance with the requirements of the Connecticut Coastal Management Act (CCMA) and other pertinent legislation. A variety of coastal land and water resources are found in Stratford’s coastal area, including but not limited to, tidal waters and embayments, intertidal flats, tidal wetlands, beaches (Short beach, Long beach, Russian/Lordship beach), bluffs, sand dunes, flood plains, and living marine resources such as finfish and shellfish. Stratford’s shellfish resources are of singular importance in Connecticut. They consist not only shellfish populations but also the habitat required for those populations to reproduce, survive, and flourish. In fact, as recognized by the Connecticut Bureau of Aquaculture, the Housatonic River at Stratford and Milford supports the most valuable seed oyster grounds in the state. Upland coastal resources adjacent to the shoreline include areas classified according to the CCMA as “developed shorelands”.

The CCMA sets the coastal boundary line marking the area within which the provisions of the CCMA apply,



Oyster Reefs (“living shoreline”) planted at Stratford Point by Sacred Heart University in 2010, which serve as a habitat for all types of shellfish and marine life in 2016. Source: <https://www.sacredheart.edu/news-room/news-listing/new-grant-will-help-shu-bolster-stratford-point-shoreline/>

including the requirements for Coastal Site Plan Review. The area within the coastal boundary also defines the area covered by the provisions of Stratford’s Municipal Coastal Program. State-wide the coastal management boundary is a continuous line delineated by a 1,000-foot curvilinear setback from the Mean High Water (MHW) line; a 1,000-foot setback from the inland boundary of state-regulated tidal wetlands, or the inland boundary of the 100-year floodplain, whichever is the farthest inland. Stratford’s coastal boundary line is shown in Figure 10.6 and also on the Existing Zoning Map within Land Use and Zoning Chapter.

The coastal water drains into the Outer Housatonic River within the Eastern Basin of Long Island Sound. In 2022, Save the Sound (a regional non-profit organization) measured water quality in bays around Long Island Sound and issued a score card on water quality within each bay.

Stratford’s Outer Housatonic River received an **A** grade thus indicating that the water quality is improving and various actions undertaken over the years to reduce water usage, maintain sewers, keep litter out of waterways, plant native species, and eliminate or reduce fertilizer use have been fruitful. However, Stratford’s coast is highly vulnerable to the impacts of sea level rise and climate change as discussed in the North East Climate Impacts Assessment (2007) which indicates that the average temperatures

across the Northeast increased by more than 1.5 degrees Fahrenheit since 1970. Several coastal properties are below an elevation of 10 feet and vulnerable to coastal flooding as shown in Figure 10.6. The ecological habitat by the coast is at highest risk from climate change although the degree of impact may vary. Likely impacts include conversion of rare habitat types (e.g., cold water to warm water streams, tidal marsh and offshore islands to submerged lands), loss and/or replacement of critical species dependent on select habitats, and the increased susceptibility of habitats to other on-going threats (e.g., fragmentation, degradation and loss due to irresponsible land use management, establishment of invasive species, etc.). Increasing temperatures, rainfall, and flooding create environments conducive to the spread of vector-borne and water-borne diseases.

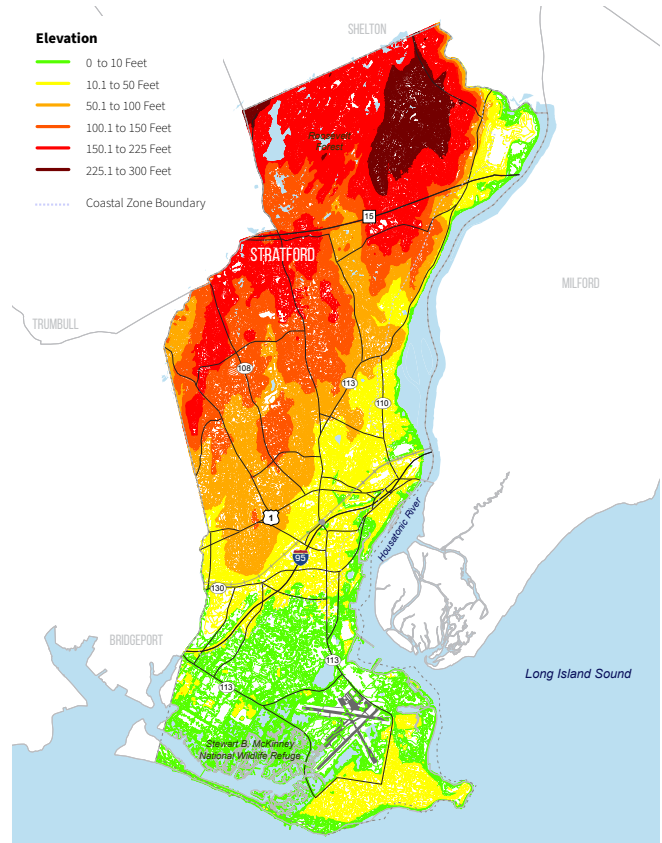
The Town prepared and adopted a Coastal Resiliency Plan in 2016 to mitigate flooding risks by the coast. A combination of nature based solutions and hard engineering solutions were recommended in this Plan. Aggressive implementation of these strategies is needed to protect critical habitat by the coast, mitigate public health impacts, and prevent loss of lives and properties.

Topography

The southern part of the town is relatively flat, gradually increasing in elevation from south to north. North of I-95, the town becomes more shaped by hills with a peak elevation of 290 feet. There are areas of steep slopes particularly in the Oronoque area and throughout Roosevelt Forest. Disturbance to steep slopes (greater than 15% slopes) would cause increased soil erosion and accumulation of sediment beyond acceptable levels thus exacerbating drainage and flooding problems. They also provide habitat to animal and plant life and recharge surface water and hence, building on steep slopes must be avoided.

The Town discourages development/redevelopment of steep slopes through its zoning and subdivision regulations. In recent years, the Town received a few applications to build affordable housing in areas of steep slopes, consistent with 8-30 g statute, which (if built as proposed) would disturb the steep slopes and endanger the habitat. Moving forward, the Town should figure out a way to address this issue so that the need for affordable housing is balanced with the need for preservation of critical habitat.

Figure 10.7. Stratford Elevation Map



Source: CT Terrain Dataset

Environmental Cleanup Sites

Brownfield is defined by the Connecticut General Statutes Section 32-9kk(a) (1) as “any abandoned or underutilized site where redevelopment, reuse or expansion has not occurred due to the presence or potential presence of pollution in the buildings, soil or groundwater that requires investigation or remediation before or in conjunction with the restoration, redevelopment, reuse and expansion of the property.”

Stratford has a number of brownfields that have been subject to environmental contamination due to its long history of industrial manufacturing. Some industries left the town and also left behind areas of known contamination such as the Raymark Industries (a superfund site) and the former Stratford Army Engine Plant (a Base Realignment and Closure Act site). These parcels have major impacts upon surrounding properties and the town as a whole; they are unproductive, often in disrepair, they require maintenance and limit the town’s tax revenues and pose health and safety hazards. They can also have a negative impact upon surrounding property values in the town and impede new growth. Among the Town’s top priorities is managing this

Figure 10.8. Contaminated Areas

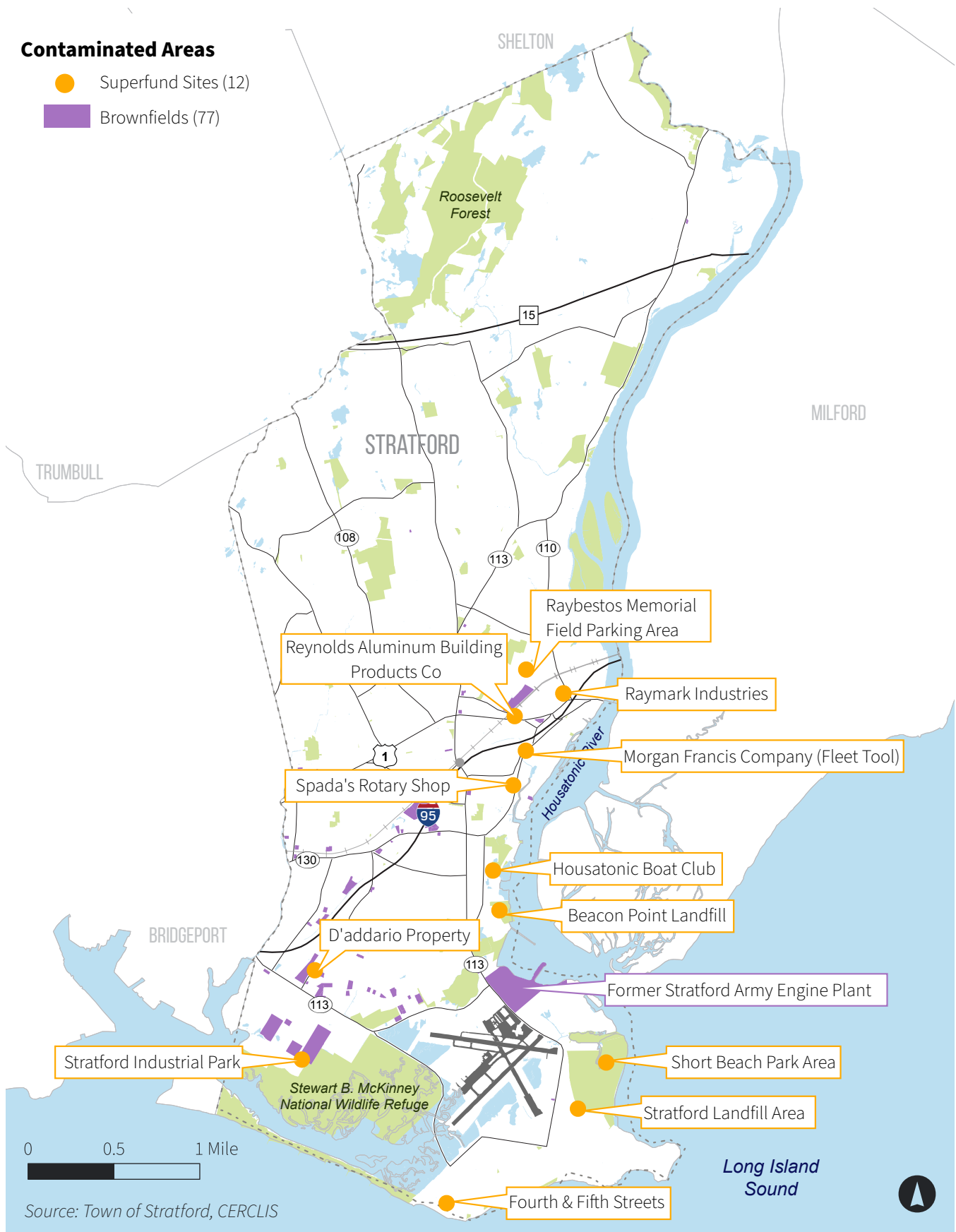
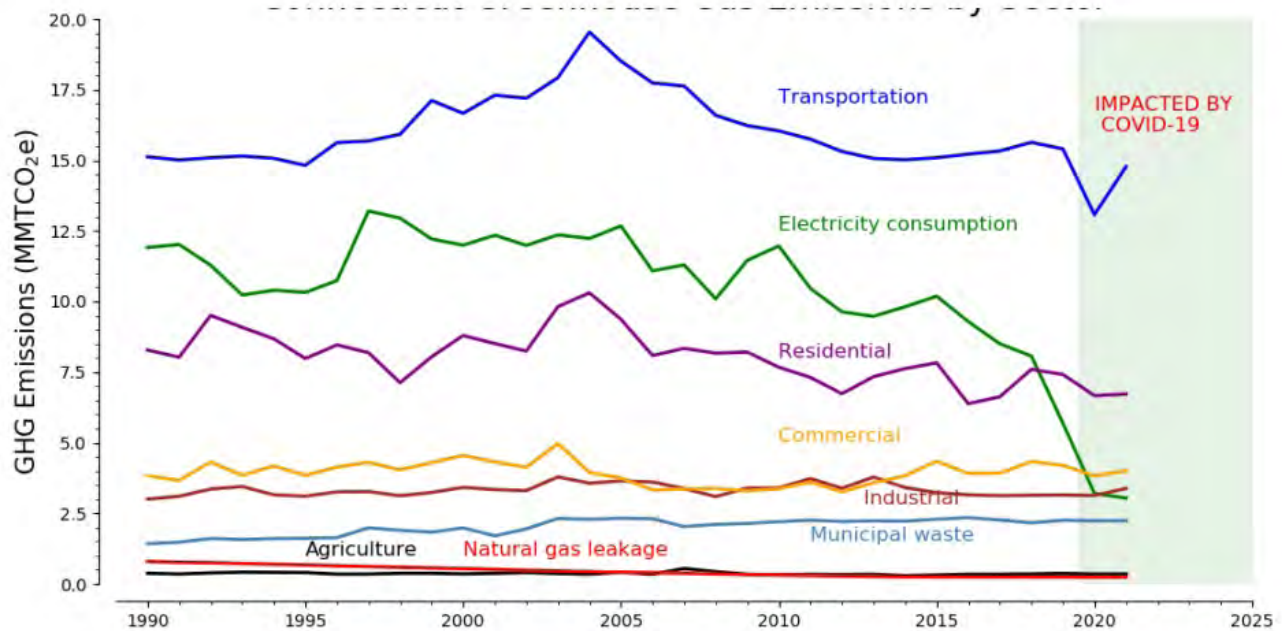


Figure 10.9. Connecticut GHG Emissions by Sector

Connecticut GHG emissions by sector



Source: <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/DEEP/climatechange/1990-2021-GHG-Inventory/GHG-Inventory-Slides-20230420.pdf>

issue, facilitating the redevelopment of these properties back into productive use.

Air Quality

Air quality in Connecticut continues to be a matter of concern due to greenhouse gas emissions from automobiles, which remain the predominant mode of transportation in the state and the town. Air pollution due to moving air from factories and wildfires as well as other mobile construction equipment, major Clean Air Act facilities, area drycleaners, gas stations, print shops, autobody shops, small manufacturing, electroplating, pesticides, paints, glues, and other natural sources (radon) is also a major concern.

Another contributor of poor air quality is the changing climate, leading to increases in droughts, wildfires, and average temperatures in general.

The Annual Air Quality Report released by American Lung Association in 2023 showed Fairfield County receiving a failing grade for its air ozone levels—the highest recorded in eastern US. Stratford is also a non-attainment area for meeting the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for ozone. According to the Connecticut

Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Inventory Update for 1990-2021, Connecticut met its statutory target for 10 percent emissions reductions below 1990 levels as of January 1, 2020. In 2021, Connecticut had emissions of 34.7 million metric tons (MMT) of carbon-dioxide equivalent, which is a decrease of 22% from 1990 levels. Transportation, electricity, and residential thermal sectors continue to account for nearly three quarters of Connecticut's GHG emissions thus impacting air quality.

Air pollution has significant adverse effects on health. Breathing in air pollutants such as ground-level ozone and particulate matter can lead to irritation of the airways, coughing, difficulty breathing, exacerbation of asthma, COPD, and other lung condition symptoms, heart attacks, irregular heartbeat and premature death in those with heart and lung conditions. While everyone's health is impacted by air pollution, sensitive groups include people with asthma and other lung and cardiac conditions, children, pregnant women, and older adults. Poor air quality has significant impacts on public health such as, increasing asthma rates and, increasing respiratory illnesses and heart attacks in general population. Therefore, it is critical to emphasize adopting zero-emission modes of transportation and

sustainable electricity usage. The Town made significant investments in recent years to promote multimodal transportation through its Complete Streets and Greenway initiatives, and to promote the use of sustainable energy in its municipal buildings. It is important to continue to invest in the expansion of these initiatives as a way of improving the air quality in the town and protecting public health. Other initiatives to expand the tree canopy and reducing impervious surface; requiring the reporting of building energy consumption to prospective renters and buyers; adopting net-zero energy building codes; promoting consumer education and awareness of sustainability initiatives (as discussed in the Connecticut GHG inventory update) are also needed.

Promoting workforce housing in the town that is attainable for people with various income levels is also one way to mitigate GHGs. It aids in reducing total vehicle miles traveled and associated higher energy costs for the commuting population.

Food

According to a report published by New England State Food System Planners Partnership (“*A Regional Approach to Food System Resilience*”), Connecticut is home to 24% of New England’s regional population and accounts for \$ 19 billion in retail food sales (22%). It is also home to 21% of

Nourish Indoor Farm located on Stratford Avenue is a non-profit indoor hydroponic farm; its goal is to decrease food insecurity and increase accessibility to nutritious options at local food pantries, particularly in winters.

food sector employment in the region but only holds 10% of agricultural land. With this gap in food production and supply, Connecticut relies heavily on out of state food producers for its local food supply. The New England Food Vision, developed by the Partnership, establishes a target of “growing at least 50% of our food by 2060 while supporting healthy food for all, sustainable farming and fishing, and thriving communities.” With Connecticut farm sizes and number of farms having decreased over the past century, Connecticut’s food production is supported by nurseries, greenhouses, sod production, vegetable and fruit farming, and aquaculture. Access to healthy food has been disproportionately lower for communities of color due to disenfranchisement of certain communities. Without access to nearby grocery stores or culturally preferred food stores, most people in low-income communities rely on corner stores, which often sell poor quality, processed, and expensive food.

The DataHaven Community Wellbeing (statewide) Survey (2018) revealed that food insecurity is higher in urban areas in the state. Over 18,000 residents of Fairfield County are food insecure according to the Fairfield County’s Hunger Coalition.

Obesity, diabetes, cancer, and heart are also higher in these communities due to barriers to accessing healthy and culturally preferred foods and concentration of unhealthy food and beverage options. In order to eliminate food insecurity and enhance public health, the issue of promoting access to healthy food has to be addressed through necessary changes to land use regulations; programs and systems changes aimed at affordability; and increased commitment of resources. Stratford has many of the components of a sustainable food system already in place such as, food pantries, farmers markets, an indoor hydroponic farm (Nourish), and a large restaurant market base. A community garden exists at Pirhala Farm where residents can grow their own food. This includes an apple orchard managed by the Town.

However, it does not have regulations that permit accessory structures such as greenhouses and vertical farms on private lots, commercial kitchens, community gardens, land trusts, etc. Stratford also does not have a Food Policy Council that could link local food production organizations to economic development and environmental preservation.



Source: US Department of Agriculture

Data Findings

- Stratford has made great progress in incorporating sustainable initiatives throughout the town. Various certifications and designations have been awarded to the community
- Communities of color and low-income households have disproportionately high energy burdens compared to the others. Energy efficiency programs could help offset their energy burden by 25%
- While the Town's inland wetland regulations protect vulnerable wetlands from development, the upland areas closer to these wetlands are not subject to the same scrutiny.
- The Town does not have a Stormwater Ordinance that currently addresses site-specific green infrastructure and other nature based in private developments which could help in reducing the total impervious cover
- Vapor Intrusion Zone was delineated in the residential area near former Raymark Site based on available ground water, soil gas, and indoor air data. Soil vapor mitigation systems have been mandated in this area by Town Ordinance to prevent groundwater contamination.
- Groundwater in the southern section of the town is not suitable for human consumption.
- The ecological habitat by Stratford's coast is at highest risk from climate change although the degree of impact may vary depending on the location
- Remediation of former Raymark site continues to remain a priority as this site indicated contaminated soils at the surface, which could lead to human exposures to toxins contained in the waste including lead, asbestos, and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs)
- Stratford is home to several plant and animal species considered as critical habitat and/or threatened or endangered according NDDDB database
- In recent years, the Town received a few applications to build affordable housing in areas of steep slopes, consistent with 8-30 g statute, which (if built as proposed) would disturb the steep slopes and endanger the habitat. Moving forward, the Town should figure out a way to address this issue so that the need for affordable housing is balanced with the need for preservation of critical habitat
- Remediating brownfields and facilitating the redevelopment of these brownfields to productive use continues to remain a priority for the Town
- Fairfield County received a failing grade for air quality in the Annual Air Quality Report (2023). Promoting sustainable multimodal transportation, sustainable energy use, and attainable workforce housing in Stratford are therefore critical in improving the air quality in the town
- Stratford already has many of the components needed for a successful and sustainable food system in place. However, the Town does not have regulations that expand healthy food production and distribution in the town.



What We Heard From the Community

Stratford's environmental resources are deeply valued in the Community. These include the Town's assets such as its beaches, riverfront, and Roosevelt Forest. Stewardship and protection of these resources is very important to Stratford's residents. Throughout the community engagement process, residents and stakeholders expressed their strong desire that Stratford's unique environmental attributes be preserved and protected. Water quality and the safeguarding of the Town's beaches and waterways was a top priority for residents. Protection of Stratford's marshlands and species habitat such as bird nesting areas were also a concern for many residents. Invasive species impacts and diseases to tree types in Roosevelt Forest were also identified. Overall, Stratford's residents feel that the Town is doing a good job of protecting its natural resources. Residents are proud of Stratford's sustainability initiatives, such as the Silver Sustainable CT Certification and Climate Leader awards that the Town currently holds.

Goal

Ensure that Stratford is a sustainable and thriving community that benefits from and supports clean energy, preserves and cares for its ecosystems, prioritizes environmental cleanup and protection, fosters community and ecosystem resiliency and prepares for any coastal changes in fiscally and environmentally sustainable ways.

Objectives & Action Steps

Objective 1. Encourage energy-efficiency and sustainability in all private developments.

1. Encourage high energy performance private developments through voluntary adoption of green building design standards in building code, and zoning and subdivision regulations.
2. Encourage participation in LEED certification programs for large scale private developments.
3. Promote the use of green roofs to reduce energy demand and utility costs, decrease greenhouse gas emissions, and mitigate the urban heat island effect and planting of native species, particular native shade trees where appropriate.
4. Promote coordination among various Town departments to adopt policies and regulations, and implement actions that promote energy efficiency.
5. Pursue HUD funding to support weatherization and energy efficiency programs for low –income households.
6. Review and update zoning regulations to remove any barriers to renewable energy production locally; educate residents on renewable energy programs.

Objective 2. Increase energy efficiency in municipal buildings and facilities.

1. Conduct an audit of current energy usage in all municipal buildings and implement cost effective, energy-efficient solutions.
2. Continue to participate in programs such as ENERGY STAR to promote energy efficiency in Town buildings and facilities.
3. Strive to achieve high performance energy standards in the redevelopment of all municipal buildings.
4. Develop a municipal energy plan with details on the long –term costs and benefits of using sustainable energy for each building.
5. Evaluate all Town operations to reduce energy consumption such as, expanding online services, encouraging telecommuting, consolidating locations of municipal services, etc., based on their feasibility.
6. Reduce fuel consumption of municipal vehicles by switching to fuel-efficient vehicles over time.
7. Implement electric vehicle (EV) charging stations in municipal parking lots.
8. Increase the use of renewable energy in municipal buildings.



Best Management Practice's (BMP) for stormwater that were developed for the Frank Deluca field parking lot and adjacent property. These techniques will aid in stormwater drainage, aesthetics, and condition of the properties.

Source: Town of Stratford

Objective 3. Strive to achieve a balance between fossil fuels and other sustainable forms of energy for transportation.

1. Update the Town's zoning to provide for sustainable development patterns that support density, walkability and conservation such as, developing standards for cluster developments, encouraging low impact developments, expanding the boundary of transit-oriented development district, etc.
2. Provide alternatives to the automobile by implementing the subsequent phases of greenway trails and complete streets projects, as discussed in the Mobility chapter of this document.
3. Partner with local employers to provide incentives to employees who choose smart commuting options such as, carpooling, commuting by public transit, etc.
4. Promote the use of public transit, and greenways and complete streets, through education and outreach via Town's social media and other news outlets.
5. Implement bike infrastructure (such as, bike racks, lockers, etc.), construct missing sidewalks, and further promote walking and biking in the town.
6. Facilitate micro-transit service within the Town Center.
7. Update parking standards to allow EV charging stations and bike parking in all developments.
8. Provide free wifi at the Town's public spaces to facilitate remote work.

Objective 4. Promote stewardship of the Town's fragile natural environment such as wetlands, watercourses, plant and animal habitats and other environmentally sensitive areas.

1. Continue to participate in the Sustainable CT program and strive to achieve the highest certification standard through the voluntary implementation of various actions aimed at sustainability.
2. Encourage low-impact developments to avoid adverse impacts to the town's natural landscapes, habitats and watercourses.
3. Prioritize the remediation and reuse of brownfield properties.
4. Evaluate the health and environmental impacts of large scale development proposals; encourage developers to provide Health Impact Assessments (HIAs) for these developments.
5. Encourage the use of native species in landscaping and incorporate regulations for invasive species eradication.
6. Prioritize acquisition of land and conservation easements for habitats most at risk from climate change.
7. Continue to implement nature based flood mitigation solutions by the coast to protect the coastal habitat.
8. Conduct an analysis of upland review areas for wetlands in the town and how best to protect them from adjacent developments.
9. Conduct an analysis of unprotected uplands in the town (that remain unprotected from an environmental perspective) and protect them from adjacent developments.
10. Acquire land and conservation easements to provide upslope advancement zones adjacent to tidal marshes and in riparian areas adjacent to cold water streams.
11. Adopt a water hierarchy that includes rain water conservation, capture and storage, and water reuse similar to the well known solid waste management hierarchy.
12. Partner in regional and state-wide initiatives to address borderless climate change issues.
13. Update the town's zoning to provide for sustainable development patterns that support density, walkability and conservation.

Objective 5. Comply with CT Municipal Stormwater Permit (MS4) requirements.

1. Develop and adopt a stormwater ordinance with standards that minimize adverse impacts to water quality due to stormwater runoff. Consider establishing that Zoning Commissions and Boards should consult the most recent Integrated Water Quality Report to determine if a site proposed for development or redevelopment is located adjacent to or within the watershed of a waterbody listed as impaired and require that appropriate LID or other BMPs to address the causes and sources of the impairment be incorporated into the development.
2. Incorporate standards for implementing green infrastructure in public and private developments, based on feasibility.
3. Promote the adoption of best management practices (such as rain barrels, green roofs, etc.), and the use of green infrastructure (such as bio-swales and rain gardens) as a means of reducing the impacts from stormwater runoff.
4. Review and evaluate the development of Low Impact Development (LID) standards within the Town's zoning and subdivision regulations, and inland wetlands and watercourses regulations.

Objective 6. Promote a sustainable local food system.

1. Develop zoning regulations to define and provide a list of permissible food production land uses; to specify where land can be used for personal or community food production; to provide standards for accessory structures (such as, greenhouses, vertical farms, etc) that support local food production.
2. Develop a Food Action Plan and create a local Food Policy Council to support private individuals, farmers, and organizations involved with local food production and distribution.
3. Enhance access to healthy food within low-income neighborhoods through the establishment of mobile food markets, community gardens, commercial kitchens, food co-ops, etc.
4. Partner with local farmers, businesses, and restaurants to develop a "buy local" campaign that expands the market for local food production.
5. Identify barriers to healthy food access and select neighborhoods to prioritize implementation use data.
6. Continue to support farmers markets and food to school programs.
7. Explore the feasibility of establishing a land trust of undevelopable lots in the Town that could be used for community food production.



Proposed redevelopment of former Center School site

Objective 7. Maintain and strengthen institutional controls in place for land use permitting and application reviews so as to protect the public from exposure to contaminants that will remain in the environment.

1. Increase awareness of and continue to enforce the Groundwater and Vapor Intrusion Zone Town Ordinance, especially when approving planning and zoning, and building permits for existing/new developments.

Objective 8. Enhance public health through improved air quality.

1. Continue and strengthen the Health Department's implementation of EPA's AirNow Program - which raises awareness of the daily AQI and actions/behavior modifications for sensitive populations and the general public to protect their health.
2. Promote sustainable transportation modes (such as train, bus, bike travel) by facilitating efficient delivery of services and education residents on existing programs and services.

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11

Waterfront Redevelopment & Climate Resiliency

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Waterfront & Coastal Resource Management Goals

Enhance the coastal and waterfront experience for residents through the accommodation and thoughtful management of water-dependent uses and coastal public access when opportunities arise. This can be accomplished through the following:

- Promote economic growth and community revitalization through strategic redevelopment of Stratford waterfront for recreational and commercial purposes .
- Conserve and enhance coastal resources and wildlife habitat, and promote highest water quality attainable.
- Promote safe, efficient, and enjoyable navigation.
- Promote active educational and scientific use of the Housatonic River.
- Enhance public awareness of Stratford’s marine history and culture and encourage community stewardship.
- Support water-based tourism activities.
- Continue to partner with local, state, and federal agencies to implement Stratford’s waterfront vision and goals.

The Connection Between Coastal Management & Climate Resiliency

The Town of Stratford must continue to carefully manage its coastal resources and waterfront assets, as it has done for decades. Climate-related challenges such as sea level rise and coastal storms will continue to be felt acutely along the shoreline. As a coastal community, these challenges may directly or indirectly affect all residents and property owners in Stratford, given the shared reliance on services, coastal assets, and community infrastructure. Therefore, this POCD addresses waterfront management and climate resiliency in the same chapter.

Climate Resiliency Goals

- Reduce the coastal and inland flood and erosion risks to residents, businesses, properties, and infrastructure by continuing to adapt to climate-driven flood and erosion events.
- Reduce the extreme heat risks to vulnerable residents by continuing to adapt to climate-driven extreme heat events, especially where co-benefits to flood mitigation can be identified.
- Embrace a “whole community” resiliency mindset by investing in resilient hubs, corridors, and neighborhoods.



Lordship Beach, Source: Town of Stratford

Overview

With nearly 18 miles of coastline, Stratford’s waterfront plays a critical role in nearly every aspect of the Town from land use and economic development to environmental conservation and open space recreation. However, like many coastal communities across the nation, Stratford’s coastline is also vulnerable to the complex challenges associated with sea level rise. Waterfront redevelopment initiatives must be therefore carefully balanced with coastal resiliency initiatives to create a dynamic and evolving waterfront.

The Plan of Conservation and Development (developed by the Town in 2014), the Harbor Management Plan (developed by Waterfront Harbor Management Commission [WHMC] in 1994), 2016 Coastal Resiliency Plan (developed by the Town) and to a lesser extent, the 2019 Regional Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan (developed by Metropolitan Council of Governments/ MetroCOG and currently being updated) establish the Town’s related visions, basic goals, and policies for the beneficial use and conservation of Stratford’s waterfront and coastal areas. *Because so many plans were in place, and given the opportunity afforded by the POCD update, the Waterfront Vision Update was developed by WHMC in 2022 and published with an effective date of 2023.* “Waterfront Vision” in this chapter is synonymous with the vision established in the WHMC’s update.

This chapter is intended to recognize, maintain, and update policies as needed to reaffirm Stratford’s commitment to a thriving waterfront and ensure consistency with Chapter 444, Section 22a-90 of Connecticut Coastal Management Act and Section 322 of Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000. It is divided in two sections to discuss baseline conditions and goals, objectives, and policies for waterfront redevelopment and coastal resiliency, as discussed on the following page.

Waterfront Redevelopment

Baseline Conditions

Stratford's waterfront is defined by three distinct coastal environments: the Housatonic River; the nearshore waters of Long Island Sound; and the coastal-barrier environment of the Long Beach-Great Meadows-Lewis Gut area. These coastal areas contain many of Stratford's most valuable natural resources, including wetlands, intertidal flats, beaches, shellfish beds, and tidal waters. Several key properties are located along the waterfront including the former Stratford Army Engine Plant site, Bond's Dock historic area, former Shakespeare Theater site, Birdseye Street river access area, Short Beach, Stratford Point, Long Beach, the Seawall, and Sikorsky manufacturing.

Stratford's coastal resources support boating and other water-dependent activities, provide essential habitat for fish and wildlife, and maintain vital ecological functions and scenic qualities; they also enhance shorefront residential areas as well as opportunities for economic growth and development. The overall quality of life in Stratford today is largely dependent on the Town's coastal area setting.

The WHMC is charged with the development and overseeing the implementation of Harbor Management Plan and plays an active role in the preservation, stewardship, management, and development of Town's waterfront areas. It is included on the many land use decisions involving the town's waterfront and partners with state and federal agencies to address activities that cause intermunicipal impacts, recognizing the borderless nature of water environments.

Stratford's Harbor Management Plan, prepared by the WHMC, was first developed in 1994 to establish the Town's basic goals and policies for beneficial use and conservation of the Town's waterfront and coastal area. Opportunities for enhancing the public use of Stratford's waterfront and the Stratford Harbor Management Area (SHMA) are identified in this plan.¹ To provide a guiding theme for implementation of the Harbor Management Plan, the WHMC developed "A

Waterfront Vision for the Town of Stratford." This document has been updated four times since its initial development in 1998 and was most recently updated in 2022-2023 as noted above.

The Town's waterfront vision is based on a concept of stewardship whereby all citizens, officials, agencies, and organizations with an interest or authority pertaining to the Stratford waterfront and the Stratford Harbor Management Area (SHMA) would consider themselves stewards responsible for care of the Town's coastal resources. That care would be for the purpose of ensuring that the natural, cultural, social, and economic values of the waterfront and SHMA are not consumed for short-term gain but instead are sustained for the benefit of future generations.

Waterfront goals, objectives, policies, and action steps within the Town's POCD are intended to complement the more expansive recommendations of the Harbor Management Plan. The major policy elements and recommendations of the Harbor Management Plan are hereby incorporated into the Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) as a major component of Stratford's vision for the future of the Town.

The Stratford Harbor Management Plan and POCD being complementary documents that should serve as the town's principal guides for land- and water-use on, in, and contiguous to the Stratford Harbor Management Area on the Housatonic River, Long Island Sound, and the Lewis Gut/Great Meadows Area.

The Stratford's Coastal Plan was prepared in 1988 and serves as the town's Municipal Coastal program, pursuant to CCMA, to identify problems and issues affecting the use and protection of coastal resources and described coastal land uses and significant coastal resources such as tidal wetlands, beaches, and shellfish resources. The CCMA requires that development and redevelopment not cause an increased risk to life or property in coastal flood hazard areas, avoid adverse impacts to coastal resources, and avoid adverse impacts on future water-dependent uses.

¹ The Stratford Harbor Management Area includes the coastal and tidal waters subject to the jurisdiction of the WHMC, including the Housatonic River within Stratford's Town boundaries; the near-shore waters of Long Island Sound between the Stratford/Bridgeport boundary on the west and the Stratford/Milford boundary on the east; and the Great Meadows-Lewis Gut area separated from Long Island Sound by the Long Beach barrier beach.

Figure 11.1. Waterfront Types



Findings

Historically, much of Stratford’s growth and development was tied to its location on the Housatonic River and Long Island Sound. Substantial opportunities for economic growth and community development associated with Stratford’s waterfront and coastal area are evident, as are the many opportunities for enhanced public use and enjoyment of the shoreline. Achievement of those opportunities while protecting environmental resources and preserving the Town’s traditional quality of life will continue to require public support as well as active involvement, long-term commitment, and thoughtful planning on the part of a number of Town agencies.

Opportunities exist to improve public access and promote commercial, educational, conservation, and/or recreational opportunities at key waterfront sites such as, the former Stratford Army Engine Plant site; by the Housatonic

River Greenway; at Hunter Haven property; at Honeywell property; at Beacon Point property; at the Deluca field; at the Birdseye Street river access area; at former Shakespeare Theater site; at Bond’s Dock at Shore Road; near Ferry Creek; near Washington Bridge area; by Stratford Point by Long Island Sound shoreline; at Great Meadows Marsh; at Lewis Gut; at Long Beach barrier beach.

The Waterfront Vision identifies a number of locations in Stratford that contribute to the vision. Table 11.1 provides descriptions and recommendations for these sites. Waterfront planning should be guided by a vision of redevelopment providing a coastal destination of regional and national significance, supportive of water-based tourism, and with a strong historic component consistent with the property's distinguished aviation history.

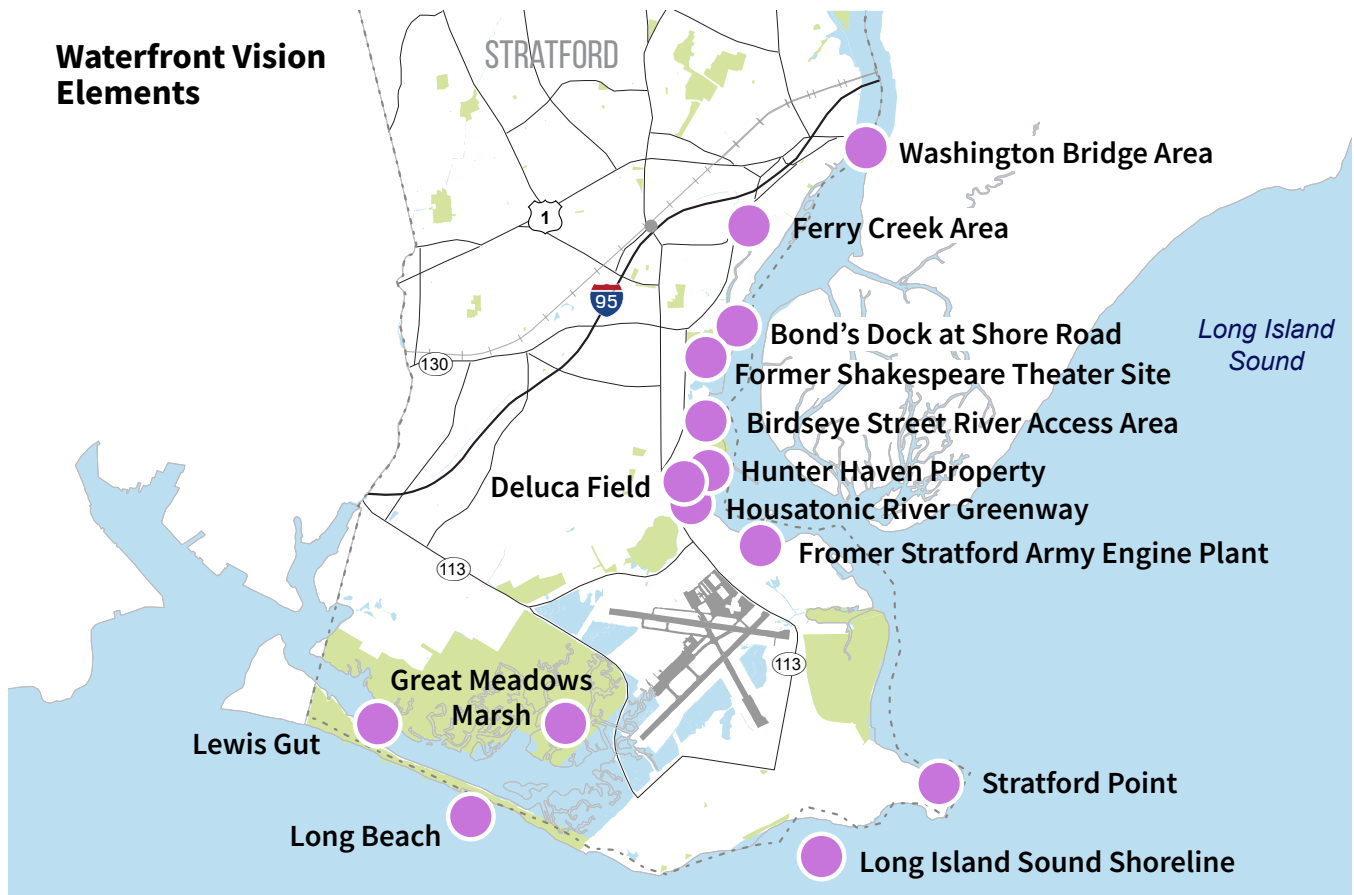
Table 11.1. Stratford Waterfront Vision Locations

★ *Priority Areas as identified by the Harbor Management Commission*

Name of Site	Description/Recommendations
Stratford Army Engine Plant	★ Mixed-Use Redevelopment Property
Housatonic River Greenway	Multi-use pathway with linear park
Hunter Haven Property	Redevelopment property with water access facilities
Honeywell Property	Redevelopment property with water access facilities; wetland, and coastal restoration property
Beacon Point Property	Redevelopment property with water access facilities; coastal restoration property
DeLuca Field	Sports fields, waterfront and the public amenities; greenway extension/coastal restoration property
Birdseye Street River Access Area	★ Boat launch, waterfront and the public amenities
Former Shakespeare Theater Property	Redevelopment property, waterfront access, arts and cultural amenities
Bond's Dock at Shore Road	★ Public water access facility; native woodland restoration property
Ferry Creek	Redevelopment property with water access facilities
Washington Bridge Area	Public access to Housatonic River
Stratford Point	★ Waterfront walkways, picnic areas, pedestrian and bicycle facilities
Long Island Sound Shoreline	Erosion control projects and regulator measures for shore protection; coastal native plantings property for migratory birds and insect habitat
Great Meadows Marsh	★ Recreational, educational, and scientific uses consistent with conservation and bank restorations
Lewis Gut	Low-impact boating, fishing, nature observation, and ecological education
Long Beach	★ Low-impact boating, fishing, beach recreation, nature observation; need different management goals for the bathing-beach section and the Long Beach West section (which could be a natural conservation area)

Source: Waterfront Vision, 2023, Harbor Management Commission

Figure 11.2. Waterfront Vision Elements



Among the 16 areas listed in Table 11.1, the following major areas are identified as priority interest and opportunity for implementing the waterfront vision:

- Stratford Army Engine Plant
- Bonds Dock on Shore Road
- Birdseye Street River Access Area
- Long Beach West and Great Meadows
- Stratford Point

Priority Areas, Source: Waterfront Vision, 2023, Waterfront Harbor Management Commission, Geoffrey Steadman



What We Heard From the Community

Preserving and maintaining Stratford's unique waterfront and coastal resources is a top priority for the community. A subset of this priority is ensuring that public access to the waterfront be maintained and expanded upon, and ensuring the highest quality of water and waterfront lands. With redevelopment anticipated at the former Stratford Army Engine Plant Site, former Shakespeare property and other locations, it is vital that planning for public access, conservation, recreation, and enjoyment of these properties is fostered and occurring in a transparent way.

The community supports the understanding that the recommendations of the Stratford Harbor Management Plan and 2023 Waterfront Vision Update developed by the WHMC should be incorporated into the POCD update document.



Movie night at Short Beach. Source: Town of Stratford



Seawall in Lordship neighborhood

Goals

Enhance the coastal and waterfront experience for residents through the accommodation and thoughtful management of water-dependent uses and coastal public access when opportunities arise. This can be accomplished through the following:

- Promote economic growth and community revitalization through strategic redevelopment of Stratford waterfront for recreational and commercial purposes.
- Conserve and enhance coastal resources and wildlife habitat, and promote highest water quality attainable.
- Promote safe, efficient, and enjoyable navigation.
- Promote active educational and scientific use of the Housatonic River.
- Enhance public awareness of Stratford's marine history and culture and encourage community stewardship.
- Support water-based tourism activities.
- Continue to partner with local, state, and federal agencies to implement Stratford's waterfront vision and goals.



Source: Town of Stratford

Objectives & Action Steps

Objective 1. Promote an attractive, safe, and interconnected system of public waterfront areas and facilities that can be enjoyed by persons of all ages and abilities.

1. Ensure that existing redevelopment plans are consistent with waterfront vision.
2. Pursue all appropriate sources of funds to achieve implementation of the waterfront vision through the budgetary and capital improvement decisions of the Town Council and through the actions of the agencies with authorities and responsibilities affecting the waterfront and Stratford Harbor Management Area.
3. Ensure that the planning, use, and maintenance of public waterfront areas and facilities will be consistent with the natural and traditional character of the waterfront.
4. Proceed with acquisition of real property and easements as necessary to implement the waterfront vision.
5. Expand the Housatonic Greenway along the entire Housatonic River shoreline from Stratford Point to the Stratford/Shelton town line.
6. Ensure that all types and sizes of recreational vessels, including motorized and sail-powered craft, excursion boats, and nonmotorized vessels such as canoes, kayaks, and rowing will enjoy the SHMA and Town waterfront facilities.
7. Support a variety of public and commercial boating services and facilities, including boat berthing, docking, mooring, and launching facilities for resident and visiting boaters, making Stratford the pre-eminent center supporting recreational boating on Housatonic River and a regional destination point for visiting boaters.
8. Host a variety of special events, programs, and activities attracting visitors to the waterfront and harbor management area thus promoting local and regional tourism.
9. Provide excursion boat operations for beneficial public use and enjoyment of the Housatonic River as well as to enhance linkages between Stratford and other locations on Long Island Sound.
10. Work with CT Audubon Society to continue to allow birdwatching locations at Stratford Point.
11. Establish new walking trails and fishing spots along the waterfront.

The Connecticut Audubon Society acquired 28 acres at Stratford Point, also known as Stratford Point Preserve, in January 2023. This preserve is home to nearly 300 bird species.

Objective 2. Balance conservation needs of the natural coastal environment with economic development objectives by the waterfront.

1. Identify and evaluate properties with past industrial uses and for redevelopment or conservation.
2. Ensure that appropriate remedial actions are undertaken as necessary to implement redevelopment plans, protect public health, safety, and welfare, and enhance the natural environment.
3. Continue to be an active participant in the redevelopment process to ensure desired growth and development in the town, including preparation of redevelopment lands and appropriate acquisition of land and easements for public purposes.
4. Continue to support the implementation of Stratford's Municipal Program (prepared in 1988) and update it as may be necessary, to use it effectively during Coastal Site Plan Review (CSPR) process in accordance with CCMA.
5. Continue to implement the Stratford Harbor Management Plan (HMP) as both POCD and HMP serve as complementary documents in protecting the town's coastal and harbor resources.

Objective 3. Enhance the ecological functions and values of the town’s coastal resources.

1. Implement the recommendations of the current Harbor Management Plan.
2. Continue to manage effectively and protect and enhance natural coastal resources, including water resources, tidal wetlands, the exceptional shellfish beds of Housatonic River, fisheries resources, intertidal flats, beaches, and aesthetic coastal resources.
3. Conserve naturalized waterfront areas and remediate waterfront properties and waterways that have suffered from contamination.
4. Protect and enhance the ecological functions and values related to fish and wildlife habitat, water quality and implement adequate flood mitigation measures to do the same.
5. Maintain and enhance the vitality of the Town’s commercial shellfish industry.
6. Effectively manage sand resources on and offshore of the Town’s public beaches in accordance with the best available sand management plans based on natural littoral processes.
7. Ensure that water quality in Stratford continues to improve through reduction of nonpoint sources of pollution and enhanced municipal wastewater treatment in accordance with best available technology and the highest standards of operation and maintenance.
8. Reduce sources of pollution to achieve the highest reasonably attainable state water quality designations in the Housatonic River, Lewis Gut, and nearshore Long Island Sound in the SHMA.
9. Ensure that all vessels comply with the “no-discharge” requirements established for Long Island Sound and the Housatonic River pursuant to the Federal Clean Water Act. Provide adequate vessel-waste pump-out facilities for the general public at Stratford marina facilities to supplement the service provided by the Town’s pump-out board operated by WHMC.

Objective 4. Ensure safe boating by all recreational and commercial vessels enjoying the river and add to the vitality of SHMA.

1. Facilitate local safe boating education.
2. Ensure compliance with laws and regulations for water and waterfront use.
3. Ensure timely and economical maintenance dredging of the Housatonic River federal navigation channel by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.
4. Utilize dredged materials for beach nourishment and other beneficial purposes, if this material is environmentally sustainable.
5. Ensure full public awareness and compliance with the vessel speed and wake requirements of the well-marked “slow—no wake” area designated by the State of Connecticut in the Housatonic River from the Washington Bridge to the mouth of the river.
6. Promote safe and active use of the Town-managed public mooring areas in the river

Objective 5. Promote practical applications for resource management and help generate needed scientific information for effective waterfront management programs.

1. Maintain and enhance active educational and scientific use of the Housatonic River, nearshore Long Island Sound, and the Long Beach-Great Meadows-Lewis Gut area, including encouraging marine field studies by primary and secondary schools, universities, conservation and natural history groups, and others.
2. Design research and education programs to have practical applications for resource management.

Objective 6. Provide public information on the Town's coastal environment and waterfront history.

1. Continue to seek valuable public input for implementing the waterfront vision, including input for developing new Town plans, programs, and regulations affecting SHMA.
2. Increase awareness of Stratford's marine-related history and culture, and demonstrate interest and achievements that the Town has made to improve the waterfront to ensure continued stewardship of the Town's coastal resources.
3. Implement a waterfront interpretive signage program through partnership with WHMC to provide public information on the Town's coastal environment and history.



Playground at Short Beach, Source: Town of Stratford



Outriggers Restaurant, Source: Town of Stratford



Bond's Dock, Source: Town of Stratford

Climate Resiliency

Baseline Conditions

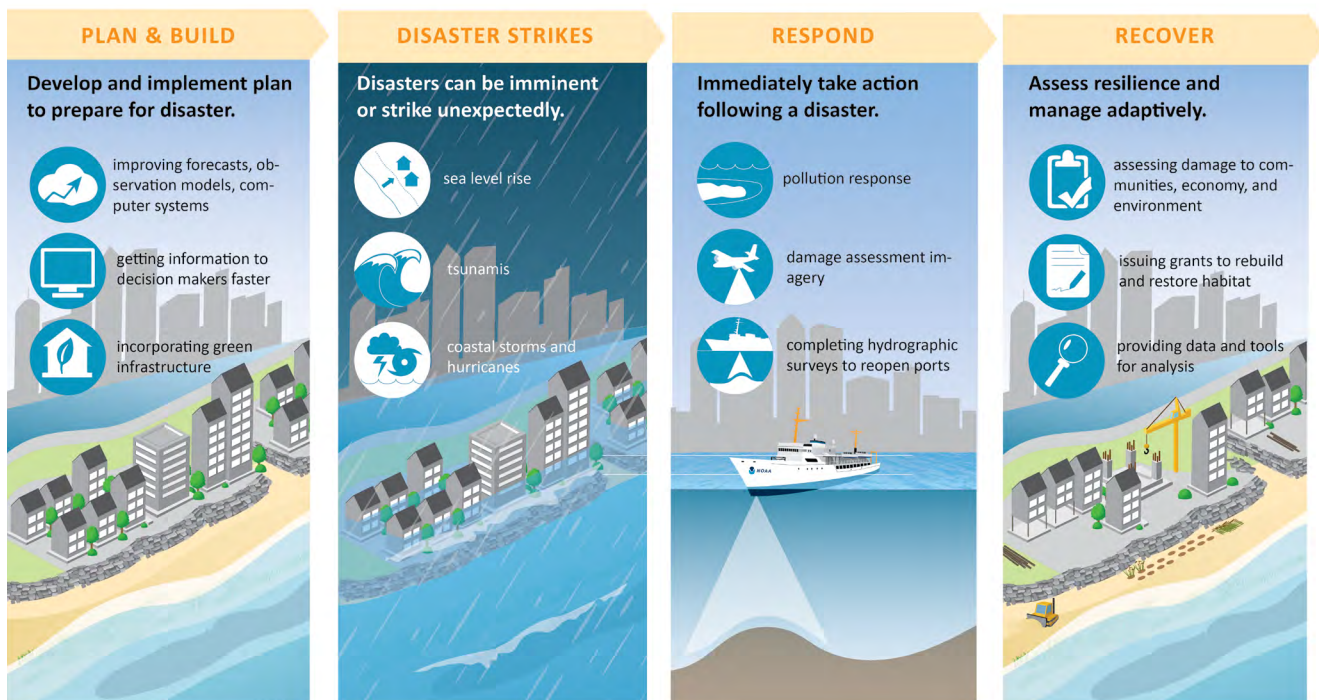
While Stratford's waterfront presents tremendous opportunities for waterfront recreation and water dependent economic development, it is highly vulnerable to sea level rise and coastal flooding events. Presently, there are different levels of risk throughout Stratford to different types of storms, floods, and other climate change driven events (i.e., heat waves). Heavy rains or precipitation events can cause riverine flooding, and severe coastal storms can cause coastal flooding. Although the Town has been working to increase resilience, significant risk is present throughout the town, and not only along the coastline. Often, these events can occur concurrently. The basic goal of climate resiliency planning in the town is to accelerate recovery following a flood event and reduce the vulnerability of existing development to flood hazards, and not to establish conditions that support increased developmental risk in the coastal floodplain.

This POCD will help to incorporate resilience into future waterfront redevelopment and redevelopment proposed on inland flooding areas for the next ten years. While there is no one area more important than another, specific areas may be at more at risk than others. These higher risk areas should be considered for more focused resilience measures

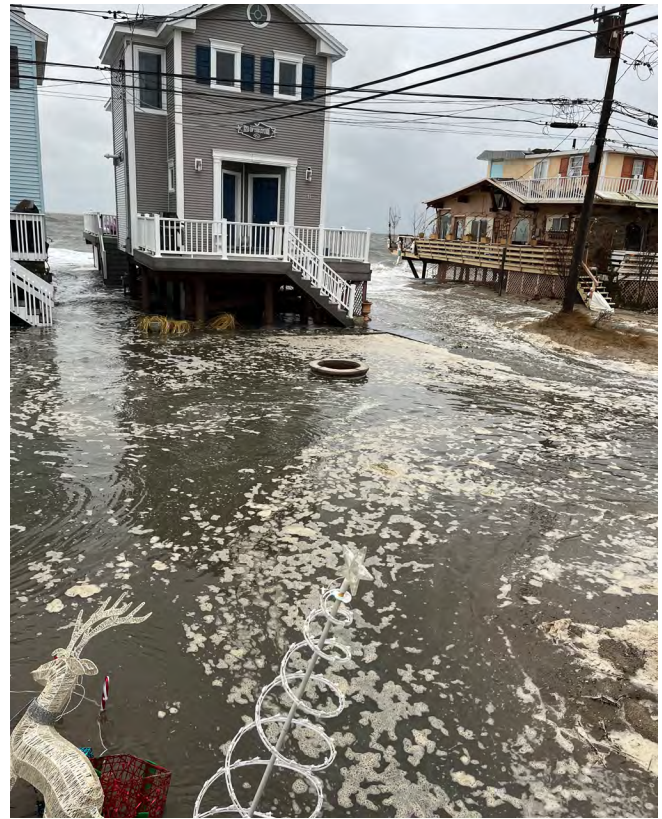
and investments, while continuing to foster townwide resilience.

Resilience can be defined as having the capacity or ability to withstand and recover quickly from an event. In general, there are four components of resilience: prepare, withstand, recover, and adapt. The Town of Stratford is already implementing and incorporating these four components throughout the community.

- Prepare the community, residents, and infrastructure for the impacts of floods, severe storms, and extreme weather and heat events. This might take the form of education and outreach, planning for events and emergencies, or ensuring emergency response supplies and measures are in place.
- Withstanding an event includes having infrastructure, homes, and buildings that will be minimally damaged during a flood or severe storm, and having an educated population that understands available resources during severe weather events and heat waves.
- Recovering from storms or floods means having the emergency response capabilities to assist those in immediate need, the mechanisms and fiscal avenues to rebuild and repair, and the support system for the community in the wake of an event.
- Adapting to changes can include tangible or visible modifications or actions, such as elevating residential



Source: NOAA



Beach Drive Condo Association Storm Pictures, Source: David Murphy

structures to help reduce flood damages in the future; or modifying how the community prepares, withstands, and recovers as storms become more frequent and severe, and as climate change results in increased heat waves and rising sea levels.

The FEMA flood zones (Figure 11.3) delineate different areas that are vulnerable to different sources of flooding. These zones include the 1% annual chance flood hazard area, or the 100-year flood event; the 0.2% annual chance flood hazard area, or the 500-year flood event; and the floodway. The 1% annual chance flood zone coincides with the special flood hazard area (SFHA). As a participant in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), the Town of Stratford administers flood damage prevention regulations and the applicable portion of the State Building Code inside the SFHA. The floodway is a more heavily-regulated riverine flood zone as this area represents the channel of the waterbody and the adjacent areas that are required to convey flood discharges.

The 1% annual chance flood zone is composed of areas along the shoreline which are designated as VE zones. These VE zones are those that have an increased risk of damage associated with storm waves. The State Building Code requires application of VE standards in the coastal AE zones

The Town of Stratford is a Class 8 community in the CRS program with a corresponding 10% discount on insurance premiums.

located waterward of the Limit of Moderate Wave Action (“LimWA”), which provides an additional level of resiliency to buildings in the coastal flood zone. In Stratford, the Limwa is located landward of the airport, generally coincident with Access Road, and therefore exerts strong control over development in a very large area.

The Town participates in the voluntary Community Rating System (CRS) program and receives points toward a class or rating that allows flood insurance premium discounts. These points are derived from actions related to flood information dissemination, regulation and protection of new development, regulation and protection of existing development, and flood warning and response. These points are annually recertified by the Town, allowing for annual reviews of the actions taken to reduce flood losses and increase flood resiliency.

The majority of the town that is at risk of flooding, as delineated by FEMA zones, is concentrated along the

Figure 11.3. FEMA Flood Zones

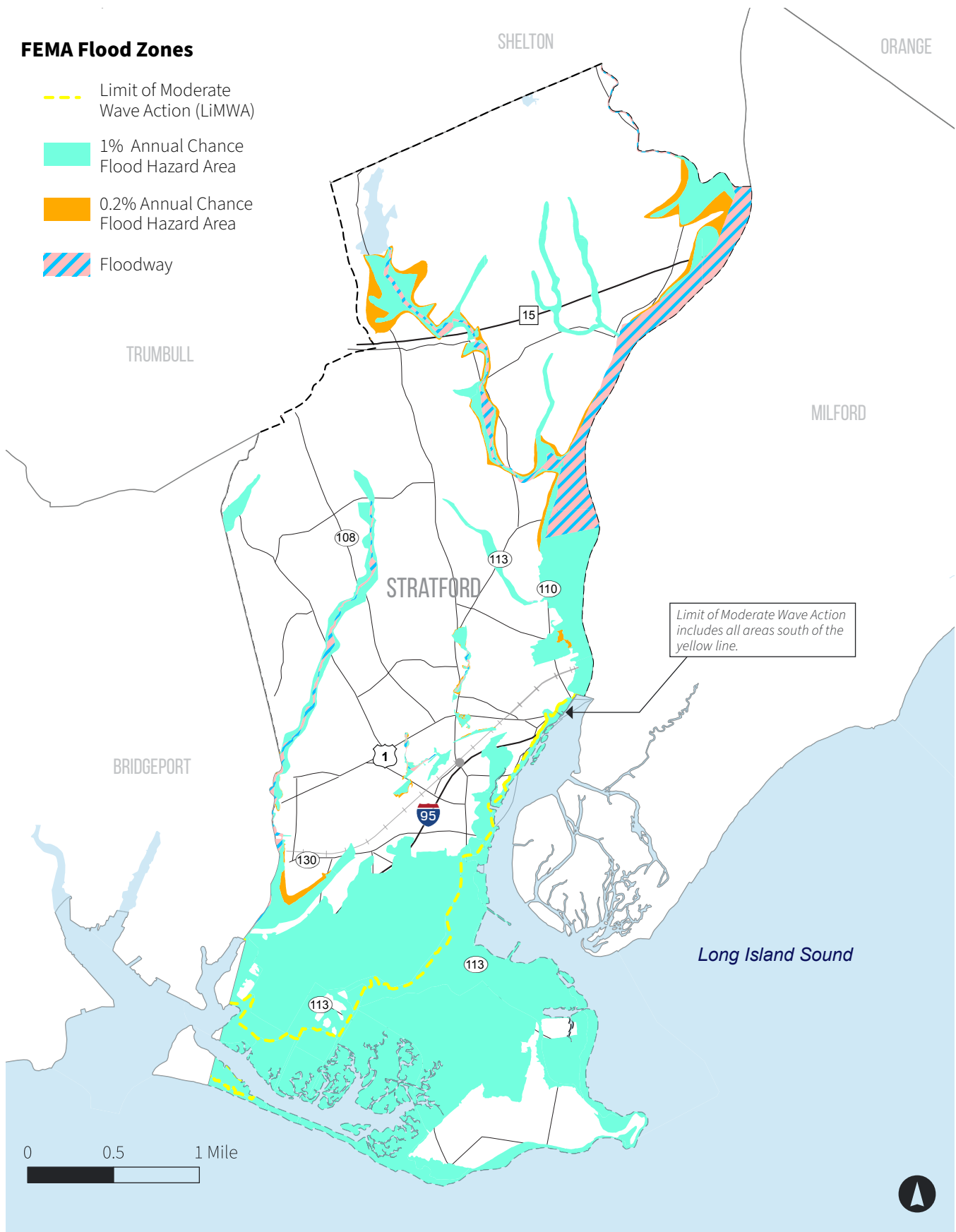
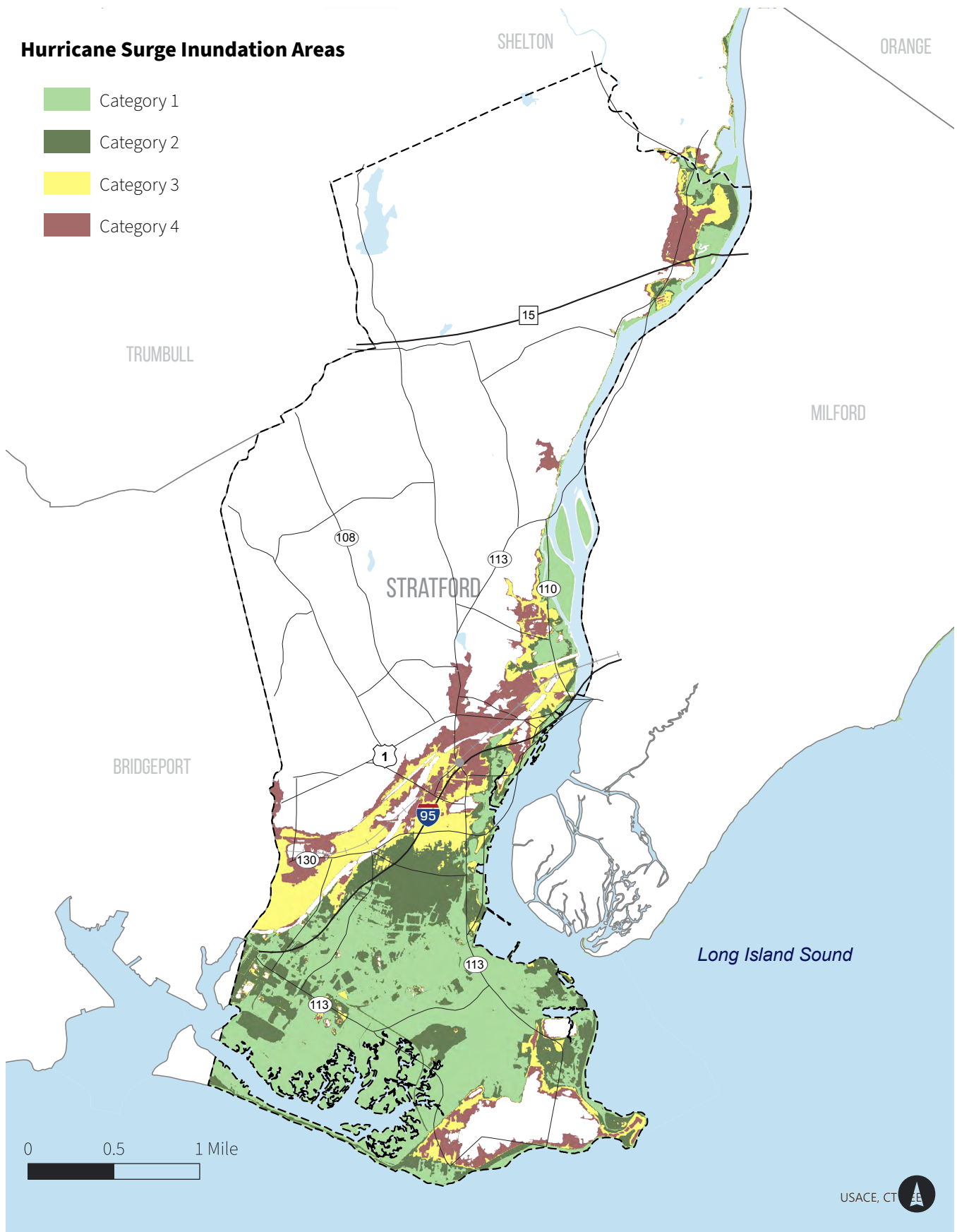


Figure 11.4. Hurricane Surge Inundation Areas



Housatonic River, Pumpkin Ground Brook, Bruce Brook, and in the southern areas of Stratford in Lordship and the South End.

The Climate Change Vulnerability Index (CCVI) developed by CIRCA is a useful tool to identify some of the specific factors driving flood vulnerabilities in Stratford. The flood CCVI (Figure 11.5) looks relatively similar to the FEMA flood mapping with the darkest blue areas representing those with the high flood vulnerability and the light blue representing the least vulnerable. However, the CCVI differs from the FEMA flood maps in that this index incorporates numerous factors that help characterize flood vulnerability such as demographic and disability data, habitat types and classifications, infrastructure, open space presence, and data layers representing capabilities to adapt and respond to flood events.

A hurricane or tropical storm, or even a severe storm, can often produce coastal flooding referred to as storm surge. Storm surge is when seawater rises to a level higher than a

normally predicted tide level. As shown in Figure 11.4, most of the town south of Interstate 95 is at-risk of flooding from a category 1 or 2 level storm surge, with some properties along the Housatonic River also at-risk. A category 3 or 4 tropical event could potentially inundate areas north of I-95 and south of Barnum Avenue, and further westward from the banks of the Housatonic River.

An additional concern for the town is the increase of extreme heat wave occurrences. Extreme heat can lead to a variety of heat stress-related health conditions, including heat stroke, respiratory problems, permanent disability, and even death. Children, the elderly, people with chronic diseases, low-income populations, and outdoor workers have higher risk of heat-related illness. As global temperatures continue to rise, the Town will likely continue to experience record temperatures and heat waves. As seen in Figure 11.6, the heat CCVI shows the most heat vulnerable areas in Stratford as those in the South End neighborhood (darkest red), with the least vulnerable areas of town in the

Figure 11.5. CIRCA CCVI Flood Vulnerability

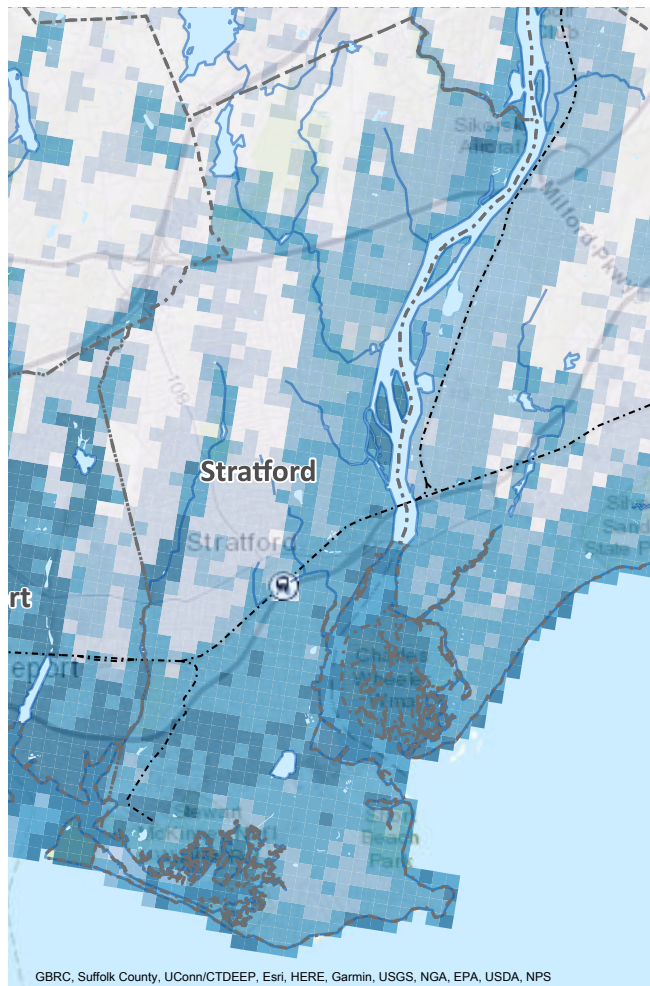
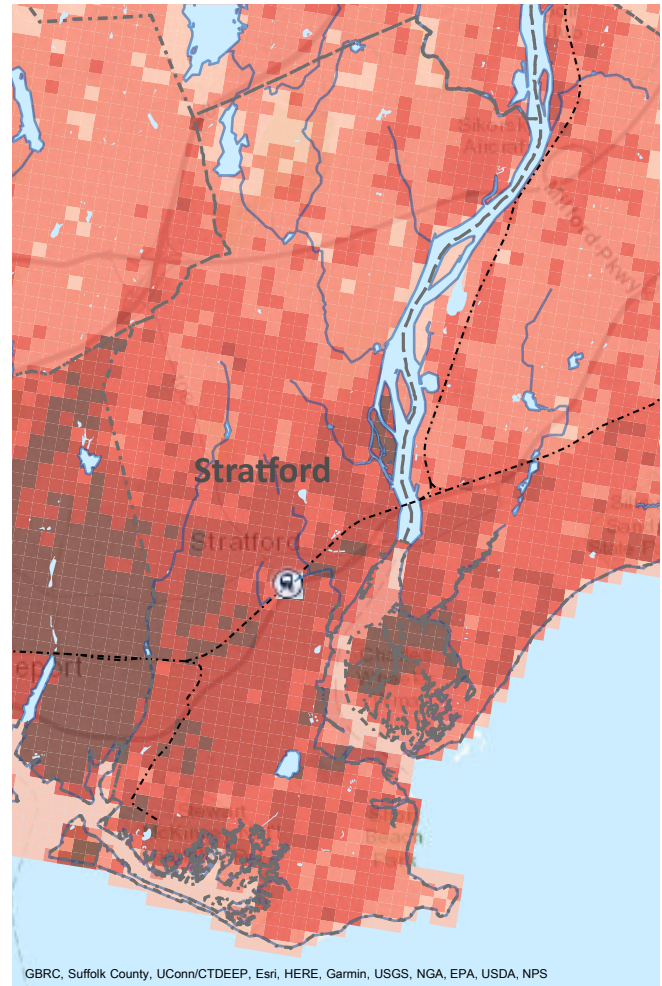


Figure 11.6. CIRCA CCVI Heat Vulnerability





Marsh at Stratford Marine Basin, Source: David Murphy

northern neighborhoods (light red). Heat vulnerabilities in the CCVI comprises several factors including demographic information, impervious surface concentration, land uses, and resources that contribute to adaptive capacity.

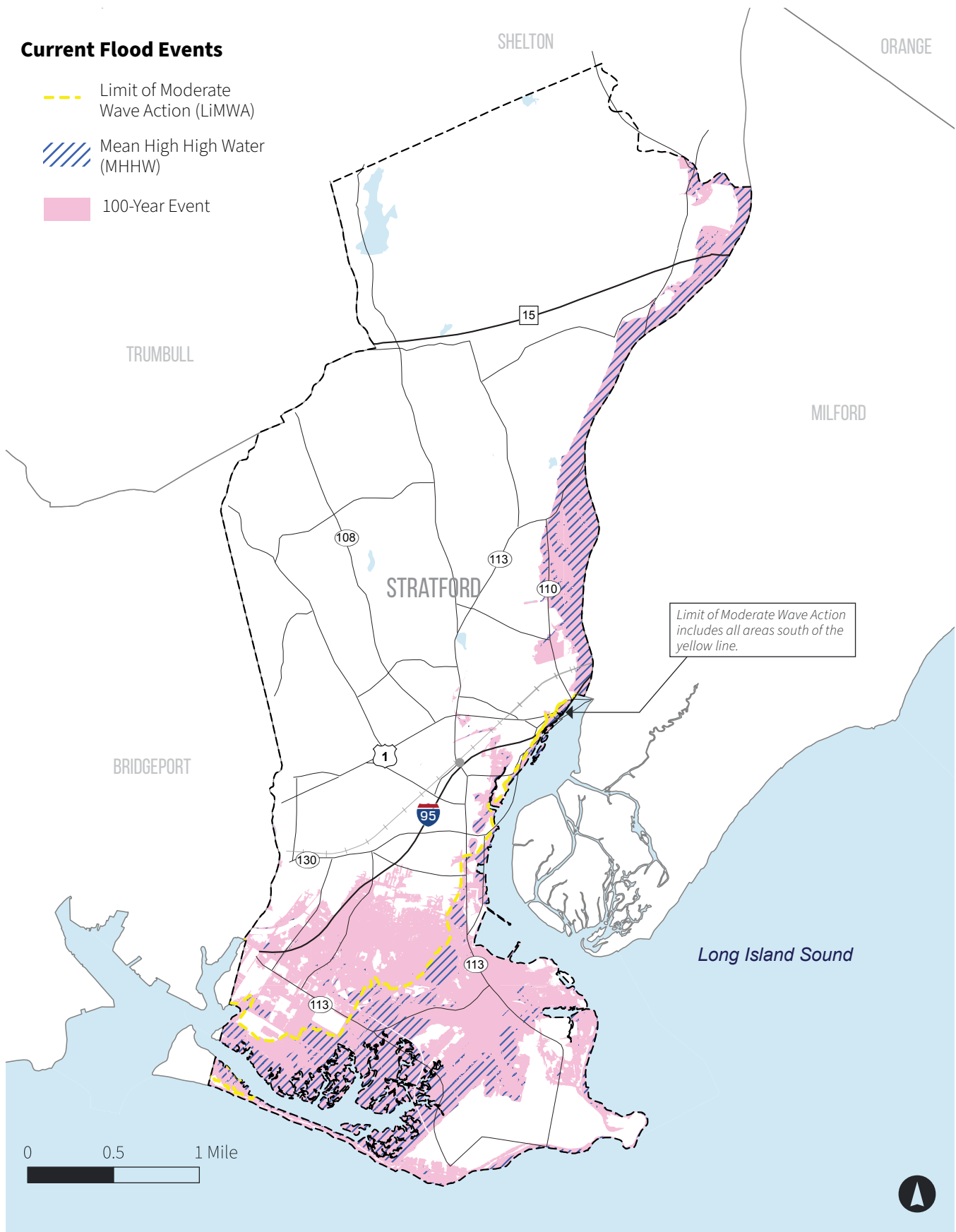
Although ongoing resiliency efforts south of I-95 are focused on reducing coastal flood risks through traditional flood protection infrastructure, future projects that help reduce stormwater flooding through green infrastructure can be designed to provide potential co-benefits to reduce extreme heat exposure. This consideration will be incorporated into studies of the stormwater flooding in the South End, where extreme heat vulnerabilities are greatest. . This is also the neighborhood with a higher concentration of low-income residents and home to the Opportunity Zone census tract. Expanding the tree canopy in this neighborhood, where feasible, would not only improve public health, but also present co-benefits of slowing the runoff during extreme rain events and reducing heat island effects.

Extreme heat management is not only focused on reducing generation of heat and exposure; providing respite from heat is also important. The Town has operated cooling centers in the past few years and will need to actively plan for expanding access and transportation to cooling centers and coastal public access as climate change increases heat exposure as described in the following pages.

Climate Change and Stratford

The FEMA maps, hurricane surge data, and the CCVI all represent present day conditions and do not necessarily represent future risk under climate change conditions. Climate projections for the state show an increase in intense precipitation, an increase in severe storm intensity, and warmer temperatures accompanied by more frequent, flash droughts.

Figure 11.7. Current Flood Events



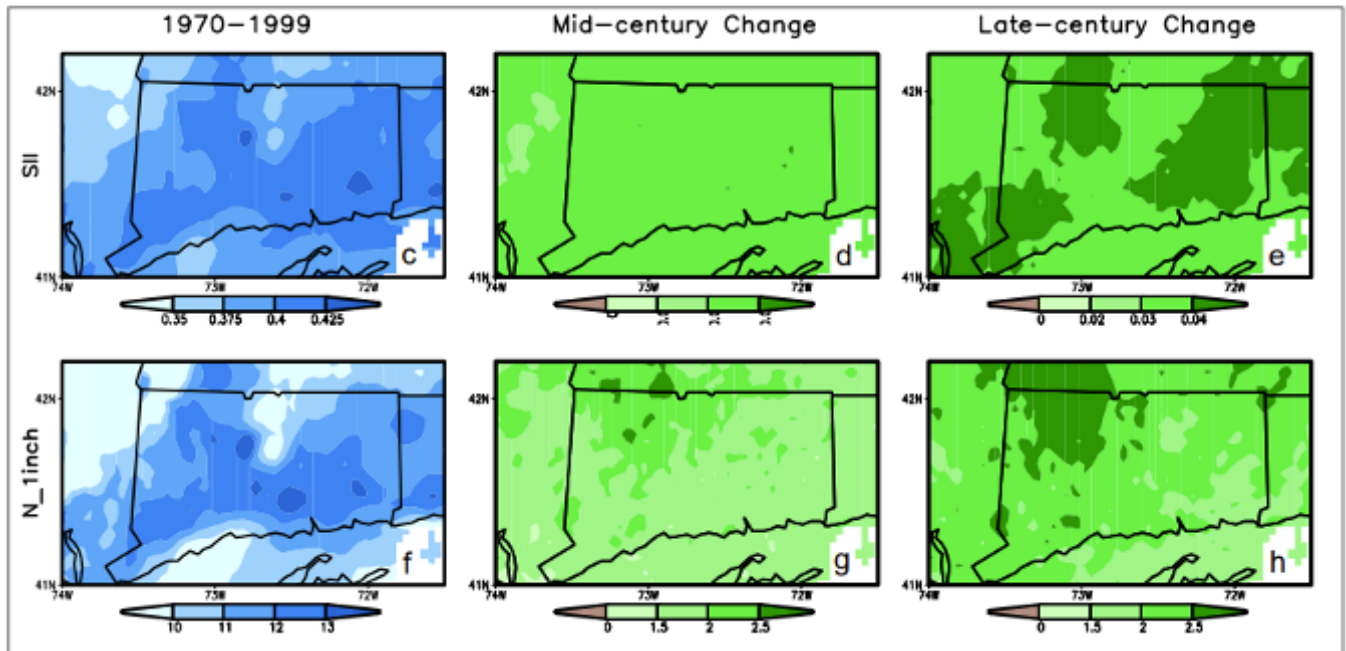
Though there are numerous resources available to evaluate climate change impacts such as the Connecticut Physical Climate Science Assessment Report (PCSAR) or the Fourth National Climate Assessment, this POCD provides only a brief overview of what impacts may look like for Stratford given the primary goal of this chapter is to provide direction on how the community can become more resilient to those impacts.

Flood Risks

CIRCA has developed sea level rise projections for the state per Connecticut Public Act 18-82 which have been set as a statewide planning threshold. It is projected that by 2050, sea level may rise up to 20 inches (50 centimeters) along the Connecticut coastline. Any rise in sea level impacts everything from a daily high tide to the extent of flood inundation from a category 4 storm surge. Current mean high high water (MHHW) and modeled 100-year event inundation (Figure 11.7) shows some areas along the Housatonic River and several locations in Lordship and southern Stratford being inundated under either of these scenarios.

In comparison, Figure 11.9 shows sea level rise projections extend MHHW and the 100-year event inundation a little further inland in those areas. Some of these areas are wetlands or marsh, and therefore extended inundation is not as detrimental as those areas that are developed. While the difference between the two scenarios may appear to be marginal, this extent also means some areas that are already experiencing flooding may see higher flood levels as sea levels rise and push further inland. This same challenge can be applied to the hurricane storm surge inundation. Those inundation areas shown in Figure 11.4 are likely to extend inland as seas rise.

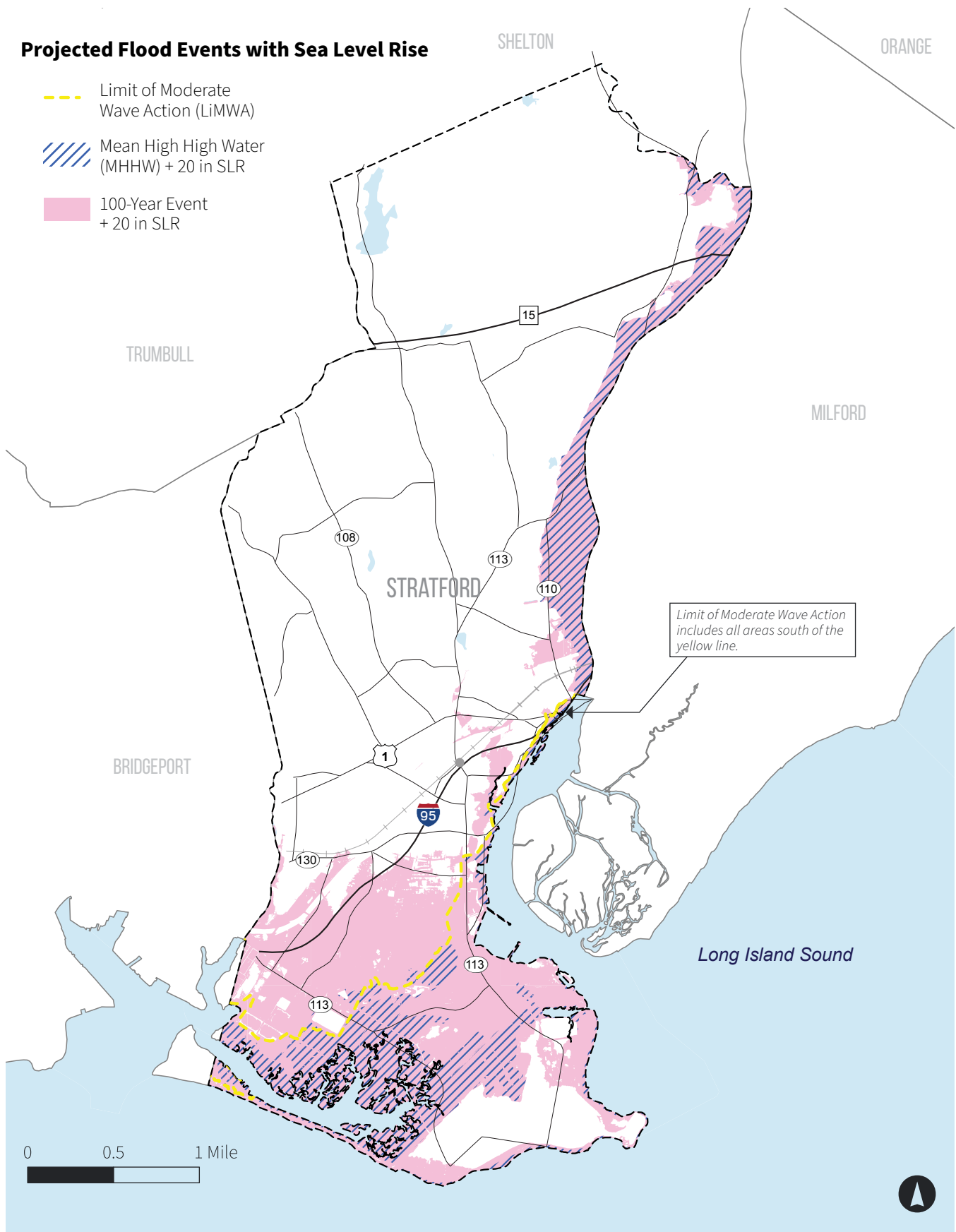
Figure 11.8. The PCSAR simple intensity index (SII) and annual number of days with more than 1 inch of precipitation (N_1inch)



Precipitation projections for Connecticut show two things: the number of days with heavy rain are expected to increase, and the time between those days is also expected to increase resulting in more frequent dry spells. The areas that are at-risk of riverine flooding may see flood levels increase during these heavy precipitation events as stream channels become over inundated with heavy rain in short periods of time. Figure 11.8 shows that precipitation intensity (SII) in relation to observed trends between 1970 and 1999 is expected to increase by 2050, with an even greater increase by 2100. The same is shown for number of days with greater than one inch of precipitation (N_1inch).

The MetroCOG Hazard Mitigation Plan (2019) provides HAZUS-generated, estimated flood losses for the Town of Stratford for different inland and coastal flood events, ranging from the 10-year storm to the 500-year storm. Inland flood losses may

Figure 11.9. Projected Flood Events with Sea Level Rise



range from \$67 million for the 10-year (10% chance) storm to \$130 million for the 500-year (0.2% storm). Coastal flood losses may range from \$92 million for the 10-year (10% chance) storm to \$958 million for the 500-year (0.2% storm).

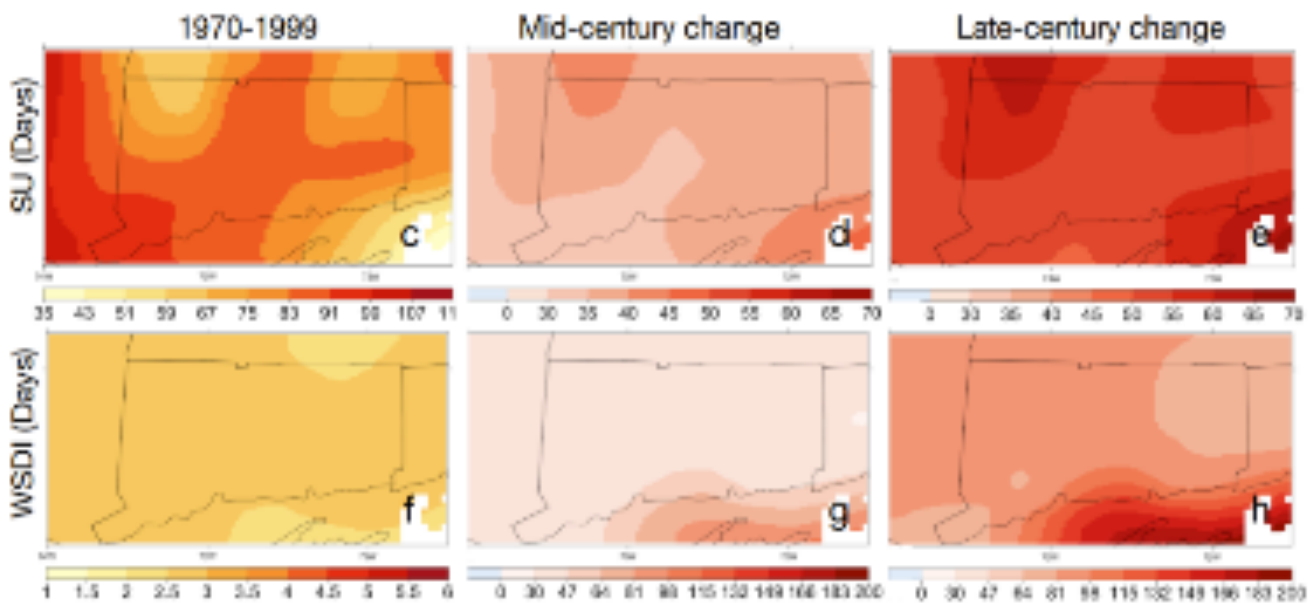
The MetroCOG Hazard Mitigation Plan also provides estimates of total exposed property affected by sea level rise. A total of 1,061 parcels with a value of \$478 million are projected to be subject to daily high tide flooding by 2050.

Clearly, the figures mentioned previously demonstrate the need to plan for strategies that make Stratford more resilient to coastal hazards and flooding in general.

Extreme Heat Risks

The number of days experiencing warm temperatures is expected to increase over the coming decades. Projections show (Figure 11.10) that by late-century the number of “summer days” is expected to increase, along with the number of warm-spell days. A warm spell is defined as an “annual count of warm spell days, where a warm spell is six or more consecutive days with temperatures >90th percentile.” Climate models show that in the 1950s the number of warm spell days was less than three per year, and this could rise to about 50 days by 2050 and more than 120 days by 2100. Projections suggest that that the number of days with summer temperatures could increase from around 80 days (in the 1950s) to more than 140 days by 2100.

Figure 11.10. Daytime heat time series (PCSAR) showing model simulated and projected changes in summer day (c,d,e) and warm spell days (f,g,h)

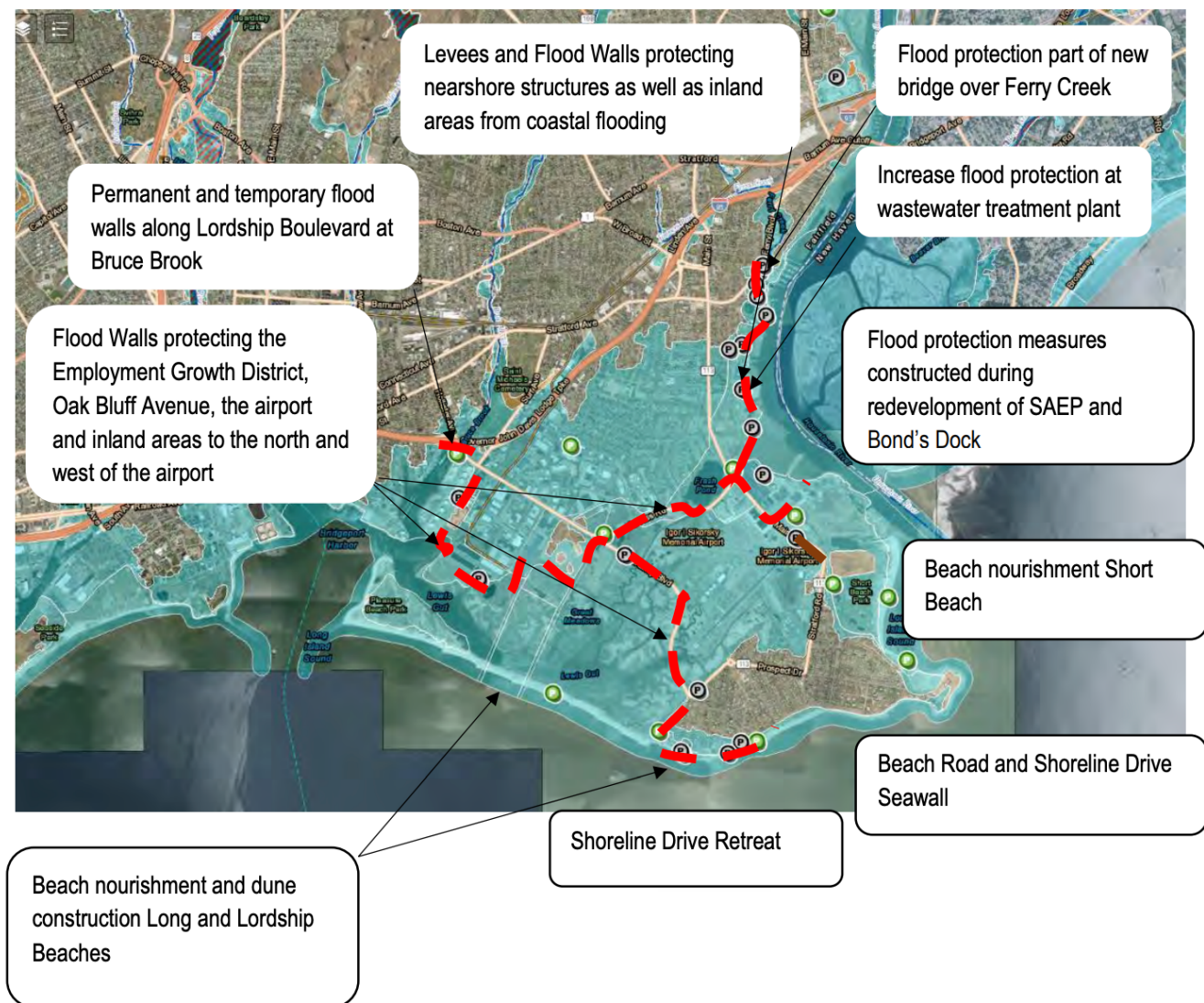


Recent Initiatives in Stratford for Climate Resiliency

The Town of Stratford has worked over the years to increase the community’s resiliency through sustained community planning, project design and implementation, and participating in regional resilience efforts. Some of these efforts include:

- Town of Stratford Coastal Community Resilience Plan (2016)
- Regional Framework for Coastal Resilience in Southern Connecticut (2017)
- Historic and Cultural Resources Resilience Planning Report (2017)
- Entry and participation in CRS Program as a Class 8 Community
- MetroCOG Multi-Jurisdiction Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan (2019)
- Resilient Connecticut Phase II and Phase III (also known as the Resilient South End Study) (2020-2023; ongoing)
- A Waterfront Vision for the Town of Stratford (2023)
- Repetitive Loss Area Analysis of properties in Special Flood Hazard Areas (2023-2025; ongoing)
- Implementation of coastal and inland flooding mitigation projects such as the new dyke proposed at WPCF, new pump stations, drainage improvements, on-going designs for greenway/berm by the Housatonic River, etc.

Figure 11.11. Stratford Coastal Resilience Plan Flood Protection Systems



Most of the Town's work related to addressing resiliency has focused on critical infrastructure such as WPCF and inland drainage improvements. This has been a sensible starting point, especially given the local and regional impacts to water quality, transportation, and jobs in general.

The Coastal Resilience Plan is an excellent example of focused risk identification and resilience planning at the municipal scale, although it is important to note that it focuses on coastal flooding and not other types of flooding. The plan identified and delineated areas in Stratford that are most at risk of coastal hazards. Specific sections of the shoreline, the interior South End neighborhood, and the commercial area along Lordship Boulevard are at significant risk of coastal flooding. The Plan also highlights actions and strategies for reducing flood risks, with a focus on risk reduction via flood protection systems that could take the form of levees, berms, walls, and elevated ground. A total of 23 individual flood mitigation and coastal resiliency projects were proposed in this Plan that were estimated to cost roughly \$ 280 million in 2016.

The Regional Framework for Coastal Resilience in Southern Connecticut (2017) and the Historic and Cultural Resources Resilience Planning Report (2017) for Stratford were key planning efforts in the Town's resiliency story, but they focused on the shoreline and coastal flood hazards just like the Coastal Resilience Plan. The MetroCOG Multi-

Jurisdiction Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan (2019) captured the strategies and actions from all of the plans completed in the three years prior and listed specific actions to help position the Town for FEMA grants. As with many flood mitigation and climate adaptation projects in Connecticut, The Town has encountered several barriers to advancing its flood protection system concepts such as the significant implementation costs and property ownership constraints.

The Resilient Connecticut planning process (2020-2021) was funded by the National Disaster Resilience Competition and U.S. HUD and administered by the Connecticut Institute for Resilience and Climate Adaptation (CIRCA). The Resilient Connecticut planning effort expanded the climate resiliency perspective for Fairfield County and New Haven County to include all types of flooding – not only coastal flooding – as well as extreme heat vulnerabilities and risks. Some of the baseline conditions described below are from the Resilient Connecticut planning process. The Resilient Connecticut vulnerability assessment was used to identify areas of intersecting climate-related needs (flooding and extreme heat) that overlapped with clusters of critical facilities, regional infrastructure, Town and regional assets, Transit Oriented Development (TOD), and key natural resources. This overlay process identified four "opportunity areas" in Stratford where the potential may exist for climate adaptation projects to reduce risks and foster resiliency.



Source: David Murphy

The opportunity area centered on Stratford center is pictured below.

Given the importance of understanding all types of barriers to coastal flood resiliency, CIRCA followed the Resilient Connecticut planning process by spearheading a year-long planning effort from 2022-2023 to identify and characterize the logistical, permitting, financial, and other barriers that the Town has encountered relative to its flood protection system concept designs.

This focused planning effort is called “Resilient South End” and its primary goal is to identify strategies for protecting the South End residents and critical facilities from flood risks; this will include strategies previously considered, variations of these strategies, or new strategies. Depending on the outcomes, the study can provide next-level planning analysis for one or two of the concepts identified in the Town’s Coastal Resilience Plan; and include a Benefit Cost

Analysis of the recommended action so that the Town can apply for federal funding to help advance flood protection.

The Resilient South End planning effort may find that future efforts should work to address identified barriers or shift priorities to more attainable or cost-effective flood mitigation projects. Secondary objectives of Resilient South End are to connect to flood mitigation measures at the WPCF; complement other stormwater-related flooding initiatives currently underway; and maximize the impact of other infrastructure investments nearby such as Greenway Phase II implementation along Elm Street connecting Bond’s Dock to Broad Street. The Town is also working to address stormwater-related flooding in the South End, which was highlighted by the flooding that occurred during the intense storms of summer 2021.

The Town received \$2.75 million from FEMA in 2019 to fund the WPCF flood protection system. Local match for this project is roughly \$ 8 million, mostly funded through the Town’s coastal resiliency bond fund and in partnership with WPCA.

Figure 11.12. Regional Adaptation/Resilience Opportunity Areas

Resilient Connecticut Phase II Regional Adaptation/Resilience Opportunity Areas

Name: Downtown Stratford
Location: Stratford

Considerations	Characteristics of Area
Flood Vulnerability	●●●●●●●●
Heat Vulnerability	●●●●●●●●
Social Vulnerability	●●●●●●●●

The Town of Stratford has undertaken flood risk reduction projects in this area of TOD, where several streams join before flowing to the Housatonic River. Railroad underpasses have flooded some of the roads that connect northern Stratford with southern Stratford.

Moderate-high heat vulnerability is attributed to low vegetative adaptive capacity, so few trees/green space, in addition to moderate-high social sensitivity. While there are trees located on in the interior of residential blocks, street trees are few.

Fire department/EOC Town Hall Public works garage Police headquarters	Stratford Emergency Medical Service Rail Station Baldwin Center/shelter	Three schools Substation Museums
--	---	--



Source: CIRCA

Findings

The plans mentioned above, such as the Coastal Resilience Plan and *Resilient Connecticut*, take a deeper look into some of the vulnerabilities across the town, and identify assets, infrastructure, and populations at greater risk, and recognized these key issues for the Town of Stratford. The Town has been actively working over the years to address these and other climate hazards; this POCD is an additional tool that the Town can utilize when considering more resilient development strategies.

Some of the key challenges for Stratford will include:

- Increased precipitation intensity will cause increased flooding along Bruce Brook, Pumpkin Ground Brook, other streams in town, and the underpasses near the Town center.
- More intense hurricanes and severe storms will result in more frequent coastal floods and storm surge events, as well as increased precipitation.
- Sea level rise will exacerbate coastal floods and storm surge events, which may already become more frequent as storm intensity increases.
- Sea level rise will also increase the frequency of nuisance flooding caused by very high tides, affecting the most low-lying properties first.
- Rising temperatures will result in a greater number of days with dangerously heat; heat-vulnerable areas may become more vulnerable in coming decades as the housing stock ages and the resident population ages.

The Town continues to embrace the strategy of “retreat, accommodate, or protect” that was outlined in the Coastal Resilience Plan. However, pursuing the funding for advanced planning analysis and design of the concepts discussed in the Coastal Resiliency Plan continues to remain a challenge, as most federal and state funding opportunities are focused

on shovel ready projects. The Town maintains a coastal resiliency bond fund in its Capital Improvement Program to fund coastal resiliency planning and implementation projects, however this is not sufficient as most of this bond money will be used to provide local match to the WPCF flood protection system implementation project for the next five years.

Notwithstanding the outcomes of the Resilient South End project described above, the Town recognizes the need to address flood pathways from its eastern shoreline. Thus, the eastern shoreline vision from the Coastal Resilience Plan is hereby prioritized. The graphic below provides a plan-view concept of the eastern shoreline flood protection system segments. Ideally, this system of connected flood protection projects will not only provide coastal flood protection, but also enhance economic development, waterfront access, and recreational opportunities by connecting to the Housatonic River greenway. The total cost estimate for this eastern shoreline flood protection system is approximately \$65 million.



Figure 11.13. Proposed Comprehensive Flood Protection

Proposed Comprehensive Flood Protection by Stratford Eastern Shoreline Along Housatonic River, Source: Town of Stratford



What We Heard From the Community

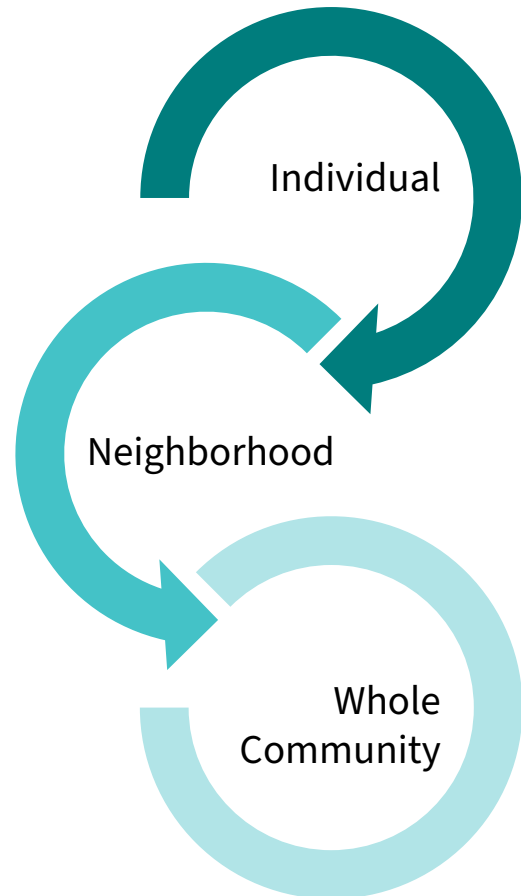
During the public workshops conducted in fall 2022, attendees were asked for their thoughts about the Town's future as a coastal community given the increasing risks related to coastal hazards and sea level rise. The resiliency questions were focused on coastal resiliency, which is a subset of the whole-community resiliency theme that Stratford is embracing in the POCD. All respondents noted that the Town's coastal assets and coastal characteristics were key resources and facets of living in Stratford, and none anticipated that people would want to move away from the shoreline.

Attendees spoke of the importance of the Town's coastal resources, public access to the shoreline, coastal land management, and the need for water-dependent uses. While these are not inherently resilience-related topics, the careful management of coastal resources and provision of public access are well-aligned with resiliency goals.

Some attendees noted their concerns related to stormwater and stream flooding, and urged the Town to carefully manage development to ensure that these types of flooding do not worsen. Other climate-driven risks such as extreme heat and severe storms were not thoroughly discussed during the workshops, although some attendees remarked that planting and maintaining more street trees and wooded areas could help reduce heat exposure.

Overview of Approach for Making Stratford Resilient

The Town should integrate resilience into planning and regulatory structures at different scales and through different mechanisms as depicted in the graphic below.



- At an individual level, the Town should focus on educating and informing residents and business owners on the current risks, future risks, and what options are available to them for increasing resilience. This might include elevating a home that has flooded in the past, retrofitting a business with flood vents and flood doors, working with properties to implement larger stormwater retention and detention systems, and working with large commercial properties to reduce impervious surface and increase green cover.
- In addition to education, the town should also support residents and property owners that wish to pursue funding for home elevations, property retrofits, retreat from areas of flood risk through voluntary acquisitions, and other hazard mitigation projects. Some funding sources, such as the FEMA Hazard

Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) or Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) are competitive grant programs that allow the Town to apply on a property owner's behalf to help reduce or eliminate damages. By providing education and fostering individual resilience and hazard mitigation, the town is working toward creating a more resilient community, while also alleviating the stress on community resources during an event. The Town understands and assumes that instances of acquisitions and elevations will be limited, but should continue to support these activities when they arise.

- At a neighborhood level, the town can seek to implement projects and infrastructure upgrades that benefit more than a single property and work to protect multiple homes or businesses. The more important example of this level of resiliency is pursuing the flood protection systems identified in the Coastal Resilience Plan as discussed above, with emphasis on the eastern shoreline segments.
- Resilience may not always equate to reliance on a large-scale flood protection projects. Resilience strategies could also take the form of upgrading or upsizing drainage systems at underpasses and in the South End, or increasing the presence of green cover and street trees to reduce extreme heat exposure while reducing the generation of stormwater.

Part of the Town's vision for resilience is to keep the concept of "whole community resilience" in focus. Although resilience can be broken down into small parts throughout the community, ensuring that large scale and critical components of the Town are resilient is important. Some of the essential strategies for whole community resilience are:

- Ensuring that Town and regional assets and critical facilities are resilient (i.e., the wastewater treatment plant which is being protected by a flood wall and berm system);
- Carefully fostering development in the Town center and TOD area away from coastal flood zones and close to community facilities, while addressing underpasses and road segments that may flood; these are known as "resilient hubs" in some communities;
- Creating accessible resources where they may be lacking (i.e., new or expanded cooling centers); and
- Supporting resilient transportation and transit corridors so people can access shelters and cooling centers and other resources before, during, and after severe storms, floods, and extreme heat events; these are known as "resilient corridors" in some communities.

These are all aspects of resilience that are necessary regardless of the timing of individual scale and neighborhood scale resilience strategies like home elevations and flood protection systems.



Safe Harbor Marina Stratford, Source: Pearce Realty Group

Vision

Incorporate resilience into future growth and development at all levels to ensure the town's residents and infrastructure are prepared for, and can withstand, recover, and adapt to, floods, severe storms, extreme heat, and climate change.

Goals

- Ensure that the Town continues to be a livable community with future economic opportunities, while supporting Town values (from the Coastal Resilience Plan).
- Make the social, economic, and environmental systems more resilient to coastal flooding and sea level rise (from the Coastal Resilience Plan).
- Increase the resilience of public infrastructure (modified from the Coastal Resilience Plan).
- Increase public awareness and understanding of coastal risks and resiliency (from the Coastal Resilience Plan).
- Provide guidance for future investment, planning, and regulatory change (from the Coastal Resilience Plan).
- Continue adapting to climate-related conditions and coastal and inland flood risks to vulnerable residents, businesses, properties, and infrastructure.

Objectives & Action Steps

Objective 1. Support the implementation of the three resilience strategies outlined in the 2016 Community Coastal Resiliency Plan (i.e., *Retreat, Accommodate, and Protect*).

1. Encourage beach restoration along Shoreline Drive in Lordship neighborhood by facilitating funding for voluntary property acquisitions; explore voluntary transfer of development rights as an option.
2. Facilitate the construction of a series of flood protection systems (levees and flood walls) along the Housatonic Riverfront, from the WPCF to former Army Engine Plant.
3. Facilitate the construction of a flood protection system at the north end of Johnsons Creek and Sprague Oil property.
4. Facilitate the lengthening (and possibly raising) of the seawall/revetment at Lordship (in combination with the retreat strategy).
5. Establish neighborhood zoning regulations and guidance that address elevating properties from a community aesthetic perspective.
6. Implement an accommodation strategy that places the direct responsibility (and cost) for private building flood protection on the property owners.
7. Limit high density developments in floodplains and if allowed, require mitigation plans for flooding.



Retreat has been a successful strategy by acquisition/demolition of houses along Long Beach. Source: i95rock.com

Objective 2. Support individual property owners and foster actions that make residents, homes, and businesses more resilient through *retreat, accommodation, and protection.*

1. Educate owners of repetitive loss properties and at-risk flood properties of the funding opportunities available for elevating and floodproofing structures.
2. Encourage private property owners in floodplains to implement accommodation strategies such as flood proofing of buildings and structures; implementing temporary flood protection measures; preparing emergency/flood response plans; post-storm repair and cleanup.
3. Support or partner with property owners that wish to pursue FEMA grant funding for elevation or retrofits of structures (i.e., HMGP or FMA programs).
4. Ensure that coastal redevelopment projects incorporate as many risk reduction and resilience design strategies as possible, and ensure that these strategies are aligned with the coastal public access goals of the Town.
5. Require state funded residential projects in coastal locations, considered as “critical activities” per CGS 25-68, to be elevated to the 500-year flood elevation with an additional two feet for sea level rise and require dry land access out of the project at the 100 year flood elevation in such locations.
6. Encourage the provision of dry land access out of large scale multifamily residential developments within 100 feet of FEMA-designated floodplains.
7. Develop a brochure to educate businesses on the available resources for flood mitigation and adaptation with approximate cost estimates and time taken for implementation of each strategy.
8. Increase awareness of and enrollment in Stratford Alerts (formerly Special Needs Registry) and Get Connected notification systems.



Shakespeare Park, Source: Molly Ryan

Objective 3. Advance neighborhood-scale solutions and funding opportunities for the development of flood protection systems and other infrastructural upgrades and improvements that increase resilience through *retreat, accommodation, and protection*, addressing both coastal and inland flooding.

1. Pursue funding to implement the recommendations of Resilient South End study (due late 2023) in pursuing or modifying the flood protection system near/at Access Road in Lordship neighborhood.
2. Develop a schedule and plans to increase capacities and upgrade drainage infrastructure, such as those serving the South End, as components become due for maintenance, repairs, or replacements.
3. Expand tree canopy and green infrastructure in South End to provide co-benefits for stormwater flood mitigation and extreme heat mitigation, where feasible.
4. Accelerate recovery process of the waterfront when impacted by coastal flooding, soil erosion, extreme winds, coastal storms, rising sea levels and other climate related events through timely deployment of municipal services and municipal funding.
5. Prioritize and implement resiliency strategies that combine the benefits of coastal flood mitigation and enhancing public access along the waterfront.
6. Elevate roads as funding becomes available (e.g. Washington Parkway).
7. Strive for identifying and conceptualizing adaptation and resilience strategies into ongoing planning processes such as the Bruce Brook Watershed Based Plan; these strategies should provide co-benefits for flood mitigation, extreme heat mitigation, and water quality protection.
8. Continue to accommodate flooding in public locations through appropriate operation and maintenance of culverts and tide gates; appropriate operation and maintenance of pump stations; regular dredging of waterways; beach nourishment and dune maintenance; maintenance of salt marshes (eg: tidal flow, salinity, depth); local use of temporary flood protection measures and management; emergency/flood response plans; evacuation planning; flood-proofing public buildings and structures; elevation of Town-owned buildings in flood plains in compliance with local, state, and federal regulations; appropriate post-storm repair and cleanup.
9. Pursue heat resilience study to better prepare the Town for the anticipated impacts of climate change.

Objective 4. Strive for whole-community resilience concepts such as “Resilient Hubs” and “Resilient Transportation and Transit Corridors” to ensure new and re-development projects are as resilient as possible through *accommodation but chiefly through protection*.

1. Continue to maintain a good standing with FEMA’s CRS program through strict adherence to the guidance provided in the most recent CRS Coordinator’s manual; and look for opportunities to streamline annual recertifications and the five-year review process.
2. Prioritize the development of new or expanded critical facilities within Resilient Hubs to ensure that they are accessible and usable before, during, and after extreme storms, floods, or extended heat waves.
3. Ensure that resources are directed to road systems that achieve the goals of resilient transportation and transit corridors, connecting people and businesses to one another and to critical facilities and services. Examples include Main Street, South Avenue, West Broad Street, Stratford Avenue, Barnum Avenue, and Surf Avenue; and the bridges and underpasses that support these roads.
4. Align resiliency concepts with the waterfront management goals developed by WHMC in the “Waterfront Vision for the Town of Stratford” and as discussed earlier in the previous section. Responsible coastal zone and waterfront management can be resilient to coastal hazards while providing benefits to the entire community.

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12

Placemaking & Urban Design

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Placemaking & Urban Design

Goal

Strive to promote a vibrant community and enhance the aesthetics and sense of place through placemaking and urban design practices including public artwork, pedestrian realm improvements and design guidelines.

Baseline Conditions

Stratford is a very diverse community visually and aesthetically. Dense development patterns are prevalent in many of the community's residential neighborhoods, particularly to the south, while large pockets of industrial and manufacturing also dominate. Stratford's natural resources such as the beaches, riverfront, marshes, and Roosevelt Forest, also heavily contribute to the Town's identity. Stratford's commercial and retail centers are spread out across the community and are dissected by I-95, the rail line and the Merritt Parkway. Stratford's residential neighborhoods to the north can be characterized by larger lot sizes with more wooded areas, and they have little connection to the Town's other residential neighborhoods such as those found in Lordship or the Town Center.

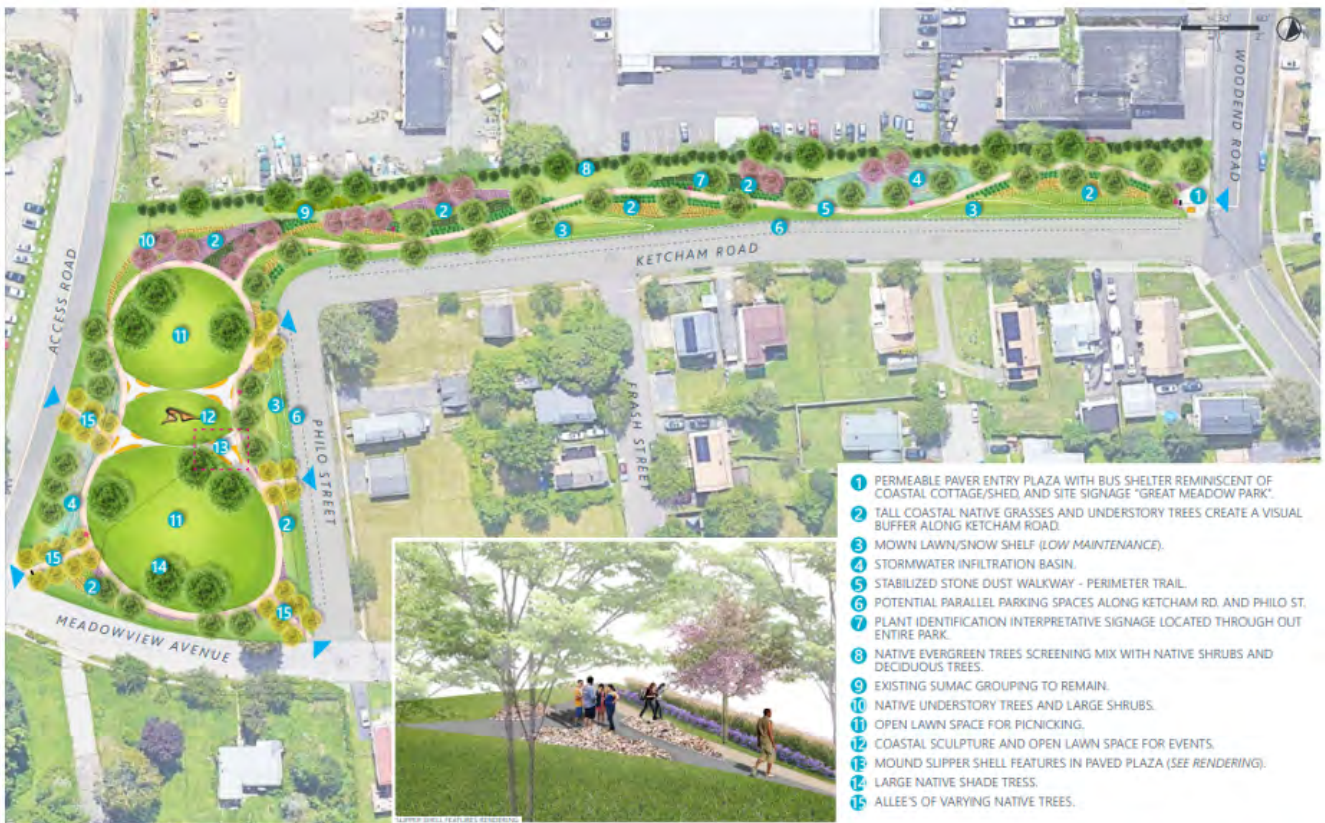
The community's colonial history is traced to the year 1639, when a courageous group of settlers arrived at Mac's Harbor on the banks of the Housatonic River. This was the Native American Village of Cupheag. According to town records, Cupheag was first called Stratford in April of 1643. Though there is little historical data to allow us to determine the exact origin of the name, it is traditionally assumed that Thomas Alsop was among the first group of settlers who came to America in 1639. John Alsop, Thomas' father, and William Shakespeare were supposedly both from the same parish of the Town of Stratford-upon-Avon in England, and both were taxed by the Crown according to his individual worth. From the foregoing, it may reasonably be deduced

that Stratford was so named after the great playwright's own Town of Stratford-upon-Avon.

Stratford takes great pride in its heritage - from its first settlers to the brave immigrants who followed in later years - from its sparkling seashore to its rolling countryside - it is steeped in history, and rich in natural beauty. It is one of the few communities in the entire nation to own its own forest, and it proudly keeps watch over the magnificent "Great Meadows Marsh". A special town of unique diversity transcended into a homogeneous melding, Stratford is quintessential New England.

Opportunities for placemaking and urban design exist and are already happening in Stratford. Public art such as Stratford's murals all contribute to the unique sense of place in the Town. Pedestrian scale decorative lighting, benches, and plantings all add to the aesthetics of the community. Streetscape design elements such as decorative pavements and signage also create a unified look and cohesive feel to the public realm.

Stratford undertook many projects and studies in recent past that incorporate elements of placemaking and urban design. Visioning workshops for the future of the former Shakespeare Property discussed uses, aesthetics, and public elements. Planning for the Stratford Greenway incorporates signage, lighting, and a unified network that connects Lordship all the way to the northern end of Town and beyond. Stratford's Complete Streets Plan provides guidance on public realm elements like bus shelters, benches and lighting. On the following page is an image of potential arboretum project on Access Road, which would beautify the corner of Access Road and Meadowview Avenue.

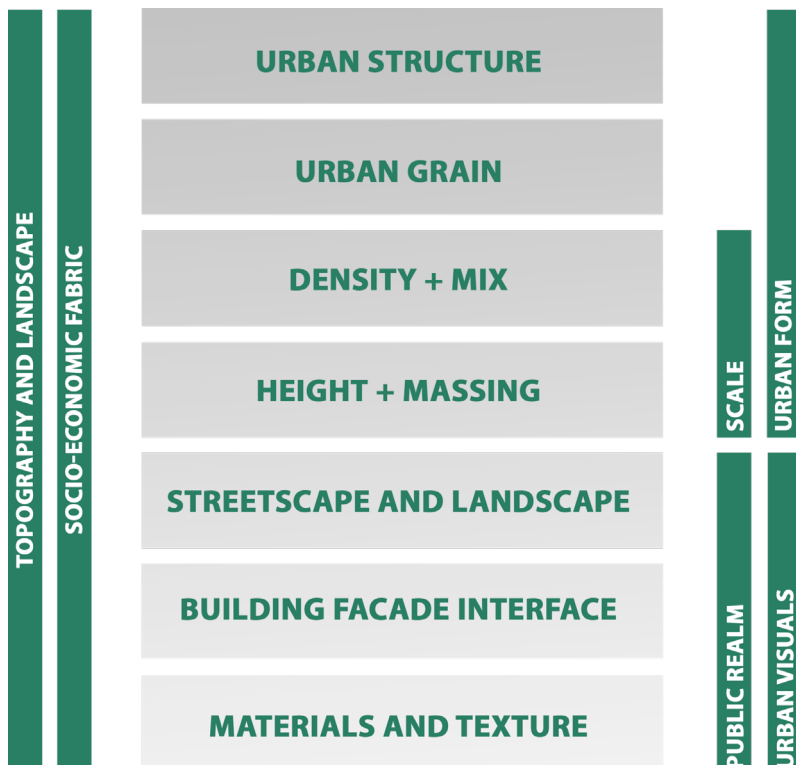


STRATFORD COASTAL BOTANICAL GARDEN AND ARBORETUM CONCEPTUAL PLAN

Arboretum Conceptual Plan, Source: Town of Stratford

What is Placemaking?

Placemaking is the process of creating quality places that people want to live, work, play, and learn in. Quality Places are active and unique sites. They are interesting, visually attractive, and often incorporating public art and creative activities. They have pleasing façades and good building dimensions relative to the street and are people-friendly.



Source: Urban Design Lab

What is Urban Design?

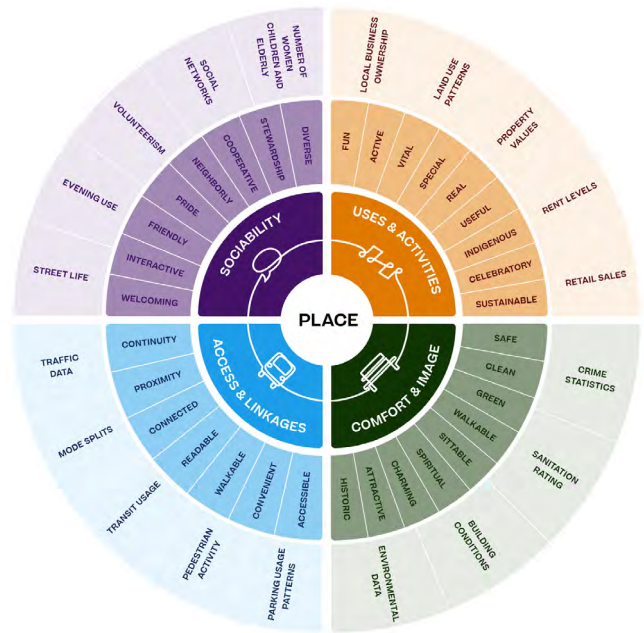
Much like Placemaking, urban design focuses on how the elements of the public realm can be built and arranged to create a positive experience for everyone. Urban design decisions can affect climate risk, public health, safety, social equity, and more. Everything from the heights and shapes of buildings to the placement of benches on sidewalks are important considerations for creating a community centered around public life and for everyone to enjoy.

On-going and Recent Initiatives

Architectural Review Board Review of Large Scale Commercial Design Projects

The Town’s Architectural Review Board (ARB) was established in 2018 to protect Stratford’s cultural heritage; to preserve and improve the aesthetics of the community; and to conserve buildings, structures, and property. This board serves as an advisory board to all land use boards and commissions (including Planning, Zoning, and Board of Zoning Appeals) that are reviewing applications for all residential developments three units or more and all commercial developments that are subject to a variance or a special case review.

The ARB developed and adopted a Commercial Design Guidelines manual to advise applicants on generally accepted designs of built environment in the town. Applicants often use this as a guide in designing their respective projects in conjunction with the standards established in the town’s building and zoning regulations. Since its initiation, the ARB reviewed nearly 30 applications and offered their recommendations to the relevant land use commissions. While ARB’s intent is to preserve Stratford’s historic character, they currently do not have authority to review and offer recommendations for as-of-right projects in Local Historic District (LHD) or on state historic properties unless these properties are subject to a special case or variance review. Any modifications or new construction on properties in LHD are reviewed by the Town’s Historic District Commission (HDC). Further, ARB does not have authority to review as-of-right commercial projects proposed in key commercial areas and community gathering centers in the town such as Stratford Center, Paradise Green, Barnum Avenue, Lordship Boulevard, Stratford Avenue, and Honeyspot Road.



Source: Project for Public Spaces, <https://www.pps.org/article/what-is-placemaking>



Rendering of ARB Approved Development on 24 Surf Avenue

Arts Commission’s Implementation Projects

The Town’s Arts Commission is charged with promotion, development, and acceptance of artistic and cultural activities, including but not limited to music, theater, dance, painting, sculpture, architecture, literature, films, and allied arts and crafts. Stratford hosts a number of community events through Celebrate Stratford such as Main Street Festival, Latin Music Festival, Blues on the Beach, and many others throughout the year. Events such as these help with placemaking by bringing residents from various parts of the town together and contribute to the sense of community that is widely prevalent in the town. The Arts Commission offers financial support to some of these events and also

hosts artist booths for spin art, face painting, etc. Recently, the Commission painted town owned traffic control boxes at 14 street intersections in the town in partnership with the Department of Public Works. They also partnered with a volunteer group called “Stratford Streetscape” to create decorative benches and lighthouses that were sold through an auction to be placed at various schools in the town. In addition, the Commission, in partnership with the Mayor, implemented two wall murals-- one at East Main Street and Patterson Avenue on the Public Works Building showcasing the town flower, daffodil and the other mural at Short Beach. The Commission often partners with local high school artists and offered their support to the high school artists who painted the wall mural at Paradise Green. They continuously offer financial support to host plays in local high schools and assist them with decorating the stage, supplying props, etc. Currently, the Commission is seeking input from local artists to paint wall murals at several commercial areas in the town. The Town has also set aside \$10,000 in the annual Capital Improvement Program each year to implement street art murals and other placemaking projects across the town.

Beautification Committee Awards for Private Properties and Public Properties Enhancement

The Town’s Beautification Committee identifies areas in the town that need beautification and enhances these areas by offering consulting services, and through programs such as, Daffodil Give Away Program and tree replacement program. The Committee also oversees Town gardens, hosts annual beautification awards, hosts holiday lighting contents and promotes public property enhancement.



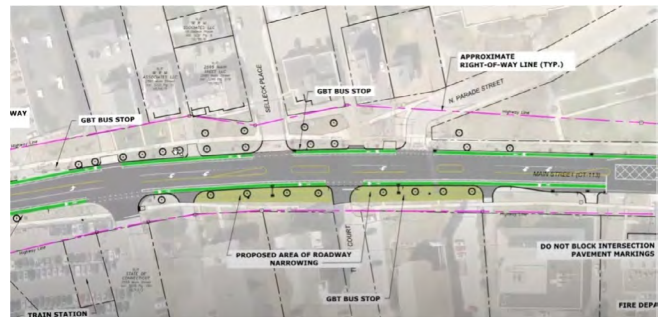
2022 Beautification Award Winner- 101 Evergreen Drive



Mural of Town Flower, Daffodil on Public Works Building on East Main Street

Complete Streets Initiative

The Town received \$ 2.5 million from the State to implement Phase I of Complete Streets on Main Street (Route 113) from the south of Barnum Avenue and Main Street intersection to Harvey Place. Placemaking and enhancing the streetscape are important components of this project through dedicated bike lanes, sidewalk improvements decorative crosswalks, enhancements to the bus shelter, and tree plantings at appropriate locations. Implementation of this project is scheduled to begin late fall 2023 - early spring 2024.



Design of proposed implementation of Phase I of Complete Streets on Main Street near Train Station

Former Shakespeare Property Redevelopment

In January 2019, the former historic Shakespeare Theater property was burnt down due to fire. Following this, the Town held community conversations in various neighborhoods to engage residents in the visioning process for redeveloping this property. Nearly 1,000 residents participated in these discussions, who recommended that the site be reused as an arts and entertainment site with options to host outdoor festivals and events, as well as, a multipurpose facility (like a black box) to showcase plays or hold concerts by involving local artists. Since 2020, this property has been re-opened for public access and enjoyment by hosting outdoor art festivals, farmers markets, etc., which brought Stratford community together once again on this site. In 2022, the Town invested municipal funds through Capital Improvement Program (CIP) to clean up and beautify this site. In addition, the Town also received \$3 million from the State Bond Commission to redevelop this site as an arts and entertainment venue.

Celebrate Stratford Events

As discussed earlier, the Town hosts several events throughout the year, at various locations from forest to shore, in partnership with local businesses and non-profits to bring the community together, boost local economy and strengthen the sense of place in the community such as the Shakespeare market, the Latin Music Festival, Blues on the Beach, Restaurant Week, Summer Concert Series, farmers markets, etc. The Town maintains an active profile on CT Visit tourism website to share information on “Things to do” in Stratford that is widely accessible to all residents and non-residents.



Phoenix (Arts) Festival held at Former Shakespeare Site in 2019



Stratford Main Street Festival in 2022

Findings

Stratford is a unique historic, waterfront, post war suburban community. The Town's rich history, including its manufacturing past as well as its distinct neighborhoods all contribute to its current identity. Stratford's waterfront, which surrounds the community, showcases Stratford's commercial and industrial past and has provided a wonderful environmental and recreational asset to the Town. Town has made significant investments and fostered several partnerships to promote placemaking through a variety of events and festivals held throughout the year. Further strengthening these placemaking efforts through long range planning and design will only reinforce Stratford's aesthetic appeal and sense of community, enabling it to continue to be the vibrant place it is today.

Opportunity sites for placemaking:

- Former Center School Site (1000 East Broadway)
- Hard's Corner (990 Stratford Avenue),
- 1791 Stratford Avenue (near Honeyspot and Stratford Ave intersection),
- Former Shakespeare site (1880 Elm Street),
- Arboretum site (Access Road and Meadowview Avenue),
- Former SAEP site (550 Main Street),
- Bond's Dock (600 Selbys Pond Road)



What We Heard From the Community

Throughout the community engagement process, residents expressed their desires for Stratford to incorporate more public artwork and aesthetic improvements into the community. Frequently, the springtime planters along Main Street were brought up, with residents emphasizing that the Town should install additional plantings like that around town to beautify the community. Additionally, gateway signage and streetscape elements such as lighting and decorative paving materials were deemed favorable. The community would like to see more murals on buildings in Stratford, such as the daffodil mural on the Public Works building. Residents frequently talked about the aesthetics of new developments, emphasizing how things look is very important. Design standards for new buildings are very important to the community. Residents also expressed their concerns on the current aesthetics of the town's commercial corridors and felt streetscape improvements are very much needed in these corridors.

Defining character areas in the town and preserving unique attributes of each character area through design standards that are applicable to as-of-right permitted developments were expressed as a priority by the ARB members.



Shakespeare Garden, Source: Town of Stratford



Shakespeare Garden, Source: Town of Stratford



Intersection of Main Street and Stratford Avenue, existing view north on Main Street



Intersection of Main Street and Stratford Avenue, potential placemaking improvements and TOD mixed use development, view north on Main Street



Intersection of Stratford Avenue and Main Street, existing view west on Stratford Avenue



Intersection of Stratford Avenue and Main Street, potential placemaking improvements, view west on Stratford Avenue

Goals

- Promote vibrant community gathering spaces for residents of all ages and abilities.
- Promote welcoming and aesthetically pleasing commercial corridors.
- Promote connectivity and accessibility between Stratford's character areas and neighborhoods.
- Encourage public private partnerships with a shared vision of implementing creative placemaking strategies.



Objectives & Action Steps

Objective 1. Reinforce a sense of place and enhance the quality of life and wellbeing of all residents.

1. Enhance public spaces.

- Identify and pursue opportunities to implement art in public spaces such as, murals, sculptures, and other art elements that are reflective of Stratford's culture and history.
- Identify unused parking areas where spaces previously used for cars can be converted as spaces for people
- Implement gateway signage and welcoming art features at gateway locations identified in the Vision Plan to welcome travelers and brand the community.
- Continue the implementation of tree planting and replacement initiative to maintain and protect Stratford's historic beauty; Stratford's original town seal commemorates the important contribution Elm trees have made to Stratford.
- Promote human scale design of buildings, streetscapes, and public spaces by encouraging a mix of uses with usable active social spaces, avoiding large building blocks and blank wall facades; providing transition areas between buildings of different scales; implementing appropriate landscaping; making optimal use of natural light; incorporating street furniture; integrating art; encouraging tactical urbanism.



Example of tactical urbanism creation in Downtown Hartford. A wide intersection was colorfully painted to provide more room for pedestrians while also helping to reduce vehicular speeds.

2. Boost community participation.

- Continue to host “Celebrate Stratford” events throughout the year to promote active use of streets and public spaces, and encourage more interactions between businesses and residents.
- Expand programming of community events to include more artistically interesting areas of the town.
- Continue to promote town events widely in social media; on Town website; local television and news outlets; and print materials such as brochures, newsletters, etc.
- Consider implementing an informational kiosk, at a central location in the town, with regularly updated information on town events and festivals for the digitally excluded population.
- Develop a marketing plan aimed at attracting visitors to the town's natural landscapes, waterfront and greenway system, including Long Beach/Great Meadows Marsh, Roosevelt Forest, Short Beach Complex, and Stratford Greenway.

Objective 1. Reinforce a sense of place and enhance the quality of life and wellbeing of all residents.

Continued

3. Promote compact urban form in the Town Center and along commercial corridors.

- Conduct a Town Center build-out analysis and parking lot study to maximize building coverage on underutilized sites; to identify areas where shared parking is a possibility; to reimagine large underutilized parking lots as public gathering spaces, thus making the Town Center more welcoming and pedestrian-friendly.
- Revise zoning regulations for commercial corridors to encourage denser developments and more urban site plans.
- Encourage parking to the rear of the buildings to create a pedestrian-oriented streetscape.

4. Preserve and enhance special character areas.

- Identify and define boundaries of special character areas of the town (eg: Historic District, Paradise Green, Barnum Ave, Lordship neighborhood, etc) through neighborhood based planning .
- Require the built environment in special character areas to consider including distinct historical and architectural features of the area in building design and create a cohesive identity for these areas.
- Include protection of significant view sheds in the site plan review process.
- Leverage iconic buildings, streetscapes, and open spaces as a means to identify and brand the community.
- Seek funding to establish facade and streetscape improvement programs to improve the character of commercial areas.
- Pursue opportunities to create community artwork such as murals, sculptures, and other elements for inclusion in the public realm.
- Construct gateway elements at locations identified in the Vision Plan to welcome travelers and brand the community.



Lordship Boulevard Employment District Concept, Source Town of Stratford

Objective 2. Attract more people to the commercial corridors and boost local economy.

1. Seek funding to establish facade and streetscape improvement programs to improve the character of commercial areas.
2. Implement entrance and wayfinding signage, and adequate landscaping and lighting on key commercial corridors such as, Barnum Ave, Lordship Boulevard, Stratford Avenue, etc.
3. Encourage a diverse range of retail uses in commercial corridors that encourage residents to relax, gather, and interact and implement street furniture, where feasible.
4. Discourage inactive uses on ground floors of primarily retail commercial corridors such as, Barnum Avenue and Stratford Avenue.
5. Encourage ground level retail uses to maximize windows and entrances that aid in window shopping and enhance the pedestrian experience in commercial corridors.
6. Connect commercial corridors to other vital destinations in town through the implementation of walking and biking initiatives, public transit, and implement/upgrade sidewalks where necessary.
7. Update parking regulations to avoid large underutilized parking lots and include standards for bike parking and electric vehicle (EV) charging stations.
8. Consider adopting a design overlay district to encourage good design of buildings in commercial corridors.
9. Implement the recommendations of Streetscape Plan for Stratford Avenue, Honeyspot Road, and Lordship Boulevard prepared in 2014 by the Town of Stratford.
10. Promote infill development of vacant store fronts and underutilized lots to provide continuity of building use and form; encourage temporary use of vacant store fronts to promote visual art initiatives in the town, where feasible.
11. Integrate green infrastructure in the design of commercial developments to reduce stormwater runoff and also enhance the look and feel of commercial corridors.
12. Strictly enforce blight regulations to avoid visual clutter.
13. Partner with local businesses to promote stewardship of commercial streetscapes through the implementation of business improvement districts; educate businesses on the economic impacts of a business improvement district.
14. Implement street art, murals, and decorative crosswalks in commercial corridors to transform them into vibrant streets.
15. Allow for adaptive reuse of existing buildings in commercial areas.
16. Revise zoning standards to encourage live/work artist housing in commercial areas.



Rendering of proposed improvements for Lordship Boulevard, view east at Surf Avenue

Objective 3. Remove barriers to accessing public spaces for relaxation and/or enjoyment.

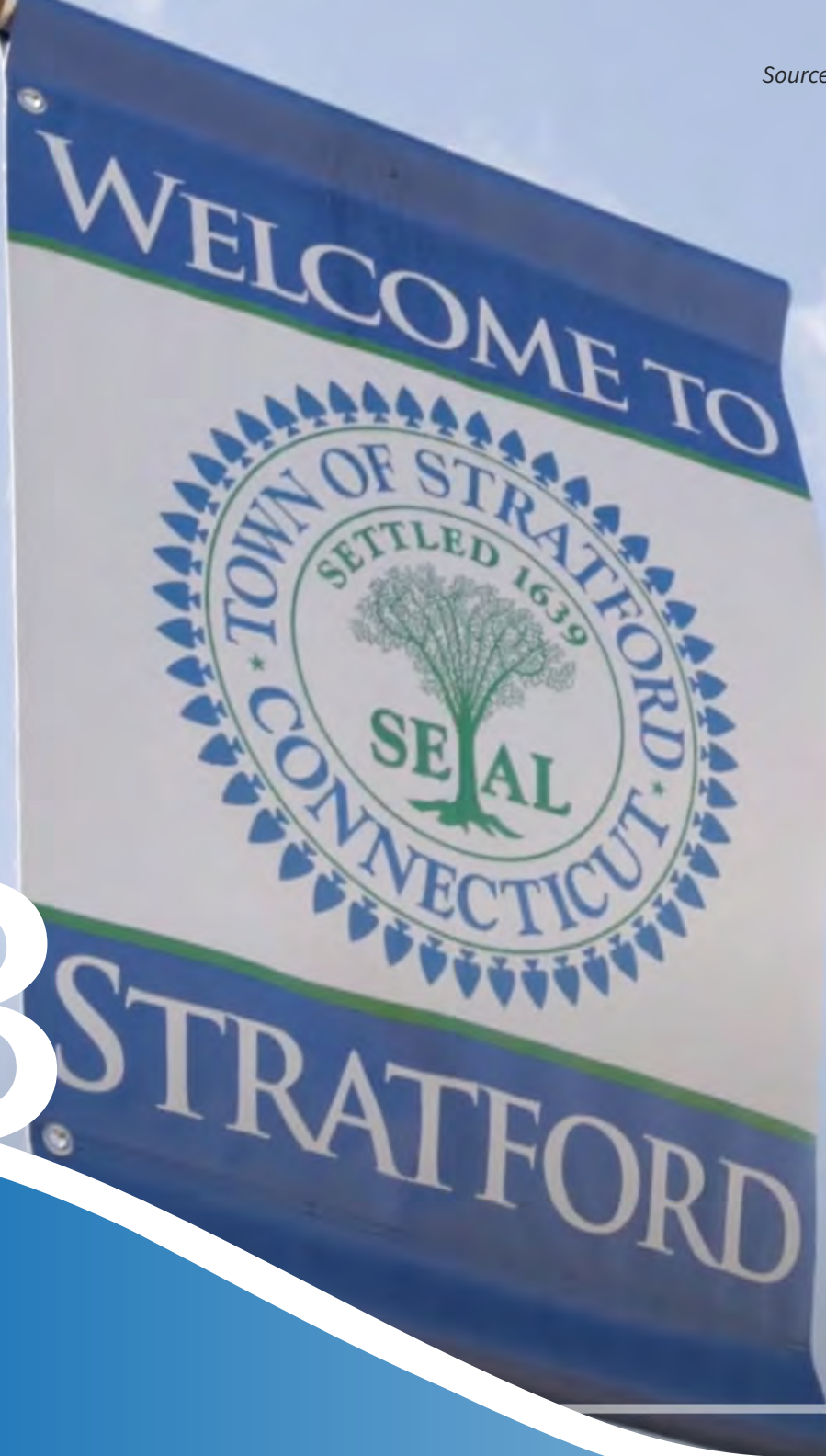
- Promote inclusive and accessible design of public spaces that are safe and welcoming to use by all, which include design features that encourage natural surveillance of public spaces (following crime prevention through environmental design policies) and also accommodate the needs of the disabled population.
- Link the cultural campus located in Town Center (Sterling House, Library, Baldwin Center, Perry House) with retail uses and other key destinations in town such as Ruby & Calvin Fletcher African American Museum, National Helicopter Museum, former Shakespeare property, former SAEP site, Roosevelt Forest, public parks, and the waterfront through the implementation of subsequent phases of greenways and complete streets.
 - Culture & Innovation Campus
 - West Broad Street Gateway
 - Academy Hill
 - American Shakespeare Festival Theater & Grounds
 - Bond's Dock
 - Broad Street Marina
 - Ferry Creek Naturalized Area Wetlands
 - Ferry Creek Commercial/Transit Oriented Development
 - Civic Campus & Festival Green
 - Extended Rail Platform
 - Pedestrian Bridge
 - Potential Rail Station Parking Structure
- Promote public access to the waterfront at the former SAEP site (currently being redeveloped) and ensure that these improvements consider heritage conservation of this site.
- Promote public access to the waterfront at Bond's Dock, thus connecting waterfront recreation with urban vitality.
- Mixed use commercial node at Bond's Dock, with public access to the Waterfront.
- Develop a comprehensive plan to evaluate the pedestrian network access throughout the town; continue to invest in sidewalk improvements and construction through the Town's Capital Improvement Program.
- Improve waterfront connector streets with landscaping according to the Vision Plan to improve connectivity to the water.



Mixed use commercial node at Bond's Dock, with public access to the Waterfront

Objective 4. Broaden the scope of placemaking opportunities and promote community stewardship.

1. Facilitate a partnership between cultural and community anchors related to the cultural campus in the Town Center to offer education and innovation programming to Stratford residents and visitors.
2. Facilitate a partnership with Connecticut Air and Space Center and Sikorsky Airport to establish a permanent home for a major museum center along Main Street at the Airport.
3. Develop a Culture & Innovation Campus Master Plan that incorporates public spaces and programming between Sterling House, Stratford Library, Perry House, and Baldwin Center, and links the former Shakespeare Theater site and former SAEP site to downtown.
4. Facilitate a partnership with local businesses in commercial corridors to establish business improvement districts where they invest as a group to maintain and improve the streetscape of the commercial corridor in which they are located, thus further boosting local economy.
5. Continue to partner with Arts Commission, Architectural Review Board, Beautification Committee, and Historic District Commission and ensure that their vision and goals align to create a cohesive and aesthetically pleasing built environment in Stratford.



13

Implementation Plan

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About the Implementation Summary

The implementation summary provided on the following pages organizes the goals and objectives presented in the previous sections of this Plan into a series of tables that may be used as a stand-alone reference. Within the summary tables on the following pages, the Plan's objectives and supporting action items are identified by which Plan theme they directly support. This assists in identifying objectives and actions that may be a higher priority than others based upon the alignment of those objectives and actions with the Plan as a whole. Actions are classified as short, medium, and long-term. This provides guidance regarding which actions should be pursued in the near term and the sense of urgency surrounding the pursuit of specific actions and objectives.

The implementation tables also identify the responsible entity for advancing the actions recommended by this Plan. Those entities vary from Town departments and divisions to boards and commissions and may include outside organizations. Local partners are also identified in this summary. Those entities are expected to coordinate and communicate their objectives and concerns with each other, to promote integrated actions and avoid any unintended consequences resulting from these actions. Success in achieving this Plan's goals will likely require additional objectives and actions to be implemented that are not yet known to the Town. As such, this implementation summary is intended to shape and guide progress towards this Plan's goals, but the measures necessary to achieve those goals are not limited to the recommendations provided here.

How to Use the Tables

The following table is excerpted from the Land Use and Zoning summary table for explanation purposes.

Partners are encouraged to coordinate and provide support to the lead agency's and staff.

Goal specific to the topic area. There is one overriding goal for each topic area of the plan.

Land Use and Zoning Goal: Promote balanced physical growth and development that fosters livable/inclusive communities, economic vitality, and healthy lifestyles while preserving the small-town charm and natural resources within the community.					
Theme		Objectives and Action Steps	Lead Agency/ Staff	Local Partners	Time Frame: •Short-term: 1-3 Years •Medium-term: 4-7 Years •Long-term: 7-10 Years •Continuous
Community Opportunity Partnerships Balance Resiliency					
Objective 1: Simplify the zoning code to increase its usefulness and understandability, and meet the needs of changing socio-economic conditions.					
	●	1. Update the Town of Stratford zoning regulations to reflect the Future Land Use Plan that will provide for increased development opportunities in appropriate areas, protect the unique attributes of neighborhoods and maintain the town's important waterfront and open spaces	P&Z Office	ZC, PC	Short-term
	●	2. Comprehensively review and evaluate current zoning regulations on definitions, uses permitted, setbacks, frontage, lot area, parking, and other such dimensional requirements and any redundant and confusing standards	P&Z Office	ZC, PC	Short-term
	●	3. Revise the current subdivision regulations to align with zoning updates, as needed	P&Z Office	ZC, PC	Short-term

Time Frame is identified as short, medium, and long-term. Ongoing actions are rated continuous.

These themes are a compilation of the themes identified for the supporting actions.

Actions that directly support or are aligned with one of the plans themes are identified here with a dot.

Actions directly comprise the multiple elements of each strategy that can be individually advanced.

The Lead Agency's/Staff are best positioned to collaborate and initiate the action, and manage progress towards the action.

Lead and Partner Entities

The offices, departments, divisions, boards, commissions, and agencies in the table at right are identified as lead or partner entities that will spearhead the recommendations of this Plan and assist with its implementation. Other Statewide/local partners that are routinely involved by the Town in implementing the actions identified in the Plan are: Metropolitan Council of Governments, Greater Bridgeport Transit Authority, Sikorsky Airport Commission, MetroNorth, Connecticut Audubon, Connecticut Department of Transportation, Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development, Connecticut Office of Climate Resilience, Connecticut Institute for Climate Resilience and Adaptation, State Historic Preservation Office, State Division of Hazard Mitigation Services, Federal Emergency Management Agency, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. The Town also partners with local businesses, institutional partners, neighboring municipalities, and non profits such as the Stratford Library, South End Community Center, Sterling House, etc. as needed.

Lead Agency/Staff	Abbreviation
Mayor's Office	Mayor's Office
Chief Administrative Office	CAO
Town Council	Town Council
Board of Education	BOE
Building Department	BD
Community & Senior Services Department	CSD
Community Development	CD
Conservation Department	CoD
Economic Development	ED
Office of Emergency Preparedness	EP
Engineering Department	ENG
Finance Department	FN
Fire Department	FD
Health Department	HD
Information Technology Department	IT
Parks Department	PARKD
Planning and Zoning Department	P&Z Office
Police Department	PD
Public Works Department	DPW
Recreation Department	RECD
Veteran's Coordinator	VC

Local Partners (Referenced in this Document)	Abbreviation
Planning Commission	PC
Zoning Commission	ZC
Architectural Review Board	ARB
Arts Commission	ARTS
Beautification Committee	BC
Board of Zoning Appeals	BZA
Boothe Park Commission	BPC
Building Needs Committee	BNC
Coastal Resiliency Implementation Committee	CRIC
Commission on Aging	COA
Community Development Block Grant Committee	CDBG
Connecticut Audubon	CTA
Conservation Commission	CC
Economic Development Commission	EDC
Emergency Planning Committee	EPC
Greenway Committee/Comple Streets Com.	GCCS
Historic District Commission	HDC
Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Committee	IWWC
Parks and Recreation Committee	PRC
Partnership for Youth and Families	PYF
Public Works Committee	PWC
Redevelopment Authority	RDA
Roosevelt Forest Commission	RFC
Shellfish Commission	SC
Stratford Housing Authority	SHA

Local Partners Continued...	Abbreviation
Stratford Housing Partnership	SHP
Sustainability Task Force (Unofficial)	SUST
Town Historian (Volunteer)	Town Historian
Traffic Authority	TA
Waterfront Harbor Mangement Commission	WHMC
Water Pollution Control Authority	WPCA

Land Use and Zoning Goal: Promote balanced physical growth and development that fosters livable/inclusive communities, economic vitality, and healthy lifestyles while preserving the small-town charm and natural resources within the community.

Theme					Objectives and Action Steps	Lead Agency/ Staff	Local Partners	Time Frame: •Short-term: 1-3 Years •Medium-term: 4-7 Years •Long-term: 7-10 Years •Continuous
Community	Opportunity	Partnerships	Balance	Resiliency				
●			●		Objective 1: Simplify the zoning code to increase its usefulness and understandability, and meet the needs of changing socio-economic conditions.			
●			●		1. Update the Town of Stratford zoning regulations to reflect the Future Land Use Plan that will provide for increased development opportunities in appropriate areas, protect the unique attributes of neighborhoods and maintain the town’s important waterfront and open spaces.	P&Z Office	ZC, PC	Short-term
			●		2. Comprehensively review and evaluate current zoning regulations regarding definitions, uses permitted, setbacks, frontage, lot area, parking, and other such dimensional requirements and to eliminate and any redundant or confusing standards.	P&Z Office	ZC, PC	Short-term
			●		3. Revise the current subdivision regulations to align with zoning updates, as needed.	P&Z Office	ZC, PC	Short-term
●	●		●	●	Objective 2: Encourage a mix of land uses that promote sustainable land use practices and healthy lifestyles.			
	●				1. Evaluate the zoning regulations and zoning map with focus on modernization to ensure equitable, innovative, and sustainable techniques that are used in accordance with the goals and strategies of this Plan.	P&Z Office	ZC, PC	Short-term
●					2. Incorporate standards for bike parking and electrical vehicle charging stations into zoning regulations.	P&Z Office	ZC & PC	Short-term
				●	3. Promote high density developments in areas adequately served by transit and community services, and in locations that have dry land access out of the development at the 100 year flood elevation.	P&Z Office	ZC, PC	Short-term
			●		4. Update the zoning regulations to facilitate mixed-use developments where appropriate.	P&Z Office	ZC, PC	Short-term
●					5. Update the Town’s existing regulation on accessory dwelling units to support aging in place, accommodate young residents, and attract startup families.	P&Z Office	ZC, PC, & SHP	Short-term
	●			●	6. Review and update the Town’s waterfront zoning regulations where appropriate to facilitate the implementation of the community’s Waterfront Vision Plan (2023).	P&Z Office	ZC, PC & WHMC	Short-term
	●			●	7. Zone mixed-use commercial nodes along the waterfront according to the Future Land Use Plan.	P&Z Office	ZC, PC & WHMC	Short-term
			●		8. Continue to accommodate the expansion of commercial and industrial uses in a manner consistent with the community vision for the town’s commercial and industrial corridors.	P&Z Office, ED	ZC, PC & EDC	Short-term

Land Use and Zoning Goal: Promote balanced physical growth and development that fosters livable/inclusive communities, economic vitality, and healthy lifestyles while preserving the small-town charm and natural resources within the community.

Theme					Objectives and Action Steps	Lead Agency/ Staff	Local Partners	Time Frame: •Short-term: 1-3 Years •Medium-term: 4-7 Years •Long-term: 7-10 Years •Continuous
Community	Opportunity	Partnerships	Balance	Resiliency				
●	●	●	●	●	Objective 2 Continued: Encourage a mix of land uses that promote sustainable land use practices and healthy lifestyles.			
			●		9. Expand the Town’s open space network and promote opportunities to interconnect these open spaces through the implementation of greenways and complete streets.	CoD, P&Z Office	GCCS, CC	Long-term
			●		10. Continue to mandate 10% open space requirement in the Town’s subdivision regulations.	P&Z Office	PC	Continuous
●					11. Provide new community facilities within or closer to Town Center, to the extent possible, so that they are accessible to residents from all parts of the town.	CSD, DPW	PYF, BNC	Long-term
			●		12. Preserve and protect environmentally sensitive areas and critical habitat by strictly regulating development in these areas.	P&Z Office, CoD	PC, IWWC, ZC	Continuous
	●			●	13. Update zoning code to promote opportunities for community gardening and farming to increase access to fresh produce and bolster the local food system.	P&Z Office, HD	PC, EDC	Short-term
		●			14. Consider a Health in All Planning approach to the Town’s review process. Continue to involve the Stratford Health Department in reviewing applications.	P&Z Office, HD	ZC, PC	Medium-term
●					Objective 3: Implement design standards to increase the aesthetic appeal of the town’s business districts and create cohesive pedestrian-oriented environments.			
	●				1. Develop design guidelines for Town’s primary commercial corridors i.e., Barnum Avenue, Lordship Boulevard, and Honeyspot Road; waterfront; and Town Center to promote redevelopment opportunities that support walkability and create a sense of place.	P&Z Office, ED	WHMC, DPW, EDC, HDC, ZC, ARB	Medium-term
	●				2. Update the Zoning Code to provide development incentives to property owners to remove non-conforming billboards.	P&Z Office, ED	ZC, EDC	Short-term

Land Use and Zoning Goal: Promote balanced physical growth and development that fosters livable/inclusive communities, economic vitality, and healthy lifestyles while preserving the small-town charm and natural resources within the community.

Theme					Objectives and Action Steps	Lead Agency/Staff	Local Partners	Time Frame: •Short-term: 1-3 Years •Medium-term: 4-7 Years •Long-term: 7-10 Years •Continuous
Community	Opportunity	Partnerships	Balance	Resiliency				
●	●	●	●	●	Objective 4: Streamline the development approval process to assure that developments which are consistent with the Town’s development regulations are approved in an efficient and prudent fashion.			
●		●	●	●	1. Review development proposals with respect to their consistency with the POCD vision, current zoning, and to meet the following additional objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preservation and enhancement of Stratford’s quality of life • Enhancement of community sustainability and reducing carbon footprint • Diversification of transportation system • Protection of natural resources, conservation areas, and environmentally sensitive areas • Enhancement of the visual appeal of the community • Physical growth with little impact to Town’s infrastructure • Design of healthy built environments and equitable neighborhoods 	P&Z Office, CAO, CoD	ZC, PC, IWWC, WHMC, ARB, HDC, CC	Continuous
	●	●			2. Evaluate current time taken for reviewing and permitting large scale land development applications and figure out ways to expedite these review and permitting processes.	P&Z Office, ED	EDC, ZC, PC ARB, HDC	Continuous
●			●	●	3. Continued to support the implementation of Stratford's Municipal Coastal Program. Update it as necessary for effective coastal site plan review process in accordance with the Connecticut Coastal Management Act.	P&Z Office	WHMC, PC, ZC, BZA	Continuous

Housing Goal: Continue to provide diverse and healthy housing options to meet the needs of current and future residents during all stages of life, while maintaining a sense of community and the unique attributes of existing neighborhoods.

Theme					Objectives and Action Steps	Lead Agency/ Staff	Local Partners	Time Frame: •Short-term: 1-3 Years •Medium-term: 4-7 Years •Long-term: 7-10 Years •Continuous
Community	Opportunity	Partnerships	Balance	Resiliency				
●	●			●	Objective 1: Support the Housing Authority in its efforts to expand housing availability for elderly residents.			
●	●				1. Increase the number of elderly / disabled units, support Housing Authority efforts to Increase the number of elderly / disabled units. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider modifying the Zoning Regulations to allow more density / height / coverage for Housing Authority redevelopment projects on the sites they currently occupy. 	SHA, P&Z Office	SHP, ZC, PC	Short-term
●	●				2. Increase the number of “Family” Units. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support Housing Authority efforts to Increase the number of family units. Consider modifying the Zoning Regulations to allow more density / height / coverage for Housing Authority redevelopment projects on the sites they currently occupy. 	P&Z Office	ZC, PC, SHP	Short-term
				●	3. Pursue federal funding to elevate or replace buildings in designated special flood hazard areas of the town.	SHA	Mayors Office	Long-Term
●	●			●	Objective 2: Develop and implement inclusionary zoning principles that promote affordable housing.			
●	●				1. Require affordable units in new residential development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider adopting a zoning regulation requiring that a percentage of any new residential development meet State affordability criteria. Consider allowing for a density bonus for developments which provide affordable units in excess of the basic inclusionary requirement. 	P&Z Office	ZC, PC, SHP	Medium-term
●	●				2. Allow/require payment of a fee in lieu of affordable units. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider modifying the Zoning Regulations to allow payment of a fee in lieu of providing affordable units that can be utilized to fund Town initiated affordable housing projects. Consider modifying the Zoning Regulations to require payment of a fee for any fractional remainder. 	P&Z Office	ZC, Town Council, PC	Medium-term
●	●				3. Establish a zoning permit fee. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider establishing an affordable housing fee as part of issuance of a Zoning Permit. 	P&Z Office	ZC, Town Council	Medium-term
●	●			●	4. Remove zoning barriers to promote the development of workforce housing opportunities in the town.	P&Z Office	ZC, SHA, PC	Short-term

Housing Goal: Continue to provide diverse and healthy housing options to meet the needs of current and future residents during all stages of life, while maintaining a sense of community and the unique attributes of existing neighborhoods.

Theme					Objectives and Action Steps	Lead Agency/ Staff	Local Partners	Time Frame: •Short-term: 1-3 Years •Medium-term: 4-7 Years •Long-term: 7-10 Years •Continuous
Community	Opportunity	Partnerships	Balance	Resiliency				
●	●		●		Objective 3: Enable more housing choices and options than what exist currently and to address current and future housing needs / desires.			
●	●				1. Legitimize existing two-family dwellings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modify the Zoning Regulations to legitimize existing two-family homes and remove roadblocks for people who want to maintain / improve these units. 	P&Z Office	ZC, PC, SHP,BZA	Short-term
●	●		●		2. Revisit accessory dwelling unit regulations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider allowing an addition to the dwelling as part of establishing the accessory apartment. Consider allowing occupancy by a caretaker or caregiver in a health-related situation. Consider eliminating the requirement to be “freely accessible” to the principal unit (but require an operable door on a common wall). Consider allowing a unit larger than 800 SF / 25% of floor area as a “special case” review . Consider eliminating the restriction on conducting a home-based business within either unit. Consider eliminating the limitation on occupancy by a family member and/or the affordability restriction. 	P&Z Office, BD	ZC, SHP, PC, BZA	Short-term
●	●		●		3. Review / revise multifamily regulations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake a comprehensive review / revision of the various multi-family provisions in the Zoning Regulations. Revisit and update specific provisions which may not reflect current market realities / lifestyles or accomplish what Stratford desires. Consider repealing Zoning Regulation Section 5.3.5 which contains limitations on multi-family units based on “apartment unit equivalents” and is based on a 1964 map of elementary school districts. 	P&Z Office	ZC, SHP, PC, BZA	Short-term
●	●		●		4. Guide multifamily locations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider discouraging multifamily housing in established single-family neighborhoods not near transit stations or bus lines (i.e., town-wide), or in coastal flood hazard areas. Revisit the locations where multifamily housing is permitted in order to facilitate appropriate redevelopment along Route 1 and in other commercial areas, reflect existing land use patterns, and enhance transit orientation. 	P&Z Office	ZC, SHP, PC	Continuous

Housing Goal: Continue to provide diverse and healthy housing options to meet the needs of current and future residents during all stages of life, while maintaining a sense of community and the unique attributes of existing neighborhoods.

Theme					Objectives and Action Steps	Lead Agency/Staff	Local Partners	Time Frame: •Short-term: 1-3 Years •Medium-term: 4-7 Years •Long-term: 7-10 Years •Continuous
Community	Opportunity	Partnerships	Balance	Resiliency				
	●		●		Objective 4: Promote housing design reflective of and sensitive to community design preferences.			
	●		●		1. Improve the Town's Commercial Design Guidelines which also include guidelines for all multifamily housing. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure that new developments fit into the overall character of Stratford, prepare written and / or illustrated design guidelines with regard to key design elements to guide developers, architects, engineers, staff, commissioners, and the community about design approaches to be encouraged (and discouraged) and maintain and/or enhance the character of Stratford (could use the TOD design guidelines in ZR Section 7.10.8 as a starting point for this effort). Conduct a visual preference exercise to understand acceptable parameters for height, scale, mass, articulation, and other design factors in different areas. 	P&Z Office, ED	ARB, ZC, PC,EDC, SHP	Medium-term
●	●	●		●	Objective 5: Support/facilitate “aging in place” for older residents.			
●		●		●	1. Provide supportive municipal services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain and/or expand services provided by the Town (Social / Recreational / Nutrition / Health / Education / Counseling / Screening / Transportation, etc.) which can help older residents age in place. Do more outreach with social workers, visiting nurses, and other services to address social isolation and enhance senior living experience. Investigate ways to provide home handyman services with volunteers (or a referral service). 	CSD, HD	Town Council, PYF, COA	Continuous
●					2. Continue to provide tax relief for older adults <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to offer tax relief for lower income older adults. Consider whether there may be ways of offering additional property tax relief: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At higher income levels. Capped at a fixed amount. Indexed to inflation. In exchange for volunteer services. In exchange for an affordability restriction. 	FN, CAO, VC	CSD, Town Council	Continuous

Housing Goal: Continue to provide diverse and healthy housing options to meet the needs of current and future residents during all stages of life, while maintaining a sense of community and the unique attributes of existing neighborhoods.

Theme					Objectives and Action Steps	Lead Agency/ Staff	Local Partners	Time Frame: •Short-term: 1-3 Years •Medium-term: 4-7 Years •Long-term: 7-10 Years •Continuous
Community	Opportunity	Partnerships	Balance	Resiliency				
●	●	●		●	Objective 5 Continued: Support/facilitate “aging in place” for older residents.			
●	●			●	3. Investigate other options <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate whether there may be ways of acquiring existing homes occupied by older adults (who may be “house rich” but “cash poor”) and leasing it back to them and to other elderly people to help address a need. Depending on the funding source (such as “Housing Choice” vouchers), it might be possible to focus exclusively on elderly persons rather than elderly/ disabled. Consider undertaking a demonstration project to see how this could work. 	SHA, CD	COA, SHP, CDBG, Town Council	Long-term
●	●	●			4. Conduct a housing conditions assessment in low income census tracts to demonstrate the need for housing improvements related to condition and accessibility and pursue federal funding to implement accessibility related improvements accordingly.	SHA, CD, P&Z Office	SHP, Town Council, CDBG	Medium-term
	●			●	Objective 6: Explore funding opportunities that support the implementation of Housing Partnership’s priorities.			
	●			●	1. Establish a Housing Trust Fund to fund Town initiated affordable housing projects and/or support public-private partnerships.	FN, CAO	Town Council	Long-term
	●			●	2. Revisit CDBG funding priorities / process.	CD	Town Council, CDBG	Short-term
●	●			●	Objective 7: Enhance the housing toolbox by guiding the locations of affordable housing development and reviewing the affordability period for deed restricted units.			
	●			●	1. Extend the affordability period for deed-restricted units <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Require that affordable units in a set-aside development be restricted for 40 years or the life of the development, whichever is longer. Consider requiring an “affordability easement” or other encumbrance (including a right-of-first refusal) so affordability restrictions do not get foreclosed out without notice to the Town. 	P&Z Office, SHA, CD	ZC, Town Council	Short-term
●	●			●	2. Adopt a “standard” Housing Affordability Plan.	P&Z Office	ZC, PC, SHP	Short-term
	●			●	3. Identify potential sites for affordable housing.	P&Z Office, SHA, CD	ZC, SHP, PC	Short-term

Housing Goal: Continue to provide diverse and healthy housing options to meet the needs of current and future residents during all stages of life, while maintaining a sense of community and the unique attributes of existing neighborhoods.

Theme					Objectives and Action Steps	Lead Agency/Staff	Local Partners	Time Frame: •Short-term: 1-3 Years •Medium-term: 4-7 Years •Long-term: 7-10 Years •Continuous
Community	Opportunity	Partnerships	Balance	Resiliency				
●	●		●		Objective 8: Obtain an exemption or moratoria on C.G.S.8-30G statute on affordable housing.			
●	●		●	●	1. Seek Relief From CGS Section 8-30g (Town) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create 766 or so additional “affordable housing” units meeting State criteria to become exempt from the Affordable Housing Appeals Procedure • Demonstrate that Stratford has obtained 420 or so housing unit equivalent points (since 1990) to get a four-year moratorium and then establish additional housing in the future to get additional moratoria • Seek to have “naturally occurring affordable housing” be considered in the tabulation of affordable housing units in a municipality 	SHA, CD, P&Z Office	Town Council	Short-term
		●			Objective 9: Continue to educate/collaborate with Stratford residents on the need for promoting housing diversity and choice.			
		●			1. Continue to educate the community about housing needs.	SHA, P&Z Office, CD	SHP, PC	Continuous
			●		2. Continue to collaborate with other agencies and organizations including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local (Town departments, Housing Authority, faith-based, etc.) • Regional (MetroCOG, non-profit organizations, shelters, Operation Hope, Center For Family Justice, Bethlehem House, etc.) • State (Department of Housing, Connecticut Housing Finance Authority (CHFA), Partnership For Strong Communities, etc.) • National (US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), US Department of Agriculture (USDA), etc.) 	P&Z Office, SHA, CD	PC, EDC	Continuous
●	●			●	Objective 10: Explore other innovative housing strategies for creating healthy, affordable, and livable communities.			
●	●			●	1. Pursue available grants through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program for healthy and accessible housing options. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use a portion of this grant money to train Health Department and other appropriate departments/ partner agencies on Healthy Homes Approach. 	CD	Mayor's Office, Town Council	Continuous

Conservation, Open Space, and Recreation Goals: Conserve, protect, and enhance open space and natural and recreational resources while managing responsible growth and development. Deliver responsive municipal services to ensure a safe, welcoming, and vibrant community now and in the future.

Theme					Objectives and Action Steps	Lead Agency/Staff	Local Partners	Time Frame: •Short-term: 1-3 Years •Medium-term: 4-7 Years •Long-term: 7-10 Years •Continuous
Community	Opportunity	Partnerships	Balance	Resiliency				
●	●			●	Objective 1: Promote ample opportunities for recreation and exercise and improve access to parks and open spaces, which also enhance public health.			
	●		●	●	1. Inventory parks and open spaces townwide and maintain a central database that is continuously updated with information on the total amount of parks, open spaces, trails, and recreation facilities, identify underserved areas, analyze threats due to natural hazards and development, mitigate impacts, and select metrics to track progress.	PARKD, RECD, CoD	PRC, CC	Short-term
	●		●		2. Aid the Conservation Commission in capitalizing on smaller areas of open space to conserve and restore our forested natural areas, which are becoming increasingly threatened with development and public pressure to maintain more park space.	CoD	CC, RFC,	Short-term
●	●				3. Enhance access to Roosevelt Forest through trail improvements to make trails safe and passable for all residents. ADA compliance is needed on the trails.	CoD	RFC	Short-term
●	●				4. Conduct survey of Roosevelt Forest, and other open space parcels, and enforce the property boundaries.	CoD	RFC	Short-term
	●		●		5. Continue to seek grants and funding for trail maintenance and expansion on select trails (as appropriate), as well as the acquisition of parcels that are adjacent to Roosevelt Forest in order to create a larger, contiguous forest network.	Mayor's Office, CoD	RFC, CC, Town Council	Continuous
	●				6. Promote greater access to trail mapping - both paper and interactive digital versions.	CoD, PARKD	RFC, PRC	Short-term
	●				7. Commission a Boothe Park Master Plan & Feasibility study.	PARKD	PRC	Medium-term
	●				8. Program and implement a variety of activities in parks so that they are widely used.	PAKRD, RECD	PRC	Continuous
	●			●	9. Implement necessary public safety and security improvements, and public infrastructure such as toilets, garbage cans, recycling bins etc., so that the town's parks and open spaces are welcoming to residents/visitors and utilized by all age groups successfully.	DPW, PARKD	PRC	Continuous
●	●				10. Take advantage of potential opportunities to advance the town's open space network as a way to promote residents' health and well-being.	CoD, PARKD	CC, PRC	Continuous
●	●			●	11. Identify and take advantage of potential opportunities to advance the town's open space network as a way to promote residents' health and well-being.	CoD, PARKD		Continuous
●	●				12. Redevelop Morgan Francis Property at 576/600 East Broadway with a recreational end use (after site remediation).	P&Z Office, CoD		Medium-term

Conservation, Open Space, and Recreation Goals: Conserve, protect, and enhance open space and natural and recreational resources while managing responsible growth and development. Deliver responsive municipal services to ensure a safe, welcoming, and vibrant community now and in the future.

Theme					Objectives and Action Steps	Lead Agency/ Staff	Local Partners	Time Frame: •Short-term: 1-3 Years •Medium-term: 4-7 Years •Long-term: 7-10 Years •Continuous
Community	Opportunity	Partnerships	Balance	Resiliency				
●	●	●	●	●	Objective 2: Expand open space network in the town.			
●			●		1. Pursue state and federal funding to promote the acquisition and management of open space properties and corridors to connect open spaces with each other, with schools, important town facilities, etc., and to promote protection of watersheds.	CoD, Mayor's Office	CC	Continuous
			●		2. Set an open space goal of 15% (roughly 300 additional acres) and continue to strive to reach this goal.	CoD	CC	Long-term
●		●	●		3. Continue to require a 10% open space set aside in new subdivisions and require homeowners to maintain the land or pay a fee to the town to increase the open space fund, as allowed by current subdivision regulations.	P&Z Office	PC	Continuous
●	●		●	●	4. Create a cohesive network of parks and open spaces in the town by coordinating parks and open space planning with the objectives of land use, transportation, historic preservation, disaster mitigation, and capital facilities planning.	PARKD	PC, ZC, PRC, Town Council	Long-term
	●		●		5. Develop zoning standards that require new developments to increase the amount of landscaping, open space, and tree canopy in all neighborhoods. New developments should preserve existing mature trees whenever possible.	P&Z Office	ZC, PC	Short-term
●	●		●		Objective 3: Increase access to the waterfront and waterways for leisure, recreation and education.			
	●		●		1. Continue to look for opportunities to provide waterfront access while also balancing the need for riparian and wetland buffers. This includes development agreements or public access easements when waterfront parcels are redeveloped such as the former SAEP site and others.	P&Z Office	ZC, WHMC	Continuous
	●				2. Implement the vision of the Town's Waterfront Vision Plan (2023) by facilitating public access to the waterfront at the public access locations identified in the vision map, which was developed by the Waterfront Harbor Management Commission (WHMC).	P&Z Office, CoD, ENG	WHMC, PC, CC, GCCS	Continuous
	●		●		3. Require development along the coastline and riverfront to provide public access and connect to the greenway network and require the creation of and management of riparian and wetland buffers.	CoD	WHMC, ,GCCS, ZC	Continuous
●	●				4. Prioritize funding the implementation of Phase III and Phase IV of greenway connecting WPCF to former SAEP site by the waterfront.	CoD	WHMC, ZC, GCCS	Short-term

Conservation, Open Space, and Recreation Goals: Conserve, protect, and enhance open space and natural and recreational resources while managing responsible growth and development. Deliver responsive municipal services to ensure a safe, welcoming, and vibrant community now and in the future.

Theme					Objectives and Action Steps	Lead Agency/Staff	Local Partners	Time Frame: •Short-term: 1-3 Years •Medium-term: 4-7 Years •Long-term: 7-10 Years •Continuous
Community	Opportunity	Partnerships	Balance	Resiliency				
	●	●			Objective 3 Continued: Increase access to the waterfront and waterways for leisure, recreation and education.			
		●			5. Actively promote public access to, as well as use and enjoyment of the town's extensive waterfront coastline through public outreach via Town's social media and print/digital media.	Mayor's Office	WHMC, PC, PRC	Continuous
	●				6. Promote awareness of Stratford's rich waterfront history through interpretive signage displayed at historic waterfront locations.	DPW	WHMC, PC, PWC	Short-term
●	●	●	●	●	Objective 4: Maintain the Town's parks, open spaces, and recreational fields at existing or improved levels.			
●					1. Increase funding for playscapes, athletic field, and athletic court replacement and refurbishment to ensure better conditions.	Town Council, PARKD	PRC	Continuous
●		●			2. Establish and promote formal volunteer groups and "friends of the parks" to help maintain parks and open space.	PARKD	PRC	Continuous
●	●				3. Allocate adequate staffing and capital resources to ensure high quality maintenance and improvements to parks and open spaces throughout the Town.	PARKD, RECD	Town Council, CC	Short-term
●	●			●	4. Facilitate community gardening and/or farming on vacant, under sized or oddly shaped/ undevelopable open space parcels in residential neighborhoods through adequate zoning measures to aid in blight reduction, social cohesion, and food sustainability. Some of these parcels should be maintained as forested natural areas.	P&Z Office HD	ZC, PC	Short-term
●	●		●		5. Develop administrative, fiscal, and programmatic resources to ensure ongoing, long-term maintenance and management of town-owned urban wilds and other natural areas.	Town Council, CC	Council, CoD, PRC, CTA	Continuous
●	●	●			6. Implement site improvements and programming for outdoor events at former Shakespeare Theater site.	PARKD, RECD	PRC, PWC	Continuous
●	●	●			Objective 5: Develop an interconnected network of trails/greenways linking Stratford destinations to one another and to neighboring communities.			
	●	●			1. Collaborate with neighboring communities to become a central hub of the regional greenway network; expand East Coast Greenway link to connect Housatonic River Greenway to coastal areas of Milford and New Haven via Ferry Boulevard.	P&Z Office ENG, CoD	GCCS	Medium-term
●	●				2. Continue to expand the Stratford Greenway and support Complete Streets initiatives to expand connectivity throughout Stratford; prioritize funding to implement the subsequent phases of these projects.	P&Z Office ENG	GCCS, Town Council	Continuous

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Theme					Objectives and Action Steps	Lead Agency/ Staff	Local Partners	Time Frame: •Short-term: 1-3 Years •Medium-term: 4-7 Years •Long-term: 7-10 Years •Continuous
Community	Opportunity	Partnerships	Balance	Resiliency				
	●				Objective 5 Continued: Develop an interconnected network of trails/greenways linking Stratford destinations to one another and to neighboring communities.			
	●				3. Pursue nominating the Housatonic Greenway as a National Scenic Coastal Byway to improve marketability and provide new funding options.	Mayor's Office	GCCS	Medium-term
	●				4. Pursue bicycle friendly community designation to market Stratford as a bicycle friendly community and demonstrate the town's commitment to invest in bicycle and pedestrian trails that enhance access to various land uses.	Mayor's Office	GCCS	Short-term
	●				5. Develop a Trails Master Plan to aid in the further development of trails/greenways; consider a feasibility study for converting abandoned rail route to trail, and connect this to existing trails/greenways.	P&Z Office, ED	GCCS	Medium-term
●	●	●		●	Objective 6: Highlight Stratford's parks and open space, including beaches, forests, trails and marshes for tourism purposes and promote ecological values, where feasible.			
●	●				1. Consider creating an interactive website with a map of Stratford's parks, open spaces, beaches, forests, trails, and marshes, with descriptions on each park/open space/trail and continuously update this site with information on various programs and activities planned at these locations .	PARKD, RECD, ED, CoD	PRC, CC, EDC	Short-term
		●			2. Increase public awareness of the Town's extensive parks, open space and recreational opportunities through print brochures and the development of digital applications that can be easily downloaded on mobile phones such as a matrix barcode (QR code) posted at various locations that leads to descriptions and additional information on these sites.	PARKD, RECD, Mayor's Office, ED	PRC, EDC	Continuous
		●			3. Continue to update information on CT Visit website— Connecticut's Office of Tourism website.	ED, PARKD	PRC	Continuous
		●			4. Continue to promote educational programming in natural open spaces, wilds, and marshes and promote their use for passive recreation, environmental education, and other uses in keeping with their natural character; encourage community stewardship in preserving these places for future generations.	PRD, CoD	PRC, CC, RFC	Continuous
●	●			●	5. Pursue funding to implement the arboretum project conceptualized by the Conservation Department on the vacant parcels along Access Road as a way to introduce more greenery at Great Meadows Park in the South End neighborhood (which is one of the underserved communities in the town with lower tree equity score); to promote ecological education; to promote tourism opportunities. Options for underground flood storage at this location should be further explored.	CoD, Mayor's Office	CC	Short-term

Conservation, Open Space, and Recreation Goals: Conserve, protect, and enhance open space and natural and recreational resources while managing responsible growth and development. Deliver responsive municipal services to ensure a safe, welcoming, and vibrant community now and in the future.

Theme					Objectives and Action Steps	Lead Agency/ Staff	Local Partners	Time Frame: •Short-term: 1-3 Years •Medium-term: 4-7 Years •Long-term: 7-10 Years •Continuous
Community	Opportunity	Partnerships	Balance	Resiliency				
●	●	●	●		Objective 7: Advocate for long-term protection and stewardship of non-town owned public and private-owned urban wilds and other natural areas .			
		●			1. Support the efforts of conservation organizations to purchase and protect land with priority placed on properties with wetlands and floodplain areas.	CoD	CC, IWWC	Continuous
		●			2. Support the efforts of conservation organizations to manage the land for invasive species, habitat diversity, critical habitats, and listed species.	CoD	CC	Continuous
		●			3. Continue to work collaboratively with residents, neighborhood groups and other stakeholders to address open space or environmental needs or concerns throughout town.	CoD	CC	Continuous
●	●		●		4. Explore Federal, State and Town funding opportunities to purchase open space, conservation or recreational lands with a priority on properties with ridgelines, wetlands, watercourses and floodplain areas or that provide connections between environmental resources.	CoD, Mayor's Office	CC, IWWC	Continuous
●	●		●		5. Create a Community Forest Management and Development Plan, explore grant funding opportunities through the CT Urban Council for Urban Forestry Management .	CoD	RFC, PC	Medium-term
		●			6. Grow environmental stewardship throughout the Town.	CoD	CC	Continuous
		●			7. Partner with Connecticut Audubon Society, Audubon Connecticut, CT DEEP, and others to protect nesting shorebirds and their habitats, particularly in Stratford's coastal areas.	CoD	CC, WHMC	Continuous
			●		8. Prioritize the redevelopment of brownfield properties and adaptive reuse of properties over development on greenfields and previously undeveloped parcels.	ENG, ED	RDA, EDC	Continuous
●	●			●	Objective 8: Expand tree canopy in the town in a responsible manner.			
●	●			●	1. Develop and implement an urban tree and forest management and development plan, which identifies municipal trees as a part of the capital infrastructure to replenish and plant new trees in the town, responsibly and prioritizing areas with the lowest tree equity index, and ensure high quality streetscapes and aesthetically pleasing built environment, and to realize the myriad of natural resources services that trees provide.	CoD	CC	Short-term
●	●			●	2. Design a planting and maintenance program to manage trees in parks and open spaces, and forested natural areas; and add to the tree inventory. Educate residents on the many health and environmental benefits of expanding tree cover.	CoD, PARKD	CC, RFC, PRC	Short-term

Economic Development Goals: Foster a vibrant economic climate that attracts both large and small businesses to create a thriving community that benefits businesses, their employees, and residents. Grow the commercial and industrial property tax bases through active recruitment of diverse businesses in order to lessen the tax burden on residents. Enhance arts, cultural, and entertainment opportunities that strengthen Stratford’s position as a local and regional tourist destination, thereby improving the quality of life in Stratford. Prioritize waterfront access and activity as an economic development strategy by utilizing the existing access points and creating new ones between the waterfront and Town’s commercial areas.

Theme					Objectives and Action Steps	Lead Agency/Staff	Local Partners	Time Frame: •Short-term: 1-3 Years •Medium-term: 4-7 Years •Long-term: 7-10 Years •Continuous
Community	Opportunity	Partnerships	Balance	Resiliency				
●	●	●		●	Objective 1: Retain existing businesses and grow new businesses.			
●	●				1. Ensure that the Office of Economic Development has the resources needed to engage in the strategies of this Plan and meet the ongoing needs of economic development in Stratford.	ED	EDC, RDA, Town Council	Continuous
●	●	●			2. Work with area legislators to increase funding assistance through state and federal grants.	ED, Mayor's Office	EDC, RDA, Town Council	Continuous
	●	●			3. Diversify housing choices in the town to expand the pool of local employee base for existing and potential employers.	ED, P&Z Office	SHP, ZC, EDC	Short-term
		●			4. Work with local employers to educate and promote safe bicycling in town such as share the road campaign, bike to work week, forest to shore weekend rides, etc.	ED	EDC, GCCS	Continuous
	●				5. Enhance connectivity between anchor institutions and major employment and commercials districts through targeted public infrastructure improvements.	ED, DPW	Town Council, EDC, PWC	Medium-term
●	●	●			6. Continue to host events and festivals that connect residents with local businesses and artists.	ED	EDC, ARTS	Continuous
	●				7. Encourage the development of artist housing guidelines that promote flexible live-work spaces in commercial and industrial districts for local artists and artisans.	ED, P&Z Office	ARTS, SHP, ZC, EDC	Short-term
●	●			●	8. Invest in transformative placemaking opportunities that create a business environment where residents stay longer and spend more money, and developers/ investors are more open to invest in new businesses due to the quality of the place.	ED, DPW, P&Z Office	EDC, P&Z, Town Council, ARTS, PWC	Medium-term
	●				9. Conduct a Town Center parking study and parking study of all commercial areas in the town to identify surface parking lots that are underutilized and encourage shared parking, where feasible; modernize Town’s commercial parking requirements.	ED, P&Z Office	EDC, ZC, PC	Short-term
	●	●			10. Revitalize and enhance Stratford Center and commercial corridors in town as unique destinations for residents and, shoppers, and commuters through successful implementation of the Town’s commercial design guidelines developed by the Architectural Review Board (ARB).	ED, P&Z Office	EDC, ARB	Continuous

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Theme					Objectives and Action Steps	Lead Agency/Staff	Local Partners	Time Frame: •Short-term: 1-3 Years •Medium-term: 4-7 Years •Long-term: 7-10 Years •Continuous
Community	Opportunity	Partnerships	Balance	Resiliency				
●	●			●	Objective 1 Continued: Retain existing businesses and grow new businesses.			
●	●				11. Explore the possibility of creating special service districts (SSDs)/ business improvement districts (BIDs) to promote stewardship of the Town's commercial corridors.	ED, P&Z Office	EDC	Long-term
	●				12. Consider investing in a commercial façade improvement grant program to facilitate the implementation of preferred design of commercial properties in the town..	ED, CD	Town Council, CDBG, EDC	Short-term
	●				13. Implement the recommendations of Stratford’s Affordable Housing Plan to promote housing diversity.	ED, P&Z Office	SHP	Short-term
	●				14. Explore the feasibility of redeveloping Sikorsky Airport as a commercial airport that enhance the economic competitiveness of Stratford.	ED, Mayor's Office, CAO	RDA, EDC	Long-term
●	●				15. Advocate for frequent high speed rail service from New York to Washington D.C. with a potential stop location in Stratford , which has the highest jobs per capita in Fairfield County.	ED, Mayor's Office, ENG	EDC	Continuous
	●			●	16. Prioritize redevelopment of older industrial areas into new, attractive developments for businesses and industries.	ED	RDA, EDC, ZC	Continuous
●	●				17. Incentivize development projects which revitalize underutilized and brownfield sites.	ED	Town Council, RDA	Continuous
●	●	●			Objective 2. Encourage the diversification and growth of the Town’s tax base.			
	●				1. Continue to maintain a current list of developable properties in town and publish this list on Town website with zoning, site, and ownership information.	ED, P&Z Office	EDC, RDA	Continuous
	●				2. Facilitate new development that bolsters the local tax base.	ED, P&Z Office	EDC, ZC, RDA	Continuous
●	●	●			3. Continue to invest in a marketing campaign highlighting Stratford's strengths and assets though print and digital materials.	ED, Mayor's Office	EDC	Continuous
		●			4. Partner with the Bridgeport Regional Business Council (BGBC) and the Stratford Chamber of Commerce (SCC) to actively promote Stratford and distribute campaign materials and information.	ED	EDC, RDA	Continuous

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Community	Opportunity	Partnerships	Balance	Resiliency				
●					Objective 3: Make development decisions that are predictable, fair, and cost effective.			
	●				1. Continue to streamline the Town’s business permitting and licensing processes.	ED, P&Z Office	WHMC, ZC, EDC, ARB, HDC, PC, Town Council	Continuous
	●				2. Conduct a build out analysis of Town Center to analyze the redevelopment potential of underutilized sites within the TOD zone and incentivize mixed use developments proposed on such sites.	ED, P&Z Office	RDA, EDC	Short-term
	●				3. Continue to update zoning regulations as necessary to include new commercial and industrial uses and to reflect current conditions and needs.	ED, P&Z Office	ZC, PC	Continuous
●	●	●	●	●	Objective 4: Identify areas in Stratford that are suited for redevelopment and adaptive reuse for industrial, commercial, retail, and office businesses.			
	●		●		1. Continue to encourage infill development on vacant and underutilized lots.	ED, P&Z Office	RDA, EDC	Continuous
●	●				2. Include wayfinding signage , appropriate streetscapes and landscaping, and enhancement of gateways to all neighborhoods of the town.	ED, DPW	Town Council, EDC, PWC	Continuous
●	●				3. Encourage the creation of coworking spaces in commercial districts.	ED, P&Z Office	EDC, ZC, PC	Short-term
	●		●		4. Continue to encourage mixed-use and higher density development in proximity to existing and planned transit stations and existing commercial districts.	ED, P&Z Office	EDC, ZC	Continuous
●	●	●		●	5. Continue to work with the preferred developer of former Stratford Army Engine Plant site site to expedite the redevelopment of this property and to promote public access to the waterfront at this site.	Mayor's Office, ED, P&Z Office, ENG	RDA, WHMC, EDC, ZC, PC	Short-term
●	●			●	6. Coordinate economic development initiatives with the recommendations contained in the Waterfront Section of this plan.	ED	WHMC, EDC, ZC	Continuous
●	●				7. Encourage the expansion of high-speed broadband coverage and gigabit internet access along the Lordship Boulevard business corridor in order to attract high tech, precision & supply chain manufacturing that bring townwide broadband and wireless facilities/ infrastructure.	ED, CAO	EDC, PWC	Medium-term

Economic Development Goals: Foster a vibrant economic climate that attracts both large and small businesses to create a thriving community that benefits businesses, their employees, and residents. Grow the commercial and industrial property tax bases through active recruitment of diverse businesses in order to lessen the tax burden on residents. Enhance arts, cultural, and entertainment opportunities that strengthen Stratford’s position as a local and regional tourist destination, thereby improving the quality of life in Stratford. Prioritize waterfront access and activity as an economic development strategy by utilizing the existing access points and creating new ones between the waterfront and Town’s commercial areas.

Theme					Objectives and Action Steps	Lead Agency/ Staff	Local Partners	Time Frame: •Short-term: 1-3 Years •Medium-term: 4-7 Years •Long-term: 7-10 Years •Continuous
Community	Opportunity	Partnerships	Balance	Resiliency				
●	●				Objective 5: Grow the town's tourism industry.			
	●				1. Expand the marketing plan aimed at attracting visitors to the town’s landscapes, historic properties, museums, waterfront, and other land marks, including Housatonic River Greenway, Long Beach/ Great Meadows Marsh, Roosevelt Forest, and Short Beach Complex.	ED	EDC, HDC, WHMC, CC, RFC	Continuous
	●				2. Consider creating an interactive town based website that advertises Stratford’s businesses and historic sites, provides a brief history of these sites, and is regularly updated.	ED, IT	EDC, HDC	Short-term
	●				3. Strengthen the connections of the pedestrian and bicycle facilities routes to commercial districts and historic sites.	ED, P&Z Office	EDC, GCCS, RDA	Continuous
●	●				4. Prioritize the redevelopment of former Shakespeare Theater site into a local and regional arts and entertainment destination.	ED, Mayor's Office	RDA, ZC, HDC, ARTS, EDC, ARB	Short-term
	●				5. Connect visitors to Stratford’s history, cultural, and natural resources through audio tours, brochures, historic plaques, and other marketing materials , utilizing distribution outlets such as CT Welcome Centers, CTVisit, etc. Continue to publicize Stratford’s Hidden Gems website and museum month.	ED	HDC, EDC	Continuous
	●				6. Continue to grow and strengthen the work of the Stratford Museums Committee through ongoing sharing of resources, best practices, and joint initiatives and partnerships.	ED	EDC	Continuous
		●			Objective 6: Strengthen existing partnerships and form new partnerships aimed at workforce development.			
		●			1. Continue to partner with Stratford Chamber of Commerce (SCC) to identify skills gaps, encourage workforce development training, employee pipelines, and the potential for innovation or entrepreneurial activity	ED	BOE, EDC	Continuous
		●			2. Continue to support the Stratford Chamber of Commerce in conducting annual and semi-annual Stratford (or regional) job fairs and match new businesses with existing skill sets/education levels of Stratford residents.	ED	EDC	Continuous
		●			3. Continue to support businesses in promoting career pathways in whole sale and retail trades, and manufacturing.	ED	EDC	Continuous

Economic Development Goals: Foster a vibrant economic climate that attracts both large and small businesses to create a thriving community that benefits businesses, their employees, and residents. Grow the commercial and industrial property tax bases through active recruitment of diverse businesses in order to lessen the tax burden on residents. Enhance arts, cultural, and entertainment opportunities that strengthen Stratford’s position as a local and regional tourist destination, thereby improving the quality of life in Stratford. Prioritize waterfront access and activity as an economic development strategy by utilizing the existing access points and creating new ones between the waterfront and Town’s commercial areas.

Theme					Objectives and Action Steps	Lead Agency/Staff	Local Partners	Time Frame: •Short-term: 1-3 Years •Medium-term: 4-7 Years •Long-term: 7-10 Years •Continuous
Community	Opportunity	Partnerships	Balance	Resiliency				
●	●		●	●	Objective 7: Encourage targeted waterfront commercial development that is resilient to natural hazards and sensitive to conservation of critical environmental areas.			
			●	●	1. Continue to implement the vision of the Waterfront Plan (updated in 2023) to protect existing water dependent uses and to direct the location of new water dependent uses in strategic locations.	ED, P&Z Office, ENG	WHMC, EDC, ZC	Continuous
			●		2. Ensure that waterfront commercial developments do not adversely impact wetlands, and other natural resource areas.	ED, CoD	CC, WHMC, EDC, ZC	Continuous
	●			●	3. Incorporate design standards for waterfront commercial sites that are resilient to coastal flooding and sea level rise, and restrict the use of contaminated materials that may discharge pollutants into the water.	ED, P&Z Office	EDC WHMC, ZC, ARB	Short-term
●	●				4. Remove any barriers to access the waterfront from the town’s commercial areas through necessary zoning amendments and infrastructure investments in missing sidewalks and bike lanes.	ED, P&Z Office	EDC, PWC	Short-term
	●		●		5. Continue to support commercial developments by the waterfront that minimize potential adverse impacts to nearby uses.	ED	WHMC, ZC	Continuous
●	●				6. Continue to work with the preferred developer of former SAEP site, and state and federal agencies to maintain adequate public access to the waterfront at this site.	ED, P&Z Office, ENG	RDA, WHMC, ZC, EDC	Short-term

Cultural and Historical Resources Goal: Preserve, promote, and protect cultural and historic resources for current and future generations as well as encouraging the stewardship of historical landmarks and properties.

Theme					Objectives and Action Steps	Lead Agency/ Staff	Local Partners	Time Frame: •Short-term: 1-3 Years •Medium-term: 4-7 Years •Long-term: 7-10 Years •Continuous
Community	Opportunity	Partnerships	Balance	Resiliency				
●	●	●			Objective 1: Promote the preservation of Stratford’s historically and architecturally significant resources.			
	●				1. Develop and adopt design guidelines to protect the distinct character of the Town’s character areas/ neighborhoods (as defined in this POCD).	P&Z Office	HDC, Town Historian	Short-term
	●				2. Designate districts under Connecticut’s “Village District” legislation to protect historic neighborhoods through zoning regulations- this would help the Town address revitalization of Main Street as expressed in the 1993 and 2014 POCD.	P&Z Office, ED	HDC, ZC, EDC, Town Historian	Short-term
	●				3. Continue to update and maintain a list of town’s historic properties, including national and state register properties and historic resources inventory (survey of the state), which can be easily accessed and updated on Stratford’s Town website.	P&Z Office	HDC, Town Historian	Continuous
	●				4. Ensure publicly owned properties (sites, artifacts, structures and buildings) of historical and architectural significance are protected and preserved.	DPW	HDC, ARB, Town Historian	Continuous
	●				5. Encourage adaptive re-use of existing historic sites, buildings, and structures.	P&Z Office, ED	HDC, RDA	Continuous
	●				6. Examine best practices and innovative zoning ordinances that encourage adaptive re-use of former residential and industrial properties for new commercial, business or multiple uses, especially in transitional areas.	P&Z Office, ED	ZC, RDA, EDC	Short-term
	●				7. Consider the expansion of the Academy Hill Historic District to include State survey properties that are in close proximity to this District.	P&Z Office	HDC, ZC, Town Historian	Medium-term
●	●				8. Pursue funding for a sensitivity analysis program for archaeological preservation from the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO).	Mayor's Office	HDC, SHPO, Town Historian	Medium-term
		●			9. Support the Historic District Commission in performing its duties to protect locally designated historic districts and properties.	Town Council	HDC, Town Historian	Continuous
					10. Review historic properties recommendations for floodplains and work with SHPO during review process.	P&Z Office	HDC, Town Historian	Short-term
	●				11. Incorporate design guidelines for rehabilitating historic properties into the Commercial Design Guidelines developed by Architectural Review Board (ARB).	P&Z Office	HDC, ARB, Town Historian	Short-term
●					12. Develop Zoning Regulations to create incentives for private property owners to preserve historic buildings	P&Z Office	ZC, HDC	Short-term

Cultural and Historical Resources Goal: Preserve, promote, and protect cultural and historic resources for current and future generations as well as encouraging the stewardship of historical landmarks and properties.

Theme					Objectives and Action Steps	Lead Agency/Staff	Local Partners	Time Frame: •Short-term: 1-3 Years •Medium-term: 4-7 Years •Long-term: 7-10 Years •Continuous
Community	Opportunity	Partnerships	Balance	Resiliency				
●			●		Objective 1 Continued: Promote the preservation of Stratford’s historically and architecturally significant resources.			
●			●		13. Commission a master plan for Boothe Memorial Park- a key historic destination of the Town.	PARKD	BPC, Town Historian	Medium-term
●	●				Objective 2: Support and promote arts, entertainment, and cultural organizations			
●	●				1. Become a Certified Local Government to access grant funding and technical assistance for historic preservation projects – this will require an active architectural review board.	Mayor's Office	HDC, ARB, PRC Town Historian	Medium-term
●	●				Objective 3: Promote historic and cultural resources as tourism destinations.			
●					1. Consider establishing a cultural arts center at the Shakespeare property and create stronger linkages between the Park, waterfront, Boothe Memorial Park and other historic destinations of the Town.	ED	ARTS, CC, PRC, EDC, Town Historian	Short-term
●					2. Link the Town’s historic and cultural resources through the trail and greenway system.	P&Z Office, ENG	HDC, GCCS	Long-term
●					3. Develop a system of coordinated interpretive signage, possibly along the greenway and complete streets routes, to identify and explain historic and cultural resources in Stratford to the users of these routes.	DPW, P&Z Office	GCCS, PWC, Town Historian	Long-term
●					4. Link the Town’s historic and cultural resources to those of neighboring Towns for the creation of regional level interpretation of history.	DPW	HDC, PWC, Town Historian	Long-term
●					5. Link museums of the industrial era – Air and Space Center, Helicopter Museum, Merritt Parkway Museum -- with other heritage interpretation sites.	DPW, ED	HDC, PWC, Town Historian	Long-term
●					6. Investigate potential designation of State scenic byways in Town to bring visitors to enjoy the natural and historic resources of the Town.	Mayor's Office	HDC, Town Historian	Long-term
		●			Objective 4: Educate residents and visitors about Stratford’s importance as a historic community.			
		●			1. Promote public awareness and appreciation of local historic resources through user-friendly brochures on how to protect, preserve, and enhance historic properties in the town.	Mayor's Office, ED	HDC, EDC, Town Historian	Continuous
		●			2. Consider distributing plaques to the owners of historic properties as a way to identify historic properties in the town and to promote community pride and stewardship of private historic resources.	Mayor's Office	HDC, Town Historian	Short-term
		●			3. Promote stewardship of public historic resources by establishing “Friends of historic places” groups and through community guided/audio tours of historic places in the town.	ED	HDC, EDC, Town Historian	Short-term

Mobility Goals: Improve and expand transportation options to support mobility and access for people of all ages and abilities. Promote sustainable, reliable, multimodal transportation network within the Town and to regional destinations.

Theme					Objectives and Action Steps	Lead Agency/ Staff	Local Partners	Time Frame: •Short-term: 1-3 Years •Medium-term: 4-7 Years •Long-term: 7-10 Years •Continuous
Community	Opportunity	Partnerships	Balance	Resiliency				
●	●	●	●	●	Objective 1: Encourage transportation infrastructure improvements that improve the accessibility and safety for all users and enhance transportation sustainability.			
	●				1. Improve streetscapes designated in the Vision Plan to transform them into multi-modal greenway linkages, incorporating bicycle lanes, improved pedestrian accommodations and enhanced landscaping.	ENG, P&Z Office, ED	EDC, GCCS, TA, PWC, RDA	Continuous
	●	●			2. Increase designated bike lanes in the town and coordinate with DOT to require low-cost bike lane markings during road improvements on major DOT owned roadways.	ENG, P&Z Office, CoD, DPW	EDC, GCCS, TA, PWC, RDA	Continuous
	●			●	3. Improve waterfront connector streets with landscaping according to the Vision Plan to improve connectivity to the water.	ENG, P&Z Office, CoD, DPW	GCCS, WHMC, TA, PWC, CC	Continuous
	●				4. Develop a comprehensive plan to evaluate the pedestrian access network throughout the Town and complete segments of missing sidewalks.	ENG, P&Z Office	GCCS, PWC, TA	Short-term
●				●	5. Ensure that sidewalks and pedestrian crossings are ADA accessible and remove any barriers to accessibility through ongoing maintenance.	ENG	GCCS, PWC, TA	Continuous
●	●		●	●	6. Maintain a careful balance between the need for the construction of new sidewalks and preservation of existing street trees by not requiring new sidewalks in areas where they may seem excessive (such as residential streets where there are no existing sidewalks to connect to).	ENG	GCCS, PWC, TA	Continuous
●	●				7. Provide improvements to pedestrian crossings as needed including crosswalk markings, signage, signal enhancements, and lighting enhancements	ENG	GCCS, PWC, TA	Continuous
	●				8. Continue with implementation of the Complete Streets Plan and greenways and pathways to include new routes in the town that provide direct connections to various destinations.	ENG, P&Z Office, ED	GCCS, PWC, TA, EDC	Continuous
	●				9. Continue to expand and promote walking routes for seniors and students to schools in the town.	ENG	GCCS, PWC	Continuous
	●				10. Invest in low-cost pedestrian and bike infrastructure through continuous and dedicated funding stream.	DPW	Town Council, PWC	Continuous
	●			●	11. Improve overall transportation system efficiency through improvements to signal coordination and optimization, monitoring of real time traffic data, installation of pedestrian and bicycle signals and bike boxes, bus shelter upgrades, crosswalk markings, signage and lighting.	ENG	GCCS, PWC, PD	Continuous
				●	12. Determine vulnerable transportation routes and transportation options that may adversely impact the Town's natural resources and human mobility needs under future climate change projections.	ENG, EP	TA, PWC, EPC, FD, PD	Short-term

Mobility Goals: Improve and expand transportation options to support mobility and access for people of all ages and abilities. Promote sustainable, reliable, multimodal transportation network within the Town and to regional destinations.

Theme					Objectives and Action Steps	Lead Agency/Staff	Local Partners	Time Frame: •Short-term: 1-3 Years •Medium-term: 4-7 Years •Long-term: 7-10 Years •Continuous
Community	Opportunity	Partnerships	Balance	Resiliency				
	●	●	●	●	Objective 1 Continued: Encourage transportation infrastructure improvements that improve the accessibility and safety for all users and enhance transportation sustainability.			
		●		●	13. Work with State and airport partners to implement flood mitigation and access management strategies for the long-term sustainability of Sikorsky Airport.	ENG, ED	TA, PWC, EPC	Short-term
		●		●	14. Continue to foster strong partnerships with CT DOT, DECD, Sikorsky Airport Authority and the Connecticut Airport Authority, the City of Bridgeport, Metro North, MetroCOG, and other local and regional partners to implement a well-balanced and sustainable multimodal transportation system in Stratford.	CAO, Mayor's Office	TA	Continuous
	●	●		●	15. Facilitate economic development at Sikorsky Airport while ensuring climate resiliency.	ED, ENG	TA, EDC, RDA	Long-term
		●	●		16. Update parking regulations in the zoning code to promote the right balance of automobile and bike parking based on development type and to include standards for pedestrian-oriented developments and other sustainable transportation modes such as electric vehicles.	ENG, P&Z Office	ZC, PC, RDA, GCCS, TA	Medium-term
		●			17. Support efforts by Greater Bridgeport Transit (GBT) and other transportation providers to increase age-friendly transportation options and transit amenities like bus shelters, benches, lighting, etc., that facilitate access and comfort for all users and abilities.	CAO	TA	Continuous
●	●	●			Objective 2: Support the expansion and improvement of transit service across the Town and region.			
	●				1. Prepare a feasibility study to identify and evaluate potential routes for micro transit service from the train station to various neighborhoods in the town.	ENG, P&Z Office	TA	Short-term
●	●				2. Facilitate the implementation of coordinated traffic signals throughout major corridors that efficiently moves vehicular traffic.	ENG	PWC, TA, PD	Continuous
	●	●			3. Work with GBT to implement micro transit service in Stratford to boost north south connectivity in the town.	CAO	TA	Short-term
	●	●			4. Work with GBT to identify improvements to increase accessibility and service on intra and inter Town transit routes, and to upgrade bus shelters with real time travel information on bus arrivals and departures.	CAO, DPW	TA, PWC	Medium-term
		●			5. Offer necessary support to GBT to maintain and expand transit and paratransit services and access, particularly to seniors and disabled population in the town.	Mayor's Office, CAO	TA, COA	Continuous

Mobility Goals: Improve and expand transportation options to support mobility and access for people of all ages and abilities. Promote sustainable, reliable, multimodal transportation network within the Town and to regional destinations.

Theme					Objectives and Action Steps	Lead Agency/ Staff	Local Partners	Time Frame: •Short-term: 1-3 Years •Medium-term: 4-7 Years •Long-term: 7-10 Years •Continuous
Community	Opportunity	Partnerships	Balance	Resiliency				
	●	●			Objective 2 Continued: Support the expansion and improvement of transit service across the Town and region.			
		●			6. Continue to support the provision of on demand transportation services to Stratford's aging population.	CSD	COA	Continuous
	●				7. Investigate potential options for expanding ferry service to Long Island Sound currently located in Bridgeport to include Stratford.	Mayor's Office	WHMC, TA	Medium-term
	●	●			8. Work with State DOT to upgrade and extend the existing platform at the train station and redevelop the train station site as a potential TOD site.	ENG, CAO, Mayor's Office, State Delegation	TA	Short-term
●	●	●			Objective 3: Strive to achieve a balance between fossil fuels and other sustainable forms of energy for transportation.			
●	●				1. Consider traffic calming initiatives in commercial corridors, near local schools, and at frequent crash locations in the town.	ENG	PWC, TA, PD	Continuous
●	●				2. Continue to pursue funding opportunities to enhance access management through the implementation of roundabouts and bicycle/pedestrian infrastructure and minimizing curb cuts, where needed.	ENG, Mayor's Office	Town Council, PWC	Continuous
●	●				3. Continue to invest in streetscape and placemaking projects in the Town Center and other prime commercial areas in the town to increase bicycle and foot traffic to various commercial and retail uses in these areas.	ENG, P&Z Office ED	Town Council, EDC, GCCS	Continuous
●	●				4. Continue to proactively manage public parking through a Town Center parking analysis to support commercial districts and protect surrounding neighborhoods.	ENG, CAO	TA	Continuous
●	●				5. Review and update current parking standards to increase the development potential of underutilized sites.	ENG, P&Z Office ED	ZC, PC	Continuous
		●			6. Work with major employers in the town to avoid the use of single occupancy vehicles through carpooling, ride sharing, biking/walking to work, and using transit service.	ED, CAO	TA	Continuous
●	●				Objective 4: Encourage development within the TOD zone to promote walkability and mixed-use development in the Town Center.			
●	●			●	1. Continue to promote transit-oriented projects in the TOD overlay zone to minimize reliance on automobiles.	P&Z Office, ED	ZC, EDC	Continuous
●	●				2. Re-analyze mid-term and long-term strategies outlined in the TOD Pilot Program (prepared in 2015) to understand their relevance in current market conditions and consider expanding TOD boundary to include new areas as suggested in the Pilot Program.	P&Z Office, ED	ZC, PC, EDC	Short-term

Community Facilities, Infrastructure and Utilities Goal: Provide high quality community facilities, services, and infrastructure that are both fiscally and environmentally sustainable while also meeting the evolving needs of the community.

Theme					Objectives and Action Steps	Lead Agency/Staff	Local Partners	Time Frame: •Short-term: 1-3 Years •Medium-term: 4-7 Years •Long-term: 7-10 Years •Continuous
Community	Opportunity	Partnerships	Balance	Resiliency				
●	●	●		●	Objective 1: Ensure that Stratford continues to adequately serve its residents and businesses with public infrastructure and utilities.			
●					1. Ensure methodical review and upgrade of the town's aging infrastructure..	DPW	PWC	Continuous
●				●	2. Continue efforts toward upgrading the Town's infrastructure with regard to potential impacts of climate change.	DPW	PWC	Continuous
	●				3. Promote the shared use of public spaces and facilities.	DPW, ED	PWC	Continuous
	●				4. Incorporate high quality design standards including environmentally friendly green design standards, into newly developed buildings and spaces.	P&Z Office, BD	ARB, ZC	Short-term
		●			5. Facilitate a partnership between cultural and community anchors related to Culture & Innovation campus to offer education and innovation programming to Stratford residents and visitors.	ED	EDC, ARTS, HDC	Short-term
	●				6. Conduct a space utilization study of the community anchors located in Stratford Center to understand current and emerging needs with regards to meeting space, events, and parking.	DPW, CAO	BNC	Short-term
●					7. Develop a maintenance schedule to assure that all Town buildings and properties undergo regular repairs and maintenance to minimize the dramatically high costs brought on by years of postponed repairs.	DPW	PWC	Short-term
		●			8. Collaborate with neighboring and regional municipalities and organizations to consolidate duplicate services where feasible.	DPW, Mayor's Office	PWC	Continuous
	●	●		●	9. Facilitate public composting of yard waste, food scraps, etc. through site selection and necessary investments to implement a townwide public composting program.	DPW	PWC	Continuous
●				●	Objective 2: Prioritize improvements to the Town's stormwater infrastructure that reduce flooding and improve water quality in the Town's surface waters.			
●					1. Require that new development must manage all stormwater on site, encourage low impact development.	ENG	ZC	Continuous
●					2. Work to reduce pollutants in stormwater flow to the Long Island Sound and the Housatonic River.	ENG, P&Z Office	ZC, CC, WPCA	Continuous
●				●	3. Perform engineering studies to determine the best way to protect infrastructure subject to extreme flooding and allocate funding to implement the recommendations.	ENG	PC, PWC	Continuous
●					4. Perform an update to the 2001 Sewage Facility Plan to identify sewer capacity issues, including identification of problem areas that would impact future development. Identify improvement plans to increase capacity that may be needed to fully implement the POCD, including plans to reduce inflow and infiltration into the sewer system.	ENG	WPCA, PWC	Medium-term

Community Facilities, Infrastructure and Utilities Goal: Provide high quality community facilities, services, and infrastructure that are both fiscally and environmentally sustainable while also meeting the evolving needs of the community.

Theme					Objectives and Action Steps	Lead Agency/ Staff	Local Partners	Time Frame: •Short-term: 1-3 Years •Medium-term: 4-7 Years •Long-term: 7-10 Years •Continuous
Community	Opportunity	Partnerships	Balance	Resiliency				
●				●	Objective 2 Continued: Prioritize improvements to the Town’s stormwater infrastructure that reduce flooding and improve water quality in the Town’s surface waters.			
●					5. Implement the Best Management Practices of the 2022 Stratford Stormwater Management Plan.	ENG	PC, ZC	Continuous
●				●	6. Address inflow and infiltration issues that arise during storm events across the wastewater collection system ; mandate drainage calculations for private developments to include impacts due to 25-, 50- and 100-year storm events.	ENG	WPCA, ZC, PC	Short-term
●				●	7. Develop and adopt a stormwater ordinance that includes green infrastructure and promotes highest water quality in public and private developments.	ENG, P&Z Office, CoD	Town Council	Short-term
●				●	8. Facilitate undergrounding of utilities to avoid downing of utility lines and threats to life and properties during major storm events.	ENG	PC, ZC, PWC	Continuous
●				●	9. Increase management of town’s urban canopy to reduce urban heat island effect due to large tracts of asphalt parking lots and to combat climate change.	ENG	PC, ZC, PWC	Continuous
●				●	10. Consider updating zoning regulations to require or encourage the retrofitting of existing stormwater systems during redevelopment to minimize flooding and potential adverse impacts to coastal water quality.	ENG, P&Z Office, CoD	PC, ZC WHMC	Continuous
		●			Objective 3: Educate residents about the importance of protecting the quality of water resources by preventing substances such as fertilizers, other contaminants, and debris from entering the storm water and sanitary sewer systems.			
		●			1. Continue to provide educational documents on the importance of protecting water quality by implementing an year round public education program.	ENG, Mayor's Office	PWC	Continuous
		●			2. Consider the creation of an educational program for stormwater management in schools.	ENG, BOE	PWC	Short-term
		●			3. Distribute educational materials to developers discussing MS4 requirements related to construction.	ENG, P&Z Office, CoD	PWC, CC, ZC	Continuous
		●			4. Educate residents about using green infrastructure such as rain gardens, permeable pavements, rain barrels, green roofs, and other rainwater harvesting systems on private properties.	ENG, CoD, CAO	Town Council, PWC	Continuous
		●			5. Educate residents regarding efficient power usage, waste reduction, efficient use of fertilizers and improved recycling habits.	ENG, P&Z Office, CoD, CAO	Town Council, PWC	Continuous

Community Facilities, Infrastructure and Utilities Goal: Provide high quality community facilities, services, and infrastructure that are both fiscally and environmentally sustainable while also meeting the evolving needs of the community.

Theme					Objectives and Action Steps	Lead Agency/Staff	Local Partners	Time Frame: •Short-term: 1-3 Years •Medium-term: 4-7 Years •Long-term: 7-10 Years •Continuous
Community	Opportunity	Partnerships	Balance	Resiliency				
●	●	●			Objective 4: Ensure that the Town’s finances are professionally and carefully managed to deliver the highest level of services and programs as efficiently as possible.			
●					1. Monitor future public investments in acquisition, new construction/ additions and improvements in relation to the delivery of service to the maximum number of Stratford residents and businesses and for the highest priority public service needs.	DPW, P&Z Office	Town Council, PWC	Long-term
●	●	●			2. Institute a process of review of the Capital Improvement Plan and Annual Capital Budget by the Planning Commission to discuss municipal projects during the planning stages before substantial investments have been made.	ENG, CAO, Mayor's Office	Town Council	Medium-term
	●				Objective 5: Prioritize improvements to the Town’s facilities to meet diverse program needs.			
	●				1. Conduct a Town Facilities Master Plan to assess capacity to meet current and anticipated program needs, to identify energy and other efficiency improvements, and to explore opportunities for consolidation and reuse.	DPW, CAO, CSD	SUST ¹	Medium-term
	●				2. Address accessibility needs of the physically disabled population in utilizing Town facilities and services.	DPW, CSD	PWC	Short-term
●	●				Objective 6: Prioritize improvements to the Town’s school facilities to meet program needs.			
	●				1. Recommend the Board of Education complete an enrollment and space utilization study of all schools to determine current and projected facility needs.	BOE	Town Council	Short-term
●	●				2. Expand the capacity of existing schools with priority given to Stratford’s most highly utilized schools as identified by Stratford Board of Education.	BOE	Town Council	Medium-term
●	●				3. Improve school facilities to ensure that high quality, modern, and fully accessible facilities are available to Stratford’s students.	BOE	Town Council	Continuous
●					4. Continue to invest in its education system to improve Stratford as a desirable place to raise a family.	Town Council	Town Council	Continuous

1 The Sustainability Task Force is an informal committee of Town Staff that work towards Sustainable Connecticut and Climate Leader designations for Stratford.

Energy and Environment Goal: Ensure that Stratford is a sustainable and thriving community that benefits from and supports clean energy, preserves and cares for its ecosystems, prioritizes environmental cleanup and protection, fosters community and ecosystem resiliency and prepares for any coastal changes in fiscally and environmentally sustainable ways.

Theme					Objectives and Action Steps	Lead Agency/ Staff	Local Partners	Time Frame: •Short-term: 1-3 Years •Medium-term: 4-7 Years •Long-term: 7-10 Years •Continuous
Community	Opportunity	Partnerships	Balance	Resiliency				
●	●	●			Objective 1: Encourage energy-efficiency and sustainability in all private developments.			
	●				1. Encourage high energy performance private developments through voluntary adoption of green building design standards in building code, and zoning and subdivision regulations.	P&Z Office, BD	ZC, ARB	Continuous
	●				2. Encourage participation in LEED certification programs for large scale private developments.	P&Z Office, BD	ZC	Continuous
	●				3. Promote the use of green roofs to reduce energy demand and utility costs, decrease greenhouse gas emissions, and mitigate the urban heat island effect and planting of native species, particular native shade trees where appropriate.	P&Z Office, BD	ZC	Continuous
		●			4. Promote coordination among various Town departments to adopt policies and regulations, and implement actions that promote energy efficiency.	Mayor's Office	SUST	Continuous
●	●				5. Pursue HUD funding to support weatherization and energy efficiency programs for low –income households.	CD	CDBG	Short-term
●	●				6. Review and update zoning regulations to remove any barriers to renewable energy production locally; educate residents on renewable energy programs	P&Z Office	ZC, PC	Short-term
		●			7. Educate residents through trainings and technical assistance to use alternative energy sources and reduce energy consumption.	Mayor's Office	SUST	Continuous
	●				8. Continue to require undergrounding of utilities through the Town's subdivision regulations.	P&Z Office	PC	Continuous
●	●				Objective 2: Increase energy efficiency in municipal buildings and facilities.			
●	●				1. Conduct an audit of current energy usage in all municipal buildings and implement cost effective, energy-efficient solutions.	Mayor's Office	SUST	Short-term
	●				2. Continue to participate in programs such as ENERGY STAR to promote energy efficiency in Town buildings and facilities.	Mayor's Office	SUST	Continuous
	●				3. Strive to achieve high performance energy standards in the redevelopment of all municipal buildings.	DPW	BNC, PWC	Continuous
	●				4. Develop a municipal energy plan with details on the long –term costs and benefits of using sustainable energy for each building.	DPW	PWC	Medium-term
●	●				5. Create an Office of Sustainability to monitor, evaluate, and coordinate actions of various Town departments in reducing energy consumption such as, expanding online services, encouraging telecommuting, consolidating locations of municipal services, etc., based on their feasibility.	Mayor's Office	Town Council	Short-term

Energy and Environment Goal: Ensure that Stratford is a sustainable and thriving community that benefits from and supports clean energy, preserves and cares for its ecosystems, prioritizes environmental cleanup and protection, fosters community and ecosystem resiliency and prepares for any coastal changes in fiscally and environmentally sustainable ways.

Theme					Objectives and Action Steps	Lead Agency/ Staff	Local Partners	Time Frame: •Short-term: 1-3 Years •Medium-term: 4-7 Years •Long-term: 7-10 Years •Continuous
Community	Opportunity	Partnerships	Balance	Resiliency				
●	●				Objective 2 Continued: Increase energy efficiency in municipal buildings and facilities.			
	●				6. Reduce fuel consumption of municipal vehicles by switching to fuel-efficient vehicles over time.	CAO	Town Council	Long-term
●	●				7. Implement electric vehicle (EV) charging stations in municipal parking lots.	CAO	PWC	Short-term
	●				8. Increase the use of renewable energy in municipal buildings.	Mayor's Office, CAO	PWC	Medium-term
	●				9. Consider "dark skies" approved lighting for all municipal buildings, walkways, and new construction.	P&Z Office, ENG, DPW	DPW, ZC	Continuous
●	●	●	●	●	Objective 3: Strive to achieve a balance between fossil fuels and other sustainable forms of energy for transportation.			
●	●		●	●	1. Update the Town's zoning to provide for sustainable development patterns that support density, walkability and conservation such as, developing standards for cluster developments, encouraging low impact developments, expanding the boundary of transit-oriented development district, etc.	P&Z Office	ZC, PC	Short-term
	●				2. Provide alternatives to the automobile by implementing the subsequent phases of greenway trails and complete streets projects, as discussed in the Mobility chapter of this document.	P&Z Office	GCCS	Continuous
		●			3. Partner with local employers to provide incentives to employees who choose smart commuting options such as, carpooling, commuting by public transit, etc.	ED	EDC	Continuous
		●			4. Promote the use of public transit, and greenways and complete streets, through education and outreach via Town's social media and other news outlets.	Mayor's Office, ED	GCCS, EDC	Continuous
●	●				5. Implement bike infrastructure (such as, bike racks, lockers, etc) and construct missing sidewalks and further promote walking and biking in the town.	DPW	PWC	Short-term
	●				6. Facilitate micro-transit service within the Town Center.	P&Z Office	GBT, CTDOT	Short-term
	●				7. Update parking standards to allow EV charging stations and bike parking in all developments.	P&Z Office	ZC, PC	Short-term
●	●				8. Provide free wifi at the Town's public spaces to facilitate remote work.	DPW	PWC	Short-term

Energy and Environment Goal: Ensure that Stratford is a sustainable and thriving community that benefits from and supports clean energy, preserves and cares for its ecosystems, prioritizes environmental cleanup and protection, fosters community and ecosystem resiliency and prepares for any coastal changes in fiscally and environmentally sustainable ways.

Theme					Objectives and Action Steps	Lead Agency/ Staff	Local Partners	Time Frame: •Short-term: 1-3 Years •Medium-term: 4-7 Years •Long-term: 7-10 Years •Continuous
Community	Opportunity	Partnerships	Balance	Resiliency				
●	●	●	●	●	Objective 4: Promote stewardship of the Town’s fragile natural environment such as wetlands, watercourses, plant and animal habitats and other environmentally sensitive areas.			
	●				1. Establish an official Town Committee on Sustainability that meets on a regular basis to promote various sustainability initiatives and stewardship of the Town’s natural environment.	Mayor’s Office, CAO	PWC	Short-term
●	●				2. Continue to participate in the Sustainable CT program and strive to achieve the highest certification standard through the voluntary implementation of various actions aimed at sustainability.	Mayor’s Office	PWC, PC	Continuous
	●		●		3. Encourage low-impact developments to avoid adverse impacts to the town’s natural landscapes, habitats and watercourses.	P&Z Office, CoD	ZC, PC, IWWC	Short-term
	●		●		4. Prioritize the remediation and reuse of brownfield properties.	ED	RDA	Short-term
●	●				5. Evaluate the health and environmental impacts of large scale development proposals; encourage developers to provide Health Impact Assessments (HIAs) for these developments.	P&Z Office, HD	ZC, PC	Long-term
	●		●		6. Encourage the use of native species in landscaping and incorporate regulations for invasive species eradication.	CoD	PC, CC	Short-term
	●			●	7. Prioritize acquisition of land and conservation easements for habitats most at risk from climate change.	CoD	PC, CC	Short-term
	●			●	8. Continue to implement nature based flood mitigation solutions by the coast to protect the coastal habitat.	CoD, ENG, P&Z Office	CC, WHMC, PWC	Continuous
	●		●		10. Conduct an analysis of unprotected uplands in the town (that remain unprotected from an environmental perspective) and protect them from adjacent developments.	CoD	CC	Short-term
	●			●	11. Acquire land and conservation easements to provide upslope advancement zones adjacent to tidal marshes and in riparian areas adjacent to cold water streams.	CoD	PC, CC	Continuous
	●			●	12. Adopt a water hierarchy that includes rain water conservation, capture and storage, and water reuse similar to the well known solid waste management hierarchy.	CoD, ENG	CC, PWC	Short-term
		●		●	13. Partner in regional and state-wide initiatives to address borderless climate change issues.	CoD, ENG, P&Z Office	CRIC ¹	Continuous
●	●		●	●	14. Update the town’s zoning to provide for sustainable development patterns that support density, walkability and conservation.	P&Z Office	ZC, PC,	Continuous

¹Although staff of ED, P&Z and CoD meet regularly to discuss coastal resiliency issues, plan for future risks and apply for grants, the Town does not have an official Coastal Resiliency Implementation Committee as recommended in the 2016 Coastal Resiliency Plan.

Energy and Environment Goal: Ensure that Stratford is a sustainable and thriving community that benefits from and supports clean energy, preserves and cares for its ecosystems, prioritizes environmental cleanup and protection, fosters community and ecosystem resiliency and prepares for any coastal changes in fiscally and environmentally sustainable ways.

Theme					Objectives and Action Steps	Lead Agency/ Staff	Local Partners	Time Frame: •Short-term: 1-3 Years •Medium-term: 4-7 Years •Long-term: 7-10 Years •Continuous
Community	Opportunity	Partnerships	Balance	Resiliency				
●	●		●	●	Objective 5: Comply with EPA stormwater MS4 NPDES permit requirements.			
	●				1. Develop and adopt a stormwater ordinance with standards that minimize adverse impacts to water quality due to stormwater runoff.	ENG, P&Z Office, CoD	Town Council	Short-term
	●				2. Incorporate standards for implementing green infrastructure in public and private developments, based on feasibility.	ENG	PWC	Short-term
●	●				3. Promote the adoption of best management practices (such as rain barrels, green roofs, etc.), and the use of green infrastructure (such as bio-swales and rain gardens) as a means of reducing the impacts from stormwater runoff.	ENG	PWC, ZC	Continuous
●	●		●	●	4. Review and evaluate the development of Low Impact Development (LID) standards within the Town's zoning and subdivision regulations, and inland wetlands and watercourses regulations.	P&Z Office, CoD	ZC, IWWC	Short-term
	●			●	5. Consider permeable pavement for municipal walkways and new construction where applicable.	ENG, P&Z Office, DPW	ZC, PWC	Continuous
●	●	●		●	Objective 6: Promote a sustainable local food system.			
	●			●	1. Develop zoning regulations to define and provide a list of permissible food production land uses; to specify where land can be used for personal or community food production; to provide standards for accessory structures (such as, greenhouses, vertical farms, etc) that support local food production.	P&Z Office, HD	SUST	Short-term
	●			●	2. Develop a Food Action Plan and create a local Food Policy Council to support private individuals, farmers, and organizations involved with local food production and distribution.	HD, ED	SUST	Medium-term
●	●			●	3. Enhance access to healthy food within low-income neighborhoods through the establishment of mobile food markets, community gardens, commercial kitchens, food co-ops, etc.	HD, ED	SUST	Short-term
		●			4. Partner with local farmers, businesses, and restaurants to develop a "buy local" campaign that expands the market for local food production.	ED	SUST	Short-term
●	●				5. Identify barriers to healthy food access and select neighborhoods to prioritize implementation use data.	ED	SUST	Continuous
●	●	●			6. Continue to support farmers markets and food to school programs.	ED, BOE	EDC, Town Council, SUST	Continuous

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Theme					Objectives and Action Steps	Lead Agency/ Staff	Local Partners	Time Frame: •Short-term: 1-3 Years •Medium-term: 4-7 Years •Long-term: 7-10 Years •Continuous
Community	Opportunity	Partnerships	Balance	Resiliency				
●	●	●		●	Objective 6 Continued: Promote a sustainable local food system			
●	●				7. Explore the feasibility of establishing a land trust of undevelopable lots in the Town that could be used for community food production	Mayor's Office	SUST	Long-term
●	●	●			8. Continue to promote and manage community gardens at Pirhala Farm.	ED	SUST	Continuous
●				●	Objective 7: Maintain and strengthen institutional controls in place for land use permitting and application reviews so as to protect the public from exposure to contaminants that will remain in the environment.			
●				●	1. Increase awareness of and continue to enforce the Groundwater and Vapor Intrusion Zone Town Ordinance, especially when approving planning and zoning, and building permits for existing/new developments.	P&Z Office, BD, HD	ZC, PC, BZA	Continuous
●	●	●		●	Objective 8: Enhance public health through improved air quality.			
●		●		●	1. Continue and strengthen the Health Department's implementation of EPA's AirNow Program - which raises awareness of the daily AQI and actions/behavior modifications for sensitive populations and the general public to protect their health.	Mayor's Office, HD	SUST	Continuous
●	●	●		●	2. Promote sustainable transportation modes (such as train, bus, bike travel) by facilitating efficient delivery of services and educating residents on existing programs and services.	P&Z Office, CAO, Mayor's Office	GCCS, TA, PC, SUST	Continuous
●		●		●	3. Maintain and strengthen institutional controls in place for land use permitting and application reviews so as to protect the public from exposure to contaminants that will remain in the environment.	P&Z Office, BD, HD, FD, CoD	PC, ZC, BZA, CC	Continuous

Waterfront and Coastal Resources Goal: Enhance the coastal and waterfront experience for residents through the accommodation and thoughtful management of water-dependent uses and coastal public access when opportunities arise.

Theme					Objectives and Action Steps	Lead Agency/Staff	Local Partners	Time Frame: •Short-term: 1-3 Years •Medium-term: 4-7 Years •Long-term: 7-10 Years •Continuous
Community	Opportunity	Partnerships	Balance	Resiliency				
●	●	●	●		Objective 1: Promote an attractive, safe, and interconnected system of public waterfront areas and facilities that can be enjoyed by persons of all ages and abilities.			
	●				1. Ensure that existing redevelopment plans are consistent with the Waterfront Vision Plan (2023).	P&Z Office, ED	WHMC, RDA, ZC	Short-term
●	●				2. Pursue all appropriate sources of funds to achieve implementation of the waterfront vision through the budgetary and capital improvement decisions of the Town Council and through the actions of the agencies with authorities and responsibilities affecting the waterfront and Stratford Harbor Management Area .	Mayor's Office	WHMC, Town Council	Continuous
	●				3. Ensure that the planning, use, and maintenance of public waterfront areas and facilities will be consistent with the natural and traditional character of the waterfront.	P&Z Office, ED	WHMC, CC, ZC, SC	Continuous
●	●				4. Proceed with acquisition of real property and easements as necessary to implement the Waterfront Vision Plan (2023).	P&Z Office, ED, ENG, CoD	WHMC, PC, RDA	Continuous
	●				5. Expand the Housatonic Greenway along the entire Housatonic River shoreline from Stratford Point to the Stratford/ Shelton town line.	P&Z Office, ED, ENG, CoD	GCCS, RDA	Long-term
	●				6. Ensure that all types and sizes of recreational vessels, including motorized and sail-powered craft, excursion boats, and nonmotorized vessels such as canoes, kayaks, and rowing will enjoy the SHMA and Town waterfront facilities.	P&Z Office, ED	WHMC, EDC, ZC, PC	Continuous
	●				7. Support a variety of public and commercial boating services and facilities, including boat berthing, docking, mooring, and launching facilities for resident and visiting boaters, making Stratford the pre-eminent center supporting recreational boating on Housatonic River and a regional destination point for visiting boaters.	P&Z Office, ED	WHMC, EDC, ZC, PC	Continuous
	●				8. Host a variety of special events, programs, and activities attracting visitors to the waterfront and harbor management area thus promoting local and regional tourism.	ED	WHMC, EDC	Continuous
	●				9. Provide excursion boat operations for beneficial public use and enjoyment of the Housatonic River as well as to enhance linkages between Stratford and other locations on Long Island Sound.	ED	WHMC, EDC	Continuous
	●	●			10. Work with CT Audubon Society to continue to allow birdwatching locations at Stratford Point .	CoD	CC, WHMC	Continuous
	●		●		11. Establish new walking trails and fishing spots along the waterfront.	P&Z Office, ENG, CoD	GCCS, DPW, CC	Continuous

Waterfront and Coastal Resources Goal: Enhance the coastal and waterfront experience for residents through the accommodation and thoughtful management of water-dependent uses and coastal public access when opportunities arise.

Theme					Objectives and Action Steps	Lead Agency/Staff	Local Partners	Time Frame: •Short-term: 1-3 Years •Medium-term: 4-7 Years •Long-term: 7-10 Years •Continuous
Community	Opportunity	Partnerships	Balance	Resiliency				
●	●			●	Objective 2: Balance conservation needs of the natural coastal environment with economic development objectives by the waterfront.			
	●				1. Identify and evaluate properties with past industrial uses and for redevelopment or conservation.	ED, P&Z Office	RDA, WHMC	Short-term
●					2. Ensure that appropriate remedial actions are undertaken as necessary to implement redevelopment plans, protect public health, safety, and welfare, and enhance the natural environment.	ED, CoD, P&Z Office	RDA, WHMC	Continuous
●					3. Continue to be an active participant in the redevelopment process to ensure desired growth and development in the town, including preparation of redevelopment lands and appropriate acquisition of land and easements for public purposes.	ED, CoD, P&Z Office	RDA, WHMC	Continuous
●	●	●			4. Continue to support the implementation of Stratford's Municipal Program (prepared in 1988) and update it as may be necessary, to use it effectively during Coastal Site Plan Review (CSPR) process in accordance with CCMA.	ED, CoD, P&Z Office	RDA, WHMC	Continuous
●	●	●		●	5. Continue to implement the Stratford Harbor Management Plan (HMP) as both POCD and HMP serve as complementary documents in protecting the town's coastal and harbor resources.	ED, CoD, P&Z Office	RDA, WHMC	Continuous
●	●		●	●	Objective 3: Enhance the ecological functions and values of the town's coastal resources.			
●	●		●		1. Implement the recommendations of the current Harbor Management Plan.	P&Z Office, ED, ENG	WHMC, ZC, EDC, CC, PWC	Continuous
●			●		2. Continue to manage effectively and protect and enhance natural coastal resources, including water resources, tidal wetlands, the exceptional shellfish beds of Housatonic River, fisheries resources, intertidal flats, beaches, and aesthetic coastal resources.	CoD, P&Z Office, ENG	WHMC, CC, ZC, PWC, SC	Continuous
●			●		3. Conserve naturalized waterfront areas and remediate waterfront properties and waterways that have suffered from contamination.	CoD, ED	RDA, WHMC	Continuous
●			●	●	4. Protect and enhance the ecological functions and values related to fish and wildlife habitat, water quality and implement adequate flood mitigation measures to do the same.	CoD, P&Z Office, ENG	WHMC, CC, CRIC	Continuous
●	●				5. Maintain and enhance the vitality of the Town's commercial shellfish industry.	CoD	WHMC, SC	Continuous
●	●				6. Effectively manage sand resources on and offshore of the Town's public beaches in accordance with the best available sand management plans based on natural littoral processes.	ENG	PWC, WHMC	Continuous

Waterfront and Coastal Resources Goal: Enhance the coastal and waterfront experience for residents through the accommodation and thoughtful management of water-dependent uses and coastal public access when opportunities arise.

Theme					Objectives and Action Steps	Lead Agency/ Staff	Local Partners	Time Frame: •Short-term: 1-3 Years •Medium-term: 4-7 Years •Long-term: 7-10 Years •Continuous
Community	Opportunity	Partnerships	Balance	Resiliency				
●	●				Objective 3 Continued: Enhance the ecological functions and values of the town's coastal resources.			
●	●				7. Ensure that water quality in Stratford continues to improve through reduction of nonpoint sources of pollution and enhanced municipal wastewater treatment in accordance with best available technology and the highest standards of operation and maintenance.	ENG, CoD, P&Z Office	ZC, CC, IWWC, WPCA	Continuous
●	●				8. Reduce sources of pollution to achieve the highest reasonably attainable state water quality designations in the Housatonic River, Lewis Gut, and nearshore Long Island Sound in the SHMA.	ENG, CoD, P&Z Office	ZC, CC, IWWC	Continuous
	●				9. Ensure that all vessels comply with the “no-discharge” requirements established for Long Island Sound and the Housatonic River pursuant to the Federal Clean Water Act. Provide adequate vessel-waste pump-out facilities for the general public at Stratford marina facilities to supplement the service provided by the Town’s pump-out board operated by WHMC.	ENG, P&Z Office, ED	ZC, WHMC, WPCA	Continuous
●	●	●			Objective 4 : Ensure safe boating by all recreational and commercial vessels enjoying the river and add to the vitality of SHMA.			
		●			2. Facilitate local safe boating education.	Mayor's Office, ED	WHMC, EDC	Continuous
		●			3. Ensure compliance with laws and regulations for water and waterfront use.	P&Z Office, ED	WHMC, ZC, EDC	Continuous
	●				4. Ensure timely and economical maintenance dredging of the Housatonic River federal navigation channel by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.	ED, CoD	WHMC CC	Continuous
	●				5. Utilize dredged materials for beach nourishment and other beneficial purposes if this material is environmentally sustainable.	ENG	PWC, WHMC	Continuous
		●			6. Ensure full public awareness and compliance with the vessel speed and wake requirements of the well-marked “slow—no wake” area designated by the State of Connecticut in the Housatonic River from the Washington Bridge to the mouth of the river.	Mayor's Office	WHMC	Continuous
●					7. Promote safe and active use of the Town-managed public mooring areas in the river.	Mayor's Office	WHMC	Continuous

Waterfront and Coastal Resources Goal: Enhance the coastal and waterfront experience for residents through the accommodation and thoughtful management of water-dependent uses and coastal public access when opportunities arise.

Theme					Objectives and Action Steps	Lead Agency/ Staff	Local Partners	Time Frame: •Short-term: 1-3 Years •Medium-term: 4-7 Years •Long-term: 7-10 Years •Continuous
Community	Opportunity	Partnerships	Balance	Resiliency				
●	●	●			Objective 5: Promote practical applications for resource management and help generate needed scientific information for effective waterfront management programs.			
	●	●			1. Maintain and enhance active educational and scientific use of the Housatonic River, nearshore Long Island Sound, and the Long Beach-Great Meadows-Lewis Gut area, including encouraging marine field studies by primary and secondary schools, universities, conservation and natural history groups, and others.	Mayor's Office, BOE	WHMC	Continuous
●	●	●			2. Design research and education programs to have practical applications for resource management.	BOE, CoD	WHMC, CC	Continuous
		●			Objective 6: Provide public information on the Town's coastal environment and waterfront history.			
		●			1. Continue to seek valuable public input for implementing the waterfront vision, including input for developing new Town plans, programs, and regulations affecting SHMA.	P&Z Office	WHMC, ZC, PC	Continuous
		●			2. Increase awareness of Stratford's marine-related history and culuture, and demonstrate interest and achievements that the Town has made to improve the waterfront to ensure continued stewardship of the Town's coastal resources.	ED, Mayor's Office	WHMC, EDC	Continuous
		●			3. Implement a waterfront interpretive signage program through partnership with WHMC to provide public information on the Town's coastal environment and history.	ENG, DPW, Town Historian	WHMC, PWC, HDC	Continuous

Climate Resiliency Goal: Incorporate resilience into future growth and development at all levels to ensure the town's residents and infrastructure are prepared for, and can withstand, recover, and adapt to, floods, severe storms, extreme heat, and climate change.

Theme					Objectives and Action Steps	Lead Agency/Staff	Local Partners	Time Frame: •Short-term: 1-3 Years •Medium-term: 4-7 Years •Long-term: 7-10 Years •Continuous
Community	Opportunity	Partnerships	Balance	Resiliency				
●	●	●	●	●	Objective 1: Support the implementation of the three resilience strategies outlined in the 2016 Community Coastal Resiliency Plan (i.e., Retreat, Accommodate, and Protect).			
	●		●	●	1. Encourage beach restoration along Shoreline Drive in Lordship neighborhood by facilitating funding for voluntary property acquisitions; explore voluntary transfer of development rights as an option.	P&Z Office, ENG, CoD	CRIC, Town Coucil	Long-term
●				●	2. Facilitate the construction of a series of flood protection systems (levees and flood walls) along the Housatonic Riverfront, from the WPCF to former Army Engine Plant.	P&Z Office, ENG, CoD	CRIC, Town Coucil, WHMC	Long-term
●				●	3. Facilitate the construction of a flood protection system at the north end of Johnsons Creek and Sprague Oil property.	P&Z Office, ENG, CoD	CRIC, Town Coucil, WHMC	Medium-term
●				●	4. Facilitate the lengthening (and possibly raising) of the seawall/revetment at Lordship (in combination with the retreat strategy).	P&Z Office, ENG, CoD	CRIC, Town Coucil, WHMC	Long-term
	●			●	5. Establish neighborhood zoning regulations and guidance that address elevating properties from a community aesthetic perspective.	P&Z Office, BD	ZC, PC	Short-term
		●		●	6. Implement an accommodation strategy that places the direct responsibility (and cost) for private building flood protection on the property owners.	P&Z Office, ENG, CoD	CRIC	Short-term
			●	●	7. Limit high density developments in floodplains and if allowed, require mitigation plans for flooding.	P&Z Office, ENG, CoD	CRIC	Continuous
●	●	●	●	●	Objective 2: Support individual property owners and foster actions that make residents, homes, and businesses more resilient through retreat, accommodation, and protection.			
		●		●	1. Educate owners of repetitive loss properties and at-risk flood properties of the funding opportunities available for elevating and floodproofing structures.	Mayor's Office, P&Z Office	CRIC	Continuous
		●		●	2. Encourage private property owners in floodplains to implement accommodation strategies such as flood proofing of buildings and structures; implementing temporary flood protection measures; preparing emergency/flood response plans; post-storm repair and cleanup.	Mayor's Office, P&Z Office, ENG, CoD	CRIC	Continuous
		●		●	3. Support or partner with property owners that wish to pursue FEMA grant funding for elevation or retrofits of structures (i.e., HMGP or FMA programs).	Mayor's Office, P&Z Office, ENG, CoD	CRIC, Town Council	Continuous
13-40	●	●	●	●	4. Ensure that coastal redevelopment projects incorporate as many risk reduction and resilience design strategies as possible, and ensure that these strategies are aligned with the coastal public access goals of the Town.	P&Z Office, ED, ENG, CoD	ZC, WHMC, EDC	Continuous

Climate Resiliency Goal: Incorporate resilience into future growth and development at all levels to ensure the town’s residents and infrastructure are prepared for, and can withstand, recover, and adapt to, floods, severe storms, extreme heat, and climate change.

Theme					Objectives and Action Steps	Lead Agency/ Staff	Local Partners	Time Frame: •Short-term: 1-3 Years •Medium-term: 4-7 Years •Long-term: 7-10 Years •Continuous
Community	Opportunity	Partnerships	Balance	Resiliency				
●		●	●	●	Objective 2 Continued: Support individual property owners and foster actions that make residents, homes, and businesses more resilient through retreat, accommodation, and protection.			
			●	●	5. Require state funded residential projects in coastal locations, considered as “critical activities” per CGS 25-68, to be elevated to the 500-year flood elevation with an additional two feet for sea level rise and require dry land access out of the project at the 100 year flood elevation in such locations.	P&Z Office, BD	ZC, PC, CRIC	Continuous
			●		6. Encourage the provision of dry land access out of large scale multifamily residential developments within 100 feet of FEMA-designated floodplains.	P&Z Office, BD	ZC, PC, CRIC	Continuous
		●		●	7. Develop a brochure to educate businesses on the available resources for flood mitigation and adaptation with approximate cost estimates and time taken for implementation of each strategy.	P&Z Office, ENG, BD	CRIC	Short-term
●				●	8. Increase awareness of and enrollment in Stratford Alerts (formerly Special Needs Registry) and Get Connected notification systems.	Mayor's Office, FD	PWC	Continuous
●	●			●	Objective 3: Advance neighborhood-scale solutions and funding opportunities for the development of flood protection systems and other infrastructural upgrades and improvements that increase resilience through retreat, accommodation, and protection, addressing both coastal and inland flooding.			
●				●	1. Pursue funding to implement the recommendations of Resilient South End study (due late 2023) in pursuing or modifying the flood protection system near/at Access Road in Lordship neighborhood.	Mayor's Office, ENG	CRIC	Short-term
●				●	2. Develop a schedule and plans to increase capacities and upgrade drainage infrastructure, such as those serving the South End, as components become due for maintenance, repairs, or replacements.	ENG	CRIC, PWC	Short-term
	●			●	3. Expand tree canopy and green infrastructure in South End to provide co-benefits for stormwater flood mitigation and extreme heat mitigation, where feasible.	CoD, ENG	CRIC, PWC	Continuous
		●		●	4. Accelerate recovery process of the waterfront when impacted by coastal flooding, soil erosion, extreme winds, coastal storms, rising sea levels and other climate related events through timely deployment of municipal services and municipal funding.	Mayor's Office	Town Council	Continuous
●	●			●	5. Prioritize and implement resiliency strategies that combine the benefits of coastal flood mitigation and enhancing public access along the waterfront.	ENG, P&Z Office, CoD	WHMC, ZC, CRIC	Continuous
●				●	6. Elevate roads as funding becomes available (e.g. Washington Parkway).	ENG	CRIC, PWC	Medium-term
●				●	7. Pursue heat resilience study to better prepare the Town for the anticipated impacts of climate change.	HD, P&Z Office	PWC	Continuous

Climate Resiliency Goal: Incorporate resilience into future growth and development at all levels to ensure the town’s residents and infrastructure are prepared for, and can withstand, recover, and adapt to, floods, severe storms, extreme heat, and climate change

Theme					Objectives and Action Steps	Lead Agency/ Staff	Local Partners	Time Frame: •Short-term: 1-3 Years •Medium-term: 4-7 Years •Long-term: 7-10 Years •Continuous
Community	Opportunity	Partnerships	Balance	Resiliency				
	●			●	Objective 3 Continued: Advance neighborhood-scale solutions and funding opportunities for the development of flood protection systems and other infrastructural upgrades and improvements that increase resilience through retreat, accommodation, and protection, addressing both coastal and inland flooding.			
	●			●	8. Strive for identifying and conceptualizing adaptation and resilience strategies into ongoing planning processes such as the Bruce Brook Watershed Based Plan; these strategies should provide co-benefits for flood mitigation, extreme heat mitigation, and water quality protection.	CoD, P&Z Office, ENG	CC, WHMC, ZC, PWC	Short-term
●	●			●	9. Continue to accommodate flooding in public locations through appropriate operation and maintenance of culverts and tide gates; appropriate operation and maintenance of pump stations; regular dredging of waterways; beach nourishment and dune maintenance; maintenance of salt marshes (eg: tidal flow, salinity, depth); local use of temporary flood protection measure and management; emergency/flood response plans; evacuation planning; flood-proofing public buildings and structures; elevation of Town-owned buildings in flood plains in compliance with local, state, and federal regulations; appropriate post-storm repair and cleanup.	ENG, CoD, EP, P&Z Office	PWC, WHMC, CC, EPC, CRIC	Continuous
●	●	●	●	●	Objective 4: Strive for whole-community resilience concepts such as “Resilient Hubs” and “Resilient Transportation and Transit Corridors” to ensure new and re-development projects are as resilient as possible through accommodation but chiefly through protection.			
	●			●	1. Continue to maintain a good standing with FEMA’s CRS program through strict adherence to the guidance provided in the most recent CRS Coordinator’s manual; and look for opportunities to streamline annual recertifications and the five-year review process.	Mayor’s Office, P&Z Office, BD, ENG, CoD, EP	CRIC, FD, PD	Continuous
●				●	2. Prioritize the development of new or expanded critical facilities within Resilient Hubs ¹ to ensure that they are accessible and usable before, during, and after extreme storms, floods, or extended heat waves.	EP, Mayor’s Office	CRIC, FD, PD	Short-term
●				●	3. Ensure that resources are directed to road systems that achieve the goals of resilient transportation and transit corridors, connecting people and businesses to one another and to critical facilities and services. Examples include Main Street, South Avenue, West Broad Street, Stratford Avenue, Barnum Avenue, and Surf Avenue; and the bridges and underpasses that support these roads.	ENG, Mayor’s Office	PWC, Town Council	Continuous
●	●	●	●	●	4. Align resiliency concepts with the waterfront management goals developed by WHMC in the “Waterfront Vision for the Town of Stratford” and as discussed earlier in the previous section. Responsible coastal zone and waterfront management can be resilient to coastal hazards while providing benefits to the entire community.	ENG, Mayor’s Office	WHMC, CRIC	Continuous

Placemaking and Urban Design Goals: Promote vibrant community gathering spaces for residents of all ages and abilities. Promote welcoming and aesthetically pleasing commercial corridors. Promote connectivity and accessibility between Stratford’s character areas and neighborhoods. Encourage public private partnerships with a shared vision of implementing creative placemaking strategies.

Theme					Objectives and Action Steps	Lead Agency/Staff	Local Partners	Time Frame: •Short-term: 1-3 Years •Medium-term: 4-7 Years •Long-term: 7-10 Years •Continuous
Community	Opportunity	Partnerships	Balance	Resiliency				
●			●		Objective 1: Reinforce a sense of place and enhance the quality of life and wellbeing of all residents. 1.1 Enhance Public Spaces			
●					1. Identify and pursue opportunities to implement art in public spaces such as, murals, sculptures, and other art elements that are reflective of Stratford’s culture and history.	Mayor's Office, ED, DPW	ARTS, HDC, EDC	Continuous
●					2. Identify unused parking areas where spaces previously used for cars can be converted as spaces for people	Mayor's Office, DPW	PWC	Continuous
●					3. Implement gateway signage and welcoming art features at gateway locations identified in the Vision Plan to welcome travelers and brand the community.	DPW	PWC	Short-term
●			●		4. Continue the implementation of tree planting and replacement initiative to maintain and protect Stratford’s historic beauty; Stratford’s original town seal commemorates the important contribution Elm trees have made to Stratford.	CoD	ZC, CC, PC	Short-term
●					5. Promote human scale design of buildings, streetscapes, and public spaces by encouraging a mix of uses with usable active social spaces, avoiding large building blocks and blank wall facades; providing transition areas between buildings of different scales; implementing appropriate landscaping; making optimal use of natural light; incorporating street furniture; integrating art; encouraging tactical urbanism.	P&Z Office, ED	ARTS, ZC, PC, ARB, EDC, HDC	Continuous
●	●				Objective 1: Reinforce a sense of place and enhance the quality of life and wellbeing of all residents. 1.2 Boost Community Participation			
		●			1. Continue to host “Celebrate Stratford” events throughout the year to promote active use of streets and public spaces, and encourage more interactions between businesses and residents.	ED	Town Council, EDC	Continuous
●	●				2. Expand programming of community events to include more artistically interesting areas of the town.	Mayor's Office, ED	EDC	Continuous
		●			3. Continue to promote town events widely in social media; on Town website; local television and news outlets; and print materials such as brochures, newsletters, etc.	ED, Mayor's Office	EDC	Continuous
●					4. Consider implementing an informational kiosk, at a central location in the town, with regularly updated information on town events and festivals for the digitally excluded population.	ED, Mayor's Office	EDC	Short-term
●					5. Develop a marketing plan aimed at attracting visitors to the town’s natural landscapes, waterfront and greenway system, including Long Beach/Great Meadows Marsh, Roosevelt Forest, Short Beach Complex, and Stratford Greenway.	Mayor's Office, ED	EDC	Medium-term

Placemaking and Urban Design Goals: Promote vibrant community gathering spaces for residents of all ages and abilities. Promote welcoming and aesthetically pleasing commercial corridors. Promote connectivity and accessibility between Stratford’s character areas and neighborhoods. Encourage public private partnerships with a shared vision of implementing creative placemaking strategies.

Theme					Objectives and Action Steps	Lead Agency/ Staff	Local Partners	Time Frame: •Short-term: 1-3 Years •Medium-term: 4-7 Years •Long-term: 7-10 Years •Continuous
Community	Opportunity	Partnerships	Balance	Resiliency				
●					Objective 1: Reinforce a sense of place and enhance the quality of life and wellbeing of all residents. 1.3 Promote Compact Urban Form in Town Center and along Commercial Corridors			
	●				1. Conduct a Town Center build-out analysis and parking lot study to maximize building coverage on underutilized sites; to identify areas where shared parking is a possibility; to reimagine large underutilized parking lots as public gathering spaces, thus making the Town Center more welcoming and pedestrian-friendly.	P&Z Office, ED	PC, TA, RDA, EDC	Short-term
	●				2. Revise zoning regulations for commercial corridors to encourage denser developments and more urban site plans.	P&Z Office, ED	ZC, PC	Short-term
	●				3. Encourage parking to the rear of the buildings to create a pedestrian-oriented streetscape.	P&Z Office	ZC	Continuous
●	●				Objective 1: Reinforce a sense of place and enhance the quality of life and wellbeing of all residents. 1.4 Preserve and Enhance Special Character Areas			
	●				1. Identify and define boundaries of special character areas of the town (eg: Historic District, Paradise Green, Barnum Ave, Lordship neighborhood, etc) through neighborhood based planning.	P&Z Office	HDC, WHMC, SHA, GCCS	Short-term
	●				2. Require the built environment in special character areas to consider including distinct historical and architectural features of the area in building design and create a cohesive identity for these areas.	P&Z Office	HDC, ARB, ZC, PC, BD	Medium-term
	●				3. Include protection of significant view sheds in the site plan review process.	P&Z Office	PC, BD	Continuous
	●				4. Leverage iconic buildings, streetscapes, and open spaces as a means to identify and brand the community.	ED, Mayor's Office	GCCS, HDC, PRD, EDC	Short-term
●					5. Seek funding to establish facade and streetscape improvement programs to improve the character of commercial areas.	ED, CD	EDC, DPW, CDBG	Short-term
●	●				6. Pursue opportunities to create community artwork such as murals, sculptures, and other elements for inclusion in the public realm.	ED	ARTS, PC	Continuous

Placemaking and Urban Design Goals: Promote vibrant community gathering spaces for residents of all ages and abilities. Promote welcoming and aesthetically pleasing commercial corridors. Promote connectivity and accessibility between Stratford’s character areas and neighborhoods. Encourage public private partnerships with a shared vision of implementing creative placemaking strategies.

Theme					Objectives and Action Steps	Lead Agency/Staff	Local Partners	Time Frame: •Short-term: 1-3 Years •Medium-term: 4-7 Years •Long-term: 7-10 Years •Continuous
Community	Opportunity	Partnerships	Balance	Resiliency				
●	●				Objective 2: Attract more people to the commercial corridors and boost local economy.			
	●				1. Implement entrance and wayfinding signage, and adequate landscaping and lighting on key commercial corridors such as, Barnum Ave, Lordship Boulevard, Stratford Avenue, etc.	ED, ENG, CoD	EDC, PC, GCSC	Short-term
	●				2. Encourage a diverse range of retail uses in commercial corridors that encourage residents to relax, gather, and interact and implement street furniture, where feasible.	P&Z Office, ED	EDC, ZC, PC	Continuous
	●				3. Discourage inactive uses on ground floors of primarily retail commercial corridors such as, Barnum Avenue and Stratford Avenue.	P&Z Office, ED	BD, ZC, PC, DECD	Continuous
	●				4. Encourage ground level retail uses to maximize windows and entrances that aid in window shopping and enhance the pedestrian experience in commercial corridors.	P&Z Office, ED	BD, ZC, PC	Continuous
●	●				5. Connect commercial corridors to other vital destinations in town through the implementation of walking and biking initiatives, public transit, and implement/upgrade sidewalks where necessary.	P&Z Office, ED ENG	PC, DPW	Continuous
	●				6. Update parking regulations to avoid large underutilized parking lots and include standards for bike parking and electric vehicle (EV) charging stations.	P&Z Office	ZC, EDC	Short-term
	●				7. Consider adopting a design overlay district to encourage good design of buildings in commercial corridors.	P&Z Office	EDC	Short-term
	●				8. Implement the recommendations of Streetscape Plan for Stratford Avenue, Honeyspot Road, and Lordship Boulevard prepared in 2014 by the Town of Stratford.	P&Z Office, ENG, ED, CoD	ZC, PC, EDC, GCCS, BD, RDA	Medium-term

Placemaking and Urban Design Goals: Promote vibrant community gathering spaces for residents of all ages and abilities. Promote welcoming and aesthetically pleasing commercial corridors. Promote connectivity and accessibility between Stratford’s character areas and neighborhoods. Encourage public private partnerships with a shared vision of implementing creative placemaking strategies.

Theme					Objectives and Action Steps	Lead Agency/Staff	Local Partners	Time Frame: •Short-term: 1-3 Years •Medium-term: 4-7 Years •Long-term: 7-10 Years •Continuous
Community	Opportunity	Partnerships	Balance	Resiliency				
●					Objective 2 Continued: Attract more people to the commercial corridors and boost local economy.			
	●				1. Promote infill development of vacant store fronts and underutilized lots to provide continuity of building use and form; encourage temporary use of vacant store fronts to promote visual art initiatives in the town, where feasible.	ED, P&Z Office, BD	ZC, PC, EDC, ARTS, ARB	Continuous
	●				2. Integrate green infrastructure in the design of commercial developments to reduce stormwater runoff and also enhance the look and feel of commercial corridors.	ENG, P&Z Office, ED	ZC, PWC	Continuous
	●				3. Strictly enforce blight regulations to avoid visual clutter.	HD, P&Z Office	BZA, Town Council	Continuous
	●				4. Partner with local businesses to promote stewardship of commercial streetscapes, explore the concept of business improvement districts, educate businesses on the economic impacts of a business improvement district.	ED, Mayor's Office	Town Council	Medium-term
	●				5. Implement street art, murals, and decorative crosswalks in commercial corridors to transform them into vibrant streets.	ED, DPW	ARTS, EDC, PWC	Continuous
	●				6. Allow for adaptive reuse of existing buildings in commercial areas.	ED, BD	ZC, EDC, RDA	Continuous
	●				7. Revise zoning standards to encourage live/work artist housing in commercial areas.	P&Z Office, ED	ZC, PC	Short-term
●	●				Objective 3: Remove barriers to accessing public spaces for relaxation and/or enjoyment.			
●	●				1. Promote inclusive and accessible design of public spaces that are safe and welcoming to use by all, which include design features that encourage natural surveillance of public spaces (following crime prevention through environmental design policies), and also accommodate the needs of the disabled population.	ENG	PWC, PD	Continuous
●	●				2. Link the cultural campus located in Town Center (Sterling House, Library, Baldwin Center, Perry House) with retail uses and other key destinations in town such as Ruby & Calvin Fletcher African American Museum, National Helicopter Museum, former Shakespeare property, former SAEP site, Roosevelt Forest, public parks, and the waterfront through the implementation of subsequent phases of greenways and complete streets.	ED, P&Z Office, Town Historian, CoD, ENG	EDC, HDC, GCCS, CC, RDA	Continuous

Placemaking and Urban Design Goals: Promote vibrant community gathering spaces for residents of all ages and abilities. Promote welcoming and aesthetically pleasing commercial corridors. Promote connectivity and accessibility between Stratford’s character areas and neighborhoods. Encourage public private partnerships with a shared vision of implementing creative placemaking strategies.

Theme					Objectives and Action Steps	Lead Agency/ Staff	Local Partners	Time Frame: •Short-term: 1-3 Years •Medium-term: 4-7 Years •Long-term: 7-10 Years •Continuous
Community	Opportunity	Partnerships	Balance	Resiliency				
●	●	●			Objective 3 Continued: Remove barriers to accessing public spaces for relaxation and/or enjoyment.			
	●				3. Promote public access to the waterfront at the former SAEP site (currently being redeveloped) and ensure that these improvements consider heritage conservation of this site.	ED, P&Z Office, ENG, CoD	WHMC, RDA, HDC, PC, ZC	Short-term
	●	●			4. Promote public access to the waterfront at Bond’s Dock, thus connecting waterfront recreation with urban vitality.	ED, P&Z Office	WHMC, P&Z	Short-term
●	●				5. Develop and regularly update a comprehensive plan to evaluate the pedestrian network access throughout the town; continue to invest in sidewalk improvements and construction through the Town’s Capital Improvement Program.	ENG, DPW	PWC, Town Council	Continuous
	●				6. Improve waterfront connector streets with landscaping according to the Vision Plan to improve connectivity to the water.	ENG, CoD	WHMC, PWC	Continuous
●	●	●			Objective 4: Broaden the scope of placemaking opportunities and promote community stewardship.			
		●			1. Facilitate a partnership between cultural and community anchors related to the cultural campus in the Town Center to offer education and innovation programming to Stratford residents and visitors.	Mayor’s Office, ED	Town Council	Continuous
		●			2. Facilitate a partnership with Connecticut Air and Space Center and Sikorsky Airport to establish a permanent home for a major museum center along Main Street at the Airport.	Mayor’s Office, ED	Town Council	Short-term
●	●				3. Develop a Culture & Innovation Campus Master Plan that incorporates public spaces and programming between Sterling House, Stratford Library, Perry House, and Baldwin Center, and links the former Shakespeare Theater site and former SAEP site to downtown.	Mayor’s Office, CSD, P&Z Office	PC, PYF, GCCS	Medium-term
		●			4. Facilitate a partnership with local businesses in commercial corridors to promote stewardship and improve the streetscape of the commercial corridor in which they are located, thus further boosting local economy.	ED, Mayor’s Office	Town Council	Medium-term
		●			5. Continue to partner with Arts Commission, Architectural Review Board, Beautification Committee, and Historic District Commission and ensure that their vision and goals align to create a cohesive and aesthetically pleasing built environment in Stratford.	ED	ARTS, ARB, HDC, BC	Continuous

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Appendix A: Community Engagement Summary

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Community Engagement Summary

Introduction

The Town of Stratford is currently working to update its Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD or Plan). This effort is being undertaken by the Planning Commission and is being guided by a Technical Advisory Committee that is comprised of department heads in various capacities within the Town. **Equitable community engagement** is a key aspect of Stratford's 2023 Plan development process. Efforts have been and will continue to be made to engage stakeholders at all stages of the planning process and provide opportunities to reach residents throughout Stratford. These include the development of the Plan Stratford project website, the launch of an online survey with interactive mapping tool, attendance at pop-up community events, public workshops, and various interviews. This carefully thought-out engagement process was designed to be **inclusive**, including everyone from kids to older adults, people of color and minorities, and **equitable** so that residents from all parts of town could participate at various times and at various occasions to engage a **diverse** range of residents. Key themes and findings from these efforts are described in further detail on the following pages.

Promoting the Engagement Process

To reach as many of Stratford's residents and underrepresented groups as possible, the project team used a variety of methods to disseminate information about the POCD update process. Promotional flyers were created in both English and Spanish and were distributed throughout the Town to various businesses and community centers such as the Library and Baldwin Center. Flyers and other project information such as social media posts were also promoted on the Town's website.

Project Website

A project website, www.PlanStratford.com was created to provide information about the Plan, advertise events, and to generate interest in the POCD. The project website includes links to an online survey, an interactive mapping tool, and meeting documents and materials. The project website has received over **2,300 visits to date**.

Online Survey

An online survey was launched to gather input from Stratford's residents and business owners regarding topics and issues discussed in the POCD. The survey was created in both English and Spanish versions, and hardcopies were distributed at the Library and Baldwin Center for residents who do not utilize the internet. Bookmarks, created in English and Spanish, with the Plan Stratford website link, advertising the online survey were distributed on Election Day, November 8th. The survey generated over **1,000 responses** from individuals in the community.

Promotional Videos

Two promotional videos were created to advertise the POCD. The first video, launched in early September, provided an overview of the Plan, and encouraged residents to get involved. It received over **200 unique views** and advertised the workshops and project website, and provided videos, images of the Town, and statements from residents. The second video highlighted progress that has occurred in Stratford as a result of the current Plan, and promoted the online survey and project website.

Pop-up Events

The project team attended four pop-ups at community events throughout the summer, engaging approximately **500 residents**. These included the Stratford Main Street Festival, the Paradise Green Farmers Market, the Shakespeare Farmers Market, and the Latin Music Festival. The purpose of these events was to promote the POCD update process, advertise the project website and online survey, and invite residents to attend the public workshops. During these events, participants were asked to identify on a map Stratford's assets, opportunities, and challenges. Responses were recorded on post-it notes and displayed so that residents could see their neighbors' responses. Stationary map boards were also placed at the Baldwin Center and Stratford Library as a method to further promote the Plan and project website as well as gather feedback from a diverse range of stakeholders. The foam core boards were in place for three months and were equipped with post-it notes and sharpie markers for recording so that participants could provide comments at any time, at their

leisure. Key themes from the pop-up events are presented below.

Assets

- Stratford’s coast, beaches, waterfront areas
- Sense of community, small town feeling
- Roosevelt Forest
- Paradise Green
- Baldwin Center, Sterling House, Library
- Highway and train access
- The Greenway- extend and expand it
- Sikorsky
- Stratford’s businesses do well, the Town is friendly to business and industry

Opportunities

- Shakespeare property and Center School- could be great assets but not well utilized
- Stratford Army Engine Plant – could be great as mixed use
- Town Center could be improved
- Complete Streets projects
- Waterfront access, marinas
- Stratford could benefit from having more restaurants with diverse options

Challenges

- Taxes and overall affordability
- Lack of older adult housing and workforce housing
- Stratford Army Engine Plant/ AVCO
- Contaminated properties
- Sea level rise, climate change impacts
- Some residents are not in favor of TOD Zoning
- Traffic congestion on major roadways
- Limited transit services, GBT schedules and headways are limited
- Lack of things to do for teens and young adults, need a movie theater or teen center
- Better maintenance needed on Town facilities and park spaces and playgrounds
- The school system was said to be disappointing by some



Participants providing comments during Main Street Festival



Planning Commission members talking to residents at the Paradise Green Farmers Market

Common General Comments

- **New development is ok, but it’s really important how something looks, aesthetics are key**
- **Planters on Main Street light posts are beautiful, more projects like that are needed in Stratford**
- **Smart, considerate change is ok. Stratford shouldn’t just grow for the sake of growth**
- **Some feel that Stratford has too much housing while others reported that it needs more housing**

Outreach to High Schoolers

In an effort to engage Stratford's younger residents, the project team also visited Stratford High School during lunch hours (four different lunch waves) to talk with students about their thoughts on how Stratford could evolve over the next ten years. Students were interested in the Plan and happy to provide feedback about what they like in Stratford and what improvements they feel are needed. Stratford's community, the beaches, and Town events were most popular with students. Many students identified the need for more things to do for teens, such as a movie theater, concert venue, or sports facility. The project team talked to approximately **200 high school students**.

Public Workshops

Three public workshops were conducted to introduce the Stratford community to the POCD update process and to gather the public's thoughts regarding a variety of topics that will be discussed in the Plan. The workshops included a brief presentation of key trends and findings, interactive polling, and break-out sessions led by facilitators with a report back to the group at the conclusion of the meeting. The format for each workshop was the same, but three different locations in Stratford were chosen to hold each workshop. Locations were based on geographic area to ensure that residents throughout Town were engaged and included. Locations included the Birdseye Municipal Complex, Boothe Memorial Park, and the Baldwin Center. A series of questions were discussed with attendees during the break-out sessions and questions were related to each of the various Plan topics that will be included in the POCD. A general summary of feedback for each of the questions is provided on the following pages. Over **200 people** attended the workshops.



High school students providing comments and learning about the POCD



Participant leaving comments on the stationary board at the Baldwin Center.



Examples of comments received during Pop-Up Events



Attendees engaging in break-out session discussions during each of the public workshops

Older Adults Workshop

A mini workshop was also conducted exclusively for older adults and was held at the Baldwin Center, the format of this workshop was essentially the same as the other workshops, but the time was condensed to accommodate the bus schedule at the Baldwin Center. Approximately **40 older adults** were in attendance.

Questions:

- **Stratford is forecasted to grow in population over the next decade. But there are not enough vacant housing units currently to accommodate all this growth. Should Stratford grow? If you believe the Town needs more housing, where should it be built and what types of housing should it be?**
- **There will be more older adults in Stratford (55+) in ten years from now based on our 2020 census data analysis. Young adults (20-29 year olds) are also forecasted to grow. What kind of housing types should we encourage for these growing older adult citizens and young adults in Stratford?**

Summary

When responding to the housing questions, attendees in general felt that Stratford needs balanced growth, that isn't just "growth for the sake of growth". Additional housing needs to be context sensitive to the surrounding neighborhoods and design standards for aesthetics are key. Most attendees were in favor of adaptive reuse to repurpose old buildings and create additional opportunities for housing. The Town should think creatively about affordable housing and look for opportunities with existing properties such as the Ella Grasso property and the Co-op. Attendees also generally felt that Stratford should consider allowing accessory dwelling units with the requirement that the main property is owner occupied. Some attendees were not in favor of the TOD Zone, while others felt it is a good strategy, but has been slowly moving forward. Housing for older adults is needed in Town, especially housing that is affordable for older adults who may wish to sell their existing home but remain in the community. Providing a mix of housing choices for older adults and young professionals and families was discussed. Additionally, many participants emphasized the importance of allowing mixed use developments near grocery stores and commercial areas

to provide services and goods to residents who many not drive.

Land Use and Zoning

- **If you could implement any project tomorrow in Stratford, what would it be?**

Summary

Redevelopment at the Stratford Army Engine Plant property was the project that was discussed the most during the workshops. Adaptive reuse of the site, incorporating a mix of development types such as restaurants, commercial, and marina uses was favorable to the majority of residents. Also important was maintaining public access to the waterfront area along the property. Development of the Shakespeare property was frequently discussed, with the majority of attendees being in favor of a community theater or amphitheater at the property. The addition of more sidewalks and complete streets projects incorporating bicycle lanes, crosswalks, and pathways was also discussed. Connectivity throughout Town and expansion of the Stratford Greenway was discussed. In general, residents were supportive and appreciative of the many improvements and investments that have been made in the Town in recent years.

Conservation, Open Space & Recreation

- **Do you think Stratford has adequate parks and open spaces for you to enjoy? If not, please elaborate on your response.**

Summary

Attendees commonly felt that Stratford has a great mix of open space resources including Roosevelt Forest, the shoreline, and Boothe Memorial Park to name a few. Concerns about losing existing open space were expressed. Attendees also discussed the Stratford Greenway and plans for Complete Streets projects, emphasizing a desire to expand and connect these facilities. Many attendees said that maintenance at several of the parks and playgrounds is needed.



Economic Development

- **What types of businesses would you like to see more of in Stratford?**

Summary

Most attendees felt that Stratford needs more restaurants, spread out across the Town. Mixed use development including restaurants, services businesses like salons, and commercial businesses are needed. Quality businesses, with owners who care about Stratford and employ Stratford's residents, are desired. Many attendees said they would like to see a movie theater or other types of activity centers come into Town so that kids and older adults have things to do. The former Bally's Gym property was discussed as a great location for businesses as well

as a structured parking facility. Uses such as coffee shops, or a bike shop to support users of the Greenway were also cited. Many attendees felt that Stratford does not need any more storage facilities, tobacco shops, pawn shops, or auto industry uses.

Cultural and Historic Resources

- **Do you have access to healthy food where you live? Would you like to grow your own food in your community in the near future?**

Summary

Most attendees said they did have access to healthy foods and were able to get to grocery stores or farmers markets for shopping needs, but many said they would like a Trader Joe's in Stratford. The Community Garden is a great asset to Stratford, and most attendees said that the Town should look for opportunities to build other community gardens at different locations throughout Town. Private home gardens, pollinator and native species plantings, and education about agriculture should be encouraged.

Mobility

- **What would encourage you to walk or bike more often for taking local transportation trips within Stratford?**

Summary

Safety concerns were cited most frequently when attendees discussed this question. The need for dedicated bicycle lanes and an expanded sidewalk network were described. Enforcement of speed limits, and education for cyclists and drivers about the rules of the road is also desired.



Traffic deters residents from walking or biking, making many locations too intimidating to access on foot or bike. Additionally, overgrown vegetation and poor sidewalk conditions were discussed. The idea of having a local shuttle bus to take residents to various destination points throughout Stratford such as the beaches or Paradise Green was also discussed.

Community Facilities, Infrastructure & Utilities

- **How do we ensure that Stratford's youth get involved and invested in Stratford? In other words, how can we make Stratford's community stronger? How can we retain Stratford's youth?**

Summary

Many residents expressed the need to support the local school system and community programs like the Sterling House. The lack of summer programs for students is an issue that many residents talked about. Residents felt that apprenticeship programs should be incorporated into the school curriculum so that students can learn skills and trades and gain work experience. Stratford has many great museums, and every kid in Stratford should have access to these assets through class trips and events. The need to provide jobs, housing that's affordable, and activities for college graduates and young professionals was also emphasized.

Energy & Environment

- **What are the energy/infrastructure improvements and opportunities that the Town should pursue?**
- **Do you think the Town is doing a good job protecting its environmental resources such as its rivers and streams, forested areas, and coastline?**

Summary

The need for more underground utilities was described as a method to make Stratford more resilient during storm events. The concept of the "Right Tree/Right Place" and not above power lines was also talked about. "Greening" up Stratford through the planting of more trees was also favorable. Solar, particularly on municipal buildings and exploring options for wind energy were also common ideas.

The incorporation of hybrid vehicles to the Town's vehicle fleet was mentioned.

In general, most attendees felt that the Town is doing an ok job protecting environmental resources, but preservation of existing properties, and cleanup at the beaches was discussed. Concerns about sea level rise and coastal flooding were common. Most residents emphasized the need for further clean up and remediation of contaminated properties.

Resiliency & Waterfront Redevelopment

- **In twenty years from now, would you prefer living by the water (near Stratford Coast) or away from the coast? Why?**
- **How could Stratford's waterfront be improved?**

Summary

Many participants said that they feel that Stratford is a coastal community, so despite not living right on the water, they feel very connected to it and believe they have adequate access to the coast. Some residents said they would love to live right on the water, but it's expensive to do so. Other residents expressed concerns about sea level rise in the coming years and did not want to live on the water. When discussing improvements to the waterfront, attendees emphasized the need to ensure public access is



preserved along Stratford's waterfront, particularly at the Stratford Army Engine Plan property. Expanding marina and boating uses and providing transient dock slips for boaters wishing to visit Stratford's restaurants was discussed. Milford was cited as an example of marine tourism, where boaters can dock and visit a local restaurant or shop and spend money in the community. The need to continue to dredge and maintain the channels was also discussed. Access to the Housatonic River and expansion of the Greenway along it is favorable.

Placemaking & Urban Design

- **Where do you spend time with family and friends in Stratford (specify public places only)? How can we promote more such places in Stratford and where?**
- **What Town in Connecticut or the New England region would serve as a good role model for encouraging positive growth and development in Stratford? Why?**
- **If you were to re-imagine the look of Stratford's major transportation corridors such as Barnum Avenue or Stratford Avenue, what would they look like?**

Summary

Stratford's beaches and waterfront were most commonly cited when attendees talked about where they spend time. Other locations such as Roosevelt Forest, Paradise Green, Pirhala's Farm, and the Shakespeare property were also common responses. The desire for more community events such as Main Street Festival and Blues on the Beach was described. The need for more activities and things to do for Stratford's youth was commonly talked about. The Library and Baldwin Center are great assets to the community, and perhaps the library should be expanded. In general, attendees felt that the Town did a great job adapting and responding to COVID.

Communities such as Fairfield, Milford, and Branford were identified as suitable role models for growth and development. Other communities like Old Saybrook, Shelton and West Hartford were also cited. The desire for a walkable, centralized downtown was a common theme with



all the responses. Many attendees also said Stratford should become the role model to other communities.

When re-imagining the look of Stratford’s transportation corridors, residents felt that the planters along Main Street in the summer are beautiful, and that the Town should do more beautification projects like that. The need for aesthetic improvements and curb appeal such as lighting, and streetscape design was commonly talked about. Residents are in favor of the murals on some of the local businesses. The need for a greater variety of stores and business was also expressed. Wider sidewalks, bicycle lanes, and traffic circles were also common topics discussed.

General

- **What if anything would cause you to leave Stratford in the next ten years? Schools? High taxes? Not enough housing choices? No high quality parks? Very few places to have fun? Rising waters? Other_____**
- **Are there any issues that should be considered as part of the Stratford POCD?**

Summary

High taxes were cited most frequently as a reason residents would leave Stratford in the next ten years. Additional growth that changes Stratford’s character and sense of community was commonly discussed. The lack of older adult housing and affordability was also a concern that many attendees stated. Coastal resiliency was a fear for many participants. Some residents commented that Connecticut is not a State that is favorable to retirees and that affordability in retirement is a concern.



When discussing issues that should be addressed as part of the Stratford POCD, many attendees felt that neighborhood preservation is key, and that any new development should fit the character of the existing neighborhoods. Developers who try and manipulate or change existing zoning to fit their needs was cited as an issue. The lack of older adult housing in Stratford was also an issue commonly discussed. The need for more economic development and business to combat the Town’s high taxes was talked about. Additionally, the desire to beautify Main Street and other areas of Town was widespread. In general, participants felt that the remediation and redevelopment at the Stratford Army Engine Plant and other contaminated properties is taking too long.

Technical Advisory Committee Meetings

A Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) was established early in the POCD process to guide and provide input for the development of the Plan. The TAC was comprised of approximately 25 members, many of whom are Department Heads from the various Town of Stratford municipal services departments. Including representatives from all of Stratford’s municipal departments and other organizations such as the Metropolitan Council of Governments (MetroCOG), ensured that a diverse range of issues and opportunities were discussed during these interactive and collaborative meetings. To date, six TAC meetings have been held on a monthly basis, with the goal of discussing various Plan topics, issues, and ideas and to provide the Committee updates about community engagement.

Survey Metrics

Inclusive engagement of the Stratford community throughout the POCD process has been very successful. During Pop-up events, the project team talked to hundreds of residents about their thoughts, concerns, and ideas for the future of Stratford. Residents of all age groups, income levels, geographic location, and race were engaged. During the workshops, which were held at different geographic locations across Stratford, approximately 35-50 Stratford residents were in attendance at each of the workshops. The online survey has generated responses from a diverse range of residents, of varying ages, residing in different areas in Stratford.

Interviews with Boards and Commission Members

The project team conducted ten interviews with boards and commission members regarding the topics covered in the POCD. The full list of boards and commissions interviewed is posted to the Plan Stratford project website along with summary notes of each discussion. In total, **about 60 boards and commissions members** participated in interviews. The boards and commissions interviews focused on the goals that have been accomplished since the previous POCD and what factors have made those results possible. The project team inquired how each board or

commission's goals have changed and what their current objectives are. This will inform the long-term vision and reasonable metrics for each topic that may be included in the next iteration of the POCD.

The following are sample questions from the interviews with boards and commissions members. The questions were tailored to each topic but followed the same general outline:

1. What are the strengths; what does the Town do well?
2. What progress has been made in the last 10 years towards the goals of the board/commission?
3. What are the issues that need to be addressed?
4. What needs does your board/commission have that the Town could or should respond to?
5. What plans does your board/commission have over the next several years that could impact the town?
6. What is your vision for your board/commission or the services that it provides? In what ways could or should it change over the next ten years?

Stakeholder Interviews

The project team conducted five stakeholder interviews where each interview focused on a distinct topic. The topics included mobility, natural environment, economic development, community facilities, or historic and cultural resources. In total, **about 50 stakeholders** attended from local departments and services, the Connecticut Metropolitan Council of Governments (MetroCOG), State





agencies, non-governmental organizations, and local businesses. Each interview asked the stakeholder group attending about Stratford’s strengths, challenges, and opportunities for their specific topic. The discussion posed questions regarding individual organizations’ existing services, goals and objectives, and plans for growth. The Project Team also asked about the organizations’ limitations and how the Town may provide further resources to support these needs. The stakeholder interviews served as collaborative meetings between representatives from different organizations who are working on the same topics. The POCD document will incorporate the interviews’ key takeaways to update the Plan’s goals so that they are reflective of lessons shared, coordinated across services, and strategic for potential funding opportunities.

Interactive Mapping Tool

An Interactive Mapping Tool was posted to the Plan Stratford project website. Users added markers to a map of Stratford identifying spots where they like something about Stratford or where they think something can be improved. Users were prompted to provide a written description of what they liked or disliked at the spot where they placed their marker. Responses were posted anonymously to the tool’s webpage, so any comments earlier users had submitted were publicly available.



Overall, **235 markers were placed on the map**. Fifty-two markers are categorized as “What do you like about Stratford” in green, and the remaining 183 markers are categorized as “What should be improved” in red. Locations were identified and commented on throughout Stratford. There are some clusters around Roosevelt Forest, Shakespeare Park, and Stratford Army Engine Plant. There are also clusters along Barnum Avenue, Main Street, Ferry Boulevard, Stratford Avenue, and Lordship Boulevard. The specific locations for each comment have been reviewed by the project team. In summary, the main themes that users like about Stratford include the maintenance and restoration of parks, beaches, marshes, and open spaces. The main themes that users think should be improved include new tree plantings, better maintained streetscapes, and more road safety features. Additionally, many comments discuss future land use including both suggestions and concerns for new residential and commercial development.

