

# Bloomfield Plan

of Conservation and Development

## Diversity...



## Amenities...



## Aesthetics...



Bloomfield, Connecticut

**August 15, 2012**

DIVERSITY

AMENITIES

AESTHETICS



*Department of  
Planning & Zoning*

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To the Citizens of Bloomfield,

On behalf of the Bloomfield Town Plan and Zoning Commission and the Plan of Development Steering Committee I am pleased to present all of you with the 2012 Plan of Conservation and Development. Members of both boards have spent the past year and one-half preparing this Plan by reviewing recommendations for conservation, development and infrastructure in an attempt to strike a balance between oftentimes competing goals. Once the overall vision was established, strategies were formulated to help achieve this vision utilizing implementable policies and tasks that can be assigned to responsible town agencies.

As with the previous Plan adopted in 2000, your participation in the various public workshops and the public survey helped shape the visions for the future and the specific recommendations contained within the Plan. During the workshops, the Steering Committee heard from dozens of residents as to what was important to them. Using these statements, this document was prepared to reflect the consensus of the community and to serve as a blueprint for Bloomfield's foreseeable future.

In a departure from past Plans, this document also contains a section associated with the Plan's Implementation. The Steering Committee and residents in general believe this new section is vitally important to ensure the goals of the Plan are realized. As the years go by, the Town Plan and Zoning Commission, working closely with the Town Council, will be able to track the progress of each of the strategies outlined and ultimately develop a report card to document progress in implementing the Plan.

The Bloomfield Town Plan and Zoning Commission and the Plan of Development Steering Committee thank you for your continued interest and support and look forward to a continued collaboration in the future.

Sincerely,

Barry Benson, Chairman

Town Plan and Zoning Commission

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# About This Plan

## Overview

This Plan of Conservation and Development (“Plan”) is a tool for guiding the future of Bloomfield.

This Plan establishes a vision and common goals for the community’s future and identifies action steps that, when implemented, will help attain that vision. If steadily implemented by Bloomfield residents and officials, this Plan will help protect important resources, guide appropriate development, protect community character, and enhance the quality of life for current and future Bloomfield residents.

In addition to being an overall guide for the community, the Plan is a legal document adopted by the Town Plan and Zoning Commission (TPZ) pursuant to Section 8-23 of the Connecticut General Statutes. The Plan is advisory in nature and provides guidance for Town decisions related to land-use regulations and capital improvements.

## Background Information

### Why Plan?

Planning is something that people and organizations perform regularly to prepare for future challenges and opportunities. Communities are no different. Planning allows a community to focus on the ‘bigger picture’ and identify significant goals, coordinate efforts produce results, and achieve efficiency and economy in implementation. Ultimately, community planning is about *people, places* and *possibilities*.

Planning helps Bloomfield:

- identify and address community needs,
- foresee the long-term consequences of current actions,
- make good decisions, and
- produce desired results.

The requirement for a community to prepare and adopt a Plan of Conservation and Development every ten years is contained in Section 8-23 of the Connecticut General Statutes, as amended.

While the statutes require that the Town Plan and Zoning Commission prepare a Plan, the main reason that Bloomfield prepared this Plan was to establish a pro-active approach to guide the community’s future.

## Plan Development Process

### Steering Committee:

- Held public input meetings
- Reviewed and discussed research booklets
- Developed goals and strategies
- Created and reviewed draft of Plan
- Forwarded to the Town Plan and Zoning Commission for review and approval
- Conducted a survey

### Town Plan and Zoning Commission:

- Reviewed draft Plan
- Held Public Information Meeting on draft Plan
- Forwarded to the Town Council and others for required review
- Held public hearing on adoption of Plan
- Adopted Plan and set effective date

## How This Plan Was Prepared

This Plan was prepared by a Steering Committee comprised of representatives of various Town boards and commissions. The Steering Committee solicited input from the public, other boards and commissions, and from Town agencies and officials. They then used this input to guide their discussions and deliberations and to draft the Plan. The plan was then forwarded to the Plan to the Town Plan and Zoning Commission for consideration and adoption.

The Town Plan and Zoning Commission then reviewed the Plan, held a public information meeting and initiated the formal adoption process. The Commission held a public hearing on adoption on June 28, 2012 and adopted the plan with an effective date of August 15, 2012.

## Supporting Documents and Information

This Plan of Conservation and Development is a strategic document – that is, it focuses on where Bloomfield intends to go from here.

As a result, much of the inventory and assessment information which was used to formulate the strategies will be found in background documents that collectively make up the Town's "Planning Library." The Planning Library provides background and more detailed information about topics in this Plan. For example, documents in the Planning Library include items such as the:

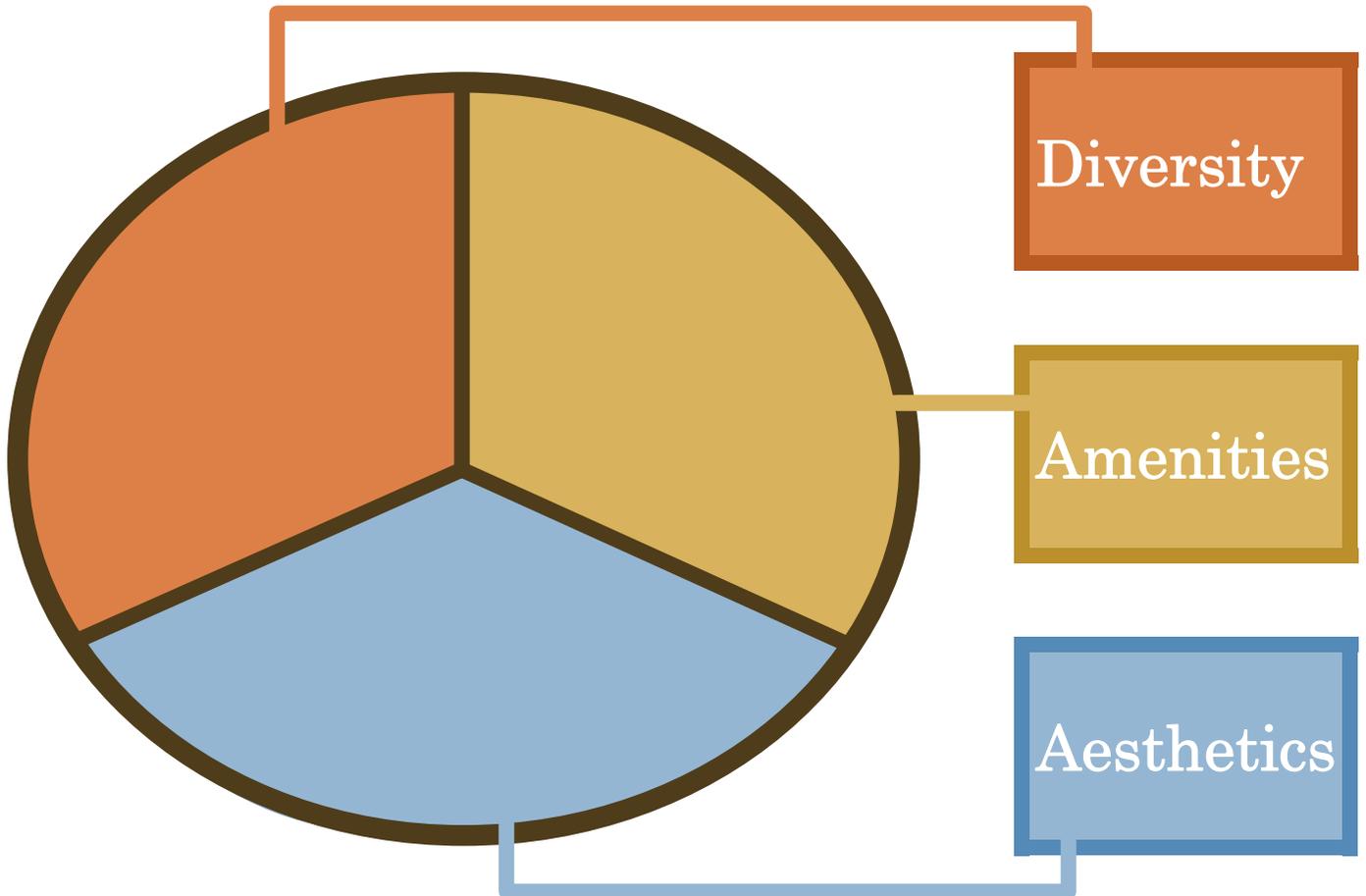
- Parks and Recreation Master Plan,
- 2000 Plan of Conservation and Development, and
- 1984 Plan of Development

## How this Plan is Organized

The Policy Chapters of this Plan are organized into three themes that align with Bloomfield's Goals:

THEMES	What We Want to Protect	How We Want to Grow	What We Want to Provide
CHAPTERS	2. Natural Resources 3. Community Character and Historic Resources	4. Bloomfield Town Center 5. Business and Economic Development 6. Housing and Residential Development	7. Transportation 8. Community Facilities, Services and Utilities

Further, Each Policy Chapter identifies three key building blocks, goals and strategies for Bloomfield as it moves forward:



# Chapter 1 Context

## Historic Overview: *How Bloomfield Got To This Point*

### Initial Settlement

As with most areas in Connecticut, Native American people inhabited Bloomfield and surrounding areas as early as 10,000 years ago. By the early 1600s several tribes were known to inhabit the region, living a nomadic life as hunter gatherers supplemented by subsistence agriculture.

### Colonial Settlement

Bloomfield was settled in the mid 1600s as colonists moved west from Windsor, the first area to be settled in Connecticut. The first families settled in an area where Blue Hills Avenue and Park Avenue now meet. This area was known as Messenger Farms and the soils were fertile for agricultural activities. By the 1730s families living in the area petitioned the General Court in Hartford for a new church parish, to be called Wintonbury.

Around the mid 1700s, the Parish of Wintonbury grew in population and many houses were constructed. Taverns, a cooperage, and small manufacturing facilities making items such as carriages, drums and bells were built. The first one-piece cast sleigh bells in the United States and Brown Drums were also manufactured in Wintonbury.

While uncertainty surrounds the history of drum manufacturing in Bloomfield, Brown Drums are now carefully guarded instruments, according to Frederick Hesketh, Town Historian (see sidebar).

### Subsistence Agriculture

Self-sufficient farming where farmers grow only enough food to feed their families.

Native Americans relied on the "Three Sisters," corn, beans and squash.

### Brown Drums in Bloomfield

"Tax records indicate that the Browns, not unlike most families in Wintonbury, were farmers. Today we would call them subsistence farmers -- producing barely enough for survival. Like most farmers, they bartered their produce and their skills.

Bloomfield tradition holds that the Browns used their particular skills as coopers to produce drums that were carried in the Revolutionary War. The Wintonbury Historical Society has not been able to document such use of Brown Drums."

Frederick Hesketh  
Wintonbury Historical Society  
[bloomfieldcthistory.org/](http://bloomfieldcthistory.org/)  
BrownsofWintonbury.PDF

### CIGNA Campus

When it was completed in 1957, the headquarters of the Connecticut General Life Insurance Company immediately was recognized as a milestone in the history of modern architecture.

The 650-acre campus is considered the country's first suburban office park and in 1992 the Connecticut Historical Commission recognized the Wilde and North Buildings on the State Register of Historic Places.

### Wilde Building



Campaign to Save Connecticut General

## Industrial Revolution, Technology and Enhanced Mobility (1760-1920)

Rail arrived in the 1850s and became an important part of the local economy. While traditionally an agricultural community, Bloomfield was able to diversify its economic base and mills were built as new transportation modes were introduced. By the 1890s there were four rail stations in Bloomfield and electricity was present in parts of the town, courtesy of the Hartford Electric Light Company.

Starting in 1909 Bloomfield was served by the Connecticut Trolley Company's Hartford Division, the largest division operated by the Company with about 20 Downtown routes and about 10 intercity routes. One of these lines extended into Bloomfield along Blue Hills Avenue, to Bloomfield Center, enhancing access into Hartford. Service continued for 20 years.

*Trolley #1565 on Blue Hills Avenue*



bera.org (#P4534 – Jas E. MacDonald)

*Central New England Railway Routes*



CENTRAL  
NEW ENGLAND  
RAILWAY  
AND CONNECTIONS  
Wikipedia.org

## Post-World War II Suburbanization 1950-present

Until the advent of the automobile, growth in Bloomfield was restricted to those areas near rail, trolley or bus lines. By the 1950s, however, the suburban exodus from Hartford had commenced, and was accelerated by the construction of Interstate 91 (in Windsor), providing Bloomfield highway access to Downtown Hartford.

In the period from 1950 to 1970, Hartford's population declined from approximately 177,000 to 158,000, while the combined populations of the six suburbs contiguous to Hartford rose from approximately 113,000 to 221,000. Bloomfield's 220 percent growth rate topped all the others by a wide margin. The expanding population spurred housing development while a fast-growing local economy brought industrial growth to the Town.

This expansion continued through the 1970s when Bloomfield's population neared 20,000. In 1973, the Town of Bloomfield was named an All-American City, an award that recognized Bloomfield's success as an ethnically and culturally diverse community. Following the 1970s boom, population growth slowed dramatically, however Bloomfield's economy continued to prosper.

As of 1996, the Town's top ten assessments, including CIGNA, Kaman Corporation and Connecticut Light & Power Co., represented 19 percent of Bloomfield's Grand List of tax-paying corporations. Bloomfield is also supported by vestiges of its agrarian roots. The former sheds and fencing of the shade grown tobacco are still visible in some areas.

## People of Bloomfield

### Population

According to the Connecticut Economic Resource Council, the Town of Bloomfield had a population of 20,757 people in the year 2009. The 1950s and 1960s were decades of significant growth for Bloomfield. The Town experienced a population increase of 7,867 (137 percent increase) and 4,691 respectively (34 percent increase). Recent growth rates have been much slower. From 1970 to 2010, the population of Bloomfield has grown 2,182 (12 percent).

### Population

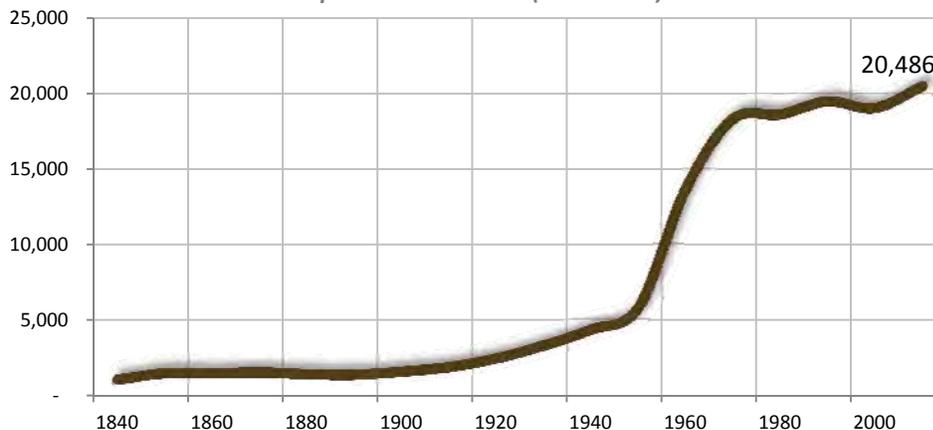
YEAR	POPULATION
1890	1,308
1900	1,518
1910	1,821
1920	2,394
1930	3,247
1940	4,209
1950	5,746
1960	13,613
1970	18,304
1980	18,608
1990	19,483
2000	19,034
2010	20,486

### Projections

	LOW	HIGH
2020	16,672 <sup>c</sup>	20,884 <sup>a</sup>
2030	15,232 <sup>c</sup>	22,125 <sup>a</sup>

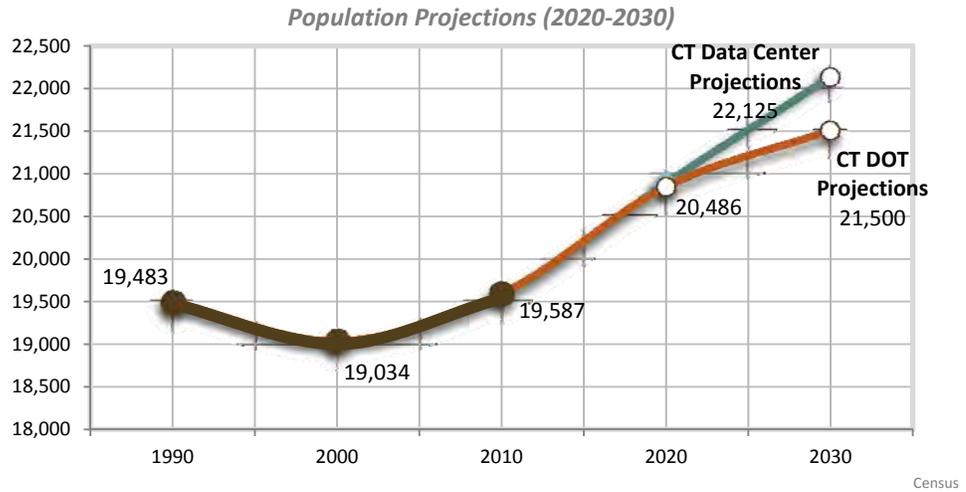
1950-2010 Census  
 2020-2030  
 a CT State Data Center  
 b CT Dept. of Transportation  
 c Planimetrics

Population Estimates (1840-2010)



Census

According to population projections prepared by the Connecticut State Data Center, growth is projected to continue to 2030, at the same pace (about 7 percent). Other population projections prepared by the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CT DOT) show a slower rate of growth.



Since the 1970s Bloomfield has seen:

- A decrease in school-age children,
- A consistent mix of middle-age residents, and
- A large increase in retirement age residents.
- The projected trend is that Bloomfield’s population will continue to age and the largest growth segment will be people age 65 and older.

*Bloomfield Age Composition (1970 to 2030)*

AGES	ESTIMATE										PROJECTIONS			
	1970		1980		1990		2000		2010		2020		2030	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
0-4	1,320	7	872	5	1,047	5	1,012	5	823	4	1,080	5	1,088	5
5-19	5,373	29	4,308	23	3,116	16	3,554	19	3,267	16	3,799	18	3,869	18
20-34	2,981	16	3,784	20	4,004	21	2,702	14	3,047	15	4,220	20	4,157	19
35 -54	5,060	28	4,508	24	5,346	27	5,690	30	5,387	26	4,564	22	5,578	25
55-64	1,797	10	2,347	13	2,155	11	2,260	12	3,213	16	2,745	13	2,252	10
65 +	1,770	10	2,789	15	3,815	20	3,816	20	4,749	23	4,476	22	5,181	23
<b>Total</b>	<b>18,301</b>		<b>18,608</b>		<b>19,483</b>		<b>19,034</b>		<b>20,486</b>		<b>20,884</b>		<b>22,125</b>	

1970 - 2010 Census,  
 2020-2030 CT State Data Center

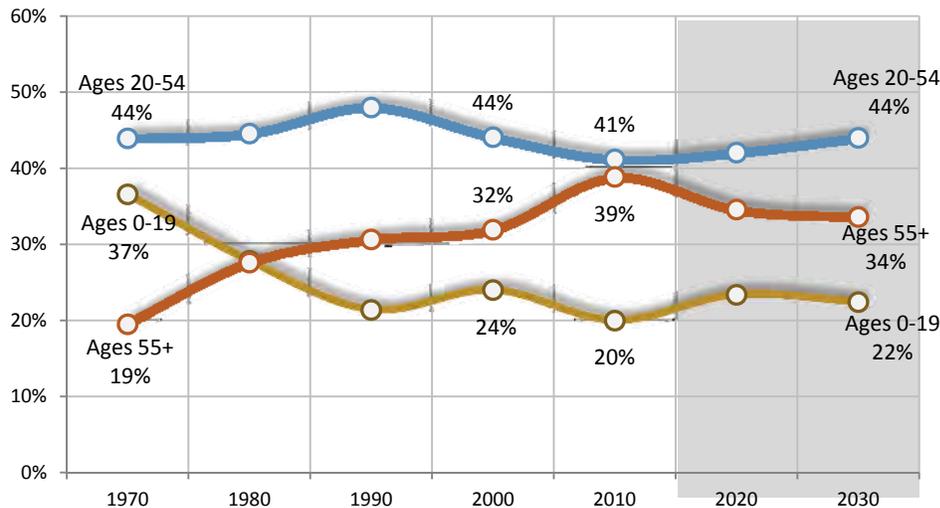
**Projections by CT Data Center (2007)**

The needs for community services change as the population changes. For Bloomfield, an increase in older residents may require different services:

*Cohort Needs*

DESCRIPTION	AGE RANGE	NEEDS	1970 TO 2000	2000 TO 2030
<b>Infants</b>	0 to 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child Care</li> <li>• Recreation programs</li> </ul>	↓	—
<b>School-Age</b>	5 to 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School facilities</li> <li>• Recreation facilities</li> <li>• Recreation programs</li> </ul>	↓	↓
<b>Young Adults</b>	20 to 34	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rental housing</li> <li>• Starter homes</li> <li>• Social destinations</li> </ul>	↓	↑
<b>Middle Age</b>	35 to 54	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family recreation programs</li> <li>• Trade-up housing</li> </ul>	↑	—
<b>Mature Adults</b>	55 to 64	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Smaller homes</li> <li>• Second homes</li> </ul>	↑	↓
<b>Retirement Age</b>	65 and over	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tax relief</li> <li>• Housing options</li> <li>• Elderly programs</li> <li>• Medical care</li> <li>• In-home services</li> </ul>	↑↑	↑

*Age Cohorts by Percent of Total Population*



Census

**Environmental Justice**

Bloomfield is designated as an Environment Justice Community.

According to the CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection: “Environmental Justice means that all people should be treated fairly under environmental laws regardless of race, ethnicity, culture or economic status.”

Bloomfield has this designation because there are census block groups within the Town with 30 percent of the population living below 200 percent of the federal poverty level.

Public Act 08-94, which became effective in 2009, requires that certain permitting processes require enhanced notification in Environmental Justice communities.

Types of projects subject to this requirement include:

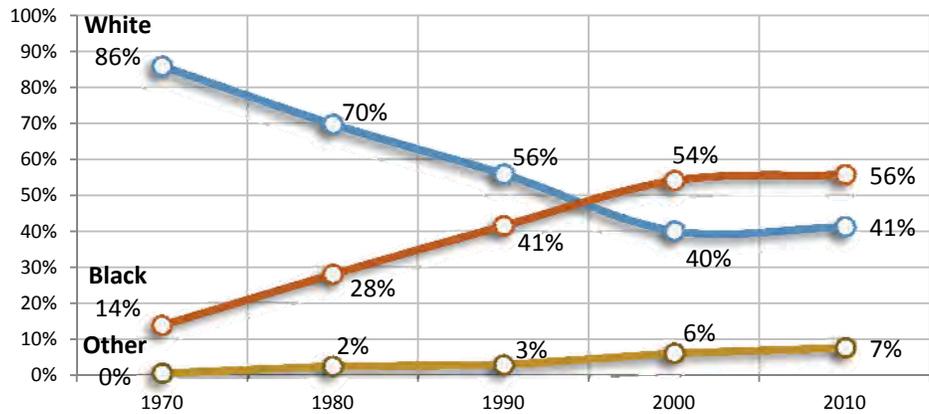
- Certain electric generating facilities,
- Incinerators,
- Landfills,
- Transfer stations,
- Certain size sewage treatment plants, and
- Major sources of air pollution.

[environmental-justice.org](http://environmental-justice.org)

**Bloomfield is a Diverse Community**

Bloomfield is one of the most diverse communities in the State. Over the past 40 years the community’s diversity has increased and it has become one of the few Connecticut communities where a majority of the residents are black (56 percent).

*Racial / Ethnic Composition (1970-2010)*



RACE/ ETHNICITY	1970		1980		1990		2000		2010	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
<b>White</b>	15,721	86	12,973	70	10,914	56	7,834	40	8,438	41
<b>Black</b>	2,510	14	5,203	28	8,108	41	10,589	54	11,405	56
<b>Other</b>	70	0	432	2	528	3	1,164	6	657	3
<b>Total</b>	18,301		18,608		19,483		19,034		20,486	

Census

*Racial Diversity in the Region*

	WHITE	BLACK	OTHER	TOTAL
Hartford	31%	41%	28%	100%
<b>Bloomfield</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>100%</b>
Windsor	67%	29%	4%	100%
East Hartford	67%	21%	12%	100%
Newington	94%	2%	4%	100%
Wethersfield	94%	3%	3%	100%
South Windsor	92%	3%	5%	100%
East Windsor	93%	5%	2	100%
Windsor Locks	94%	3%	3%	100%
Glastonbury	94%	2%	4%	100%
East Granby	97%	2%	1%	100%
State	82%	10%	8%	100%
County	77%	14%	9%	100%

“Other” includes American Indians, Alaska Natives, Asians, Native Hawaiians, and other Pacific Islanders  
2000 Census

# Housing in Bloomfield

There were about 9,019 housing units in Bloomfield in 2010, according to the Census. This is an increase of 526 units from the 2008 figures provided by the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD). According to DECD, the housing stock is predominantly single-family, with about 74 percent of the units in this category.

*Housing Mix (1980-2008)*

UNIT TYPES	1980		1990		2000		2008	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
1	5,045	75%	6,009	70%	6,277	77%	6,662	74%
2	236	3%	190	3%	174	2%	220	2%
3-4	261	4%	311	4%	310	4%	261	3%
5+	965	18%	1,089	21%	1,315	16%	1,791	20%
OTHER	6	<1%	139	2%	101	1%	9	<1%
TOTAL	6,513	100%	7,738	100%	8,175	100%	8,493	100%

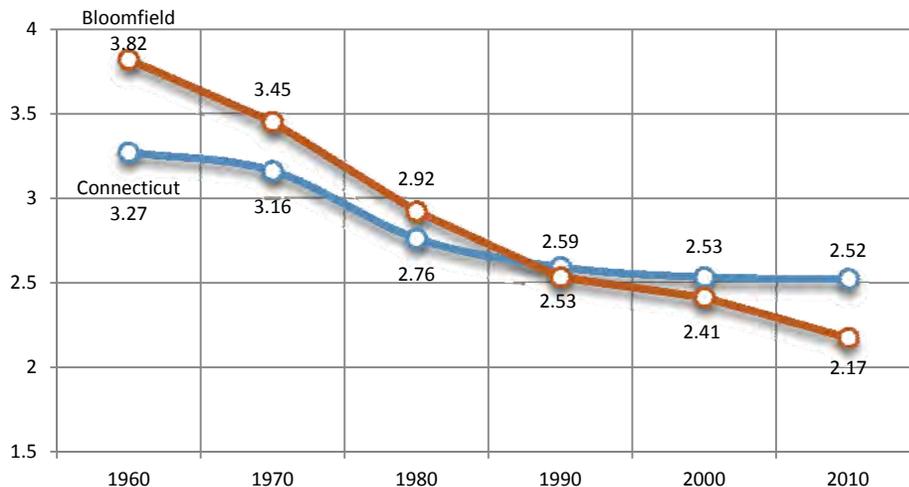
Census(1980-2000) DECD (2008)

## Housing Occupancy (Tenure) and Size

Census data suggests that about 72 percent of Bloomfield's housing units are owner-occupied, compared to 61 percent in the County and 63 percent in the State.

Household size in Bloomfield is following State and National trends towards smaller households. From 1960 Bloomfield has seen the household size shrink from 3.8 persons per household to just fewer than 2.2, a 42 percent decrease. The State average has decreased 18 percent during this same timeframe.

*Persons per Household (1960-2010)*



Census

## Change in Housing Units

		% Change
1980	4,856	--
1990	5,375	11%
2000	8,175	52%
2010	9,019	10%
TOTAL		
1980-	4,163	86%
2010		

Census (1980-2010)

## Tenure (2000)

	O	R	V
Bloomfield	72	24	4
County	61	34	5
State	63	31	6

Census

O = Percent owner-occupied  
R = Percent renter-occupied  
V = Percent vacant

## Household Size

1960	3.82
1970	3.45
1980	2.92
1990	2.53
2000	2.41
2010	2.17
State	2.52

Census (1960-2010)  
CERC (2009)

### Affordable Housing

In order to qualify as an affordable unit under Connecticut General Statutes (CGS) Section 8-30g, a dwelling must be:

- assisted housing (funded under a State or Federal program),
- CHFA-financed housing (financed under a 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 percent 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.

This is a 10 percent threshold for when the law applies.

### Affordable Housing Trends: Reported versus Actual (2002-2008)

	DECD	ACTUAL
2002	15.3	15.1
2003	13.5	12.9
2004	11.8	11.1
2005	12.4	11.6
2006	10.6	9.8
2007	11.5	10.5
2008	11.6	10.7

Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD)

### Adjacent Towns (2008)

Avon	2.6
<b>Bloomfield</b>	<b>11.6</b>
East Granby	5.6
Hartford	34.6
Simsbury	3.5
West Hartford	7.1
Windsor	6.8

DECD

### Housing Prices

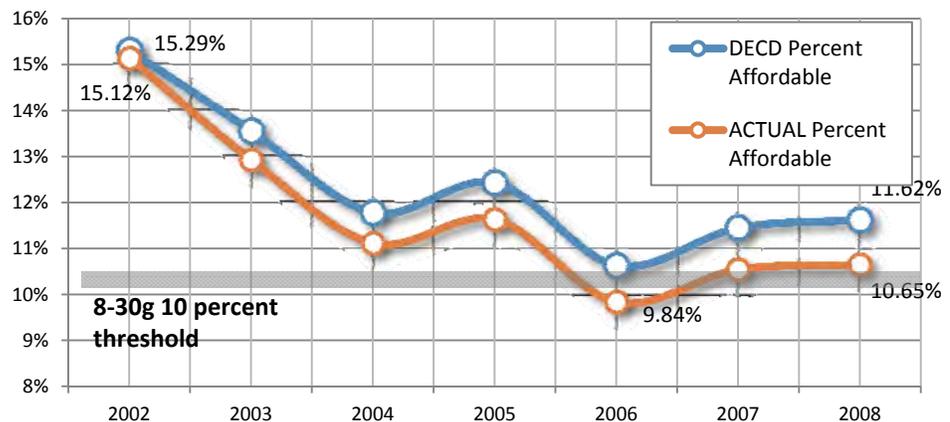
Sales data from the Warren Group shows that the median sales price of single-family houses in Bloomfield steadily increased from 1997 to 2007. For single-family houses, the median sales price peaked at \$230,000 in 2007. Median condo sales peaked at \$337,200 in 2008. For all units sold, the median was \$229,450. On average, about 218 single-family homes are sold per year.

When compared to State averages in terms of age, Bloomfield has a “younger than average” housing stock. The majority of homes in Bloomfield were built during the 1950s through the 1980s, which supported the significant population growth that occurred during that period.

### Housing Affordability

The term “affordable housing” can mean many things. Often people associate the term with subsidized or low-income housing. Sometimes that is the case. Other times, this means housing for lower wage earning employees, young adults just entering the workforce or municipal employees.

Affordable or modest price housing also is important for fixed income seniors who wish to stay in the community when ready to downsize to a smaller home. Bloomfield currently meets the State’s 10 percent threshold (see sidebar) and is exempt from the Affordable Housing Appeals provision in CGS 8-30g.



DECD

# Economy of Bloomfield

The 2000 US Census indicates that there are about 18,100 jobs in Bloomfield. According to the Connecticut Economic Resource Center (CERC) from 2000 to 2008 Bloomfield lost about 564 jobs (17,536). Almost half of the businesses in Bloomfield are service related (42 percent) while, almost one-third of the jobs are in manufacturing (31 percent).

BUSINESS SECTOR	1995		2009	
	ESTABLISHMENTS	EMPLOYMENT	ESTABLISHMENTS	EMPLOYMENT
Manufacturing	10%	13%	8%	31%
Transportation, Communications and Utilities		7%	5%	3%
Trade	24%	14%	19%	15%
Finance, Insurance and Real Estate	10%	21%	9%	6%
Services	36%	28%	42%	26%
Other	20%	17%	17%	19%
	100%	100%	100%	100%

CT DECD (1995) and CERC (2009) – Numbers may not add to 100 percent because of rounding

Bloomfield as an employment center that imports workers from other communities. The Community is in the top ten for both job / worker and job / household ratios in Connecticut. Most of the workers that commute to these jobs arrive by automobile.

Bloomfield lost jobs from 1990 to 2000. In addition, Bloomfield residents have become less reliant on jobs within the community while the local labor force has shrunk. Manchester and East Hartford residents have become more reliant on jobs in Bloomfield, which might be a result of the construction of Interstate 291.

## People Who Work in Bloomfield (1990-2000)

	1990		2000	
	#	%	#	%
<b>Bloomfield</b>	<b>2,462</b>	<b>12.8</b>	<b>1,707</b>	<b>9.7</b>
Hartford	2,621	13.6	1,395	7.9
West Hartford	1,446	7.5	1,105	6.3
Windsor	1,102	5.7	991	5.6
Enfield	954	5.0	861	4.9
East Hartford	554	2.9	854	4.9
Manchester	482	2.5	720	4.1
Other Towns in the Capital Region	5,569	28.9	5,094	29.0
Other CT Towns	2,792	14.5	3,601	20.5
Other Places	1,265	6.6	1,253	7.1
Total	19,247	100%	17,581	100%

Census – Numbers may not add to 100 percent due to rounding

## Jobs in Bloomfield Top Employers

Cigna	3,463
Kaman	924
Bloomfield	643
Jacobs Vehicle Systems	475
Seabury	400
Duncaster	276
Pepperidge Farms	260

CAFR, 2008

## 10 Highest Job/Worker Ratios in Connecticut (2000)

Farmington	2.61
Hartford	2.35
Windsor Locks	2.21
<b>Bloomfield</b>	<b>1.81</b>
North Haven	1.69
Canaan	1.64
Groton	1.53
East Granby	1.52
Orange	1.40
Rocky Hill	1.38

## 10 Highest Job/Housing Ratios in Connecticut (2000)

Farmington	3.00
Windsor Locks	2.90
Hartford	2.45
North Haven	2.45
<b>Bloomfield</b>	<b>2.21</b>
East Granby	1.98
Canaan	1.92
Orange	1.92
Westport	1.80
Stamford	1.78

CENSUS

**Educational Attainment  
% Age 25 or Over with  
Bachelors Degree or Higher**

Avon	62%
<b>Bloomfield</b>	<b>31%</b>
East Granby	37%
Hartford	12%
Simsbury	61%
West Hartford	53%
Windsor	31%
State	34%

CENSUS 2000

## Skills of Bloomfield Residents

Bloomfield's employed workforce consists of about 10,440 workers:

- Bloomfield has a higher percentage of residents working in the finance sector (21 percent) when compared to 16 percent in the County and 11 percent in the State,
- A lower percentage of residents employed in manufacturing (13 percent) than the County (19 percent) and the State (22 percent), and
- A lower percentage of residents in retail and wholesale trades (about 14 percent) than the County (19 percent) and State (20 percent).

### *Labor Force by Industry of Employment (2000)*

INDUSTRY	PERCENT OF LABOR FORCE		
	BLOOMFIELD	COUNTY	STATE
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	1%	1%	1%
Construction	5%	5%	6%
Manufacturing	13%	19%	22%
Wholesale trade	3%	4%	4%
Retail trade	11%	15%	16%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	6%	5%	6%
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing	21%	16%	11%
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, waste management services	6%	6%	7%
Educational, health and social services	19%	17%	19%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	1%	1%	1%
Other services (except public administration)	8%	7%	3%
Public administration	6%	4%	4%
Total	100%	100%	100%

Census – Numbers may not add to 100 percent due to rounding

About 20 percent of Bloomfield residents worked in Bloomfield, which represents a small reduction from the 1990 Census. 80 percent of residents commute to other communities.

### *Where Bloomfield Residents Work (1990-2000)*

	1990		2000	
	#	%	#	%
<b>Bloomfield</b>	<b>2,462</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>1,707</b>	<b>20</b>
Hartford	3,738	37	2,730	31
West Hartford	690	7	682	8
Windsor	479	5	354	4
East Hartford	434	4	331	4
Manchester	86	1	261	3
Other Towns in the Capital Region	1,430	14	1,646	19
Other CT Towns	743	7	794	9
Other Places	140	1	195	2
Total	10,202	100%	8,700	100%

Census – Numbers may not add to 100 percent due to rounding

## Household Income

According to the Connecticut Economic Resource Center, in 2007, the median household income in Bloomfield was \$67,174. This is lower than the State median (\$68,055) but higher than the County median (\$64,189).

*Median Household Income (1979-2009)*

	STATE		COUNTY		BLOOMFIELD	
		CHANGE		CHANGE		CHANGE
<b>1979</b>	\$20,077	-	\$20,140	-	<b>\$24,227</b>	-
<b>1989</b>	\$41,721	+108%	\$40,609	+101%	<b>\$47,853</b>	+98%
<b>1999</b>	\$53,935	+29%	\$50,756	+25%	<b>\$53,812</b>	+12%
<b>2009</b>	\$68,055	+26%	\$64,189	+26%	<b>\$67,325</b>	+25%

US Census Bureau and CERC

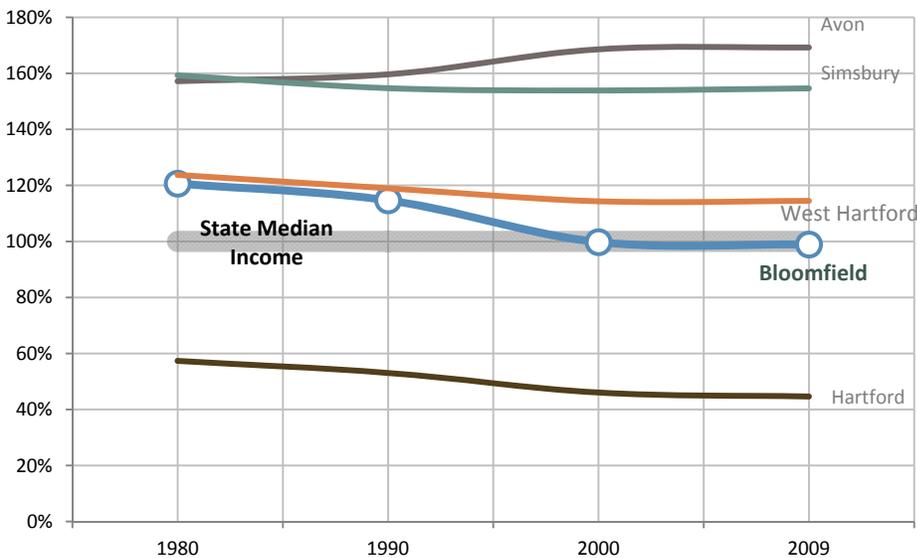
### Median Household Income

Avon	\$115,186
<b>Bloomfield</b>	<b>\$67,325</b>
East Granby	\$87,048
Hartford	\$30,379
Simsbury	\$105,240
West Hartford	\$77,918
Windsor	\$80,457
State	\$68,055

CERC 2009

Over the past thirty years Bloomfield's median household income increased at a slower rate than the State and County. Bloomfield went from a community about 20 percent above the State median household income to a community at, or slightly below the State median household income.

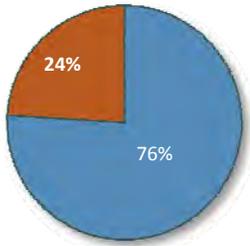
*Comparison of State Median Household Income (1979-2009)*



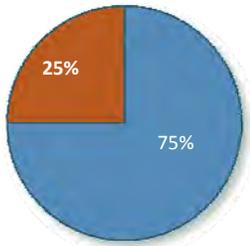
US Census Bureau and CERC

**Business In Bloomfield**

24 percent of Bloomfield is Zoned for Business Uses



About 25 percent of the Grand List is from Business activities



# Zoning in Bloomfield

The majority of Bloomfield is zoned for residential uses (12,846 acres). Of that land area about 44 percent is zoned for one-acre and two-acre lots. The result is about 5,500 acres of Bloomfield is zoned for single-family houses on larger lots.

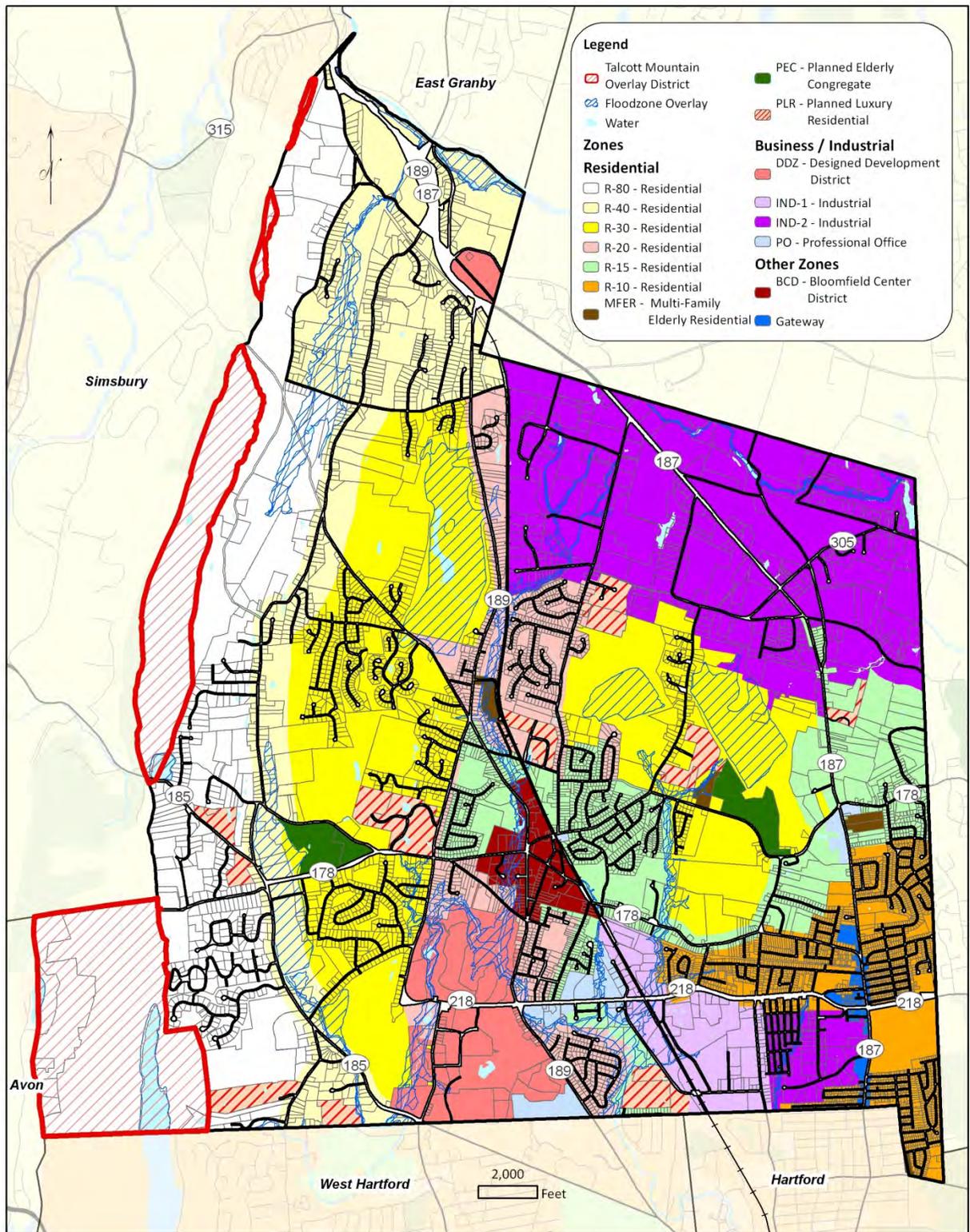
Bloomfield has zoned 24 percent of the Town (about 4,137 acres) for business activities.

ZONE		ACRES	PCT	
<b>Residential</b>		<b>12,803</b>	<b>76%</b>	<b>PCT RES</b>
R-80	About 0.5 housing units per acre	3,430	20%	27%
R-40	About 1 housing unit per acre	2,121	12%	17%
R-30	About 1.5 housing units per acre	3,212	19%	25%
R-20	About 2 housing units per acre	1,026	6%	8%
R-15	About 3 housing units per acre	1,426	9%	11%
R-10	About 4 housing units per acre	963	6%	7%
MFER	Multi-Family Elderly Residential	53	<1%	<1%
PLR	Planned Luxury Residential	438	3%	3%
PEC	Planned Elderly Congregate	145	1%	1%
<b>Business</b>		<b>4,123</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>PCT BUS</b>
DD	Design Development	675	4%	16%
IND-1	General Industry 1	429	3%	10%
IND-2	General Industry 2	2,584	15%	62%
PO	Professional Office	161	1%	4%
BCD	Bloomfield Center District	205	1%	5%
GWD	Blue Hills Gateway District	69	<1%	2%
BD	Business District	14	<1%	<1%
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>16,926</b>	<b>100%</b>	

Assessor's Records

# Zoning Map

Bloomfield, CT



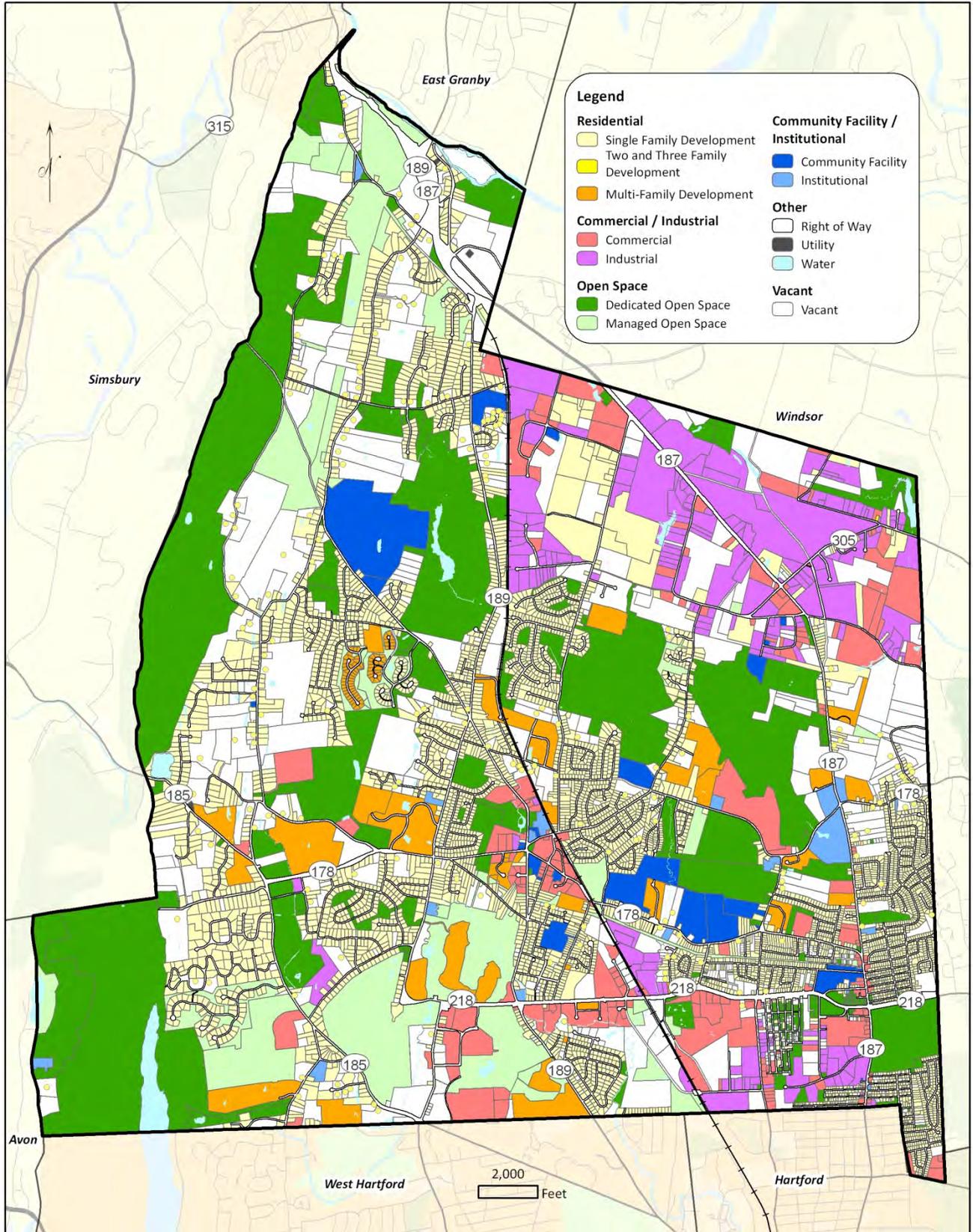
## Land Use in Bloomfield

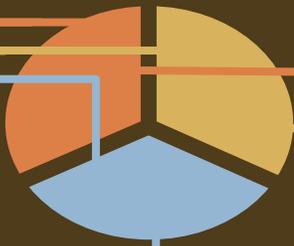
LAND USE		ACRES		PERCENT
<b>Residential</b>			<b>4,636</b>	<b>27.4</b>
	Single Family	3,822		
	Two and Three Family	92		
	Multi Family	722		
<b>Business</b>			<b>2,177</b>	<b>12.9</b>
	Commercial	1,001		
	Industrial	1,176		
<b>Open Space</b>			<b>5,413</b>	<b>32.0</b>
	Dedicated Open Space	4,052		
	Managed Open Space	1,362		
<b>Community Facility / Institutional</b>			<b>335</b>	<b>2.0</b>
	Community Facility	226		
	Institutional	109		
<b>Other</b>			<b>1,282</b>	<b>7.6</b>
	Right of Way	1,199		
	Utility	3		
	Water	80		
<b>Vacant</b>			<b>3,082</b>	<b>18.2</b>
	Vacant	3,082		
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>16,926</b>	<b>100%</b>	

Assessor's Records

# 2010 Land Use Map

Bloomfield, CT





PLAN THEME

# What We Want to Protect

- **Natural Resources**
- **Community Character and  
Historic Resources**

# Chapter 2 Natural Resources



This chapter focuses on the protection of natural resources to maintain their ecological, public health and safety, and aesthetic values. The presence of certain natural resources influences development patterns and the intensity of development. Some natural resources are so important that they must be “preserved” in order to continue to provide ecological benefits and protect public health and safety. Permanent preservation as undeveloped land is the preferred approach for these resources. If preservation is not feasible then carefully-regulating the development of land is the next best approach for protecting such resources.

For other natural resources, “conservation” is a key approach. Conservation means that some level of development is often acceptable, provided that the integrity of the natural resource is “conserved.” Best practices to conserve such resources are contained throughout this section.

Alterations should be avoided to the maximum extent feasible:

- 100 year Floodplain
- Water and watercourses
- Sensitive Wetlands
- Wetland soils
- Farmington River
- Great Drain

**RESOURCES TO PRESERVE**

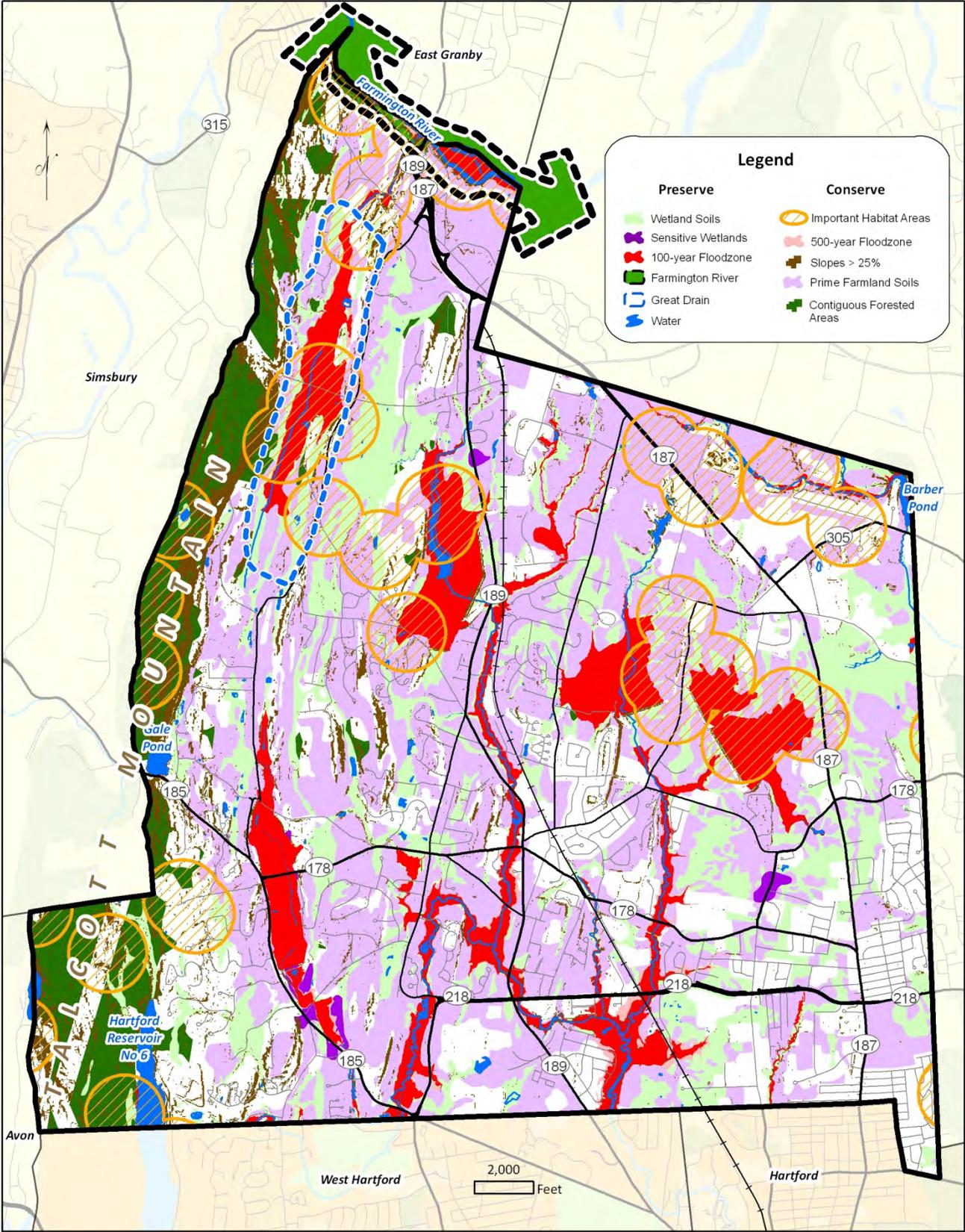
The functions of the resources might be able to be maintained if development occurs in an environmentally-sensitive manner:

- 500 year floodplain
- Aquifers
- Unique or special habitat areas (Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection Natural Diversity Database)
- Talcott Mountain
- Steep slopes (>25 percent)
- Farmland soils

**RESOURCES TO CONSERVE**

# Natural Resources Plan

Bloomfield, CT



### Vernal Pools

Vernal pools are seasonal wetlands. The unique environment of vernal pools provides habitat for numerous rare plants and animals that are able to survive and thrive in these harsh conditions.

## Protect Water Resources

Water resource preservation has been a high priority of Bloomfield for the past 40-odd years. Water Resources (e.g., wetlands, watercourses, vernal pools and floodplains) provide critical public health and safety functions. Wetlands provide habitat, can absorb and store water, and thereby provide a natural flood control. They can also filter out pollutants from stormwater.

Floodplains are intended to convey water during times of heavy rain. Any depletion of their flood conveyance capacity can impact adjacent and downstream properties. Preservation of the 100-year flood plain is of particular importance. As required by the State, activities that might impact wetlands and floodplains are regulated. The Town has further strengthened wetlands protection by extending the upland review area along certain rivers and working to limit clear-cutting in the review areas. This should continue.

Vernal pools (see sidebar) are basins that contain water for just a few months in the year. Protection of vernal pools is essential for species which are dependent upon them for survival. The land surrounding vernal pools are critical to their proper functioning. Landowners have an important role in protecting vernal pools and Bloomfield should provide education about what they are how to protect them. Bloomfield should continue to protect these areas when development is proposed.

### Continue to Protect Wetlands and Watercourses

Since the 1970's, the protection of wetlands and watercourses has consistently been a priority in Bloomfield. Wetlands and watercourses are regulated in accordance with rules developed by the State and fine-tuned by the Inland Wetland and Watercourse Commission.

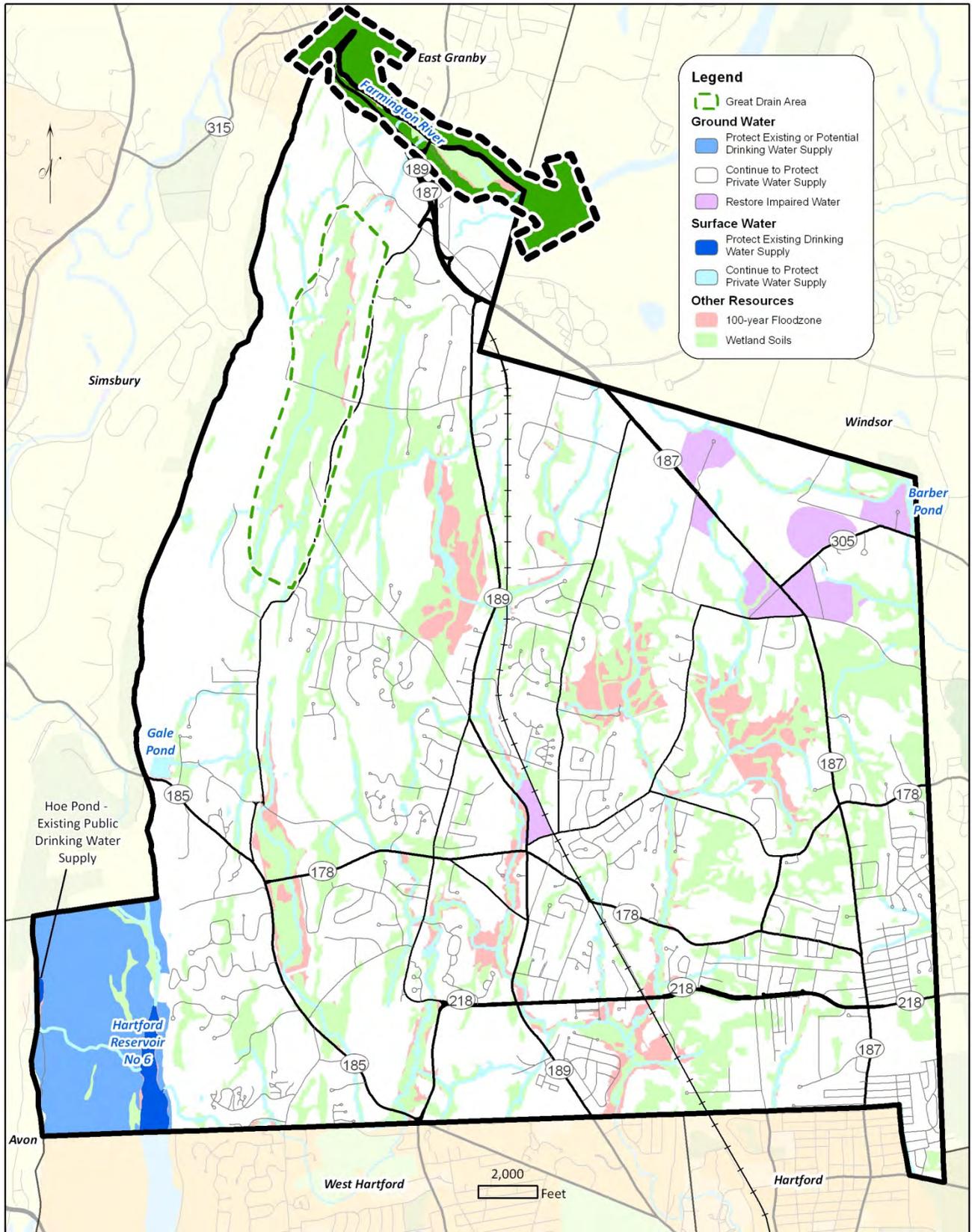
Key resource areas include:

- The Great Drain (a valuable ecological system that runs parallel with Talcott Mountain),
- The Farmington River, and
- Sensitive wetlands identified by past planning efforts.

Bloomfield should continue to protect inland wetlands and watercourses and update policies, when needed, to support these efforts.

# Water Resources Plan

Bloomfield, CT



## Riparian

Relating to or located on the bank of a watercourse. Riparian zones are the areas adjacent to the watercourse.

### Riparian Buffer Effectiveness

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has identified factors, in addition to buffer width, that contribute to a buffer's effectiveness. These include

- vegetation (amount and type),
- soil compaction,
- adjacent land use activity, and
- the amount of water that flows through the buffer.

Construction activities can impact buffers. Bloomfield can minimize disturbances during construction by requiring developers to:

- place construction materials on elevated ramps to prevent soil compaction and destruction of vegetation,
- restrict equipment movement to non-vegetated areas, and
- restore and re-vegetate disturbed areas to predevelopment conditions.

### Metropolitan District

The Metropolitan District (MDC) is a non-profit municipal corporation chartered by the Connecticut General Assembly in 1929 to provide potable water and sewerage services on a regional basis.

The MDC provides quality water supply, water pollution control, mapping, and household hazardous waste collection to eight member municipalities -- Bloomfield, East Hartford, Hartford, Newington, Rocky Hill, West Hartford, Wethersfield and Windsor -- and to portions of other towns in the region

## Protect Riparian Zones

Undeveloped buffers of water resources area important. Areas along water resources are often called "Riparian Zones" (see sidebar). Riparian zones are important for good water quality and help to prevent sediment, nitrogen, phosphorus, pesticides and other pollutants from reaching a waterbody. Bloomfield should continue to manage development within the Riparian Zones and seek to preserve these areas as undeveloped.

## Protect Drinking Water Resources and Aquifers

Bloomfield has limited identified drinking water resources and relies on a regional public water supply system. The Metropolitan District (MDC see sidebar) has a reservoir and water treatment facility in the town, and provides drinking water to most households and businesses.

MDC operates a water treatment facility and reservoir (#6) in the southwest corner of the Town. This land is protected because the MDC is a sensitive land-owner and Bloomfield has taken steps to protect this resource through the zoning regulations. There are areas in Bloomfield where groundwater resources have been identified and these areas should be protected.

While Bloomfield is part of the MDC water supply area, portions of the community rely on private wells. The water supply area covers the majority of the Town, but some parts of town rely on private wells, and clean groundwater. Protecting these water supplies is important.

In addition, areas with impaired surface and ground waters should be improved, when possible. Many of these areas involve properties with older land use activities, built at a time when water quality protection measures were not required. Small restoration projects on these sites, and along waterbodies adjacent to these sites, can improve overall water quality. One way to improve water quality in these areas is to eliminate stormwater pipes that discharge directly into an open water body. Another technique involves illuminating unnecessary impervious areas (e.g., parking lots).

## Continue to Address Stormwater Quality and Quantity

Activities that occur in the watersheds of these resource areas can impact water quality. Pollutants from failing septic systems, the overuse of fertilizer or pesticides, poor pasture management practices, and sediments and contaminants found in stormwater runoff can degrade water quality in rivers and lakes.

Research also indicates that when a watershed contains over 10 percent impervious surfaces, water quality degrades. Most of Bloomfield is between 10 and 25 percent impervious areas, resulting from suburban development occurring at the end of the last century. Managing stormwater will be a big issue for Bloomfield because water quality and quantity will continue to be major issues, and towns will be required to do more to manage these resources. Reducing stormwater flow in these areas is an important strategy.

A community can take a number of steps to reduce stormwater flow (and thus the flow of pollutants) and improve stormwater quality. These steps include reducing impervious surfaces, encouraging on-site infiltration, and maintaining vegetated covers. Modified development approaches, such as low impact development (see sidebar), can be a meaningful way to protect water resources in the future. Bloomfield should consider implementing the measures outlined in this section, and might consider developing a Watershed Management Plan to implement this strategy in a more comprehensive manner.

A way to reduce impervious surfaces is to use pervious surfaces for walkways, parking lots and access drives. There are many alternatives to the traditional impervious surface materials (such as pavement) and they are becoming more commonly used by developers and communities. These products still provide the structural support needed but they allow water to infiltrate the ground, thereby reducing runoff. Strategies that promote the reduction of pavement widths on new roads can also help.

Other meaningful changes include reducing requirements for off-street parking and allowing the construction of parking spaces to be deferred to a later date, if needed. Bloomfield has adopted a maximum parking limit for retail development, provided zoning tools to allow parking lot reductions and has utilized alternative parking lot design and should continue this approach. Bloomfield might even add more uses to the list of uses they have a maximum parking standard.

### Low Impact Development (LID)

LID is an ecologically-friendly approach to site development and stormwater management that aims to mitigate development impacts to land, water, and air.

The approach emphasizes the integration of site design and planning techniques that conserve natural systems and hydrologic functions on a site.

Low impact development techniques can offer many benefits, some of which include:

- Protect water quality by reducing impacts to water bodies,
- Preserve integrity of ecological and biological systems,
- Reduce municipal infrastructure and utility maintenance costs (streets, curbs, gutters, sidewalks, storm sewer), and
- Preserve trees and natural vegetation.

[lowimpactdevelopment.org](http://lowimpactdevelopment.org)

### Low Impact Development Tools and Techniques

There are many LID tools available, including:

- Rain Gardens,
- Cisterns,
- Pervious pavements and surfaces, and
- Xeroscaping.



Education campaigns can be an effective way to reduce stormwater impacts.

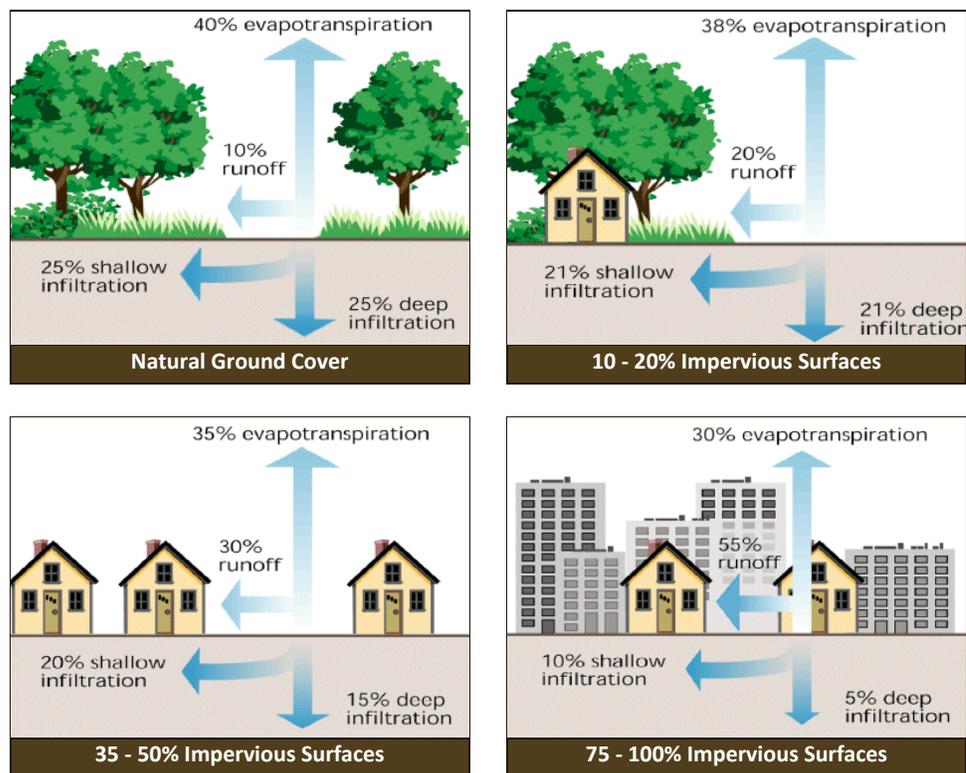
Minimizing, or eliminating runoff from vehicle washing and lawn irrigation are two areas where residents can help improve water quality.

In 2006 students from Watkinson Middle School marked stormdrains in the Kenwood Circle Neighborhood as part of an education program.

Vegetated land reduces the flow of stormwater compared to lawn areas and cleared land (see diagrams in the sidebar) because it allows water to infiltrate into the ground. Sometimes during construction more trees and vegetation are cleared than is necessary to develop the site, which reduces opportunities to encourage infiltration and results in more runoff. Carefully reviewing the building envelope during the land development stage can help reduce excessive clearing.

Bloomfield has utilized low impact development tools for newer projects and should find more ways to integrate this approach into all land-use decision-making and as part of retrofits of Town-owned drainage facilities (see page 104). While managing stormwater on new projects is important, stormwater is often sent to the road and into the Town drainage system from older developments. Relying on the Town drainage systems, perhaps the largest public utility managed by the Town of Bloomfield, can be problematic.

*How Stormwater Impacts Water Resources – Where Rain Water Goes...*



This drainage system is not managed in a way other public utilities (e.g., water, sewer) are managed; funding for drainage improvements is allocated to deal with emergencies rather than as part of a long-term management plan, as with other utilities. Bloomfield

should allocate funding, continue to update its inventory of catch basins and outfalls and develop plans to improve water quality as part of these systems.

## **Minimize Pollution Sources that Could Impact Water Quality**

There are common practices by households and businesses that can contribute to water pollution. These include the overuse of fertilizer, use of pesticides, dumping or washing cleaners (such as car wash cleaners) into storm drains, etc.

These and other pollutants may seep into groundwater or wash away into rivers, lakes and other waterbodies. Public education should focus on explaining the impacts of these practices and suggesting alternative approaches. Some towns have limited the use of non-organic fertilizers and pesticides on private property. Bloomfield can be a leader in this area by eliminating the use of non-organic fertilizers and pesticides on Town-owned land. This is also a good idea because of the health risks associated with some of these products.

Past land use practices can also be a challenge. Certain land uses can impact groundwater and create expensive cleanup costs. These sites are called brownfields (see sidebar). Bloomfield has already identified some brownfield areas and worked with property owners to restore the water quality. This is a good practice and should continue as need are identified.

Some areas of Bloomfield depend on privately-managed on-site septic systems for wastewater management. Each septic system owner is essentially a privately-run utility. Improperly maintained or installed septic systems can be a high risk for malfunction and when they malfunction important water resources (e.g., drinking water, coastal waters) can become polluted. Older systems are more prone to failure due to poor construction and/or maintenance. Bloomfield should monitor septic system maintenance in these areas. If problems are detected, than an ordinance would be required to enable the health district to become more active in septic system management.

### **Brownfields**

Property for which the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse may be complicated by the presence or potential presence, of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contamination. Cleaning up and reinvesting in these properties protects the environment, reduces blight, and takes development pressure off of green spaces and working lands.

## Protect Habitat and Vegetation

Undeveloped land provides habitat for wildlife, particularly when the land is permanently preserved (“dedicated open space”). People are attracted to Bloomfield because of its wildlife and undeveloped land. Continued protection of undeveloped land in targeted areas can help preserve habitat in Bloomfield.

The Town and its conservation partners should maintain and enhance wildlife habitat by inventorying, analyzing, and developing habitat management plans for existing dedicated open space. This could be conducted in conjunction with the management plans discussed later.

*The Connecticut Endangered Species Act*, passed in 1989, recognizes the importance of our state’s plant and animal populations and the need to protect these species and their habitats. This is a useful tool for identifying where key habitat areas are located.

### Targeted Land Preservation Areas

CONTIGUOUS FORESTED AREAS	PRIME FARMLAND SOILS	TALCOTT MOUNTAIN AND THE GREAT DRAIN
<i>Large contiguous areas of forest cover. Many of these areas are owned by multiple property owners</i>	<i>Areas with soil conditions that are ideal for crop production purposes</i>	<i>Natural resource features that are significant elements of the community</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Important habitat areas</li> <li>• Decrease stormwater runoff</li> <li>• Reduce erosion</li> <li>• Filter air pollution</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Important food security areas</li> <li>• Valuable agricultural resource</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Important habitat areas</li> <li>• Important community character resources</li> </ul>

### Protect Contiguous Forested Areas

Trees and vegetation provide habitat, decrease stormwater runoff, reduce erosion, sequester carbon, filter air pollution and add to the character of an area. Strategies to preserve vegetation include minimizing the amount of clearing during construction, employing practices during construction to prevent accidental damage to trees, ensuring that newly planted trees (as part of development approvals) are properly planted and maintained, and encouraging property owners to retain vegetation. Bloomfield could also plant more trees on Town-owned land in and within public road rights-of-way.

Strategies to protect habitat include limiting development near important habitat areas, minimizing the clearing and fragmentation of forests and preserving forest lands located adjacent to other preserved forest lands. While there is very little contiguous forested area remaining in Bloomfield it is located in a high value area (Talcott Mountain).

### **Continue to Preserve Farmland Soils**

Soil data shows that about 1,490 acres of vacant land are classified as “Prime Farmland Soils” according to the US Department of Agriculture Soil Survey (about 9 percent of Bloomfield). This land is currently not protected and it remains as potential farmland by the desire of the current owners to farm or otherwise keep this land free of development. Bloomfield has preserved farmland in the past through the open space acquisition program. The community should continue these efforts where resources are available.

### **Continue to Protect Talcott Mountain and the Great Drain**

The Talcott Mountain Range and Great Drain are located along the western portion of the Town. These features are important natural resource and habitat areas that contribute to community character. The ridgeline of the Mountain was identified as a key resource to protect in the Town’s 2000 POCD. In 2009 the Town Plan and Zoning Commission adopted the Talcott Mountain Overlay District (TMOD) zoning regulation. This tool, along with sensitive land ownership, is an important approach to protect this resource and it should remain in effect.

The Great Drain, which runs parallel to Talcott Mountain, is home to a concentration of - identified important habitat areas (“Endangered, Threatened and Special Concern species and Significant Natural Communities,” Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection). The continued preservation of land in this watershed can help protect and link important wildlife habitats, along with other benefits that undeveloped land provides.

**Conservation Commissions**

The Conservation Commission is an official body of the municipality, created by vote of the local legislature, with its members appointed by the chief executive officer. The enabling legislation for the operation of Connecticut conservation commissions can be found in Chapter 97, Section 7-131a of the Connecticut General Statutes.

Its duties and discretionary abilities stem from its purpose: "...the development, conservation, supervision and regulation of natural resources, including water resources within its territorial limits."

# Expand Organizational Capacity

Bloomfield has regulatory agencies working to preserve and conserve natural resources (Town Plan and Zoning Commission and the Inland Wetland and Watercourse Commission). The community has also established a Conservation, Energy, and Environmental Committee to work on these issues. This Committee is currently organized as a subcommittee of the Town Council.

Some communities have established Conservation Commission (see sidebar) to manage these resources. Bloomfield should evaluate whether a Conservation Commission would be a useful addition to the community’s organizational capacity.

	Continue to Do What We Are Doing	Consider New Approaches
<b>OUR STRATEGIES</b>	2.1 Protect wetlands, vernal pools and watercourses	2.10 Improving areas where impaired surface and ground water has been found
	2.2 Protect riparian zones	2.11 Evaluating parking requirements and consider reducing the minimum requirement for commercial development
	2.3 Protect Groundwater Resource Areas	2.12 Expanding the maximum parking requirement into additional uses
	2.4 Protect Talcott Mountain (Talcott Mountain Overlay District)	2.13 Eliminating the use of non-organic pesticides and fertilizers on Town-owned land
	2.5 Regulate and manage activities in floodplains	2.14 Encouraging land owners to use organic pesticides and fertilizers on private property
	2.6 Address stormwater runoff	2.15 Limiting the use of non-organic pesticides and fertilizes on private property
	2.7 Require new development to be low impact development	2.16 Monitoring septic system maintenance
	2.8 Protect undeveloped lands as habitat	2.17 Establishing a Conservation Commission
	2.9 Minimize tree clearing and ground disturbance during construction	2.18 Developing habitat plans for open space areas

# Chapter 3 Community Character and Historic Resources



## DIVERSITY

To preserve our cultural history and celebrate our emerging future

## AMENITIES

To protect elements that tie us to the past and reinforce our values

## AESTHETICS

To enhance features that communicate our values to others

“Character” means something different to each resident, but residents tend to agree that the Town’s character should be protected. Community character often includes physical features, from natural resources to patterns of development, that make a town unique. Residents and local officials identified things that add to Bloomfield’s character and things that detract.

<p><b>Contribute to Bloomfield’s Character</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Farmland</li> <li>• Forests, parks and undeveloped land</li> <li>• Scenic roads</li> <li>• Scenic views</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volunteer</li> <li>• Historic buildings</li> <li>• Small businesses</li> <li>• Community events</li> <li>• Cultural diversity</li> </ul>
<p><b>Detract from Bloomfield’s Character</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Look of some buildings and development sites</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strip development patterns with large parking lots in front of buildings</li> </ul>

Bloomfield is a complex community and has a number of different character themes, which include:

- A New England Village (Bloomfield Center),
- Inner ring suburban development, typically found in communities this close to an urban center,
- Outer ring suburban residential development, atypical for a town this close to an urban center, and
- Pockets of rural/agricultural land-uses (western Bloomfield).

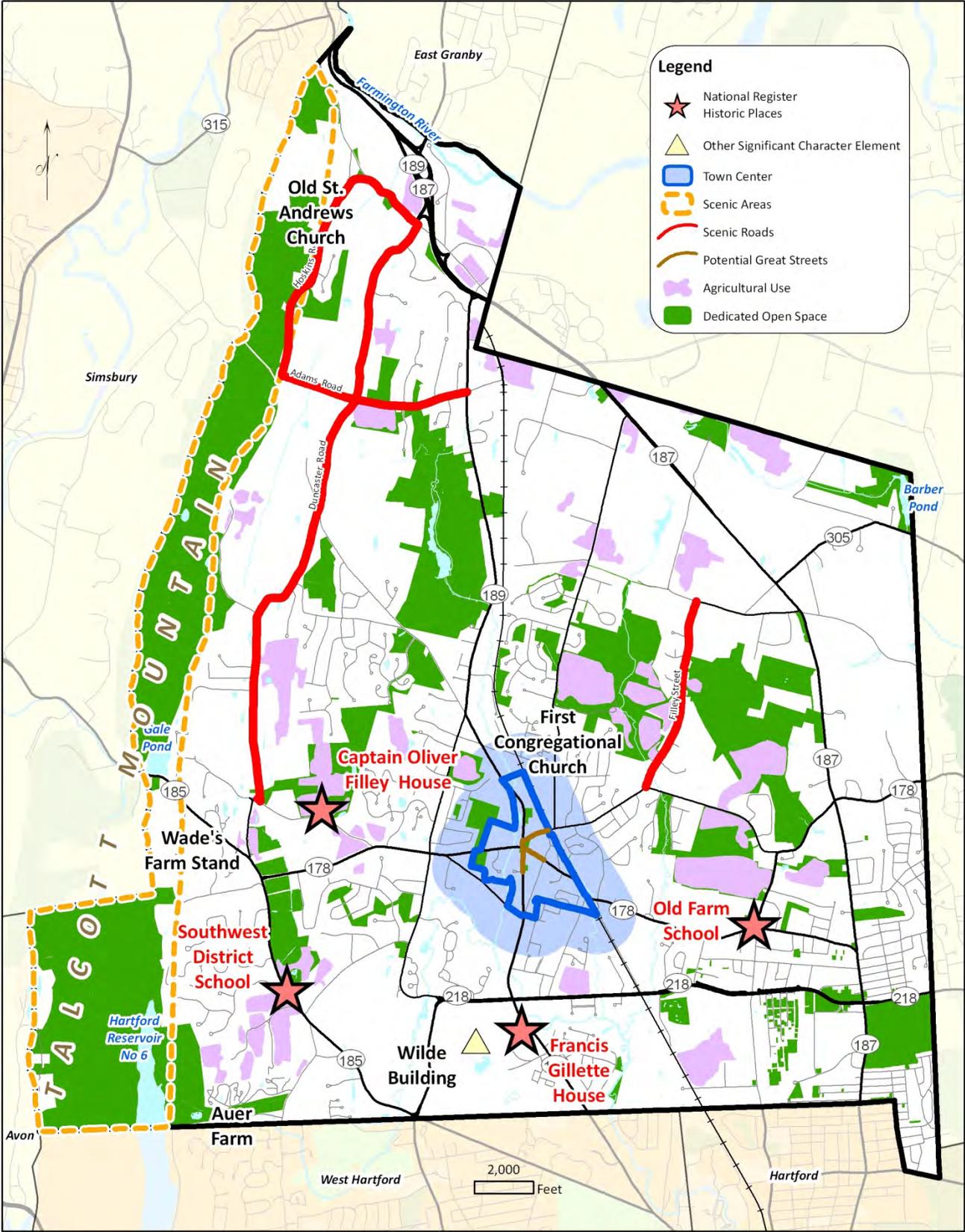
Each theme has its own characteristics that make Bloomfield special. As a result the essence of Bloomfield cannot be narrowly defined to one specific place, or period of time, as each of these elements correspond to different times in Bloomfield’s history.

Instead Bloomfield will need a variety of strategies to address Community Character. These strategies include:

- Identifying and protecting historic resources,
- Protecting remaining farmland and undeveloped land, and
- Defining the appropriate design objectives for the various parts of the Town.

# Character Resources Plan

Bloomfield, CT



## Farming Challenges

Challenges to farming in Connecticut include:

- rising land values (resulting in higher taxes, less ability to purchase new land, and succession tax issues),
- fluctuating market conditions (including lower price supports, higher fuel and fertilizer costs),
- loss of support systems (farm equipment dealers, milk haulers, and farm labor),
- market risk where property needs to be put up as collateral or sold to fund capital needs,
- aging farmers, and
- fewer people interested in being farmers.

## Purchase Development Rights (PDR)

Through a PDR program, a landowner receives compensation for the value of the development rights associated with a land parcel. The owner still owns the land, but is compensated for relinquishing the right to develop it as real estate. Agriculture and other uses of the land continue.

For the public, PDR programs enable land conservation at a much-reduced expense, as the cost of PDR is less than outright purchase of land, and costs associated with subsequent management of the land remain the responsibility of the landowner.

## Agri-tourism

Agricultural tourism, or agri-tourism, is one alternative for improving the incomes and potential economic viability of small farms and rural communities

ctfarms.uconn.edu

# Preserve Agricultural Resources

Farmland, along with Bloomfield's scenic roads, wooded hills and other features, contributes to the Town's New England character. In addition, farmland is now seen as a valuable resource for economic activity and job creation as well as providing a needed local source of food.

While farming in Bloomfield may not involve large operations with cattle and hay, it is a part of the community character and landscape. Like other parts of Connecticut, Bloomfield has seen its farmland developed and with it has lost some of its rural character. In addition, people moving to Bloomfield may not have the same appreciation of farming activities and this can lead to land-use conflicts.

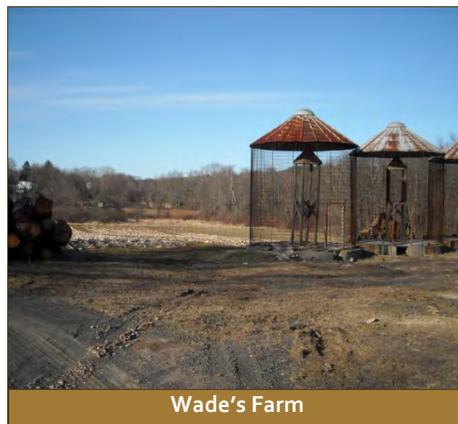
## Importance of Farmland

Preserving farmland is important because it:

- Provides "food security" in times of turmoil,
- Ensures a source of fresh, locally-grown produce with lower transportation costs,
- Provides jobs and fiscal benefits,
- Preserves Bloomfield's agricultural heritage,
- Protects farmland from development, and
- Enhances community character.



Lisa Lane Farm

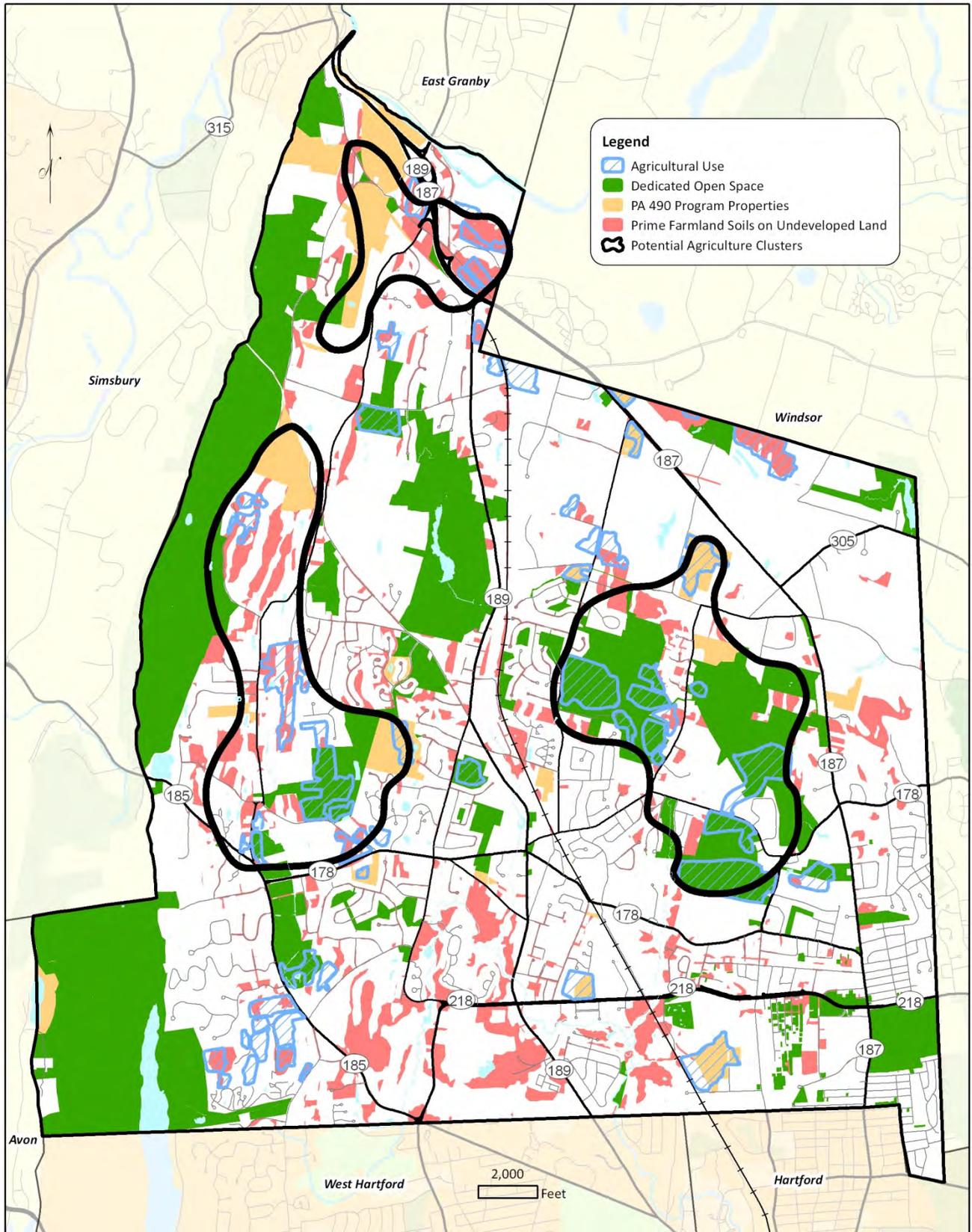


Wade's Farm

Bloomfield has been supportive of agriculture and farmland preservation and this will continue to be a priority. Evaluating land use regulations to enable farming and agri-tourism, allowing farming on Town-owned land and establishing organizational capacity through a Conservation Commission or other agency are strategies (see page 28) that will be pursued by the Town.

# Agricultural Resources Plan

Bloomfield, CT



**Community Support Agriculture (CSA)**

A CSA is a way for the food buying public to create a relationship with a farm and to receive a weekly basket of produce. By making a financial commitment to a farm, people become "members" (or "shareholders," or "subscribers") of the CSA.

Some farms offer produce subscriptions, where buyers receive a weekly or monthly basket of produce, flowers, fruits, eggs, milk, meats, or any sort of different farm products.

[www.localharvest.org/csa/](http://www.localharvest.org/csa/)

**Right to Farm Ordinance**

Connecticut has a "Right to Farm" law (Connecticut General Statutes Section 19a-341) and some communities have decided that affirming this philosophy within their Town is important.

In June of 2000 the Town of Woodstock established this right to farm ordinance to protect agricultural or farming operations. The ordinance prohibits certain ramifications of farming from being considered nuisances.

**Agriculture Overlay Zone**

A special zoning district created to provide additional provisions for agriculture, or to limit permitted uses to agriculture.

**Keep Bloomfield Farming**

During this planning process The Wintonbury Land Trust and The Conway School of Landscape Design developed a Plan to promote and retain farming in Bloomfield. This is an important document for Bloomfield that should be utilized as strategies are implemented.

**Establish a Farmland Preservation Program**

As mentioned on page 27, preserving farmland is important in Bloomfield and it is a targeted land preservation area. A farmland preservation program is a valuable tool for retaining agriculture. Bloomfield's farmland preservation program should involved an inventory of key areas (farmland clusters), identify key parcels (farmland and farm clusters) and dedicate funding for land acquisition.

**Promote Agriculture**

While preserving farms and farmland is important, agricultural activities also need to be promoted in order to thrive. Bloomfield already hosts a farmers market once per week as an ad-hoc activity. Tools that might help Bloomfield promote agriculture include establishing a dedicated Farmers Marketplace, supporting the development of Community Supported Agriculture (see sidebar) programs, developing a "buy local" campaign, working with Auer Farm to promote farming, and adopting a "Right to Farm" ordinance (see sidebar).

	Continue to Do What We Are Doing	Consider New Approaches
<b>OUR STRATEGIES</b>	3.1 Allow farming on town-owned land and leased land	3.3 Establishing a farmers marketplace
	3.2 Host a farmers market	3.4 Creating a "buy local" campaign
		3.5 Establishing an Agriculture / Farm Committee / Commission
		3.6 Creating organizational capacity (Conservation Commission or other group) to implement these strategies (discussed on page 28)
		3.7 Supporting the development of a Community Supported Agriculture program
		3.8 Developing a local farm inventory / identify clusters
		3.9 Adopting a "Right to Farm" ordinance
		3.10 Work with Auer Farm to promote farming
		3.11 Evaluating land use regulations for agriculture and agri-tourism
		3.12 Preserving farmland through a farmland preservation program

# Preserve Undeveloped Land

Undeveloped land (“open space”), in adequate quantities and appropriate locations, will help protect community character, conserve important natural resources, shape development patterns, and enhance the quality of life for Bloomfield residents.

In meetings held at the beginning of the planning process, Bloomfield residents also identified that open space preservation continues to be a high-priority issue.

## Undeveloped Land Preservation in Bloomfield

TYPE	EXAMPLES
Dedicated Open Space	Land preserved in perpetuity as open space, often with public use. Includes land owned by the Wintonbury Land Trust, the Metropolitan District Commission, and the State of Connecticut (about 4,052 acres).
Open-ness	Land preserved from development (such as a conservation easement) but public use is generally not allowed. Includes conservation easements held by various agencies and properties in the PA 490 program.
Managed Open Space	Land set aside for some other purpose (such as watershed protection) but that provides some open space value. Public use may not be allowed (about 1,362 acres). Includes cemeteries.

The common element in the above table is that the land is used or preserved in some way or owned by an entity where there is some level of assurance about how the land will be used or preserved in the future. Since 1984, Bloomfield has added about 2,500 acres of open space (5,414 acres today). This is an 87 percent increase from the 1984 total (2,890 acres).

In addition, Bloomfield has land that looks or feels open but is not preserved in perpetuity as open space (includes vacant, privately-owned land). This land is not included in the above table since there is no assurance about how the land will be used or preserved in the future. This perception is called “open-ness” (see sidebar) and this land is often called “perceived open space.”

There is no standard of how much open space land a community needs and there are too many variables to define such a standard. Each town is different, both in terms of physical features and residents’ perceptions of what is appropriate.

*Standards are only guidelines and focusing on the **quantity** of open space may not provide for the **quality** of open space that residents want ...*

### Open-ness

Land that provides a feeling of open space, but is neither protected or managed as open space.

### Amount of Open Space Land In Bloomfield



### State Open Space Goals

CGS Section 23-8 sets a statewide goal of 21 percent of the State’s land area as open space, with 10 percent held by the State and 11 percent held by municipalities and private conservation organizations or water companies.

*32 percent of Bloomfield is Open Space.*

**Greenway**

A greenbelt / greenway is a corridor of open space that:

- may protect natural resources... or offer opportunities for recreation or multi-use (non-motorized transportation),
- may connect existing protected areas and provide access to the outdoors,
- may be located along a defining natural feature, such as a waterway...
- may be a green space along a highway or around a village.

Connecticut General Assembly Public Act 95-335

**East Coast Greenway**

The East Coast Greenway (ECG) is a project to create a nearly 3,000-mile path linking the major cities along the Atlantic coast, from Calais, Maine to Key West, Florida, for non-motorized transportation.

The East Coast Greenway has been recognized to be an important economic-driver for many communities because of the number of people that use the trail system for recreational purposes.

greenway.org

**Penwood State Park**

Bloomfield is fortunate to have Penwood State Park as a character and recreational asset. It is an 800-acre park that serves as a regional greenway amenity.

# Create Greenways

Developing a strategy to connect existing undeveloped areas with greenways is an effective way for Bloomfield to establish a meaningful open space system. The greenway concept involves providing linkages between community facilities, villages and recreation areas.

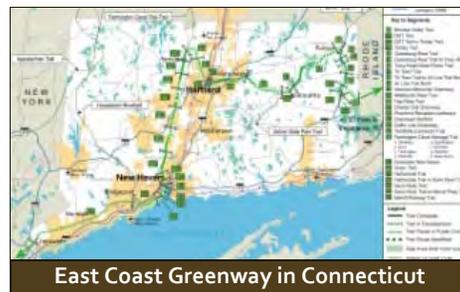
Greenways can also include trails and become a recreational amenity for the community. Ultimately, Bloomfield should develop a classification system to identify where active and passive recreation areas should be located and how these areas should be managed, especially on Town-owned land.

Greenways connect places and can connect people to places as well. Many greenways include paths and trails to provide access. Bloomfield has several walking and hiking trails within its borders. The Penwood and Talcott Mountain State Parks have a well-maintained trail system including the Metacomet Trail that creates a north-south greenway through Bloomfield and several other towns. Other opportunities for greenway connections, such as the Wintonbury Trail and connections to Auer Farm, exist and should be explored as these connections will help create a meaningful greenway and trail network.

## Develop the East Coast Greenway in Bloomfield

The East Coast Greenway in Bloomfield is a proposed 10-mile multi-purpose trail concept that would connect Downtown Hartford and the Tarriffville Connector in Simsbury using the “Griffin Line” railroad right-of-way, where possible.

This project is part of a larger greenway project known as the East Coast Greenway (see sidebar), which extends from Florida to Maine along the eastern United States. Portions of this greenway involve abandoned rail line (about 7 miles). The remainder of the Greenway would have to be designed to coexist with the existing rail line.



East Coast Greenway in Connecticut



Example of "Rail with Trail"



### Greenway Safety

Greenway trails have documented low crime rates compared to other developed land uses. Vegetation can be managed to reduce the perception of fear or crime.

Dense, naturalistic vegetation along one side of a trail is not perceived as unsafe as long as the other side is visually open. Provide 100 feet of both forward and rear visibility on trails where possible.

USDA  
[http://www.unl.edu/nac/bufferguidelines/docs/conservation\\_buffers.pdf](http://www.unl.edu/nac/bufferguidelines/docs/conservation_buffers.pdf)

## Promote Use of the Farmington River Park

As identified in the 2000 Plan, the Farmington River Park is a unique opportunity to provide direct recreational access to the river for citizens of Bloomfield. The Farmington River naturally defines part of Bloomfield's northern border with East Granby and has good fishing areas and world-class canoe and whitewater runs. The Park shares space with two private residences, creating a "private" feel, which causes some users to feel like they are trespassing.

Bloomfield should do more (e.g., installing additional signs, creating a car-top boat launch and making the park feel "public") to promote the use of this facility. Building connections to neighboring communities (i.e., greenway trail and canoe trail) is an important strategy.

## Support Wild and Scenic Designation

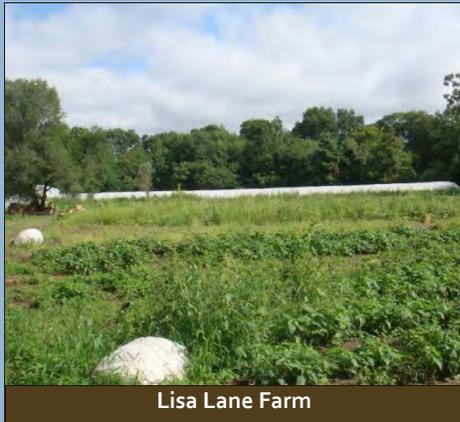
In 1994, 14 miles of the Upper Farmington River, stretching from Colebrook to Canton, was added to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers system with an act of Congress. Efforts are being made to extend this designation to the Lower Farmington River, which travels along the northern boundary of Bloomfield. Bloomfield should continue to support this designation.

## Establish East - West Greenways

The 2000, Plan of Conservation and Development discussed an important East-West connection known as the Wintonbury Trail. This trail, which has been unused for many years, is an important greenway link and should be developed. Bloomfield should explore whether elements of this trail system can be restored. One particular property, the Town Golf Course, presents a use conflict for the currently envisioned route. The 1989 Parks and Recreation Master Plan identified the Trolley Trail as an important greenway as well. Bloomfield should work to create East-West Greenways.

## Preserve Undeveloped Land

One of the ways that Bloomfield can help to maintain its character is by retaining as much undeveloped land as possible. Perhaps the best way that Bloomfield can preserve undeveloped land is through “use value assessments” (as opposed to “market value assessment”) for certain properties. While this program temporarily prevents land from being developed, it removes the cost burden of owning large parcels of undeveloped land. The program has three parts – farm use, forest use, and open space use. State law requires towns to provide the Farm and Forest programs.



Lisa Lane Farm



Farmland

## Promote the Farm and Forest Use Assessment Programs

The Farm and Forest Use Assessment Programs are established by State Statute to provide short-term tax relief for qualifying agricultural activities and land preservation. Bloomfield has properties utilizing these assessment programs and should continue to promote these programs for any property that qualifies.

## Consider Re-Adopting an Open Space Use Assessment Policy

Under the Public Act 490 Open Space Use Assessment Program, the Assessor may incorporate land into the program if the parcel is designated (or the eligibility criteria are specified – see sidebar) in the Plan of Conservation and Development, and the designation (or criteria are) approved by the Town Council. Bloomfield has utilized this tool in the past, but is no longer using it. If this tool is going to be utilized then the process needs to be properly adopted, use clear language and be easy to administer.

### Open Space Use Assessment Policy

A policy may be the most flexible as to which properties are eligible for the Open Space Use Assessment and the assessor would appear to have discretion as to whether the property met the local criteria.

#### EXAMPLES

*Some communities have established that any portion of a parcel that exceeds the minimum lot size for the zone is eligible for the open space assessment if the area that receives the assessment is greater than the minimum lot size for the zone. Land that is used for business or utility purposes is excluded.*

#### NEW MILFORD, CT

*Pursuant to CGS 12-107e, the following land is designated as open space land for purposes of taxation under said statute: A contiguous parcel of land, excluding approved building lots, which consists of at least twice the minimum lot size required for the zoning district within which the lot is located, as designated on the official zoning map.*

*The following are excluded from open space land classification:*

- *Any land containing improvements*
- *Any land legally subdivided into any parcel and or lot, and*
- *Any land zoned for non-residential uses.*

### Exclusion of Town-Owned Land from Open Space

Town-owned land is not included because: (1) while public land, not all Town-owned land is open space; (2) not all Town-owned land is planned to be used as open space; and (3) unless the Town-owned land has some level of restriction preventing future development, political pressure could result in the change of designation to a non-open space use.

Bloomfield should consider some sort of classification system for the future use of Town-owned land.

### Public Act 490 Assessment Program

Public Act 490 (PA 490) assessment program (CGS 12-107e) allows communities to reduce the tax burden on parcels recognized as farm use and forest use - making such land more affordable to own so that it may remain undeveloped.

## Develop Strategies to Protect Land “Managed” as Open Space.

There are a number of agencies, both public and private, that currently manage land as open space (e.g., golf courses, cemeteries). Developing a strategy to identify and then convert these lands into dedicated open space can be useful.

Strategies might include:

- working with the property owner to find funding to protect the site,
- acquiring a “first right of refusal” and eventually purchasing the property,
- working with the property owner to selectively develop the site, maximizing the highest value areas for open space, or
- facilitating the process of having conservation easements placed on the property, perhaps by covering legal expenses associated with the process.

Land-use regulations, particularly zoning and subdivision regulations, are important tools to preserve undeveloped land. Many communities use the permit process as a way to protect important resources or to create greenways and connected trails.

Bloomfield has a history of using regulatory tools to achieve open space objectives and should continue this strategy.

## Continue to Allow / Promote Conservation Development

Bloomfield allows conservation-style residential development. This tool, along with the Planned Luxury Residential District, are important zoning techniques because they allow development while preserving land as open space. The alternate development approach is a conventional subdivision, which has a lower open space requirement.

Today, the Conservation Development technique requires a special permit from the Town Plan and Zoning Commission (TPZ). The Long Estate development on Simsbury road utilizes a conservation development approach and it is considered a successful development. Because this tool has worked in Bloomfield, the community might consider making this the preferred development technique in the future.

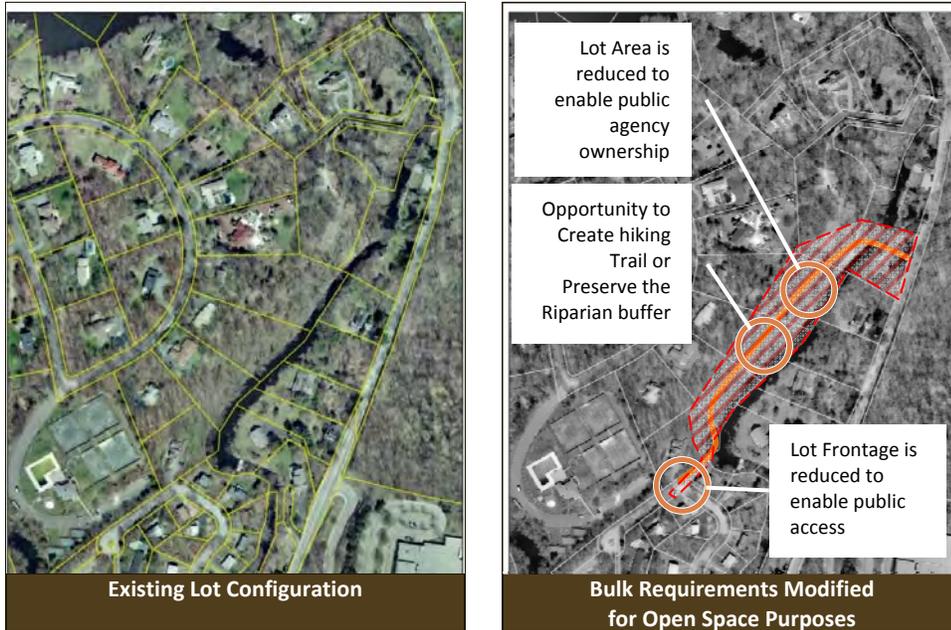
To accomplish this, the community could allow Conservation Development “by right” (after a site plan is approved by the TPZ) and make the conventional residential development obtain a special permit.

## Consider Off-Site Dedication of Required Open Space

Some towns have also adopted standards to allow for the off-site dedication of open space as part of a subdivision, or when it is required as part of a development. In such situations, the Commission could accept land in another part of Bloomfield if they believed that land to be more significant to the overall open space framework of the community.

## Consider Bulk Modifications to Protect Land as Open Space

Some communities have allowed the bulk requirements in the Zoning Regulations (minimum lot frontage, minimum lot size, etc.) to be modified if land is dedicated as open space. This allows the transfer of ownership of the land, without creating a zoning non-conformity. This strategy might be effective in areas along waterbodies where development has been set back from the resource and there is sufficient room to create a meaningful greenway. *See illustration below:*



## Manage Town-owned Open Space

### Create Master Plans for Town-owned Land

Often land acquired by the Town has not been formally set-aside for some purpose. Creating plans for these parcels, which identify their long-term use, as either a municipal facility, active recreation (i.e., athletic fields) or passive recreation (e.g., hiking trails, scenic overlooks), is one way that the community can manage future expectations for this land.

If the Town does decide that land will remain as passive recreation, the community should evaluate whether some additional form of protection, such as a conservation easement, should be granted to an outside agency, to create additional stewardship of the land.

Bloomfield has already taken steps to create Management Plans. The *Parks and Recreation Master Plan* (1989) is a good starting point. Recreational activities are discussed on page 99.

### Continue to Allow Farming on Town-owned Open Space

Use of open space land is an important consideration. Bloomfield has allowed farmers, to use Town-owned lands for agricultural purposes. Farming is usually constrained by the cost and availability of land along with the tax implications that come with ownership.

Developing partnerships with farmers to provide land at a reduced rental rate is one way to promote / retain farming while meeting overall open space objectives. This is a good use of open space land and Bloomfield should continue to allow farm activities on open space lands. Farmers using town-owned lands should be encouraged to use organic practices.

Bloomfield should also approach active farms, such as Lisa Lane Farm, to identify what is needed to retain farm operations on these properties and to encourage organic practices here as well.

	Continue to Do What We Are Doing	Consider New Approaches
<b>OUR STRATEGIES</b>	3.13 Preserve undeveloped land	3.19 Developing the East Coast Greenway
	3.14 Promote the Farm and Forest Use Assessment Programs	3.20 Improving Farmington River Park
	3.15 Allow farming on Town-owned open space	3.21 Establishing east / west greenways
	3.16 Install signs along the boundaries of Town-owned land and easements	3.22 Re-adopting an Open Space Use Assessment Program
	3.17 Allow / promote conservation development	3.23 Developing strategies to protect land “managed” as open space
	3.18 Support the Wild and Scenic designation of the Lower Farmington River	3.24 Allowing an off-site dedication of land when open space is required
		3.25 Providing bulk modifications to protect land as open space
		3.26 Making conservation development a requirement
		3.27 Developing management plans for Town-owned open space
		3.28 Developing an open space plan and identify key parcels to acquire

### **National Register of Historic Places / District**

Listing on the National Register of Historic Places / District is basically ceremonial - it entitles the owner to place a historic plaque on the property but has little effect on activities of private property owners. Properties and areas listed on the National Register are recognized for their historic significance or as an example of an historic period in American history.

### **Local Historic District**

A local historic district provides the most regulatory protection for historic resources.

Generally, any activity that affects the exterior appearance of a property in the district must obtain a Certificate of Appropriateness from the local Historic District Commission (HDC).

Establishing a local historic district requires adoption of a local ordinance (approved by the local legislative body) and approval by two-thirds of the properties to be included in the district (see CGS 7-147 for more information).

### **Certified Local Government**

The State Historical Commission has a Certified Local Government program that provides historic preservation grants and technical assistance to eligible communities.

## **Preserve Historic and Scenic Resources**

Historic and scenic issues are important because they establish a sense of character.

There are numerous historic buildings and scenic resources within the community.

### **Inventory Resources**

An inventory of historic and scenic resources is an important tool for land-use decision makers. A comprehensive inventory should be conducted to identify all resources so they may be recognized for their significance and protected, when appropriate. These resources can then be linked to the Town's Geographic Information System (GIS). If sufficient resources exist in an area of Bloomfield, the Town may consider working to establish a National Register Historic District (see sidebar) to recognize these resources.

### **Become a Certified Local Government**

The Certified Local Government Program, administered by the State Historic Preservation Office, provides Federal and State grant funding for programs that identify, register and protect resources that contribute to Connecticut's cultural heritage. It can be an important tool for communities that want to recognize and preserve historic resources, but do not have the technical expertise or funding to accomplish these tasks. Bloom has been fortunate that the Wintonbury Historical Society has been active as a historic preservation advocate.

The Society has restored the 1796 Old Farm School and secured National Register of historic Place recognition for Old Farm School, Southwest District School, Capitan Oliver Filley House and the Francis Gillette House. The Town should continue to work with this organization, and others, to achieve the desired objectives.

## Continue to Encourage Sensitive Ownership

The most effective means of preserving historic resources is ownership by people or organizations that are sensitive to the historic significance of the resource and are financially and emotionally committed to maintaining that resource. Sensitive ownership should be encouraged and supported. Educational programs and technical assistance related to historic preservation can be effective tools to assist owners of historic resources.

Bloomfield can also support property owner efforts if a Local Historic District (see sidebar) is proposed. This tool can be a useful way for a neighborhood to work together to protect important resources. Another tool, the village district (see sidebar) enables the community to manage these resources, particularly design elements, through the zoning regulations. Bloomfield has made the Town Center area a Village District and should continue to use this tool there.

## Provide Incentives for Rehabilitation of Historic Buildings

Rehabilitating and refurbishing historic properties can be a challenge. Local regulations and the costs of making improvements to these buildings could impact the rehabilitation. Incentives that the town can provide include: tax abatements and regulatory incentives (i.e., adaptive reuse zoning). Bloomfield should evaluate whether regulatory incentives should be provided for the rehabilitation of historic structures. Façade easements, in favor of the Town, should be acquired when these tools are used.

## Adopt a Demolition Delay Ordinance

Bloomfield does not have a mechanism that alerts the community when historic structures are threatened by demolition. A demolition delay ordinance (see sidebar) might be an appropriate mechanism to provide the community with the ability to request a property-owner to reconsider demolition. This tool will not prevent demolition, but gives the community an opportunity to have a dialog about possible preservation options.

### Village District

Section 8-2j of the Connecticut General Statutes allows a community to adopt zoning regulations which gives the Town Plan and Zoning Commission greater authority over the design aspects of an application in the town center area.

### Demolition Delay Ordinance

A tool to help municipalities preserve their community's historical and architectural resources.

The State of Connecticut allows towns to impose a waiting period of up to 180 days before granting a demolition permit.

This waiting period can allow interested parties time to explore alternatives to demolition and provide "a window of opportunity for preservation."

An effective ordinance will enable communities to have a dialog about how historic buildings can continue to serve important and productive roles. This tool does not prevent redevelopment.

### Scenic Roads

A key step in protecting scenic roads is to identify the roads and then take steps to protect the elements that make the road scenic (e.g., stone walls and trees).

Connecticut General Statutes Section 7-149a offers Bloomfield the ability to establish an ordinance to improve coordination and management of scenic roads.

In 2001, the Bloomfield Town Council adopted a Scenic Road Ordinance (Section 17-161-167).

### Great Streets

In more developed areas, there are scenic streets, also known as “great streets.” These streets tend to be rich with character, (e.g., beautiful buildings and trees) and create a “sense of place.”

## Recognize Scenic Roads and Great Streets

Bloomfield has a number of local roads and streets that are considered scenic by residents and visitors alike, no town roads have officially been designated as scenic road in accordance with State statutes (see side bar).

Preservation of scenic roads can create public policy conflicts. This can occur when the attributes that make a road scenic (i.e., road width, tree canopy, stone walls) contradict the “one-size fits all” road highway design. It is important for Bloomfield to identify these areas and develop a clear public policy that meets the community’s overall objectives. For example, small adjustments to road design requirements, especially for new roads, might allow the community to encourage roads that may one day be considered scenic.



Scenic Road



Potential Great Street

## Identify Scenic Views

Scenic views can be found in many parts of Bloomfield. These views can be threatened by development, particularly tree clearing on hills and hill tops. Limiting the type of development, the extent of clearing and building coverage in these areas could help to preserve scenic views.

Most scenic views are observed from a public right-of-way. Identifying where these resources are, and paying attention to how land is developed are two ways that Bloomfield can manage the impact to this resource.

## Continue to Promote Beautification and “Wayfinding”

How visitors experience a community is important. Communities can improve the visitor experience through beautification of public spaces and lands, and by adding wayfinding (see sidebar) signs. The Bloomfield Beautification Committee is a volunteer committee that supports The Town of Bloomfield with its mission to promote and facilitate activities that improve the appearance of Bloomfield.

The Bloomfield Beautification Committee meets throughout the year at Town Hall and recommends or plans beautification activities with support from the Department of Public Works. These efforts should continue to be promoted. Street trees and trees in the public right-of-way are important to beautification efforts. Bloomfield should conduct an inventory of public trees and develop a tree protection strategy.

Wayfinding signs are an important tool for sharing community features and attributes. Simple wayfinding signs can direct visitors to parking and town services. More detailed signs might be located at important places, and include information about local history and legends.

### Beautification Committee Sites

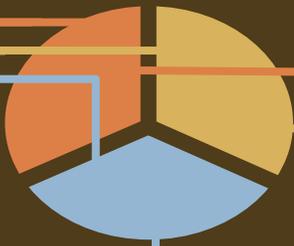
- The Mary Hill Memorial park at the corner of Blue Hills Avenue and Park Avenue.
- The Town Green across from Prosser Library (at the corner of Park Avenue and Tunxis Avenue).
- Plantings are also placed around the Town Hall building and the Wintonbury Branch Library.
- The bed around the Bloomfield police station sign.
- A crescent-shaped garden at the intersection of Marguerite Avenue and Blue Hills Avenue.
- Seventeen planters are filled with flowers at various municipal buildings around town.
- Hardy mums are placed at various locations throughout town in the fall.

	Continue to Do What We Are Doing	Consider New Approaches
<b>OUR STRATEGIES</b>	3.29 Conduct programs / events at historic sites and buildings	3.35 Developing an urban homesteading program
	3.30 Encourage sensitive ownership	3.36 Becoming a Certified Local Government
	3.31 Retain the Village District zoning regulation	3.37 Adopting an adaptive reuse zoning regulation
	3.32 Recognize scenic roads	3.38 Establishing a local historic property recognition program
	3.33 Promote beautification	3.39 Adopting a policy statement about historic resources
	3.34 Support and promote efforts of the Beautification committee	3.40 Supporting the establishment of a Local Historic District
		3.41 Adopting a demolition delay ordinance
		3.42 Acquiring historic preservation easements (when appropriate)
		3.43 Developing a historic resource inventory / map
		3.44 Recognizing great streets
		3.45 Inventorying street trees
		3.46 Installing wayfinding signs

### Wayfinding

Wayfinding involves the organization of information to enable people to comfortably and successfully access a place. This information is typically displayed through signage placed at key gateways and interest points.

Wayfinding can create an environment where the public is able to navigate an area based on the information provided and by understanding the design elements used by the area to convey the message.

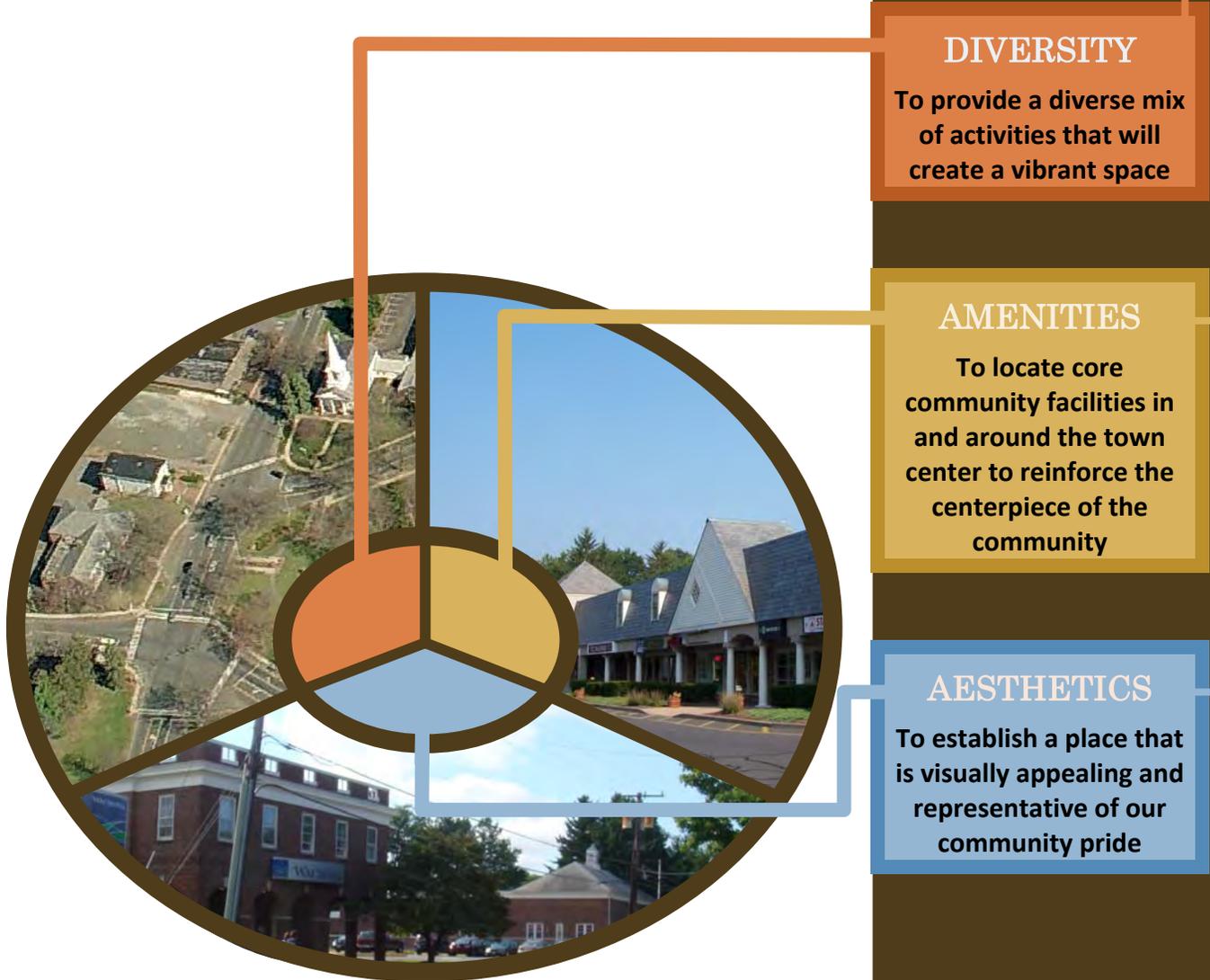


PLAN THEME

# How We Want to Grow

- **Bloomfield Town Center**
- **Business and Economic  
Development**
- **Housing and Residential  
Development**

# Chapter 4 Bloomfield Town Center



### Bloomfield Town Center

The Town Center encompasses an area of less than a quarter mile square and is the municipal, cultural and commercial heart of Bloomfield.

Located at the junction of five main roads, Bloomfield Center is easily accessible from anywhere in the Town.

The Library, Town Hall and First Congregational Church are located at the main intersection forming the civic center of the community.

The well-maintained Town Green and tree lined streets create an attractive entrance and impression of Bloomfield Center.

## Make the Town Center the Priority Development Area in Bloomfield

Bloomfield's key development strategy is to redevelop the Town Center. Bloomfield's Town Center is the focal point of the community and it will be a priority area for any new development. As envisioned, Bloomfield Town Center of the future will be the location people choose to "Live, Work, and Play." To accomplish this goal, Bloomfield should:

- Engage Stakeholders
- Enhance the "heart and soul" of the Bloomfield Center,
- Facilitate redevelopment of the Wintonbury Mall,
- Reduce the influence of automobiles in the center,
- Create a "sense of place,"
- Develop solutions for parking, and
- Find creative solutions for implementation.

### Engage Property Owners

Bloomfield's initial role in the Town Center should be to engage property owners in a conversation about redevelopment. A specific task as part of this process would be to develop an economic development strategy for specific parcels and work with the development community to identify impediments for redevelopment.

This project might include an inventory of existing conditions and a comparison of what is allowed under the current zoning regulations to show the property owners what redevelopment opportunities are available. A second element might include an assessment of market conditions for targeted development activities (e.g., retail, dining and housing). The overall concept is to get property owners to see the possibilities that are available in the Town Center, and enable meaningful private-sector supported redevelopment.

# Enhance the “Heart and Soul” of Bloomfield Center

Ultimately, a big part of why Bloomfield Center is a special place comes from the mixture and amount of housing in and around the center, along with the combination of “social” activities available here. Local businesses, particularly retailers and restaurants also create a special feel to the place. Over time, Bloomfield Center has lost some of the more “popular” businesses. While the change in retail is noticeable, these other elements continue to provide a “sense of place” for this area.

Social, civic, and cultural activities enhance the “sense of place” and may need community support to remain viable. Working with organizations that provide these amenities, the community may be able to fine-tune land use regulations, taxation policies or other issues to be more responsive to their needs.

Bloomfield will continue to make the center a priority by locating important community facilities there.

## Potential Facility Location Preferences

### Town Center

The area depicted on various maps in this Plan

### Centralized Location

Can be either:

- Central to the entire Town
- Central to a particular area or neighborhood

### Other Locational Factors

Other factors might include:

- Convenient access,
- Access to various Transportation modes,
- Neighborhood location,
- Environmental constraints,
- Hazardous constraints (e.g., flood zone), or
- Resource attributes (e.g., Farmington River).

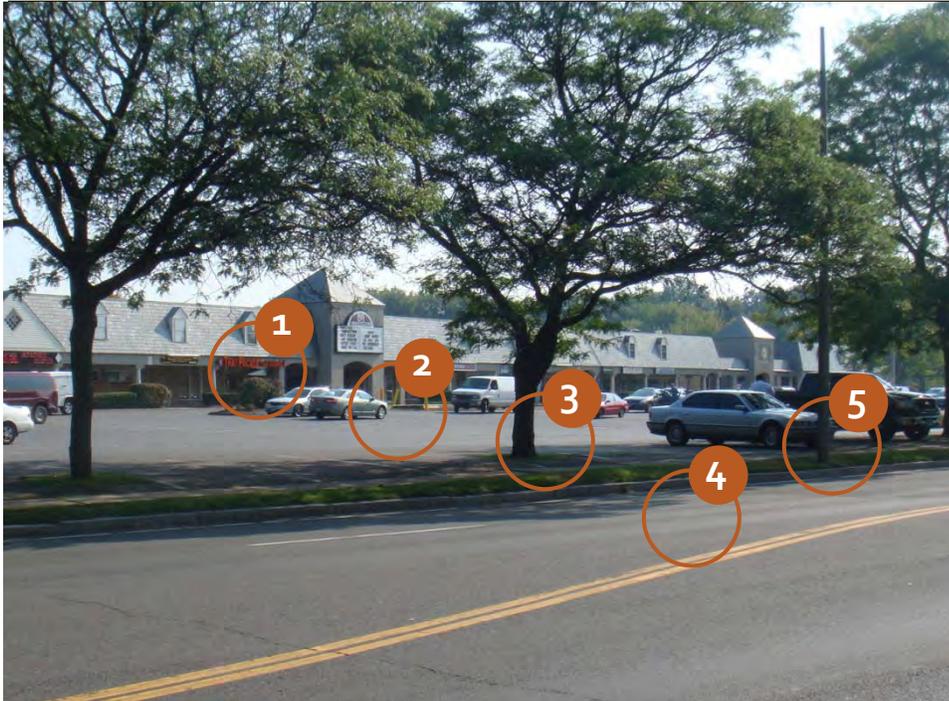
Potential Community Facility Location Preferences

FACILITY PURPOSE	TOWN CENTER	CENTRALIZED LOCATION	OTHER FACTORS
General Government Offices	★★★★★	★★★	★
Emergency Services (e.g., fire, police)	★★★	★★★★★	★★
Emergency Shelter	★	★★★	★★★★★
Public Works	★	★★★	★★★
Recreation	★★★	★★★	★★
Community Services (e.g., library, community center)	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★
Schools	★★★	★★★★★	★★★

★ = Low Priority; ★★★★★ = High Priority

## Facilitate Redevelopment of the Wintonbury Mall

The center has a number of challenges and opportunities. The Wintonbury Mall is perhaps the most important privately-owned property in the center, because of its proximity to the Green and community facilities.



### TODAY

1. Buildings are too far from the street, and as a result, this is not a pedestrian-friendly atmosphere
2. Parking lots dominate the space and create a strip-mall atmosphere rather than a town center atmosphere
3. Street trees provide shade, rather than being ornamental or decorative. This is a good feature.
4. Pedestrians do not feel safe crossing Park Avenue because the road is wide. There are few crosswalks and little signage informing motorists about pedestrian rights to cross the road.
5. Electric, and communication utilities have already been placed underground and do not create visual clutter on Park Avenue.



### THE FUTURE?

6. Encouraging multi-story buildings, placed closer to the road, create a strong sense of place and provides additional opportunities for housing within the town center. The design of these buildings is an important consideration.
7. Creating opportunities for *al fresco* dining along the sidewalk (in the right-of-way if necessary)
8. Allowing on-street parking will maximize the use and economic value of the town center, while minimizing impervious surface area.
9. Creating and retaining a pedestrian-friendly space is a critical element for the town center.

## Facilitate Redevelopment of Other Commercial Sites

It is envisioned that development in the Town Center will be in the form of redevelopment of existing commercial sites into a mixed-use atmosphere. Redevelopment should encourage a mixture of uses that focus on creating an attractive place to “live, work and play.” Housing, outdoor dining, along with attractive buildings and streetcapes are part of this redevelopment vision. The 2004 Bloomfield Center Study, completed by the University of Hartford, might be a model to begin a dialog about redevelopment for the other sites.



## Upgrade Existing Public Spaces

### Improve Filley Park

Filley Park is an important community asset that has fallen into repair. Plans are being developed to upgrade and redevelop this park. These efforts should continue.

### Improve Streetscapes

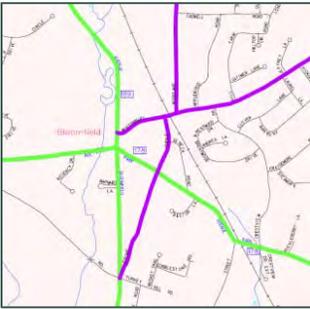
Streetscapes and trees in the public right of way are very important in the Town Center. Bloomfield should develop a tree inventory and provide funding for streetscape improvements. Trees that are removed due to disease, or other health-related issues, should be replaced in a timely manner.

### Road Design: Capacity or Context?

Roads can be categorized in several ways, such as based on function, character and capacity.

Road classification can provide guidance on the types of improvements needed based on the road's intended role.

State roads in Bloomfield Center are classified as "Minor Arterials," depicted in green below:



Reclassifying roads in accordance with the desired role (character) will accomplish the following:

- Provide more nuanced guidance on the types of improvements most appropriate for a road based on the existing and desired character of the area, and
- Better align the road's classification with zoning and desired development levels.

## Reduce the "Influence" of Automobiles in the Center

Roads and cars dominate Bloomfield Center. State Routes 189 (Tunxis Avenue and Bloomfield Avenue) and 178 (Mountain Avenue and Park Avenue) converge at the Town Green and overwhelm this small public space. Much of this "dominance" involves excessive pavement widths installed to optimize traffic movements. These decisions have been made by transportation planners and engineers as part of a transportation policy directed by road classifications. Essentially, because these roads are classified as "arterials" and "collectors" the roads need to be designed to serve this purpose above all else. A

Adjustments in road capacity (the ability of the road to function) can have a big impact on community character and the "sense of place" of the Town Center. In addition, rethinking how cars move through the Town Center, perhaps at a slower rate of speed and with less pavement and less traffic signals, may make this place a more pedestrian-friendly environment. Bloomfield should work to improve character of the roadway design, with an emphasis on design for people, rather than for automobiles.



Bloomfield might:

- Conduct a traffic study to assess various alternative,
- Install more crosswalks, where people actually cross the road, or desire to cross the road (often a mid-block crossing),
- Install "stop for pedestrians" in crosswalks,
- Work with the Department of Transportation to allow on-street parking,
- Encourage more commercial activity at the edge of the street / road right of way, and
- Protect shade trees located within the public right of way

## Create a “Sense of Place”

Vibrant town centers have a “sense of place”. A feeling that you are someplace special and that there is an atmosphere worth enjoying. A place you might want to “hang out.” Having mixed use (businesses with housing above), buildings close to the street, a tree canopy and outdoor dining are ways that Bloomfield can establish a sense of place in the Town Center. Bloomfield should continue to request these features and amenities when new site development is proposed in the Town Center. Events, along with appropriate facilities for these events, should continue to be part of the Town Center. Appropriate facilities include electrical hookups for PA systems and public restrooms.

## Develop Solutions for Parking

In 2012, automobile parking is still important. Parking in the Center is handled by a series of private off-street parking lots. No on-street parking is allowed (or promoted). The current parking management strategy is to require each individual property owner to build, maintain and manage their parking. This creates an environment that is auto-oriented, as parking lots dominate the landscape and users cannot easily move from property to property without a car.

The challenge for Bloomfield is to find ways to create shared parking, to improve where people park their cars and how they access the places they are visiting. Shared parking can be managed privately or publically, and some communities have created zoning incentives to promote an organized parking scheme.



Large Parking Areas in the Town Center

Reducing off-street parking requirements in the zoning regulations and coordinating existing on-street parking spaces through better management and shared use are two meaningful ways that Bloomfield can enhance the sense of place in Bloomfield Center.

## Shared Parking - An Economic Development Strategy?

Surface parking lots occupy a significant amount of land within areas zoned for business development. It is estimated that the average strip mall has at least 2 times more area used for parking than buildings.

Because municipalities in Connecticut rely on the property tax as a revenue generator, the full utilization of lands zoned for business development should be an economic development strategy.

Requiring that land be set-aside for off-street parking reduces economic gain that might be achieved if this land were used for buildings. Shared parking reduces the redundancy of parking within an area, allowing less parking to be built.

**Tax Increment Financing (TIF)**

TIFs are public financing methods which has been used for redevelopment and community improvement projects.

TIFs use future gains in taxes to finance current improvements. These future gains are realized as a result of an increase in the value of real estate, and new investment.

Communities use TIF to finance public infrastructure, such as sidewalk and street construction, and parking structures, to stimulate private investment or redevelopment.

**Find Creative Solutions for Implementation**

Bloomfield might consider becoming more active in redevelopment of the Town Center.

Tools such as Tax Increment Financing (see sidebar) might provide funding for infrastructure improvements (e.g., parking, sidewalks, street trees) when new development / redevelopment is contemplated by the private-sector. For example, redevelopment of the Wintonbury Mall might require the construction of a parking garage. Bloomfield could help the developer overcome the financing difficulties associated with this task by using the TIF program and paying the proceeds off over time with the increased tax revenue generated by the new development.

	Continue to Do What We Are Doing	Consider New Approaches
<b>OUR STRATEGIES</b>	4.1 Locate important community facilities in the Town Center	4.8 Engaging property owners
	4.2 Host events and improve facilities	4.9 Reducing the influence of motor vehicles on the town center
	4.3 Retain a pedestrian-friendly space in the Town Center	4.10 Creating opportunities for outdoor dining
	4.4 Allow mixed uses	4.11 Allowing on-street parking in the Town Center
	4.5 Provide / require a tree canopy along roads and in parking lots	4.12 Using Tax Increment Financing and other tools to encourage redevelopment
	4.6 Encourage multi-story buildings, located closer to the road.	4.13 Encouraging the redevelopment of properties in the Town center
	4.7 Improve Filley Park	

# Chapter 5 Business and Economic Development



## DIVERSITY

To promote a business environment that is not over-reliant on any particular business-sector

## AMENITIES

To provide for goods and services to enhance our residents' quality of life

## AESTHETICS

To reinforce our community values through attractive and well maintained business areas

### Economic Development

The creation of tax revenue, jobs and places that sell goods / provide services.

### Village-style Development

This plan identifies the need to create vibrant places within the community and establishes focal points and priorities for where these places should be located. It is envisioned that these areas will be the future villages in Bloomfield.

The village development priorities have been chosen because it will best prepare Bloomfield for the lifestyle choices that will result from our access to, and changes in the way we use transportation and energy resources.

## Become More Active in Promoting Bloomfield

Economic development, specifically the creation of tax revenue, jobs and places that sell goods / provide services, is an important topic in Bloomfield. In the past, community leaders have made economic development a priority by creating areas to encourage business development and by promoting the Town. Bloomfield's economic development strategy has four main components:

- Retain existing businesses,
- Expand organizational capacity,
- Promote development in the Town Center and targeted development areas, and
- Redevelop when possible.

### Work to Retain Existing Businesses

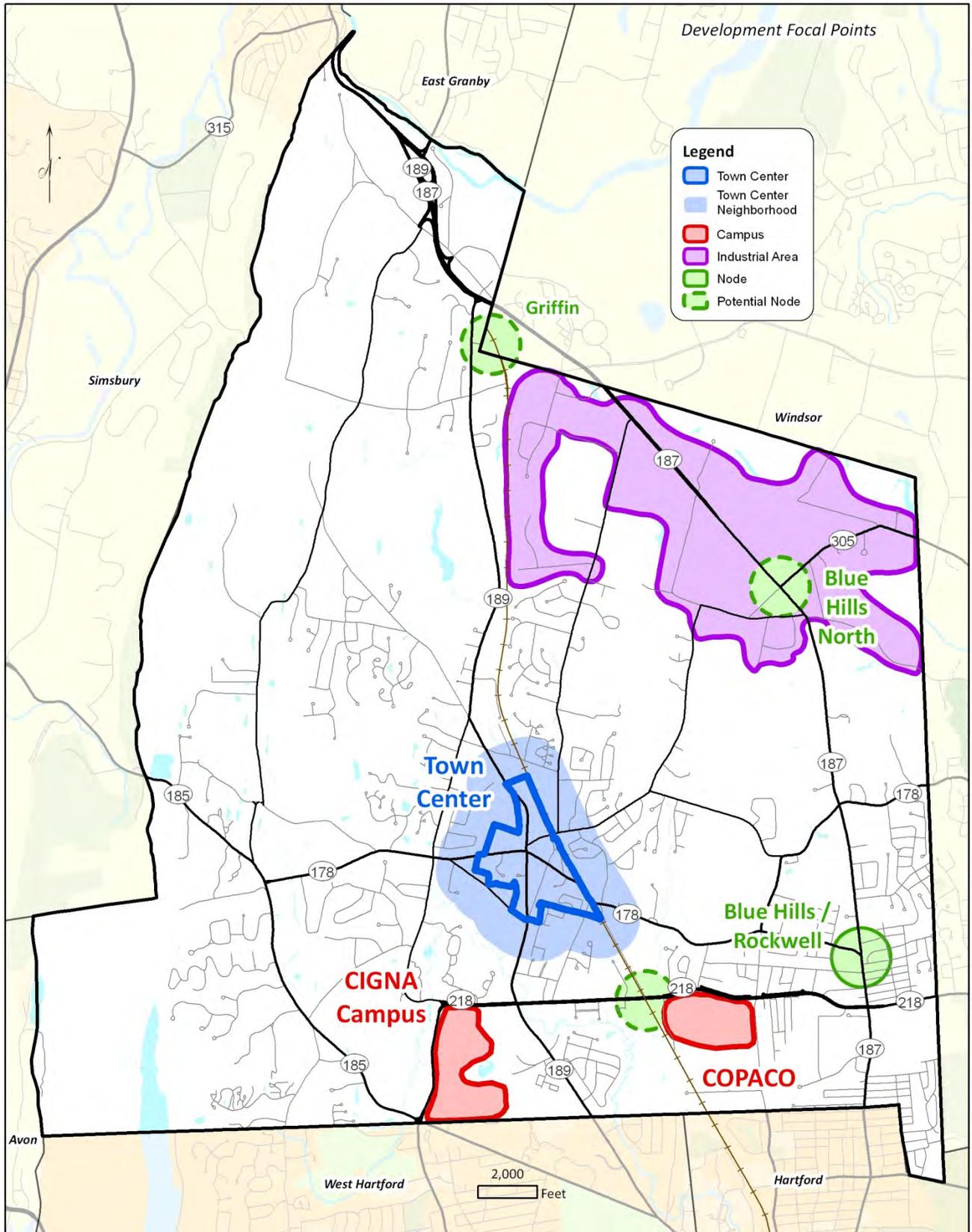
Bloomfield's first economic development priority is to retain existing businesses. Bloomfield recognizes that businesses that are here today contribute to Town's economy and the community in a variety of ways and are an important part of the Town. More growth typically comes from existing companies and it is both easier and less expensive to retain existing businesses than to attract new ones.

Specific strategies include those that help to better market businesses, those that reduce regulatory barriers, and those that streamline the approval process. Bloomfield might:

- develop a "buy local" businesses marketing program,
- list businesses on the Town website (with links),
- develop a sign program to guide people to businesses that are "off the beaten path",
- use financial incentives (i.e., tax abatements) for business expansions,
- create rules that make redevelopment easier than developing greenfields,
- allow businesses to receive permits by-right for certain activities,
- support small-scale commercial agriculture (e.g. vineyards, cheese-makers),
- improve existing services desired by the business community,
- reduce off-street parking requirements, and / or
- provide joint application review across all land use commissions.

# Community Structure Plan

Bloomfield, CT



## Expand Organizational Capacity

Developing and expanding programs that promote Bloomfield will continue to be important activities for Bloomfield. Existing programs, such as the one-stop permitting (all agencies in one office space) can be an effective way to improve the business climate. Bloomfield does not have a staff person or agency that is dedicated to economic development activities. This has been identified as an issue that needs to be corrected. Some communities have hired an economic development professional to market the community and lead overall economic development efforts.

Bloomfield should consider hiring an economic development professional to work towards retaining existing businesses, marketing the community, sharing important information about the community, pursuing grant funds and expanding the tax base.

## Promote Development in the Town Center

As mentioned in Chapter 4, the Town Center is an important community asset. This plan identifies the need for new development to occur in the Town Center and makes the Town Center, and surrounding neighborhoods, the highest priority targeted development area. Some residents have indicated that additional dining and lodging opportunities should be encouraged to locate here.

## Promote Development in Targeted Development Areas

Bloomfield has also established other places in Town where business and economic development should be encouraged. These areas are a lower priority than the Town Center, however they provide opportunities for a diverse range of new growth:

- Cottage Grove (COPACO and CIGNA)
- Blue Hills Avenue / Rockwell

Bloomfield has utilized creative zoning techniques for these areas and should continue this approach. The community might also enhance community structure by promoting the development of new nodes and targeted development areas, if the need arises. Potential new areas include:

- Griffin
- Blue Hills North

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## **Cottage Grove**

Cottage Grove is an important east/west vehicular transportation route within Bloomfield. It is a State-owned road (Route 218) and provides a mix of residential and commercial areas. This will continue to be an important development area for Bloomfield. The challenge is to promote new development and redevelopment in a way that does not compromise the Town Center, and in ways that make this place more user-friendly for pedestrians. Bloomfield's goal has been to limit strip commercial development, particularly retail uses, and should continue this strategy.

## **CIGNA Campus**

The CIGNA campus is situated along the Bloomfield/West Hartford Border. The 2000 Plan proposed a CIGNA Mixed-Use Center, focusing on office development, conference center use and golf or other recreational development. Development has occurred in this area, and has included high-end homes and a successful, albeit small, retail center and an apartment complex. Continuation of this development strategy should be considered.

## **Continue to Encourage the Development of Medical Office Space**

Medical offices have been moving to Bloomfield from Hartford for a number of reasons. A critical mass has formed, and now many people within the region know that Bloomfield is a center for out-patient care. Health care is expected to be a growing sector of the US economy, and some experts have estimated that an additional 60 million square feet of medical office space will be needed in the United States.

Bloomfield should evaluate land along the 218 corridor to determine where additional medical office space may be accommodated to capitalize on being "the location" within the region.

## **Continue to Protect Residential Neighborhoods**

There are several residential neighborhoods that border Cottage Grove. These neighborhoods are in a precarious location because of surrounding land-uses and the traffic volumes on Cottage Grove. Because of these two issues, property owners often seek to change the zoning to allow commercial activity.

### The University of Hartford

Chartered on Feb. 21, 1957 as a University for the Hartford community, the University of Hartford merged three existing schools, the Hartford Art School, the Hartt School of Music, and Hillyer College. It now has an enrollment of 7,400 students.

Bloomfield has been very resilient to these requests and past plans have recommended against retail developments in these areas. Since the last plan, new medical offices have opened along Route 218. This land-use activity has been a good revenue source for the town, and there may be more demand for this land-use activity in the future. If Bloomfield were to rethink the zoning of these neighborhoods, higher density residential and medical office should be the two activities that are considered.

### COPACO Shopping Center

COPACO is an interesting place. The name COPACO was a trademarked acronym for Connecticut Packing Company, and the site was originally used as a meat packing facility. Over time, the property owner has created a dynamic regional business center (430,000 square feet), providing services for both Bloomfield and regional residents.

Much of this development has been designed around the automobile and features strip mall elements that adversely affect community structure: large parking lots located in front of stores, single-story buildings, and poor / limited pedestrian connectivity within the development and to adjacent neighborhoods. It is important to note that this shopping area is an important transit point. Many of the commuter bus routes in Bloomfield meet at this site, providing good transportation access for people that do not have automobiles

The 2000 Plan envisioned a mix of retail, office, housing and recreation land uses linked to the University of Hartford. The concept involved a village center designed around the existing retail center of COPACO as well as the potential expansion of the University of Hartford into the Town. Bloomfield should encourage redevelopment of this center.



#### THE FUTURE?

1. Potential train Station along the "Griffin Line".
2. Evaluate how this area might be "repurposed" into a mixed use development, providing retail stores, offices, services and housing.
3. Promote linkages between the COPACO area and the University of Hartford.

## **Continue to Develop a Learning Corridor**

There has been an ongoing dialog about the University of Hartford expanding into the Town of Bloomfield, most-notably, to provide transportation access to the campus. Bloomfield has encouraged this activity and should continue to work with the University to enable this to occur.

Pursuing the development of a Bloomfield connection to the University of Hartford can be part of a larger strategy to create a learning corridor, in conjunction with the Hartford Seminary, along the southern portion of the Town. Continuing the on-going dialog with these institutions is an important economic development activity for the Town.

## **Create Open Space South of Cottage Grove**

The area south of Cottage Grove bordered by Granby Street to the west and Douglas Street to the east has long been considered a business development area. This area has a number of challenges:

- small lots, sparsely developed for residential uses,
- poor drainage and a lack of infrastructure (e.g., roads, sanitary sewer and water),
- ownership of rights-of-way in this area is also questionable, and
- many of the properties in this area are residential or vacant land.

Bloomfield should continue to allow business development along Cottage Grove Road and work to retain as much vacant land and open space in areas that are not directly accessible from Cottage Grove Road.

## **Blue Hills**

### **Route 187, North of Cottage Grove**

The Gateway District north of Cottage Grove is about small-scale stores and businesses. As identified in past planning efforts, it is important to protect residential neighborhoods, even though traffic volumes are high. The development strategy for this area should be to reinforce the neighborhood center by creating better pedestrian connections and promoting new development / redevelopment that is closer to the street with less focus on the automobile (no parking lots in the front of the buildings) with mixed uses.

## Route 187, South of Cottage Grove

Bloomfield’s first industrial park was developed in this neighborhood and many of the land uses are oriented to automobiles and commercial service. Development along the frontage of Blue Hills Road should be a pedestrian-scale. Development further from the road could have larger tenants. In the southwest quadrant created by Blue Hills and Cottage Grove Bloomfield may be able to satisfy multiple objectives by allowing automobile-oriented uses toward Cottage Grove (larger-scale retail and restaurants) and pedestrian-scale buildings closer to Blue Hills by using the topography in this area to create two separate development styles.

## Rockwell Neighborhood

In 2009, regional planners evaluated the Rockwell neighborhood as part of a smart growth initiative. Planners worked with community residents and developed a strategy to reinforce the neighborhood development pattern that has traditionally been located in this part of the town. Some economic development initiatives require a critical mass of residents to support the new businesses. Creating places that people want to live is important. It involves quality housing, community facilities and open space. Rockwell neighborhood could serve these needs.



### THE FUTURE?

1. Create infill residential development that is “transit-supportive”
2. Reinforce community elements by upgrading community facilities
3. Create transportation connections
4. Preserve “openness” by retaining recreational fields

Illustrations are from the Capitol Region Council of Government’s (CROG) *Together We Can Grow Better: Smart Growth for a Sustainable Connecticut Capitol Region*(2009), prepared by Jonathan Rose Companies and Wallace Roberts & Todd, LLC

# Emerging Areas

## Blue Hills North (@ Route 305)

The 2000 Plan identified an opportunity for a small neighborhood mixed-use center at the intersections of Blue Hills Avenue and Route 305. The concept described in the Plan focused on accommodating the growing needs of employees in the industrial zone. More recently, the Capitol Region Council of Governments explored that idea in the Route 305 Corridor Study, and included transit-supportive development (see sidebar) as a planning element.

At public meetings, Bloomfield residents have expressed an interest in creating a more sustainable development pattern for the community. The creation of smaller villages was one of the strategies that seemed to resonate and could be accomplished in a way that does not impact the Town Center.

The Route 305 development strategy is to redesign the developed areas at the intersection of Old Windsor Road / Blue Hills Avenue. This potential development strategy would convert relatively low-density, one story “flex buildings” and other land into high-density, pedestrian-friendly and transit-oriented, mixed-use developments.

As envisioned by planners, this strategy would utilize two, three, or even four story buildings constructed on new streets carved out of the existing sites and would create a neighborhood center.

### Transit-supportive development

- Developments organized within traditional street grids composed of short blocks to encourage walking and promote safety and security.
- Streets with narrow traffic lanes, on-street parking, wide sidewalks, and bicycle lanes.
- Bus transit facilities integrated within developments to create multi-functional public spaces that allow transit riders to undertake multiple tasks, or errands, at one stop.
- Human-scaled architecture with finely detailed, contextual buildings including porches, cafes, custom pedestrian-level lighting, and signage.
- Multi-story, mixed-use buildings situated close to a tree-lined street.
- Discrete parking located to the rear of buildings or along the street to create more walkable streets and calm traffic.
- Proximity and mix of uses to allow for shared parking and to reduce parking demand.



### THE FUTURE?

1. Residential development patterned in a village-style can create a sense of place
2. Existing buildings can be “repurposed” for uses that support the village
3. Opportunity for Route 305 to be extended to the west
4. New buildings located closer to the street
5. Improve connectivity of existing buildings. Shared parking and updated landscaping

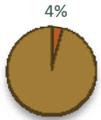
Illustration is from the Capitol Region Council of Government’s (CRCOG) *Route 305 Corridor Study* (11/2009), prepared by Clough Harbour & Associates (CHA)

**Amount of Industrial Land In Bloomfield**

*Area Used for Industrial Purposes*  
1970



1984



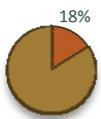
1992



2010



*Area Zoned for Industrial Purposes*



**Targeted Industry Study**

A targeted industry study identifies specific types of businesses that are likely to locate in a community, then narrows the list down to those that best meet the community's needs.

Taken together, these two pieces define a clearer picture of the types of business the community could successfully market itself to and provide appropriate zoning for development.

**Griffin**

Griffin is located in the northern part of Bloomfield and in close proximity to office and business development in Windsor. This area has been identified as a Targeted Development Area if commuter rail is proposed. Bloomfield should continue to have this area as an emerging place, but promote development in other targeted development areas as a primary objective.

**Continue to Promote Industrial Development**

About 3,000-acres of Bloomfield are zoned for industrial development of some manner. Since the 1970s land used for industrial purposes has increased from 440 acres to 1,176 acres. Much of this increase can be attributed to the Town's proximity to Bradley International Airport in Windsor Locks. Specifically, Bloomfield has seen growth in warehousing and distribution and corporate office facilities and should continue to pursue these types of industries.

Past planning documents have recommended that this growth be focused towards the northeast corner of the Town, for a number of reasons:

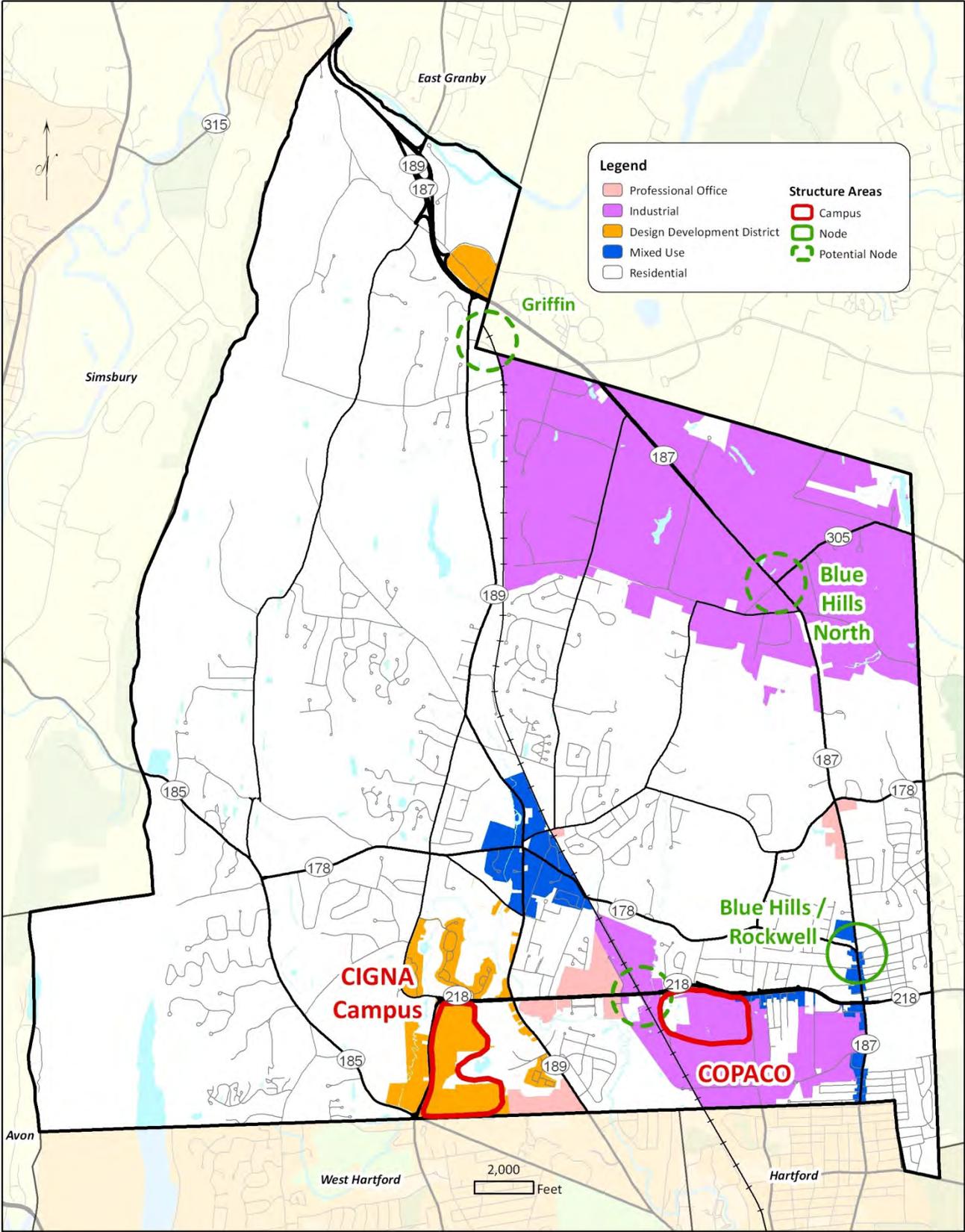
- vacant land was plentiful,
- few homes were present,
- good transportation access to the airport, and
- located near similar types of development in Windsor.

Industrial development remains a priority in this area. Some people are concerned that there is a need for additional diversity of businesses in this area. Bloomfield should evaluate existing uses that are allowed in this area and consider new industries, such as solar energy production. A Targeted Industry Study (see sidebar) might be a useful tool for this project. Evaluating what types of uses the market is demanding can be one way to determine if zoning regulations are properly tailored for this area.

A non-business approach may also be acceptable in this area if the proposed development involves mixed-uses in a targeted development area (see page 58) or for uses that provide housing to senior residents (e.g., Duncaster).

# Business Development Plan

Bloomfield, CT



**Business Incubator**

A business assistance program involving rental space and resources for start-up companies.

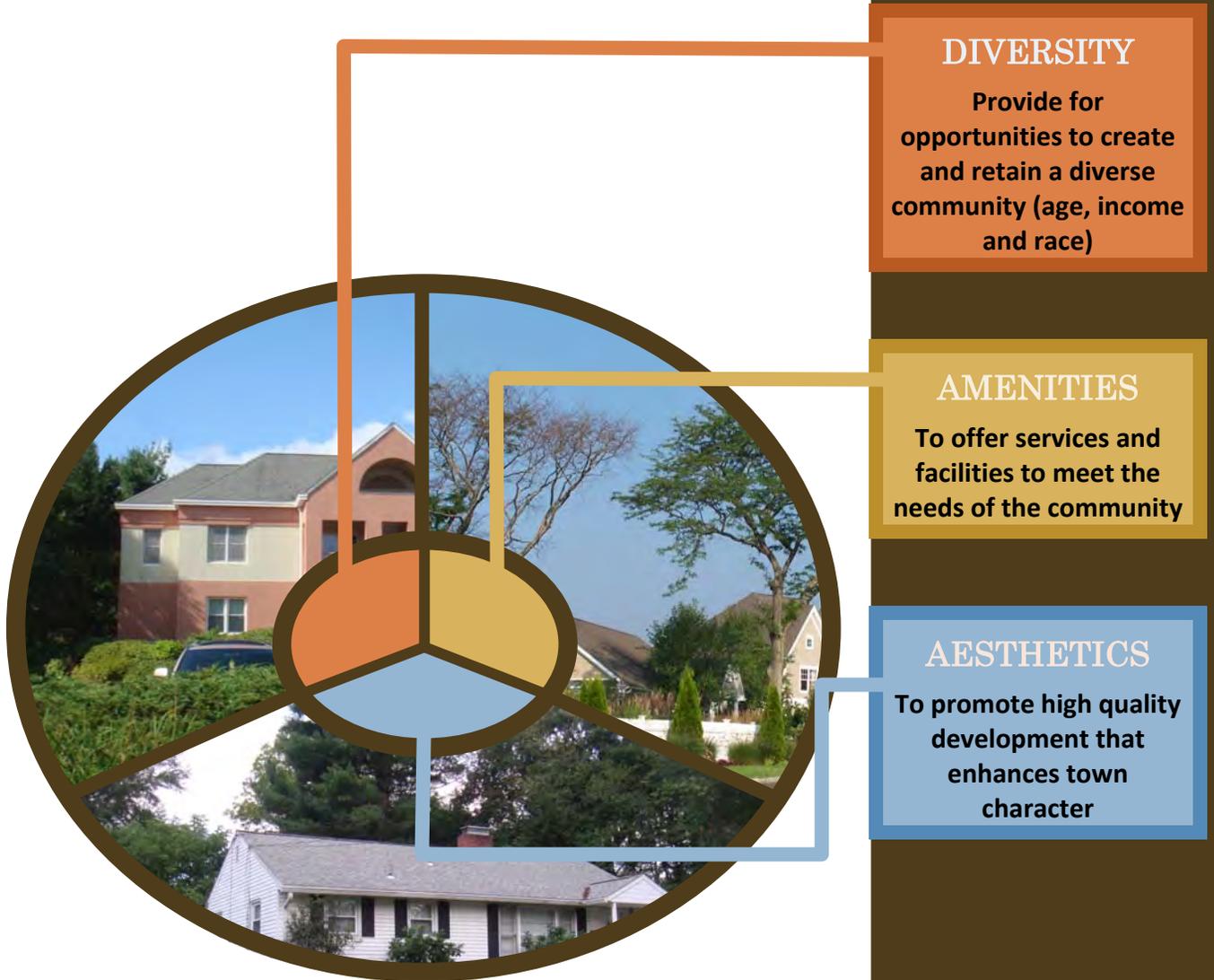
- low cost rental space,
- financial advising, and
- shared resources (e.g., administrative services).

**Consider Creating a Business Incubator**

Some communities have determined that the free market is not providing sufficient opportunities for business development (e.g., not enough space, space is too expensive, insufficient entrepreneurial resources) and have decided to take a more active role in business development. Bloomfield should consider creating, or encouraging the creation of, business incubator space and resources (see sidebar) for emerging industries.

	Continue to Do What We Are Doing	Consider New Approaches
<b>OUR STRATEGIES</b>	5.1 One-stop permitting (all land use agencies in one office)	5.6 Develop strategies for business retention
	5.2 Protect residential neighborhoods	5.7 Hiring an economic development professional
	5.3 Promote industrial development	5.8 Promoting development in the town center
	5.4 Utilize creative zoning techniques for targeted development areas	5.9 Promoting development in targeted development areas: 5.9.1 Cottage Grove (CIGNA and COPACO) 5.9.2 Blue Hills Avenue
	5.5 Promote redevelopment	5.10 Creating new targeted development areas: 5.10.1 Griffin 5.10.2 Blue Hills North
		5.11 Developing alternatives to industrial development that support community objectives
		5.12 Consider conducting a Targeted Industry Study
		5.13 Creating, or supporting the development of, a business incubator space and resources

# Chapter 6 Housing and Residential Development



## Continue to Reinforce the Pattern of Development

Bloomfield residential development has been influenced by the availability of infrastructure (public water, sanitary sewer and transportation) and in many ways mimics the development in adjacent communities. For example, closer to Hartford, the development pattern is small lots with small homes, built when the trolley line was present. Larger lots can be found along the Simsbury town line. To reinforce this desired pattern of development, Bloomfield should:

- Protect single-family neighborhoods
- Promote conservation development, and
- Guide new development to targeted areas.

### Protect Single-Family Neighborhoods

Bloomfield's residential neighborhoods contribute to the Town's character and attract new residents to the community. The existing development pattern, laid out in earlier plans, is supported by roads, sewer and water infrastructure. This pattern should be maintained and existing neighborhoods should be protected from business encroachments. Zoning has been a useful tool for protecting existing neighborhoods. Overall, Bloomfield should continue to use existing zoning tools to manage single-family residential development.

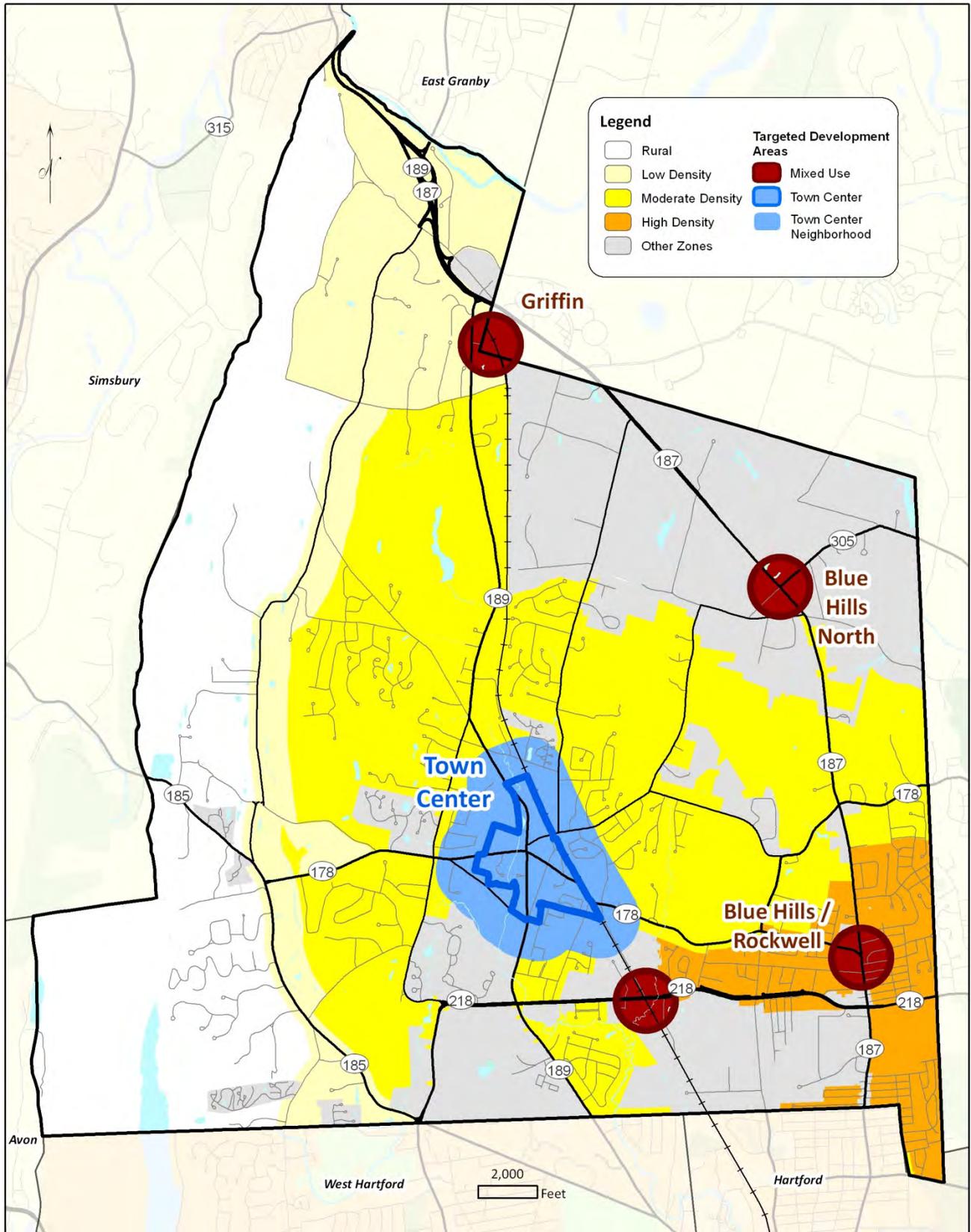
### Continue to Promote Conservation Development

Neighborhoods where residents can walk to businesses, have access to transit and are in close proximity to open space and recreational facilities are important to Bloomfield. Most of Bloomfield's new residential developments include these attributes. The use of a conservation-development technique, where land preservation is achieved through careful site planning, has been one of the reasons. Bloomfield should continue this development approach. Some communities have made conservation-development the mandatory development technique when new subdivisions are proposed.

Today, conservation development is allowed by special permit from the Town Plan and Zoning Commission. Bloomfield should consider making conservation development an as-of-right tool, especially in areas where undeveloped land is desired.

# Residential Densities Plan

Bloomfield, CT



**Affordable Housing**

In order to qualify as an affordable unit under Connecticut General Statutes (CGS) Section 8-30g, a dwelling must be:

- assisted housing (funded under a State or Federal program),
- CHFA-financed housing (financed under a 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 percent 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.

This is a 10 percent threshold for when the law applies.

**Guide Housing to Targeted Development Areas**

When Bloomfield has a chance to influence private development, the Town should guide new multi-family development to the targeted development areas as a way to develop the critical mass of these areas (people needed to support retail, transit, etc). Creating higher-density development in targeted growth areas is an important Community Structure strategy for Bloomfield. This policy objective was also intended as a tool to protect the remaining agricultural lands and to preserve single-family areas of the community.

*Targeted Development Areas*

First / Main Priority	Second Priority	Third Priority
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Town Center</b></li> <li>• <b>Town Center Neighborhood</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Cottage Grove (CIGNA and COPACO)</b></li> <li>• <b>Blue Hills / Rockwell</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Blue Hills North</b></li> <li>• <b>Griffin</b></li> </ul>

**Diversity of the Types of Housing**

Bloomfield is a diverse community. People are what make the community diverse, and people need a place to live. Often, people with less means (financial, social, physical) find it more challenging to find, and maintain, suitable housing. For Bloomfield, providing opportunities to retain diversity (e.g., mixed-income neighborhoods), through housing policies, should continue to be a priority.

**Preserve Existing Affordable Housing**

When talking about housing that is affordable, it is important to note that Bloomfield currently meets the State’s 10 percent threshold (see affordable housing sidebar) and is exempt from the Affordable Housing Appeals provision in CGS 8-30g. Bloomfield is currently recognized as having about 12 percent of its housing stock as affordable. State definitions of affordability allow Bloomfield to compare the existing affordable housing units to the number of housing units that were counted as part of the 2000 Census, 10 years ago.

Since 2000, Bloomfield has added 769 new housing units and zero new dedicated affordable housing units. In addition, the community lost 301 recognized affordable units, resulting in an updated percentage of 10.7 percent. This may become an issue that the Town needs to address.

If Bloomfield continues to build new housing units that do not qualify as affordable, the percentage of housing units that are affordable will continue to dip, moving us closer to the overall 10 percent threshold, which, if passed, would make the town subject to the Appeals Act. Bloomfield should take steps to preserve existing affordable housing by:

- providing a unit density bonus (see sidebar) for existing affordable housing developments, to extend the affordability restrictions of existing units,
- providing tax abatements for existing affordable housing developments to extend the affordability restrictions,
- working with state grant agencies to identify funding sources to renovate existing units, and
- promoting the use of CHFA and other loan programs.

## Update / Rehabilitate Older Homes

Certain areas of Bloomfield have clusters of older housing units. These clusters can become problematic because older homes cost more to maintain and operate. Often, when one house becomes deteriorated, others follow and a trend can emerge. It is important that Bloomfield offer programs to assist lower income homeowners with the maintenance of their properties. Housing rehabilitation programs can be a meaningful way to provide assistance.

To manage this opportunity correctly, Bloomfield should establish criteria as to where this type of development would be most appropriate, for example, based on:

- existing land use activities (use and density),
- existing zoning designation,
- access to a public water supply,
- access to the public sewer system, and
- access to transportation and transit.

## Density Bonus

A density bonus is an incentive-based tool that permits developers to increase the maximum allowable development on a property in exchange for helping the community achieve public policy goals.

Increasing development density may allow for increases in developed square footage or increases in the number of developed units.

### Tax Lien Sales

The sale, conducted by a governmental agency, of tax liens for delinquent taxes on real estate. This tool is authorized in the Connecticut General Statutes Section 12-157.

### Incentive Housing Zone (IHZ)

A new land use tool has recently been developed to encourage additional affordable housing units in the State of Connecticut. The new HOMEConnecticut statute - the Connecticut Housing Program for Economic Growth - provides financial incentives to towns that create overlay zones (Incentive Housing Zones) which allow for mixed-income housing at higher densities.

This statute provides:

- Authorization to create incentives for municipalities that create zones allowing higher density housing and that issue building permits in those zones.
- \$4 million for technical assistance grants
- Authorization for a focused Blue Ribbon study of housing development barriers, additional incentives for municipalities, the need for rental assistance for low-income residents, and ways to improve state housing finance.

## Identify Tax Delinquent Properties and Foreclose on Them

Bloomfield currently does not foreclose on tax delinquent properties. Instead the community sells the tax liability to a company that then works to collect the taxes (see Tax Lien Sales sidebar). This has been a fairly-successful way to manage tax delinquencies, but the method has drawbacks. Sometimes the tax delinquency can be prolonged, and allowed to accrue (at 18 percent interest), which ultimately prevents a property owner from ever getting out of their tax burden.

Instead, Bloomfield could develop a strategy to evaluate the use of tax delinquent properties for affordable housing. The policy might provide that when Bloomfield forecloses on delinquent tax properties, the property would be available for the development of affordable housing units, either by the Town, a non-profit organization (e.g., Habitat for Humanity), or a developer. Based on the experiences in other communities, such foreclosed properties are ideal for the development of affordable housing.

## Utilize the Incentive Housing Zone Tool

Bloomfield could take a leadership role by adopting Connecticut's newest land use tool, the Incentive Housing Zone (IHZ). Created in 2007 by the Connecticut General Assembly, the program provides cash incentives to municipalities that establish zoning districts for affordable housing and then allow units to be built. One of the incentives is a cash payment to municipalities that adopt the zone.

The IHZ districts have to meet the minimum density requirements established in the law and towns must provide a manageable permit process. Ideal locations to use this tool include infill within the town center, at new nodes and along transportation and utility corridors. This tool might also be appropriate on Town-owned buildings that are available for "repurposing," because these buildings are no longer being utilized for town purposes.

Currently, state funding is not available for this program. If the State is serious about this program, then funding will be restored, restoring the "incentive" for communities to utilize this tool. When that happens, Bloomfield should consider using this tool in areas that are supportive of transportation goals.

## Consider Requiring Inclusionary Zoning

The concept of zoning was envisioned as a tool to provide separation of incompatible land use activities. The scope of control evolved to regulate the types of densities that are allowed, and the interaction of private space and public space through the management of “bulk” elements, such as building size, height and setbacks from property liens.

The next zoning evolution involves the creation of incentives to further public policy. These incentives can alleviate some of the market forces that prevent community goals from being achieved, such as by providing additional density to enable housing affordability.

To prevent further erosion of the base inventory of affordable housing units, Bloomfield should consider requiring that new developments provide affordable housing as part of the development. Called “Inclusionary Zoning” (see sidebar), Bloomfield has the ability to require the development community to assist us in the goal to provide affordable housing within community.

As a community, Bloomfield has options as to how this strategy is implemented, Bloomfield can:

- require a percentage of all new units in any residential project to be deed restricted as affordable (typically between 10-25 percent ),
- provide a density bonus for developments that have inclusionary units, and / or
- allow developers to pay a fee in lieu of affordable housing if providing new units is a severe hardship.

## Continue to Enforce Housing Codes

Bloomfield works diligently to enforce housing and zoning codes to eliminate blight. Because of the various regulations involved (e.g., zoning, health, building), a successful program requires coordinated enforcement approach across all town agencies. Bloomfield should assess whether the current enforcement approach and staff resources are adequate.

Additional team members may be needed to resolve issues, especially when financial or emotional distress are the cause of the problem. Bloomfield should continue to develop a team approach among the zoning, building, police staff and others.

### Inclusionary Zoning (IZ)

Inclusionary zoning requires developers to make a percentage of housing units in new residential developments available to low- and moderate-income households.

Often, in return, developers receive non-monetary compensation-in the form of density bonuses, zoning variances, and/or expedited permits - that reduce construction costs.

Some communities also allow a “fee in Lieu of Inclusionary Housing” to provide the developer with an “opt out” for smaller projects, or developments where affordable units can not be readily integrated into the design.

### Why Code Enforcement is Important

Code enforcement can help to:

- improve the quality of life for Bloomfield residents,
- stabilize neighborhoods,
- provide safe, decent, and clean dwelling units,
- maintain and enhance property values, and
- prevent blight.

Blight is an important community character issue. Blight is often on private property. Recognizing this fact, Bloomfield adopted a Blight Ordinance which empowers to community to require property owners to improve the condition of their property.

The Zoning Official enforces the Ordinance. This can be challenging because of other administrative responsibilities that are assigned to this position.

### “Age in Place”

Enabling elder residents to stay in their homes comfortably, safely and independently as they age, regardless of physical challenges.

### NORC - Naturally Occurring Retirement Community

The term Naturally Occurring Retirement Community used to describe neighborhoods or buildings in which a large segment of the residents are older adults.

In general, they are not purpose-built senior housing or retirement communities and were neither designed nor intended to meet the particular health and social services needs and wants of the elderly.

Reports indicate that as many as 25 to 36 percent of all seniors live in thousands of NORCs nationally. This trend is expected to grow as the vast majority of middle-aged Americans (45+) surveyed also want to age in place and expect to receive the services that will allow them to do so.

[www.norcs.com](http://www.norcs.com)

## Anticipate Senior Housing Needs

With people living longer and healthier lives, the older age group will continue to grow. The “baby boom” (people born between 1946 and 1964) will enter these older age groups during the next 20 years.

By the year 2030, adults aged 55 and over will comprise up to 33 percent of the total population of Bloomfield, up from only 20 percent in 1970. More residents that are elderly will constrain the number of housing units that are in the market and increase the demand for workers. A reduction in supply and an increase in demand will further stress housing affordability.

*Challenges:* An aging population changes the housing dynamics of the community:

- people remain in their homes for a longer period of time than has occurred in the past, reducing the availability of homes,
- aging homeowners may do less to maintain their homes,
- aging residents require additional healthcare services which requires workers to perform those services,
- older persons have different lifestyle needs, which may not be satisfied in a mature housing stock (e.g., multi-story homes), and
- alternative financial solutions may be needed to “out live” the retirement savings (e.g., reverse mortgage).

As elderly residents become less independent, the need and types of assistance increases. In addition, elder residents often rely on fixed incomes and they may not have the ability to react to increasing property values and property taxes, potentially making them less willing to endorse public investments.

Bloomfield has housing units that serve elderly residents, ranging from active adult units where no services are provided to full-serve nursing homes. There are areas in the community that have naturally evolved to serve these needs (see sidebar on NORCs) and areas that were specifically built to provide services for elderly residents, such as Duncaster Lifecare Community and Seabury.

Bloomfield might also take steps to facilitate the “age in place” desires and make sure housing is accessible. Allowing accessory apartments “by right” or reducing the permitting requirements for such apartments may be a way to accommodate this need.

Accessibility will be an increasingly important issue because Bloomfield has an aging population. Making sure facilities have ADA parking and access should continue to be a priority.

	Continue to Do What We Are Doing	Consider New Approaches
<b>OUR STRATEGIES</b>	6.1 Protect single-family neighborhoods	6.7 Preserving existing affordable housing
	6.2 Promote conservation development	6.8 Creating programs to update / rehabilitate older homes
	6.3 Guide new multi-family development to Targeted Development areas	6.9 Identifying tax delinquent properties and foreclose on them
	6.4 Provide for a diverse community	6.10 Utilizing the Incentive Housing Zone tool
	6.5 Make accessibility a priority	6.11 Considering requiring inclusionary zoning
	6.6 Enforce housing and zoning codes	6.12 Anticipating senior housing needs

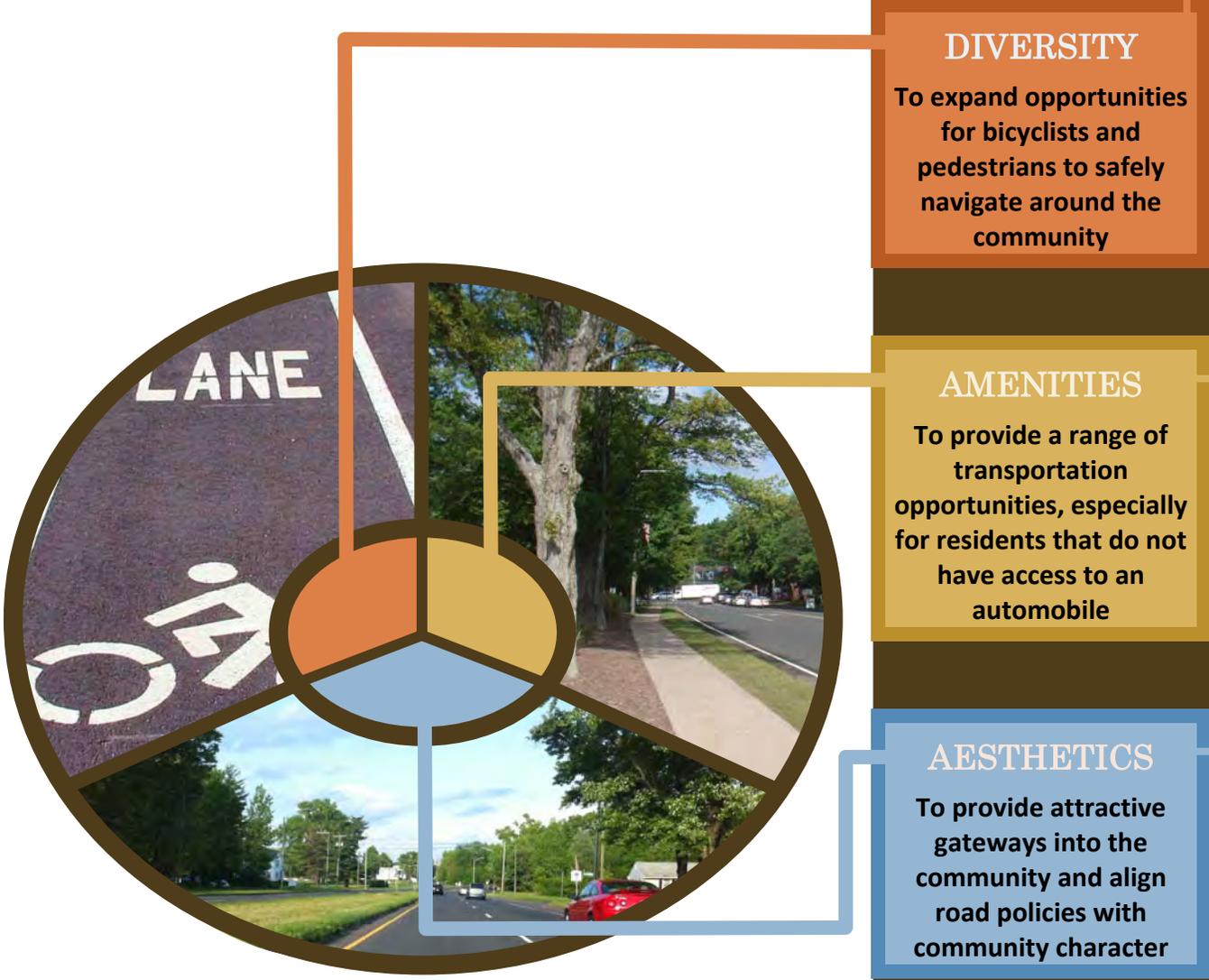


PLAN THEME

# What We Want to Provide

- **Transportation**
- **Community Facilities,  
Services and Utilities**

# Chapter 7 Transportation



**Complete Streets**

The “Complete Streets” idea involves designing roads that provide safe access for all users, regardless of age or ability.

Complete streets need to work for drivers, transit users, pedestrians, and bicyclists, as well as for older people, children, and people with disabilities.

**Complete Streets Vision**

The Complete Streets Vision suggests which areas of Bloomfield could be highest priority for pedestrian and bicycle accommodations. It can also help the Town Plan and Zoning Commission determine when a private development should include sidewalks and bicycle facilities.

Highest priority areas are those areas where there is more likely to be a demand for sidewalks or there is a desire to increase pedestrian and bicycle activity.

## Match Transportation to Community Needs

Overall, a community’s transportation system should support existing and desired land-use patterns and provide for the mobility of its residents, workers, and visitors. Most people think of roads when they think of transportation, however, viable transportation options expand mobility options for residents or workers who do not have a car, are unable to drive, or prefer not to drive. This is particularly important in communities that have a large or growing senior population.

Many components of Bloomfield’s transportation infrastructure are under the jurisdiction of state, and regional entities. While Bloomfield does not have direct control over these other entities, continued collaboration can ensure that Bloomfield’s transportation system meets local needs.

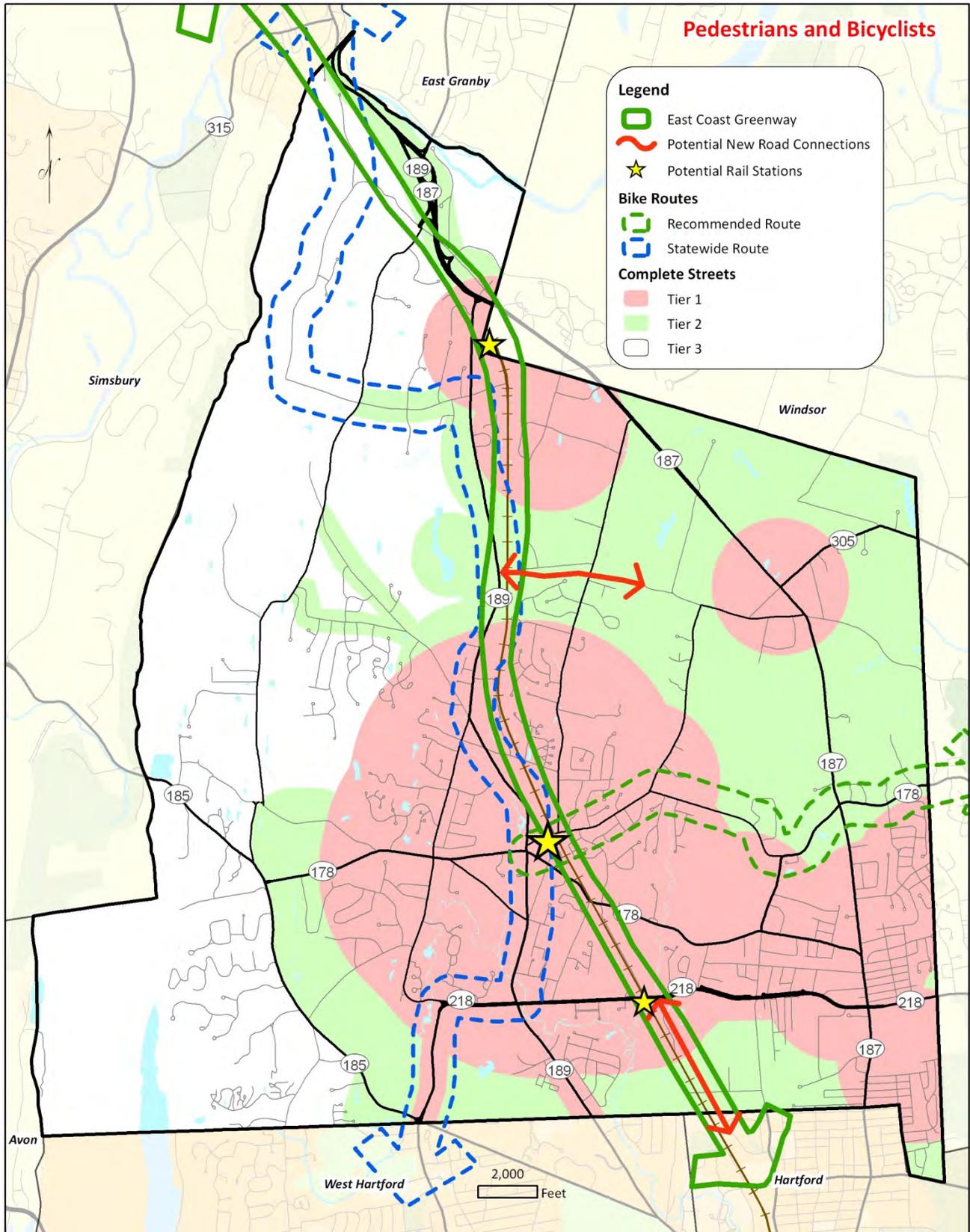
Nationally, road transportation policy is moving towards Complete Streets (see sidebar) where pedestrians, bicyclists and motorist are equally considered in the design and construction of roads. This new emphasis can be a challenge for communities that have elements of a rural road network (narrow roads, little existing sidewalk, and right-of-way limitations). Bloomfield should work to upgrade facilities, when possible, to incorporate elements of the complete street approach.

*Potential Complete Street Priority Areas*

FUNDING PRIORITY TIERS	LOCATIONS	IMPROVEMENTS	
		PEDESTRIANS	BICYCLES
1	Major transportation routes, the Town Center and around schools; areas where pedestrian activity is high	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sidewalks on both sides of the street</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On-road bike lanes / line</li> <li>Off-road bike paths, “sharrows” and /or striping</li> </ul>
2	Other important roads; areas where pedestrian activity is moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sidewalks on one side of the Street (if any)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“Share the Road” signs and / or striping</li> </ul>
3	Minor roads; areas where pedestrian activity is low		

# Transportation Plan

Bloomfield, CT



### Safe Routes to School

Safe Routes to School is a movement promoting walking and bicycling to school by supporting efforts to make it safe, convenient and fun for children to do so.

When routes are safe, walking or biking to and from school is an easy way to get the regular physical exercise that children need for a healthy lifestyle.

Safe Routes to School initiatives also help to ease traffic congestion and air pollution, improve community spirit and contribute to students' readiness to learn in school.

## Promote Walking and Bicycling

Walking and bicycling are arguably the most energy efficient forms of transportation. An increase in the number of trips made by foot or on bicycle can also reduce traffic and have environmental and health benefits. While a community cannot change people's behavior, it can increase opportunities and reduce barriers to walking and biking. Promoting walking and bicycling by providing for safe facilities throughout the Town is an important priority in Bloomfield.

### Enhance the Pedestrian Network

Sidewalks are the most important component in the pedestrian network. There are three means for creating opportunities and reducing barriers for pedestrian and bicyclists:

- public investment,
- requiring individual property owners to pay for it, and / or
- through improvements made by the private-sector when development occurs.

In terms of public investment, the Town has a track record of providing and promoting pedestrian infrastructure. The Town has maintained the walkable environment in and around the Town Center and has invested in sidewalks in other areas where walking is a suitable means of transportation. The Town also has an ordinance that requires property owners abutting a sidewalk to maintain (snow removal), repair and improve sidewalks to Town specifications.

Bloomfield should consider making all sidewalk improvements a public responsibility, unless private-development is proposed. It is recognized that sidewalk maintenance and construction requires funding and difficult choices have to be made annually about where limited dollars can best be used to enhance the sidewalk network.

Having a clear Sidewalk Plan that identifies priority areas for future sidewalks could help clarify how individual sidewalk additions fit into the larger picture. The Complete Streets Vision could be a basis of these priority areas.

Bloomfield Center and Blue Hills Avenue, along with establishing "Safe Routes to Schools" (see sidebar), are priority areas for sidewalks. Conversely, there are areas of Bloomfield where sidewalks might not be necessary (e.g., cul-de-sac roads with low

traffic volumes). The Sidewalk Plan can aid in the determination of when to require sidewalks and to strengthen public decision-making.

Once safe pedestrian routes exist around the schools, the Board of Education might be able to re-visit the bus policies, requiring students within walking distance to walk. This approach could help the Town save money on bus transportation costs, which might then be reassigned to enhance education services.

## **Become a Bicycle-Friendly Community**

On-road bike accommodations are important components of a bicycle transportation system. Bicyclists have different needs than pedestrians. Bicyclists have the same rights within the roadway as motorists, but their rights are often overlooked by motorists. Providing motorists with information about bicyclist rights, especially along heavy-travelled bike routes can be an easy way to promote bicycle use. Installing “Share the Road” signs, “sharrows” (see sidebar) and becoming a bicycle friendly community are important tasks for the community to accomplish.

Making the space safer for bicyclists by removing obstacles along the shoulder (signs, telephone poles and catch basins) and by providing dedicated bike lanes are other ways to improve bicycling. In addition, providing amenities (pathways connecting adjacent properties, bicycle racks, etc.) as new development or redevelopment occurs can be meaningful ways to promote bicycling.

## **Build the East Coast Greenway Segment**

The East Coast Greenway is a multi-purpose trail network that extends from Florida to Maine and is proposed to pass through Bloomfield. Trail segments have been built throughout Connecticut. These segments have been built by local efforts, typically coordinated by the Town where the segment is located.

Bloomfield has discussed a potential route, and a feasibility study for a portion of the trail network has been recently completed. Bloomfield should continue to pursue implementation of the trail and work with state and regional partners to promote this transportation facility.

### **Bicycle Friendly Community**

The Bicycle Friendly Community is a League of American Cyclists program that provides incentives, hands-on assistance, and award recognition for communities that actively support bicycling. A Bicycle Friendly Community welcomes cyclists by providing safe accommodation for cycling and encouraging people to bike for transportation and recreation.

### **Share the Road**



### **Sharrows**

Street marking indicating that the bike lane and automobile travel lane are shared. The purpose of these arrows is to remind motorists that bicyclists frequently use the road and have a right to occupy the traveled way.

## Roadway Classifications in Bloomfield

### *Principal Arterials*

Major arterials provide for traffic movement between Bloomfield and the surrounding towns. In many cases they also give access to adjacent properties, which detracts from their primary design function.

### *Minor Arterial*

Minor arterials provide options for alternate traffic movement and may also serve to connect major arterials. Some through-service is provided but traffic volumes are lighter than along the major arterials.

### *Collector Streets*

Collectors provide for traffic movement between neighborhoods within the Town and “collect” traffic from local roads. These streets create the connecting links in the transportation network; traffic can be carried from local streets via collectors to principal and minor arterials.

### *Local Streets*

Local streets provide direct access to the properties located along them. All streets in Bloomfield not classified as collectors or arterials are considered local streets.

## Continue to Improve Overall Circulation

Bloomfield’s road network provides convenient access to jobs and other destinations in the Town and the region. Regional commuters depend upon Bloomfield’s roads to reach key employment areas. While regional commuters add traffic, they also present business development opportunities and tax revenue for municipal operations.

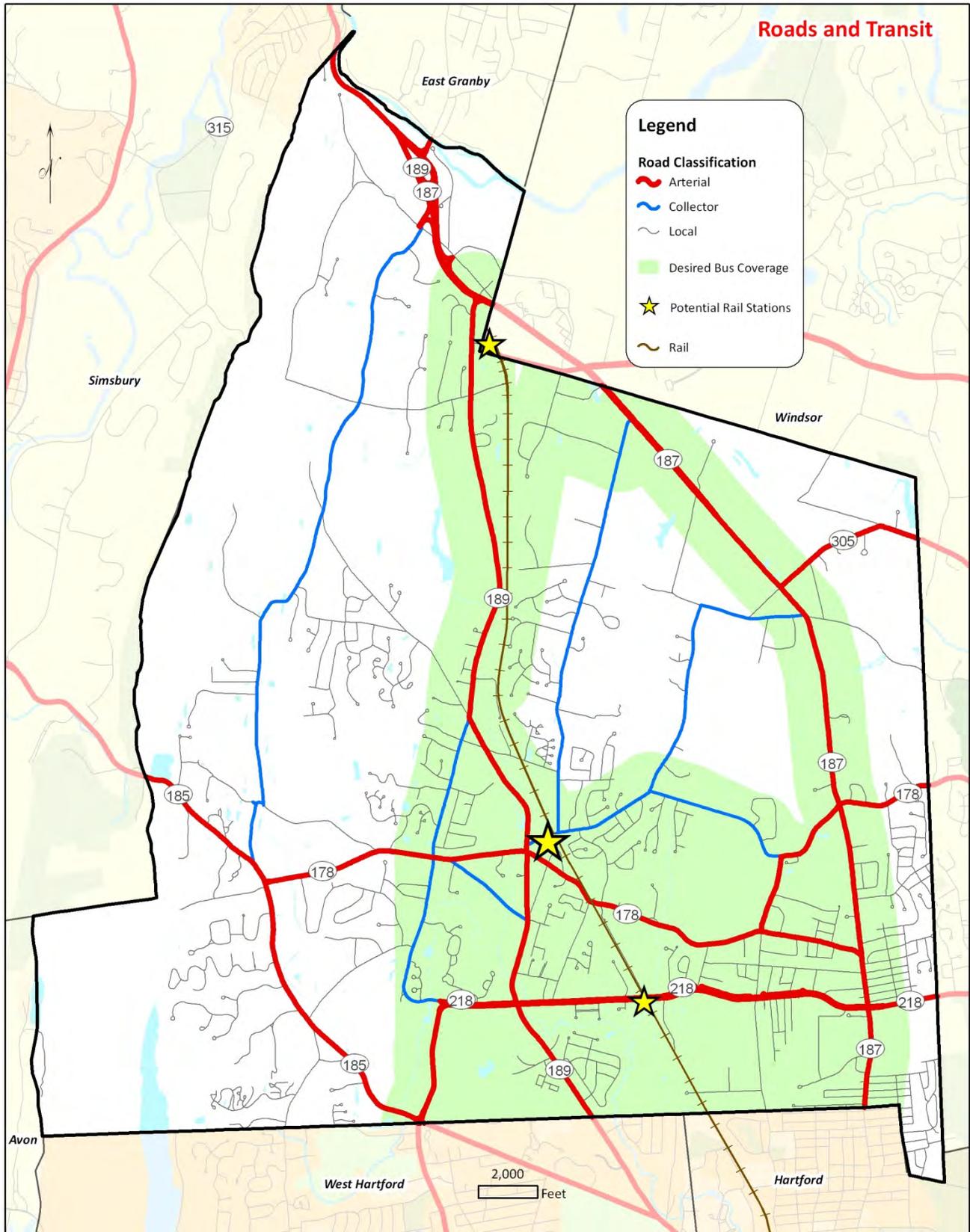
To evaluate and manage potential traffic impacts, the Town Plan and Zoning Commission requires the submittal of Traffic Impact Statements when certain development is proposed. Another approach used by communities is to tie allowable land-uses to road classification (see sidebar). High traffic generators are generally not considered appropriate on local roads and, often, collector roads. Therefore certain uses are only allowed on arterials. This can be particularly helpful when siting non-residential uses (schools, nursing homes, religious facilities) in residential zones.

Certain areas of Town tend to experience some congestion during morning and evening rush hours (generally roads that provide access to I-91, Hartford and large in-town employers). For example, the Route 218 (Cottage Grove Road) / Route 187 (Blue Hills Avenue) intersection is the crossroads of two important regional connections. Improvements to this intersection are necessary, and the Connecticut Department of Transportation has contemplated design options. Cost is the limiting factor, and because of existing land uses in the area (cemetery) and environmental concerns (wetlands) there are limited alternatives available. Bloomfield should continue to support improvements at this intersection.

Aesthetics should also be a consideration during this project. In the past, trees and other landscape features were proposed along 218, but were not planted. Bloomfield should continue to request these enhancements. Trees in the median of Route 218 and along the frontage roads would significantly enhance the aesthetic quality of this area. These types of enhancements have been made on other state roads, so this request is not extravagant, or outside of the state’s capacity.

# Transportation Plan

Bloomfield, CT



**Building A Northwest Connector**

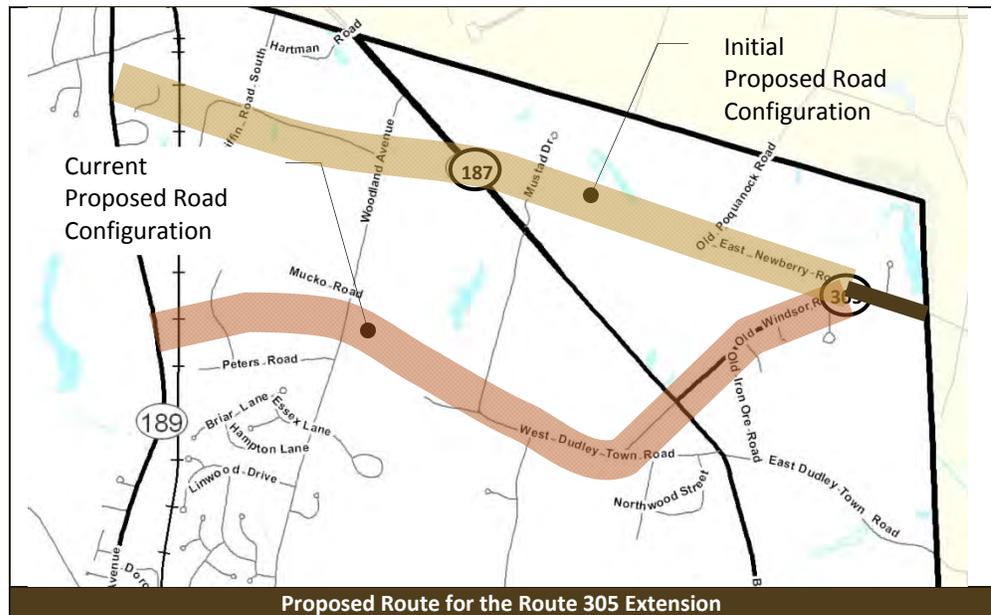
Bloomfield has long contemplated an enhanced East-West transportation connection in the north part of Town. This connection would link large parcels of industrial land with key transportation systems, like Interstate 91. It has been identified as a critical transportation element.

The 1984 plan shows a route that would have connected Route 305 with East and West Newberry Roads, near the Windsor town line.

More recently the route has moved south, for a number of reasons. This new route alignment utilizes Route 305 to the Intersection of Blue Hills Avenue (Route 187) and continues along to Route Tunxis Avenue (Route 189). Past plans did not show a connection to Tunxis Avenue.

**Continue to Support the Extension of Route 305**

State and regional planners have discussed establishing a connection from Route 189 to Route 187 by extending Route 305. A similar road project, the so-called Northwest Connector, was also presented in the 1984 and 2000 Town plans (see Building a Northwest Connector sidebar). While this is may not be a priority project, Bloomfield should continue to support this project, but request that improvements include a complete street approach, whereby pedestrians and bicyclists are incorporated into road safety and design.



**Continue Working to Create a Transportation Connection Between the Town and the University of Hartford Campus**

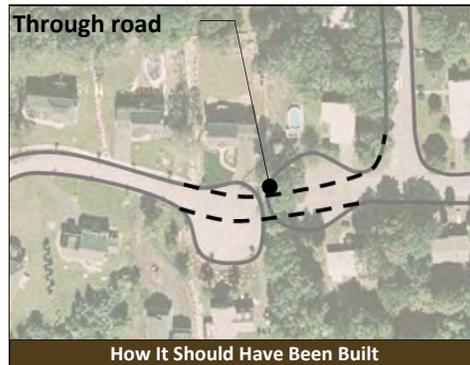
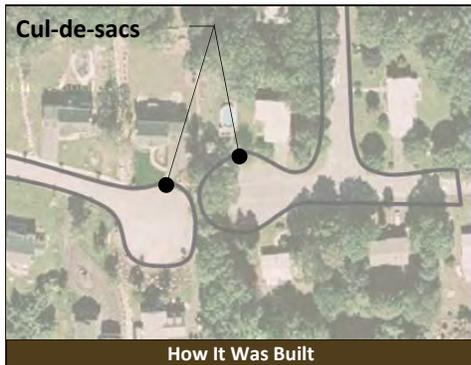
The 2000 Plan identifies the establishment of a transportation link between the Town and the University of Hartford as a good project for Bloomfield to implement. A number of reasons were cited as to why this improvement should be made, including the creation of a vibrant mixed use space at COPACO, and the desire to create access to additional education opportunities in Bloomfield.

## Enhance Road Connections / Connectivity

Many of the new roads have been built with private dollars as developers utilized local land-use regulations, limiting the Town's financial contributions towards the construction costs. Under this approach, developers have been the Town's "implementers." In many communities these new subdivision-related roads serve no public purpose, other than to provide access to the properties along the new road. Bloomfield has been careful to limit the creation of public roads that have no future public purpose and should continue to do so.

Proposals for new Town-owned roads should continue to be evaluated under this policy objective. Any other new Town-owned road proposals should be seriously scrutinized as they may not further any public objective for transportation. Cul-de-sac roads, designed with no possible future road connections, should be prevented.

In some communities roads are completed at different times and as part of different development projects. It is important that local policy remain firm in instances where road connectivity is important. The illustrations below depict a community with a soft road connection policy, and final design was influenced by neighborhood opposition to road connections.



### Hidden Costs of Cul-de-sac Roads

Cul-de-sacs are often utilized by developers to build the road frontage needed for new development. These roads serve a limited public purpose, primarily to provide access to properties located along the cul-de-sac.

Cul-de-sacs present snow removal challenges for public works departments because their vehicles were not designed to navigate the turning radius of the cul-de-sac.

This results in the need to back up repeatedly while removing snow and also creates challenges as to where the snow can be placed once removed from the road surface.

It is estimated by some public works departments that a cul-de-sac can add 40 minutes to the overall snow plow route.

Some communities have taken steps to ban public cul-de-sacs.

### Access Management

Access management focuses on ways to improve traffic flow by reducing reasons why people may get held up in traffic, such as the number of driveways and left turns. Strategies include using shared driveways and interconnected parking lots.

### Private Road

A roadway that is not owned or maintained by the town. Ownership and maintenance is often shared by a number of property owners that have rights to pass.

### Management Issues of Private Roads

Private roads have several management issues that might arise from time-to-time. Maintenance of private roads can be a particular point of contention because:

- it can be expensive,
- no one really wants to pay for it, and
- some property owners feel that they should receive the same level of service from the town that public roads receive.

## Improve Access Management

“Access Management” is an overarching strategy to optimize access to land while ensuring for the safe and efficient flow of traffic. Curb cut (driveway) management is a key component of access management. Multiple curb cuts in close proximity to one another impact traffic flow, increase the potential for accidents, and increase the number of conflict points between pedestrians and vehicles.

The Town Plan and Zoning Commission have worked to limit / combine curb cuts when development occurs. Additional steps could include adding access management provisions to its zoning regulations and preparing an access management plan, particularly along the Blue Hills Avenue Corridor. An access management plan provides specific recommendations for access to properties along a corridor, and can identify opportunities for multiple properties to share parking. Zoning regulations can then require compliance with the plan when properties are developed or redeveloped.

The State has ultimate control over the location and number of curb cuts for properties along State-owned roads. The Town should continue to work with the State to ensure its decisions are consistent with Town policies for access management. This is especially important for Route 187 where multiple driveways and parking lots could be better coordinated.

## Address Private Roads

Bloomfield has a number of private roads and it is important to recognize that private roads can become a political issue: some residents want the Town to maintain them, but they do not want the public to use them. Bloomfield should consider adopting a formal policy about maintenance requests along private roads and require decisions be made by the Town Council, at a public meeting.

This formalized process places the burden on the property owners to independently develop consensus and also provides other Town residents with an opportunity to comment on the proposal. The Town should be careful when it does maintain or use a private road, as that road may become the responsibility of the Town.

## Work to Restore Community Character Along State Roads

State Routes 218, 178, 185, 187, 189 and 305 are the main transportation routes through Bloomfield. These roads have the highest traffic volumes within the community. They are owned and maintained by the Connecticut Department of Transportation, a State agency.

The busiest of these routes is 218, an access-controlled highway that serves as a major transportation corridor. Many of Bloomfield's regional businesses have located along this corridor. Policies related to this road should continue to support function, i.e., traffic capacity and travel speeds.

Some State routes should be designed to fit community character rather than traffic capacity. Of particular importance are Routes 178 and 189 which criss-cross the Town Center. Under their road classification system the road serves as a minor arterial (the road's functional classification). For Bloomfield, these Routes serve as roads where local businesses are located, which frame the Town Center and provide access to many of the neighborhoods in the community. As such, the road's form is an important element for the community.

The balance for Bloomfield is to try to manage the CTDOT's functional classifications with community character ("form" elements, such as pedestrian-friendly and slower traffic speeds): two-lanes, sidewalks, on-street parking, street and shade trees, rather than as a four-lane highway designed for traffic movement and travel speeds. CTDOT has become sensitive to "form" issues (Context Sensitive Solutions – see sidebar) and Bloomfield needs to continue to have a dialog about how this balance can continue. While form is important, Bloomfield should also promote the use of "complete streets" (discussed on page 78) for all state-owned roads.

### Context Sensitive Solutions

Context sensitive solutions (CSS) is a collaborative, interdisciplinary approach that involves all stakeholders in providing a transportation facility that fits its setting.

It is an approach that leads to preserving and enhancing scenic, aesthetic, historic, community, and environmental resources, while improving or maintaining safety, mobility, and infrastructure conditions.

**Road Maintenance Costs**

Soaring construction costs during the past five years are straining state and local budgets.

By the summer of 2008, asphalt prices were up 70 percent, concrete 36 percent, and steel 105 percent. Diesel fuel, used to operate heavy construction equipment, soared 305 percent, including a 63 percent jump in one year. Over time, these higher costs have eroded purchasing power on construction projects.

National Center for Pavement Preservation

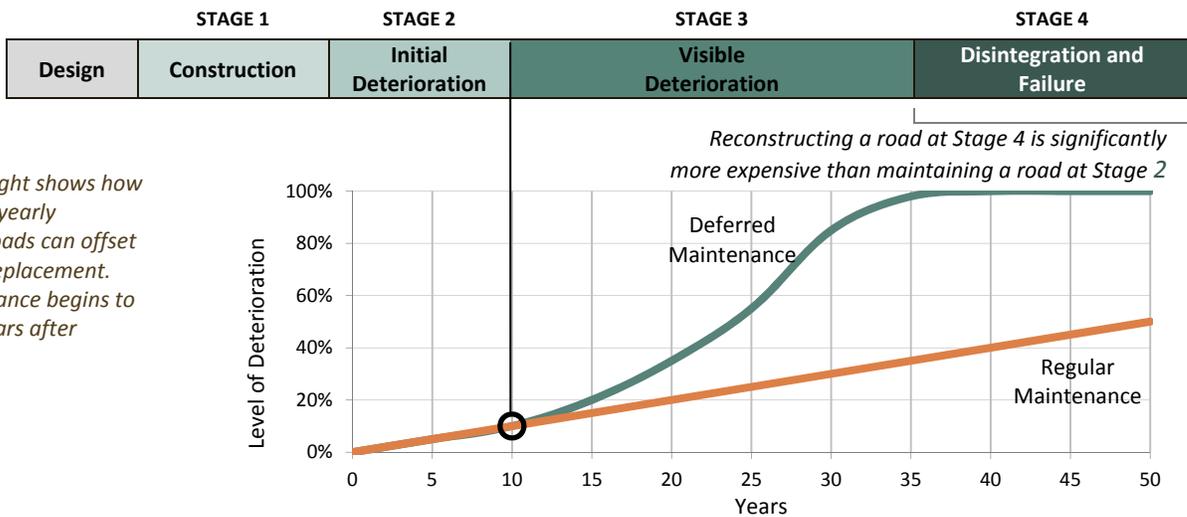
**Maintain Existing Roads**

Maintenance of existing roads is a top priority. Sufficient funding should be set aside to properly maintain and improve existing roads. Maintaining existing road infrastructure is an important for safety and convenience, but it is also important from a cost efficiency perspective; regular maintenance can extend the useful life of a road and thereby delays the need for reconstruction and, in the process, saves money.

The Town is responsible for maintaining about 103 miles of the 129 miles of roads in Town. The State Department of Transportation maintains the rest. Road maintenance should occur on a 20-year cycle, with all roads being addressed within that timeframe. Certain elements of a community’s infrastructure can easily be forgotten when budgets tighten and perhaps the largest community infrastructure is its road network. Delayed and deferred maintenance leads to higher repair and reconstruction costs—pay now or pay more later.

Developing a system to improve the timeline for maintenance is not solely an appropriation issue. Adopting a pavement management system can help a community ensure that it gets the most return for each dollar invested in maintenance. A pavement management system includes ongoing data collection, monitoring and analysis of road conditions. Computer programs allow the testing of scenarios to determine how to improve roads and increase their useful life in the most cost-effective manner.

*Life Cycle of a Road*



The chart to the right shows how a commitment to yearly maintenance of roads can offset the need for full replacement. Deferred maintenance begins to accumulate 10 years after construction.

Because the road infrastructure is such an important community investment, Bloomfield should continue to find ways to maximize the limited dollars available for maintenance.

## Abandon Roads When They Are No Longer Needed

Roads can sometimes outlive their intended purpose and are no longer critical to the transportation network. Bloomfield should continue to assess road functionality and consider abandoning roads when another objective can be achieved. For example, certain roads in the Town Center may no longer be needed, and the road right of way could be used as part of a development proposal. The current Plan identified Seneca Road as one road that should be abandoned.

## Continue to Support Public Transportation

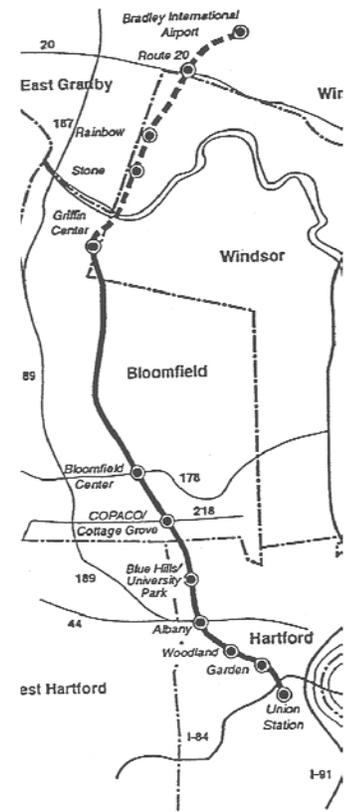
Bloomfield residents have public bus access through Connecticut Transit (CTTRANSIT), operated by the Connecticut Department of Transportation. CTTRANSIT operates public bus routes in Bloomfield. COPACO Center is a key transit transfer point within the community, as all routes meet at this location.

In addition, Bloomfield is one of 16 communities that belong to the Greater Hartford Transit District. The District plans, develops, operates, maintains, and provides transportation and related services such as transportation centers and parking facilities. CTTransit operates local and commuter bus service. Bloomfield should continue to support the bus service and work to identify where service can be enhanced (new routes, or extended hours).

## Continue to Support Rail Improvements

Since the 1970s or so, Bloomfield has consistently been a supporter of the Griffin Line Passenger Rail Concept (see sidebar). Plans for the development of passenger rail have been put on hold, numerous times over the past 30 plus years, and more recently have been eliminated as a regional priority. As gas prices fluctuate demand for passenger rail may increase and this project could see a resurgence. Bloomfield should remain supportive of this project. Short-term improvements, such as upgrading the tracks to accommodate freight traffic, should also be supported.

Griffin Line Concept



	Continue to Do What We Are Doing	Consider New Approaches
<b>OUR STRATEGIES</b>	7.1 Promote walking and bicycling	7.9 Adopting a complete streets vision
	7.2 Enhance the pedestrian network	7.10 Becoming a bicycle-friendly community
	7.3 Improve overall circulation	7.11 Building the East Coast Greenway segment
	7.4 Support the extension of Route 305	7.12 Creating a transportation connection between the Town and the University of Hartford campus
	7.5 Manage existing roads	7.13 Enhancing road connections and connectivity
	7.6 Abandon roads when they are no longer needed	7.14 Improving access management
	7.7 Support public transportation	7.15 Addressing private roads
	7.8 Support rail improvements	7.16 Working to restore character along state-owned roads

# Chapter 8 Community Facilities, Services and Utilities



## DIVERSITY

To provide a wide-range of facilities and services to meet the needs of our residents

## AMENITIES

To provide a rich experience within each facility or as part of provided services

## AESTHETICS

To have facilities that we can be proud of and that are representative of our community

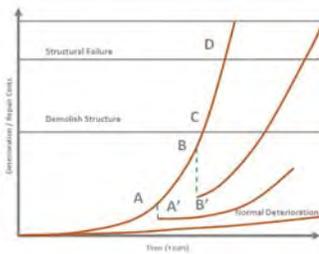
**Cost of Deferred Maintenance**

Cost of deferred maintenance is best described by the graphic “Why Maintenance is Important – the Cost of Deferred Maintenance”. It is certain that all structures deteriorate over time, as indicated by the plot marked "Normal Deterioration."

The curve marked ABCD is the plot that shows that, if the facility is not proactively taken care of, repair cost will escalate exponentially. If there is intervention at an early stage of its life (at point A'), then the deterioration cost will be much lower.

If intervention is at a later stage (at point B'), the cost will be lower than that indicated by curve ABCD but higher than the curve for the early stage of intervention (point A').

*Why Maintenance is Important – The Cost of Deferred Maintenance*



# Maintain Existing Facilities

As identified earlier, Bloomfield owns and operates a number of community facilities that serve various purposes within the community. During public meetings regarding the plan, numerous comments were made by residents regarding the quality of these facilities, particularly how poorly the facilities have been maintained. There is concern that the lack of maintenance may eliminate future use of some of these facilities.

Examples of deferred maintenance are prevalent within the community. Leaky roofs in multiple buildings and the condition of Filley Park are two of the most cited concerns. From a community character perspective, the condition of Filley Park is a significant concern.

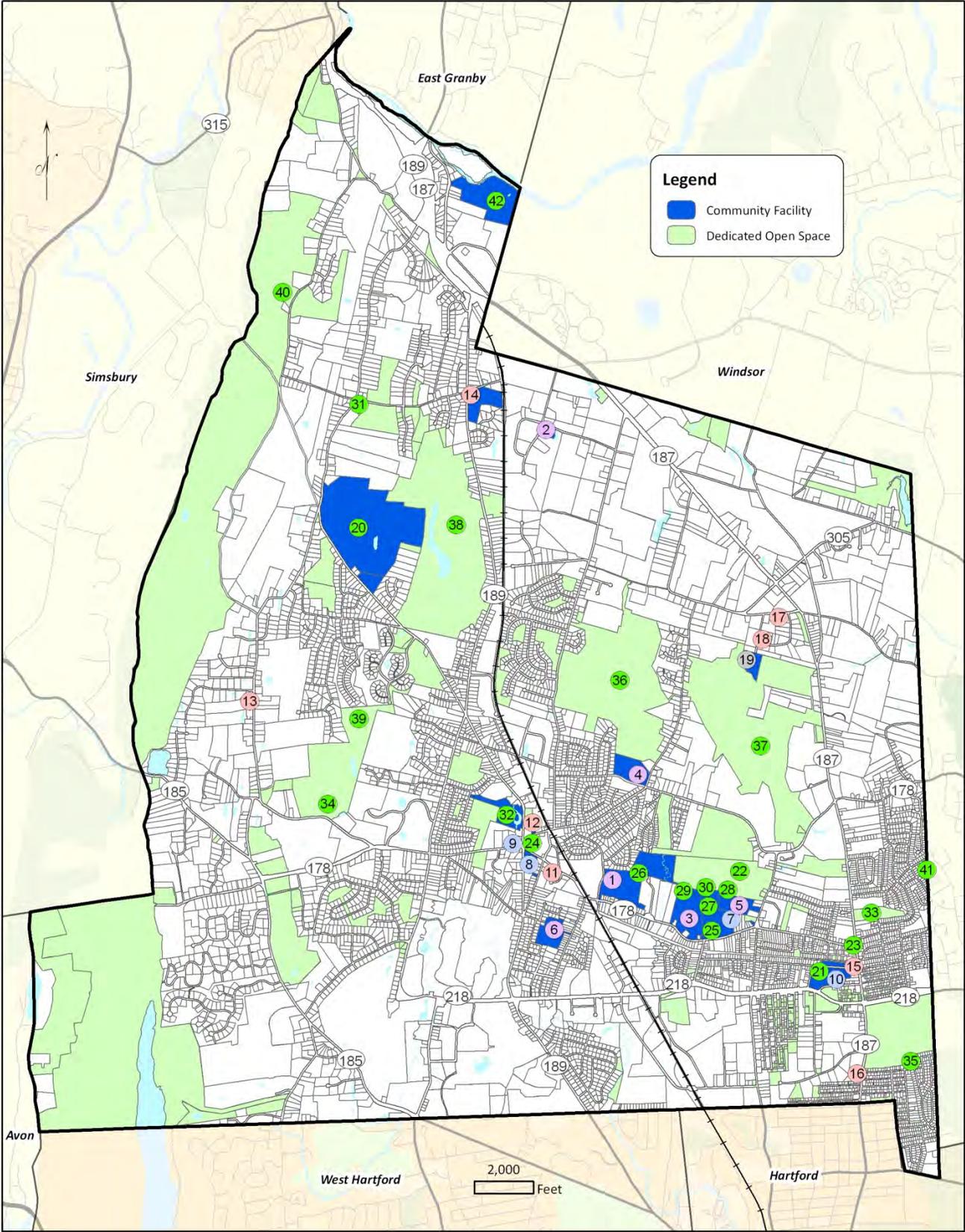
*Community Facilities Legend* (see facing page)

- Education**
- 1 Bloomfield High School
  - 2 The Big Picture High School
  - 3 Arace School
  - 4 Laurel Elementary School
  - 5 Metacomet Elementary School
  - 6 J.P. Vincent Elementary School
- General Government**
- 7 Alvin B. Woods Human Services Center
  - 8 Town Hall
  - 9 Prosser Library
  - 10 Wintonbury Branch Library
- Public Safety**
- 11 Police Department
  - Center Fire District**
  - 12 Company 1
  - 13 Company 2
  - 14 Company 3
  - Blue Hills Fire District**
  - 15 Company 1
  - 16 Company 3
  - 17 Company 4
  - 18 Volunteer Ambulance
- Public Works**
- 19 Public Works Garage

- Parks and Recreation**
- 20 Wintonbury Hills Golf Course
  - 21 Blue Hills Neighborhood Center
  - 22 Samuel Wheeler Reed Park
  - 23 Mary Zolan Hill Green
  - 24 Town Green
  - 25 Marilyn Michaelson Senior Center
  - 26 High School Fields
  - 27 Human Resource Center Fields
  - 28 Metacomet School Fields
  - 29 Arace School Fields
  - 30 Municipal Pool
  - 31 Vista Gardens
  - 32 Filley Park
  - 33 Joyce Neighborhood Street Park
  - 34 LaSalette Open Space
  - 35 Pershing Park Playground
  - 36 Reservoir No. 1
  - 37 Reservoir No. 2
  - 38 Reservoir No. 3
  - 39 Sinnott Farms Open Space
  - 40 M.K. Wilcox Park
  - 41 Wintonbury Hills Playground
  - 42 Farmington River Park

# Community Facilities Map

Bloomfield, CT



**Strategic Facilities Plan (SFP)**

The SFP identifies the type, quantity and location of spaces required to fully support the organization’s initiatives and should be framed within the organization’s vision. The SFP includes three primary components:

- an analysis of existing facilities (e.g., location, capability, utilization and condition),
- identification of what existing and new facilities are necessary to support community needs and desires, and
- an implementable plan to address facility needs.

**Capital Replacement Planning**

Capital replacement planning is an effort to:

- assess the current and projected physical needs of a property,
- establish the costs of maintaining or modernizing it, and
- create a strategic plan for addressing those needs within financial constraints.

A capital replacement plan begins with a comprehensive and detailed inventory of the existing physical plant to determine the condition of each system and establish its remaining useful life.

It is important that the plan identify the costs associated with each system and a timeframe for when repairs need to be made. Then, it is up to policy-makers to establish a dedicated replacement reserve, so funding is available when repairs are needed.

**Replacement Reserve Funds**

A replacement reserve account is a dedicated account set up to pay for the replacement of short-lived assets and to cover anticipated maintenance costs.

**Balance “Needs” and “Wants”**

Maintenance of existing community facilities is an important issue for Bloomfield to address over the next ten years. While costly, ongoing maintenance actually saves money in the long-term. Community facilities are a significant public investment, and the public trust relies on proper maintenance of what the community has already invested in, before it will accept new investments. A Strategic Facilities Plan (see sidebar) for all community facilities is an important tool to set policies and manage this process.

Bloomfield’s next challenge is to find the balance between the “needs” and “wants,” to best assign available monies to projects that meet the greatest need. Before building new facilities the community should develop Capital Replacement Plans for each facility (see sidebar), and make the needed commitments to existing buildings, including:

- establishing Replacement Reserve Funds (see sidebar), and
- implementing strategies to reduce energy costs and improve facility efficiency.

Then, evaluation of the “needs” can be accomplished in a meaningful way.

*Bloomfield’s Community Facilities*

FUNCTIONS	EXISTING FACILITIES	IDENTIFIED “NEEDS” / “WANTS”
<b>General Government Offices</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Town Hall</li> <li>• Board of Education Offices</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some departments have identified space constraints</li> </ul>
<b>Emergency Services (e.g., fire, police)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Police Station</li> <li>• 6 Fire Stations</li> <li>• Ambulance Garage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional space for the police department</li> </ul>
<b>Public Works</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highway Garage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional space</li> </ul>
<b>Recreation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ball fields</li> <li>• Outdoor pool</li> <li>• Numerous neighborhood parks</li> <li>• Community center</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Upgrades to the community center</li> <li>• Upgrades to the outdoor pool facility</li> <li>• Creation of an aquatic center</li> <li>• Additional athletic fields</li> <li>• Bike trails</li> </ul>
<b>Community Services (e.g., library, community center)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Senior center</li> <li>• 2 Libraries</li> <li>• Community garden</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need additional library space at the main branch</li> <li>• Upgrades to the Senior Center</li> </ul>
<b>Schools</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High school</li> <li>• Middle school</li> <li>• Elementary school</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schools have recently been renovated</li> </ul>

# Address Identified Community Facility Issues

The following table summarizes identified needs and discusses some considerations that have been identified as part of this planning process. The table highlights areas that need to be part of long-term strategic facility planning. It does not take into consideration the costs or fiscal resources to undertake these projects. While the summary uses the word “needs,” it does not distinguish between those items which are necessary for a department to fulfill its function versus those items which are desirable for quality of life or other purposes.

FINDINGS		CONSIDERATIONS
<b>ADMINISTRATION/ SERVICES</b>		
<b>Town Hall</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The building needs a new roof and other maintenance activities</li> <li>• Overall space appears adequate</li> <li>• There is an ongoing dialog about merging town and Board of Education office operations at this site, but on-site parking will be a challenge.</li> <li>• Additional vault storage space should be planned</li> <li>• Create a records management program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Importance of keeping Town Hall and most administrative services in the Town Center to continue to make this place an important location within the community</li> <li>• Longer term, electronic storage and records management could reduce some spatial needs and improve public access to town records</li> </ul>
<b>Schools</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Space in schools is adequate – recent bonding for upgrades</li> <li>• Declining school enrollment – One school will be closing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School enrollments tend to be cyclical; If a school is closed due to declining enrollments, the Town should consider retaining the building and possibly leasing out space; If enrollment increases again, it is very difficult to find land for a new school</li> </ul>
<b>Public Works</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need to update the Public Works Complex</li> <li>• Underground fuel storage tank (UST) removal is needed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide sufficient resources to manage existing commitments</li> </ul>
<b>Social and Youth Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need additional work space</li> <li>• Equipment needs to be updated</li> <li>• Need additional parking and meeting space</li> <li>• Aquatic center</li> </ul>	

FINDINGS		CONSIDERATIONS
<b>PUBLIC SAFETY</b>		
<b>Police</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Police Department feels the police station does not meet current space needs</li> <li>• State mandates might drive future need for more space</li> <li>• Need to conduct a needs analysis for space</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If expanded – where? Current location is central, but is there room (second story was initially planned)</li> </ul>
<b>Fire</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bloomfield Center Fire District and the Blue Hills Fire District are separately run public agencies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If there is ever a change to the fire service demands, are existing buildings and equipment adequate?</li> <li>• What other trends might influence fire stations and their locations?</li> </ul>
<b>Ambulance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Private organization</li> <li>• No space needs indicated</li> </ul>	

FINDINGS		CONSIDERATIONS
<b>OTHER SERVICES AND AMENITIES</b>		
<b>Leisure Services (Recreation)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintenance is priority</li> <li>• Increased demand for good quality sports fields</li> <li>• Upgrades desired for existing facilities</li> <li>• Aquatic center / indoor pool is desired</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop / update facility master plans</li> </ul>
<b>Senior Center</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintenance is needed</li> <li>• Modernization is needed</li> <li>• An indoor pool is desired (currently use Duncaster’s indoor pool)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If, over the long term, Senior Center moved to the center of town, how could this facility be used to meet other needs - municipal or economic development?</li> </ul>
<b>Library</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need additional space. Expansion and updated library on the current site is desired</li> <li>• Ongoing maintenance has been an issue:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Air conditioning is broken</li> <li>○ Roof leaks</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Parking is insufficient</li> <li>• Lower level is prone to flooding</li> <li>• Not American with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Longer term – will need to address parking</li> <li>• Library plays important role in attracting residents to the Town Center. Important long term that they remain in the Town Center (as they are planning).</li> </ul>
<b>Technology</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance data connectivity through wired and wireless connections</li> <li>• “Plug and play” presentation capabilities</li> </ul>	

## Parks and Recreation Activities

The Leisure Services Department manages parks and recreation activities in Bloomfield. This department has identified maintenance of existing facilities as its priority over the coming years for these activities and facilities.

Rising demand for sports fields is a pressing issue in many communities. It can be very difficult to find vacant land for new sports fields. Most of Bloomfield’s fields have been identified as being in poor-to-adequate range, with fields serving a purpose other than their design. The Department (with coordination with the School Department) carefully manages the use of fields to meet demand as best as possible, but they think there may be a future need for additional football and lacrosse fields. This issue should be studied.

### Continue to Partner with the Private-sector

Bloomfield relies on a mix of public and privately-owned facilities / management for recreation purposes. This can be a cost-effective solution from a facility perspective, but it may impact the level of control the town has. Bloomfield should continue to utilize this approach, and monitor whether additional public facilities will be needed.

Factors that influence recreational facility management include:

- cost (who is paying for what, such as maintenance, insurance and capital improvements), and
- control (who has oversight and makes decisions, such as scheduling programs and long-term use).

	<i>Lower Town Cost</i>	<i>Higher Cost</i>
<i>Less Town Control</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Private ownership maintenance and programming.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public ownership and maintenance of the facility but allow the private-sector to provide programming.</li> </ul>
<i>More Control</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public use of privately-owned and maintained facilities.</li> <li>• Public programming of privately-owned and maintained facilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public ownership, maintenance and programming</li> </ul>

Finally, it is important to ensure that recreation facilities are “Good Neighbors” since they can have impacts on neighboring uses. If new facilities are built, they should be in locations where the types of activities and impacts (e.g., traffic, noise and lighting) have a minimal effect on nearby residences. Conversely, when new development is proposed adjacent to existing recreational facilities, these developments should be carefully planned to minimize impacts to buildings when the facilities are being used. This can help ensure that existing facilities remain viable over the long term.

**Library Snap Shot**

Prosser Public Library  
1 Tunxis Avenue

Wintonbury Branch Library  
1015 Blue Hills Avenue

**Per Capita Figures**

	TOWN	CT
<i>Books and Serials</i>		
	6.3	4.2
<i>Circulation</i>		
	16.4	9.2
<i>Expenditures</i>		
	\$72	\$42

Nces.ed.gov (2004)

**Upgrade and Expand the Library**

Bloomfield operates two library facilities, the Prosser Public Library (main branch) and the Wintonbury Branch. The 2000 Plan identified the need to expand the Prosser Public Library in the Town Center and the need for additional parking to satisfy user demand. This remains an important initiative for the community. While the library is a center for learning and social activity, it fosters a strong sense of community within the Town. In addition, retaining it’s location in the Town Center should be part of future design considerations. The Town is developing a design for this project and should continue to implement the expansion program as planned. New program opportunities, such as the inclusion of a coffee shop might help offset operational costs and provide an amenity for users of the facility.

**Continue to Explore Opportunities to Consolidate School and Government Activities**

Few residents realize that school and municipal government operate independently. Often, residents assume that the town government can readily utilize school facilities and vice versa. Both agencies have administrative controls and scheduling commitments that need to be considered. Some communities have improved coordination and interaction between these two agencies.

For example, in some communities the school facilities are owned and managed by the Town, but programmed by the Board of Education. This provides the Town with the comfort level that buildings are being properly maintained (or, if they are not, properly assigns accountability) and allows the Board of Education to focus on its mission: educating students. Bloomfield should evaluate whether this approach makes sense for the community.

Sharing existing facilities is more cost-effective solution than building new facilities. Sharing does require careful cooperation and coordination. Bloomfield should continue to evaluate how coordination is occurring and fine-tune the program as needed.

Sharing administrative functions and space are also areas where Bloomfield might find cost-savings. There has been some discussion that building an addition at Town Hall and moving the Board of Education administrative offices to this site could improve government efficiencies.

## Plan for a New Senior Center

With an aging population, programs for senior citizens will continue to be important in Bloomfield. Bloomfield has an active senior citizens center, which is located in a retired school facility. The senior center shares this space with the Leisure Services and the Social / Youth Services departments and local non-profits (Chamber of Commerce and Bloomfield Access Television). While recycling the retired school has been an effective way to enhance community services, there are some challenges with this facility.

The facility is old and aging. It lacks central air conditioning and the roof is leaking. Other departments that share the facility have expressed a need for additional space. It might be appropriate to rethink the purpose of the senior center and whether the space should be designed around needs rather than fit into vacant space.

When thinking about the purpose of a senior center, there are two approaches: building-oriented or program-oriented.

Building-Oriented		Program-Oriented	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Starts with a building and no specific programs</li> <li>Programs are designed around existing space</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Starts with a list of programs, but no particular building</li> <li>Space is designed around types of programs offer</li> </ul>	
Town Center	Elsewhere	Town Center	Elsewhere
Use Other Town Buildings	Use Existing Building	New Building	New Building
<p><i>Pros</i> Do not have to build a new building</p> <p><i>Cons</i> Building may not satisfy program needs</p>	<p><i>Pros</i> Do not have to build a new building</p> <p><i>Cons</i> Building may not satisfy program needs</p>	<p><i>Pros</i> Building can be designed for program needs</p> <p><i>Cons</i> Need a new building</p>	<p><i>Pros</i> Building can be designed for program needs</p> <p><i>Cons</i> Need a new building</p>

Bloomfield should evaluate if the value and purpose of a senior center is defined by where the center is located (building, site and location within the Town) or whether it is defined by the types of programs and activities that are offered. After that evaluation is completed, improvements to senior programming (i.e., upgrading the existing facility or building a new facility) can be implemented, including a cost-benefit analysis of the various options.

### Purpose of a Senior Center – General Factors for Consideration

#### STEP 1 - Building or Program Oriented?

Bloomfield’s current senior center has to rely on a program-oriented approach because the senior center was created as a result of opportunity. The opportunity occurred when a school was closed and repurposed for town use.

#### STEP 2 - Is location Important?

Should the Senior Center be located in the Town Center?

**School Enrollment**

	1997	2008
9-12	704	729
5-8	817	615
K-4	1,017	813
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,538</b>	<b>2,157</b>

**LEED Certification**

LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) is one of several third-party green building certification programs. LEED is the nationally accepted benchmark for the design, construction and operation of high-performance green buildings.

LEED gives building owners and operators the tools they need to have an immediate and measurable impact on their buildings' performance.

LEED promotes a whole-building approach to sustainability by recognizing performance in five key areas of human and environmental health: sustainable site development, water savings, energy efficiency, materials selection and indoor environmental quality.

There are 4 classifications:

LOWEST

- Certified
- Silver
- Gold
- Platinum

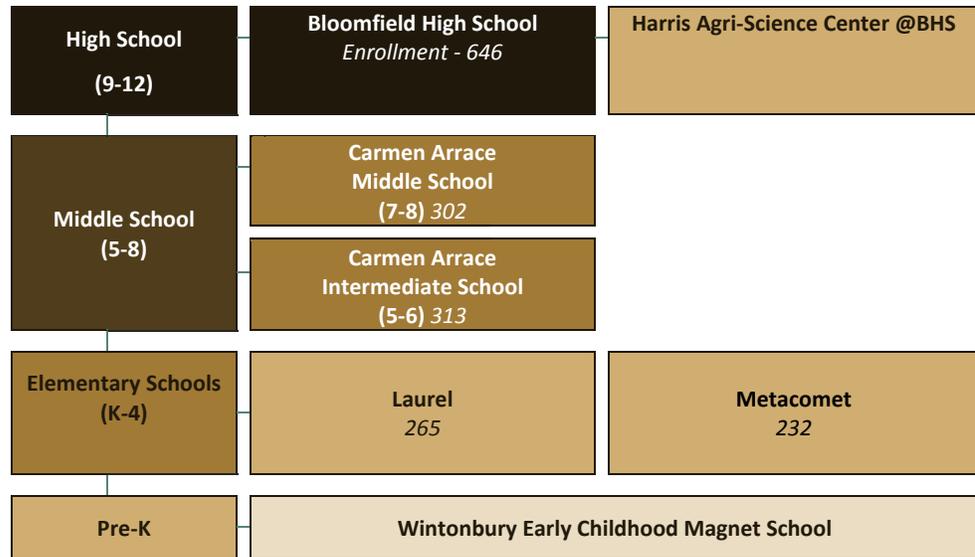
HIGHEST

**Maintain Adequate Educational Facilities**

The school system is one of Bloomfield's important community assets. There are two main facility issues that Bloomfield should continue to address:

- facility modernization, and
- a period of declining enrollment.

Bloomfield Board of Education operates two elementary schools (K-4), one middle schools (5-8), one pre-school, and one high school (9-12). There are about 2,100 students in the school district and the schools range in enrollment from the 83-pupil Big Picture High School to Bloomfield High School with about 650 students.



Strategic School Profiles 2008-2009

Bloomfield has worked to improve the image of the school district by improving school facilities, implementing stricter policies (e.g., uniforms) and adapting to new models of learning (i.e., magnet schools). The community has spent approximately 95 million dollars upgrading the district's facilities. This project included bringing these facilities up to the LEED "Silver Certificate" energy consolidation standard (see sidebar). Being a leader in "green" buildings is an important role for the community.

Recent school reconstruction has resulted in consolidation and the closing of the J.P. Vincent School. The J.P. Vincent School has been returned to the Town of Bloomfield and will be under the programming control of the Town Council. Bloomfield should create a study group to develop reuse options for this site / facility.

	Continue to Do What We Are Doing	Consider New Approaches
<b>OUR STRATEGIES</b>	8.1 Maintain the Town Center as the focal point for town governance and the library	8.5 Locating community facilities in areas that are appropriate for the type of use and best meet the needs of residents / users
	8.2 Minimize impacts between new and existing neighborhoods and those facilities that might have impacts on neighborhoods	8.6 Monitoring how demographic changes might affect the needs and demands on Town services and facilities
	8.3 Seek innovative ways to provide quality-of-life amenities, such as through grants, public-private partnerships, etc.	8.7 Investigating options for expanding the police station
	8.4 Re-use and reconfigure existing space, share facilities, and employ technology innovations to meet needs and minimize the need for new land or buildings	8.8 Determining approaches for meeting recreation demands
		8.9 Assessing “needs” and “wants”
		8.10 Expanding the library
		8.11 Upgrading the senior center
		8.12 Moving the Board of Education into the Town Hall facility
		8.13 Updating and maintaining public buildings, including the provision of energy conservation measures
		8.14 Updating and maintaining parks and recreation facilities
		8.15 Developing master plans for community facilities
		8.16 Developing and implementing energy plans for community facilities

### **Why We Need to Treat Wastewater?**

Everyone generates wastewater. Typical residential water usage is from 40-65 gallons per household per day.

Wastewater contains pathogens (disease organisms), nutrients (e.g., nitrogen and phosphorus), solids, chemicals from cleaners, and even hazardous substances

### **Centralized Solutions**

Sewage from each source is collected in buried pipes and then moves to a single treatment plant. In Bloomfield, the Metropolitan District Commission operates the sewer system.

### **Decentralized Solutions**

Decentralized solutions treat and disperse wastewater as close as possible to its source, use the soil in preference to surface water discharge, and maximize reuse opportunities.

They often employ low-cost, low-maintenance infrastructure (e.g., individually-managed onsite and cluster systems), require appropriate management, and disperse smaller volumes of treated sewage to the environment at multiple locations.

## **Public Water and Sanitary Sewer**

### **Continue to Support Sanitary Sewer**

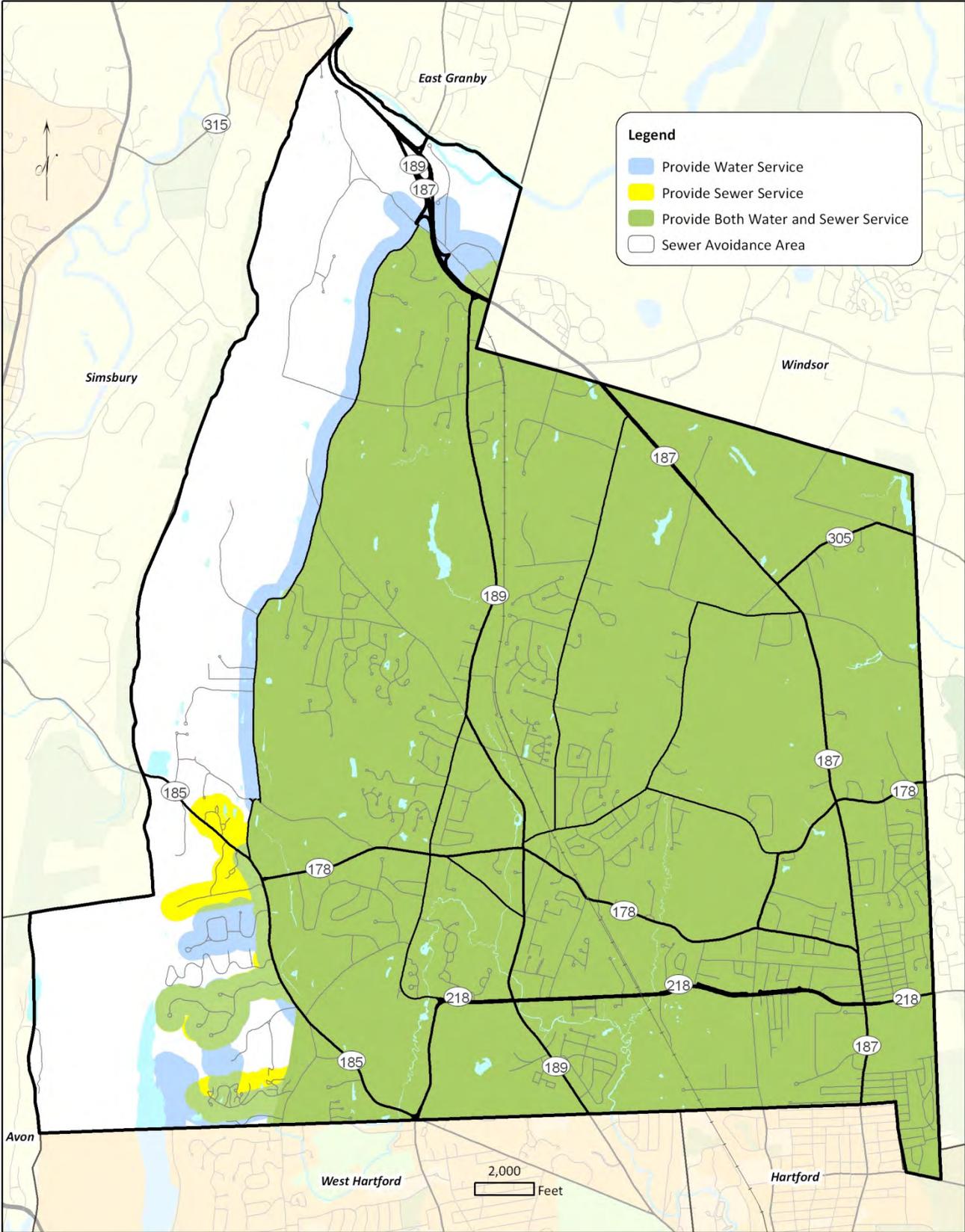
Houses and businesses in Bloomfield are either served by on-site septic systems or public sewers. The Metropolitan District manages the public sewer system in town. The availability of public sewers impacts the amount of and type of development that a parcel of land can accommodate. Ultimately, the MDC has decided when and where sewers are to be extended.

The Town Plan and Zoning Commission should continue to work closely with the MDC to help meet land-use goals. Such coordination will have added importance in that the State now requires that sewer expansions are consistent with the State's Plan of Conservation and Development. The State generally will not fund the expansion of sewers into conservation or preservation areas, as identified in the State Plan. Ultimately, areas that are near public sewers should have access to public sewers service. In state-defined conservation areas, sewers should be used to remedy health issues, not to support additional development.

The remaining non-sewered areas of Bloomfield would be considered "Sewer Avoidance" areas where the intent is to continue to rely upon private on-site septic systems unless public health issues warrant sewer extensions. As discussed on page 23, septic system maintenance is an important water quality protection measure. While the Metropolitan District Commission (MDC) provides a rebate for tank cleaning, additional measures may be warranted, and the situation should be monitored.

# Utility Vision

Bloomfield, CT



### **Watershed Management Plans**

A watershed management plan involves developing strategies to achieve water resource goals within a watershed. It includes the analyses, actions, participants, and resources related to development and implementation of the plan.

### **Connecticut Stormwater Quality Management Manual**

Developed by Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (CTDEEP) to provide guidance on measures necessary to protect water resources from the adverse impacts of stormwater runoff.

The Manual focuses on site planning, source control and pollution prevention, and stormwater treatment practices.

## **Continue to Support Public Water**

Bloomfield's residents and businesses obtain their water either from a public water system managed by the Metropolitan District Commission, from private on-site wells, or from neighborhood wells. Projections for future service connections and demand are not available for individual towns; overall the MDC anticipates they can meet water needs of the region over the next 10 years.

Bloomfield should continue to monitor areas that rely on neighborhood wells. Often, a public water supply has to be extended to these areas because of management concerns, or water quality failures. Ultimately, areas that are near a public water supply should have access to public water service.

## **Continue to Manage Stormwater**

### **Drainage**

Stormwater management is often forgotten and only becomes an issue when flooding occurs after a major storm event or when pollution is detected. Bloomfield works to address stormwater problems during the land development process and as part of daily maintenance activities conducted by the Public Works Department. More frequent and serious rain events, along with new federal laws, are making stormwater management a more important topic for communities to address.

Stormwater management issues in Bloomfield have three main areas of concentration:

- controlling the amount of water,
- improving the quality of the water, and
- finding a way to pay for it.

The Town has been mapping its drainage infrastructure so that there will be a complete inventory of the location and size of pipes and other elements. According to the Town Engineer, continued inspections and maintenance of the existing drainage system is the priority.

As discussed in Chapter 2 (page 23) the Town should continue to pursue Low Impact Development (LID) techniques (see sidebar), which promote on-site infiltration. Reducing the amount of stormwater that runs off of properties (and into drainage pipes) relieves burdens on the Town’s drainage infrastructure and can reduce the need for constructing and maintaining additional drainage structures. Bloomfield might take a leadership role in applying low impact development techniques on Town-owned land and facilities. Narrowing roads (provided road function and emergency serve needs can be satisfied) is one way to utilize this approach.

On Town-owned facilities, the community might install rain gardens, cisterns or green roofs when upgrading existing facilities or building new ones.



### Low Impact Development (LID)

LID is an ecologically-friendly approach to site development and stormwater management that aims to mitigate development impacts to land, water, and air.

The approach emphasizes the integration of site design and planning techniques that conserve natural systems and hydrologic functions on a site.

Low impact development techniques can offer many benefits, some of which include:

- Protecting water quality by reducing impacts to water bodies,
- Preserving integrity of ecological and biological systems,
- Reducing municipal infrastructure and utility maintenance costs (streets, curbs, gutters, sidewalks, storm sewer), and
- Preserving trees and natural vegetation.

[lowimpactdevelopment.org](http://lowimpactdevelopment.org)

### Low Impact Development Tools and Techniques

There are many LID tools available, including:

- Rain Gardens,
- Cisterns,
- Pervious pavements and surfaces, and
- Xeroscaping (water conservation landscaping strategy).

## Promote Energy Efficient Street-lighting

Street lights and traffic signals consume energy and can be expensive to operate. When electricity was cheap and plentiful people did not question the installation of street lights and there was little criteria used to determine whether the lighting was needed. Outdoor lighting wastes energy in situations where the amount of lighting used exceeds what is reasonably required.

Some communities have started to assess street lights to determine whether opportunities exist to eliminate the fixture, replace the fixture with energy-efficient bulbs, or change the overall illumination level. Bloomfield should inventory the street light network and assess whether street lights are appropriate.

In addition, other communities have looked to change traffic signal operations to save energy. Making motorists stop at a signal when no other motorists are at the signal is a waste of energy. Turning the traffic signals to a blinking condition, or completely off, have been strategies that have been explored, that Bloomfield should consider.

### Use Renewable Energy

Energy will continue to be an issue of national importance and reducing our energy needs is important. Bloomfield should continue to use renewable energy and commit to purchasing at least 20 percent of the town’s power needs from renewable sources. Often, community facilities can be a major source of energy waste. Bloomfield should investigate and remediate wasteful energy losses. This might requiring upgrades equipment in all public facilities in response to the inevitability of expensive energy in the future and its impact on the environment if steps to modify our living and development habits. Bloomfield has already taken some steps to prepare for a vulnerable energy marketplace and should continue to build on what has been done to strengthen the community’s resiliency.

	Continue to Do What We Are Doing	Consider New Approaches
<b>OUR STRATEGIES</b>	8.17 Support public sewer service	8.24 Monitoring septic system maintenance compliance
	8.18 Support public water service	8.25 Monitoring areas/properties on private wells
	8.19 Manage stormwater	8.26 Evaluating street lighting and developing standards for when lighting should be provided
	8.20 Inventory the stormwater system	8.27 Installing energy-saving street lighting
	8.21 Utilize low impact development techniques	8.28 Changing traffic signal timing to reduce energy consumption
	8.22 Avoid sewers in areas where they are not needed	8.29 Purchasing, 20 percent of the town’s energy from renewable sources
	8.23 Use renewable energy	8.30 Investigating and eliminate wasteful energy loses
		8.31 Upgrading equipment in community facilities

# Chapter 9 Future Land Use Plan



DIVERSITY

AMENITIES

AESTHETICS

While the Future Land-use Plan looks very similar in appearance to a zoning map, it should not be construed as such.

The colored areas represent desired future land uses, which do not necessarily correspond to zoning classifications.

The Future Land-use Plan is a reflection of the stated goals, objectives and recommendations of the Plan, as well as an integration of the preceding elements in the Plan. In essence the Future Land-use Plan is a statement of what Bloomfield of tomorrow should look like upon implementation of the strategies in the Plan.

The Future Land-use Plan will serve to guide the Town Plan and Zoning Commission as changes to the official Zoning Map are proposed.

### Descriptions of Future Land-use Categories

#### What We Want to Protect

##### Natural Resources

-  Steep Slopes, Wetlands and Floodzone
-  Great Drain
-  Farmington River
-  Water

##### Community Character

-  Open Space

#### How We Want to Grow

-  Rural and low density housing
-  Moderate density housing
-  High density housing
-  Multi-family housing
-  Mixed Use Node / Targeted Development Area
-  Town Center Neighborhood
-  Town Center
-  Office / Design District
-  Mixed Use
-  Industrial

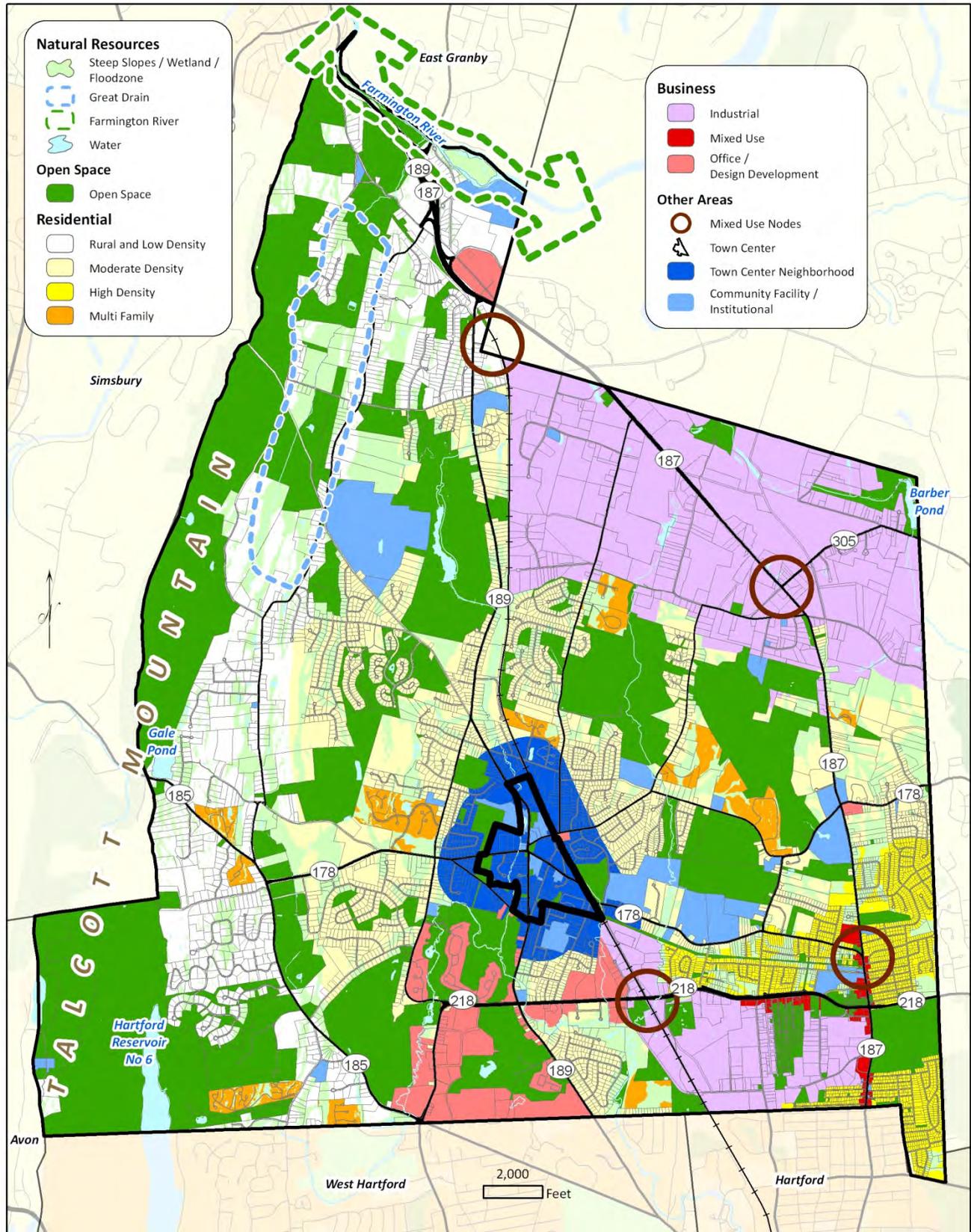
#### What We Want to Provide

##### Community Facilities

-  Existing facilities

# Future Land Use Plan

Bloomfield, CT



## Plan Consistency

In accordance with CGS 8-23, the Future Land-use Plan was compared to State and Regional plans and was found to be generally consistent with both the State Conservation and Development Policies Plan and the Connecticut Capital Region Plan of Conservation and Development.

All three plans:

- identify natural resource, open space, aquifer and historic areas for conservation, and
- identify desirable development densities based on the existing zoning designations of these areas.

Any inconsistencies can be generally attributed to:

- difference in definitions of desirable uses or development densities,
- local (as opposed to State or regional) desires about how Bloomfield should grow and change in the coming years, or
- the fact that the State and Regional Plans make policy recommendations for relative intensity and environmental sensitivity while this Plan suggests specific land-use types.

### **Consistency With Growth Principles of the State Conservation and Development Policies Plan, 2005-2010**

Bloomfield's Plan is consistent with the State Growth Principles as follows:

Principle 1	Redevelop and revitalize regional centers and areas of mixed-land uses with existing or planned physical infrastructure.
-------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

This Plan places a particular emphasis on redevelopment in Bloomfield Town Center and the redevelopment of areas along major transportation routes to reinforce community structure. These strategies utilize existing physical infrastructure, and limit the expansion of critical infrastructure to a defined area.

Principle 2	Expand housing opportunities and design choices to accommodate a variety of household types and needs.
-------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

The Plan expresses a need for and provides strategies for diversifying housing choices to meet current and anticipated demographic and affordability needs. It also looks at ways to capitalize on the existing housing stock and to encourage appropriate new housing development in areas that reinforce the traditional development pattern and efficient delivery of services.

Principle 3	Concentrate development around transportation nodes and along major transportation corridors to support the viability of transportation options and land reuse.
-------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

The Plan recommends future development, including mixed-use development, primarily as infill and redevelopment in and around the Town Center and along major transportation corridors at key nodes, including where potential train stations might be situated. The plan focuses on optimizing existing infrastructure in these areas.

Principle 4	Conserve and restore the natural environment, cultural and historical resources, and traditional rural lands.
-------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

The Plan of Conservation and Development identifies strategies to:

- protect natural resources,
- preserve traditional rural land and agricultural lands,
- protect historic resources, and
- protect and enhance community character.

These strategies will help conserve and restore Bloomfield’s natural environment, scenic, cultural and historical resources.

## Principle 5

Protect environmental assets critical to public health and safety.

The Plan provides strategies to conserve and preserve natural resources in order to protect public health and safety and for overall environmental protection. It also strongly emphasizes the need to protect drinking water sources and to make Bloomfield a sustainable community. The Plan promotes the use of utilities to solve environmental quality issues in these areas, without increase the development intensity.

## Principle 6

Integrate planning across all levels of government to address issues on a local, regional, and statewide basis.

The Plan of Conservation and Development is part of the process of integrating planning with other levels of government and with other agencies.

The Plan will be used to coordinate efforts with:

- adjacent communities,
- regional organizations, and
- state agencies.

# Chapter 10 Implementation

## Overview

Implementation of the Plan is an ongoing process. While some recommendations can be carried out in a relatively short period of time, others may only be realized by the end of the planning period or beyond. Since some recommendations may involve additional study or a commitment of fiscal resources, their implementation may take place over several years or occur in stages.

For Bloomfield, the first step toward successful plan implantation is to create an implementation table, identify responsible entities, and develop priorities.

## Plan Implementation Committee

Some communities establish a Plan Implementation Committee (PIC) to oversee implementation of the Plan's recommendations. The PIC could use implementation schedules to guide the ongoing implementation. The PIC could meet three to four times a year to establish priorities and guide implementation of the Plan's recommendations. In addition, the Committee could assess the status of specific recommendations, establish new priorities, and suggest new implementation techniques. The Town's various boards and commission should be represented on the PIC to help prioritize, coordinate, and refine implementation of the Plan.

## Annual Update Program

The Plan is not a static document that can only be amended every ten years. It can be difficult to anticipate change during a ten year time frame. If dramatic change alters a premise on which recommended strategies are based, or creates unanticipated issues, the land-use commissions can make interim amendments to this Plan to address these changes. In doing so, the commissions and other agencies can be assured that their decisions are consistent with an up-to-date Plan of Conservation and Development.

Bloomfield, with the assistance of the Plan Implementation Committee, should consider reviewing the Plan with the following schedule:

**Updating Tools**

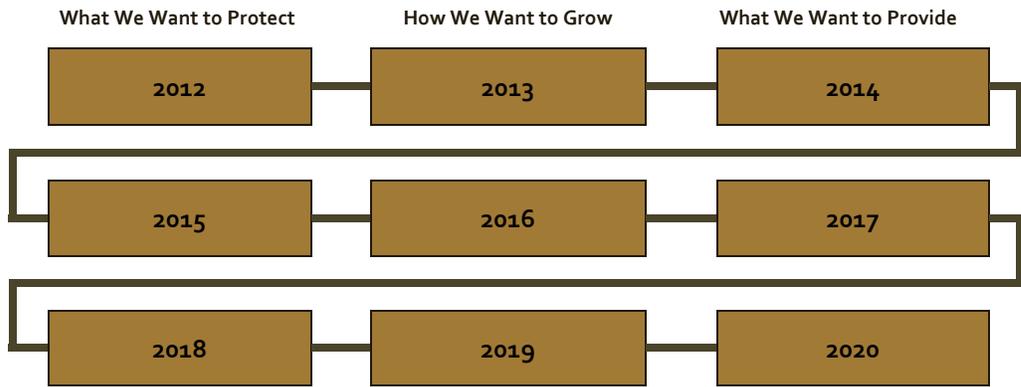
Hold annual public informational meetings to summarize the Plan recommendations and receive feedback from the community,

Hold workshop sessions for local boards, commission and other interested persons to discuss Plan strategies and suggest alternative language,

Revise Plan sections as appropriate, and

Re-adopt the Plan whenever there are minor text or map changes or when the TPZ wants to reaffirm the existing policies of the Plan.

*Possible Plan Update Schedule*



By following this schedule, each review and update extends the Plan’s ten-year life, until a comprehensive update is needed.

**Implementation Tools**

The following highlights a number of tools to help implement the POCD. The Town should determine which tools are most appropriate for Bloomfield.

**Application Review**

The Town Plan and Zoning Commission can accomplish goals and objectives of the Plan by using it to guide land use decisions. The Commission should measure and evaluate all land use proposals for consistency with the Plan. Inconsistency may not be a reason to deny a project, but should cause the community to more closely examine the impacts of the project and whether the inconsistency will threaten the health, safety and welfare of the town.

**Zoning and Subdivision Regulations**

The Zoning Regulations and the Subdivision Regulations provide specific criteria for land development and therefore are important tools to implement the recommendations of the Plan. However, this is only true if the regulations reflect the recommendations of the Plan. Zoning regulations, the zoning map, and subdivision regulations should be updated to implement Plan recommendations and promote consistency between the Plan and the regulations.

## Capital Budget

The Capital Budget (or Capital Improvement Program) is a tool for planning, identifying and prioritizing capital expenditures while accounting for fiscal constraints. The POCD contains recommendations that may require the expenditure of town funds. Any such recommendation must go through the Town’s capital budgeting process. The Plan recommends that these (and other) items are considered when the Capital Improvement Program is developed / updated.

## Referral of Municipal Improvements

Section 8-24 of the Connecticut General Statutes requires that municipal improvements (defined in the statute) be referred to the Planning [and Zoning] Commission for a report before any local action is taken. If the Commission does not approve a project, it can only be implemented after a two-thirds vote by the Town Council. The Commission should evaluate referrals for their consistency with this POCD.

## Implementation Tables

**Priority** – The Implementation table includes “policies” and “tasks”:

- A policy is ongoing and never completed. Because policies are on-going, a time-frame is not necessarily applicable. Priority level for a policy indicates how important it is that the Town abides by the policy in order to achieve the goals in the plans. A low priority policy does not necessarily mean it is not important. It may reflect that other policies were more important at the time this plan was adopted or that the issue is not urgent in nature.
- A task can be completed and therefore priority level can be used to indicate a timeframe for undertaking a task. For example, high priority tasks might be accomplished in the short term (1 to 3 years), medium priority tasks might be accomplished in 4 to 6 years and lower priority tasks might be accomplished in 7 or more years.

**Initial Lead and Partners** – The initial lead is the board, commission or department/staff who would most likely take the lead with implementing the task or policy because it generally falls within their mission or area of expertise. Partners are others that would likely also play a role in implementation. In cases where a “partner” rather than the initial lead has ultimate responsibility for adopting or approving the outcome (e.g., a new ordinance), an “\*” is placed next to that entity.

### Implementation Table Agency Legend

AC	Agriculture Committee (to be created)
BC	Beautification Committee
CC	Conservation Commission (or the Energy, Conservation and Environment Committee)
DPW	Department of Public Works
EDC	Economic Development Consultant
FO	Facilities Operations
IWWC	Inland Wetland and Watercourse Commission
LS	Leisure Services
LS	Library Services
MDC	Metropolitan District Commission
SS	Senior Services
TPZ	Town Plan and Zoning Commission
WHBHD	West Hartford – Bloomfield Heath District
WHS	Wintonbury Historical Society
WLT	Wintonbury Land Trust

# Implementation Tables

## What We Want to Protect

Natural Resources Strategies – Pages 14-28							
#	DESCRIPTION	PRIORITY LEVEL			ENTITIES		STATUS
		HIGH	MEDIUM	LOWER	INITIAL LEAD	PARTNERS	
	Continue to...						
2.1	Protect wetlands, vernal pools and watercourses	X			IWWC		
2.2	Protect riparian zones	X			IWWC	TPZ	
2.3	Protect Groundwater Resource Areas	X			TPZ	MDC	
2.4	Protect Talcott Mountain (Talcott Mountain Overlay District)	X			TPZ		
2.5	Regulate and manage activities in floodplains	X			TPZ		
2.6	Address stormwater runoff	X			TPZ	DPW	
2.7	Require new development to be low impact development	X			TPZ		
2.8	Protect undeveloped lands as habitat		X		TPZ	CC	
2.9	Minimize tree clearing and ground disturbance during construction		X		TPZ		
	Consider...						
2.10	Improving areas where impaired surface and ground water has been found		X		TPZ	TC, MDC	
2.11	Evaluating parking requirements and consider reducing the minimum requirement for commercial development		X		TPZ		
2.12	Expanding the maximum parking requirement into additional uses		X		TPZ		
2.13	Eliminating the use of non-organic pesticides and fertilizers on Town-owned land	X			TC	BOE, DPW	
2.14	Encouraging land owners to use organic pesticides and fertilizers on private property			X	TC	CC	
2.15	Limiting the use of non-organic pesticides and fertilizers on private property						
2.16	Monitoring septic system maintenance			X	WHBHD	CC	
2.17	Establishing a Conservation Commission	X			TC		
2.18	Developing habitat plans for open space areas		X		CC		
2.19	Planting trees on Town-owned land and in public rights-of-way		X		DPW	TC	

CHAPTER 2

## What We Want to Protect

### Community Character Strategies: Farming – Pages 29-34

	#	DESCRIPTION	PRIORITY LEVEL			ENTITIES		STATUS
			HIGH	MEDIUM	LOWER	INITIAL LEAD	PARTNERS	
CHAPTER 3		<b>Continue to...</b>						
	3.1	Allow farming on town-owned land and leased land	X			TC	CC, AC	
	3.2	Host a farmers market		X		AC	CC	
		<b>Consider...</b>						
	3.3	Establishing a farmers marketplace		X		AC	CC	
	3.4	Creating a "buy local" campaign			X	EDC		
	3.5	Establishing an Agriculture / Farm Committee / Commission		X		TC		
	3.6	Creating organizational capacity (Conservation Commission or other group) to implement these strategies (discussed on page 28)			X	TC		
	3.7	Supporting the development of a Community Supported Agriculture program				AC		
	3.8	Developing a local farm inventory / identify clusters			X	AC		
	3.9	Adopting a "Right to Farm" ordinance		X		TC		
	3.11	Evaluating land use regulations for agriculture and agri-tourism	X			TPZ		
3.12	Preserving farmland through a farmland preservation program							

## What We Want to Protect

Community Character Strategies: Open Space – Pages 35-43							
#	DESCRIPTION	PRIORITY LEVEL			ENTITIES		STATUS
		HIGH	MEDIUM	LOWER	INITIAL LEAD	PARTNERS	
	<b>Continue to...</b>						
3.13	Preserve undeveloped land	X			TC	AC, CC, WLT	
3.14	Promote the Farm and Forest Use Assessment Programs	X			TC	AC, CC, WLT	
3.15	Allow farming on Town-owned open space	X			TC	AC, CC	
3.16	Install signs along the boundaries of Town-owned land and easements	X			FO	TC, CC	
3.17	Allow / promote conservation development						
3.18	Support the Wild and Scenic designation of the Lower Farmington River						
	<b>Consider...</b>						
3.19	Developing the East Coast Greenway	X			TC	CC	
3.21	Improving Farmington River Park				TC	FO, LS, CC	
3.22	Establishing east / west greenways		X		TC		
3.23	Re-adopting an Open Space Use Assessment Program		X		TC	AC, CC, WLT	
3.22	Developing strategies to protect land "managed" as open space			X	TC	AC, CC, WLT	
3.25	Allowing an off-site dedication of land when open space is required			X	TPZ	CC, WLT	
3.24	Providing bulk modifications to protect land as open space			X	TPZ	CC, WLT	
3.25	Making conservation development a requirement		X		TPZ	CC, WLT	
3.28	Developing management plans for Town-owned open space	X			TC	LS, CC, AC	
3.28	Developing an open space plan and identify key parcels to acquire	X			CC	AC, CC, WLT	

CHAPTER 3

## What We Want to Protect

### Community Character Strategies: Scenic and Historic Resources – Pages 44-47

#	DESCRIPTION	PRIORITY LEVEL			ENTITIES		STATUS
		HIGH	MEDIUM	LOWER	INITIAL LEAD	PARTNERS	
	<b>Continue to...</b>						
3.30	Conduct programs / events at historic sites and buildings		X		CC	TC, WHS	
3.31	Encourage sensitive ownership	X			CC	BC, WHS, TPZ	
3.32	Retain the Village District zoning regulation	X			TPZ	CC	
3.33	Recognize scenic roads		X		TPZ	BC, CC, WHS, WLT	
3.34	Promote beautification	X			BC	TC	
3.35	Support and promote efforts of the Beautification committee	X			TC		
	<b>Consider...</b>						
3.36	Developing an urban homesteading program		X		TC		
3.37	Becoming a Certified Local Government		X		TC	WHS, CC	
3.38	Adopting an adaptive reuse zoning regulation	X			TPZ	CC	
3.39	Establishing a local historic property recognition program	X			TC	WHS, CC	
3.40	Adopting a policy statement about historic resources	X			TC	CC	
3.41	Supporting the establishment of a Local Historic District			X	TC	TPZ, CC	
3.42	Adopting a demolition delay ordinance		X		TC	CC	
3.43	Acquiring historic preservation easements (when appropriate)		X		TPZ	CC	
3.44	Developing a historic resource inventory / map		X		CC	WHS	
3.44	Recognizing great streets			X	TPZ	BC, CC	
3.45	Inventorizing street trees						
3.46	Installing wayfinding signs			X	TPZ	CC	

## How We Want to Grow

### Town Center Strategies – Pages 49-56

#	DESCRIPTION	PRIORITY LEVEL			ENTITIES		STATUS
		HIGH	MEDIUM	LOWER	INITIAL LEAD	PARTNERS	
	<b>Continue to...</b>						
4.1	Locate important community facilities in the Town Center	X			TC		
4.2	Host events		X		TC	LS	
4.3	Retain a pedestrian-friendly space in the Town Center	X			TC	TPZ; DPW	
4.4	Allow mixed uses		X		TPZ		
4.5	Provide / require a tree canopy along roads and in parking lots			X	TPZ	DPW	
4.6	Encourage multi-story buildings, located closer to the road.		X		TPZ		
4.7	Improve Filley Park						
	<b>Consider...</b>						
4.8	Engaging property owners	X			TC	TPZ; DPW	
4.9	4.14 Engaging property owners Reducing the influence of motor vehicles on the town center						
4.10	Creating opportunities for outdoor dining						
4.11	Allowing on-street parking in the Town Center	X			TPZ	TC	
4.12	Using Tax Increment Financing and other tools to encourage redevelopment			X	TC	DPW	
4.13	Encouraging the redevelopment of properties in the Town center			X	TC	TPZ, EDC	

CHAPTER 4

## How We Want to Grow

Business and Economic Development Strategies – Pages 57-68							
#	DESCRIPTION	PRIORITY LEVEL			ENTITIES		STATUS
		HIGH	MEDIUM	LOWER	INITIAL LEAD	PARTNERS	
	<b>Continue to...</b>						
5.1	One-stop permitting (all land use agencies in one office)	X			TC	EDC, TPZ, IWWC	
5.2	Protect residential neighborhoods	X			TPZ		
5.3	Promote industrial development				EDC		
5.4	Utilize creative zoning techniques for targeted development areas		X		TPZ		
5.5	Promote redevelopment	X			TPZ		
	<b>Consider...</b>						
5.6	Develop strategies for business retention	X			EDC	TPZ	
5.7	Hiring an economic development professional	X			TC		
5.8	Promoting development in the town center	X			EDC	TPZ	
5.8.1	Promoting development in targeted development areas:						
5.8.2	Cottage Grove (CIGNA and COPACO)		X		EDC	TPZ	
5.9	Blue Hills Avenue		X		EDC	TPZ	
5.9.1	Creating new targeted development areas:						
5.9.2	Griffin			X	EDC	TPZ	
5.10	Blue Hills North			X	EDC	TPZ	
5.12	Developing alternatives to industrial development that support community objectives		X		TPZ	EDC	
5.13	Consider conducting a Targeted Industry Study		X		EDC	TC	
5.13	Creating, or supporting the development of, a business incubator space		X		EDC	TC, TPZ	

## How We Want to Grow

Housing and Residential Development Strategies – Pages 67-77							
#	DESCRIPTION	PRIORITY LEVEL			ENTITIES		STATUS
		HIGH	MEDIUM	LOWER	INITIAL LEAD	PARTNERS	
	<b>Continue to...</b>						
6.1	Protect single-family neighborhoods	X			TPZ		
6.2	Promote conservation development	X			TPZ		
6.3	Guide new multi-family development to Targeted Development areas		X		TPZ		
6.4	Provide for a diverse community		X		TPZ	TC	
6.5	Make accessibility a priority			X	TPZ	TC	
6.6	Enforce housing and zoning codes		X				
	<b>Consider...</b>						
6.7	Preserving existing affordable housing		X		TC	TPZ	
6.8	Creating programs to update / rehabilitate older homes	X			TC		
6.9	Identifying tax delinquent properties and foreclose on them		X		TC		
6.10	Utilizing the Incentive Housing Zone tool			X	TPZ	TC	
6.11	Considering requiring inclusionary zoning			X	TPZ		
6.12	Anticipating senior housing needs		X		TPZ		

CHAPTER 6

## What We Want To Provide

Transportation Strategies – Pages 79-92							
#	DESCRIPTION	PRIORITY LEVEL			ENTITIES		STATUS
		HIGH	MEDIUM	LOWER	INITIAL LEAD	PARTNERS	
	<b>Continue to...</b>						
7.1	Promote walking and bicycling	X			TC		
7.2	Enhance the pedestrian network		X		TC	DPW	
7.3	Improve overall circulation		X		TC	DPW	
7.4	Support the extension of Route 305			X	TC		
7.5	Manage existing roads		X		TC	DPW	
7.6	Abandon roads when they are no longer needed			X	TC	DPW, TPZ	
7.7	Support public transportation		X		TC		
7.8	Support rail improvements			X	TC		
	<b>Consider...</b>						
7.9	Adopting a complete streets vision		X		TC	DPW	
7.10	Becoming a bicycle-friendly community	X			TC	DPW, CC	
7.11	Building the East Coast Greenway segment	X			TC	DPW, CC	
7.12	Creating a transportation connection between the Town and the University of Hartford campus			X	TC		
7.13	Enhancing road connections and connectivity			X	TC	DPW	
7.14	Improving access management			X	TPZ		
7.15	Addressing private roads			X	TC		
7.16	Working to restore character along state-owned roads		X		TC	TPZ, CC	

## What We Want To Provide

Community Facility Strategies – Pages 93-103							
#	DESCRIPTION	PRIORITY LEVEL			ENTITIES		STATUS
		HIGH	MEDIUM	LOWER	INITIAL LEAD	PARTNERS	
	<b>Continue to...</b>						
8.1	Maintain the Town Center as the focal point for town governance and the library	X			TC		
8.2	Minimize impacts between new and existing neighborhoods and those facilities that might have impacts on neighborhoods		X		TPZ	TC, LS, FO	
8.3	Seek innovative ways to provide quality-of-life amenities, such as through grants, public-private partnerships, etc.		X		TC	LS, FO	
8.4	Re-use and reconfigure existing space, share facilities, and employ technology innovations to meet needs and minimize the need for new land or buildings		X		TC	FO	
	<b>Consider...</b>						
8.5	Locating community facilities in areas that are appropriate for the type of use and best meet the needs of residents / users	X			TC		
8.6	Monitoring how demographic changes might affect the needs and demands on Town services and facilities		X		TC	LS	
8.7	Investigating options for expanding the police station			X	TC		
8.8	Determining approaches for meeting recreation demands			X	PLS	TC	
8.9	Assessing “needs” and “wants”	X			TC		
8.10	Expanding the library	X			TC		
8.11	Upgrading the senior center		X		TC	LS	
8.12	Moving the Board of Education into the Town Hall facility		X		TC	BOE	
8.13	Updating and maintaining public buildings, including the provision of energy conservation measures	X			TC		
8.14	Updating and maintaining parks and recreation facilities		X		TC	DPW, FO, LS	
8.15	Developing master plans for community facilities		X		TC	FO, LS, BOE	
8.16	Developing and implementing energy plans for community facilities			X	TC	FO, DPW, LS, BOE	

CHAPTER 8

## What We Want To Provide

Utility Strategies – Pages 104-108							
#	DESCRIPTION	PRIORITY LEVEL			ENTITIES		STATUS
		HIGH	MEDIUM	LOWER	INITIAL LEAD	PARTNERS	
	<b>Continue to...</b>						
8.17	Support public sewer service		X		TC	MDC	
8.18	Support public water service		X		TC	MDC	
8.19	Manage stormwater	X			TC	DPW, MDC	
8.20	Inventory the stormwater system	X			DPW	TC, MDC	
8.21	Utilize low impact development techniques		X		TPZ	DPW, FO, TC	
8.22	Avoid sewers in areas where they are not needed			X	TPZ	MDC	
8.23	Use renewable energy						
	<b>Consider...</b>						
8.24	Monitoring septic system maintenance compliance		X		WHBHD	CC	
8.26	Monitoring areas/properties on private wells			X	WHBHD	CC	
8.27	Evaluating street lighting and developing standards for when lighting should be provided			X	DPW	CC	
8.28	Installing energy-saving street lighting		X		DPW	CC	
8.28	Changing traffic signal timing to reduce energy consumption		X		WHBHD	CC	
8.29	Purchasing, 20 percent of the town's energy from renewable sources						
8.30	Investigating and eliminate wasteful energy loses						
8.31	Upgrading equipment in community facilities						



# Acknowledgements

## Steering Committee

Barry Berson	Chair
Charlotte Gregg	
David Mann	
Elene Needelman	
Fannie Gabriel	
Jerry Long	
Joan Gamble	
Jonathan Colman	
Vikki Reski	

## Town Plan and Zoning Commission

Barry Berson	Chair
Byron Lester	Secretary
Nicholas Panke	
Fannie Gabriel	
Abraham Ford, Jr.	
Alfred LeFebvre	
Elene Needelman	
Charlotte Gregg	Alternate
Pamela Gray	Alternate
Barbara Reid	Alternate

## Town Council

Sydney Schulman	Mayor
Wayne Hypolite	Deputy Mayor
Donna Banks	
Joan Gamble	
Joseph Washington	
E. Leon Rivers	
Robert Berman	
Joseph Merritt	
Mark Jacobs	

## Town Staff

Louie Chapman, Jr.	Town Manager
Sharron Howe	Assistant to the Town Manager
Thom Hooper, AICP	Director of Planning
Michael Kosilla	Zoning Enforcement Officer

Technical Assistance provided by:

## Planimetrics

Glenn Chalder, AICP	President
Jason Vincent, AICP	Vice President
Heidi Samokar, AICP	Senior Planner
Leonard Desson, GISP	GIS Manager

