TOWN OF NEWINGTON

**TOWN PLAN AND ZONING COMMISSION**

FEBRUARY 26, 2020 - 7:00 P.M.

Town Hall - Auditorium

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**AGENDA**

I. WELCOMING REMARKS

II. PRESENTATION OF DRAFT POCD

Documents:

POCD FINAL DRAFT 03FEB2020.PDF

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS

IV. REMARKS BY COMMISSIONERS

V. ADJOURN

REVISED POCD DRAFT – For Community Meeting

# NEWINGTON

## 2020 Plan Of Conservation And Development

**DRAFT FOR COMMUNITY MEETING**

**FEBRUARY 2020**

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# WELCOME!

January 2020

To Newington Residents,

This is the DRAFT 2020 Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) for Newington. The Town Plan and Zoning Commission will be holding a community workshop meeting to get comments from residents, businesses, and property owners on:

**Wednesday February 26 at 7:00 PM**
**Town Hall Auditorium**
**131 Cedar Street**

This DRAFT is an update of the 2010 Plan of Conservation and Development based on:

- The provisions of Section 8-23 of the Connecticut General Statutes,
- Current conditions and trends affecting Newington,
- Independent research and investigation,
- Input from local boards, commissions, departments, and agencies, and
- Working meetings of the Town Plan and Zoning Commission.

Following the community workshop meeting, it is envisioned that this DRAFT will be reviewed and refined by the Town Plan and Zoning Commission before moving forward with adoption and implementation.

We look forward to your comments and input at the meeting on February 26.

Sincerely,

*Newington Town Plan & Zoning Commission*

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# INTRODUCTION

This document is the 2020 Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) for Newington, Connecticut. This POCD update was prepared by the Town Plan and Zoning Commission (TPZ) with input from Newington residents and from other local boards and commissions.

A Plan of Conservation and Development is a document which is intended to establish a common vision for the future of a community and then determine strategies that will help attain that vision.

Every so often, it makes sense for a community to evaluate the conditions and trends affecting the community and make informed decisions about how it should approach the future in order to:

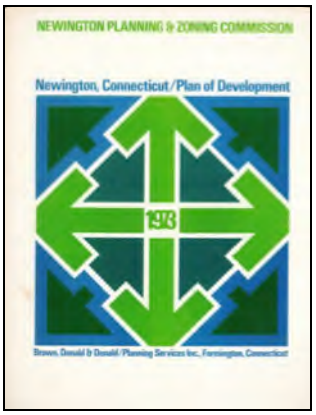
- Protect things important to the community (conservation strategies),
- Wisely manage our use of resources to help maintain and improve the community for future generations (sustainability strategies);
- Guide uses and activities in ways that will provide things the community wants or needs (development strategies), and
- Provide for things which will enhance the overall health and well-being of the community and the quality of life of its residents (infrastructure strategies).

The strategies in the POCD are intended to reflect a consensus of what is considered desirable for Newington and its residents in the future.

## Prior Plans

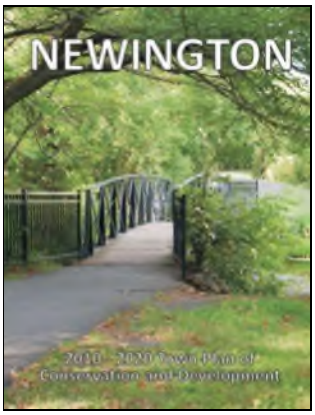
Newington prepared and adopted POCDs in the past to address community issues and opportunities and this POCD is being prepared for the same reasons.

**1973 POCD**




**1995 POCD**

**2010 POCD**




The preparation and adoption of a POCD is a responsibility of a municipal planning commission (as per Section 8-23 of the Connecticut General Statutes).

## POCD Preparation Process

The POCD was prepared by the TPZ with assistance from Town Staff and a planning consultant. Public participation occurred throughout the planning process so that the POCD would reflect a consensus on Newington's vision for its future.

The process involved the following elements:

- Independent research / investigation by a planning consultant
- Community meetings to help understand community concerns
- Preparation of briefing booklets covering key POCD topics based on the 2010 POCD and independent research / investigation
- Review / discussion of briefing booklets by the TPZ intended to generate consensus on planning strategies for Newington's future
- Preparation of a first draft of a POCD
- Review / discussion of POCD first draft by the TPZ
- Community meeting to get feedback on revised POCD draft
- Refinement of POCD by TPZ based on community input
- Adoption of updated POCD

EXCERPTS FROM CONNECTICUT GENERAL STATUTES 8-23

# Plan of Conservation and Development

### A Planning Commission shall:

- Prepare, adopt and amend a plan of conservation and development ...
- Review the plan of conservation and development at least once every ten years ...
- Adopt such amendments to the plan or parts of the plan ... as the commission deems necessary to update the plan.

### The Plan of Conservation and Development shall:

- be a statement of policies, goals and standards for the physical and economic development of the municipality, ...
- Show the commission's recommendation for the most desirable use of land within the municipality for residential, recreational, commercial, … conservation, agricultural and other purposes and for the most desirable density of population in the ... parts of the municipality.
- 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.
- Make provision for the development of housing opportunities, including opportunities for multifamily dwellings consistent with soil types, terrain and infrastructure capacity, for all residents of the municipality and the planning region ...
- 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 ...
- Take into account the state plan of conservation and development ... and note any inconsistencies it may have with said state plan.
- Consider the use of cluster development to the extent consistent with soil types, terrain, and infrastructure capacity.
- Consider the … protection and preservation of agriculture,

### The Plan of Conservation and Development may:

- Show the commission's recommendation for a system of principal thoroughfares, parkways, bridges, streets and other public ways; for airports, parks, playgrounds and other public grounds; for general location, relocation and improvement of public buildings; for the general location and extent of public utilities and terminals, whether publicly or privately owned for water, sewerage, light, power, transit and other purposes; and for the extent and location of public housing projects.
- Include recommended programs for the implementation of the plan ...
- (Include) such other recommendations ... in the plan as will ... be beneficial to the municipality.

# POCD Vision

As part of preparing this POCD, the vision statements from the 2010 were reviewed, refined, and carried forward as part of this POCD:

## Vision Statements

Newington will continue to protect its environmental resources, particularly its wetlands and Cedar Mountain. Identifying additional open space and striving to create an open space system will be a priority as will the stewardship of the community's land resources. Newington will continue to maintain its historic resources, housing stock, public buildings, parks, schools and infrastructure at the highest quality possible.

Newington will continue to be *primarily* a medium density single-family, owner-occupied community, with safe neighborhoods and excellent community services. Newington will seek ways to diversify its housing mix to meet the changing housing needs of present and future residents.

Newington will place a high priority on the vitality of its Town Center; the appearance of the Center; and the Center's location as the place for governmental and institutional buildings. Newington will strive to maintain the Center's New England character and compact size and discourage expansion into adjacent residential areas.

Newington will look at ways to take advantage of transportation services (such as a proposed rail station and the existing CT Fastrak busway stations) to enhance the community, including its economy and housing portfolio.

Newington will continue to recognize that the quality of life in the community is influenced and enhanced by the non-residential land uses that support the Town's grand list. While these uses are essential to a vibrant and economically successful community; changes in zoning districts will be evaluated based on the characteristics of the surrounding area.

Newington will use its location within the Capitol Region as an asset to encourage new development and the reuse of older sites in harmony with surrounding areas.

## POCD Organization

Following this Introduction, the POCD contains a summary of the conditions and trends affecting Newington at the time this POCD was being prepared and an outline of input and feedback from residents about issues important to them.

Then, the chapters of the POCD are organized around four main thematic elements used to organize the goals and strategies for the future of Newington. Each element contains one or more chapters addressing specific topics of importance to Newington going forward.

Following these four strategic elements, there are sections on plan consistency and implementation.

**Terms Explained**

The POCD contains two types of recommendations or strategies. These are located at the end of each policy chapter of the POCD

Policies are statements in ***black text*** suggesting ways that Newington should evaluate proposed activities or initiatives to implement the POCD. Note that policies may never be considered "implemented" since they are intended to be on-going.

Action steps are specific tasks in ***red text*** which can be taken to implement the POCD. Action steps can be considered implemented when complete.

# Using The Town Plan

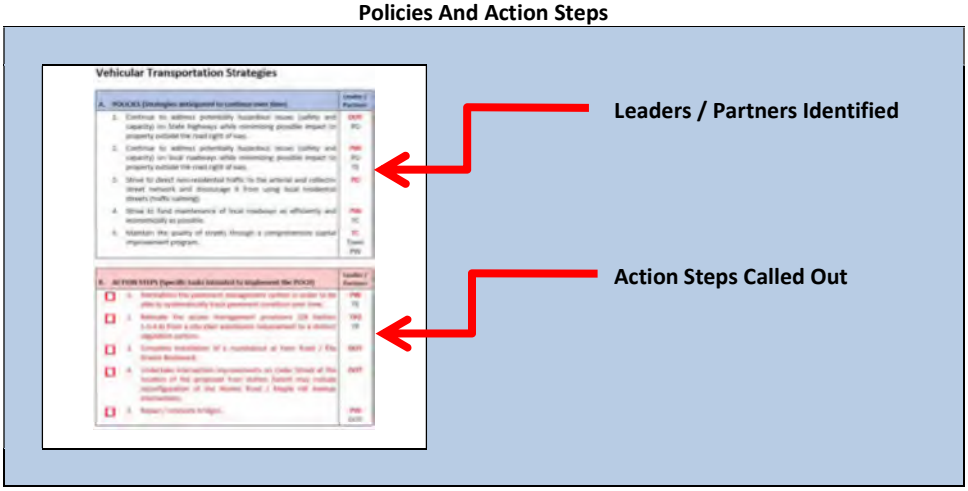
Implementation is the most important part of the planning process and a key focus in this POCD. Even though the POCD is an advisory document, it is intended to:

- Provide a framework for consistent decision-making in Newington over the next decade or so, and
- Guide local boards and commissions in such efforts.

Several elements of this POCD have been specifically configured to promote implementation:

1. **Action Steps Specifically Called Out** – Action steps (described in the sidebar) have a separate table to highlight the *pro-active steps* that should be taken to implement the POCD.
2. **Policies Organized** – Policies (described in the sidebar) have been organized to facilitate their use by the TPZ (and others) to evaluate potential actions in terms of POCD consistency, such as:
   - Zoning amendments (text or map changes).
   - Preparing its advisory report to the Town Council when reviewing municipal improvement requests (as provided in CGS Section 8-24).
   - Reviewing inter-town zoning and subdivision referral notices for advisory reports to the Capitol Region Council of Governments.
   - Reviewing and commenting on the Capital Improvement Plan's recommended project schedule.
3. **Leaders / Partners Identified** – Each policy and action step in the POCD has a leader (and often one or more partners) identified. These are the entities most responsible for implementation of that policy or action step. Experience has shown that specifically identifying the responsible entity has a dramatic effect on implementation. A legend for acronyms used to identify leaders and partners is on the inside back cover.

**Policies And Action Steps**



# CONDITIONS & TRENDS

## Overview

This section of the POCD provides a general overview of conditions and trends affecting Newington at the time the 2020 Plan of Conservation and Development was being prepared.

## History of Newington

The landform of the area we now know as Newington evolved over millions of years as a result of geologic forces. Native Americans are known to have inhabited this area for the past 10,000 years or so. European discovery and settlement of New England by the English and Dutch began in the early 1600s. Settlement in this area began in the 1630s at Windsor, Hartford (Dutch Point), Wethersfield and Old Saybrook.

As population grew in these early settlements, people moved further outward in order to have land to farm and to support their families. The area we now know as Newington was settled by people from the Wethersfield colony after a land "purchase" around 1665. Early settlers were generally subsistence farmers.

Over time, settlers became frustrated over the rigors of travelling to Wethersfield to participate in religious and governmental meetings, especially during the winter months. In 1713, permission was granted to establish a separate parish named Wethersfield West which was renamed Newington in 1721. Residents still had to travel to Wethersfield for town meetings.

This relationship worked well for the next 160 years or so. However, disagreements with Wethersfield over dedication of tax revenues towards desired road improvements led to an effort to incorporate as a separate municipality. This petition was approved in 1871 and Newington became the 166$^{th}$ municipality in Connecticut.

The advent of the trolley car, bus service, and the automobile brought more growth in the early 20th century and Newington grew rapidly, especially after World War II. Newington's geographical location in the center of the state, proximity to Hartford, plus great improvement in highways have attracted many new residents and businesses over the years.

**Newington's Population**

| | |
|---|---|
| **1880** | 934 |
| **1890** | 953 |
| **1900** | 1,041 |
| **1910** | 1,689 |
| **1920** | 2,381 |
| **1930** | 4,572 |
| **1940** | 5,449 |
| **1950** | 9,110 |
| **1960** | 17,664 |
| **1970** | 26,037 |
| **1980** | 28,841 |
| **1990** | 29,208 |
| **2000** | 29,306 |
| **2010** | 30,562 |
| **2020** | 31,185 |
| **2030** | 32,576 |
| **2040** | 34,156 |

US Census data for 1870 to 2010. Projections by the Connecticut State Data Center based on a cohort survival model.

# People Of Newington

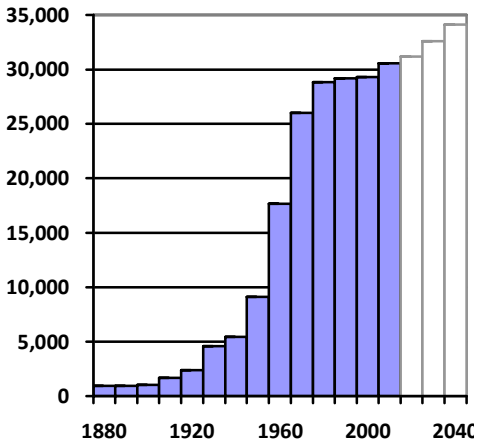
The American Community Survey estimates that Newington had a population of 30,603 people in 2017. This represents a modest increase of 41 people from the 30,562 persons reported in the 2010 Census.

As can be seen from the adjacent table and chart, Newington grew significantly between about 1945 and 1980.

Population projections, which extrapolate recent trends (birth rates, death rates, net migration) into the future, suggest that the number of Newington residents will increase in the future.

Of course, it must be remembered that these are projections and variations can occur, especially further into the future.

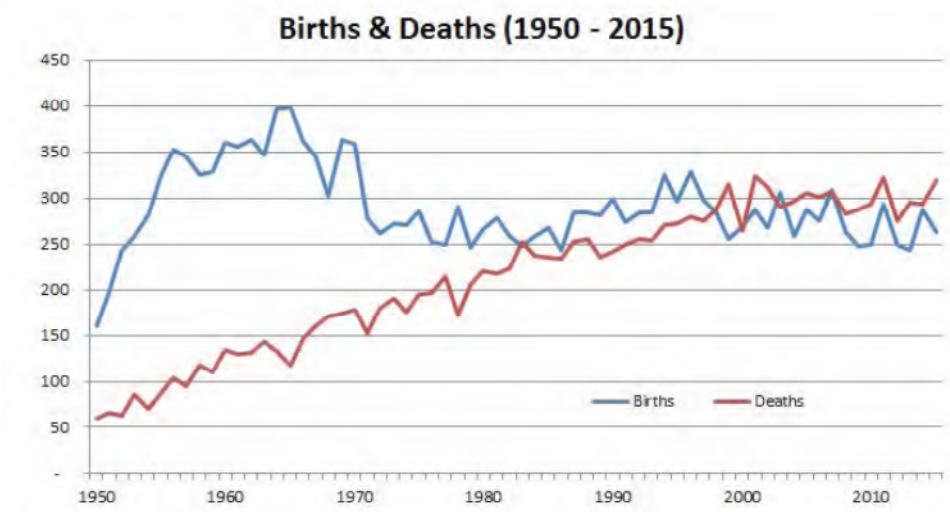
**1880 – 2010 Population (with projections to 2040)**




US Census

**Population Change Driven Mostly By Net Migration**

As can be seen by the following chart, the number of births and deaths in Newington has fluctuated over time due to demographic and economic factors. Births were quite pronounced in the 1950s and 1960s during what is referred to as the "baby boom" (a nation-wide surge in births between 1945 and 1965). Natural increase (births minus deaths) has been flat since the year 2000 or so.



Overall, population has grown in Newington in each of the last six decades has been driven by net in-migration of new residents. In the last two decades, the net in-migration has offset a natural decrease of population where the number of deaths exceeded the number of births.

**Components of Population Change**

| | 1950s | 1960s | 1970s | 1980s | 1990s | 2000s |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **If the Census indicates the population changed this much in this decade …** | **+8,554** | **+8,373** | **+2,804** | **+367** | **+98** | **+1,256** |
| **And this much "natural change" occurred as a result of births and deaths …** | **+1,960** | **+2,154** | **+905** | **+306** | **(36)** | **(201)** |
| Births | +2,817 | +3,593 | +2,765 | +2,671 | +2,930 | +2,770 |
| Deaths | (857) | (1,439) | (1,860) | (2,365) | (2,966) | (2,971) |
| **The net change in people moving in (or out) of Newington during the decade was …** | **+6,594** | **+6,219** | **+1,899** | **+61** | **+134** | **+1,457** |

US Census, Connecticut Health Department reports, Planimetrics

The impact of migration is an important consideration in Newington since Census data shows that ***almost 45 percent*** of all households in Newington moved to their housing unit in the prior decade.

**Decade That 2010 Householder Moved To Housing Unit**

| | 2000 | 2010 | Share Of All Units | 2000s Change | Retention Rate |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **2000s** | - | 5,349 | **44%** | +5,349 | - |
| **1990s** | 5,808 | 2,648 | **22%** | -3.160 | 46% |
| **1980s** | 2,314 | 1,461 | **12%** | -853 | 63% |
| **1970s or earlier** | 3,892 | 2,673 | **22%** | -1,219 | 69% |
| **Total** | 12,014 | 12,131 | **100%** | | - |

2000 Census, 2010 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate

From looking at the changes in age composition over the decades (and interpolating net migration), it appears that Newington tends to attract young adults (ages 25 to 39) and their children. These are the age groups most associated with renters and first-time homebuyers.

While there is some net out-migration above age 50, this number is modest and is dwarfed by the number of people aging into these age cohorts.

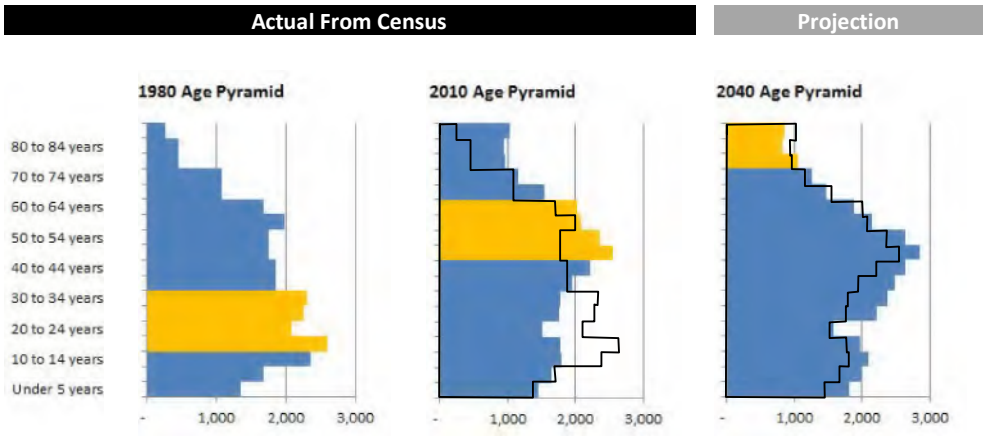
| Newington's Median Age | |
|---|---|
| 1960 | 32.6 |
| 1970 | 30.2 |
| 1980 | 34.5 |
| 1990 | 39.0 |
| 2000 | 41.9 |
| 2010 | 43.6 |
| *2020 (proj.)* | *42.6* |
| *2030 (proj.)* | *41.1* |
| *2040 (proj.)* | *41.0* |

US Census, Planimetrics

## Newington's Age Composition Is Changing

Overall, the changing age composition of Newington may be the most significant demographic consideration. The following age composition charts show the number of people in each 5-year age group (by the width of the bar) from 1980 to 2010 with projections to 2040.

People considered part of the "baby boom" (people born between about 1945 and 1965) are shown in orange. The black outlines show the age composition 30 years earlier so that changes can be seen more readily.




Estimates from the American Community Survey for 2017 indicate that:

- About 27 percent of all Newington households have one or more people under the age of 18 (potential school children), and
- About 43 percent of all Newington households have one or more people 60 years of age or older.

## Newington Is Becoming More Diverse

In addition to a changing age composition, Newington is changing in other ways as well. Similar to the state and the nation, Newington is becoming a more racially and ethnically diverse community.

**Community Diversity (1980 - 2010)**

| | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 | 2010 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **White** | 28,274 | 28,197 | 27,393 | 26,436 |
| **Non-White** | 567 | 1,011 | 1,913 | 4,126 |
| **Percent Non-White** | 2% | 4% | 7% | 14% |
| **Non-Hispanic** | 28,507 | 28,596 | 28,227 | 28,254 |
| **Hispanic** | 334 | 612 | 1,079 | 2,308 |
| **Percent Hispanic** | 1% | 2% | 4% | 8% |

1980 – 2000 Census

# Economy Of Newington

A local economy is important in terms of:

- Providing for jobs and income for people,
- Ensuring a range of goods and services is available, and
- Providing tax revenue to support local services.

There are over 950 businesses in Newington and the town is known for its retail shopping opportunities along the Berlin Turnpike and the business and industry located in local industrial parks and elsewhere in the community.

Median household income (half the households earn more and half the households earn less) is one way to gauge the strength of the local economy.

The value of taxable property in a municipality is important because it supports municipal budgets and services provided within the community. The percent of the real estate tax base that is comprised of businesses is an important consideration to many people since business uses typically provide revenue but do not demand as much in services. This revenue is then available to provide services that primarily benefit residents of the community.

**Jobs In Newington**

| | |
|---|---|
| 1963 | 8,035 |
| 1970 | 12,421 |
| 1980 | 13,400 |
| 1990 | 1,7330 |
| 2000 | 18,070 |
| 2010 | 16,186 |
| 2016 | 16,839 |

CT Labor Dept.

**Jobs In The Municipality**

| | |
|---|---|
| **Hartford** | 111,165 |
| **West Hartford** | 28,758 |
| **New Britain** | 24,803 |
| **Rocky Hill** | 17,370 |
| **Newington** | **16,839** |
| **Berlin** | 11,775 |
| **Wethersfield** | 10,201 |

CERC, 2019

**Jobs / Housing Balance**

| | |
|---|---|
| **Hartford** | 2.1 |
| **Rocky Hill** | 2.0 |
| **Berlin** | 1.4 |
| **Newington** | **1.3** |
| **West Hartford** | 1.1 |
| **Wethersfield** | 0.9 |
| **New Britain** | 0.8 |

CERC, 2019

**Self-Employment Rate**

| | |
|---|---|
| **West Hartford** | 11.0% |
| **Berlin** | 9.2% |
| **Wethersfield** | 8.9% |
| **Newington** | **7.1%** |
| **Rocky Hill** | 6.3% |
| **Hartford** | 5.4% |
| **New Britain** | 5.0% |

CERC, 2019

**Median Household Income**

| | |
|---|---|
| **Berlin** | $93,750 |
| **West Hartford** | $91,875 |
| **Rocky Hill** | $81,988 |
| **Newington** | **$80,315** |
| **Wethersfield** | $78,371 |
| **New Britain** | $41,844 |
| **Hartford** | $32,095 |

CERC, 2019

**Per Capita Grand List**

| | |
|---|---|
| **Rocky Hill** | $158,725 |
| **Berlin** | 152,031 |
| **West Hartford** | $148,220 |
| **Newington** | **$126,985** |
| **Wethersfield** | $118,513 |
| **Hartford** | $52,709 |
| **New Britain** | $50,285 |

CERC, 2019

**Percent Business Tax Base**

| | |
|---|---|
| **Hartford** | 35% |
| **Rocky Hill** | 23% |
| **Newington** | **19%** |
| **Berlin** | 17% |
| **New Britain** | 15% |
| **West Hartford** | 14% |
| **Wethersfield** | 10% |

CERC, 2019

**Historic Housing Stock**

| | |
|---|---|
| 1960 | 4,972 |
| 1970 | 7,655 |
| 1980 | 10,445 |
| 1990 | 11,609 |
| 2000 | 12,264 |
| 2010 | 12,550 |

Historic - 1900 - 2010 Census.

**Average Household Size**

| | |
|---|---|
| 1960 | 3.55 |
| 1970 | 3.40 |
| 1980 | 2.77 |
| 1990 | 2.56 |
| 2000 | 2.44 |
| 2010 | 2.43 |

Historic - 1900 - 2010 Census.

# Housing In Newington

## Overall Housing Growth

According to the American Community Survey, Newington had about 12,871 housing units in 2017. From 1990 to 2010, Newington added an average of about *47 housing units per year*. This is well below the growth rate in prior decades when Newington was adding about *160 to 270 housing units per year*.

While there is only a limited amount of undeveloped land remaining, there could be potential for additional housing development through redevelopment of existing properties.

## Housing Occupancy

Over time, the number of people per occupied housing unit in Newington has been decreasing (although it may have stabilized between 2000 and 2010). In 2010, about 62 percent of all housing units in Newington were occupied by one or two people. Only about 3 in 8 households contained more than two residents.

If household sizes were to continue to get smaller and no new housing units were built, Newington would have a lower population in the future. In the past, Newington has added enough new housing units to offset the fact that exiting housing units are occupied by fewer people.

**Single-Family Detached Home**

**Single-Family Detached Home**

**Townhouse (Piper Brook)**

**Multi-Unit Building (Bradford Commons)**

Newington has a diverse housing stock. About 64% of all housing units in Newington are single-family detached homes and the other units are in 2-4 family dwellings or multi-family buildings. About 78% of all housing units in Newington are owner-occupied.

Housing affordability is an issue throughout Connecticut and communities are recognizing that community vitality, community diversity, and economic development can all be enhanced by having a housing portfolio which includes affordable units. Measures of affordability include units which:

- Represent "naturally occurring" affordable housing since they sell or rent at prices affordable to low- and moderate-income persons and families, and
- Meet the statutory definition of "affordable housing" (see sidebar).

Newington has a number of housing units which are naturally affordable to low- and moderate-income persons and families. While Newington has almost 1,100 units meeting the statutory definition of "affordable housing", this represents less than 10 percent of the local housing stock and so Newington is subject the State affordable housing appeals procedure.

**Affordable Housing Defined**

In order for a housing unit to qualify as an affordable unit under CGS 8-30g, a dwelling must be:

- Governmentally assisted housing (funded under a state or federal program);
- Occupied by a person receiving tenant rental assistance under a program for income-qualifying persons or families);
- Financed under a government program for income-qualifying persons or families; or
- Housing that is deed restricted to be affordable to low- or moderate-income persons or families for at least 40 years.

Until 10% of a community's housing stock is affordable, it is subject to an affordable housing appeals procedure that shifts the burden of proof to the community to show that threats to public health or safety outweigh the need for affordable housing.

| Percent Single Family | |
|---|---|
| **Berlin** | 76% |
| **Wethersfield** | 74% |
| **West Hartford** | 66% |
| **Newington** | **64%** |
| **Rocky Hill** | 48% |
| **New Britain** | 29% |
| **Hartford** | 15% |

CERC, 2019

| Percent Owner-Occupied | |
|---|---|
| **Berlin** | 83% |
| **Newington** | **78%** |
| **Wethersfield** | 76% |
| **West Hartford** | 71% |
| **Rocky Hill** | 66% |
| **New Britain** | 45% |
| **Hartford** | 24% |

CERC, 2019

| Average Household Size | |
|---|---|
| **Hartford** | 2.7 |
| **Berlin** | 2.6 |
| **New Britain** | 2.6 |
| **West Hartford** | 2.6 |
| **Newington** | **2.4** |
| **Rocky Hill** | 2.4 |
| **Wethersfield** | 2.4 |

CERC, 2019

| Median Sales Price | |
|---|---|
| **West Hartford** | $318,800 |
| **Berlin** | $288,000 |
| **Rocky Hill** | $254,400 |
| **Wethersfield** | $246,200 |
| **Newington** | **$228,000** |
| **Hartford** | $159,100 |
| **New Britain** | $157,300 |

CERC, 2019

| Median Rent | |
|---|---|
| **Rocky Hill** | $1,304 |
| **West Hartford** | $1,236 |
| **Newington** | **$1,163** |
| **Berlin** | $1,097 |
| **Wethersfield** | $1,025 |
| **New Britain** | $925 |
| **Hartford** | $914 |

CERC, 2019

| Pct. "Affordable" Housing | |
|---|---|
| **Hartford** | 38% |
| **New Britain** | 18% |
| **Wethersfield** | 9% |
| **Berlin** | 9% |
| **Newington** | **8%** |
| **West Hartford** | 8% |
| **Rocky Hill** | 5% |

CERC, 2019

**Terminology**

**Developed Land** – land that has buildings, structures, or improvements used for a particular economic or social purpose (such as residential or institutional).

**Committed Land** – land that is used for a particular economic or social purpose (such as roads or open space).

**Vacant Land** – land that is not developed or committed.

**Dedicated Open Space** - land owned by the Federal government, the State, the Town, land trusts, or conservation organizations intended to remain for open space purposes.

**Managed Open Space** - land owned by non-government organizations which is used for other purposes, but provides open space benefits.

# Land Use In Newington

According to digital mapping, Newington contains approximately 8,383 acres. A summary of land use information based on the assessor's records found that about 93 percent of Newington's land area had been developed or committed to different uses and about 580 acres could be available for conservation and/or development in the future.

| | Acres | Percent of Developed / Committed | Percent of Total Area |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Residential Uses**<br>Single-Family Residential<br>2-4 F Residential<br>Multi-Family Residential | **3,485** | **45%** | **42%** |
| **Business Uses**<br>Business / Commercial<br>Industrial / Technology | **1,382** | **18%** | **16%** |
| **Open Space**<br>Dedicated Open Space<br>Managed Open Space / Water Co. | **1,133** | **15%** | **14%** |
| **Community Facility / Institutional**<br>Community Facilities<br>Institutional | **699** | **9%** | **8%** |
| **Other**<br>Roads / Rail / Busway<br>Utility | **1,104** | **14%** | **13%** |
| **Developed / Committed** | **7,804** | **100%** | **92%** |
| **Vacant** | **580** | | **7%** |
| **Total** | **8,383** | | **100%** |

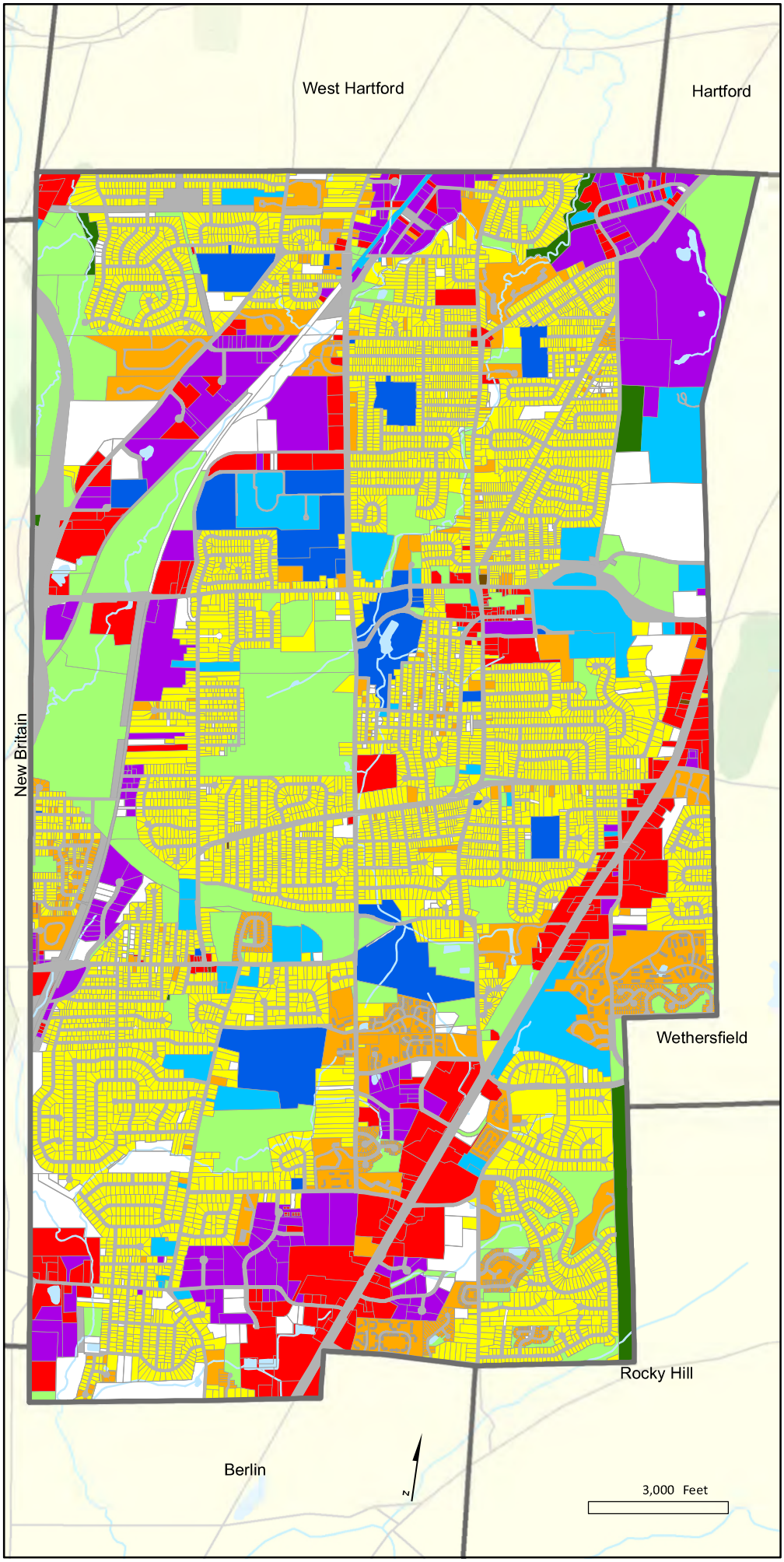
Planimetrics and New England GeoSystems based on Assessor database. Totals may not add due to rounding

**Residential Use**

**Business Use**

# Land Use

## Newington, CT




**Residential**

- Single Family Residential
- Multi-Family Residential

**Business / Industrial**

- Business / Commercial
- Mixed Use
- Industrial

**Institutional**

- Community Facility
- Institutional

**Open Space**

- Dedicated Open Space
- Managed Open Space

**Other**

- Utility / Transportation
- Vacant

# Zoning In Newington

According to digital mapping of the community, about 58 percent of Newington is zoned for residential development. Approximately 25 percent of the community is zoned for business development and industrial development.

| | Acres | | Percent of Total Land Area |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Residential** | | **4,891** | **58%** |
| R-7 – About 5.0 units per acre | 147 | | |
| R-12 – About 3.0 units per acre | 2,774 | | |
| R-20 – About 2.0 units per acre | 1,235 | | |
| RP – Planned Residential | 576 | | |
| RD – Designed Residential | 159 | | |
| **Business** | | **1,052** | **13%** |
| Business – Town Center | 43 | | |
| Business / Commercial Development | 89 | | |
| Business – Berlin Turnpike | 155 | | |
| Planned Development | 766 | | |
| **Industrial** | | **985** | **12%** |
| Industrial | 985 | | |
| **Other Zones** | | **961** | **11%** |
| Open Space | 767 | | |
| Public Land | 194 | | |
| **Non-Zoned** | | **493** | **7%** |
| Roads / Rights-Of-Way | | | |
| **Total** | | **8,383** | **100%** |

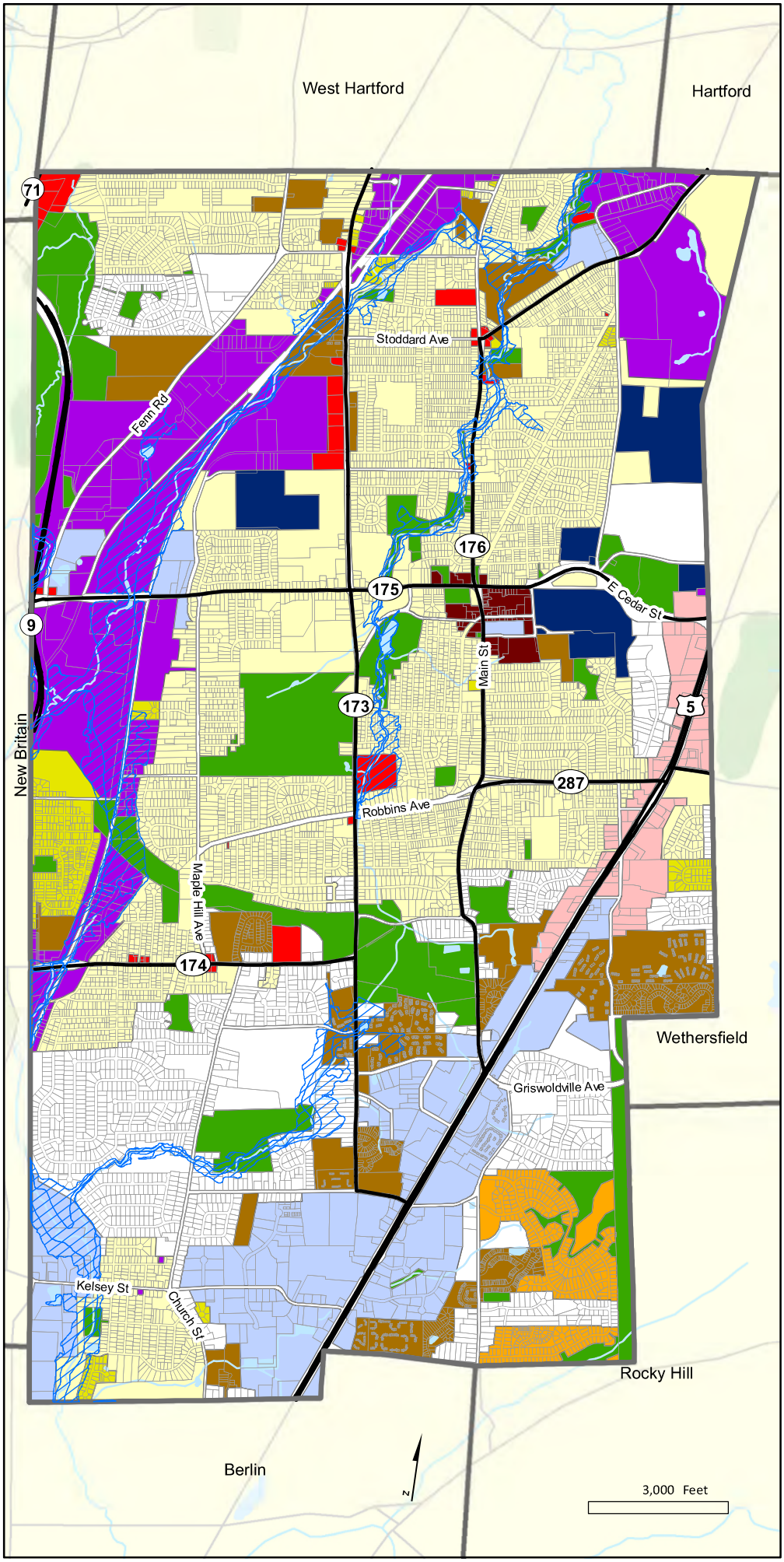
Planimetrics and New England GeoSystems based on Assessor database. Totals may not add due to rounding

**Residential Zoned Area**

**Business Zoned Area**

# Zoning

## Newington, CT




### Residential

- R-7 Residential
- R-12 Residential
- R-20 Residential
- RD Residential Designed
- RP Residential Planned

### Business

- B-TC Business - Town Center
- B / CD Business / Comm. Dev.
- B-BT Business - Berlin Turnpike
- PD Planned Development

### Industrial

- I Industrial

### Other

- OS Open Space
- PL Public Land
- 100-Year Flood Plain

# Fiscal Overview

Key fiscal indicators which reflect the circumstances affecting Newington and surrounding communities are presented below.

Equalized mill rate is a way to compare the mill rate between municipalities since it is based on the full market value of all taxable property in a municipality estimated by the Connecticut Office of Policy and Management.

| Equalized Mill Rate | |
|---|---|
| **Hartford** | 40.47 |
| **New Britain** | 33.29 |
| **Wethersfield** | 27.16 |
| **West Hartford** | 24.57 |
| **Newington** | **23.67** |
| **Berlin** | 21.34 |
| **Rocky Hill** | 18.81 |

CERC, 2019

| Per Capita Tax Levy | |
|---|---|
| **West Hartford** | $3,642 |
| **Berlin** | $3,244 |
| **Wethersfield** | $3,219 |
| **Newington** | **$3,006** |
| **Rocky Hill** | $2,985 |
| **Hartford** | $2,133 |
| **New Britain** | $1,674 |

CERC, 2019

| Percent State Aid | |
|---|---|
| **Hartford** | 50% |
| **New Britain** | 44% |
| **Newington** | 22% |
| **Wethersfield** | **17%** |
| **Berlin** | 16% |
| **West Hartford** | 16% |
| **Rocky Hill** | 15% |

CERC, 2019

| Education Share of Spending | |
|---|---|
| **Newington** | 67% |
| **Wethersfield** | 64% |
| **West Hartford** | 64% |
| **New Britain** | 61% |
| **Berlin** | 60% |
| **Rocky Hill** | 57% |
| **Hartford** | 57% |

CERC, 2019

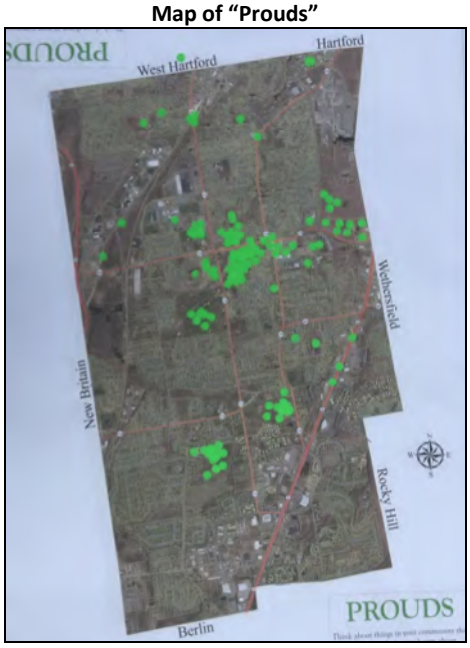
# Community Issues & Concerns

As part of updating the POCD, a public workshop meeting was held to give residents and property owners an opportunity to identify issues they felt were important to consider as part of the POCD. More information about the exercises conducted and the input received is contained in a summary report on file in the Town Planner's office.

Meeting participants were asked to think of things about Newington they were proud of. This exercise tends to reveal the types of things that attract people to Newington, contribute to the overall quality of life, and what people might want to encourage in Newington in the future (number of mentions in parentheses):

- Community Facilities (100)
- Community Character (60)
- Open Space (38)
- Town Center (11)
- Business Development (10)

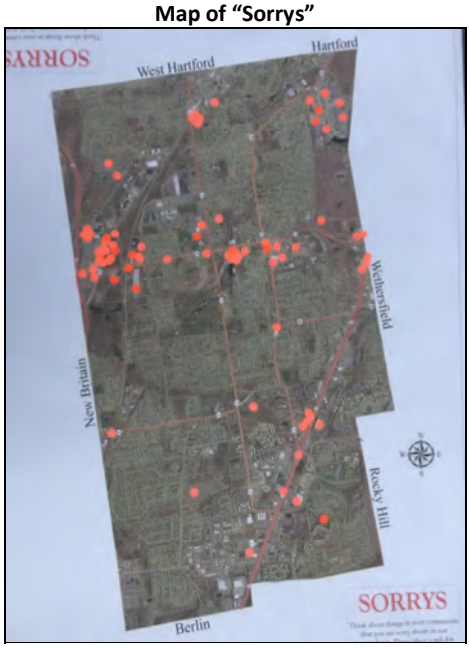
**Map of "Prouds"**




Residents were also asked to identify things in Newington they were sorry about. This exercise tends to reveal the types of things in Newington that might irritate people, detract from the overall quality of life, and what people might want to discourage in Newington in the future:

- Vehicular Transportation(42)
- Community Character (31)
- Business Development (29)
- Pedestrian / Bike / Transit (26)
- Community Facilities (22)
- Other (40)

**Map of "Sorrys"**



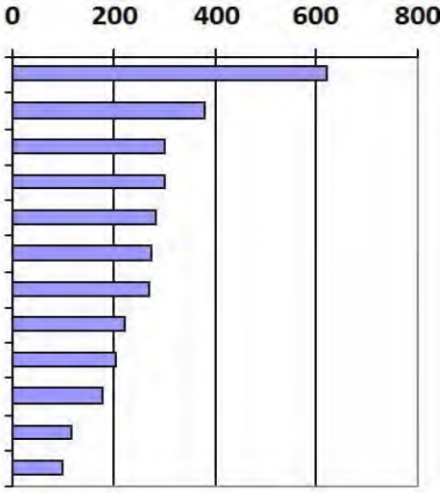
**Planning Points Exercise**

People attending the meeting were given five vouchers representing "planning points" (one @ 20 points, two @ 10 points each, and two @ 5 points each) to allocate among twelve boxes representing topics being considered for Newington's POCD.

Residents were asked to allocate the planning points in the boxes to reflect what they felt was important to them and/or for the community to address as part of the planning process.

Although an unscientific survey, participants at the meeting used "planning points" to express their feeling about topics typically considered as part of a POCD. When ranked in the order of points received, the topics identified as being ***most important*** to consider in the POCD included:

1. Open Space (620)
2. Traffic / Circulation (380)
3. Town Center (300)
4. Community Facilities (300)
5. Business Dev. (285)
6. Transit-Oriented Nodes (275)
7. Community Character (270)
8. Sustainability (225)
9. Walking / Biking / Bus (205)
10. Natural Resources (180)
11. Residential Dev. (120)
12. Water / Sewer / Utilities (100)




Thoughts and feelings expressed of participants at the meeting included the following:

- Newington should preserve more open space.
- Traffic is a real problem at times, especially Cedar Street.
- The Town Center is prime real estate and can and should be improved.
- The Town should maintain the community facilities we have.
- Newington should maintain a strong tax base and fill empty spaces in existing buildings.
- Transit nodes (the proposed train station and the two CTFastrak stations) are the biggest opportunity and the biggest challenge for Newington.
- Newington appears and feels like a small community and should continue to do things that preserve / enhance community character.
- Newington should strive to become a more sustainable community.
- Newington should make sure this POCD is implemented

# NATURAL RESOURCES

## *Continue to protect water quality and other natural resources.*

Protection of natural resources in Newington is important in terms of preserving environmental functions, protecting community character, and enhancing the quality of life for residents. The overall goals are to:

- Ensure that environmentally significant areas are preserved in their natural condition and allow passive recreation and/or educational use.
- Protect groundwater and streams from degradation from direct discharges (point sources) and non-point sources of pollution.

**Water Resources**

Water resources in Newington include:

- Surface Water - Surface water features such as brooks, streams, and ponds can be the most visible water-related resources.
- Wetlands – Wetlands and vernal pools help maintain water quality, control flooding, and support biodiversity in Newington.
- Groundwater - Groundwater resources store significant amounts of water which helps maintain base flows in streams and rivers.
- Floodplains - Flooding along watercourses is a natural phenomenon associated with spring thaws and major storm events.

Preserving and protecting water quality may be the most important natural resource strategy in Newington. Protection of water quality can occur by:

- Preserving wetland areas and other natural drainage systems due to their important natural functions,
- Providing vegetated buffers (ideally of natural vegetation) along watercourses and waterbodies,
- Implementing "low impact development" (LID) practices to address the quality of stormwater runoff and help recharge groundwater supplies.
- Reducing or eliminating erosion and sedimentation, and
- Discouraging the use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides,

Drainage issues can be a challenge in some areas of Newington. Much development in Newington occurred before knowledge of runoff dynamics was as evolved as it is today. Tighter soil types and flatter topography can slow the ability of water runoff to discharge in a timely way in many areas in Newington.

**Land Resources**

The key land resource in Newington is Cedar Mountain, one of seven traprock ridgelines in Connecticut. This unique landform is significant due to the natural habitats it provides and the plants and animals it supports. The scenic views to and from Cedar Mountain are a key element in the overall aesthetic character of Newington.

Since 2005 Newington has had regulations in place (Zoning Regulations Section 4.4.6) to protect the Cedar Mountain traprock ridgeline and adjacent areas. In recognition of this important natural resources, Newington has acquired ownership and easements of key properties along the ridgeline (such as some land at the state-owned Cedarcrest Hospital site on Russell Road) in order to continue to preserve its important environmental and cultural functions.

**Plant and Animal Resources**

Newington supports a variety of plant and animal habitats. Some locations in Newington have been identified by the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection as "natural diversity areas." These locations are known to contain endangered, threatened and special concern species and/or significant natural communities.

Trees have been recognized as a key tool for mitigating climate change as well as enhancing community character.

In order to manage biodiversity, Newington will seek to require the use of native species (and remove invasive species and discourage or prohibit their future use) in Newington.

**Air Resources**

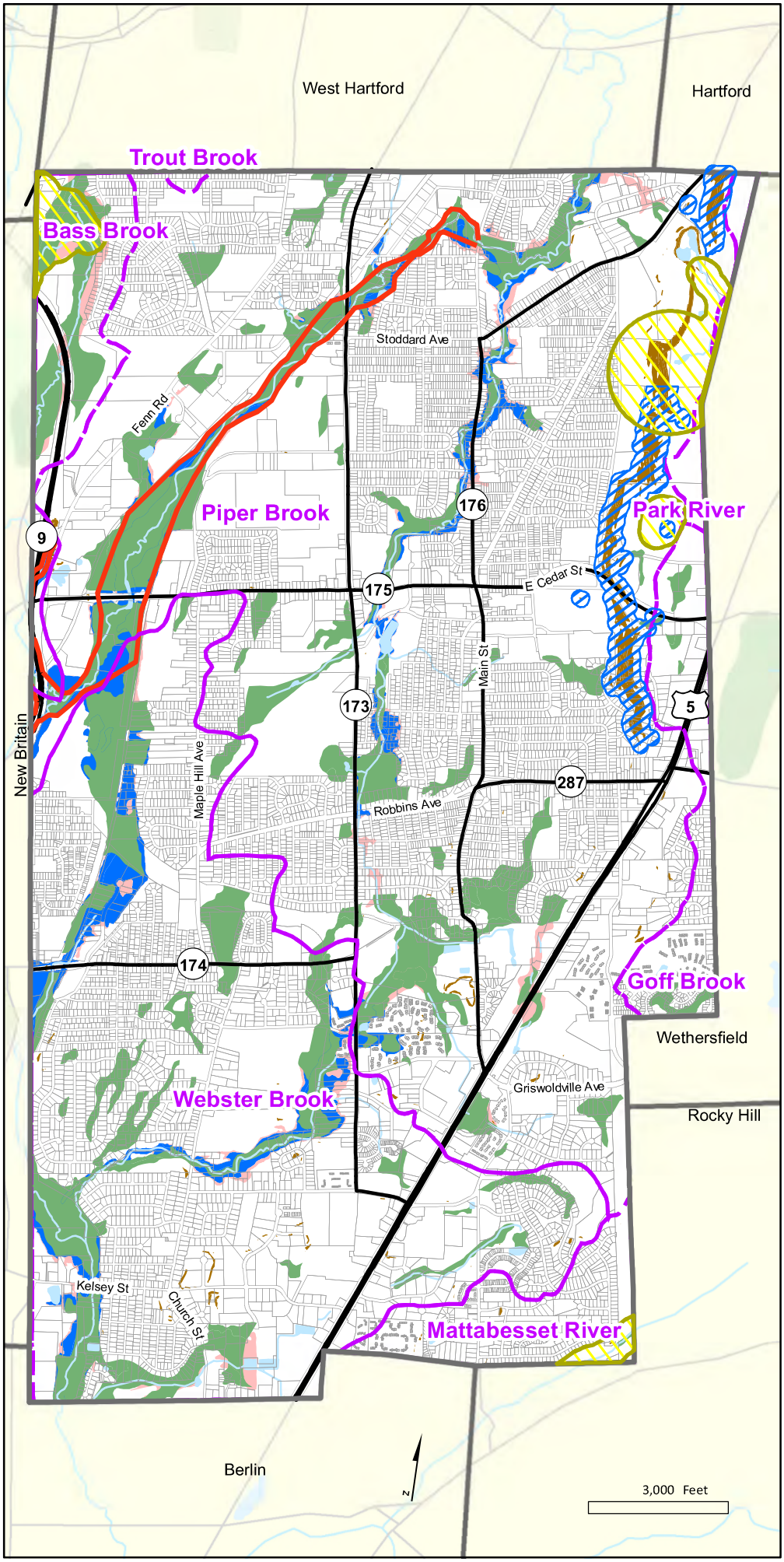
There is growing awareness that air pollutants (including greenhouse gas emissions) are having impacts on people's quality of life and Newington will seek ways to address this issue in the future.

**Piper Brook**

**View To The West From Cedar Mountain**

# Natural Resources

## Newington, CT




### Water Resources

- Watercourse
- Watershed Boundary
- Wetland
- Channel Encroach. Line
- 100 year Flood Plain
- 500 year Flood Plain

### Land Resources

- USGS Steep_Slope (>25%)
- Potential Ridgeline Setback Area

### Biologic Resources

- Natural Diversity Database (NDDB)

# Natural Resource Strategies

**Legend for Leaders / Partners on inside back cover**

| A. POLICIES (Strategies anticipated to continue over time) | Leader / Partners |
|---|---|
| 1. Continue to protect important natural resources such as watercourses, wetlands, floodplains, steep slopes and ridgelines (such as Cedar Mountain), and areas listed on the State's Natural Diversity Database. | **CIWC**<br>EQC<br>DEEP |
| 2. Continue efforts to maintain and improve water quality in Newington, including implementing "low impact development" techniques, where practical and achievable. | **Town**<br>TPZ |
| 3. Promote the maintenance and enhancement of trees and tree cover for environmental and aesthetic benefits. | **TW**<br>EQC |
| 4. Encourage the use of native species and species appropriate to Newington's climate zone (and discourage the use of invasive species). | **CIWC**<br>TPZ |
| 5. Promote efforts to maintain and improve air quality such as reducing emissions from idling vehicles and promoting transit-oriented development. | **CCHD**<br>DEEP |
| 6. Continue to inform and educate residents and businesses about:<br>a. The importance of protecting natural resources,<br>b. Using native plants in landscaping,<br>c. Reducing pesticide and fertilizer use, and<br>d. Best management practices for protecting water quality. | **CIWC**<br>EQC<br>CCHD<br>DEEP |
| 7. Continue to collaborate with other conservation organizations to protect important natural resources. | **CIWC**<br>DEEP |

| B. ACTION STEPS (Specific tasks intended to implement the POCD) | Leader / Partners |
|---|---|
| ☐ 1. Amend the Zoning Regulations to:<br>a. Encourage or require the use of native species (listed on the Connecticut Native Tree and Shrub List) and species appropriate to Newington's climate zone as part of any TPZ approval, and<br>b. Discourage or prohibit the use of invasive species. | **TPZ** |
| ☐ 2. Create a GIS mapping layer clearly identifying the Ridgeline Setback Area as defined in the Zoning Regulations. | **TP**<br>Town |
| ☐ 3. Undertake programs to encourage the preservation, maintenance, and planting of trees for their environmental benefits (such as interception of rainfall, removal of CO2, heat relief, habitat, and other benefits). | **CIWC**<br>TW |

# OPEN SPACE

## *Strive to establish a Town-wide open space system.*

Preservation of open space can help protect environmentally sensitive areas, provide wildlife habitat, preserve lands for recreational uses, provide fiscal and economic benefits, protect community character, and enhance quality of life.

The overall goals are to:

- Create a Town-wide open space network.
- Protect environmentally sensitive areas.
- Protect the small-town character that is here now and provide a sense of space and relief from intensive development.

The term "open space" can have different meanings to different people. For the purposes of the POCD, the term "open space" will be used to refer to land that falls into one of the following categories:

| | Dedicated (Protected) | Managed (Unprotected) |
|---|---|---|
| **Publicly Owned** | Town Park<br>State Park | Vacant Town Land<br>Vacant State Land |
| **Privately Owned** | Land Trust<br>Deed Restriction | Private Golf Course<br>Cemetery<br>Undeveloped Land |

**Mill Pond Park**

**Possible Greenway System**

**Open Space**

While the Open Space Committee adopted a definition of open space for its purposes, that definition focused mainly on opportunities for sport and outdoor recreation.

The POCD suggests the definition of open space for Newington might be adapted from that used in part (b) of CGS Section 7-131d:

*(1) Land identified as being especially valuable for recreation, forestry, fishing, conservation of wildlife or natural resources;*

*(2) Land which includes or contributes to a prime natural feature of the state's landscape, including, but not limited to, … a river, its … watershed, an aquifer, … ridgelines, an inland … wetland, … or other important geological feature;*

*(3) Habitat for native plant or animal species listed as threatened or endangered or of special concern, as defined in section 26-304;*

*(4) Protects a relatively undisturbed outstanding example of a native ecological community which is now uncommon;*

*(5) Enhances and conserves water quality of the state's lakes, rivers and coastal water;*

*(6) preserves local agricultural heritage; …*

Open space and its preservation and protection is important to Newington residents. Perhaps because about 90 percent of the land area of Newington is developed or committed, the remaining undeveloped parcels have considerable significance in the eyes of residents.

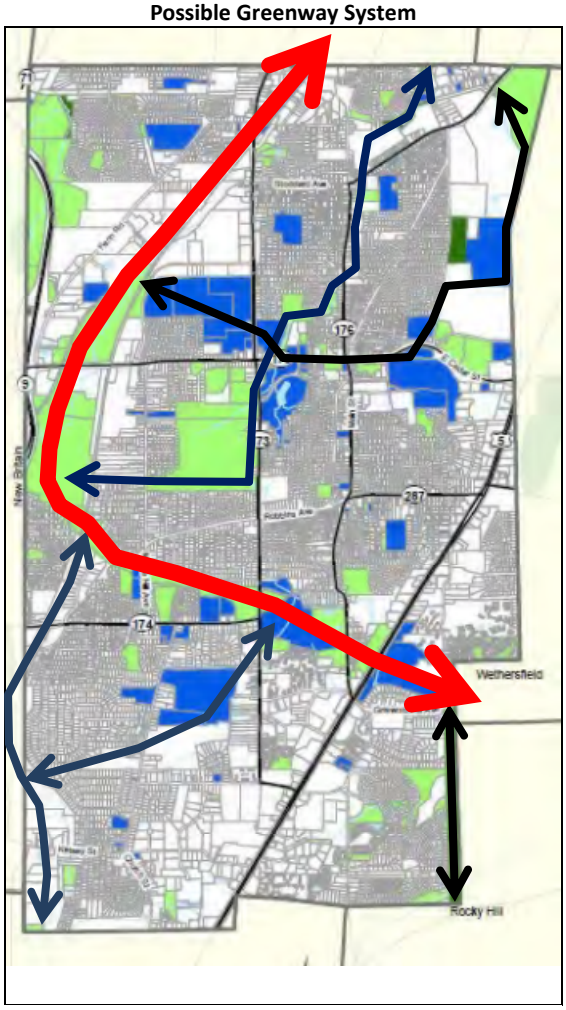
Open space linkages can also be key open space amenities. The establishment of open space linkages (also called "greenways"), which may include trails, has been part of Newington's open space strategy for some time.

The key elements of this approach can be:

- A main spine along the former I-291 corridor and the CTfastrak busway (red line),
- Linkages along waterway corridors (blue lines), and
- Linkages through existing and future open spaces and institutional lands (black lines).

While making some of these connections may pose a challenge, doing so would enhance the overall value of the open space system (and its economic benefits).

**Possible Greenway System**

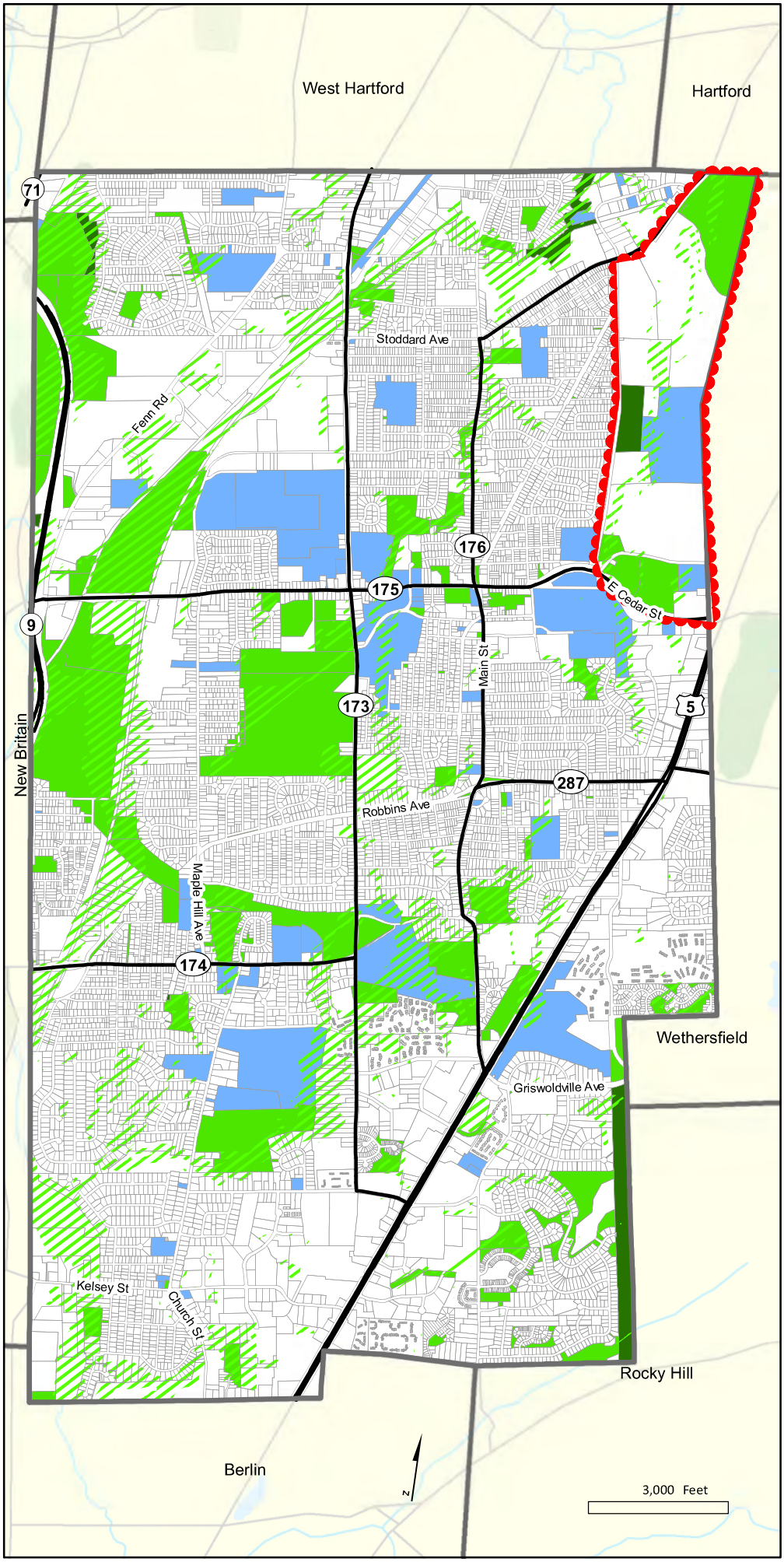



Newington should continue to use available tools to accomplish these goals:

- Open space purchases / donations,
- Grant programs / partnerships with conservation organizations,
- Dedication of conservation easements / access easements,
- Dedication of open space at the time of development, and
- Regulatory provisions (wetland, zoning, subdivision, etc.)

# Open Space

## Newington, CT




**Open Space**

- Dedicated Open Space
- Managed Open Space

**Institutional**

- Community Facility / Institutional

**Other**

- Natural Resource Constraints
- Cedar Mountain Desirable Open Space Area

# Open Space Strategies

**Legend for Leaders / Partners on inside back cover**

| A. POLICIES (Strategies anticipated to continue over time) | Leader / Partners |
|---|---|
| 1. Continue to preserve open space in Newington in order to help:<br>a. Protect important natural resources,<br>b. Preserve and enhance the character of Newington, and<br>c. Link open space areas together as greenway corridors. | **OSC**<br>TPZ<br>PRB |
| 2. To help accomplish the vision of open space preservation and linkages, continue to preserve open space (acquisition and/or easements) at the time of development, and seek grant funding and other assistance. | **OSC**<br>TPZ |
| 3. Preserve Cedar Mountain as open space. | **OSC** |
| 4. To allow for public access and use, encourage open space set aside as part of a subdivision to be deeded to the Town or to a land trust rather than a conservation easement or homeowner's association. | **OSC**<br>TPZ |
| 5. Work with landowners to explore means of preservation of desirable parcels, including a right-of-first-refusal or similar approach. | **OSC** |
| 6. Seek to make annual appropriation to the Land Acquisition Fund, Article V, Section 48-18, Newington Code of Ordinances. | **TC** |

| B. ACTION STEPS (Specific tasks intended to implement the POCD) | Leader / Partners |
|---|---|
| ☐ 1. Establish a greenway trail segment. | **OSC**<br>PRB |
| ☐ 2. Consider preparing an open space plan that:<br>a. Inventories existing open spaces by ownership / type,<br>b. Identifies open space linkages / greenway corridors, and<br>c. Identifies desired future open space properties. | **OSC** |
| ☐ 3. Review the Subdivision Regulations and the Zoning Regulations to strengthen ways to preserve open space as part of future development:<br>a. Mandatory provision of open space (or a fee-in-lieu-of),<br>b. Open space development patterns,<br>c. Fee in lieu of open space, and<br>d. Allow dedication of land elsewhere in Newington. | **TPZ**<br>TP |
| ☐ 4. Publish maps with useful information about trails and access points for residents and visitors. | **OSC**<br>PRB |
| ☐ 5. Amend Section 3.25 of the Zoning Regulations to remove the reference to a page number in the 2010 POCD. | **TPZ**<br>TP |

# COMMUNITY CHARACTER

## *Preserve and enhance Newington's character and sense of community.*

The term "community character" refers to the physical and other characteristics which contribute to people's overall impression of a community. Community character helps give a community a sense of identity and a sense of community.

The overall goal is to preserve and enhance those things, both physical and otherwise, which contribute to the overall character of Newington and the sense of community and small-town character.

Although every Newington resident may have their own perception and interpretation of exactly what "community character" means to them, some common elements that may contribute to Newington's overall character and quality of life include the following:

- **Natural Resources** – Wetlands, water bodies, hillsides, and other physical features.
- **Scenic Features** – Scenic features, scenic views and similar features.
- **Open Space**– Parks and other preserved lands.
- **Undeveloped Land**– Undeveloped lands that provide visual respite.
- **Recreational Facilities** – Recreational facilities and activities (such as sports fields, recreation facilities, etc.).
- **Key Local Places** – Places such as the Town Center or local facilities (such as the Library).

**Historic Resource**
**(Gen. Martin Kellogg House)**

**Locally Important Resource**
**(Eddy Farm)**

**State / National Registers of Historic Places**

The National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) identifies resources significant in the history of the nation.

The State Register of Historic Places (SRHP) identifies resources significant in the history of the state. Listings on the National Register are also listed on the State Register.

These designations are not regulatory in nature and only directly affect activities involving federal and/or state funding. Property owners may be eligible for tax benefits for improvements to these resources.

The designations may be for districts (areas containing multiple properties) or for individual properties.

**Local Historic Districts**

A local historic district is regulatory in nature and regulates exterior changes in view from a public street. Newington does not have any local historic districts.

**Enhance Historic Awareness**

Newington could encourage the installation of plaques on historic buildings to help people appreciate the richness of historic resources in the community.

This could also be tied into a self-guided tour (web-based or app-based).

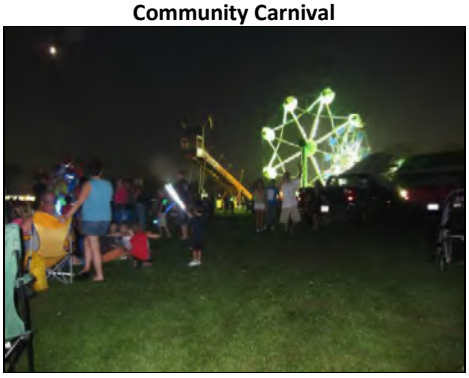
- **Designated Historic Resources** – The following historic resources contribute to Newington's character (see sidebar for acronyms):

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Districts** | | | |
| A. | Newington Junction North | Willard Ave. | NRHP |
| B. | Newington Junction South | Willard Ave. | NRHP |
| C. | Newington Junction West | Willard Ave. / W. Hill Rd. | NRHP |
| D. | Robbin-Wells Historic District | Robbins Ave. / Main St. | *SRHP* |
| **Sites** | | | |
| 1. | Gen. Martin Kellogg House | 679 Willard Ave. | NRHP |
| 2. | Enoch Kelsey House | 1702 Main St. | NRHP |
| 3. | Unni Robbins II House | 1692 Main St. | NRHP |
| 4. | Willard Homestead | 372 Willard Ave. | NRHP |
| 5. | Newington Junction Railroad Depot | Willard / Francis Aves. | NRHP |
| 6. | Capt. Jonathan Stoddard House | 303 Willard Ave. | *SRHP* |
| 7. | Residence | Deming Street | *SRHP* |
| 8. | Amos Fairchild House (relocated) | Main Street | *SRHP* |
| 9. | Deming Young Farm House | 282 Church Street | *SRHP* |

- **Locally Important Resources** – Not state or nationally designated but important locally:
  - Eddy Farm,
  - Ancient Burial Ground,
  - Old Highway.
- **Community Events** – Community events in Newington bring residents together to celebrate and share common experiences.

The POCD recommends that these and other attributes that contribute to the overall community character of Newington and the quality of life of residents be maintained and enhanced.

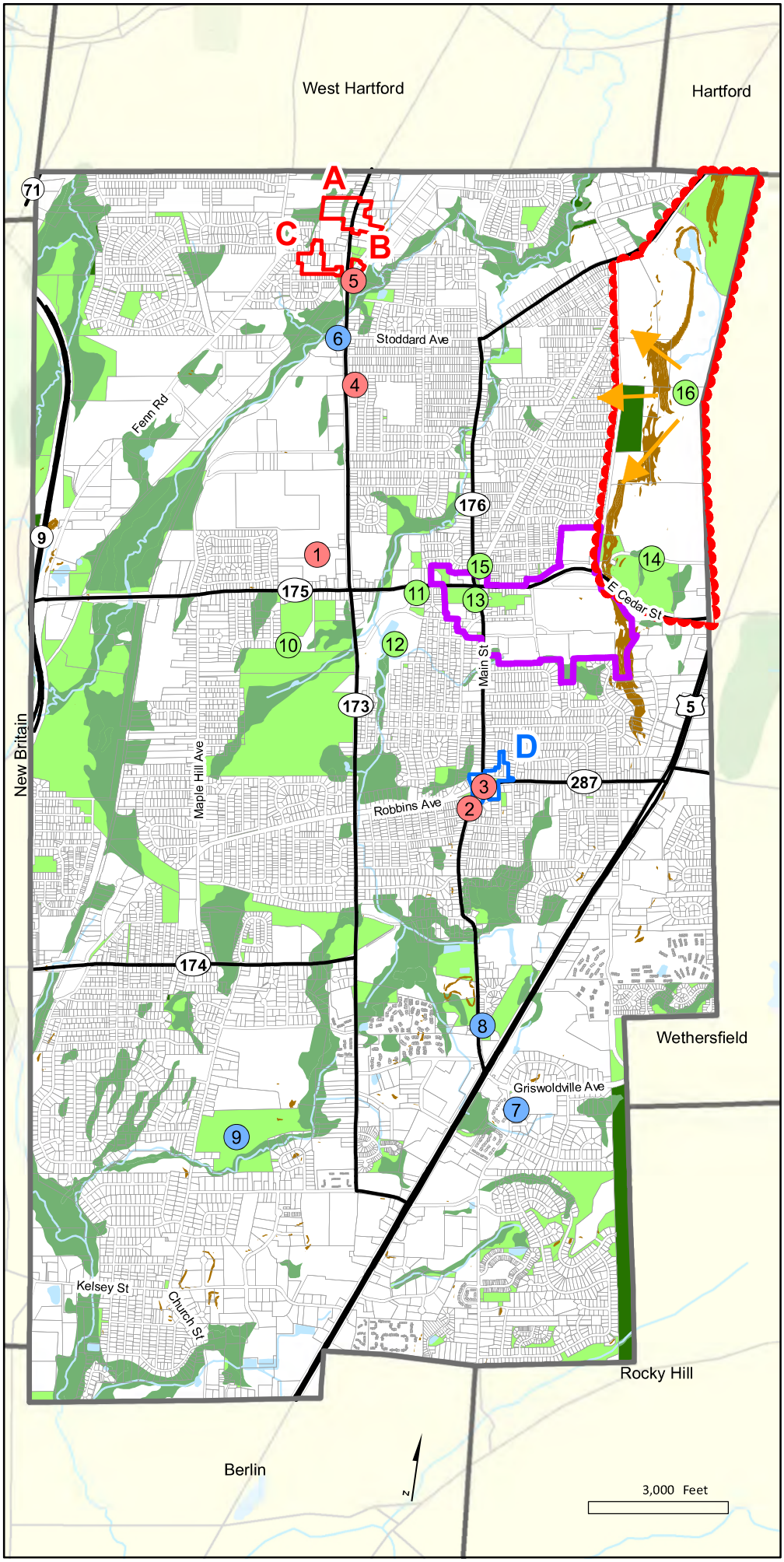
**Community Carnival**



**Community Fireworks**

# Community Character

## Newington, CT




Town Center

### Historic Places

- National Register Historic Place
- State Register Historic Place
- Local Historic Place

### Historic Districts

- National Register Historic District
- State Register Historic District
- Cedar Mountain Desirable Open Space Area

### Open Space

- Dedicated Open Space
- Managed Open Space

### Scenic Resources

- Scenic View
- Waterbody
- USGS Steep Slope (>25%)
- Wetland

# Community Character Strategies

**Legend for Leaders / Partners on inside back cover**

| A. POLICIES (Strategies anticipated to continue over time) | Leader / Partners |
|---|---|
| 1. Continue to preserve natural resources, open space, scenic resources, and other features (such as Cedar Mountain) that contribute to Newington's character. | **CIWC** OSC |
| 2. Continue to encourage the preservation and protection of historical and archeological resources. | **MH** NHS |
| 3. Promote the maintenance and enhancement of trees and tree cover for environmental and aesthetic benefits. | **TW** |
| 4. Continue to protect tree canopies from unreasonable destruction as a result of utility pruning or other activities. | **TW** |
| 5. Continue to promote underground utilities. | **Town** |
| 6. Continue to implement enforcement programs using the building, housing and fire codes as positive tools to maintain property values. | **Town** BSC |
| 7. Continue to utilize the blight ordinance and other tools to address blighted structures, clean-up of unkempt parcels, and removal of unused vehicles. | **Town** BSC |
| 8. Continue to offer residents low interest rehabilitation loan funds through continued participation in the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development Small Cities program. | **TP** |
| 9. Continue to encourage community and civic activities that promote and enhance community pride and spirit (such as annual "clean up" days). | **TC** PRB |
| 10. Continue efforts to keep people involved in the community as participants and volunteers. | **TC** |

| B. ACTION STEPS (Specific tasks intended to implement the POCD) | Leader / Partners |
|---|---|
| ☐ 1. Establish and enhance "gateway" features at key locations which announce that people are entering Newington. | **EDC** TC |
| ☐ 2. Establish and enhance "wayfinding" signage at appropriate places to help guide visitors to local destinations. | **EDC** TC |
| ☐ 3. Establish a street tree planting program for residential property owners to plant and maintain trees on their property near the street with consideration to utility locations, roadway and sidewalk maintenance, and other factors. | **CIWC** TW |
| ☐ 4. Consider enactment of a "demolition delay ordinance." | **TC** |
| ☐ 5. Consider whether it makes sense to establish a "design review" process for certain types of land uses and/or certain locations. | **TPZ** TP |

# SUSTAINABILITY / RESILIENCY

***Become a more sustainable and more resilient community.***

## Sustainability

The concept of sustainability is becoming more prominent in public policy and Newington should start to address these issues. Basic environmental and energy sustainability strategies might include the following:

| Theme | Possible Actions |
|---|---|
| **Energy Consumption** | • Reducing energy use / becoming more energy efficient<br>• Increasing use of renewable energy (solar, wind, etc.)<br>• Providing alternative approaches (fuel cell, micro-grids, etc.)<br>• Considering life-cycle costing in energy-related decisions<br>• Promoting "greener" buildings / vehicles<br>• Providing for electric car charging stations |
| **Water Consumption** | • Reducing water use<br>• Reducing water waste / recycling water |
| **Waste Generation** | • Reducing waste (including food waste)<br>• Reducing use of plastic bags, straws, etc.<br>• Increasing recycling / composting |
| **Stormwater Management** | • Using low-impact development (LID) strategies to address stormwater quality and quantity |
| **Greenhouse Gas Emissions** | • Reducing reliance on fossil fuels<br>• Reducing current / future $CO_2$ emissions |

The concept of economic sustainability is addressed in other sections of the POCD.

Newington and a number of other Connecticut communities are participating in the SustainableCT program (a voluntary program established by a non-profit organization) which helps community measure and report their progress on sustainability. The SustainableCT program incorporates the following concepts:

| | |
|---|---|
| **CONCEPT I.** | **Thriving Local Economies** |
| A. | Support Redevelopment of Brownfield Sites |
| B. | Implement Sustainable Purchasing |
| C. | Inventory and Promote Local Retail Options |
| D. | Provide Resources and Supports to Local Businesses |
| E. | Promote Sustainable Workforce Development |
| F. | Participate in and Promote C-Pace Program |
| **CONCEPT II.** | **Well-Stewarded Land and Natural Resources** |
| A. | Create a Watershed Management Plan |
| B. | Engage in Watershed Protection and Restoration |
| C. | Develop an Open Space Plan |
| D. | Create a Natural Resource and Wildlife Inventory |
| E. | Manage for Drought and Municipal Water Use |
| F. | Provide Education on Water Conservation |
| G. | Implement Low Impact Development (LID) |
| H. | Manage Woodlands and Forests |
| I. | Facilitate Invasive Species Education and Management |
| J. | Implement Green Grounds and Maintenance Program |
| **CONCEPT III.** | **Vibrant and Creative Cultural Ecosystems** |
| A. | Map Tourism and Cultural Assets |
| B. | Support Arts and Creative Culture |
| C. | Develop a Creative Placemaking Plan |
| D. | Provide an Arts and Culture Program for Youth |
| **CONCEPT IV.** | **Dynamic and Resilient Planning** |
| A. | Integrate Sustainability into Plan of Conservation and Development and Zoning |
| B. | Adapt Permitting Process to Promote Sustainable Development |
| C. | Develop Agricultural-Friendly Practices |
| D. | Assess Climate Vulnerability |
| E. | Inventory and Assess Historic Resources |
| F. | Streamline Solar Permitting for Small Solar Installations |
| **CONCEPT V.** | **Clean and Diverse Transportation Systems and Choices** |
| A. | Implement Complete Streets |
| B. | Promote Effective Parking Management |
| C. | Encourage Smart Commuting |
| D. | Support Zero Emission Vehicle Deployment |
| E. | Promote Public Transit and Other Mobility Strategies |

| CONCEPT VI. | Efficient Physical Infrastructure and Operations |
|---|---|
| A. | Benchmark and Track Energy Use |
| B. | Reduce Energy Use Across All Municipal Buildings |
| C. | Achieve High Energy Performance for Individual Buildings |
| D. | Increase Use of Renewable Energy in Municipal Buildings |
| E. | Develop a Municipal Energy Plan |
| F. | Manage Municipal Fleets |
| G. | Install Efficient Street Lights |
| H. | Implement a Community Energy Campaign |
| **CONCEPT VII.** | **Strategic and Inclusive Public Services** |
| A. | Hold a Sustainability Event |
| B. | Provide Effective Community Communications |
| C. | Train Municipal Commissions |
| D. | Encourage Healthy and Sustainable Food Networks |
| E. | Report Materials Management Data and Reduce Waste |
| F. | Implement Save Money and Reduce Trash (SMART) Program |
| G. | Recycle Additional Materials and Compost Organics |
| H. | Develop a Food Waste Reduction Campaign |
| I. | Conduct Health Impact Assessments |
| J. | Encourage Smoke-Free and Tobacco-Free Public Spaces |
| **CONCEPT VIII.** | **Healthy, Efficient and Diverse Housing** |
| A. | Design and Implement a Housing Needs Assessment |
| B. | Grow Sustainable and Affordable Housing Options |
| C. | Benchmark Energy and Water Use for Multifamily Housing |
| **CONCEPT IX.** | **Inclusive and Equitable Community Impacts** |
| A. | Optimize for Equity |
| **CONCEPT X.** | **Implement Other Sustainability Actions** |

**Resilience Strategies**

**Avoidance-Related**

- Identification / avoidance / risk reduction

**Mitigation-Related**

- Evaluating probability / risk scenarios
- Evaluating approaches (protection / adaptation)
- Balancing of cost / benefit
- Hardening infrastructure (e.g. burying utilities)
- Promoting grid independence / interconnected community

**Response-Related**

- Pre-event education / training
- Pre-event response plans

# Resiliency

For the POCD, resiliency relates to the concept of being able to identify, avoid, minimize, mitigate, absorb and/or recover from impactful events in an efficient and timely way. This can include:

- Mitigation of known hazards such as intense storms, flooding, and similar events (including storm preparation and emergency response).
- Emergency services (such as police, fire, medical).
- Adaptation to climate change including an increase in the frequency and intensity of storms which exceed the infrastructure capacity and/or surpass past storm events.
- Economic disruption.

# Sustainability / Resiliency Strategies

**Legend for Leaders / Partners on inside back cover**

| A. POLICIES (Strategies anticipated to continue over time) | Leader / Partners |
|---|---|
| 1. Strive to become a more sustainable and more resilient community. | **Town** |
| 2. Incorporate environmental sustainability in municipal decision making:<br>a. Energy consumption.<br>b. Water consumption.<br>c. Waste generation.<br>d. Stormwater management.<br>e. Greenhouse gas emissions. | **Town** |
| 3. Encourage residents and businesses to include sustainability considerations in their decision making. | **Town** |
| 4. Continue planning and implementing hazard mitigation strategies (flooding, intense storms, emergency response, etc.). | **CPD**<br>Town |
| 5. Continue efforts to:<br>a. Identify, avoid, reduce, mitigate, and recover from impactful events.<br>b. Improve preparation / response for impactful events including:<br>• Emergency shelter capacity / supplies,<br>• Redundant energy supply,<br>• "Off-grid" generation (including generators and fuel cells), and<br>• Mobile cellular antennae / charging stations. | **CPD**<br>PD<br>FD |

| B. ACTION STEPS (Specific tasks intended to implement the POCD) | Leader / Partners |
|---|---|
| ☐ 1. Start participating in programs and activities of SustainableCT. | **Town** |
| ☐ 2. Implement the regional Hazard Mitigation Plan (and update as necessary). | **CPD**<br>Town |
| ☐ 3. Review and update land use regulations for ways to promote sustainability (solar collectors, wind turbines, etc.) and resilience. | **TPZ**<br>TP |

**Sustainability**
**(Water Conservation)**

**Resilience**
**(Washout From Undersize Culvert)**

# NEWINGTON TOWN CENTER

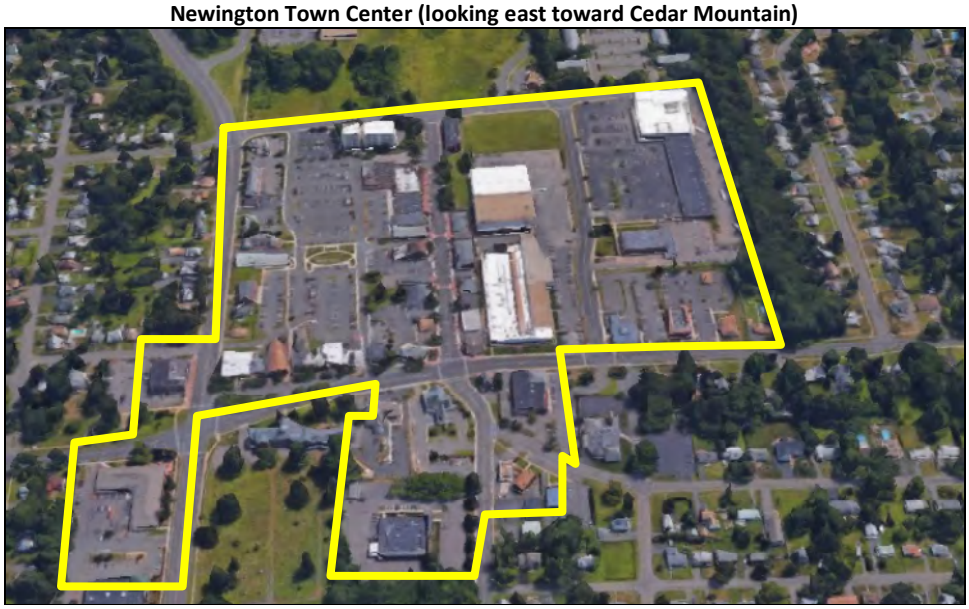
## *Strengthen the Center as a mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly area with a strong "sense of place."*

A key issue for the POCD is how to make Newington Town Center more vibrant and attractive and relevant to the needs of the community now and in the future. The overall goals are to encourage pedestrian-friendly development (business and mixed-use buildings) in the Town Center area which:

- Maintains and enhances a vital, useful and functional Town Center.
- Helps strengthen Town Center businesses.
- Supports the desired overall character of Newington and is sensitive to adjacent residential neighborhoods.
- Carefully guides the reuse of properties for continued grand list growth.

Newington Town Center should be the major community focal point and the business, civic, institutional, and cultural center of the Town. Just as West Hartford Center reinvented itself following the construction of Westfarms Mall and then evolved itself further with the development of Blueback Square, Newington should strengthen Newington Town Center as a mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly place with a strong "sense of place."

**Newington Town Center (looking east toward Cedar Mountain)**



**Walk Score**

Newington Town Center has a "walk score" of 66 points out of 100. Walk score is an indication of whether there are destinations within a compact area, not whether there are sidewalks or other pedestrian accommodations.

Studies have shown a positive correlation between walk scores and real estate values (sales prices and rental rates).

The most desirable scores are between 70 and 100:

- 90-100 is considered a walkers' paradise where residents don't need to own a car;
- 70-89 is very walkable and residents probably don't need a car.

Below 70 and neighborhoods are somewhat walkable but probably necessitate public transportation, a bike or a car for getting around. A score below 50 means the community is car-dependent, and a score below 25 means residents need to drive everywhere.

The Newington Town Center area has several strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and constraints which are worth contemplating:

| Strengths | Weaknesses |
|---|---|
| • Good population in trade area<br>• Good traffic flows<br>• High occupancy<br>• Served by bus transit<br>• Relatively compact area<br>• Shared parking already in place<br>• Focal point for community events | • Lack of strong anchor<br>• Lack of cohesive "brand"<br>• Lack of casual dining opportunities<br>• Lack of fine dining opportunities<br>• Pedestrian traffic is light / moderate<br>• Parking configuration seen as desolate / inconvenient |

| Opportunities | Challenges |
|---|---|
| • Much land area could be available for future development<br>• Yield per acre (floor area, taxable value, etc.) could be increased significantly<br>• Can change perception / reality<br>• Façade improvements | • Industrial facility interrupts connectivity of uses and pedestrianism<br>• Hard to incorporate properties across Cedar Street as part of a cohesive whole<br>• Retaining a grocery store |

The POCD recommends that Newington seek ways to:

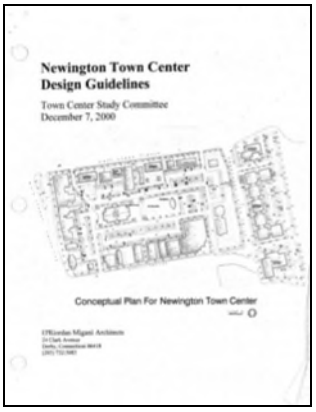
- Build on strengths,
- Overcome weaknesses,
- Seize opportunities, and
- Address constraints.

To do this, it is recommended that a community-driven planning process (like a community "charrette" or a carefully constituted steering committee) be undertaken for the Newington Town Center area in order to:

- establish an overall vision,
- suggest possible regulation changes, and
- set the stage for complementary development.

While Town Center Design Guidelines (which contains a conceptual plan for part of Newington Town Center) were prepared in the year 2000, much has changed in the Town Center and the world of retail in the past two decades and it is probably time to revisit the Town Center and have a conversation about ways to enhance the vibrancy and vitality of Newington Town Center as the primary community focal point and support uses and development which help achieve this goal.

**Design Guidelines**


Newington Town Center
Design Guidelines
Town Center Study Committee
December 7, 2000
Conceptual Plan For Newington Town Center

A charrette process results in community-driven support for development which is considered appropriate for the location. Key elements include:

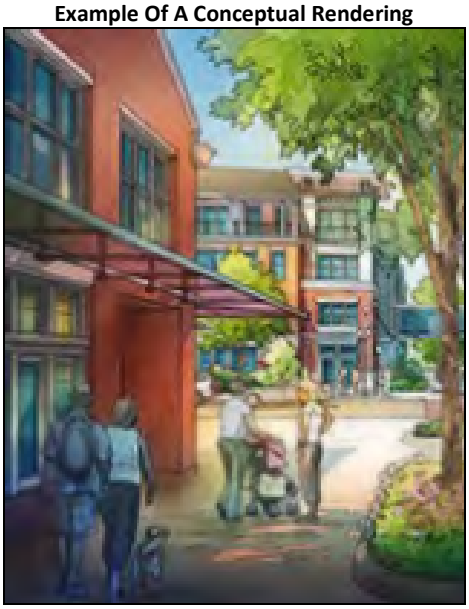
- Visual preference survey
- Area walking tour for shared observations
- Participatory design exercises
- Facilitated discussions
- Developed graphics to illustrate consensus

**Community Driven Participatory Process**

**Tactile Modelling**

**Example Of A Conceptual Plan**

**Example Of A Conceptual Rendering**



**Charrette**

A charrette (sometimes called a design charrette) is an intense period of collaborative design and/or planning activity in which a group of designers explore possible:

- solutions to a design problem, and/or
- visions for a specific area.

The general idea of a charrette is to create an innovative atmosphere in which a diverse group of stakeholders can collaborate to "generate visions for the future". Charrettes can also serve as a way of quickly generating design solutions while integrating the aptitudes and interests of a diverse group of people.

While the structure of a charrette varies, charrettes often take place in multiple sessions which allow for:

- a larger group to break into smaller groups,
- design sketches to be prepared to reflect expressed concepts.

Eventually, the work products of multiple groups or multiple sessions are brought back to a larger to attain consensus or for further dialogue.

## Importance of Mixed Use

There is an important distinction between:

- Mixed-use areas,
- Mixed-use buildings, and
- Mixed-use sites.

**Mixed Use Areas**

It is important that Newington Town Center be a mixed-use area so that it is active and vibrant at all hours of the day and a variety of meaningful destinations are *in close proximity* (walking distance) to each other.

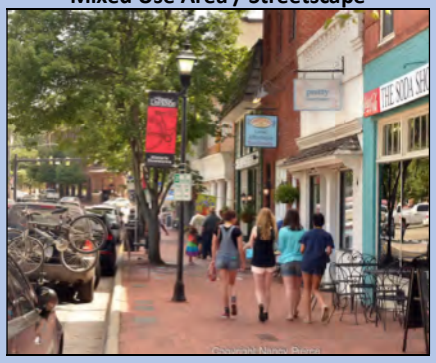
More and more people want to live in mixed-use areas and take advantage of convenient shopping, dining, entertainment options as well as social and recreational opportunities.

***Newington will seek to maintain the mixed-use nature of the Town Center and enhance and diversify it by strengthening the streetscape and by incorporating housing in new development and redevelopment.***

**Mixed Use Area / Streetscape**

**Uniform Use Area / Streetscape**

**Mixed Use Area / Streetscape**



**Uniform Use Area / Streetscape**

# Importance of Mixed Use (cont.)

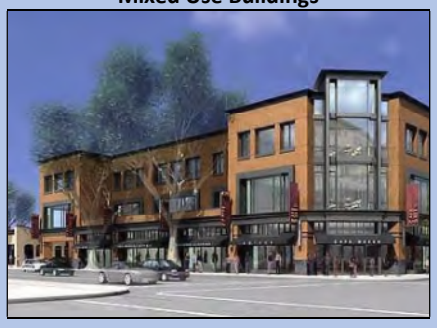
**Mixed Use Building**

It is also important that important that Newington Town Center have mixed-use ***buildings*** so that there are multi-story buildings (with active streetscape uses at street level and residential and other uses above) which "frame" the street. Mixed use buildings make the greatest contribution to establishing and maintaining a mixed-use area.

***Newington will seek to encourage or require the establishment of mixed-use buildings in the Town Center and discourage or prohibit the establishment of one-story / single-use buildings which do not contribute to the overall vision for Newington Town Center.***

**Mixed Use Buildings**

**Mixed Use Buildings**



**Mixed Use Sites**

Mixed use sites do not typically make the same contribution to the vibrancy and streetscape of an area and should be avoided in Newington Town Center.

***Newington will seek to discourage or prohibit the establishment of mixed-use sites which do not contribute to the overall vision for Newington Town Center.***

**Mixed Use Site**

**Mixed Use Site**

**Active Street Uses**

Features which contribute to an active and pedestrian-friendly streetscape include:

- shops,
- restaurants,
- outdoor dining,
- other uses that generate significant pedestrian traffic.

An active and pedestrian-friendly streetscape can also result from:

- public parks,
- benches, fountains, and other street furniture, and
- large display windows which attract passerby interest.

**Passive Street Uses**

Features which do not contribute to an active and pedestrian-friendly streetscape include:

- blank walls,
- driveways,
- parking lots,
- vacant lots,
- abandoned buildings, and
- offices (or banks) with little apparent activity.

In addition to the charrette process, the Zoning Regulations which guide activities in the Business-Town Center district should *consider modifying the regulations* to:

- Allow restaurants by Site Plan approval (rather than Special Permit) to help attract more restaurants.
- Allowing outdoor dining by approval of a Site Plan modification rather than requiring a Special Permit.
- Consider requiring a Special Permit for a "passive use" identified below which is located at street level (since such uses can significantly deter pedestrian activity).
- Allowing apartment uses in a business building by Site Plan approval (rather than Special Permit).

| ACTIVE STREET-LEVEL USES (Retail Trade / Services) | Site Plan | Special Permit |
|---|---|---|
| Retail stores, personal service shops or stores. | ■ | |
| Bakeries. | ■ | |
| Theaters, recreation and entertainment | ■ | |
| Restaurants (excluding drive-in or curb service) | | ■ |
| Temporary / seasonal outdoor dining | | ■ |
| Health clubs and dance studios. | | ■ |
| **PASSIVE STREET-LEVEL USES (Offices / Banks)** | | |
| Business or professional offices. | ■ | |
| Banks. | ■ | |
| Corporate headquarters, research / development. | ■ | |
| **RESIDENTIAL USES** | | |
| Multi-Family Residential (17.4 units/acre) | | ■ |
| Residential Buildings for the Elderly (60 units/acre) | | ■ |
| Apartments in Business Buildings | | ■ |
| **SUPPORT USES** | | |
| Parking Lots | ■ | |
| Parking Garage | | ■ |
| **OTHER USES** | | |
| Clubs or fraternal organizations. | ■ | |
| Food preparation, caterers | ■ | |
| Funeral parlors or mortuaries. | | ■ |
| Printers, dry cleaners, and the like. | | ■ |
| Fueling station located within a shopping center | | ■ |

**Allow these 2 uses by Site Plan (rather than Special Permit)**

**Require a Special Permit for these 3 uses (rather than Site Plan)**

**Allow this use by Site Plan (rather than Special Permit)**

**Require a Special Permit for these 2 uses (rather than Site Plan)**

To encourage additional development in the future, the TPZ should consider *reducing the parking standards* in the Town Center area. Studies have found that mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly areas may only need a parking ratio of about 3.0 spaces per 1,000 SF of floor area since people park once and then visit multiple locations. The Zoning Regulations currently require parking as high as 6.0 spaces per 1,000 SF of floor area parking ratio but allow a request for a reduction to 3.5 to 4.0 spaces per 1000 SF for adhering to required design standards. Rather than make this a discretionary request that the TPZ could deny (which can deter property owners and developers due to the uncertainty), this could be made a blanket standard for everyone in the Business - Town Center district where they are within a certain distance of Constitution Square (the Town parking lot). The TPZ could retain the provision in the Regulations (Section 3.12.A.5.B) which allows a total exemption from parking standards in certain situations.

In addition, the TPZ should consider whether there are ways to *provide stronger incentives* for the dedication of land for municipal parking (see Section 3.12.3) – in addition to exempting buildings from parking requirements when land is dedicated to public parking, communities such as West Harford and Darien and have then gone ahead and reconfigured the parking area to provide more spaces and better circulation).

The TPZ should *continue to maintain* the Town Center Village Overlay District (Section 3.12A) which provides for design review of new uses to ensure that new development and/or redevelopment enhances the character, landscape and architectural quality of Newington Town Center. However, the TPZ may want to revisit the language in Section 3.12.A.2 which appears to require Commission approval of a change of use in an existing building (even if no new exterior construction) is proposed.

In addition, the TPZ should *continue to maintain* the provisions which allow some flexibility in area and/or dimensional standards for good design and consistency with adjacent buildings:

- Yard setback requirements,
- Frontage requirements,
- Lot area requirements, and
- Use of on-street parking.

**Newington Town Center**

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. Encourage appropriate development and redevelopment of Newington Town Center which enhances a pedestrian-friendly streetscape.

2. Invest in "place-making" since doing so creates economic value for all property owners (more visitation, longer stays, higher sales, higher rents, and higher sale prices) and for the community as a whole.

3. Encourage growth and retention of a diversity of businesses in Newington Town Center to continue to attract residents, shoppers, and visitors.

4. Reinforce Newington Town Center as a great place for residents, visitors, and business investment and a place that fosters a strong sense of community.

5. Promote Newington Town Center as a place that accommodates shopping, dining, leisure, work, housing and governmental services, in an architecturally, economically and socially diverse and pedestrian-friendly environment.

6. Maintain and improve the character of Newington Town Center and its pedestrian-friendly nature, historic elements and diverse range of architectural styles.

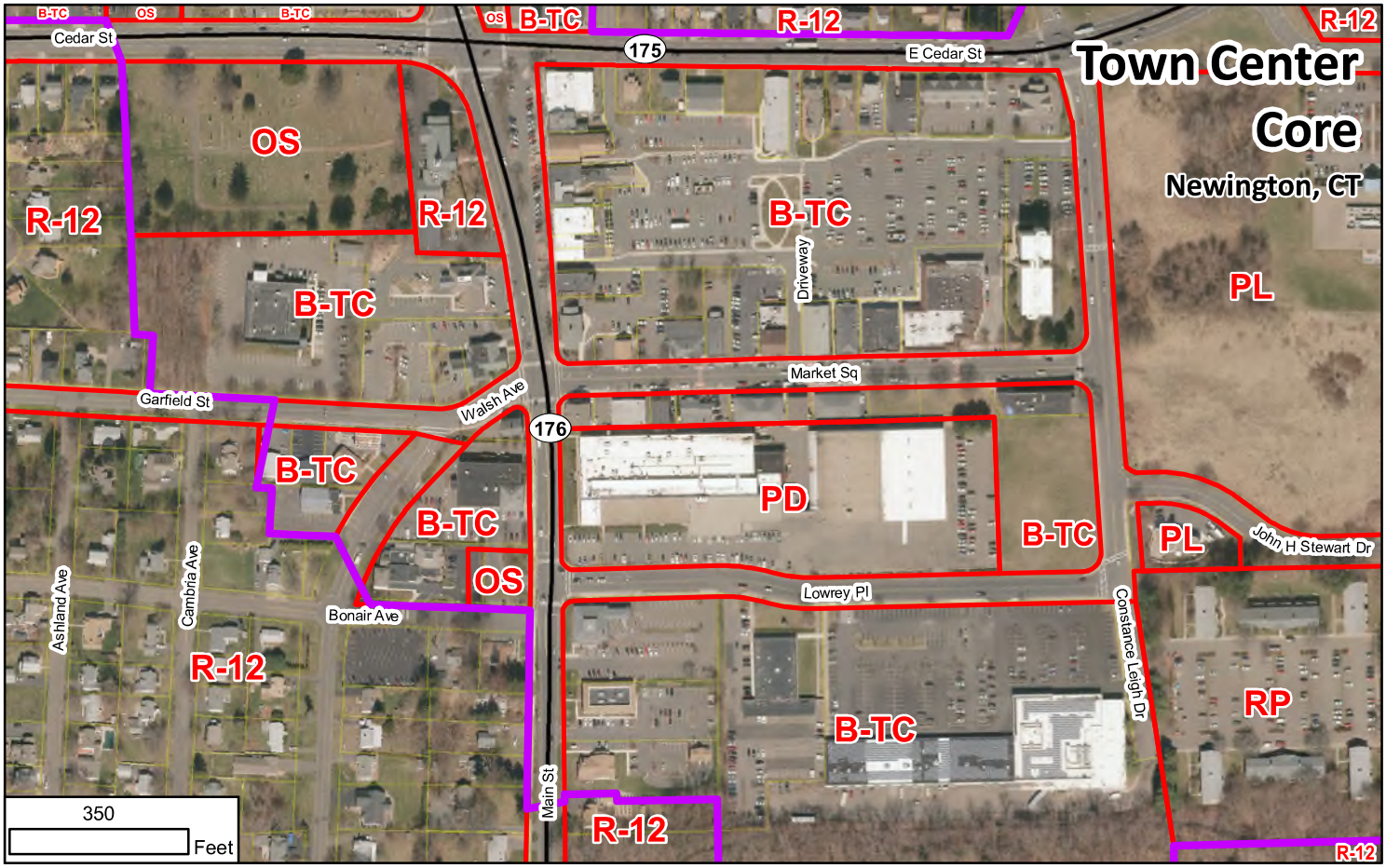
7. Seek to ensure that Newington Town Center is well-maintained, comfortable, and safe for people of all ages, incomes, and backgrounds at all times of the day.

8. Maintain the attractive look and feel of Newington Town Center and its relationship with surrounding neighborhoods.

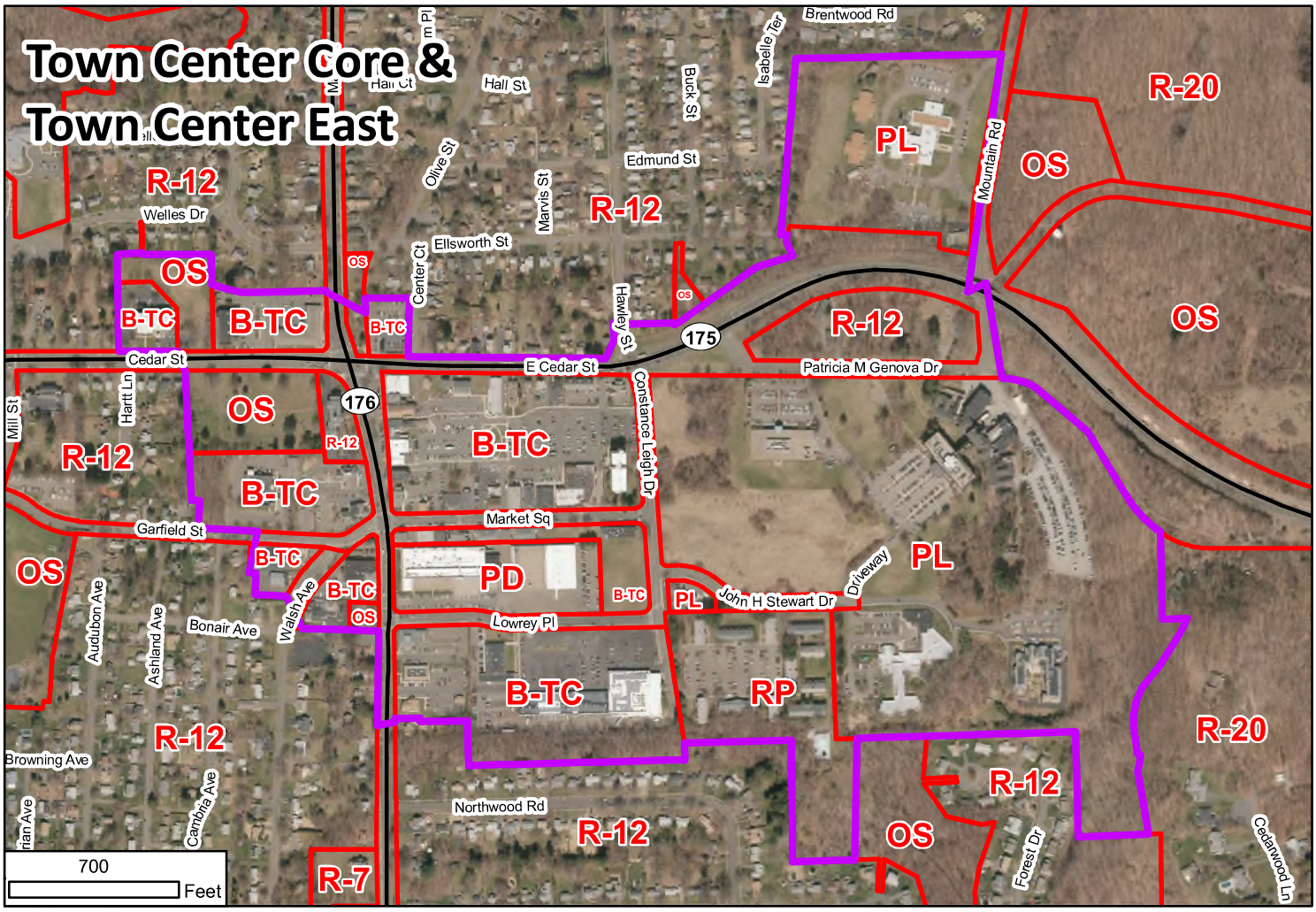
9. Maintain and enhance transitional "buffer" areas and seek to ensure appropriate scale, height and setback to adjacent residential areas.

10. Manage traffic and parking to reduce impacts on the surrounding neighborhoods and enhance safety, mobility and convenience for businesses, residents and visitors.

11. Seek to implement improvements within Newington Town Center and surrounding neighborhoods to enhance pedestrianism, handicapped accessibility, bicycle access, transit use, and other forms of mobility (including "Complete Streets").




Town Center | Zone Boundary | Parcel Boundary



# Newington Town Center Strategies

Legend for Leaders / Partners on inside back cover

| A. POLICIES (Strategies anticipated to continue over time) | Leader / Partners |
|---|---|
| 1. Seek to enhance the vibrancy and vitality of Newington Town Center as the primary community focal point and support uses and development which help achieve this goal. | **EDC** TPZ |
| 2. Establish and maintain regulations which will support a vibrant mixture of business, civic and residential uses in Newington Town Center and a mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly area with an active streetscape. | **TPZ** EDC |
| 3. Continue to ensure that new development and redevelopment enhances the character, landscape and architectural quality of Newington Town Center (and maintains or re-uses existing facades and/or materials, where feasible). | **TPZ** |
| 4. Continue to ensure that streetscape improvements (sidewalks, lighting, trees, curbing, signage etc.) are of the highest quality and consistent in design theme (see the Main Street streetscape). | **TPZ** Town |
| 5. Continue to seek grants and other funding to extend and enhance streetscape improvements along Main Street, Market Square, Lowrey Place, Constance Leigh Drive, Cedar street, East Cedar Street, Garfield Street, and into Constitution Square (parking lot). | **EDC** Town |
| 6. Seek ways to expand and improve the public parking area including additional private property donations for public parking. | **EDC** Town |
| 7. Continue to support and facilitate Newington Town Center as a location for community events and public gatherings. | **EDC** Town |
| 8. Continue to ensure that building height and land uses at the perimeter of Newington Town Center are sensitive to adjacent residential areas. | **TPZ** |

| B. ACTION STEPS (Specific tasks intended to implement the POCD) | Leader / Partners |
|---|---|
| ☐ 1. Consider undertaking a community-driven planning process (like a community "charrette" or a carefully constituted steering committee) for Newington Town Center to establish an overall vision, suggest possible regulation changes, and to set the stage for complementary development. | **TPZ** EDC |
| ☐ 2. Evaluate Town Center parking requirements and permit lower parking ratios if the land uses comply with design guidelines, joint use and time-of-day shared parking. | **TPZ** EDC |
| ☐ 3. Utilize the strategic framework of the National Main Street Program in collaboration with businesses and property owners as Newington Town Center continues to evolve. | **EDC** TC |

# OPPORTUNITY AREAS / SITES

## *Promote appropriate reuse and redevelopment at opportunity sites.*

In most parts of Newington, the current zoning is appropriate for the locational attributes of the area and the land uses in those areas benefit from a stable land use approach in the future.

On the other hand, there are some areas of Newington where the locational attributes may have changed in a material way and this presents a situation where the community can investigate and discuss possible land use options for the future in order to:

- Build on strengths,
- Overcome weaknesses,
- Seize opportunities, and
- Address constraints.

The overall goals are to:

- Maximize possibilities at "opportunity sites" to accomplish the overall goals of the POCD.
- Promote appropriate conservation and development that retains Newington's small-town character with emphasis on the reuse and redevelopment of existing sites.

Some "opportunity *areas*" and recommended approaches are discussed on the following pages. The map on page 53 shows the location of "opportunity" areas (generally larger multi-owner locations). Some additional "opportunity *sites*" shown on the map on page 53 and the map legend suggests some future use possibilities for these sites.

## Opportunity Area A – Newington Town Center

The Newington Town Center discussion is contained in Chapter 8.

A related discussion regarding "Town Center *East*" (the area between Newington Town Center and Cedar Mountain) is discussed on page 52.

**Mixed Use**

See pages 40-41 in the Newington Town Center chapter for a discussion of:

- Mixed-use areas,
- Mixed-use buildings, and
- Mixed-use sites.

# Opportunity Area B – Future Train Station

A significant opportunity which has arisen in Newington since the POCD adopted in 2010 is the possibility for a train station to be developed by the Connecticut Department of Transportation (DOT) on Cedar Street over the next few years. This station, once constructed, has the potential to be a transformative event in the history of Newington.

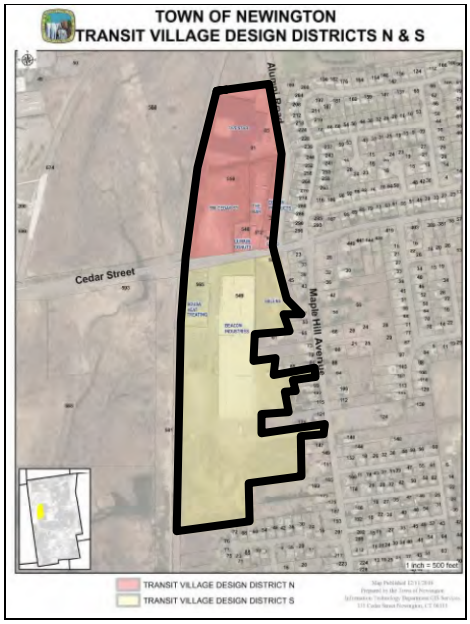
While a train station had been considered a possibility for Newington Junction, the Cedar Street location was identified as a preferred alternative by DOT. The DOT challenged the Town to implement a regulation for land near where the rail line crosses Cedar Street that would have the potential for stimulating development appropriate to its proximity to a train station. The Town of Newington responded by:

- having a "Transit Village Design District" (TVDD) regulation prepared,
- identifying approximately 64 acres of land where the regulations could be utilized in the future, and
- the Town Plan and Zoning Commission adopting the TVDD regulations in August 2019.

The adoption of the TVDD regulation was the essential first step to DOT continuing their planning for a train station in Newington.

For the zoning regulation to be utilized in the future, several steps must occur:

- the land (which is currently privately owned by multiple parties) must be assembled by a private developer or a development entity for the area north of Cedar Street (20 acres), south of Cedar Street (44 acres). or both,
- the developer must prepare a master plan consistent with the TVDD regulations and get the master plan approved by the Town Plan and Zoning Commission.

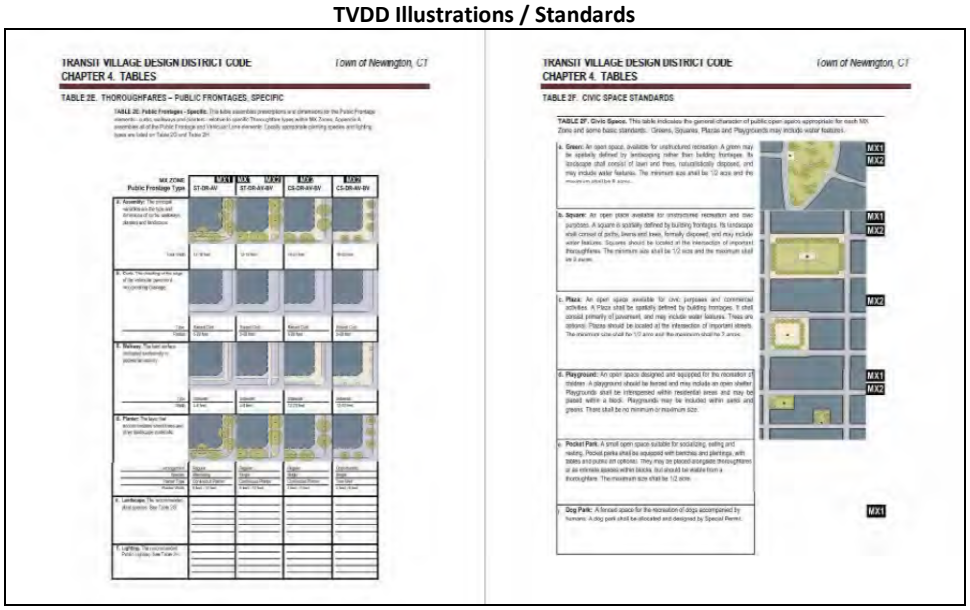



Of course, for the development to occur, the train station itself (train platforms, station facility, etc.) must be built by DOT or adequate assurances provided that it will be built.

The TVDD code is approximately 70 pages in length and contains numerous standards and illustrations about important development considerations:

- Neighborhood types,
- Building form and placement standards,
- Building use standards (mixed use buildings are required), and
- Signage, parking, and other standards.

**TVDD Illustrations / Standards**




However, even with 70 pages of text and illustrations, there is no clear indication of what the transit village could look like, how much development might occur, and how it might integrate into Cedar Street. While some may postulate that this should be proposed by the developer, others feel that the Town should have the ability to be ***pro-active*** about (rather than reactive to) some of the development possibilities that may occur.

**Future Train Station**

## Land Use Strategies

1. Since some time may pass development applications can be made, the Town may wish to take advantage of this opportunity to undertake a community-driven planning process (like a community "charrette" or a carefully constituted steering committee) for the TVDD area.
2. The planning process would provide an opportunity to:
   a. Establish an overall vision,
   b. Tweak the regulations (if needed), and
   c. Set the stage for the type of development which best fits Newington and supports the train station.

**Context**

The Cedar Street Fastrak Station opened in March of 2015 and usage has grown since then. The Cedar Street station is the closest station to the Central Connecticut State University (CCSU) campus.

At one time, CCSU had been considering a campus expansion in Newington, south of Cedar Street. The current status of those plans is unclear.

A TOD Overlay District (which allows residential buildings with up to 9.7 units per acre and mixed-use buildings with business uses on the first floor) provides additional development opportunities for the area bounded by:

- Holly Drive/Ella Grasso Boulevard on the north
- Rail line on the east,
- a line parallel to and approximately 2000' south of Cedar Street on the south, and
- CT Route 9 on the west

# Opportunity Area C –West Cedar Street

An opportunity area exists in the vicinity of the Cedar Street Fastrak station.

**West Cedar Street**

## Land Use Strategies

1. Continue to promote appropriate development of the National Welding Site (now owned by the Town).
2. Continue to work with DOT to address chronic parking shortages at the Cedar Street Fastrak station (either on a short-term or long-term basis).
3. Continue to work with CCSU and others with regard to appropriate future development of the land south of Cedar Street along the Fastrak ROW.
4. Seek to establish a possible greenway trail route along Piper Brook.

**Cedar Street Fastrak Area**

# Opportunity Area D – Newington Junction

An opportunity area exists in the vicinity of the Newington Junction Fastrak station.

**Newington Junction**

## Land Use Strategies

1. Consider establishing an overlay zone which will enable mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly, transit-oriented development specific to the unique circumstances of the Newington Junction area along streets near the Fastrak station (and do not "leapfrog" into the middle of residential neighborhoods).
2. Continue to work with DOT to address chronic parking shortages at the Newington Junction Fastrak station (either on a short-term or long-term basis).

**Newington Junction Fastrak Area**

**Context**

Newington Junction is called that because it sat at the confluence of two separate rail lines and was the location of the Newington train station.

When the Fastrak system was being planned, Newington Junction was studied by CRCOG as a location to promote transit-oriented development (TOD).

However, the study process and recommendations were not strongly supported in Newington at that time and the TPZ adopted a moratorium on multi-family residential development (Section 3.0.1) which expired in 2016.

## Opportunity Area E – Berlin Turnpike

With the changing nature of retail, there may come a time when some properties along the Berlin Turnpike will be ripe for redevelopment due to market considerations.

In the meantime, there are certain uses already located along the Berlin Turnpike (such as transient lodging facilities) which have transitioned into uses which are having a negative impact on adjacent properties and the community.

Newington should prepare for and address these situations to promote appropriate redevelopment of these sites in ways that support the desired overall character and structure of Newington. Whether two separate zoning districts (Berlin Turnpike Business and Planned Development) are needed along the Berlin Turnpike should also be evaluated.

## Opportunity Area F – Town Center East

**Town Center East**

### Land Use Strategies

1. Work with Hartford Healthcare and other property owners to undertake a community-driven planning process (like a community "charrette" or a carefully constituted steering committee) for the Town Center East area in order to:
   - establish an overall vision which will integrate it into (and help strengthen) the Town Center area while respecting the opportunities and constraints presented by the site and its location,
   - suggest possible regulation changes, and
   - set the stage for complementary development.

**Town Center East**

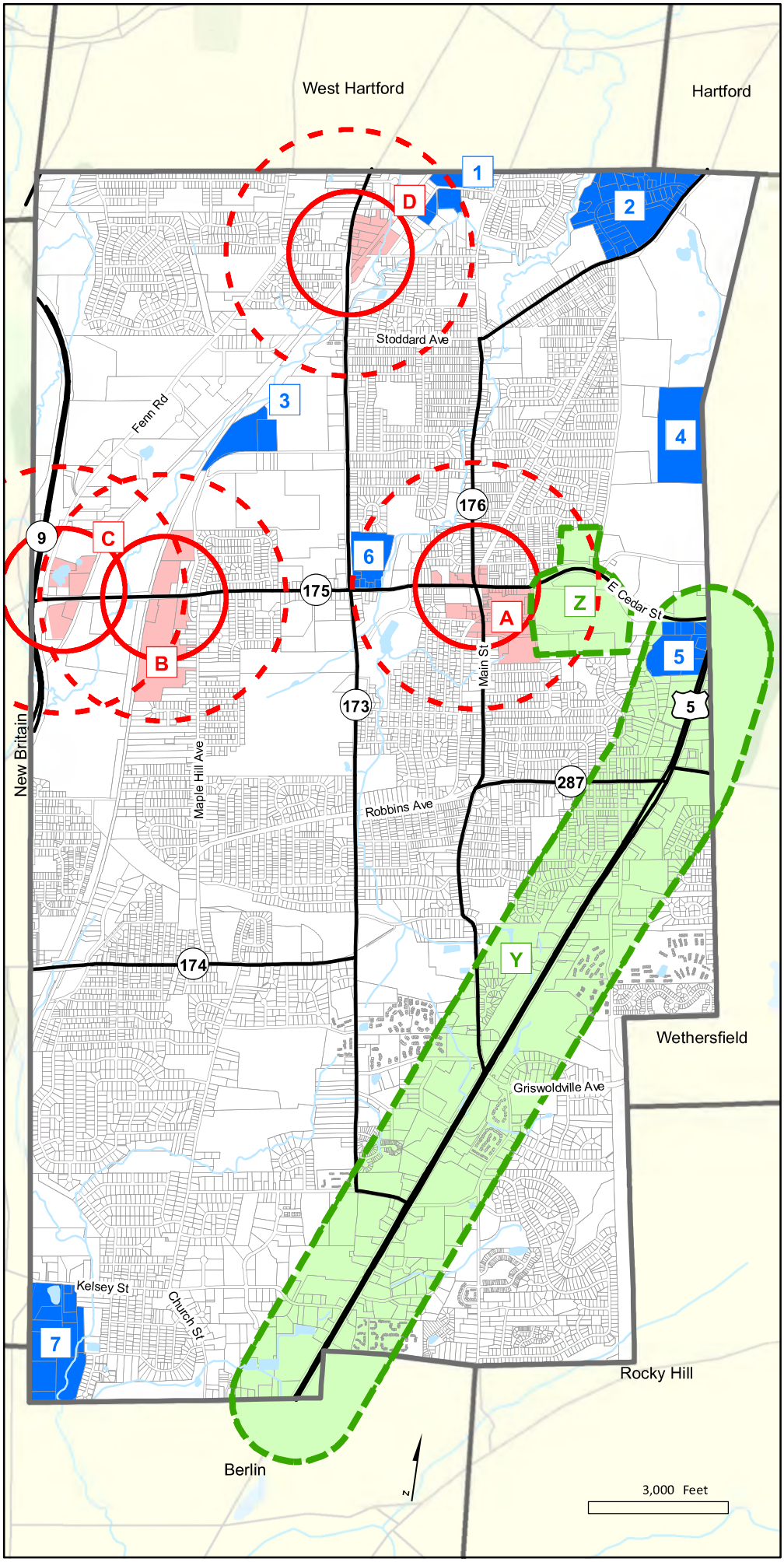
**Context**

Town Center East is the area between Newington Town Center and Cedar Mountain.

Much of his area was once the campus of Newington Children's Hospital before it was relocated to Hartford in the 1990s and became the Connecticut Children's Medical Center.

# Opportunity Sites

## Newington, CT




**Codes:**

B = Business
I = Industrial
M = Mixed Use
O = Office
P = Public / Private Institution
R = Residential
T = Transitions

**Key Opportunity Area**

(Generally mixed use, pedestrian-friendly, and transit oriented)

Core = 1/4 Mile Walk Radius

Fringe = 1/2 Mile Walk Radius

A = Town Center (M)
B = Future Train Station (M)
C = Cedar Street Fastrak Station (M)
D = Newington Junction (M)

**Special Opportunity Area**

Y = Berlin Turnpike (B/I/O/P)
Z = Town Center East (B/M/O/P/R)

**Opportunity Site**

1 = Day Street (B/I/M/R)
2 = North Mountain Road (I/O)
3 = Alumni Road (B/I/O/P)
4 = Cedarcrest Hospital (O/P/R)
5 = East Cedar Street (B/O/R)
6 = Willard Avenue (O/P/R)
7 = Kelsey Street (B/O/I)

# Opportunity Site Strategies

Legend for Leaders / Partners on inside back cover

| A. POLICIES (Strategies anticipated to continue over time) | Leader / Partners |
|---|---|
| 1. Maximize possibilities at "opportunity" areas and sites in order to promote appropriate reuse and redevelopment in ways which support the desired overall character and structure of Newington. | **EDC**<br>TPZ |
| 2. Encourage "transit-oriented" development in areas where transit stations have been and/or will be established. | **EDC**<br>TPZ<br>DOT |
| 3. Promote development of Newington Town Center area. (see Chapter 8) | **EDC**<br>TPZ |
| 4. Promote compatible development and redevelopment along the Berlin Turnpike including transient lodging facilities which have transitioned into uses which are having a negative impact on adjacent properties and the community in general. | **EDC**<br>TPZ |
| 5. Enhance and improve the appearance and quality of development at commercial gateways. | **EDC**<br>TPZ |

| B. ACTION STEPS (Specific tasks intended to implement the POCD) | Leader / Partners |
|---|---|
| ☐ 1. Undertake a community-driven planning process (like a community "charrette" or a carefully constituted steering committee) for the future train station area to establish an overall vision, tweak the regulations (if needed), and to set the stage for the type of development which best fits Newington and supports the train station. | **TPZ**<br>DOT<br>EDC |
| ☐ 2. Consider establishing an overlay zone (or other approach) which could enable mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly, transit-oriented development specific to the unique circumstances of the Newington Junction area. | **TPZ**<br>EDC |
| ☐ 3. Work with Hartford Healthcare and other property owners to undertake a community-driven planning process (like a community "charrette" or a carefully constituted steering committee) for the Town Center East area. | **TPZ**<br>EDC |

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

***Promote appropriate economic development to meet community needs.***

For the POCD, economic development is considered to include uses and activities that:

- Provide jobs for residents of Newington and the region,
- Provide goods and services for people and for businesses, and/or
- Provide net tax revenue to support local services.

In recent years, the concept of economic development has grown to include uses other than commercial / industrial which provide one or more of the above attributes (such as assisted living facilities and age-restricted housing which provide more in tax revenue than they require in municipal services).

Newington has attracted significant economic development over the years to the point there is limited undeveloped land area available for future economic development. As a result, the main economic development opportunities in the future are likely to arise from:

- Key "opportunity" areas (as discussed in Chapter 9), and
- Redevelopment of individual sites.

The overall goals are to:

- Support development of a wide range of commercial / industrial uses to maintain a strong tax base without adversely impacting residential areas.
- Ensure that commercial / industrial areas have adequate public utilities and roadway capacity to accommodate future growth.
- Promote reuse and redevelopment of existing properties, where appropriate, to take advantage of good locations and utility services.

**Business Development**

**Industrial Development**

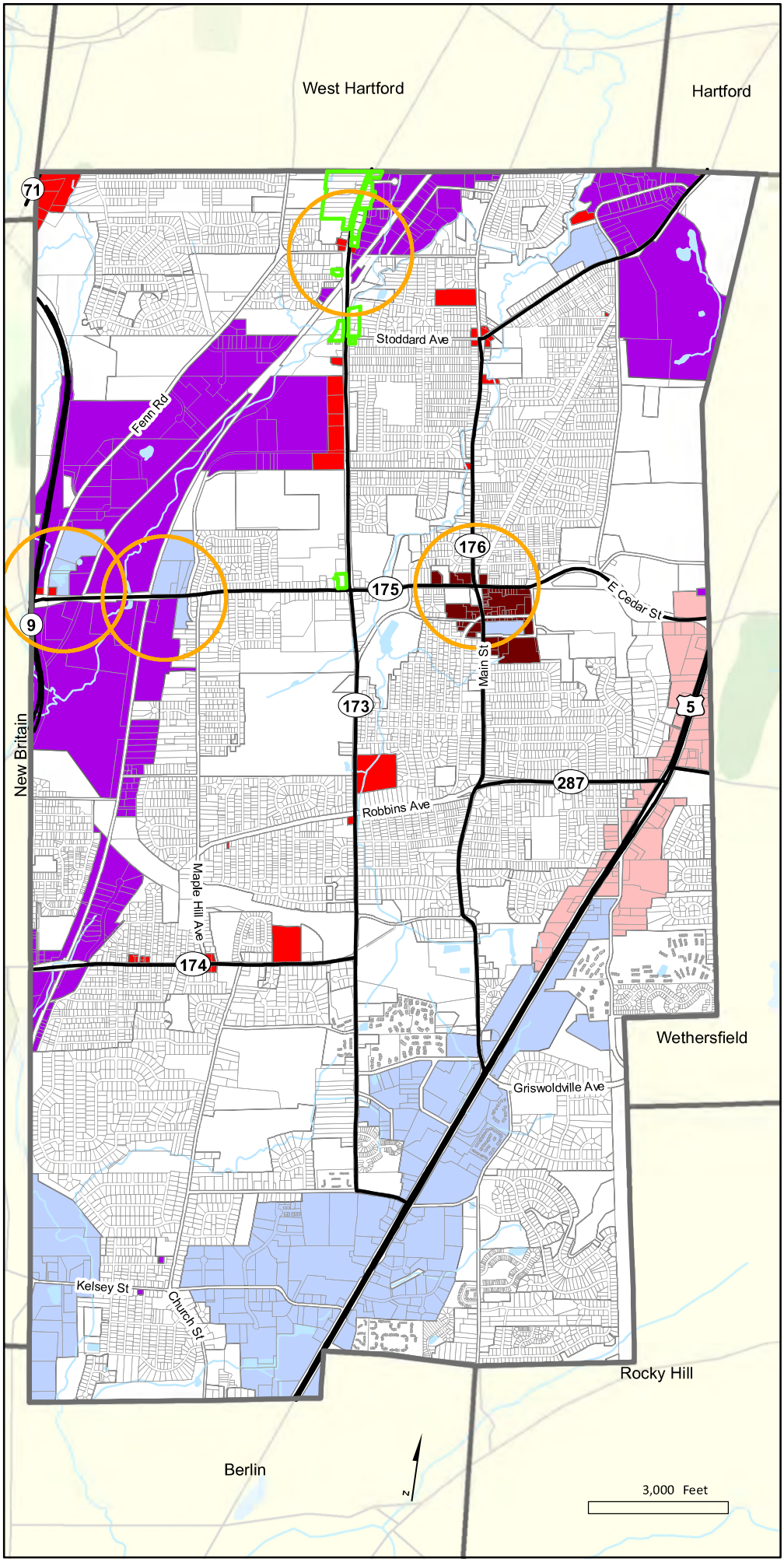
# Economic Development Strategies

Legend for Leaders / Partners on inside back cover

| A. POLICIES (Strategies anticipated to continue over time) | Leader / Partners |
|---|---|
| 1. Continue to promote appropriate economic development in Newington in order to:<br>a. Provide jobs for residents of Newington and the region,<br>b. Provide goods and services for residents, businesses and visitors, and/or<br>c. Provide net tax revenue to support local services. | **EDC**<br>Town |
| 2. Continue to support existing businesses and industries and continue efforts to keep them in Newington. | **EDC**<br>Town |
| 3. Continue efforts to attract new businesses and industries to Newington. | **EDC**<br>Town |
| 4. Seek to improve the attractiveness of Newington, both economically and physically, in order to attract economic development. | **EDC**<br>Town |
| 5. Increase the focus on economic opportunity areas. | **EDC**<br>Town |
| 6. Continue to investigate and use, as appropriate, appropriate tools to promote economic development (such as tax incentives, tax increment financing, and other tools). | **EDC**<br>Town |
| 7. Where appropriate, reuse and redevelop existing commercial properties to take advantage of good locations and utility services. | **EDC**<br>Town |
| 8. Continue to protect residential neighborhoods and transitional areas adjacent to commercial properties with effective landscaped buffers and use controls to mitigate potential nuisances. | **TPZ** |
| 9. Seek to preserve industrially zoned areas and protect them from encroachment by non-industrial uses which reduce the available supply of industrial land and sometimes result in land use conflicts. | **TPZ** |
| 10. Continue to encourage the development of land within the Berlin Turnpike corridor for regional retail / service uses which will enhance this thoroughfare's trade location within the Central Connecticut market area. | **EDC**<br>Town |
| 11. Continue to manage home-based business operations (section 3.3.3 and Section 3.4.4 of the Zoning Regulations) to ensure they do not cause a nuisance or adversely affect residential neighborhoods. | **TPZ**<br>TP / ZEO |

# Business Development

## Newington, CT




Key Opportunity Area

**Business Zones**

- B-TC Business - Town Center
- B / CD Business / Comm. Dev.
- B-BT Business - Berlin Turnpike
- PD Planned Development
- Willard Avenue Redevelopment District

**Industrial Zones**

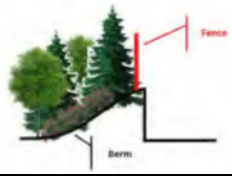
- I Industrial

**Other Zones**

- Land Zoned For Other Than Business Or Industry

| B. ACTION STEPS (Specific tasks intended to implement the POCD) | Leader / Partners |
|---|---|
| ☐ 1. Review the Zoning Map to ensure the location and type of business and industrial zoning districts are appropriate. | **TPZ** TP |
| ☐ 2. Review uses permitted in the various business and industrial zoning districts to ensure they are appropriate and eliminate uses which are not compatible with the nature of each area. | **TPZ** TP |
| ☐ 3. Review dimensional standards in the various business and industrial zoning districts to ensure they are appropriate. | **TPZ** TP |
| ☐ 4. Revisit the landscaping / buffering requirements in the Zoning Regulations to provide "performance –based" buffers that require more planting in narrower buffers and less planting in wider buffers. | **TPZ** TP |
| ☐ 5. Revisit parking requirements for business and industrial uses to ensure that a use will have enough parking but not unnecessarily limit the ability to develop or expand buildings. | **TPZ** TP |
| ☐ 6. Analyze existing neighborhood business districts to improve their appearance, provide safe and convenient customer parking, maintain appropriate boundaries, and ensure that adjacent residential properties are not adversely impacted | **TPZ** TP |

**Performance-Based Buffer Concept**

| | Overhead (Plan) View | Cross-Section View |
|---|---|---|
| **In most circumstances, a 25' wide landscaped area would provide the desired buffer between a business/industrial use and a residential area.** | | |
| **Where more separation distance can be provided (i.e., more than 25'), fewer trees might be needed to provide the desired buffer.** | | |
| **On the other hand, a tighter site (where a 25' wide area cannot be provided) might be able to provide an adequate buffer by providing more planting, a berm, and/or a fence.** | |   |

# RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

## *Promote a variety of housing types to meet changing needs while retaining Newington's character.*

Newington is primarily a residential community since most of the land is zoned and used for residential development. While most residential areas are primarily single-family homes, about one-third of the housing units in Newington are multi-family developments (apartments or condominiums).

The overall goals are to:

- Provide housing options for a variety of household types, sizes, ages, tenures, and income groups within safe and stable neighborhoods.
- Protect and conserve the quality of existing housing stock from neglect, incompatible neighboring uses, and disinvestment.
- Maintain quality residential neighborhoods by avoiding the intrusion of non-compatible uses and/or non-residential traffic.

The diversity of Newington's housing stock including multi-family housing types) is a significant asset, since it increases the opportunity that people of all ages, means, and interests will be able to find housing in the community that meets their needs.

Future housing issues in Newington are likely to include:

- Continuing to diversify the housing portfolio (including upscale housing),
- Providing for housing that is more affordable for younger and older age groups, and
- Meeting the housing needs of an aging population.

**Single Family Home**

**Multi-Family Development**

**NOAH Estimates**

The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) calculated the 2019 income for a four-person household in the Hartford region earning 80% of the area median income was $78,320.

At the 30% threshold, a household earning that income could afford a housing payment of almost $1,960 per month.

The American Community Survey (ACS) data for Newington reports that there were at least 2,100 apartments or homes in Newington where the gross rent was less than that.

In terms of buying a residence, a payment of $1,960 per month for a mortgage, taxes, and utilities at prevailing terms in 2019 (4.0%, 30 years) would support a home sale price of more than $200,000 if no down payment was made. ACS data indicate that about 3,400 housing units in Newington were valued at affordable levels (i.e. - less than $200,000). With a down payment, even more housing units would be available.

## Housing That Is More Affordable

Housing is considered affordable if a person or family spends less than 30 percent of their income on a mortgage or rent and related costs (taxes, utilities, etc.). For persons or families who earn 80 percent of area median income or below, it can be difficult to find adequate housing they can afford.

There are two types of housing that can meet this need:

- naturally occurring affordable housing units (NOAH) that sell or rent at affordable prices, and
- housing that is subsidized or deed-restricted to affordable prices.

**Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing** - As can be seen from the sidebar, there are about 5,500 housing units in Newington (over 40 percent of the housing stock) that are valued at affordable prices. Newington has a diverse housing stock and there is plenty of housing at different price levels to meet diverse housing needs. This is a strength of the community.

**Subsidized / Deed-Restricted Affordable Housing** - In Connecticut, the term "affordable housing" is used to refer to housing that is specifically dedicated or reserved in some way for households earning 80 percent or less of the area median income. Newington has over 1,100 housing units that meet these criteria and this totals about 8.6 percent of the housing stock in the community:

| For Low / Moderate Income Households | |
|---|---|
| Governmentally Assisted Units | 530 |
| Tenant Rental Assistance | 115 |
| Single-Family CHFA/USDA Mortgages | 435 |
| Deed Restricted Units | 36 |
| **Total Assisted Units** | **1,116** |
| As Percent of 2010 Housing Units (13,011 units) | 8.58% |

In Connecticut, municipalities with *less than ten percent* of their housing stock meeting the above criteria are subject to the "Affordable Housing Appeals Procedure" (CGS Section 8-30g). This is an important consideration since, if a developer proposes a housing development containing affordable housing meeting certain criteria specified in the statute, such development may not have to comply with local land use regulations.

While the creation of affordable housing units can provide many benefits, communities often prefer that such units be created in locations and ways that fit with the character of the community.

## Possible Strategies to Create Affordable Housing

**ZONING APPROACHES**

1. Adopt an inclusionary zoning requirement requiring that ***any housing development***:
   - create affordable units within that development or elsewhere in the community where such location is found acceptable by the Commission, and/or
   - pay a fee into a municipal Housing Trust Fund.

2. Provide for accessory apartments and other accessory dwelling units (see CGS Section 8-30g for how such units can be counted as affordable units).

3. Allow dimensional flexibility (such as building height or a density bonus) in appropriate areas when it will result in affordable housing units.

**PARTNERSHIPS / FUNDING**

4. Establish, maintain, and fund a local Housing Trust Fund.

5. Pursue grants for the construction and maintenance of affordable housing.

6. Work with local non-profit organizations to create affordable housing units.

7. Seek private donations of property for development of affordable and/or mixed-income housing.

**OTHER APPROACHES**

8. Research the potential for placing of deed-restrictions on "naturally-occurring affordable housing" so that Newington will get credit for such housing.

9. Seek ways to extend deed restrictions for a longer period.

10. Seek ways to convert existing housing units to deed-restricted affordable units through down payment assistance for new buyers, tax reduction for existing single-family and multi-family uses and purchase / restriction.

If Newington wishes to gain more control over the development of CGS 8-30g affordable housing in the community, there are two ways to become exempt:

- Find ways to create enough affordable housing units to meet the 10 percent threshold, or
- Find ways to create enough affordable housing units to get a series of four-year moratoria.

To meet the threshold -- 10 percent of the units in the last Census, Newington would need to have 1,301 affordable housing units. With 1,116 units today, reaching this threshold would require the creation of 185 affordable units. Note, however, that this threshold will change once the 2020 Census is released.

The other way to get a moratorium is to accumulate enough "housing unit equivalent points" to meet State-defined thresholds. Points can be obtained as follows:

| | Ownership Unit | Rental Unit |
|---|---|---|
| Family units at 40% of area median income | 2.0 | 2.5 |
| Family units at 60% of area median income | 1.5 | 2.0 |
| Family units at 80% of area median income | 1.0 | 1.5 |
| Elderly units at 80% of area median income | 0.5 | 0.5 |
| Unrestricted units in a "set-aside" development | 0.25 | 0.25 |
| Bonuses for 3+ bedrooms, elderly units mixed with family units, approved incentive housing development, resident-owned mobile manufactured home park | varies | varies |

**Newington is in the process of applying to the Connecticut Department of Housing for a four-year moratorium based on "housing unit equivalent points" obtained since 1990.**

**Until that application is approved and the moratorium is granted, Newington is still subject to CGS 8-30g.**

## Housing For An Aging Population

Housing for an aging population is an important consideration for most communities and Newington is no exception.

For people with adequate incomes, Newington has a diverse array of housing choices for people to find a housing choice which meets their needs. In addition to independent living, Newington has several facilities which offer assisted living and other types of assistance / care.

For people who would prefer to remain in their own homes, Newington has a variety of services which can help people "age-in-place". The demand for these services can be expected to increase significantly in the future.

The challenge can be that, although people's life expectancies increase, their financial means do not. As a result, an increased need for subsidized housing for elder people can be anticipated in the future. Since there is already a substantial waiting list for housing managed by the Newington Housing Authority, work should begin now on finding ways to address this growing need.

**Aging In Place**

Newington offers several programs to assist the elderly age in place including:

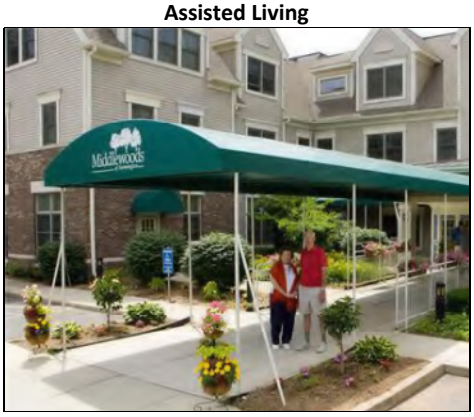
- Elderly tax relief,
- Meals-on-Wheels,
- Dial-a-Ride, and
- Other services.

**Multi-Family Housing**

**Housing Authority Housing**

**Housing Authority Housing**

**Assisted Living**



**Overall Housing Diversification**

In addition to older age groups, there are other groups who may also seek housing options:

- Younger age groups starting to earn their way in the world who do not want to live at home,
- Younger age groups who may still be balancing college debt,
- Older persons who may experience job loss, divorce, or other events and would benefit from having housing options available when they need them,
- People with special needs (such as people who are mobility-impaired and use a walker or wheelchair).

Overall, there are many demographic segments where the current housing mix may not meet their current and future needs. Other communities have come to the realization that they can, and should, diversify their housing portfolio to provide for a variety of housing types.

Since accessory apartments can be an effective tool for addressing housing needs within the existing housing stock, the provisions in the Newington Zoning Regulations should be revisited to ensure they are meeting community needs.

**Areas in Newington which may be best located to assimilate housing options within the community may include:**

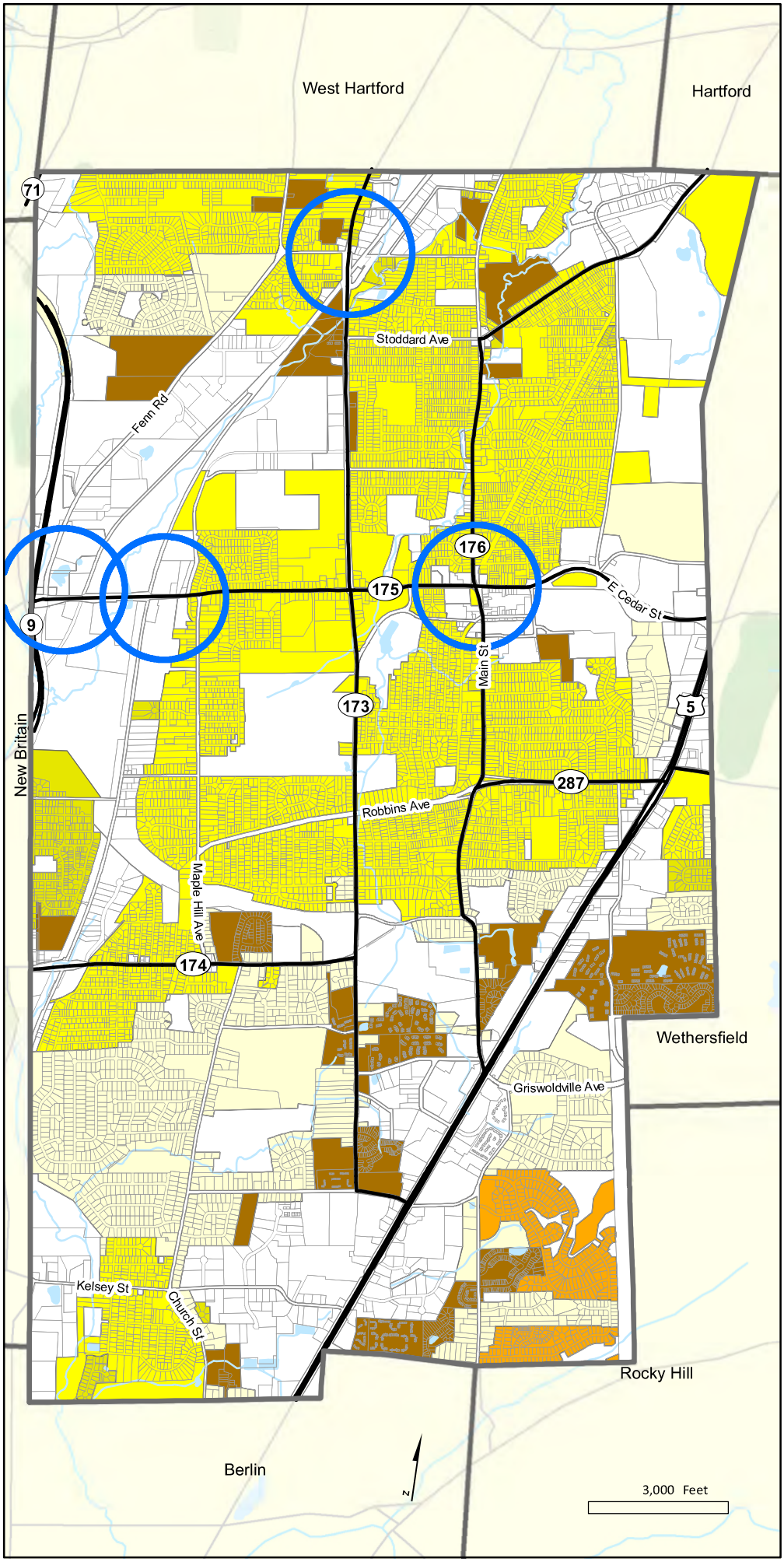
- **Newington Town Center (and nearby areas such as "Town Center East") which will help support the strengthening of this area,**
- **Areas which are walkable to transit stations including:**
  - **the future train station location on Cedar Street,**
  - **the Cedar Street Fastrak station,**
  - **the Newington Junction Fastrak Station,**
- **Areas which are near existing CT-Transit bus routes.**

**Single-Family Residential**

**Multi-Family Residential**

# Residential Development

## Newington, CT




Key Opportunity Area

**Residential Zones**

- R-7 Residential
- R-12 Residential
- R-20 Residential
- RD Residential Designed
- RP Residential Planned

**Other Zones**

- Land Zoned For Other Than Residential

# Residential Development Strategies

Legend for Leaders / Partners on inside back cover

| A. POLICIES (Strategies anticipated to continue over time) | Leader / Partners |
|---|---|
| 1. Continue to protect and enhance residential neighborhoods by:<br>• Carefully managing special permit uses in residential neighborhoods, and<br>• Mitigating potential conflicts between residential and other uses (scale, setbacks, buffer areas, design compatibility, etc.). | **TPZ** |
| 2. Seek to diversify Newington's housing portfolio to provide housing options for a variety of household types, sizes, ages, abilities, tenures, and income groups within safe and stable neighborhoods. | **HNSC**<br>HA |
| 3. Encourage the maintenance and improvement of the existing housing stock and discourage disinvestment or neglect. | **Town** |
| 4. Continue to offer low interest rehabilitation loans through continued participation in state and/or federal grant programs. | **TP** |
| 5. Continue to provide support services for the growing number of people who choose to "'age in place." | **COAD**<br>Town |
| 6. Help the Newington Housing Authority address the growing need for housing for income-limited senior citizens. | **Town**<br>HA |

| B. ACTION STEPS (Specific tasks intended to implement the POCD) | Leader / Partners |
|---|---|
| ☐ 1. Consider adopting an inclusionary zoning requirement (as authorized by CGS 8-2i) to require an affordable housing component of every new housing development, especially in housing opportunity areas identified in the POCD (see Chapter 9). | **TPZ**<br>HNSC |
| ☐ 2. Prepare an official Affordable Housing Plan, as required under PA 17-170 (codified as CGS Section 8-30j), with compliance required by July 24, 2022). | **TPZ**<br>HNSC |
| ☐ 3. Review the accessory apartments provisions in the Zoning Regulations to see if they can be simplified and help address changing community needs. | **TPZ**<br>TP |

**Single-Family Residential**

**Multi-Family Residential**

# COMMUNITY FACILITIES

## *Continue to provide and maintain community facilities to meet local needs.*

Community services (such as public works, public safety, and education) contribute significantly to Newington's character and quality of life. For the purposes of the POCD, community facilities are considered to include buildings and other facilities which are used to provide services to residents.

The overall goal is to provide quality community facilities which are well maintained and accessible to all residents.

The POCD does not get involved in the day-to-day operation of local departments but does look at:

- The adequacy of local facilities to meet anticipated community needs during the planning period (to 2030 or so) and beyond, and
- Whether the potential exists to expand such facilities in the future should the need arise.

**Town Hall**

**Public Safety**

**Education**

**Recreation**

**Demographic Changes**

Like many communities, Newington is anticipating an increase in the number of older residents and this will have implications for community facilities.

This can include more demand for services for older residents:

- Senior Center
- Tax relief
- Assistance for those choosing to "age in place", such as "meals on wheels"
- Emergency medical
- Social services
-

The following table provides a macro-level overview of community facility issues in Newington which will likely require attention over the next 10 to 20 years:

| Function | Assessment |
|---|---|
| **Building Maintenance** | • There appears to be deferred maintenance on a number of community facilities and this will eventually result in higher costs than if there was an on-going maintenance/replacement program in place (a capital improvement plan) |
| **Library** | • Expansion / renovation is desired to meet community needs |
| **Recreation** | • Lack of investment in facilities (pools, fields, etc.) shows<br>• Park and Recreation Master Plan (2007) needs updating to address current and anticipated future issues |
| **Future Expansion Potential** | • Consider purchasing sites adjacent to existing community facilities if doing so will provide an opportunity to prepare for possible future expansion, if or when needed. |

The following table identifies situations which may change over the next 10 to 20 years and should be monitored:

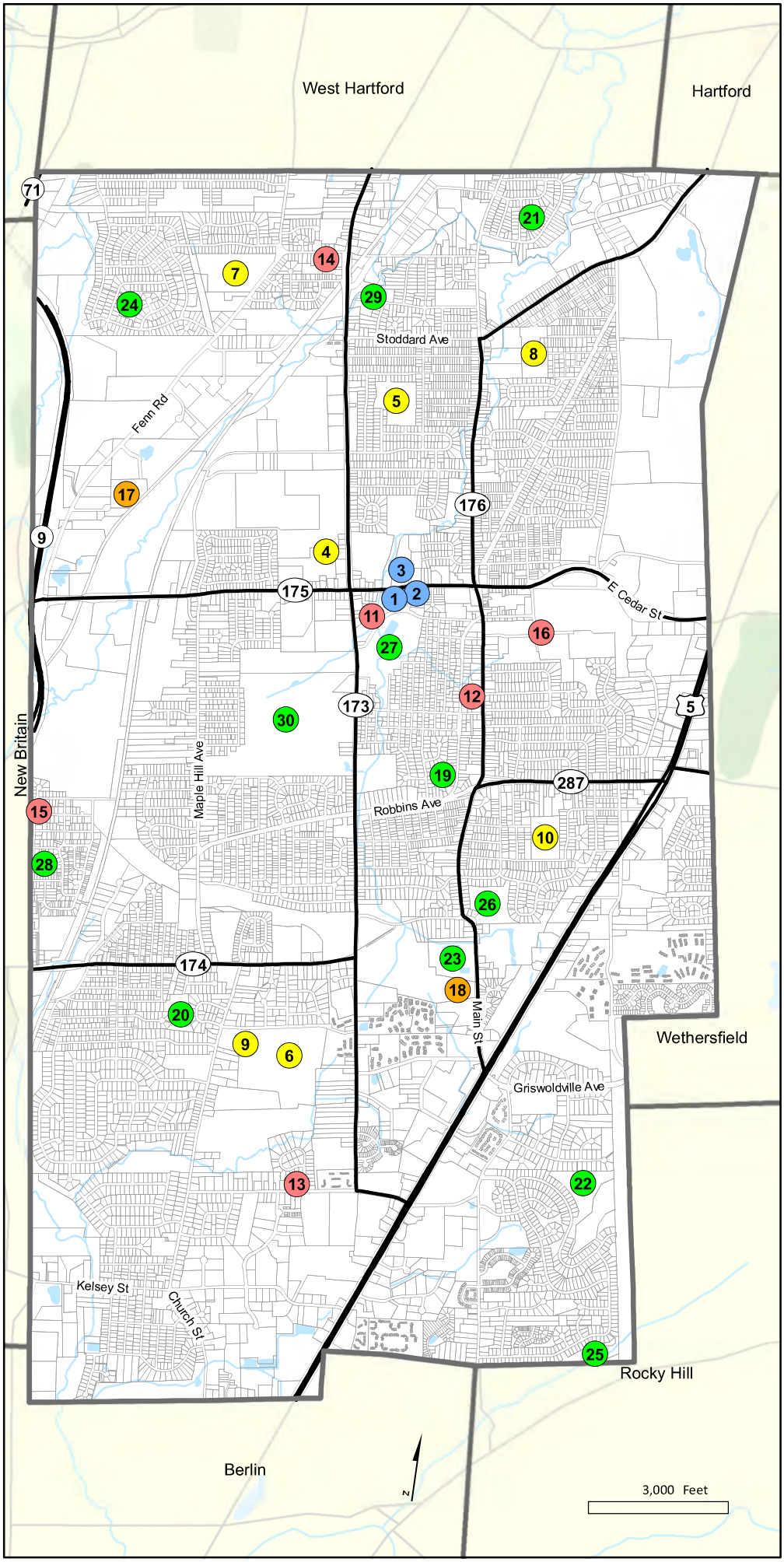
| Function | Assessment |
|---|---|
| **Schools / Education** | • While existing buildings are expected to be adequate in size (since enrollment is expected to remain stable), building condition issues and programmatic changes (such as full day pre-school) may require attention<br>• Continue to monitor enrollment changes and project future enrollments |
| **Public Works** | • Monitor site utilization since the current facility may not be adequate for long-term community needs |
| **Fire Department** | • Volunteer fire department continues to work well but many communities are finding this to be more difficult than it has been – a paid department will be much more expensive and may necessitate a reconfiguration of equipment and stations<br>• Some facilities may need upgrades to meet community needs<br>• Facilities study programmed for 2020 |
| **Police** | • Station is cramped for current needs but may get some relief after completion of Town Hall / Community Center project<br>• Situation should be monitored |

The following community facilities and services are expected to be adequate for community needs for the next 10 years or so:

- Town Hall / Community Center (once current renovation / expansion project is completed).
- Senior Center / Community Center.
- Solid waste.
- Emergency medical response.

# Community Facilities

## Newington, CT




**General**

1. Town Hall
2. Lucy Robbins Welles Library
3. Newington Senior Center

**Education**

4. Newington High School
5. Martin Kellog Middle School
6. John Walllace Middle School
7. Anna Reynolds Elementary School
8. Elizabeth Green Elementary School
9. John Patterson Elementary School
10. Ruth Chaffee Elementary School

**Public Safety**

11. Newington Police Department
12. Newington Fire Department Co 1
13. Newington Fire Department Co 2
14. Newington Fire Department Co 3
15. Newington Fire Department Co 4
16. Newington Volunteer Ambulance

**Public Works**

17. Newington Highway Garage
18. Transfer Station / Former Landfill

**Parks and Recreation**

19. Badger Field
20. Beacon Park
21. Beachwood Park
22. Candlewyck Park
23. Churchill Park
24. Eagle Lantern Park
25. Littlebrook Park
26. Mill Brook Park
27. Mill Pond Park
28. Seymour Park
29. Starr Park
30. Newington Golf Course

# Community Facility Strategies

Legend for Leaders / Partners on inside back cover

| A. POLICIES (Strategies anticipated to continue over time) | Leader / Partners |
|---|---|
| 1. Maintain and manage community facilities and services in an efficient and cost-effective way to maximize their utility and to:<br>a. meet current community needs, and<br>b. anticipate and adapt to future community needs. | **TC**<br>BOE<br>CIC |
| 2. Undertake improvements to improve accessibility (mobility, sight, hearing, etc.) to all municipal facilities and services. | **TC**<br>BOE<br>COAD |
| 3. Whenever sites become available adjacent to existing facilities, consider purchasing those sites if doing so will provide an opportunity to prepare for possible future expansion, if or when needed. | **Town**<br>TC |
| 4. Monitor school enrollments (and project future enrollments in order to anticipate possible future facility needs (expansion or contraction). | **BOE** |
| 5. Monitor site utilization at the Public Work facility since the current facility may not be adequate for long-term community needs. | **PW**<br>Town |
| 6. Continue to support the volunteer fire department. | **Town**<br>FD |
| 7. Monitor space utilization / needs at the police station. | **Town**<br>PD |
| 8. Continue to ensure that all signs utilized to identify Town-owned facilities, buildings, public park lands and their respective features shall be uniform in design (Administrative Letter 35 (2004)). | **Town** |

| B. ACTION STEPS (Specific tasks intended to implement the POCD) | Leader / Partners |
|---|---|
| ☐ 1. Establish an Infrastructure Study Committee to provide (or charge the Capital Improvements Committee with providing) a comprehensive overview of community facility needs and issues (including deferred maintenance) including:<br>a. Library,<br>b. Park and Recreation,<br>c. Fire facilities, and<br>d. Other facilities. | **TC**<br>CIC |

# VEHICULAR TRANSPORTATION

***Provide for safe and efficient vehicular transportation to meet community needs.***

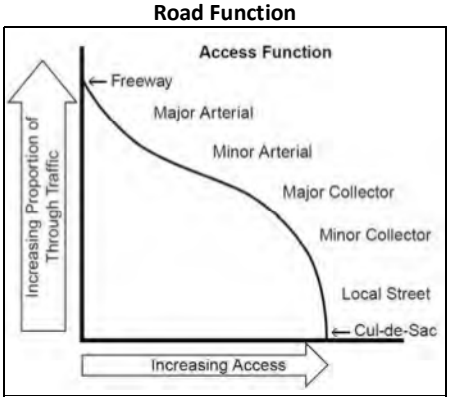
The roadway system in Newington is important in the day-to-day life of the community and the system should be managed and maintained to meet community needs, efficiently and cost effectively. The overall goals are to:

- Provide a transportation network which places priority on safety and adequate levels of service for adjacent land uses.
- Ensure that the Town's road system provides the most balanced circulation network possible recognizing that existing Town and State roads are already well established.

Newington's system of public roads fulfills three basic functions and the map on page 74 shows which roads serve which function:

- Primarily connecting Newington to other areas (arterial roads),
- Conveying traffic from local roads to main roads (collector roads), and
- Primarily accessing individual properties (local roads).

**Road Function**




It is somewhat unique that many of Newington's streets provide regional circulation and this causes some burdens on the community in terms of traffic congestion and impacts on adjacent properties.

**East Cedar Street**

**Fenn Road**

**Electric Vehicles**

A number of people are converting to electric vehicles for environmental, economic, and sustainability reasons. However, the availability of vehicle charging stations can be a challenge.

Newington should seek ways to encourage or require the establishment of vehicle charging stations as part of new developments.

**Autonomous Vehicles**

This POCD was being prepared during a time when there is discussion regarding the possible roll-out of autonomous vehicles. While the timing of this is unclear, Newington should begin to consider ways to address and/or accommodate such trends as they occur.

## Traffic Congestion

Newington experiences significant traffic volumes on major roadways due to its population, employment, retail destinations, major roadways (such as the Berlin Turnpike), and proximity to major population centers. This can result in congestion and delays along major roadways and at key intersections.

Safety and congestion issues on State highways are addressed by the Connecticut Department of Transportation as they are identified and prioritized. Likewise, the Town of Newington is responsible for addressing these issues on local roadways.

In order to maintain roadway capacity and safety, the Town requires submission of an access management plan (Section 5.3.4.6 of the Zoning Regulations) and then uses that information to evaluate opportunities to reduce the number of curb cuts and share driveway access as part of its development review process.

In addition, there are some roadway improvement needs which have been identified and/or programmed:

- Installation of a roundabout at Fenn Road / Ella Grasso Boulevard.
- Intersection improvements on Cedar Street at the location of the proposed train station (which may include reconfiguration of the Alumni Road / Maple Hill Avenue intersection).
- Repair / renovation of bridges.

**Proposed Roundabout**
**At Fenn Road / Ella Grasso Blvd.**
**(entrance to Route 9 northbound)**

**Driveway / Intersection**
**Configuration On Cedar Street**
**Near Proposed Train Station**

**Traffic Calming**

As a result, there are situations in Newington where traffic uses local streets to try to avoid congestion. This is unfortunate since it can turn what was intended and built as a local street into the functional equivalent of a collector street (more traffic seeking to travel at higher speeds).

To address this, Newington may wish to consider implementing "traffic calming" measures, *as appropriate*, along certain streets to deter through traffic and manage it more effectively.

## Sample Of Possible Traffic Calming Techniques

**Awareness** - A neighborhood meeting can raise awareness of the issue and involve residents in identifying possible approaches.

**Signage –** Signage informs motorists of acceptable speeds and/or behavior. Roads can be marked for "no trucks." Unreasonably low speed limits are not recommended.

**Speed Enforcement –** Enforcement of speed limits and other traffic laws in neighborhoods can help slow traffic and help police learn when and where to focus their traffic calming efforts.

**Narrowing Travel Lanes -** Narrowing travel lane width can calm traffic. A constriction (choker, chicane, etc.) can also be effective although it can hamper snowplows and emergency response.

**Mini-Roundabouts -** A mini-roundabout is a street intersection feature which requires vehicles to slow down and navigate around the island in an intersection and yield to vehicles already in the roundabout.

**Speed Bump / Hump –** Temporary or permanent raised sections of roadway which can deter speeding and cut-through traffic. However, this can also create issues for snow plowing and emergency response.

**Pavement Management**

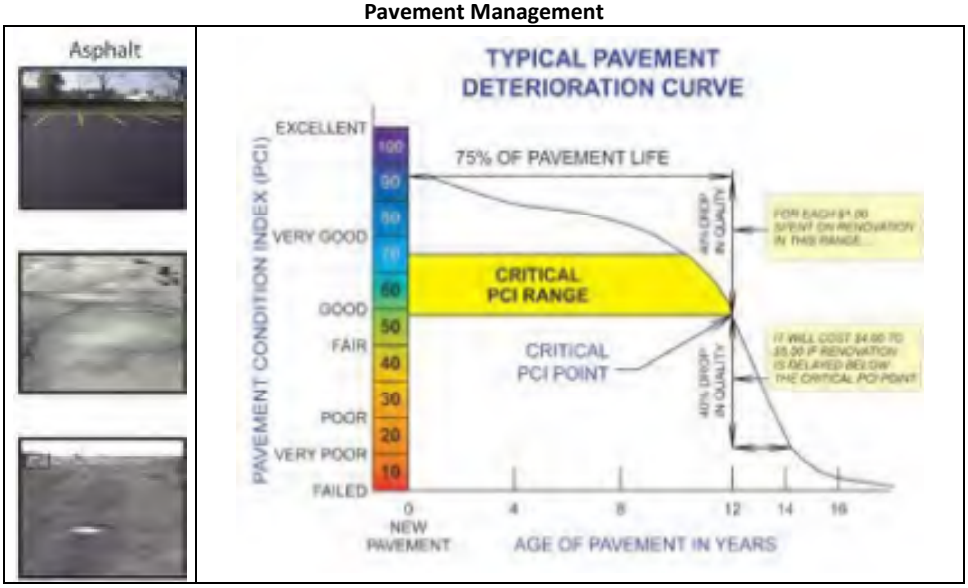
Pavement maintenance is a continuing concern and funding constraints have resulted in a reactionary (rather than a proactive) approach to road maintenance and repairs in Newington. There are visual indications of pavement degradation.

Over the long term, experience has shown that it is more cost effective to be pro-active about maintaining roads in good condition (crack sealing, etc.) rather than letting roads deteriorate to the point where more expensive approaches (repaving, reconstructing, etc.) are required.

**Crack Sealing**

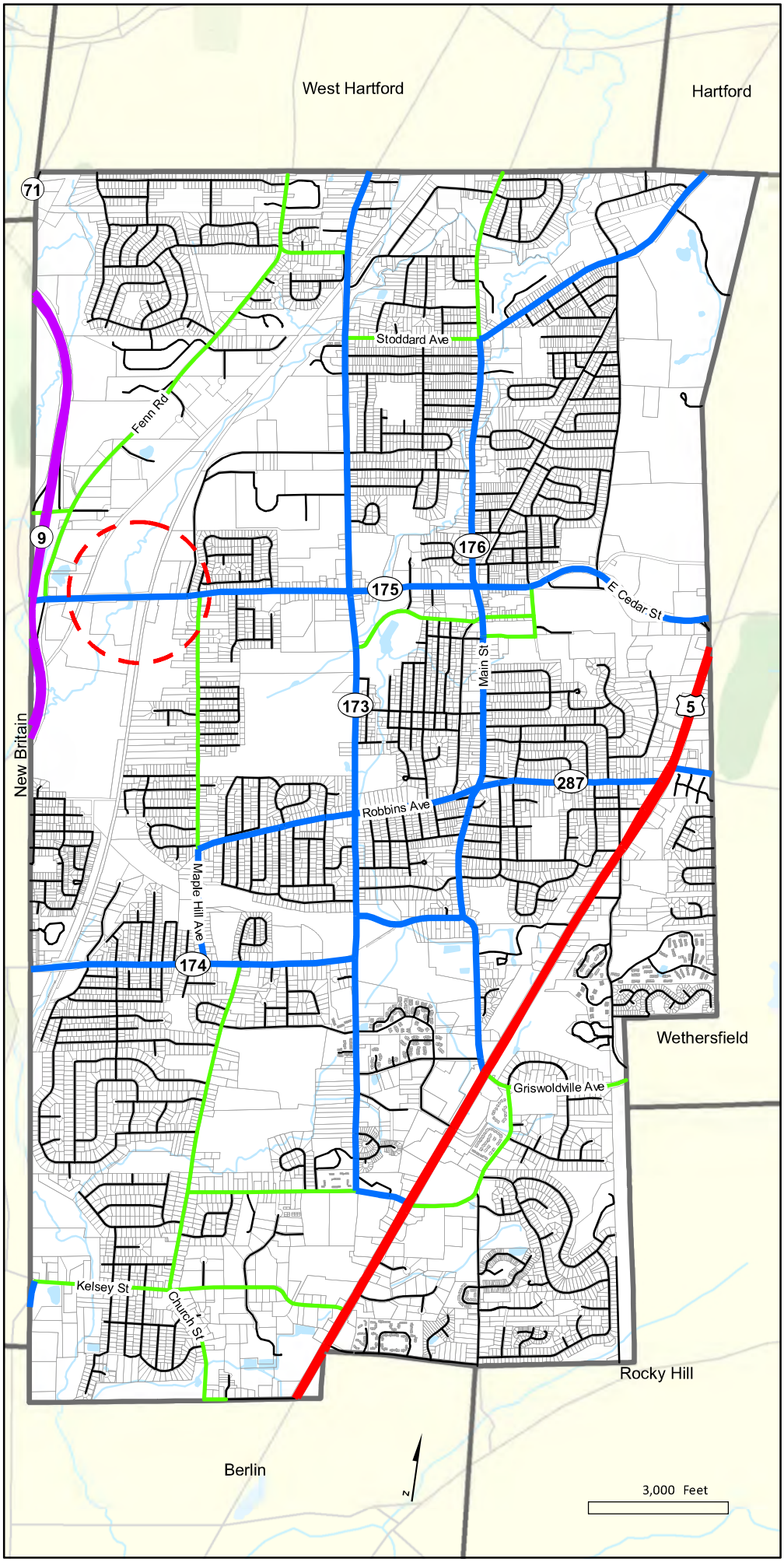
**Road Reclamation**

**Pavement Management**



# Road Classification

## Newington, CT




**Regional Classifications (CT DOT)**

- Principal Arterial - Other Expressway
- Principal Arterial - Other
- Minor Arterial
- Major/Minor Collector
- Local
- Intersection Improvements Required As Part Of Train Station / Transit Village

# Vehicular Transportation Strategies

Legend for Leaders / Partners on inside back cover

| A. POLICIES (Strategies anticipated to continue over time) | Leader / Partners |
|---|---|
| 1. Continue to address potentially hazardous issues (safety and capacity) on State highways while minimizing possible impact to property outside the road right of way. | **DOT**<br>PD |
| 2. Continue to address potentially hazardous issues (safety and capacity) on local roadways while minimizing possible impact to property outside the road right of way. | **PW**<br>PD<br>TE |
| 3. Strive to direct non-residential traffic to the arterial and collector street network and discourage it from using local residential streets (traffic calming). | **PD** |
| 4. Strive to fund maintenance of local roadways as efficiently and economically as possible. | **PW**<br>TC |
| 5. Maintain the quality of streets through a comprehensive capital improvement program. | **TC**<br>Town<br>PW |

| B. ACTION STEPS (Specific tasks intended to implement the POCD) | Leader / Partners |
|---|---|
| ☐ 1. Reestablish the pavement management system in order to be able to systematically track pavement condition over time. | **PW**<br>TE |
| ☐ 2. Relocate the access management provisions (ZR Section 5.3.4.6) from a site plan submission requirement to a distinct regulation section. | **TPZ**<br>TP |
| ☐ 3. Complete installation of a roundabout at Fenn Road / Ella Grasso Boulevard. | **DOT** |
| ☐ 4. Undertake intersection improvements on Cedar Street at the location of the proposed train station (which may include reconfiguration of the Alumni Road / Maple Hill Avenue intersection). | **DOT** |
| ☐ 5. Repair / renovate bridges. | **PW**<br>DOT |

# PEDESTRIAN, BICYCLE, AND TRANSIT TRANSPORTATION

***Provide for safe and efficient pedestrian, bicycle, and transit systems to meet community needs.***

Historically, most transportation planning was devoted to the movement of vehicles on roadways. In recent years, however, there has been growing interest in providing for pedestrian, bicycle, and transit systems to meet community needs.

The overall goal is to promote non-vehicular modes of transportation which are appropriate and practical for Newington.

## Pedestrian Circulation And Mobility / Accessibility

Newington has about 54 miles of sidewalks along Town and State roadways and the Zoning Regulations and Subdivision Regulations generally require sidewalk construction as part of new development. The focus moving forward will involve closing the gaps in the sidewalk system and doing more to maintain and enhance overall accessibility in the community for pedestrians:

- Maintain and enhance the sidewalk network in Newington Town Center (including crosswalks).
- Seek ways to extend the sidewalk network from Newington Town Center to the proposed train station on Cedar Street.
- Seek ways to extend the sidewalk network from Newington Town Center to the Fastrak station on Fenn Road as well as north to the Newington Junction Fastrak station.
- Make sidewalk / crosswalk improvements to improve accessibility for mobility-impaired people (and for an aging population in general).

More can also be done to improve accessibility for mobility-impaired people:

- No threshold entries at buildings.
- Sidewalk ramps at crosswalk locations as well as properly timed signals for crossers.
- Ensuring appropriate provision is made for handicapped parking spaces and access from there to buildings and other destinations.

**Roadway Lane Widths**

The Connecticut Department of Transportation (DOT) has adopted a policy which provides for establishing lane widths of 11 feet when repaving or restriping roads. This change (from historic lane widths of 12 feet or more) has the potential to make more space available for cyclists and other roadway users.

Newington should actively participate in evaluating opportunities to stripe narrower lanes where appropriate.

## "Complete Streets"

Nowadays, attention is turning to "complete streets" where existing road rights-of-way are used to enable safe, convenient and comfortable travel and access for users of all ages and abilities regardless of their mode of transportation.

A "road safety audit" was conducted for Newington Town Center in 2016 with regard to establishing a complete streets program. Planning is underway for implementing complete street initiatives on Maple Hill Avenue and Robbins Avenue. Newington should consider adopting a town-wide complete streets policy in order to promote consideration of transportation options for all users.

## Bicycle Usage

A number of the major roads in Newington are not well configured for bicycle riders since they have constricted shoulders, fast moving traffic, and/or heavy traffic. Despite these impediments, the POCD encourages safe, convenient, comfortable, and secure bicycle-riding environments and encourages bicycle where appropriate. In addition, the Town should consider participating in "bike-share" programs being considered in the Hartford region.

## Enhancing Transit Services

Commuter Rail - The DOT has been working to improve rail service along the New Haven to Springfield corridor and this rail line goes through Newington. As part of this effort, the DOT is proposing to establish a train station in Newington now that the Town has adopted regulations to support transit-oriented development near the proposed station location (Cedar Street near maple Hill Avenue). Once the train station opens, Newington will have access to 16 round trip train per day.

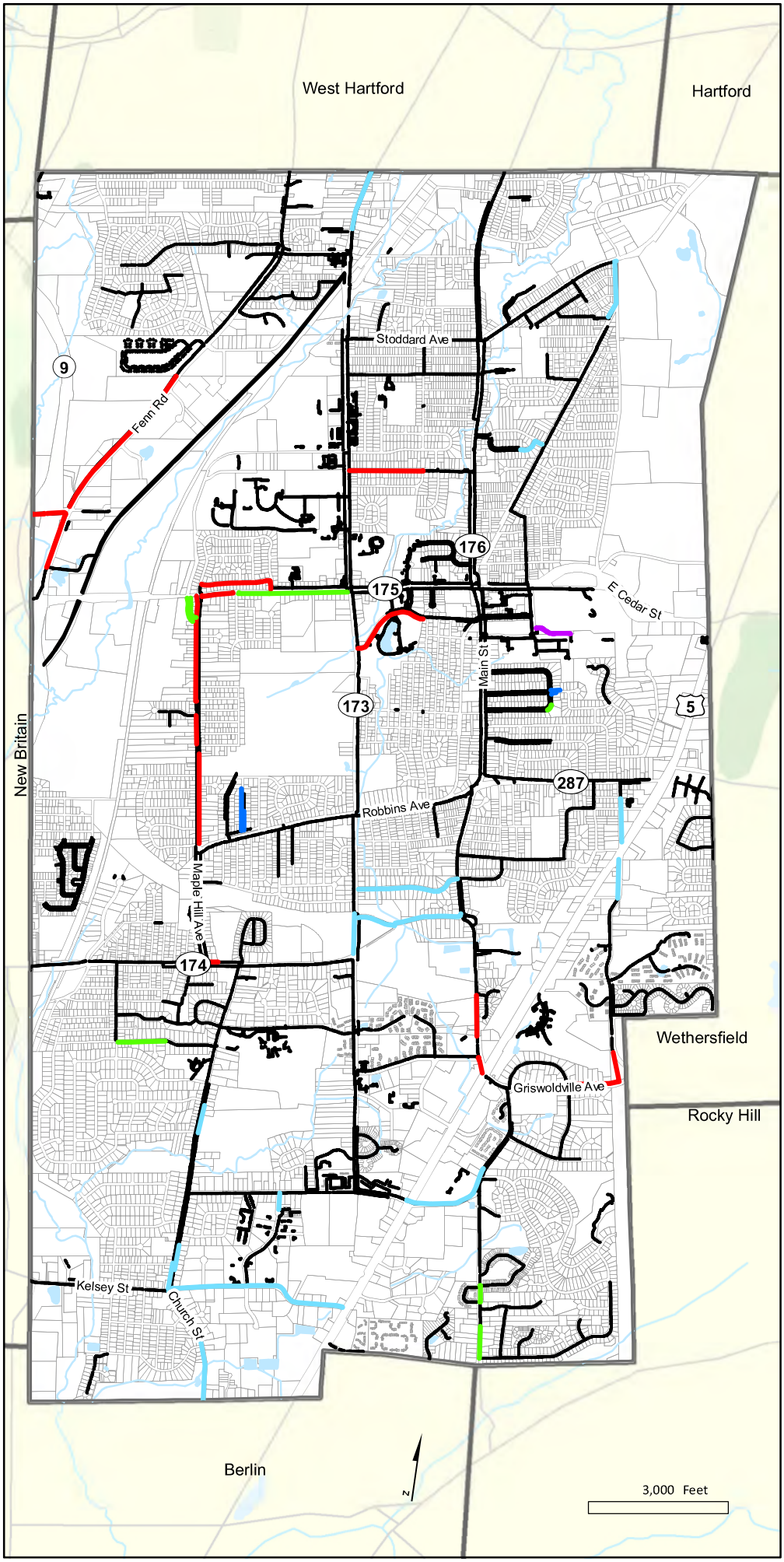
Fastrak Busway – In addition, Newington has two stations (Cedar Street and Newington Junction) along the Fastrak busway which has been established to provide fixed route express service between Hartford and New Britain. The service is gaining ridership although it is ironic that a shortage of parking at the stations in Newington is an impediment to people using Fastrak more.

Bus Routes – Newington is served by seven CT-Transit bus routes (#41, #45, #47, #69, #140, #144, #512) which connect different parts of Newington with Hartford, New Britain, West Hartford, Wethersfield, and Berlin.

Para-Transit – Newington has a weekday dial-a-ride (paratransit) service offering door-to-door service for the elderly and disabled. Usage of these programs should be monitored since there may be a need to provide more vehicles and/or service more needs (residents, workers, commuters, other age groups) as Newington's population ages.

# Pedestrian Plan

## Newington, CT




**Pedestrian Facilities**

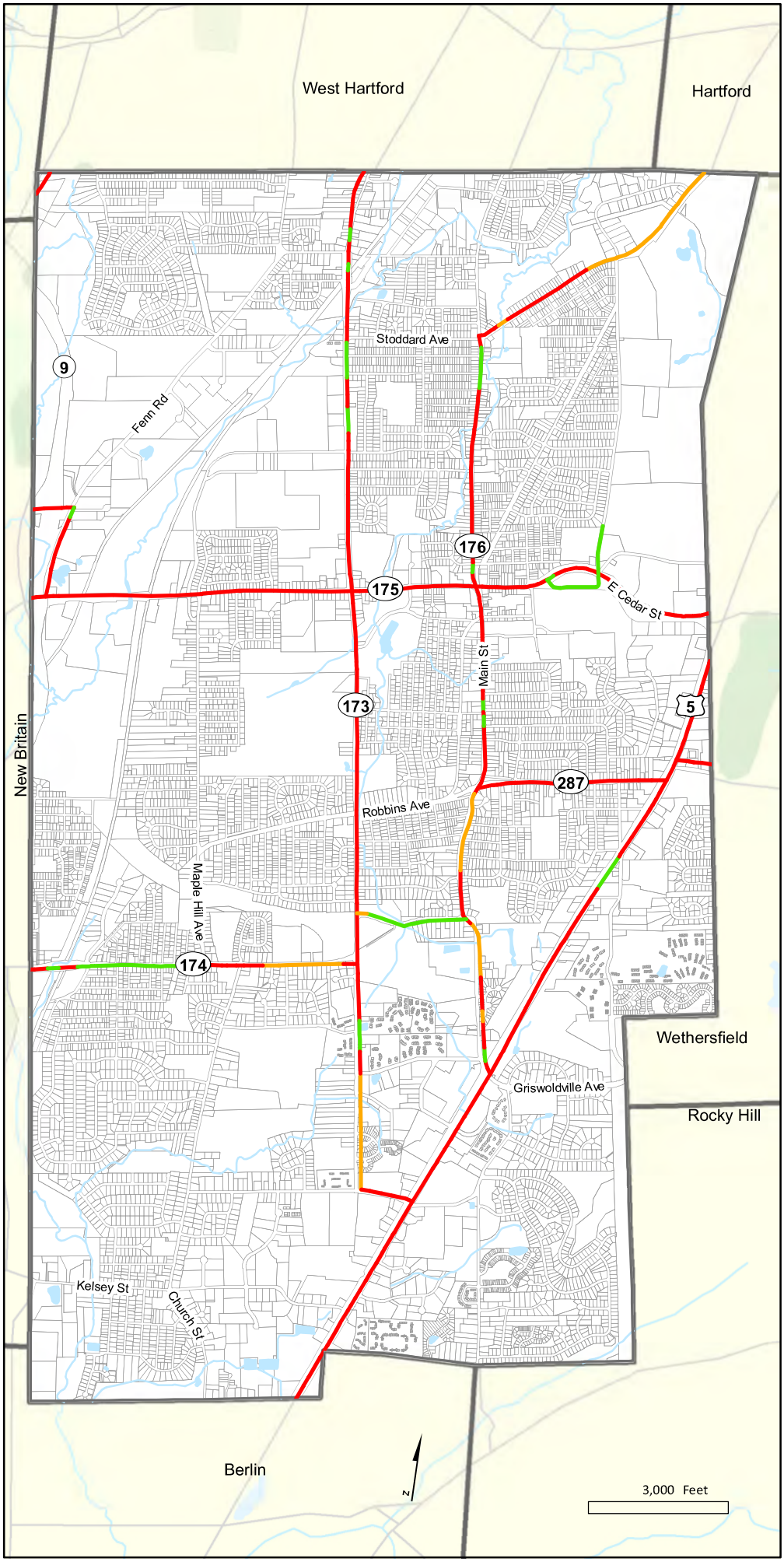
Current Sidewalk

**Future Sidewalk**

- High Priority
- Medium Priority
- Low Priority
- Sidewalk to be removed
- Sidewalk to be replaced

# Bicycle Plan

## Newington, CT

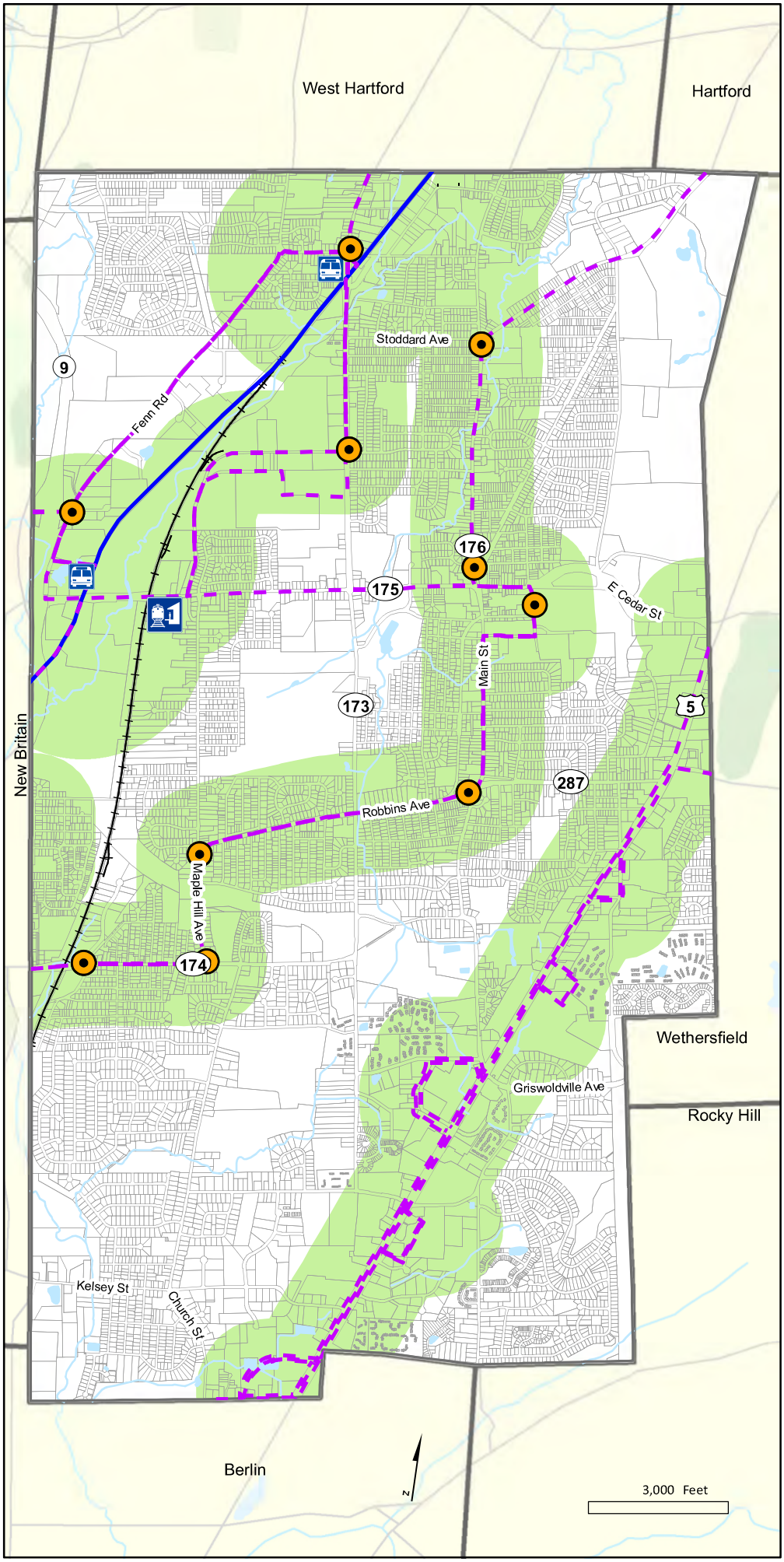



**Bicycle Routes**

- Most Suitable
- Suitable
- Less Suitable

# Transit and Rail Plan

## Newington, CT




**Bus Services**

- Fastrak Busway
- Fastrak Busway Station
- Bus Route
- Bus Shelter

**Rail Services**

- Rail Service
- Proposed Train Station
- Area within ¼ mile of bus route or within ½ mile of busway / train station

# Pedestrian / Bicycle / Transit Strategies

Legend for Leaders / Partners on inside back cover

| A. POLICIES (Strategies anticipated to continue over time) | Leader / Partners |
|---|---|
| 1. Maintain and enhance pedestrian circulation including:<br>a. accommodations for the special needs of an aging population.<br>b. overall community accessibility for mobility-impaired people | **PW**<br>DOT<br>COAD |
| 2. Encourage new development and redevelopment to provide pedestrian amenities (sidewalks and/or trails). | **TPZ**<br>TE |
| 3. As provided in the Open Space section of the POCD, seek to establish a greenway / trail system. | **OSC**<br>Town |
| 4. Support accommodations and improvements which will support and enhance bicycle use in Newington. | **TE** |
| 5. Seek opportunities to stripe narrower lanes on roadways, where appropriate, in order to provide more space for cyclists. | **DOT**<br>PW |
| 6. Encourage new development and redevelopment to provide bicycle amenities. | **TPZ**<br>TE |
| 7. Continue to participate in regional bicycle planning efforts and seek to implement Newington recommendations. | **Town**<br>CRCOG |
| 8. Support establishment of the Newington train station on Cedar Street. | **Town** |
| 9. Support the maintenance and improvement of transit services (rail and bus) to meet community needs. | **Town** |
| 10. Continue to support para-transit bus services in Newington (such as the "dial-a-ride"). | **COAD** |
| 11. Monitor "dial-a-ride" usage since there may be a need to provide more service as Newington's population ages. | **COAD** |

| B. ACTION STEPS (Specific tasks intended to implement the POCD) | Leader / Partners |
|---|---|
| ☐ 1. Review the Zoning Regulations and Subdivision Regulations to ensure sidewalk installation is required as part of new development (or redevelopment). | **TPZ**<br>TP |
| ☐ 2. Develop a priority schedule for closing gaps in sidewalk network. | **TC**<br>TE |
| ☐ 3. Consider adopting a town-wide "complete streets" policy in Newington. | **TC**<br>TE |
| ☐ 4. Investigate opportunities to provide more parking (as part of new development or separately) to support the use of the Fastrak busway. | **DOT**<br>Town |

# UTILITY INFRASTRUCTURE

***Support the provision of adequate utility services to meet community needs.***

In the POCD, utility infrastructure refers to utility services such as:

- Piped utilities (sewer, water, storm drainage, and natural gas),
- Wired utilities (electric, telephone, and cable), and
- Wireless services (communications).

The overall goals are to:

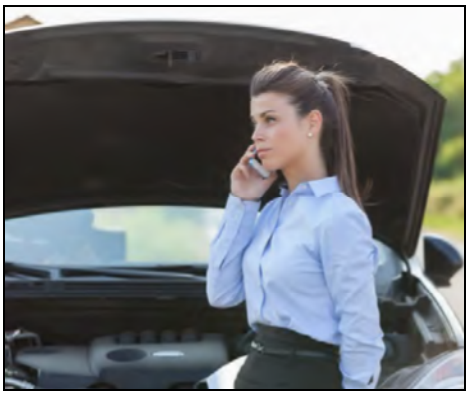
- Provide for adequate utility infrastructure to meet community needs.
- Use utility infrastructure to support the desired overall community structure.

**Water Supply**

**Sewage Collection**

**Electrical Distribution**

**Wireless Communication**

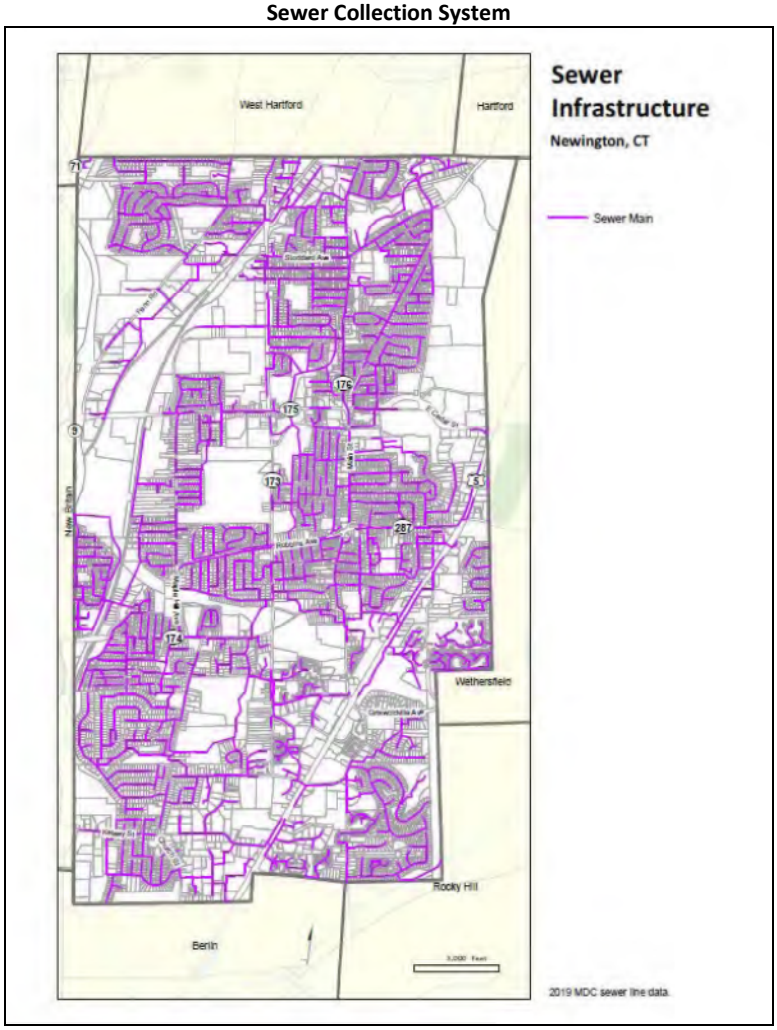


**Piped Infrastructure**

Sewage Collection / Treatment System - Most areas of Newington are served by the Metropolitan District Commission (MDC) sewer system. There is capacity in the system and at the plant to accommodate additional sewer flows and so Newington has adequate sewer service to meet community needs for the foreseeable future.

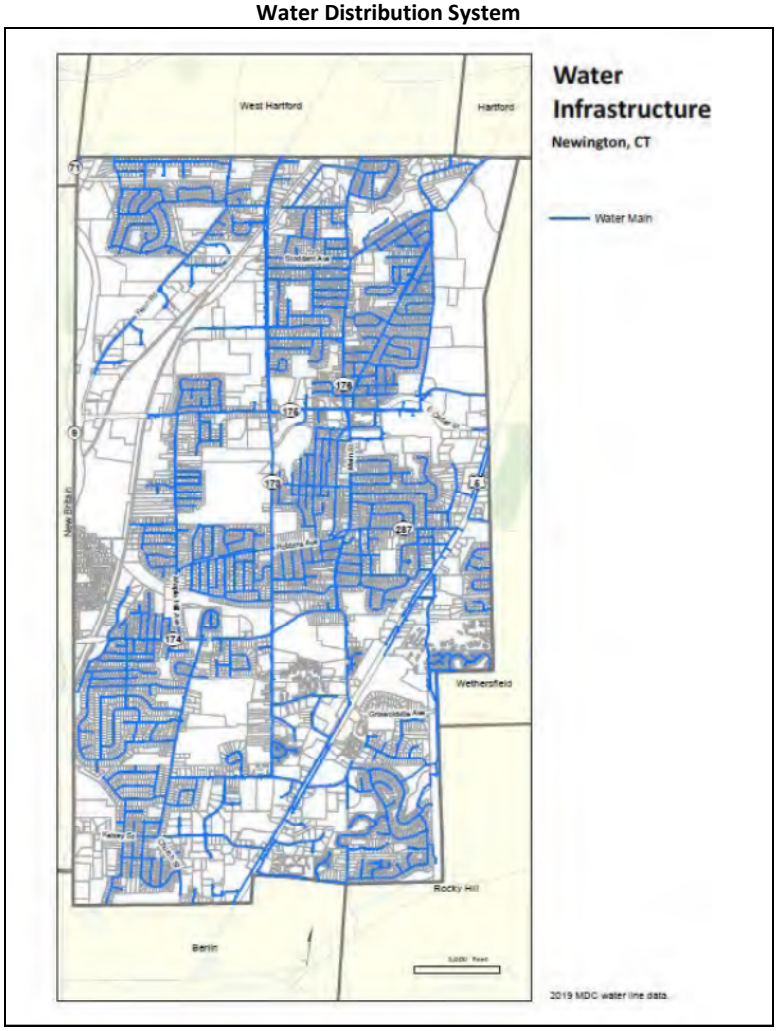
CGS Section 8-23(g) requires that a POCD identify the general location and extent of any areas served by existing sewerage systems, where sewerage systems are planned, and where sewers are to be avoided. ***Given the sewer capacity available, all areas of Newington are considered potential sewer service areas and no areas are identified as sewer avoidance areas.***

**Sewer Collection System**



Water Supply / Distribution System - Most areas of Newington are served by the Metropolitan District Commission (MDC) water supply system. There is an adequate supply of water available to meet community needs for the foreseeable future. Newington will continue to promote the extension of water service to those sections of Newington not presently connected and to areas where future development is anticipated.

**Water Distribution System**




Storm Drainage - Storm drainage is an important issue since some areas of Newington experience flooding due to flat slopes, tight soils, and undersized pipes and culverts. To help address these challenges, Newington has adopted "low impact development" regulations to address storm water quantity (and water quality) and encourage these issues to be addressed on individual properties as well as by the Town and/or State.

**Wired Infrastructure**

Electricity - Electrical distribution in Newington is provided by Eversource. Over the years, the reliability of the electric distribution system has been improved through equipment upgrades, tree trimming, and other approaches. Adequate electricity is expected to be available in the future to meet the needs of local users and accommodate new technologies and uses (such as electric vehicles and electric charging stations). Solar, wind, and other localized generation is used on some individual properties but is not widespread.

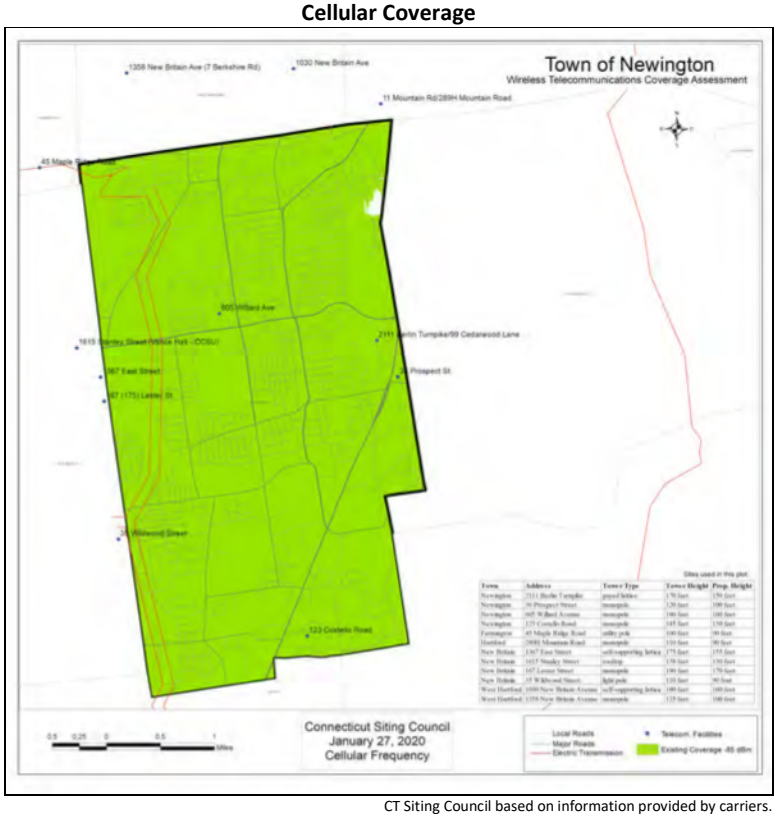
Wired Communications - Wired communication services (land-line telephone and cable communication) in Newington are provided by Cox Communications and Frontier Communications. Most homes and businesses are now obtaining telephone, internet, and cable television service through "bundled services" from these providers.

While wired communication service is adequate to meet the basic needs of residents, it is a key objective of Newington to promote high speed / high capacity broadband service for all parts of the community. The Town should continue to work with providers to find ways to upgrade and improve the wired communications network.

## Wireless Infrastructure

Most people are using mobile phones and other wireless devices (some people are relying exclusively on them). Even though coverage is extensive in Newington, additional facilities may be needed in the future to provide capacity and enhanced services. Newington would like to support the improvement of wireless capacity using the least visually obtrusive means possible (such as "stealth" technologies).

**Cellular Coverage**

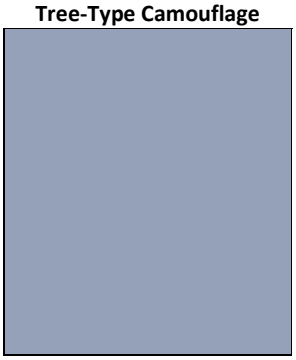



CT Siting Council based on information provided by carriers.

**Common Tower With No Camouflage**

**Stealth Monopole As Flagpole**

**Tower With Tree-Type Camouflage**



# Utility Infrastructure Strategies

Legend for Leaders / Partners on inside back cover

| A. POLICIES (Strategies anticipated to continue over time) | Leader / Partners |
|---|---|
| 1. Encourage or require extension of Metropolitan District sewer service to those sections of Newington not presently connected and to areas where future development is anticipated. | **Town**<br>MDC |
| 2. Encourage or require extension of Metropolitan District water service to those sections of Newington not presently connected and to areas where future development is anticipated. | **Town**<br>MDC |
| 3. Use the town-wide Storm Drainage Analysis Study (2010) as the basis for addressing drainage improvements in a coordinated way. | **TE / PW**<br>TC |
| 4. Continue efforts to address "MS4" drainage permit requirements as established by the State and Federal governments including implementing "LID" approaches to storm drainage | **TE**<br>PW<br>TPZ |
| 5. Continue to work with Eversource to ensure adequate electric service and electrical reliability in Newington while "balancing such efforts with a desire to maintain a robust tree canopy. | **TE**<br>TW |
| 6. Encourage the provision of adequate wired communication service (land line telephone, cable television, and wired internet) to meet community needs. | **EDC**<br>Town |
| 7. Promote provision of high-speed internet access (enhanced broadband capacity) in Newington for the benefit of businesses and residents. | **EDC**<br>Town |
| 8. Work with telecommunication providers and the Connecticut Siting Council to provide for wireless services to meet local needs in the least visually intrusive manner. | **EDC** |

| B. ACTION STEPS (Specific tasks intended to implement the POCD) | Leader / Partners |
|---|---|
| ☐ 1. Consider revisiting the town-wide Storm Drainage Analysis Study (2010) in order to anticipate the impacts of a projected increase in the frequency and severity of storm events and the ability of "LID" approaches to help mitigate negative impacts. | **TE**<br>PW<br>Town |

# IMPLEMENTATION

## *Implement the Plan of Conservation and Development*

Implementation of POCD recommendations is the most important part of the planning process. While identifying strategies is important, nothing will really change if policies and action steps are not implemented.

Implementation takes place after the POCD is adopted and the various recommendations are put into action and evaluated. While the Town Plan and Zoning Commission has the lead role in promoting the Plan's implementation, implementation will only occur with the diligent efforts of Newington residents and officials. As a result, responsibility for implementation rests with all boards, agencies, and individuals in Newington.

Some agencies will play important roles in implementing the POCD. A number of POCD recommendations will be implemented by the Town Plan and Zoning Commission through zoning amendments, application reviews, and other means. Some other recommendations will require the cooperation of the Town Council and other local boards and commissions.

Implementation of a Plan typically occurs in two main phases:

- some of the recommendations can and should be given high priority since they are critical to the implementation of the Plan;
- other recommendations will be implemented over time because they may require additional study, coordination with or implementation by others, or involve the commitment of significant financial resources.

If the Plan is to be realized, it must serve as a guide to all residents, businesses, developers, applicants, owners, agencies, and individuals interested in the orderly conservation and development of the Town of Newington.

**Policies**

Policies are continuing activities that may never be fully implemented. They are difficult to monitor in terms of implementation and do not lend themselves to target completion dates.

On the other hand, POCD policies can be used to evaluate potential actions. For example, POCD policies could be used as a basis for land use decisions by the Town Plan and Zoning Commission, especially for:

- Special Permit applications, and
- Zone change and text changes.

Implementation of the POCD will be facilitated by encouraging the Town Council and other Town agencies to consider the POCD policies when making their decisions.

**Action Steps**

Action steps are specific tasks which can be clearly defined and involve a specific action. Action steps can be itemized, prioritized, scheduled, managed, and monitored for progress.

The POCD anticipates that over time, Newington will continue to identify and undertake new action steps to help implement the Plan.

# Implementation Tools

## Establish A POCD Implementation Process

Having a process to implement the POCD will help ensure it is influential in guiding future actions of the town.

Some communities have found that a Plan Implementation Committee (PIC) can be effective at coordinating implementation of the POCD. The most effective PICs include representatives of various Town boards and commissions. In some other communities, the Town Plan and Zoning Commission sets aside specific meetings to review POCD implementation.

The plan implementation meeting(s) should occur regularly (maybe 2-3 times per year) to review the implementation tables in the POCD and refine priorities based on local issues, funding opportunities, and/or other criteria.

The POCD implementation process can also include giving new members of key Town boards and commissions a copy of the POCD.

## Use The Implementation Tables

The chapters of the POCD contain implementation tables which contain two types of recommendations – policies and actions steps. Using these tables to guide municipal actions (leaders, partners, priority, etc.) will help implement the POCD.

**Example Of An Implementation Table**

| B. ACTION STEPS (Specific tasks intended to implement the POCD) | Leader / Partners |
|---|---|
| ☐ 1. Establish a plan implementation process to prioritize, coordinate, and refine implementation of the POCD. | **TPZ**<br>TP |
| ☐ 2. Update the Zoning Regulations (and Zoning Map) to implement strategies, policies, and action steps in the POCD. | **TPZ**<br>TP |
| ☐ 3. Update the Subdivision Regulations to implement strategies, policies, and action steps in the POCD. | **TPZ**<br>TP |
| ☐ 4. Give new members of key Town boards and commissions a copy of the POCD once they are seated. | **Town** |

## Maintain The POCD

A POCD should be a dynamic document that is used, reevaluated, and amended as necessary. When a POCD is considered strictly a reference document rather than a working document, its effectiveness in guiding the community can diminish over time.

Newington should consider keeping this POCD current and not waiting 10 years to update it. The simplest way to maintain the POCD might be to review major sections of the Plan every year by:

1. Holding a workshop session to summarize current POCD recommendations and discuss potential new POCD strategies,
2. Revising POCD sections including any changes to the maps, as appropriate, and
3. Re-adopting the POCD.

**8-24 Review**

Section 8-24 of the Connecticut General Statutes requires that municipal improvements (as defined in the statute) be referred to the Town Plan and Zoning Commission for a report before any local action is taken.

The Commission should strive to ensure that the referral occurs and that spending on municipal improvements reflects the priorities and recommend-dations of the POCD.

## Update Land Use Regulations

The Zoning Regulations are critical in guiding new development and redevelopment in Newington and so these regulations should be consistent with POCD goals and recommendations. It has been a number of years since the regulations were *comprehensively* updated and so it may be time to review and update the Zoning Regulations, as necessary.

The Subdivision Regulations should also be made consistent with POCD goals in order to implement POCD recommendations.

## Implementing The POCD Through The Budget

When Newington invests in projects and programs which are closely aligned with the policies and action items identified in the POCD, the community moves closer to achieving its overall goals and objectives. This includes new programs and initiatives as well as maintaining the facilities Newington already has.

Annual Operating Budget - The annual operating budget guides municipal spending and so it is an important indicator of municipal priorities. Incorporating POCD recommendations in the operating budget and adequately funding them will certainly help to implement POCD recommendations.

Capital Budget / Capital Improvement Programming - Capital projects tend to be long-term investments in the future of a community. When these capital investments help accomplish recommendations in the POCD, the community benefits in a number of ways.

**Key Definitions**

**Capital Asset** - Land, land improvements, infrastructure, equipment, or other assets that have a long-term lifespan.

**Capital Project** - A project which results in the acquisition or increased value or lengthened lifespan of a capital asset.

**Capital Budget** - The amount of money to be spent in the *current fiscal year* for capital projects.

**Capital Improvements Plan** - A *multi-year* financial plan that:

- Lists and describes capital projects a local government plans to undertake,
- Indicates how projects will be funded, and
- Projects the effects of the plan on key financial variables, such as the real property tax rate.

Spending on capital projects is an important part of Newington's approach to the future and the difference between a capital budget and a capital improvement program deserves additional discussion.

Capital projects can be of three general types:

- Spending to maintain a capital asset and maintain or extend its useful life or level of service,
- Spending to physically expand an existing capital asset (such as a school building), and/or
- Spending to provide a new facility to meet present or future community needs.

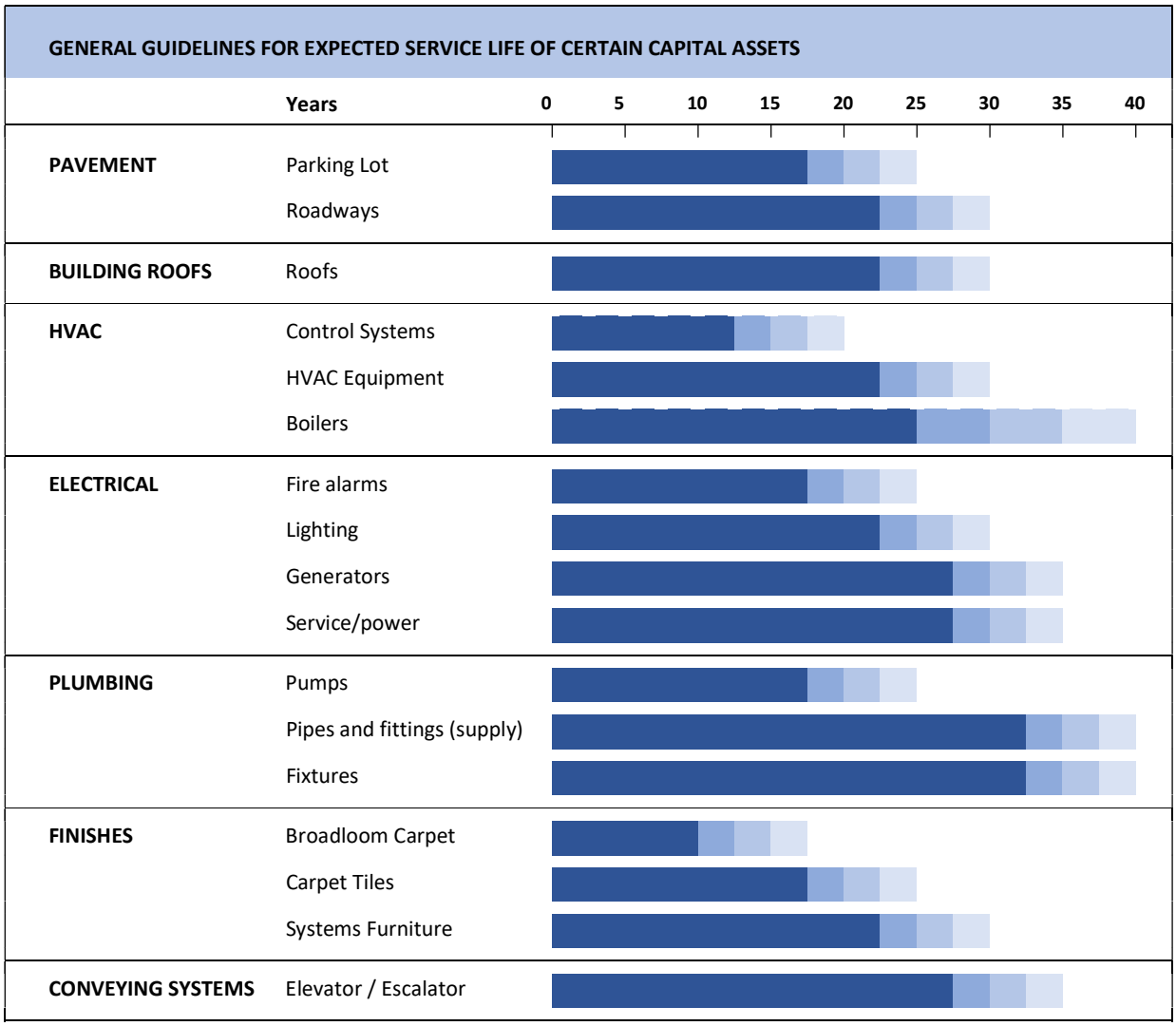
Creating a *multi-year financial plan* with estimations of capital funding needs and how to pay for them (based on assumptions about operating expenditures, revenues, assessed value, reserves, and known debt service commitments) is an important way for a community to efficiently and cost-effectively address the maintenance of its capital assets and address the needs and desires of residents.

In fact, if Newington did not invest towards meeting its capital needs:

- Infrastructure (such as roads or utility systems) may deteriorate or fail affecting the basic health and safety of residents.
- Building systems (such as roofs or mechanical systems) may deteriorate affecting the usability of the facility.
- Operating costs and/or future replacement costs may be higher and reduce funds available to provide other services.
- It runs the risk of having to respond to emergencies in response to failures and pay higher costs rather than anticipate and plan for capital needs in a cost-effective way.
- The community may not be in a position to maximize its economic potential.
- The visual attractiveness of the community may suffer.
- The Town may not be able to take advantage of state or federal grants to offset the cost to local property owners.
- The quality of life may be reduced.

Developing and funding a multi-year financial and capital plan has clear benefits to Newington:

- Allowing for better project ranking and affordability measures,
- Clearing up uncertainty about current levels of investment,
- Resolving the problem of dealing with the same issues repeatedly, and
- Improving the annual budget and budget process since the amount of funding required for debt service and capital spending can be balanced in current and future years.




Adapted From "Facility Management and Capital Renewal", Fairfax County, Virginia

A multi-year financial and capital plan is also a useful budgeting and managing tool since it allows the Town to:

- Balance capital investments with available financing, thereby receiving the optimum benefits for the available public revenue.
- Align capital investment with its planning goals and operating resources.
- Take advantage of government, foundation, and other grant programs and leverage project-specific funding resources.
- Undertake a logical process of assigning priorities to projects based on their overall importance to the Town.
- Coordinate activities with federal, state and regional organizations, utility companies, and the private sector to anticipate when the Town will undertake public improvements, and make decisions and plan investments accordingly.

**Sources of Revenue**

Revenue to fund capital spending can come from:

- Property taxes that directly fund capital projects (pay cash)
- Property taxes that fund debt service expenses for projects that were bonded
- Special assessments
- User fees
- State grants
- Federal grants

Capital spending to maintain or achieve a certain level of service is an important consideration. A regular planning process (such as preparing a multi-year capital improvement plan) should:

- Inventory and assess different types of physical infrastructure,
- Identify deficiencies,
- Establish a desired "level of service" or other metric for facilities, and
- Prioritize needed investments.

This analysis should also include consideration of the desired level of service. How to measure level of service for each of the various types of capital assets maintained by the Town will be an on-going endeavor ((public water, public sewer, roadway pavement, sidewalks, trails, recreation facilities, fire / police / emergency medical, open space, public works, education, etc.).

If the demands placed on a capital asset exceed its capacity, the level of service might be expected to decline. Thus, it will be important for Newington to monitor the qualitative aspects of the community's capital assets LOS in order to:

- Assure that development occurs in concert with the capacity of local facilities,
- Enable adequate public facilities to be provided in a timely manner
- Help achieve the growth objectives of the POCD, and
- Correct deficiencies in providing adequate levels of service as opportunities arise.

Just as car owners change their oil on a regular basis and replace their vehicle when needed, Newington should do the same thing.

**Sealing Roadway Cracks**

**Roof Replacement**

In some communities, capital projects are scored as to their overall priority based on such considerations as:

| Criteria | Description | Weight |
|---|---|---|
| **1. Health, Safety & Welfare** | An assessment of the degree to which the project improves health and safety factors. For example, projects that result in the reduction of accidents, improved structural integrity, and mitigation of health hazards would score higher | 25% |
| **2. Regulatory Or Legal Mandates** | An assessment of the degree to which the project is under a regulatory order or other legal mandate, or meets a federal, State or local safety requirement. For example, projects that are required by court orders and other legal mandates would score higher. | 25% |
| **3. Operational Necessity** | An assessment of the degree to which the project sustains (5 points max.) or improves (10 points max.) operational efficiency and effective delivery of services. | 10% |
| **4. Implication Of Deferring The Project (Opportunity Costs)** | An assessment of costs associated with *deferring* the project (such as inflationary construction costs or additional annual operating / maintenance costs for each year the project is not funded). For example, projects that would have significantly higher future costs or negative public perception, should they be deferred, would score higher. | 10% |
| **5. Community Demand** | An assessment of the degree to which the project meets a community need or responds to community demand. | 7% |
| **6. Funding Leveraging** | An assessment of the amount of Town funding in the project compared to the amount of funding provided by outside agencies. For example, a project that would bring grant funds from an outside agency into the Town would score higher, while a project that relies only on Town funds would score lower. | 7% |
| **7. Strategic Goals** | An assessment of the degree to which the project furthers the strategic goals as adopted in the POCD. | 6% |
| **8. Budget Impact** | An assessment of the project's budget impact (i.e., the degree to which it affects operations and maintenance costs positively or negatively). For example, a roof replacement project that reduces both maintenance requirements and energy consumption. On the other hand, a new facility that increases maintenance, energy and staffing costs would score lower. | 5% |
| **9. Implementation Readiness** | An assessment of the time required for a project to begin based on project complexity; agreements or approvals required by Town and non-Town entities; timing considerations with other capital projects (if applicable); the degree to which the project is in compliance with the POCD or other Town-adopted plans; and level of public support. Whether a public information strategy is recommended will be noted. | 5% |

Adapted from City of Annapolis, Maryland

# Implementation Strategies

Legend for Leaders / Partners on inside back cover

| A. POLICIES (Strategies anticipated to continue over time) | Leader / Partners |
|---|---|
| 1. Implement the POCD using the implementation tables as a guide for municipal actions. | **TPZ**<br>TP |
| 2. Regularly review POCD strategies, policies and action steps to ensure they are relevant to community needs. | **TPZ**<br>TP |
| 3. Use the POCD policies to guide land use decisions such as Special Permits, map changes, and text changes. | **TPZ**<br>TP |
| 4. Encourage other boards and commission to consider and use POCD policies, as applicable, when making decisions. | **TPZ**<br>TP |
| 5. Coordinate implementation efforts with adjacent municipalities as well as state and regional agencies. | **TPZ**<br>TP |
| 6. Use the POCD as a guide when preparing the annual operating budget. | **TC**<br>Town |
| 7. Use the POCD as a guide when preparing the capital budget. | **TC**<br>Town<br>CIC |
| 8. Use the POCD policies to review "municipal improvements" referred to the Town Plan and Zoning Commission by the Town Council (CGS Section 8-24). | **TPZ**<br>TP |
| 9. Coordinate with other municipalities and regional organizations to implement POCD recommendations and accomplish desirable outcomes. | **Town**<br>CRCOG<br>JSSS |

| B. ACTION STEPS (Specific tasks intended to implement the POCD) | Leader / Partners |
|---|---|
| ☐ 1. Establish a plan implementation process to prioritize, coordinate, and refine implementation of the POCD. | **TPZ**<br>TP |
| ☐ 2. Update the Zoning Regulations (and Zoning Map) to implement strategies, policies, and action steps in the POCD. | **TPZ**<br>TP |
| ☐ 3. Update the Subdivision Regulations to implement strategies, policies, and action steps in the POCD. | **TPZ**<br>TP |
| ☐ 4. Give new members of key Town boards and commissions a copy of the POCD once they are seated. | **Town** |

# CONCLUSION

The POCD has been prepared to meet the challenges that will confront the Town of Newington in the future. It is meant to serve as a guide to be followed in order to enhance the Town's quality of life, the overall economy, and community character.

The POCD is also intended to be flexible enough to allow adjustments that achieve specific goals and objectives while maintaining the integrity of the long-term goals of the community. Still, the most important step of the planning process is implementation of the Plan's strategies, policies, and action steps.

During the next few years, some of the goals will be achieved, circumstances will undoubtedly change, and conditions may arise that will suggest that it is time to reconsider some of the POCD strategies, policies, and action steps. Such situations are to be expected. Programs that help achieve community consensus, establish community goals, and promote community welfare will all turn out to be positive steps in the history of Newington.

# Consistency With Regional Plan

In accordance with Section 8-23 of the Connecticut General Statutes, the POCD has been evaluated for consistency with the Land Use Policy Map in the Capitol Region Plan of Conservation and Development prepared by the Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG). The Newington POCD was found to be generally consistent with the Land Use Policy Map in the CRCOG Plan.

**CRCOG Land Use Policy Map**

# Consistency With State Plan

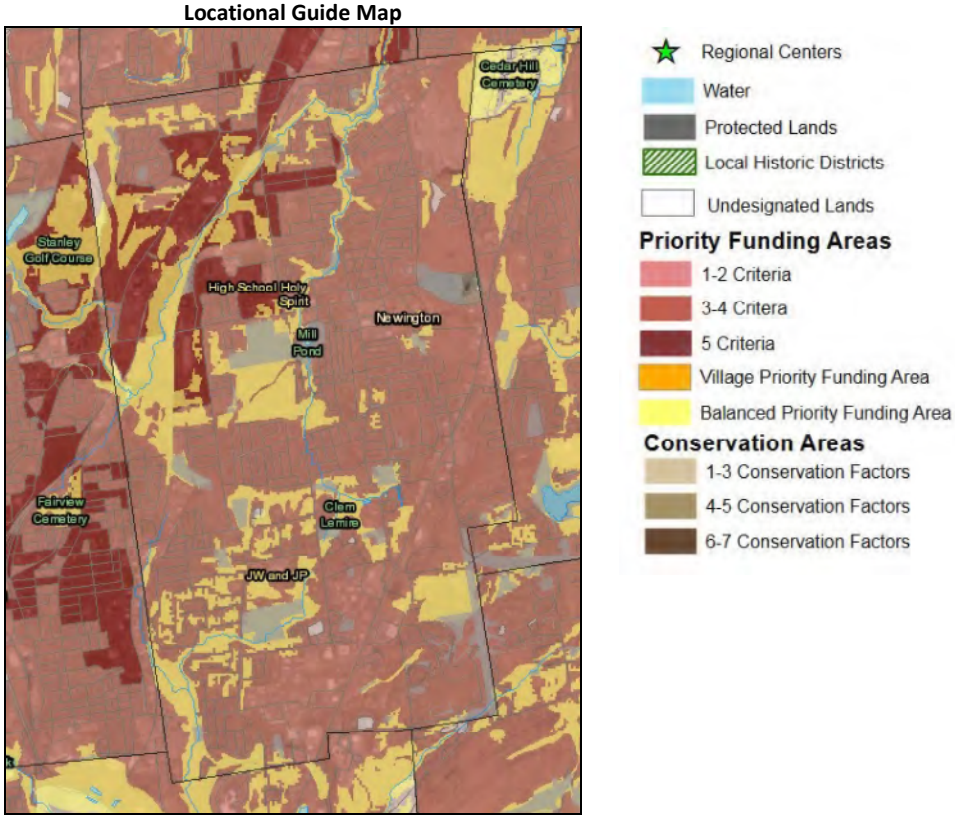
In accordance with Section 8-23 of the Connecticut General Statutes, the POCD has been evaluated for consistency with the State Conservation and Development Policies Plan (2013-2018 Plan since the 2018-2023 Plan had not been adopted at the time this POCD was being prepared). As part of this review, the POCD was found to be generally consistent with the Locational Guide Map in the 2013-2018 State Plan.

In the future, Newington should consider requesting that the following areas be considered as "village priority funding areas" in the State Conservation and Development Policies Plan:

- Newington Town Center,
- The proposed train station area on Cedar Street, and
- The Newington Junction and Cedar Street CT Fastrak stations.

In the future, Newington should consider requesting that Cedar Mountain be identified as having more conservation factors.

**2013-18 State of Connecticut Locational Guide Map**



# Consistency With State Growth Principles

In accordance with Section 8-23 of the Connecticut General Statutes, the Plan of Conservation and Development was found to be consistent with statewide growth management principles.

| Principle | Findings |
|---|---|
| 1. **Redevelop and revitalize regional centers and areas of mixed land uses with existing or planned physical infrastructure.** | **CONSISTENT** – Although Newington is not a "regional center", the POCD promotes mixed use, pedestrian-friendly development in Newington Town Center and at existing and planned transit hubs. |
| 2. **Expand housing opportunities and design choices to accommodate a variety of household types and needs.** | **CONSISTENT** - The POCD promotes strategies to help provide for housing options that are more affordable and to address the housing needs of an aging population. |
| 3. **Concentrate development around transportation nodes and along major transportation corridors to support the viability of transportation options and land reuse.** | **CONSISTENT** - The POCD promotes mixed use, pedestrian-friendly development in Newington Town Center and at existing and planned transit hubs. |
| 4. **Conserve and restore the natural environment, cultural and historical resources, and traditional rural lands.** | **CONSISTENT** - The POCD contains specific strategies to:<br>• Protect natural resources,<br>• Preserve open space, and<br>• Protect historic and scenic resources. |
| 5. **Protect environmental assets critical to public health and safety.** | **CONSISTENT** - The POCD contains recommendations to protect water quality (both surface and ground), preserve floodplain areas, minimize runoff, and other similar strategies. |
| 6. **Integrate planning across all levels of government to address issues on a local, regional, and statewide basis.** | **CONSISTENT** - The POCD has been used, and will be used, to coordinate efforts with:<br>• Adjacent communities,<br>• Regional organizations, and<br>• State agencies. |

## Future Steps

During the next few years, it is envisioned that action steps in the POCD will be implemented as opportunities arise and circumstances permit. Completion of action steps is the most effective way to accomplish POCD recommendations.

Over the course of time, it is also envisioned that the strategies and policies in the POCD will be applied and used to guide decision making in Newington.

While circumstances will undoubtedly change, programs that help achieve community consensus, establish community goals, and promote community welfare will all turn out to be positive steps in the history of Newington.

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS


**Town Plan and Zoning Commission**

Dominic Pane, Chair
Anthony Claffey, Vice Chair
Garrett Havens, Secretary

Michael Fox
David Lenares
Stanley Sobieski
Stephen Woods

Hyman Braverman, Alternate
Thomas Gill, Alternate
Bryan Haggerty, Alternate

Frank Aieta (to September 2019)
Michael Camillo (to November 2019)
John Bottalico-(to November 2019)
Paul Giangrave (to November 2019)

Carol Anest, Town Council Liaison
Gail Budrejko, Town Council Liaison

**Commission Staff**

Craig Minor, AICP
Town Planner

Andrew Armstrong
Assistant Planner and ZEO

Cindy Roberts-Diaz
Administrative Secretary

Norine Addis
TPZ Recording Secretary

***Special thanks to the residents, business owners and property owners who came to meetings, contributed to discussions, and helped create this POCD for Newington.***

**Technical Support**

Planimetrics

Glenn Chalder, AICP
(Overall Project Management)

NEGEO New England Geosystems www.negeosystems.com

Michael Fazio
(GIS Mapping)

# LEADERS AND PARTNERS

**Designations For Leaders And Partners In The Policies / Action Steps Tables**
**(sorted alphabetically by acronym)**

| | |
|---|---|
| **BOE** | Board of Education |
| **BSC** | Blight Subcommittee |
| **CCHD** | Central Connecticut Health District |
| **CIC** | Capital Improvements Committee |
| **CIWC** | Conservation/Inland Wetlands Commission |
| **COAD** | Commission on the Aging & Disabled |
| **CPD** | Civil Preparedness Director |
| **CRCOG** | Capitol Region Council Of Governments |
| **DEEP** | CT Dept. of Energy / Environmental Protection |
| **DOT** | CT Department of Transportation |
| **EDC** | Economic Development Commission |
| **EQC** | Environmental Quality Commission |
| **FD** | Fire Department |
| **HA** | Housing Authority |
| **HNSC** | Housing Needs Study Committee |
| **JSSS** | Joint Shared Services Subcommittee |
| **LBT** | Library Board of Trustees |
| **MDC** | Metropolitan District Commission |
| **MH** | Municipal Historian |
| **NHS** | Newington Historical Society |
| **OSC** | Open Space Committee |
| **PD** | Police Department |
| **PRB** | Parks & Recreation Board |
| **PW** | Public Works / Highway Department |
| **TC** | Town Council |
| **TE** | Town Engineer |
| **Town** | Town agencies as directed by Town Manager |
| **TP** | Town Planner |
| **TPZ** | Town Planning & Zoning Commission |
| **TW** | Tree Warden |
| **ZEO** | Zoning Enforcement Officer |