

PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT

AMENDED February 15, 2023
EFFECTIVE February 24, 2023



TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1-1
HISTORY AND TRENDS	2-1
PLAN OVERVIEW	3-1
NATURAL RESOURCES	4-1
OPEN SPACE AND GREENWAYS	5-1
COMMUNITY CHARACTER.....	6-1
DOWNTOWN AND NEIGHBORHOODS	7-1
BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT	8-1
HOUSING.....	9-1
COMMUNITY FACILITIES.....	10-1
UTILITIES	11-1
TRANSPORTATION.....	12-1
SUSTAINABILITY OBJECTIVES	13-1
FUTURE LAND-USE PLAN	14-1
PLAN CONSISTENCY	15-1
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	



This Plan has been developed to be viewed on the internet.

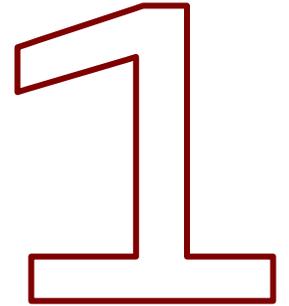
The online version is free and environmentally-friendly.

Web Links active as of 1.13.2010

INTRODUCTION

"Good plans shape good decisions. That's why good planning helps to make elusive dreams come true."

Anonymous



Purpose of the Plan

This Plan of Conservation and Development is a tool for guiding the future of Torrington. It is intended to be both visionary and action-oriented.

One purpose of this Plan is to establish common goals for the community's future. These goals involve determining a positive future outcome or positive strategies and directions for Torrington to pursue.



Skokan's Pond



Older housing stock in the North End (above);
Reused historic building for a bank (below)



Another purpose is to outline action steps, that when implemented, will help attain that vision. If steadily implemented by Torrington 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 Torrington residents.

Updating Tools

- holding annual public informational meetings to summarize the Plan recommendations and receive feedback from the community;
- holding workshop sessions for local boards, commission and other interested persons to discuss Plan strategies and suggest alternative language;
- revising Plan sections as appropriate; and
- re-adopting the Plan whenever there are minor text or map changes; or when the Planning and Zoning Commission wants to reaffirm the existing policies of the Plan.

Why Plan?

Planning is something that people and organizations perform regularly since it helps prepare for future challenges and opportunities. Communities are no different. Planning provides the opportunity to:

- focus on the 'bigger picture' and identify significant goals,
- promote overall values and achieve important purposes,
- coordinate efforts and produce consistent results, and
- achieve efficiency and economy in implementation.

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

The Connecticut General Statutes (CGS 8-23) also require municipalities to adopt a plan of conservation and development every ten years.

How This Plan Was Prepared

Since the adoption of the last Plan of Development in November of 1989, the City of Torrington has continuously updated the Plan to react to changing conditions and modern approaches to conservation and development issues. The most recent update, in August of 2005, involved the Sewer Service Area, an important policy for the City.

During the planning process meetings were held with City agencies and officials and the public to identify planning issues for Torrington to monitor or address. These issues were summarized for the Planning and Zoning Commission and City staff began preparing sections of the Plan.

Annual Update Program

Torrington might follow a program of updating Plan chapters by Theme, such as:



Use and Maintenance of the Plan

This Plan is intended to provide a framework for consistent decision-making by City boards, commissions and residents with regards to conservation and development-related activities. While generally intended to guide conservation and development over the course of a decade, this Plan will lay the foundation for long-term goals reaching far into the future.

Torrington's Plan is intended to be a dynamic document. As strategies are implemented and evaluated, the Plan should be refined to address new issues, adjust a course of action or to refine strategies.

It is intended that each chapter will be updated during the term of this Plan, and that each update may result from more specific planning for that particular subject matter. For example, a portion of the Downtown and Neighborhood Chapter of this Plan is the Executive Summary of the adopted Downtown Master Development Plan, which was approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission.

In the future, other such planning efforts might result in adoption of the executive summary as the "over-arching" plan element in a similar manner.

HISTORY AND TRENDS

"The charm of history and its enigmatic lesson consist in the fact that, from age to age, nothing changes and yet everything is completely different."

Aldous Huxley

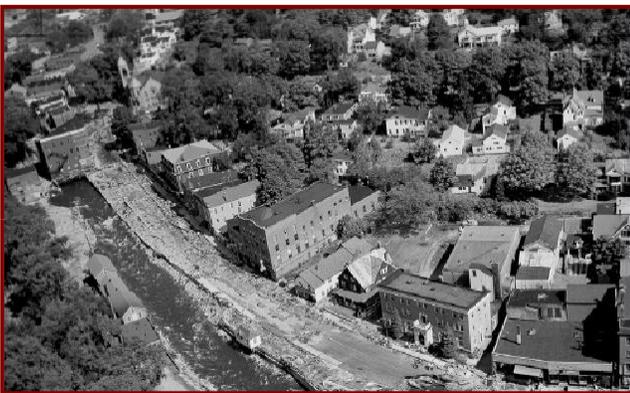


Native Americans occupied parts of Northwestern Connecticut as long as 10,000 years ago. Torrington's native population was part of the Algonquian family of tribes and numerous stone points and stone tools have been found here documenting the presence of Native Americans over thousands of years. In 1732 the Colony of Connecticut granted to Windsor, Connecticut several townships including Torrington.

Ebenezer Lyman Jr. of Durham purchased land from one of the Windsor proprietors and in 1735 became Torrington's first settler. The first school, store, church and tavern were built high on the hills, west of the Naugatuck River, near the homes of the earliest settlers. The second area to be settled was the eastern hill known as Toringford.

These hills provided the best farmland for the settler's agricultural work. In October 1740, Torrington was given permission to incorporate as a town and organize its own town government and ecclesiastical society.

1955 Flood – Connecticut State Library



The Connelly Inn (above); The old armory building (below)



Postcards from www.cardcow.com

Connecticut Freedom Trail in Torrington

John Brown Birthplace
John Brown Road,
Torrington, CT

Perhaps the most famous abolitionist of the Civil War era, Brown became renowned for his raid on Harper's Ferry, VA. His roots and his life, however, began in this home in Torrington.

Isaiah Tuttle House
4040 Tarringford Street,
Torrington, CT

A stop on the Underground Railroad. Currently a private home and not open to the public.

Uriah Tuttle House
3925 Tarringford Street,
Torrington, CT

A stop on the Underground Railroad. Currently a private home and not open to the public.

www.visitconnecticut.com/freedom.html

The rapidly moving water of the Naugatuck River was harnessed to provide waterpower for the early 19th century industries. Significant industrial growth began to occur here in 1813 when Frederick Wolcott erected a woolen mill.

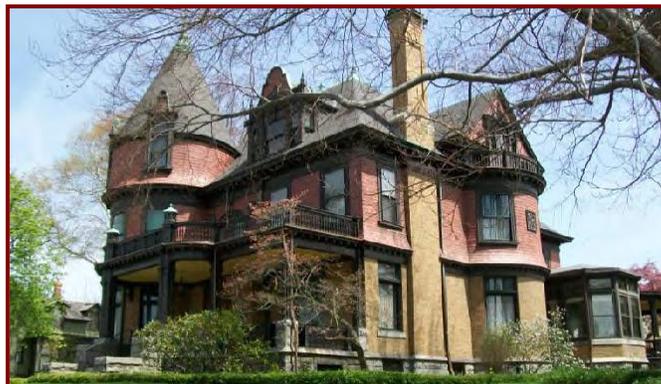
The mill attracted a large workforce and created a demand for housing, goods and services. The small industrial village that grew up around the mill was called Wolcottville for many decades and is now the central business district of Torrington.

In 1834 Israel Coe and Erastus Hodges began the construction of two brass mills on the Naugatuck River. This was the beginning of the brass industry in Torrington, an industry that would later be synonymous with the entire Naugatuck valley.

When the Naugatuck Valley railroad was completed thorough Torrington in 1849, it linked Torrington with other population centers, ending its isolation and stimulating industrial development. Soon Torrington was producing a vast array of metal products including needles, brass, ice skates, hardware, bicycles, and tacks.

English, German and Irish immigrants contributed to the growth of the community in the mid nineteenth century. Torrington's growing industrial plants continued to attract immigrants through the early 20th century. As immigration from southern and eastern Europe increased, Torrington's population exploded from 3,000 to 22,000 between 1880 and 1920. New immigrants during this period included the Poles, Czechs, Slovaks, Italians and Lebanese. In 1923, with a population of 23,000, Torrington was chartered as a city.

Torrington is the birthplace of the abolitionist, John Brown. Born here in 1800, he moved with his family to Ohio while still a young boy. The house that Brown was born in was destroyed by fire in 1918. Today, this historic site is part of the Connecticut African American Freedom Trail (see sidebar). Another famous Torrington resident was Gail Borden who developed and produced condensed milk here in 1856.



Torrington Historical Society

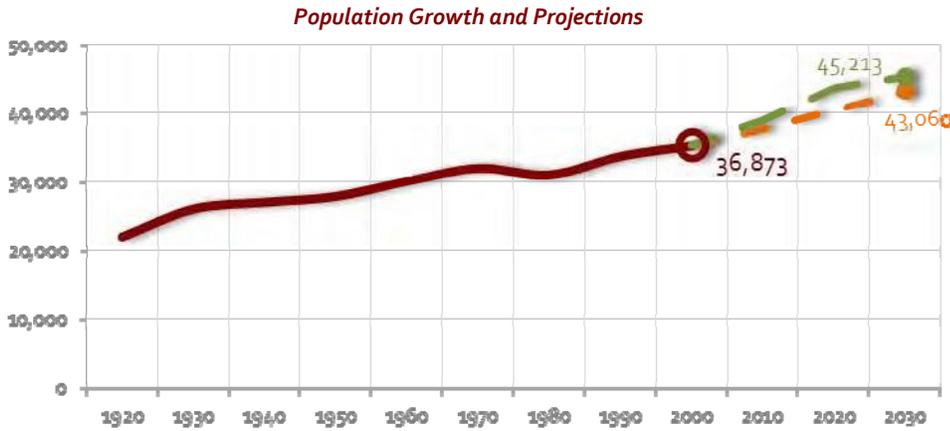
Within the Downtown National Register Historic District is the Hotchkiss-Fyler Estate, home of the Torrington Historical Society where the City's rich past is preserved and made available to the public.

Incorporated in 1944, the Historical Society is a non-profit educational institution.

www.torringtonhistoricalsociety.org

POPULATION

In 2008, an estimated 36,873 people lived in Torrington according to the Connecticut Economic Resource Council (CERC). Population growth has slowed, with a very small increase of 1 percent since 2000. Despite this slow rate of growth, other demographic trends may influence future housing needs and demands in Torrington - specifically, an aging population and shrinking household size.



Torrington is projected to become a community where 50 percent of the total population is age 55 and over. This is an increase from 1980 where only about one third of the population was in this age cohort.

Actual and Projected Age Composition in Torrington, 1980 to 2030

Ages	ACTUAL			PROJECTED		
	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020	2030
0-4	1,662	2,305	2,107	2,048	2,092	2,059
5-19	6,530	5,496	6,706	6,082	6,061	6,051
20-34	7,297	8,677	6,172	7,430	7,832	7,217
35-54	6,343	7,998	10,839	9,094	6,259	6,806
55-64	4,023	2,958	2,972	6,358	8,224	4,022
65 +	5,132	6,253	5,572	6,918	12,250	18,230
Total	30,987	33,687	34,368	37,930	42,718	44,385

1980 to 2000 Census and Connecticut State Data Center (CSDC), 2007

Torrington has seen its average household size shrink from 2.96 in 1970 to 2.33 in 2005. Part of the reason for a shrinking household size is the increase in single-person households. Torrington has a higher percentage of single-person households than the County or State and that percentage increased from 1990 to 2000.

Single-Person Households

	1990			2000		
	CITY	COUNTY	STATE	CITY	COUNTY	STATE
Overall	29%	23%	24%	32%	25%	26%
Owner-Occupied	20%	17%	18%	24%	19%	20%
Renter-Occupied	44%	39%	37%	47%	44%	40%

Census

Population Change

	Pop.	% Change
1920	22,055	--
1930	26,040	18%
1940	26,988	4%
1950	27,820	3%
1960	30,045	8%
1970	31,952	6%
1980	30,987	-3%
1990	33,687	9%
2000	35,202	4%
2008	36,873	5%

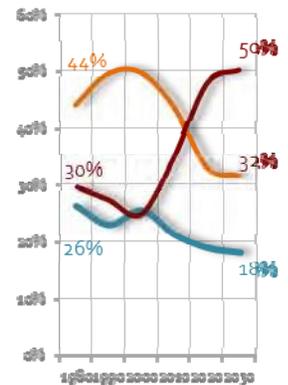
Census; CT State Data Center; City of Torrington, 1989 Plan of Development; CERC (2008)

Population Projections

	Estimate	% Change (over decade)
2010	37,580 - 38,758	6% - 9%
2020	40,320 - 43,546	7% - 12%
2030	43,060 - 45,213	4% - 7%

CSDC and CT Department of Transportation LU-27C, 2008

Change In Age Composition Percent of Total Population



Census

Change in Average Household Size

		% Change
1970	2.96	--
1980	2.55	-14%
1990	2.38	-7%
2000	2.33	-2%
2005 Census	2.33	--

Commuting Patterns
into Torrington, from...

Torrington	8,853
Winchester	1,069
Harwinton	658
Litchfield	631
Waterbury	551
New Hartford	421
Watertown	316
Thomaston	300
Goshen	271
Bethel	200

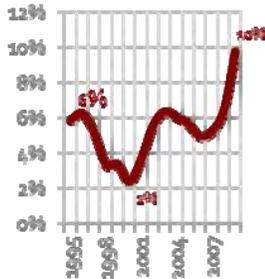
2000 Census

from Torrington, into...

Torrington	8,853
Litchfield	835
Winchester	608
Watertown	422
Waterbury	410
Hartford	392
New Hartford	310
Simsbury	309
Avon	302
Thomaston	280

2000 Census

Unemployment Rate



CT DOL

Zoning

	ZONE	ACRES
Business	CIR	121.69
	I	1,126.36
	IP	538.79
	LB	553.59
	GB	173.20
Residential	R6	1,598.21
	R10	950.73
	R10s	1,089.40
	R15	591.10
	R15s	1,863.31
	R25	696.10
	R40	674.80
	R60	11,352.29
	RRC	1056.63
	RWP	2,999.62
	TOTAL	

EMPLOYMENT

The 2000 US Census indicates that there were about 16,310 jobs in Torrington. According to the Connecticut Economic Resource Center (CERC) and the Department of Labor (CT DOL), from 2000 to 2008 Torrington lost about 400 jobs. Trade and Services account for about 66 percent of all business establishments, and about 66 percent of all Torrington jobs.

Types of Jobs in Torrington

BUSINESS SECTOR	ESTABLISHMENTS	EMPLOYMENT
Agriculture	2%	1%
Construction and Mining	14%	7%
Manufacturing	6%	17%
Transportation and Utilities	2%	2%
Wholesale and Retail Trade	25%	27%
Finance, Insurance and Real Estate	7%	4%
Services	41%	39%
Government	3%	3%

CERC

Labor Force

According to the Connecticut Department of Labor, Torrington has a labor force of 19,644 in 2009. This is an increase of 1,372 from 2000 (about 8 percent). About 10 percent of the Labor Force is currently unemployed. This is the highest it has been in the last 15 years, but it reflects National and State trends and economic conditions.

While considered an employment center in the Region, with a total of 15,893 jobs and 19,644 workers the net effect is that Torrington exports workers to other communities. About 55 percent of the jobs in Torrington are filled by Torrington residents, the remainder (45 percent or so) are filled by people from outside of the City.

ZONING

The City of Torrington is about 40 square miles in size. The City has been divided into 15 zoning districts to regulate land-uses. About 10 percent (about 2,500 acres) of the City is zoned for business land-uses, while 90 percent (about 22,880 acres) is zoned for residential land-uses.



Big Y Plaza (above); Conservation subdivision (below)



Preserving Open Space and Farms

PLAN OVERVIEW

"A hundred years after we are gone and forgotten, those who never heard of us will be living with the results of our actions."

Oliver Wendell Holmes

The Plan is designed around three main themes:

- Conservation,
- Development, and
- Infrastructure.

Each Theme has the following Chapters:

Conservation Theme



- 4 - Natural Resources
- 5 - Open Space and Greenways
- 6 - Community Character

Development Theme



- 7 - Downtown and Neighborhoods
- 8 - Business Development
- 9 - Residential Development

Infrastructure Theme



- 10 - Community Facilities
- 11 - Utilities
- 12 - Transportation

CONSERVATION THEMES

Examples of Strategies included in the Plan are as follows:

	NATURAL RESOURCES	OPEN SPACE	CHARACTER
KEY STRATEGIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address Flood Control 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide Funding for Open Space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protect and Preserve Farmland
SECONDARY STRATEGIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Restore Rivers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop Trails 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protect Scenic Ridgelines
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address Phosphates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve and Maintain Parks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preserve Hay Lots and Meadows

DEVELOPMENT THEMES

	DOWNTOWN	BUSINESS	HOUSING
KEY STRATEGIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the Downtown Master Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retain Existing Businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop Housing in Sustainable Areas
SECONDARY STRATEGIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Locate Government Facilities Downtown 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilize Smart Growth Measures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address Housing Affordability
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote Cultural Heritage Tourism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote Small Business Expansion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address Changing Housing Needs

INFRASTRUCTURE THEMES

	FACILITIES	UTILITIES	TRANSPORTATION
KEY STRATEGIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update Police Headquarters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue Sewer Avoidance in Rural Areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a Comprehensive System
SECONDARY STRATEGIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve Access to Information Address 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve Stormwater Systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to Encourage Access Management
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address Regional Role for Social Programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address Long-term Sewer Needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide Safe Routes for Bikes and Pedestrians

The City has also developed overall objectives to make Torrington a sustainable place. These objectives are located in a single chapter, but are intended to be part of all future planning and implementation in the City.

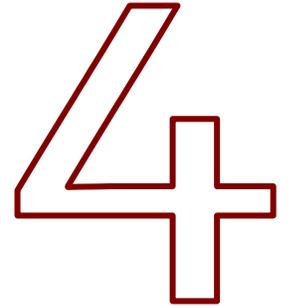
OVERALL SUSTAINABILITY OBJECTIVES

KEY STRATEGIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conserve Energy
SECONDARY STRATEGIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conserve Water
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote Green Neighborhoods

NATURAL RESOURCES

"When one tugs at a single thing in nature, he finds it attached to the rest of the world."

John Muir



The City of Torrington has an abundant and varied inventory of natural resources. The City's close proximity to the Naugatuck River spurred its development during the industrial revolution. The large granite formations along the Still River corridor make the Winsted Road prime for quarrying operations. The high rolling hilltops with fertile land is important farmland producing milk, produce and other agricultural products.

This plan highlights and identifies different resources within Torrington that need protection and preservation.

Watersheds, Water Resources and Water Quality

The *Water Resources Plan* shows the limits and boundaries of minor watersheds within Torrington as well as delineates larger tributaries, water bodies and rivers.

Torrington is divided into two major drainage basins: the Housatonic River Watershed (the Naugatuck River, Bantam River and their tributaries) and the Farmington River/Connecticut River Watershed (the Still River and its tributaries). Torrington should work to protect and improve water quality in these resource areas. Creating riparian buffers, especially with a forested canopy, is one way to achieve this goal.

Torrington Water Supply is the municipal supplier of water purchased from the Torrington Water Company and serves approximately 250 customers along Winsted Road in the northern sections of Torrington. The Winsted Road distribution facilities are owned by the City of Torrington and include 4.5 miles of water main and 20 hydrants. The Torrington Water Company acts as an agent for the City.

The majority of public water supplies are supplied locally by individual wells or by the Torrington Water Company. The privately-held Torrington Water Company, established in 1873, supplies drinking water from its 5,400-acre watershed in Torrington, Goshen and Norfolk to residents of Torrington, Litchfield, New Hartford and Harwinton to nearly 9,000 households. Approximately two thirds of the watershed land is currently perceived as open space but little has been formally preserved.

The City should work with the water company to secure much of this land in perpetuity as open space/water supply land. Also, DEP must ensure that water will not be shifted from one watershed to another to protect downstream water levels in our natural rivers and streams.

Watershed Planning

All activities that occur within a watershed will somehow affect that watershed's natural resources and water quality.

New land development, runoff from already-developed areas, agricultural activities, and household activities such as gardening/lawn care, septic system use/ maintenance, water diversion and car maintenance all can affect the quality of the resources within a watershed."

www.ctdep.gov

Stormwater Impacts

Polluted stormwater runoff is a leading cause of impairment to the nearly 40 percent of surveyed water bodies which do not meet water quality standards. Over land or via storm sewer systems, polluted runoff is discharged, often untreated, directly into local water bodies.

When left uncontrolled, this water pollution can result in the destruction of fish, wildlife, and aquatic life habitats; a loss in aesthetic value; and threats to public health due to contaminated food, drinking water supplies, and recreational waterways.

www.epa.gov

NPDES

The NPDES (National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Stormwater) program is a comprehensive approach to address the sources of stormwater discharges affecting water quality. Torrington is currently exempt from this program.

Low Impact Development

Low Impact Development (LID) involves the use of environmentally-friendly design elements (e.g. swale, infiltrators, rain gardens) as part of site design

www.lowimpactdevelopment.org

Surface and Ground Water Quality on Water Resources Plan

Areas with known water quality issues exist, where City efforts should be made to improve water quality.

Improve Water Quality in the Stormwater Collection System

Torrington like most communities has installed storm drains and pipes as a way to manage stormwater. This system has developed over time, often with little data that depicts where the system is located or how it was built. While management of this system is an important infrastructure issue, there are conservation strategies that Torrington should consider, especially since stormwater runoff has been identified as one of the largest sources of water pollution (see sidebar).

The Federal government has developed a national program (NPDES – see sidebar) to address the impacts of stormwater. Although Torrington is exempt from the NPDES requirements, the City has been following the program guidelines to manage stormwater runoff. Updating the existing system using modern water quality restoration techniques, scrutinizing runoff from construction sites and educating the public about stormwater quality are NPDES strategies that Torrington should expand on.



Fishing at Stillwater Pond (above), River cleanup (below)



West Branch of the Naugatuck River

Inland Wetlands and Inland Wetland Soils

Inland wetlands perform many functions that make them valuable to the community. They help control flooding, remove sediment and contaminants from our streams and rivers, and provide habitat for countless birds, fish and animals. The Natural Resources Plan shows inland wetlands as identified by the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection.

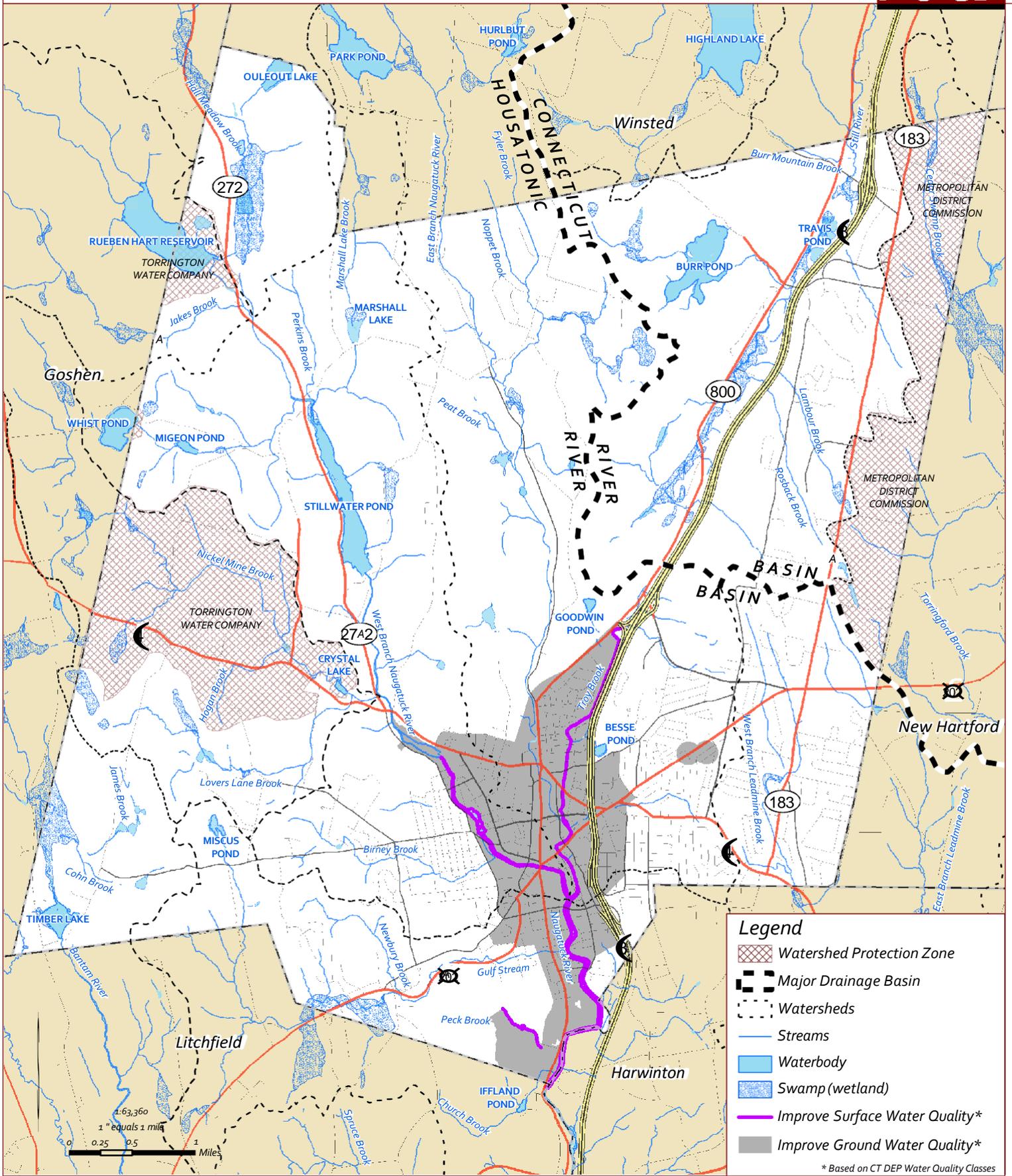
The value of inland wetlands and their protection has been, and will be in the future, of paramount importance to the legislators on the local, State and national levels. The State of Connecticut recognized the importance of inland wetlands and watercourses and adopted standards and procedures for the protection of inland wetlands and their environs.

In Torrington, the Inland Wetlands Commission regulates any disturbance or potential impacts to inland wetlands within 75 feet of a wetland soils type or 100 feet of a watercourse. Through this regulation, inland wetlands and watercourses will be protected and preserved wherever possible throughout the City.

Impacts to these resources occur from existing developed sites and from new development. Torrington should continue to review proposals adjacent to inland wetlands and watercourses and integrate Low Impact Development (see sidebar) land-use techniques when possible into new development. Torrington should also assess whether stream restoration might be appropriate for watercourse located in the more heavily developed parts of the City.

WATER RESOURCES PLAN

Watersheds, Waterbodies, and Streams



Legend

- Watershed Protection Zone
- Major Drainage Basin
- Watersheds
- Streams
- Waterbody
- Swamp (wetland)
- Improve Surface Water Quality*
- Improve Ground Water Quality*

* Based on CT DEP Water Quality Classes



Value of Forests

Precipitation is absorbed and slowed by trees and the forest floor before it reaches local streams and flows to rivers.

This slow absorption reduces the potential for flooding and provides time to enhance water quality.

Flood Control

Construction of the flood control project in Torrington was authorized in July of 1956 along the Naugatuck River.

Other flood protection projects were in completed in 1957 and 1958.

Community Rating System

The National Flood Insurance Program's (NFIP) Community Rating System (CRS) is a voluntary incentive program that recognizes and encourages community floodplain management activities that exceed the minimum NFIP requirements.

As a result, flood insurance premium rates can be discounted to reflect the reduced flood risk resulting from the community's actions.

fema.gov

floodsmart.gov

msc.fema.gov

Waterways and Flooding

The *Natural Resources Plan* shows the current approved Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) floodplain boundaries applicable to existing Torrington development. Floodplains have historically borne a disproportionate share of development for commercial/industrial, transportation and agriculture for many reasons including access to water for power or transportation, flatness of land and ease of development.

In the United States the *National Flood Insurance Program* regulates development in mapped floodplains based on the 100-year flood (1 percent annual chance of a flood of this magnitude). The *Flood Insurance Rate Maps* typically depict both the 100-year floodplain [A zone] and the 500-year floodplains [B Zone].

Where a detailed study of a waterway has been done, the 100-year floodplain will also include the floodway, the critical portion of the floodplain which includes the stream's channel and any adjacent areas that must be kept free of encroachments that might block flood flows or restrict storage of flood waters.



Hall Meadow Reservoir (above);
Naugatuck River (below)



April 16, 2007 Flooding at the Gulf Stream

A problem is that any alteration of the watershed upstream a point in question can potentially affect the ability of the watershed to handle water, and thus potentially affects the levels of the periodic floods.

Torrington will continue to manage development in and around our floodplains to ensure the safety of its people and security of their properties and will work with FEMA to update our local mapping as funding becomes available from the Federal Government. Torrington should also evaluate whether flood management incentive programs, such as the Community Rating System (see sidebar) are an appropriate tool for the community.

An issue facing Torrington right now is the fate of the local Flood Protection Project constructed in our Downtown following the 1955 flood. Over the years the Project was managed at a level of care that matched the City's ability to fund the maintenance and which met the minimum requirements of the Army Corps of Engineers. Torrington should also work to restore the riparian buffer along this corridor and remove invasive plants that have been introduced into this area and have thrived.

Following the devastation of the failed levee system in New Orleans, federal maintenance requirements were raised and an order to comply was placed on the Project in Torrington. At this time the Army Corps, City leaders, politicians, engineers and concerned citizens are working on a solution to address maintenance, flood control, aesthetics, environmental concerns, and public use/access of the river and the hopeful creation of a river walk in Downtown.

Protect Steep Slopes

Torrington is constructed in a major river valley at the confluence of the East and West Branches of the Naugatuck River. A third river valley is present in the north-central region where the Still River flows north into the Mad River towards the Farmington River/Connecticut River Watershed. Protection of the water resources in Torrington is imperative as more and more impervious surface covers land in critical watersheds. Enforcement of regulations regarding water quality and imperviousness within watersheds should be high priority.

The steepest slopes in Torrington are along the west side of the Still River valley, Red Mountain and within the northwest corner of the city boundary. A significant amount of the steepest slopes are contained within the Paugnut State Forest along the Still River.

As more and more of the “easy” land is no longer available, increasing pressure will be placed on more marginal land that is sloping or on rock. Increased attention should be paid to the development of these sites to assure stabilized site drainage and water quality and to access downstream watershed impacts.



View from Weigold Farm (above)
Hills around Stillwater (below)



From the higher elevations amazing views are available. Specific viewing sheds are identified on the *Community Character/Scenic Resource Map* that should be preserved or maintained for public appreciation and viewing.

Current Land Cover

The University of Connecticut *Center for Land Use Education & Research* (CLEAR) developed land cover maps for the years 1985, 1990, 1995 and 2002.

As the name implies, land cover shows the “covering” of the landscape, as opposed to land use, a term that refers to what is practiced, permitted or intended for a given area (such as zoning designations).

Land cover information was derived through analyses of satellite-based remote sensing images. The predominant land cover within Torrington (2002 CLEAR data) is deciduous forest at about 34 percent; followed closely by coniferous forest at about 24 percent and developed land at about 23 percent.

The 1985 and 2006 land cover images shows even further changes in land cover since 2002.

Land Cover Statistics 1985-2006

Land Use	Change in acres
Developed	+935.4
Grass	+360.6
Agricultural Field	-246.7
Forests	-1,109
Water and wetlands	-106.7
Barren	+187.5

www.clear.uconn.edu

Views

Endangered Species

Any native species documented by biological research and inventory to be in danger of extirpation throughout all or a significant portion of its range within the State and to have no more than five occurrences in the state, and any species determined to be an "endangered species" pursuant to the federal Endangered Species Act.

Threatened Species

Any native species documented by biological research and inventory to be likely to become an endangered species within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range within the State and to have no more than nine occurrences in the state, and any species determined to be a "threatened species" pursuant to the federal Endangered Species Act.

Species of Special Concern

Any native plant species or any native non-harvested wildlife species documented by scientific research and inventory to have a naturally restricted range or habitat in the state, to be at a low population level, to be in such high demand by man that its unregulated taking would be detrimental to the conservation of its population or has been extirpated from the State.

www.ctdep.gov

Protect Threatened or Endangered Species

The Connecticut Endangered Species Act, passed in 1989, recognizes the importance of our state's plant and animal populations and the need to protect them from threats that could lead to their extinction. The overall goal of the legislation is to conserve, protect, restore and enhance any endangered or threatened species and their essential habitat.

The Connecticut Threatened or Endangered Species Map is a map created and managed by the Department of Environmental Protection and requires annual updating to keep current on existing known species of interest within our City boundaries and is shown on the Natural Resources Plan as the Natural Diversity Database Area.

Biodiversity data is needed for Torrington, and relevant to planning as large sections of the City are untouched. The DEP and other natural resource organizations need to be encouraged to explore and document Torrington's resources in a more detailed manner so we have a better understanding of what is really present within the City. This will only aid the City's land use groups to make better more informed decisions.



Mile-a-Minute Vine (above); Phragmites (below)



Invasive plant species along Flood Control areas

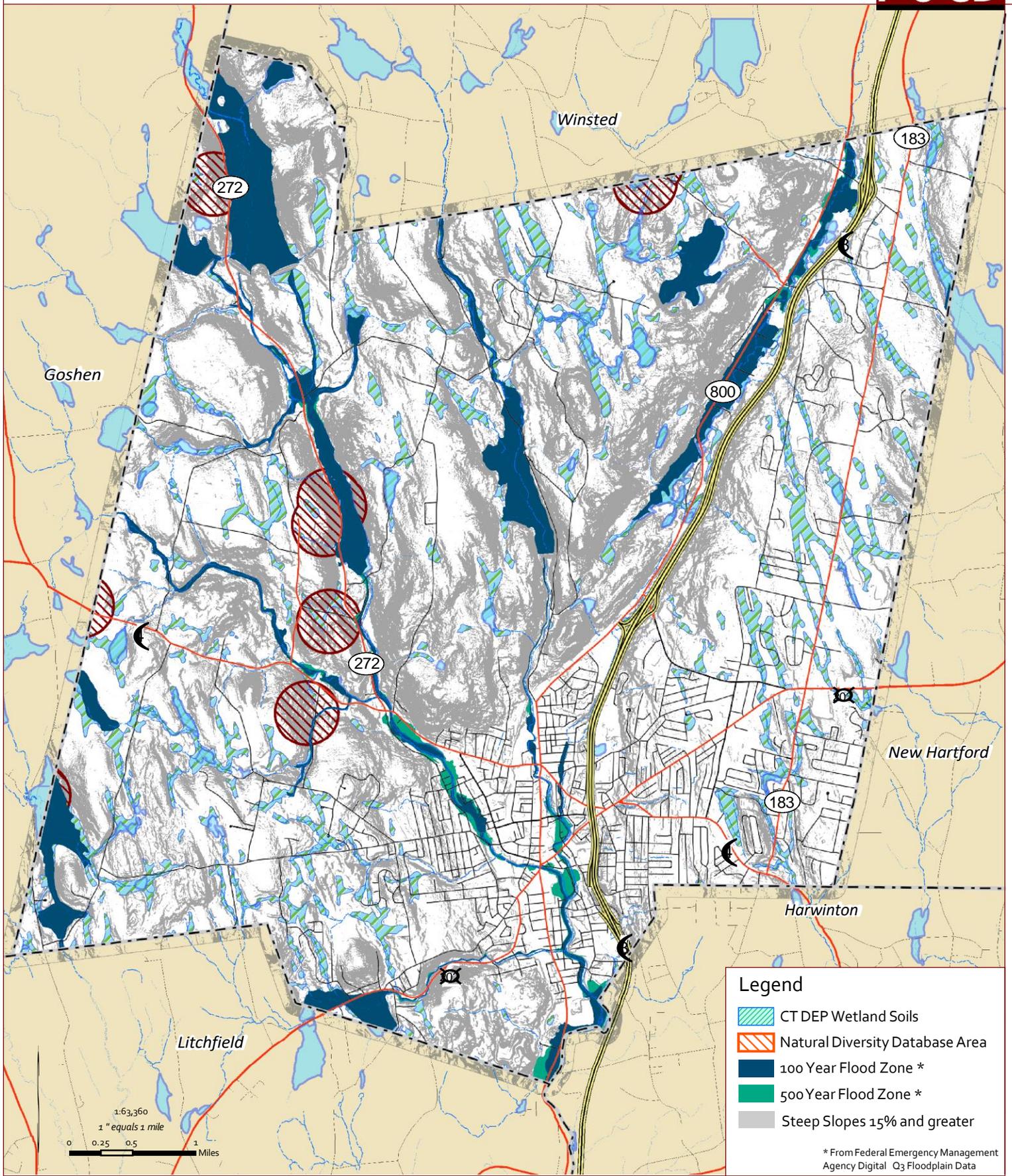
Further, Torrington needs to assess the current impact of invasive plant species on its existing resources and create a plan of action, if needed, to eradicate or control the spread of these plants. Specific plants of concern in Torrington are: Japanese Knotweed, Phragmites, and Mile-a-Minute Vine. Other invasive species are found within the City boundaries and should be controlled on a site by site basis. The flood control project has become a significant seed source of invasive species found downstream.

Improve Communication on Conservation Issues

The City should enhance communication with the public regarding various natural resources and accessibility to them. Torrington has many beautiful areas and special places to visit – but very few know they exist. We will design/develop new maps highlighting existing features, sites and trails for natural resources and consider providing expanded information on local farms and regional connections.

A new colorful network of informational signs will be developed to direct visitors to area places of interest. Expanding educational programming in schools and for the public is critical to educate the new generation on the need for conservation and to foster pride in the community.

NATURAL RESOURCES PLAN



Legend

- CT DEP Wetland Soils
- Natural Diversity Database Area
- 100 Year Flood Zone *
- 500 Year Flood Zone *
- Steep Slopes 15% and greater

* From Federal Emergency Management Agency Digital Q3 Floodplain Data

Goals of Urban Forestry

Protect undeveloped forests from human encroachment and the impacts of land development by creating and applying various planning techniques, regulatory tools, and incentives.

Enhance the health, condition, and function of urban forest fragments

Reforest open land through active replanting or natural regeneration to regain some of the functions and benefits of a forest and to increase overall watershed forest cover and increase forest canopy.

www.cwp.org

Manage the Urban Forest

There is greater recognition of how urban trees and forests improve air and water quality, reduce stormwater runoff, conserve energy, and protect public health. At the same time, the loss of trees and forests in developing watersheds continues, and urban tree canopy in developed areas deteriorates through removal or lack of replacement.

The benefits of urban trees are many. Urban trees:

- reduce stream erosion and stormwater runoff,
- improve water and air quality,
- provide habitat for wildlife,
- reduce summer air and water temperatures, and
- improve the quality of life for residents.

Torrington should evaluate the urban forest needs on a watershed basis and develop plans to:

- conduct stream restoration projects to improve riparian buffers,
- plant shade trees in areas where pedestrian activity is high,
- establish forestry goals for urban and rural parts of the community, and
- develop a plan to provide on-going maintenance of public trees.

Natural Resource Strategies

	TASK	DESCRIPTION
4-1	Protect water supply land as open space	Work with the water company to secure as much water supply watershed land as possible
4-2	Improve water quality in the stormwater collection system	Updating the existing system using modern water quality restoration techniques, continuing to scrutinize runoff from new development and educating the public about stormwater
4-3	Incorporate Low Impact Development techniques into land-use regulations	
4-4	Evaluate stream restoration opportunities along developed areas	As land development applications come in, look for ways to improve or restore stream buffers
4-5	Develop a solution to address maintenance flood control and other concerns related to the Flood Protection Project	Work closely with Federal, State and local authorities as well as public stakeholders to find sustainable solutions to the problem
4-6	Assess the current impact of invasive species.	Inventory and establish a management plan
4-7	Improve communication with the public regarding conservation issues	Set up a strategy of education, outreach and action to engage the community
4-8	Protect and preserve view sheds and scenic views when possible	
4-9	Evaluate urban forest needs on a watershed basis	Determine what watersheds have been significantly impacted and manage development within those watersheds accordingly

OPEN SPACE AND GREENWAYS

POCD

5

"The trouble with land is that they're not making it anymore."

Will Rogers

In communities throughout the Northeast taxpayers are supporting local investment to protect open space and improve recreation areas. Open space provides multiple benefits including protection of water supplies, wildlife habitat and wildlife corridors, outdoor recreational opportunities, maintenance of ridgeline views and preserved farm lands. Active recreation areas, such as ball fields, are in great demand as more people of all age groups participate in sports.

Passive recreational uses such as hiking, wetland boardwalk trails, a dog park, cross-country skiing and bird watching trails are desired and are currently very difficult to find on local public lands. Improved access to streams, rivers and other scenic resources are needed and can allow for a different kind of recreational opportunity and encourage a diverse range of activities to occur along those links.

A major goal for Torrington is to connect our open spaces and special places through a river walk, hiking trails, greenways, rail to trails and a rails & trails network. We also need to find funding to support open space initiatives.

Historic cemetery as open space



View from Weigold's Farm (above), School fields as open space (below)



Implement the Naugatuck River Greenway Plan

The Litchfield Hills Council of Elected Officials has developed a Greenway Plan for the Naugatuck River. This Plan has been approved by the Connecticut Department of Environment of Protection. Torrington intends to take steps to acquire land and right-of-way to complete the Plan. The City should also consider using innovative land-use tools to allow property owners to donate their excess land along the Greenway without becoming a zoning non-conformity (through modifications to minimum lot size when land is donated).

Greenways

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

Officially Designated Greenways In Torrington

- Naugatuck River Greenway (2006)
- Sue Grossman Still River Greenway (2003)

Open Space Definitions

Conservation Easement – A restriction placed on a piece of property to protect its associated resources. .

Dedicated / Preserved Open Space – Land with certain restrictions or covenants that protect it from development in perpetuity.

Managed Open Space – Land perceived as open space such as golf courses or cemeteries but in fact is not preserved.

Blue-Blazed Trails

See the *Connecticut Walk Book* for a list.

www.ctwoodlands.org

Reinvest in Local Parks and Recreation

Protecting open spaces is good business for a community. Communities that balance development and open space protect the quality of life sought by families and industries looking for a new location to live and work. The City of Torrington's Department of Parks & Recreation has completed a detailed *Parks and Recreation Master Plan* for the City parks in 2004. For more detailed information about specific parks, their uses and development, consult the Master Plan document.

With obesity on the rise nationally and a youthful population leaving the area, efforts should be increased to provide fitness trails and recreational opportunities that appeal to younger people. Rock climbing walls, obstacle courses, roller trails, expanded skate parks and other youth-minded activities should be considered and incorporated in planning when possible.

Increase Urban Open Space

Open space located in more developed urban areas is very important. Passive "pocket parks", planted outdoor dining opportunities, vegetated streetscapes along with small neighborhood parks all add to the quality of life for the urban resident. Creating open space in the core of the city provides refuge to the residents from excessive pavement to relax and play as well as improve water quality and the quality of life in general. As Torrington progresses with its Downtown redevelopment, a strategy should be devised to locate areas for green space and the removal of paved areas in key locations (See Chapter 7).

As Coe Park changes into more of a destination garden, a need arises for an open public park for concerts and active recreation to draw people into a central activity area. The Downtown Municipal Development Plan should locate a possible site, perhaps connecting with the river walk, to provide this much needed active outdoor gathering space.

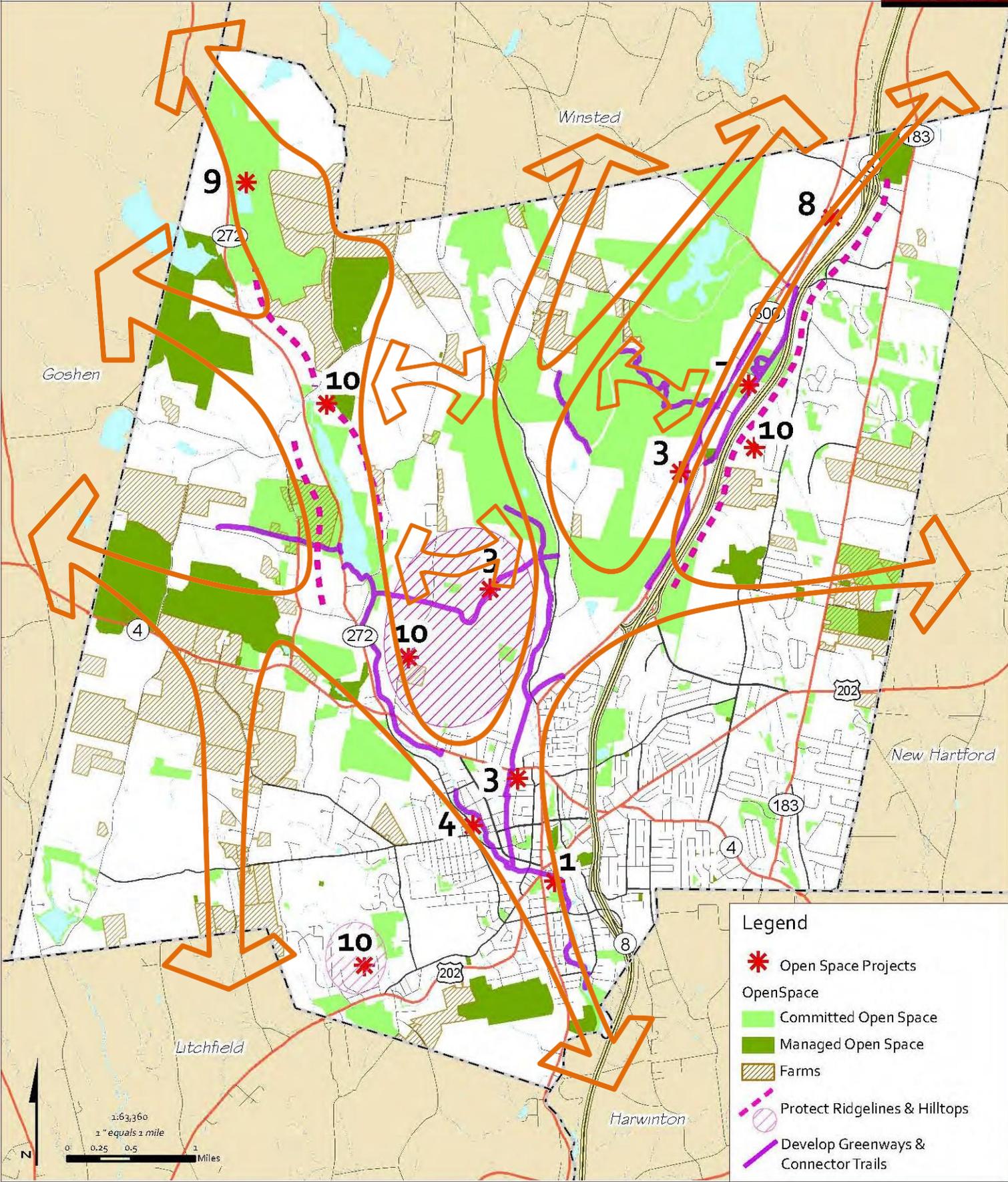
Protect Existing Open Space

Torrington is fortunate to have considerable permanent open space. A 2009 GIS study shows about 23 percent of Torrington's land area was protected open space (including school properties and detention basin areas). As the region's most densely populated community and urban center, Torrington has considerably less open space per capita than other area towns.

The highest concentration of existing open space is in the northern and western sections in large blocks owned by the State and the Torrington Water Company. The Water Company land is not fully protected from development. The City will work with landowners that control land that is managed open space (e.g. golf courses, schools) to find ways to convert this land into protected open space.

The *Open Space Plan* includes an updated map of Torrington's open spaces showing land owned by the State, City, Heritage Land Preservation Trust, conservation easements, private open space, and Water Company owned land. The Plan also illustrates Torrington's top 10 conservation priorities.

OPEN SPACE PLAN



Open Space Strategies

RANK	TASK	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION
5-1	Naugatuck River Restoration and River Walk	Naugatuck River through Downtown (Army Corps project area)	Develop a river walk along the banks of the Naugatuck River through Downtown. Remove invasive species from the stream edges, eliminate or reduce the amount of large rip rap and create a more naturalistic edge with native grasses, flowers and taller shrubs to provide shelter and shade for aquatic organisms and to improve water quality.
5-2	Open Space Funding	n/a	Find methods of additional funding for the Open Space Account. Consider filing fees, bonding, line item account, grants, annual contributions etc. Acquire land to support the open space goals.
5-3	Greenways and trails		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connector trail from Main Street to Sunnybrook State Park 	City-wide	Create a greenway and trail to connect North Main Street to Sunnybrook State Park. Develop plans and construct trail. A footpath currently exists on private property and needs to be formalized and protected. Use of grants, local fund-raising and bonding should be considered.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connect Sue Grossman Greenway to Downtown 	Along Winsted Road	Acquisition of right-of-way for new greenway path from Harris Drive to Newfield Road, along the rail line, to Downtown. Right-of-ways need to be acquired from railroad, utility and private land owners. Use of grants, local fund-raising and bonding should be considered. Continue unified cooperation between residents, the City, and State agencies.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sunnybrook to Stillwater connector & preserve significant natural land 	Property along Mountain Road and at the end of Stone Ridge Drive	Encourage the State to acquire property to connect Sunnybrook State Park and Stillwater Pond State Park. In addition to providing a walking connector and wildlife corridor between the State parks. The land should also protect and preserve the upland beaver marsh and heron rookery, Indian Lookout Mountain Laurel display and overlook. The City should contact the State to highly-encourage acquisition of the land needed to connect these parks and protect these resources.
5-4	West Branch of the Naugatuck - restoration	West Branch of the Naugatuck River at Church Street	Breach, circumvent or remove the Church Street dam to restore natural flow to this portion of the River. Project would include sediment remediation and native restoration of the river's edge from Church Street to Wolcott Avenue. The project should also include trails along the River as described in the Naugatuck River Greenway Plan (LHCEO).
5-5	Preserve hay fields/grasslands/sedge meadows	City-wide	Acquire conservation easements over existing hayfields for site protection and provide incentives for the farmers to take their hay later in the season to allow fledging of nesting birds that require the fields for cover and food (specifically Connecticut Birds of Concern - e.g. Bobolinks)
5-6	Protect additional farmland	Rossi farm, Weigold Farm area & Ruwet Farm	Work with the State and private land owners to acquire development rights to much of the existing farmland - including working hayfields to maintain Torrington's character.
5-7	Expand Machuga Park, add vehicular link to Harris Drive and connect to state park trails	Machuga Park	Acquire property or right of way over old trolley line to Harris Drive; protect the area around the park through conservation easement or land ownership. Work with the Parks & Recreation Commission to include passive recreation opportunities. Connect the Park to the Sue Grossman Still River Greenway. Expand hiking opportunities and link the Park with the State park trail system through abandoned Buttrick Road.
5-8	Protect Still River Corridor	Still River along Winsted Road	The Still River is a highly diverse resource in Torrington providing much in the way of flood storage, habitat and water quality enhancements. Acquire conservation easements or land along the Still River to protect this watercourse from further degradation and enhance the Sue Grossman Greenway with trails into special areas for public access and appreciation.
5-9	Encourage the Reinvigoration of John Minetto State Park	John Minetto State Park -	Renovate and improve John Minetto State Park in a similar fashion as Burr Pond, Haystack and Dennis Parks. The State needs to undertake Minetto as its next big project due to its close proximity to a core population center; it's a beautiful facility for 'staycations' and could easily be reopened as a campground to provide for more constant care of the property.
5-10	Encourage the Preservation of the Scenic Hills and Ridgelines of Torrington	City-wide	Encourage development away from key ridgelines in Torrington to protect the scenic vistas around Torrington and from Downtown.

COMMUNITY CHARACTER

"The more a community comes to resemble 'Anyplace, U.S.A.', the less reason there will be to visit."

Edward T. McMahon, Director, American Greenways Program



Torrington is nestled in the Litchfield Hills, countryside noted for its scenic beauty. The City is the largest in Litchfield County and has been the industrial and commercial hub of northwestern Connecticut for over a century.

Torrington has the largest concentration of Art-Deco buildings in the State of Connecticut and this is an important part of the character of the community. The core of Downtown was classified as a National Historic District in 1988.

Unfortunately, the face of Torrington changed forever in 1955, when a catastrophic flood significantly altered the city, tearing up Main Street and washing numerous buildings away. The resulting flood protection projects have altered the scenic aspect of the Naugatuck River. Torrington's challenge is to find ways to embrace their past and move forward into the future.

Downtown Warner Theater



Maintain agricultural feel in rural areas (above),
The Naugatuck River (below)



Currently, Torrington is a mix of manufacturing, retail, tourist attractions, farmlands and rural areas. Downtown is being preserved as a thriving cultural center, boasting the Warner Theatre and the renowned Nutmeg Conservatory. It's eclectic mix of antique dealers, art houses, architecture and small specialty shops makes Torrington an appealing choice for residents and tourists alike. – From the Torrington website www.torringtonct.org

Historic Districts

Torrington has two National Register Historic Districts:

- Downtown
- Torrington Street

According to Historic Resource Surveys there are several other areas in the City that could qualify as National Register Historic Districts.

These areas include:

- Barber Street,
- Prescott Street,
- Cook Street - Taylor Street, and
- a portion of Migeon Avenue.

There are also buildings that might also qualify as National Register Historic Places:

- First Congregational Church,
- Lewis Whiting House,
- Fowler House, and
- Villa Friuli.

What is Community Character?

To take an active role in preserving the City's character you must first find out what makes it unique and special. Below is a snapshot of what sets Torrington apart from the other 168 towns in Connecticut:

- a compact modern Downtown with excellent examples of Art-Deco, commercial Victorian and Modernistic architecture;
- rivers and headwaters – the City was built around the confluence of the East and West Branch of the Naugatuck River with many other important rivers and streams that define the area (Still River, Bantam River, Gulf Stream) with their associated wetlands and upper reach tributaries;
- a community affected and defined by the 1955 Flood; and
- a small concentrated city core surrounded with approximately two-thirds of the land in light suburban and rural development.

Protect Scenic Resources

Scenic resources are those visual elements of the landscape and community that help define Torrington - Downtown buildings, riverside landscape, farmland and wooded hills. The *Community Character/Scenic Resources Map* illustrates the locations of resources that need to be protected in order to preserve the quality and uniqueness of Torrington's character. Often times preserving the elements of the community character end up preserving natural resources as well, as they are often one and the same.



Open meadows along Rossi Road (above), Scenic roadways like Pothier Road (below)



Farmland - Carroll's Farm

Legend for Community Character/Scenic Resources Map on Facing Page

SCENIC VIEWS

- A** Views south to Klug Road – Weigold Farm
- B** Stillwater Pond and north to Norfolk Mountain Rd.
- C** Views towards Downtown from Indian Lookout – Mountain Rd.
- D** Views across the valley – Mazzarelli land
- E** Panoramic views east – Klug Farm

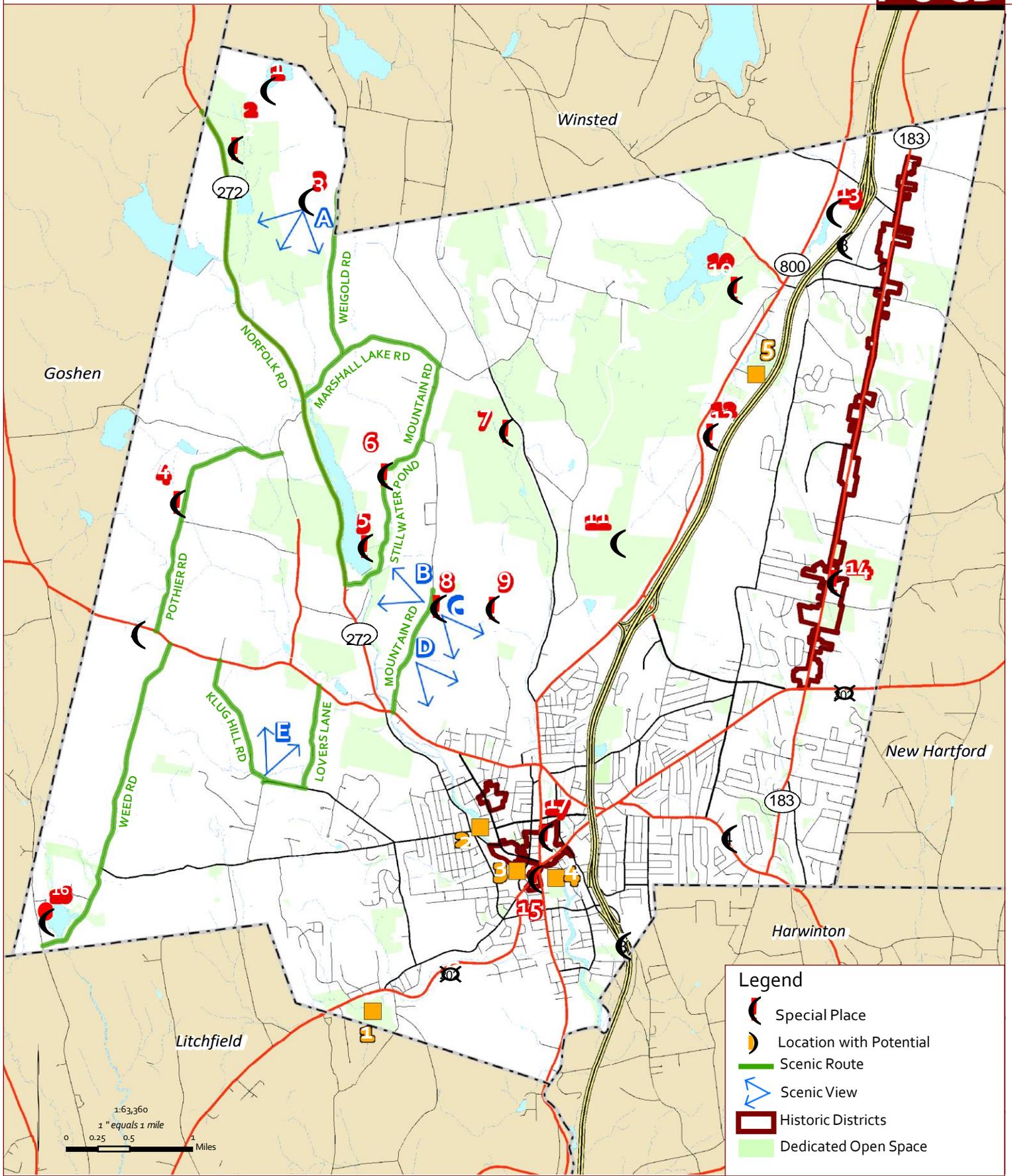
POTENTIAL SCENIC AREAS

- 1** Massive wetland complex – Gulf Stream
- 2** Potential public access area – Church St. Dam
- 3** Naugatuck River
- 4** Farmer's market (expand to all year)
- 5** Potential destination park on the Sue Grossman Greenway – Machuga Park

SPECIAL PLACES

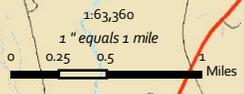
- 1** Very picturesque with lake – Lake Ouleout
- 2** Wild and scenic streams - Hopmeadow
- 3** Unique grasslands and bog system – Weigold Rd.
- 4** Farm with historic buildings – Carroll Farm
- 5** Picturesque lake – Stillwater Pond State Park
- 6** Great waterfowl and wildlife site - Skogan's Pond
- 7** Known for its hiking trails - Sunnybrook
- 8** Mountain Laurel display - Indian Lookout
- 9** Heron rookery, ponds - Top of Red Mountain
- 10** Recreational lake and trails - Burr Pond State Park
- 11** Wooded hills & hiking trails - Paugnut State Forest
- 12** Still River wetland complex
- 13** Birding area with scrub meadows and ponds
- 14** Family farm – Ruwet Farm
- 15** An historic park with beautiful plantings - Coe Park
- 16** Timber Lake on the Bantam River
- 17** Historical Society and Museum (Main St)

COMMUNITY CHARACTER/SCENIC RESOURCES



Legend

- Special Place
- Location with Potential
- Scenic Route
- Scenic View
- Historic Districts
- Dedicated Open Space



Village District

Section 8-2j of the Connecticut General Statutes allows a community to adopt zoning regulations which will give the Planning and Zoning Commission greater authority over the design aspects of an application.

The statutes require that:

- such a district only be established in an area with a distinctive character, landscape, or historic value, and
- that the Commission retains a “village district consultant” to provide advice and guidance on design issues.

Protect Ridgelines

Torrington has many unspoiled ridgelines that maintain the green valley walls surrounding the City. The protection of major ridge lines, especially along the Route 8 corridor on both sides of the valley, the prominent Red Mountain area, views from Mountain Road northwest towards the UCONN campus including both sides of the Stillwater Pond, and the wooded hillsides of Besse Hill near New Litchfield Street should be a priority for protection. The Planning and Zoning Commission should consider the impact of proposed uses, including subdivisions, to the scenic ridgelines throughout Torrington.

Identify and Preserve Historic Resources

The *Community Character/Scenic Resources Map* is included to show current preserved or protected properties. It also identifies which of those lands are permanently preserved. The Torrington Historical Society and the Torrington Historic Preservation Trust along with the City of Torrington should work collaboratively to ensure that community history is preserved.



The Torrington Historical Museum (above), Historic Downtown – Yankee Pedlar Inn (below)



Early Wolcottville Map of Torrington

Preservation strategies should include conducting more historic resource surveys, designation of additional historic properties and historic districts, and the storage of historic documents, maps and photographs in a modernized manner that allows greater protection of the resources and provides better public access. Electronic filing and up to date methods of storage and sharing should be explored.

Torrington will take action to preserve the City's key natural, cultural and historical resources including taking action to preserve and upgrade the City's oldest cemeteries. Historic trails within the City should be enhanced and expanded to connect into other trail systems throughout the City. Specifically the Walking Tour of Downtown Historic District should be enhanced with signage and directional keys to direct someone around the trail even without a map handout.

Reduce Light Pollution

In 2001 the Planning and Zoning Commission adopted a new Outdoor Lighting Regulation aimed at minimizing "light trespass" and the glow surrounding development at night. The regulations were based on the Dark Sky Organization's model (www.darksky.org) and include requirements that limit lighting levels for different uses and require full cut-off fixtures to focus light downward, not out or up into the sky. All new commercial and industrial developments will comply with the dark skies initiative.

Efforts should be made to continue to limit the wasted energy and light that creates the glow around the City's developed areas to allow the residents to more clearly see the stars. Special emphasis should be given to utility pole lighting of private properties from the right of way. All of this type of lighting should be eliminated or replaced with 100 percent full-cutoff fixtures by 2010 to meet CGS 13a-143d requirements.

Glare from restaurant lighting



Sky glow (above); No sky glow (below)



The City of Torrington has about 3,700 street lights they maintain. Approximately 1 percent of those have been replaced with full cutoff light fixtures. Torrington is working to replace older fixtures with the full-cutoff fixture when the fixture requires replacement or when new installations are done.

The City should pursue any available grant monies to speed up the process of converting these old fixtures to reduce glare, and light trespass and to lower the City's utility usage. Efforts to change over or eliminate unneeded street lights should be a priority in the more rural areas first to have a more immediate effect in reducing sky glow.

The Campaign for Dark Skies deserves wide support during this special year [2009, International Year of Astronomy].

But it's not just astronomers who want to experience a clear view of the stars, just as it's not just keen ornithologists who would feel deprived if song-birds disappeared from parks and gardens.

It's indeed a deprivation if young people living in cities never see a dark starry sky - just as it is if they never see any natural countryside.

Sir Martin Rees
Astronomer Royal of England

CGS 13a-143d

In 2003 the Connecticut General Assembly passed legislation to remove floodlights from the public right of way. This law seeks to:

- reduce light trespass
- reduce glare, and
- promote energy-efficient light fixtures.

www.cga.ct.gov/2007/pub/Chap238.htm#Sec13a-143d.htm

Light Trespass



Full Cut-off Fixture



www.starlightcascade.ca/rl/

Farmland Preservation

Connecticut Department of Agriculture and the Connecticut Farmland trust have developed a number of programs and initiatives to protect farmland and promote farming.

www.ct.gov/doag

www.ctfarmland.org

Connecticut Grassland Habitat Conservation Initiative

In 2006 Connecticut developed a grassland habitat conservation program to protect critical grassland areas.

www.ct.gov/dep/lib/dep/wildlife

Preserve Farmland and Promote Farming

The *Farmland Plan* identifies area farms that are permanently preserved and which should be preserved indefinitely. The parcels are divided into a couple of categories: active and protected, active not protected, small farms and hay lots. A priority list of farms follows which identifies farms that should be preserved including property descriptions and key reasons for preservation.

Agriculture is more than just creating attractive rural settings for “city folk” to visit. Farms are viable economic and socially important businesses within our community and region. Aside from the economic benefits of agriculture, the act of farming, whether for dairy production, crops, bees, horses or horticulture, leaves a mark on the land that reminds us of our heritage and a simpler life. The rural countryside is a landscape that is endangered within our community. The ever present pressure to develop new homes and roads, often do so at the loss of agricultural lands.

The *Farmland Plan* also identifies some Potential Agriculture Clusters. The State of Connecticut has placed a high priority on protecting farms that are in close proximity to other farmland and preserved landscapes. By identifying, and refining this Agriculture Cluster concept, Torrington may be able to make a more compelling case for farmland preservation in these areas.

Working Farm Protection Strategies

1. *Klug Farm* area (Klug Hill Road) – (160 acres of the Klug Farm are currently preserved under the State Farmland Preservation Program);
2. *Zordan Farm* area (Area bounded by Weed Road, Klug Hill Road and Route 4);
3. *Weigold Farm* (Weigold Road), (150 acres preserved with funds from the State Farmland Preservation Program);
4. *Ruwet Farm* (Torrington Street near Middle School);
5. *Carroll Farm* (Pothier Road), (100 acres are currently under review with the State Farmland Preservation Program);
6. *Hennessey Farm* (Highland Avenue and Allen Road); and
7. *Rossi Farm* (Rossi Road and Litchfield town line)

Small farms are also critical to the character of Torrington. Under the Torrington Zoning Regulations, to qualify as a farm in Torrington you need a minimum of three acres. These small farms require some form of appreciation and protection as they become more and more important to the local market in supplying local produce and specialty products. They also create an attractive rural character indicative of farming in the hills of Torrington.

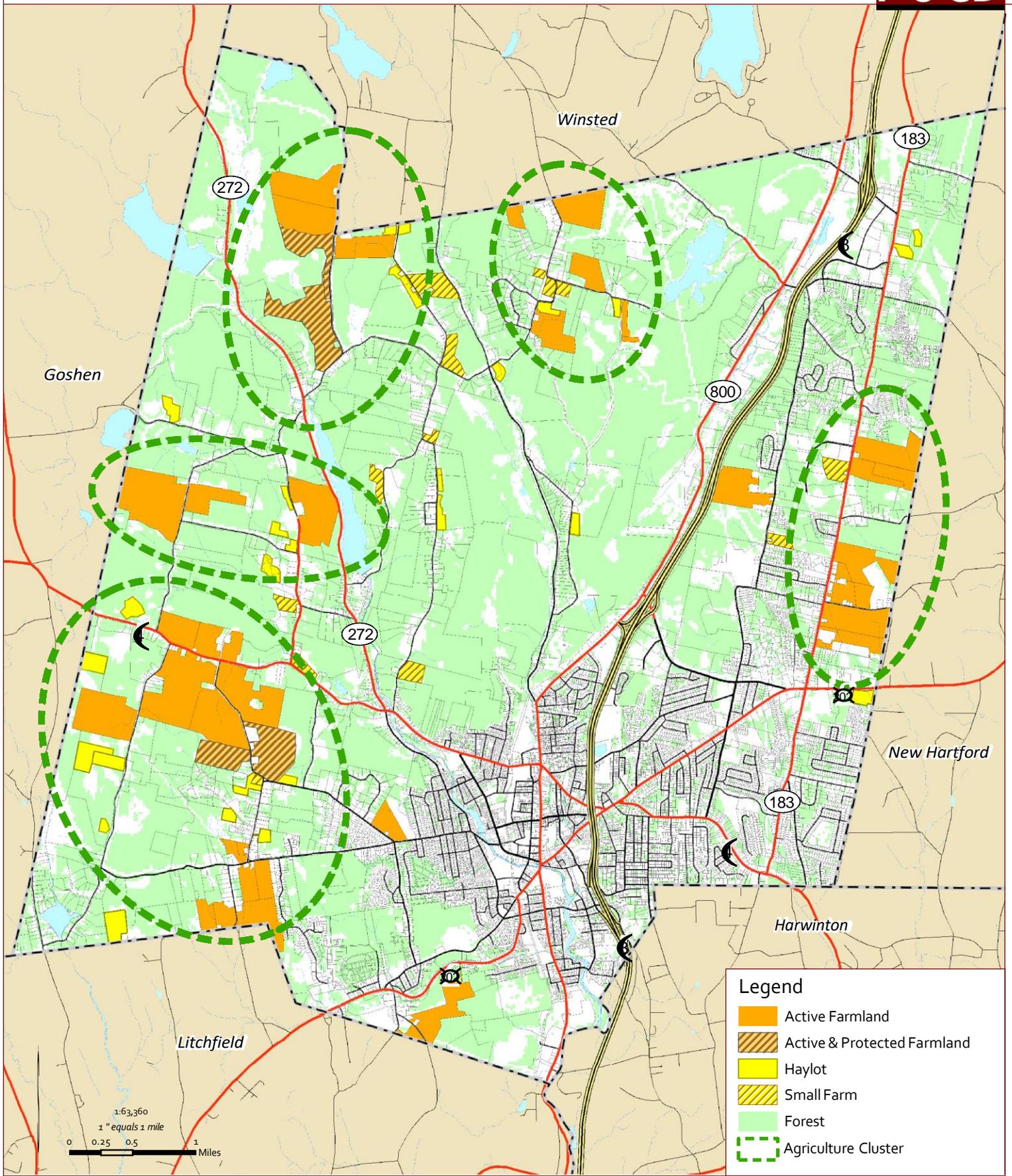


Downtown Farm Market (above), West side dairy farm(below)



East side farm

FARMLAND PLAN



Legend

- Active Farmland
- Active & Protected Farmland
- Haylot
- Small Farm
- Forest
- Agriculture Cluster

Protect Hay Lots

Hay lots within Torrington must be protected. As development continues, hay lots are often seen as expendable. Since two of Torrington’s major working farms are dairy farms, hay is an important crop for their survival. Dairy farms in nearby communities have had to close or move due to lack of close supplies of hay.

Hay lots also serve as vital grassland communities and are necessary for the protection and preservation of many grassland species. DEP has designated grasslands as a priority habitat type to be preserved within the State. Subdivision regulations should encourage and support the preservation of hay lots within the community.

Community Character Strategies

	TASK	DESCRIPTION
6-1	Protect scenic resources	Ensure listed special places are protected by public ownership, conservation easement or other method
6-2	Protect ridgelines	Review and screen proposed development for ridgeline impacts and encourage development away from ridges
6-3	Update the priority historic preservation list	Work with the Torrington Historical Society to update ownership data and conduct outreach for protection
6-4	Reduce light pollution	Enforce the 100 percent full cut-off regulations on all new projects and retrofits. Follow-up with Connecticut Light and Power (CL&P) to change out or remove floodlights in the right of way
6-5	Preserve farmland and protect working farms	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Concentrate on the priority list of farms.• Refine the Agricultural Clusters concept for open space protection• Protect hay lots

DOWNTOWN AND NEIGHBORHOODS

POCD



"There is no doubt that our Downtown is the heart of Litchfield County. It is vital that we begin to restore and renew the vibrancy of Torrington's center. The City has the opportunity to redevelop the Downtown area and to capitalize on its growth and position as the regional destination for cultural and recreational purposes. The goal of our plan is to revitalize our Downtown to the energetic community center that we all know it can be."

Ryan J. Bingham, Mayor

Implement the Downtown Municipal Development Plan

The Downtown Municipal Development Plan proposes to revitalize the Project Area in phases through a combination of public and private investment. Public investment will focus on infrastructure improvements including: street network modifications; expanded and consolidated off-street parking; and enhancements to the pedestrian environment in the Downtown.

The following pages (7.2 through 7.5) are from the Downtown Municipal Development Plan (MDP) Executive Summary, prepared by the Torrington Development Corporation.

For more detailed information, please refer to that Plan.

Main Street



Downtown is the core for many activities (above), Newly renovated storefront on Main (below)



There will also be opportunities for in-fill private development directly supported by the infrastructure investments. Private investment in the renovation and occupancy of vacant space in existing structures will also be made in the Project Area.

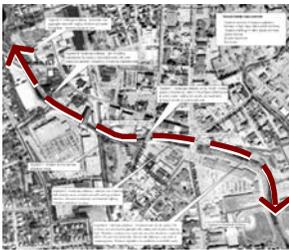
Torrington Development Corporation (TDC)

The goals of the TDC are:

- Promote economic development.
- Strengthen the existing mixed uses of Downtown.
- Promote local and regional arts, cultural interests, and tourism.
- Preserve Torrington's heritage and historic character.
- Improve pedestrian facilities, traffic circulation, parking and streetscape

www.torringtondevelopment.org

Riverwalk Concept (2005)



Municipal Development Plan First Priority

The first phase activities are programmed for an area generally bordered by Mason Street/City Hall Avenue, on the north, the East Branch of the Naugatuck River on the east, Torrington Plaza and the Library on the south and Prospect Street on the west. Activities in adjacent areas of the Downtown will support activities within the Phase 1 area.

For example, off-street parking available west of Prospect Street and north of City Hall Avenue /Mason Street will be available to support properties and uses within the Phase 1 area. In the longer term, it is anticipated that both public and private investment will occur in the balance of the Project Area.

The timing and extent of this investment will build on Phase 1 successes as well as overall improvement of the economy. As proposed in the Conceptual Master Plan prepared in 2006, which was the subject of the Environmental Impact Evaluation (EIE), it is anticipated that future phases will create mixed-use development opportunities as an extension of the Phase 1 development patterns.

The specific activities included in Phase 1 include the following:

- extension of City Hall Avenue to a point of intersection on East Main Street with a realigned Center Street;
- the expansion and reconfiguration of the parking area between the extended City Hall Avenue and the rear of properties fronting on Main Street. The design of this parking area will provide for continued service access to the rear of the Main Street properties;
- the creation of modest infill development opportunities on East Main Street to the west of the intersection with the City Hall Avenue extension to strengthen the East Main Street gateway;
- the expansion and reconfiguration of the parking area internal to the block bordered by East Main Street, Center Street, and Franklin Street;
- reconfiguration of the Main Street, East Main Street, Franklin Street, South Main Street, Water Street intersection to improve vehicular movement and create a more pedestrian friendly environment. When combined with the City Hall Avenue extension, the opportunity to make Main Street one-way in a northerly direction results;
- streetscape improvements on Main Street, East Main Street and South Main Street will be constructed to both enhance the aesthetic qualities of the area and support a pedestrian friendly environment; and
- a portion of the Greenway on the south side of the Naugatuck River between South Main Street and Prospect Street will be constructed.

Phase 1 activities will be implemented in stages with the first priority being the extension of City Hall Avenue and the reconfiguration of the parking between the extended City Hall Avenue and the rear of properties fronting Main Street. It is the intention of the Torrington Development Corporation to provide the land needed for these activities through negotiations with property owners.

The extent of land necessary to construct these improvements will be determined based on detailed design in consultation with property owners. Based upon conceptual designs completed to date, five parcels and portions of three parcels would be the maximum number of parcels needed to accommodate these activities. Based upon an inventory of current occupancy, it is estimated that seven businesses would potentially be displaced.

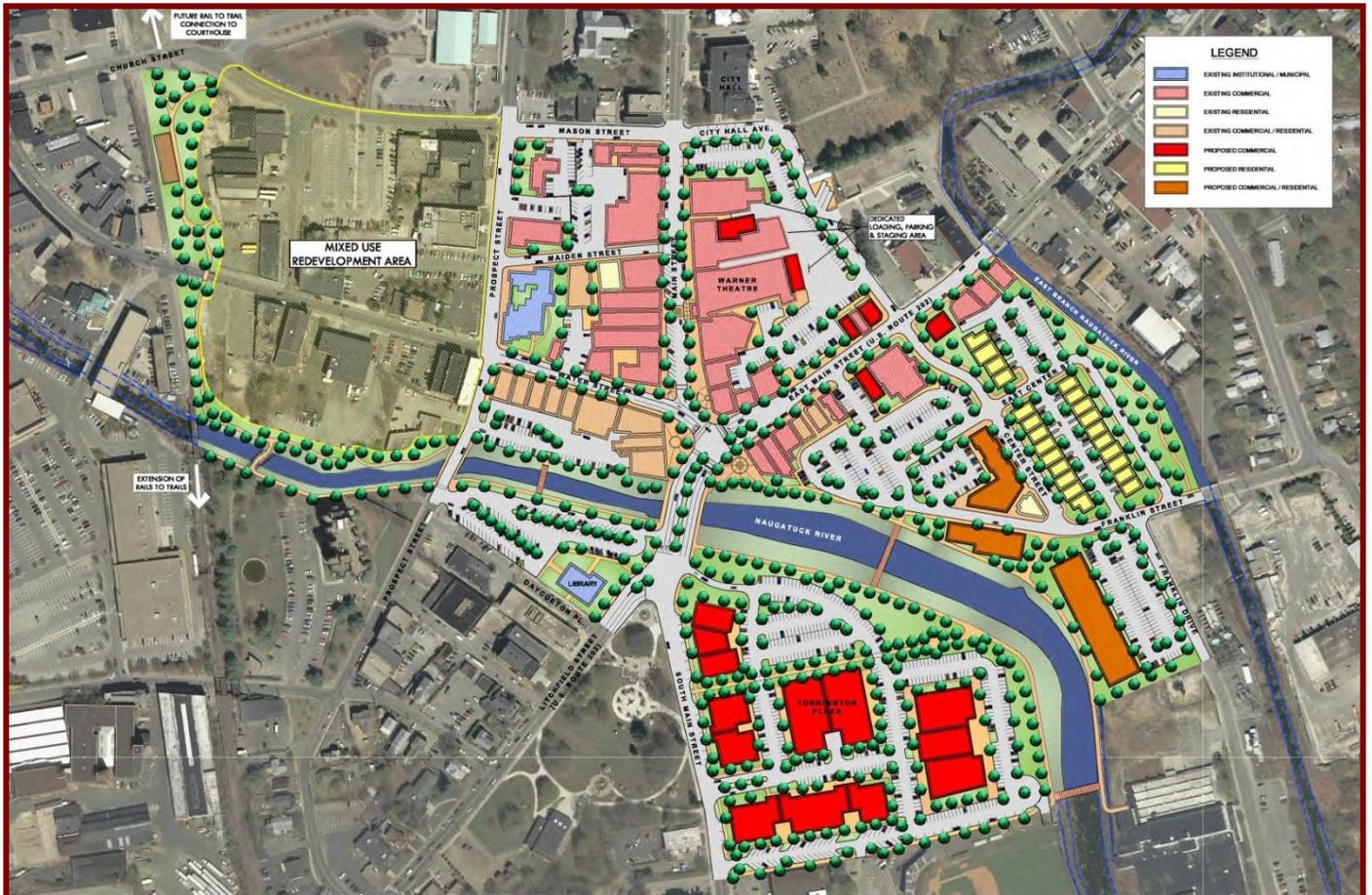
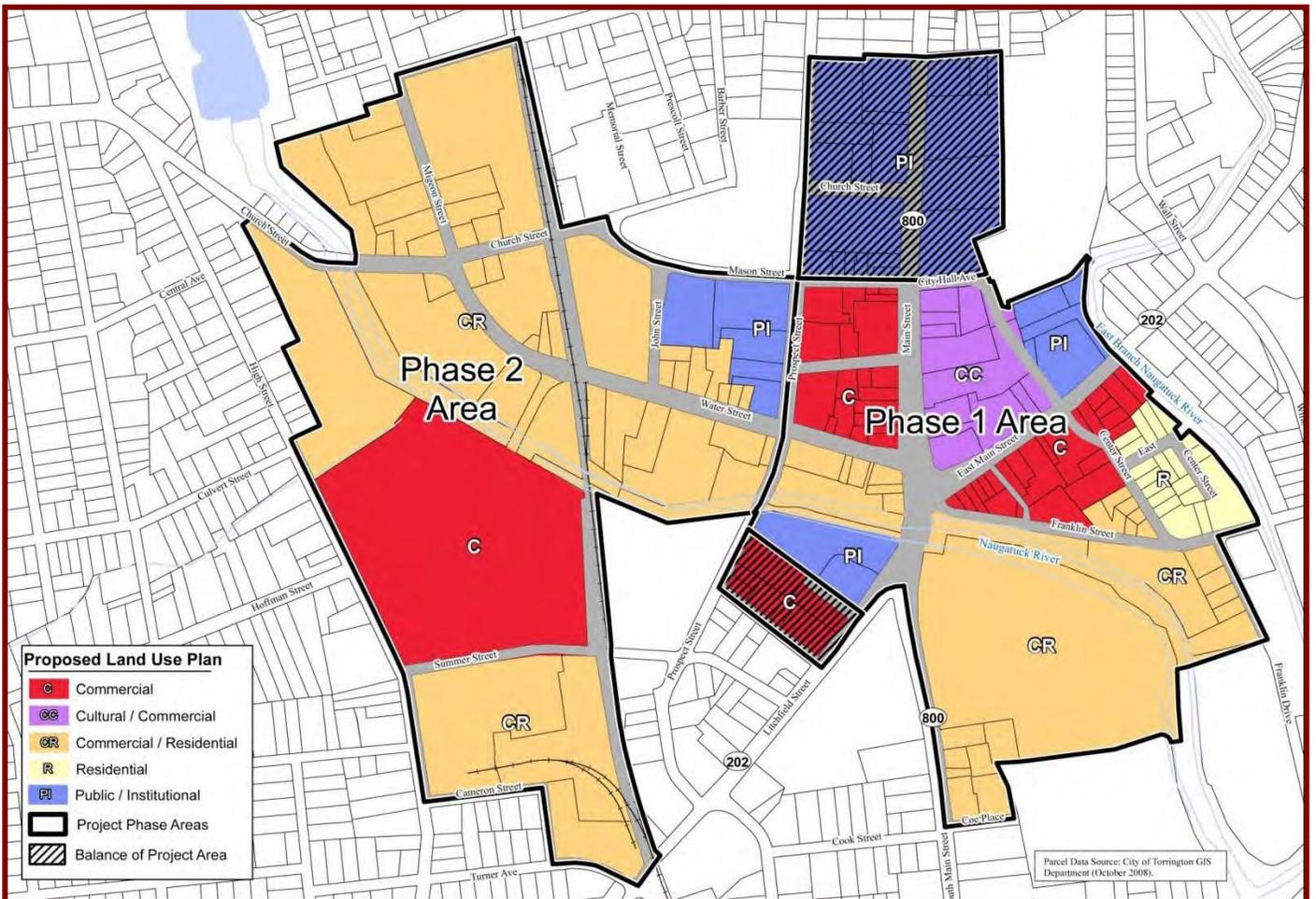
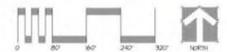


FIGURE 7-1a PHASE I CONCEPT PLAN
DOWNTOWN TORRINGTON MDP
 TORRINGTON, CONNECTICUT FEBRUARY 24, 2009

MILONE & MACBROOM
 Planning
 and
 Architectural Services



Municipal Development Plan Second Priority

The second priority is the reconfiguration of the East Main Street, South Main Street, Water Street, Main Street and Franklin Street intersection. In addition, streetscape improvements will be undertaken on Main Street and East Main Street as well as construction of the section of the greenway on the south side of the Naugatuck River between South Main Street and Prospect Street



Beautification Committee maintains the Downtown islands (above), Street level view of the main intersection Downtown (below)



The 2nd Priority Area - Downtown Intersection

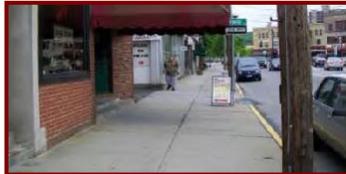
Municipal Development Plan Third Priority

The third priority area within Phase 1 is the area bordered by East Main Street, Center Street and Franklin Street. Activities proposed in this area include reconfiguration of the parking area internal to this block and the realignment of the Center Street /East Main Street intersection. Based upon anticipated funding availability, these activities will be implemented within a later timeframe than the first priority activities described above.

The same design and consultation process as described above will be used to determine the amount of land necessary for these activities. Based upon conceptual designs completed to date, seven parcels and portions of three parcels would be the maximum number of parcels needed to accommodate these activities. Based upon an inventory of current occupancy, it is estimated that two businesses, one fraternal lodge and six households would potentially be displaced.



Franklin Street (above), East Main Street sidewalk in need of improvements (below)



MDP 3rd Priority Area

Any property acquisitions determined to be necessary will be acquired on a negotiated basis based on independent appraisals. There is no intent to use the eminent domain powers. Such powers may be used if negotiations do not result in agreement.

Before eminent domain powers can be used, the properties to be acquired must be specified, a public hearing held and the City Council must approve use of the powers. Occupants of property to be acquired will receive relocation compensation in accordance with applicable law.

In addition to the proposed actions described above, the Municipal Development Plan contains a proposed zoning/land-use controls section. This section proposes to create a new Downtown District (DD) zoning classification to cover the Project Area. This would replace the current zoning designation which is predominantly General Business (GB) with small areas classified as Industrial (I), Residential (R-6) and Local Business (LB). It is anticipated that the Planning and Zoning Commission will adopt this new zone to provide consistency between the Municipal Development Plan controls and the zoning regulations.

In addition to land use controls, the new district incorporates the Design Review Guidelines prepared by the Planning and Zoning Commission and the Architecture Review Committee. The parking requirements have been reduced in the new district in recognition of how the Downtown functions. This will be an incentive to investment in the renovation and occupancy of structures in the Project Area. These controls as well as the design guidelines will be applicable to the entire Project Area not just the Phase 1 area.

Coe Park



Coe Park flag plaza (above), Lincoln and Grant's visit to the Torrington Historical Society (below)



In conclusion, the revitalization strategy in the Municipal Development Plan builds on the strengths of the Downtown represented by its historic architecture, diversity of uses, institutions, cultural attractions, human scale and opportunities for private investment supportive of public investment.

The selection of the Phase 1 area and activities advances this strategy in that it encompasses the core of the Downtown where these strengths are concentrated. The strategy recognizes that public action is necessary to enhance the competitiveness of the Downtown and strengthen Torrington as a regional center.

Why Housing is Important in Downtown

People who live in downtowns typically spend 3 to 4 times the amount of people who work in a downtown.

They also have a greater positive economic impact on an annual basis than do visitors or destination shoppers.

Randall Gross of the consulting firm Randall Gross/Development Economics

Continue to Make Downtown The Priority Area in Torrington

The success of Downtown will be based on creating a density of people and diversity of uses. Torrington needs to develop a rich diversity of destinations that will attract a critical mass of people to live, work and shop. By encouraging mixed uses Downtown (with ground floor retail and services and upper floor offices and residential uses) parking is optimized and Downtown is in use 24 hours per day.

Provide Housing in Downtown

With the exception of single-use residential buildings located on non-residential streets, Downtown residences should exist on upper floors. Upper floors are quieter and safer for residents and allow more vibrant uses such as retail, restaurants and art galleries to be active on the street level.

Downtown residents provide a 24 hour atmosphere that transcends their purchasing power. Torrington needs to create an environment that feels safe and comfortable and where Downtown residents will help attract non-residential visitors who will shop, dine, attend cultural venues and otherwise enjoy Downtown.

Downtown housing also needs to meet a wide range of price points, as well as both rental and ownership options should exist to capture the greatest number of residents.

Make Downtown Pedestrian-Friendly

Making Downtown feel safe, comfortable, interesting and enjoyable for walking gives it a competitive advantage from suburban shopping areas. Pedestrians can provide for "impulse shopping" when shoppers make unplanned purchases. Pedestrian activity sends a message that the area is vibrant and worth visiting. Torrington needs to create pedestrian-friendly intersections Downtown to increase pedestrian safety. Including "pedestrian bulbs," improving crosswalks visibility and making sure walk signals have sufficient time for elderly residents to cross the road are ways to make this happen.

Promote Easy Downtown Parking

Give the Downtown parking areas a positive name such as, "Easy Downtown Torrington Park" with an identifiable logo. Provide small but noticeable signs to guide people to parking lots. Create and distribute a Downtown parking brochure to all the merchants who can then hand them out to customers. Provide Downtown parking information and options on the City's website.

Make Downtown Bicycle Friendly

Provide public bike racks. The updated City Hall should include a public bike rack along with other locations such as Coe Park and the Torrington Plaza.

Promote Special Events Downtown such as car shows as an effective means of bringing people Downtown who may otherwise never visit. While merchants may complain that few sales occur during special events, the long-term benefit of enhancing Downtown's image is more important. If people come Downtown and feel safe and have a positive experience, the odds are they will return at some point for dining, entertainment or shopping.



Continue to Develop Torrington as the Cultural Center for Litchfield County

The Warner Theater, Nutmeg Ballet and Artwell are regionally significant cultural venues that others can build upon to encourage Downtown as an arts and entertainment district. Artists bring performances and viewings but also bring complementary clusters of businesses that can contribute to economic vitality.

Torrington needs to encourage creative people to seek space in existing downtown historic buildings and adaptive reuse of Torrington's former manufacturing buildings in Downtown that can accommodate artist studios, live/work lofts, arts-based manufacturing, and creative businesses like architectural firms.

Promote Cultural Heritage Tourism

Work with the Torrington Historical Society to focus on the City's historic architecture and manufacturing heritage to engage "cultural heritage tourism" (see sidebar) as a mechanism for revitalization. Highlight the cultural assets of Torrington to appeal to a wide variety of visitors and residents.

Support Initiative to Enhance Education Opportunities in Downtown

Encourage higher education venues to offer classes Downtown. College students are often looking for unique dining and entertainment places to hang out and prefer urban to suburban locations. An undergraduate or masters program in arts and entertainment could represent another catalyst for redevelopment.



The internationally known Nutmeg Ballet (above),
The Warner Theater (below)



The Nutmeg Conservatory for the Arts

Founded in 1969 by acclaimed ballet teacher, Sharon Dante, the Nutmeg Conservatory has continued the commitment to her original vision of providing professional-level ballet training to aspiring young dance artists.

The Nutmeg Conservatory is recognized as a leading professional ballet training organization in the United States and is accredited by the National Association of Schools of Dance.

www.nutmegballet.org

Cultural Heritage Tourism

Cultural heritage tourism involves traveling to experience the places and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present. It includes historic, cultural and natural attractions.

www.culturalheritagetourism.org/

College students are an important retail market segment for many downtowns and represent a significant housing market as well. It could attract additional younger people to live Downtown.

The Concept of Community Structure

Community structure (the overall physical organization of Torrington) is an important consideration in the Plan.

Studies have found that the physical organization of a community enhances community character and quality of life and can help guide land-use regulations and decisions.

Torrington's structure can be traced back to its historical development and the influence of the hills in valleys in the community.

Community Structure Elements in Torrington

The main elements of Torrington's overall community structure consists of:

- a large core (Downtown Torrington);
- several mixed-use village centers,
- moderate to high intensity residential neighborhoods, and
- low density and rural residential development in outlying areas.

Neighborhood areas identified in this Plan

- Downtown
- North End
- East End
- West End
- South End
- Southwest
- Torrington
- West Torrington
- Drakeville
- Burrville

Evaluate Planning Issues in Torrington Neighborhoods

There are numerous villages and neighborhoods that make up the City of Torrington. Many residents closely associate to these places. Torrington should evaluate these areas and determine whether special neighborhood planning efforts should be undertaken.

North End



Police Station, Gateway to North End (above) North End neighborhood (below)



Route 4 and Main Street

East End



East End diner (above); East End neighborhood (below)



The Glass Building on Route 208/4

West End



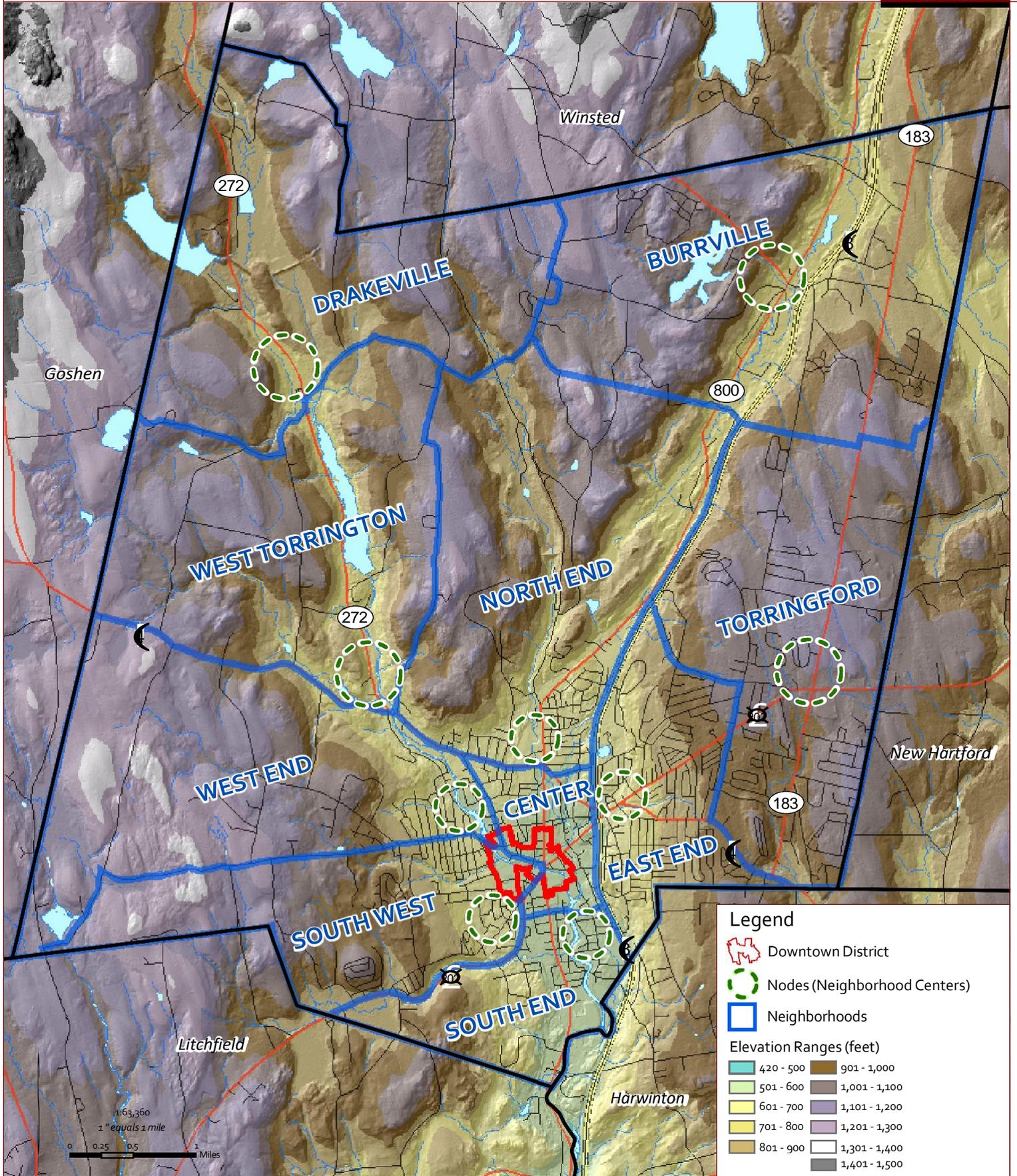
West End Neighborhood (above); West End businesses (below)



Riverside Avenue near West Branch

COMMUNITY STRUCTURE

NEIGHBORHOODS AND NEIGHBORHOOD CENTERS



South End



South End market (above); South End neighborhood (below)



City garage and neighborhood

Southwest



Southwest neighborhood (above); Southwest School (below)



Southwest School and vicinity

Torrington

Encouraging commercial development that fits into the neighborhood

New commercial development



Commercial development (above); Historic house in Torrington (below)

Existing residential development



Intersection of Route 183 and Route 200

West Torrington

Intersection of Route 272 and Route 4



Congregation Church (above); Norfolk neighborhood (below)



Neighborhood Planning

Neighborhood planning involves the identification of neighborhood-specific problems and the development of strategies to solve these issues.

Neighborhood plans might include:

- streetscape designs,
- strategies to address blight,
- signage (commercial or interpretative),
- historic preservation,
- environmental protection,
- sidewalk improvement, or
- social service issues.

Drakeville

Marshall Lake at Norfolk Road



The Hemlocks (above); Drakeville neighborhood (below)



Burrville



A Burrville quarry (above); Burrville neighborhood (below)



Locate Government Facilities Downtown When Possible

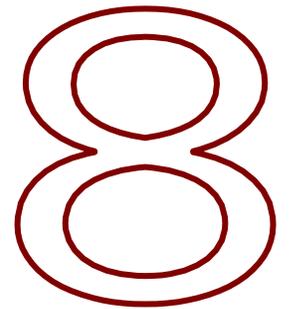
Public buildings hold a symbolic significance underscoring Torrington’s regional hub and generates downtown employees and visitors that are economically significant. Torrington should continue to consider Downtown locations as a higher priority when evaluating sites for new municipal facilities.

Downtown and Neighborhood Strategies

	TASK
7-1	Implement the Municipal Development Plan – First Priority
7-2	Implement the Municipal Development Plan – Second Priority
7-3	Implement the Municipal Development Plan – Third Priority
7-4	Continue to make Downtown the priority area
7-5	Provide housing in Downtown
7-6	Make Downtown pedestrian-friendly
7-7	Promote Downtown parking
7-8	Make Downtown bicycle friendly
7-9	Locate government facilities Downtown when possible
7-10	Continue to develop Torrington as the cultural center for Litchfield County
7-11	Promote cultural heritage tourism
7-12	Support initiative to enhance education opportunities in Downtown
7-13	Evaluate neighborhood areas and determine whether special neighborhood planning efforts should be undertaken.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

POCD



"Some regard private enterprise as if it were a predatory tiger to be shot. Others look upon it as a cow that they can milk. Only a handful see it for what it really is - the strong horse that pulls the whole cart."

Winston Churchill

The City of Torrington, with about 57 percent of the Litchfield Hills' total non-farm jobs and 47 percent of the Region's residents, is clearly the economic heart of the region. While Torrington is a relatively small city, with a population of about 37,000 individuals, the US Bureau of the Census recently designated the City as a Micropolitan Statistical Area.

Downtown Central Business District



Shoppers on Main Street (above);
Expanding business – Fuel Cell Energy (below)



Torrington is a Micropolitan Area because the central city has fewer than 50,000 people, the threshold for a city anchoring a Metropolitan Area. There are over 500 Micropolitan Statistical Areas in the United States.

According to the US Census, Torrington is the largest such Micropolitan Area with a population of 188,000. Torrington is a Micropolitan Statistical Area because the community is an economic hub that draws workers and shoppers from Litchfield County towns and miles around.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Torrington's Office of Economic Development is to provide extensive support to current and prospective businesses of all sizes. The Office is charged with diversifying the City's tax base, creating new employment opportunities and strengthening Torrington's role as the regional heart of Litchfield County.

Litchfield Hills Economic Development Partnership (LHEDP)

In 2005 the LHEDP completed a regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for the Litchfield Hills region.

The City of Torrington is committed to the regional vision statement as identified during the CEDS process:

"Over the course of the next two decades, the Litchfield Hills Region will promote growth opportunities for higher education and strengthen the economic well-being and quality of life for all of its residents. The Region will continue to transition to a more diversified economy that is globally competitive and results in the retention and creation of new and higher paying jobs, supported by appropriate labor force skills. The local property tax base will be expanded and broadened in a manner that conserves appropriate open space and community character, while strengthening the area's existing urban and village centers."

Goals

The City's Economic Development goals are as follows:

- maintain the basic character and quality of life of the City of Torrington with a suitable mix of residential, commercial, agricultural and industrial zoned property while continuing to provide a mix of residential property;
- enhance the City's tax base, while maintaining a balance between jobs and housing;
- advise and cooperate with City agencies and departments to insure that public utilities and services such as fire, police, medical, schools, roadways, transportation, and recreation facilities satisfy the demands of a growing population; and
- protect the City's natural resources, ensuring the preservation of open spaces and encouraging the preservation of historically significant sites.

Encourage Downtown Redevelopment

Although much effort has gone into improving and revitalizing the central business district there remains a need for further revitalization. The City recognizes the need and opportunity to redevelop Downtown in order to eliminate weaknesses and capitalize on its growth and position as the regional destination for governmental, cultural, shopping, restaurant, and recreational purposes.

In addition the City wants to ensure to preserve the symbols of Torrington's heritage in a manner that complements economic development and growth for the City and will preserve the character and livelihood of Torrington's traditional Main Street Center.

In 2004 in an effort to accomplish Downtown redevelopment; The Torrington Development Corporation (TDC), a nonprofit public/private partnership was formed. The Corporation leads, directs and coordinates comprehensive efforts to expand the tax base, foster sustainable job growth, retain existing industry and nurture Torrington's role as a diverse and vibrant cultural center.

In 2008 the TDC and the City received \$500,000 from the State of Connecticut to complete a municipal development plan (MDP) to improve traffic flow to Main Street. In 2009 the MDP was completed and will be used by the TDC to lead Downtown redevelopment. The Economic Development Commission supports the TDC efforts and will work hand to hand to accomplish this important objective (See Section 7).

For more details concerning Downtown redevelopment please visit www.torringtondevelopment.org

Utilize Smart Growth Measures

Economic development efforts within the City of Torrington will be in accordance with accepted smart growth measures. These efforts include revitalizing the urban center, reusing vacant industrial buildings, remediating and redeveloping brownfield sites, and focusing new industrial/ commercial development where existing infrastructure can support the growth. These smart growth policies will maximize the utilization of existing infrastructure resources while minimizing greenfield development.

Retain Existing Businesses

Torrington recognizes the importance of our existing businesses. More growth typically comes from existing companies and it is both easier and less expensive to keep a job than to attract new ones. By some estimates, between 60 to 80 percent of new employment growth is due to existing companies.

In 2008 in conjunction with the Mayor's Office, the Economic Development Office instituted a formal business visitation program. The primary purpose of the Business Visitation Program is to stimulate local economic growth by retaining and expanding existing businesses. The program focuses on understanding local business needs and delivering or developing resources to address those needs. By working with existing firms, the City is committing to firms that are important to the future of the local economy, and to those who have already invested in the community.

Recruit New Industry

In order to expand the commercial and industrial sectors of the overall tax base, the Office of Economic Development actively recruits companies to relocate to the City. The City utilizes the Northwest Connecticut Marketing Brochure.

This Brochure provides a comprehensive guide to Torrington's assets as well as gives an overview of the Litchfield Hills Region. In addition the City is a member of Connecticut Economic Resource Center's (CERC) SiteFinder. Since over 90 percent of the initial site selection screening is now done using the internet, SiteFinder, is an excellent tool to showcase available Torrington property.

In addition to SiteFinder's comprehensive database, it provides demographic features and Economic Development Data and information. The City is also a member of the International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC) and participates annually in conferences and seminars with real estate executives such as *Global Core-Net* and *MDM*.

Foster the Creation of Small Businesses

The City of Torrington will continue to work with existing small businesses and potential start-ups. The Office of Economic Development, in conjunction with the NW Chamber of Commerce, SCORE, and the CT Small Business Development Center, will provide technical assistance to entrepreneurs. The City will also work with various funding partners such as the Connecticut Development Authority (CDA), Community Economic Development Fund (CEDF), CT Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD), and the Litchfield Hills Micro Loan Program.

Torrington will also explore the feasibility of redeveloping one or more vacant industrial buildings into "flex" incubator space to facilitate business start-ups, artist's incubator spaces and expansions.

Continue to Promote Tourism

The City of Torrington will continue to promote itself as the cultural and recreational hub of Northwest Connecticut in order to bring more tourists into the City and receive a larger percentage of the tourism dollars spent in Litchfield Hills. This will be done in conjunction with the Northwest Connecticut Convention and Visitors Bureau and with the cooperation of local tourist destinations such as the Warner Theatre, Nutmeg Conservatory, Artwell

Tourism in Connecticut

- 8 million visitors annually
- \$5.4 billion in household income
- \$7.95 billion in gross State produce
- \$87 million in hotel tax revenue
- Every \$1.00 invested in culture and tourism creates \$9.30 in State and local revenue

Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism

Tourism in Litchfield County

- 1,926,399 visitors in 2004

Tourism in Torrington

- Warner Theatre draws 100,000 visitors annually
- 8,000 visitors view exhibits and attend events at the Torrington Historical Society

Warner Theater and Torrington Historical Society

Visitor's Center

The Northwest Connecticut Chamber of Commerce has proposed to create a Northwest Connecticut Welcome Center in a commuter parking lot near Route 8. The facility will occupy the historic Skee's Diner (image below).



Tax Abatement Programs in Connecticut

CGS 12-65b – Allows towns to offer abatements for at least one of the following:

- office use,
- retail use,
- residential use,
- manufacturing use
- warehouse, storage or distribution use
- structured multilevel parking use necessary in connection with a mass transit system
- information technology
- recreation facilities, or
- transportation facilities.

www.cga.ct.gov/2009/pub/chap203.htm#Sec12-65b.htm

CGS 12-65h – Allows towns to provide abatements for personal property located in a manufacturing facility.

www.cga.ct.gov/2009/pub/chap203.htm#Sec12-65h.htm

Torrington Tax Abatement Program

www.torringtonct.org/Public_Documents/TorringtonCT_EcDev/abatement.pdf

Gallery, Torrington Historical Society, John Brown Birthplace, and the Beecher House Society.

In 2009, the Arts and Culture Commission (ACT) was formed to promote Torrington's diverse arts and cultural assets, and to foster economic growth through these assets. The commission is working to develop and build a strong, vibrant, arts and cultural alliance that contributes to the success of Torrington's existing arts and cultural assets.

ACT plans to establish arts and culture as a highly visible element of the region's identity. They will work and assist in the display and presentation of art, artistic performance and cultural activities in Torrington, as well as assist in the recognition of the City's local artists.

In collaboration with the Northwest Chamber of Commerce the City of Torrington will serve as location for the new regional visitor's center. The Northwest Connecticut Welcome and Informational Center will promote tourism and education of Northwest Connecticut by displaying appropriate business information and materials. Centrally located near the Downtown Torrington exist off of Route 8, the center will introduce residents and visitors to the many cultural, and historical opportunities found in the Northwest Region.

Continue to Provide Tax Incentives

In an effort to attract, retain and expand businesses, the City of Torrington has adopted a tax incentive policy in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes 12-65b and 12-65h. This policy establishes a tax abatement/ deferral program for certain businesses that make significant investments in either real property or personal property within City limits. Torrington will continue to market this policy to prospective businesses and will regularly compare it to other municipalities to ensure its fairness and competitiveness.

Continue to Provide a Façade Improvement Program

Working in conjunction with the Litchfield Hills Council of Elected Officials, the City of Torrington has managed a Façade Improvement Program that provides incentive financing for renovation of commercial properties throughout the City.

The program is designed to:

- strengthen the economic viability of the region's businesses,
- improve and beautify the exterior appearance of storefronts and commercial buildings, and
- preserve the architectural heritage of the region's business buildings.

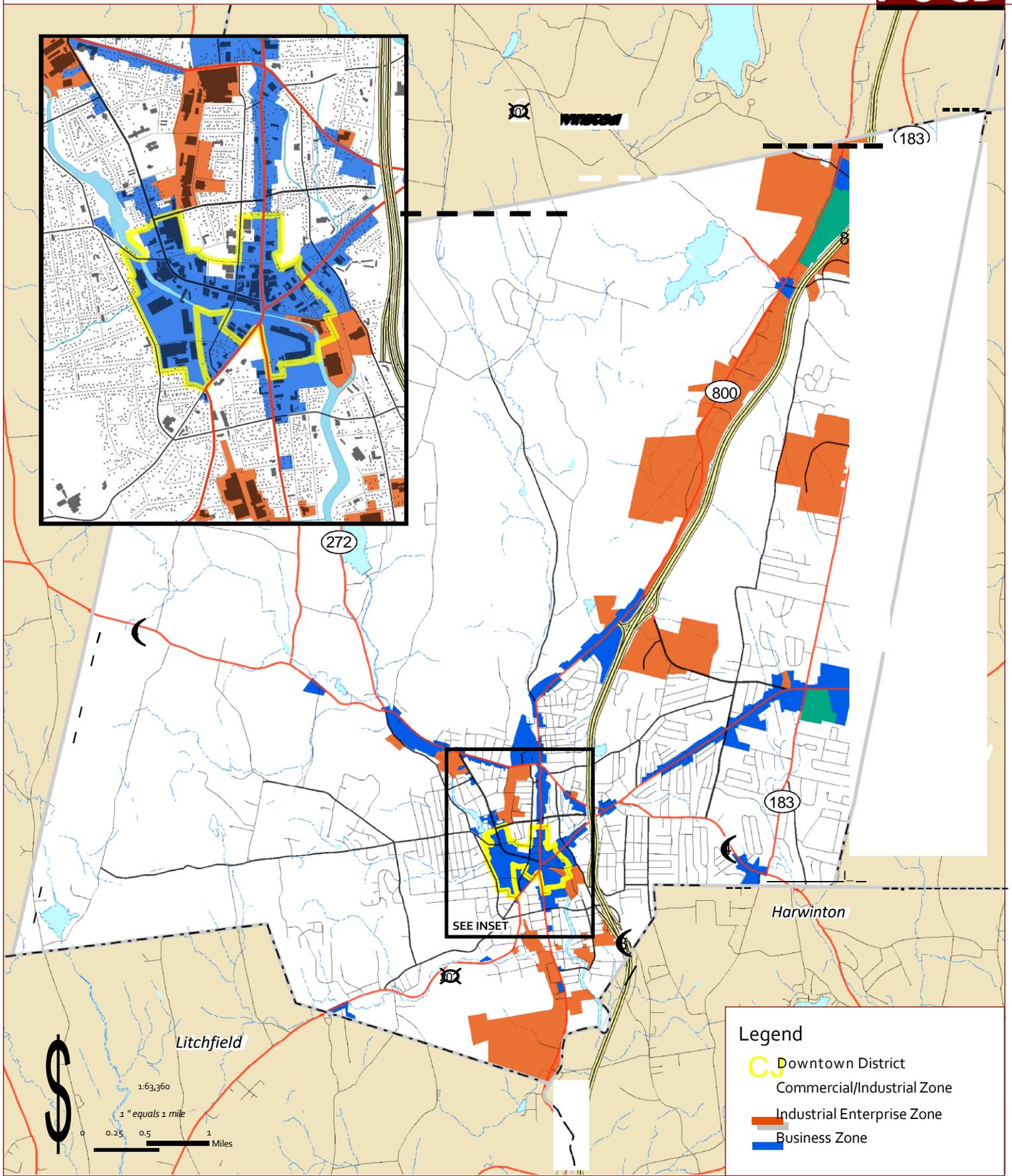


Façade improvement success story (above);
New small businesses Downtown (below)



Promoting tourism with street fairs and festivals

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PLAN



- Legend**
- Downtown District
 - Commercial/Industrial Zone
 - Industrial Enterprise Zone
 - Business Zone

1:63,360
1" equals 1 mile
0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles

Still River Corridor

The Still River has been identified as a natural resource that needs to be protected. The land adjacent to the River has been zoned for industrial development and is designated as an Enterprise Zone.

Torrington should work with developers to promote future development that protects the natural resource while meeting the economic development objectives.

Maintaining vegetated buffers along the river and using low impact development techniques are two ways that Torrington can balance these two needs.

Enterprise Corridor Zone Benefits

www.ct.gov/ecd/cwp/view.asp?a=1099&q=249766

Corporate Business Tax Credit

www.cga.ct.gov/2009/pub/chap208.htm#Sec12-217e.htm

Litchfield Hills Regional Micro Loan Program

The purpose of the program is to provide affordable and accessible financing to income-eligible applicants within the 11 town Litchfield Hills region to diversify the economic base, create and retain jobs, and to encourage and leverage private investment.

www.torringtonct.virtualtownhall.net/public_documents/TorringtonCT_EcDev/000EFoCD-000F8513

Continue to Offer Enterprise Corridor Zone Benefits

In 2005 the City of Torrington were designated as an Enterprise Corridor Zone. The goal of the Zone is to expand the commercial/ industrial base and to help lower the tax burden on the business community by revitalizing once-productive industrial areas.

This designation allows the municipality to provide incentive benefits for eligible business relocation/ expansion projects within the zone. The City of Torrington is in the process of identifying areas zoned I – *Industrial Zone* and IP – *Industrial Park Zone*, that are suitable for Enterprise Corridor status.

Eligible businesses, including manufacturers, warehouse distributors, and certain designated service related businesses are eligible for the following benefits:

- a 5-year, 80 percent abatement of local property taxes on all qualifying real and personal property that are new to the grand list of the City of Torrington as a direct result of a business relocation, expansion or renovation project.
- a 10-year, 25 percent or 50 percent credit on that portion of the Connecticut Corporate Business Tax that is directly attributable to the business relocation, expansion or renovation project as determined by the Connecticut Department of Revenue Services and as provided under Section 12-217(e) of the Connecticut General Statutes.

The City of Torrington, in conjunction with the Town of Winchester, will continue to work cooperatively to promote the Enterprise Corridor Zone and will share marketing resources as identified in the inter-municipal agreement.



Vacant factories offer opportunity in the Enterprise Corridor (above); New incubator space (below)



Redevelopment of Old Shopping Plazas

Continue to Identify Business Incentive Programs

Business incentive programs, such as the Litchfield Hills Micro Loan Program, are valuable to small businesses. The purpose of the Loan Program is to provide affordable and accessible financing to eligible businesses within Torrington and the 11-town Litchfield Hills Region. This program was created to diversify the economic base; create and retain jobs, especially for low/moderate income persons; and, to encourage and leverage private investment.

In order to meet the City's economic development goals, the City of Torrington will continue to offer the following business assistance programs. Continue to research and apply for State and Federal grant funds to implement additional incentive programs in the future.

Promote Brownfield Remediation

Some neighborhoods that once employed industrial workers now contain large vacant abandoned campuses, which contain environmental contaminants that are preventing redevelopment and the creation of new job opportunities. These properties are referred to as “Brownfields” (see sidebar). The City is committed to the revitalization of our neighborhoods, especially those affected by these vacant manufacturing spaces.

Besides the obvious environmental threats to human health and the environment, the majority of brownfield sites become blighted properties which are eyesores and contribute negative perceptions, blight, and even crime—regardless of data that says otherwise. This in turn limits opportunities to attract reinvestment that will spur economic growth. Surrounding property values may be affected and certainly without economic growth, tax revenues are diminished. The impacts of brownfields can extend beyond the boundaries of a property to affect the surrounding community:

- Harm human health and the environment
- Become eyesores and contribute to blight
- Fuel negative perceptions such as crime
- Reduce surrounding property values Limit reinvestment and economic growth
- Reduce tax revenue

Dealing with contamination can be a risky venture without first understanding potential environmental liabilities, costs and regulatory requirements. But addressing contamination is only one of the factors that drives successful redevelopment. Physical, economic, legal, real estate, regulatory and community elements are all critical drivers—and need to be cohesively examined to establish viability and a path forward. Multiple disciplines must be choreographed around relevant site-specific elements, carefully tempered and balanced with the end-use and financing structure in mind.

The City of Torrington has been tackling issues of brownfield redevelopment, and determined there was a need to better define a process and provide much-needed technical direction to potential developers and property owners. The City created a Brownfield Redevelopment Strategy that necessitates a flexible and evolving approach—one that can be customized depending on the site, the proposed development and the capacity of the developer. The Strategy consists of a series of four inter-related graphics. These visual depictions are intended to facilitate clear communications across City of Torrington departments, with prospective developers and with the community. As the City moves through the process, refines its approach this strategy can be easily modified.

The City, developers and property owners should refer to the most current Brownfield Redevelopment Strategy for guidance in revitalizing a brownfield site. A summary of this Strategy, along with the brownfield area-wide map that was studied can be found on the next five pages.

Brownfields

Brownfields are real property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant. Cleaning up and reinvesting in these properties protects the environment, reduces blight, and takes development pressures off green spaces and working lands.

Revolving Loan Fund Grant

\$1,000,000 for hazardous substances

The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has selected Torrington for a brownfields revolving loan fund grant to capitalize a revolving loan fund to support cleanup activities for sites contaminated with hazardous substances.

Grant funds also will support marketing, oversight, and community outreach activities.

www.epa.gov/brownfields

Litchfield County Compact for Higher Education

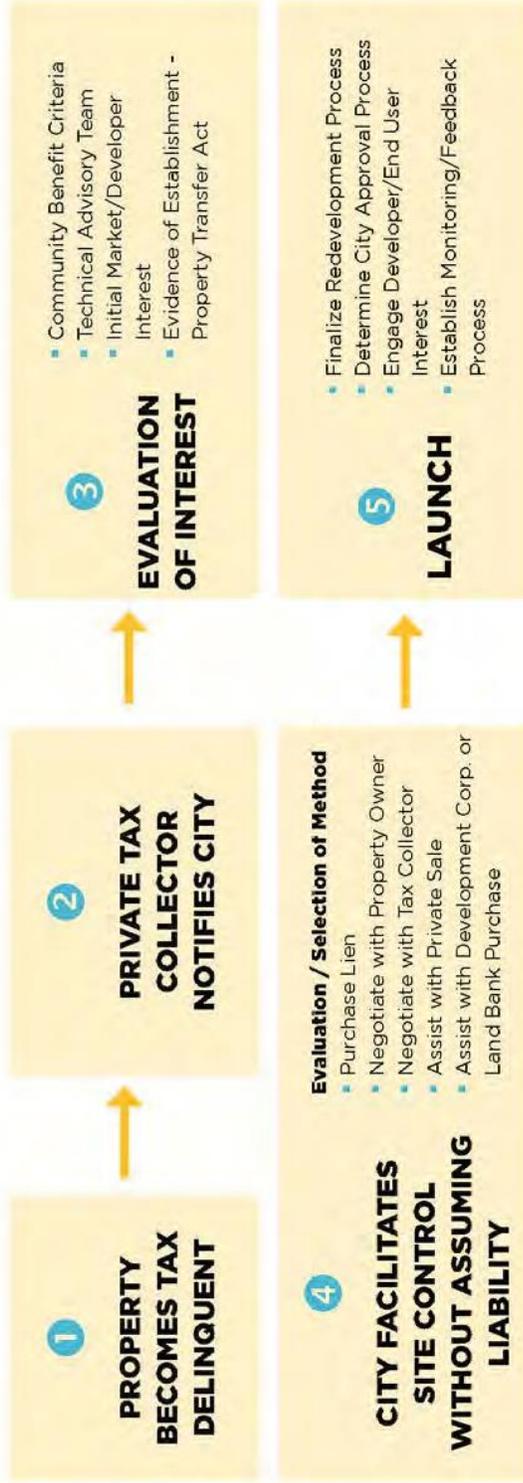
In 2008, the Economic Development Commission and the Northwest Chamber of Commerce, along with the Northwestern Connecticut Community College and the University of Connecticut at Torrington, established the Litchfield County Compact for Higher Education (LCC). The goal of the LCC is to ensure that the needs of local businesses are met by the curriculum of our local colleges.

Facilitated Acquisition of Brownfields Guide TORRINGTON FAB

Facilitated Acquisition of Brownfields: Dubbed FAB, this establishes five steps to guide the City in evaluating its options and deciding to become involved in gaining site control for a potential brownfield property that has been tagged for a tax sale by the private tax collector. This process has been developed to afford flexibility in the level of involvement the City determines to be appropriate based on technically defensible information and input from the City Council. This process includes the critical

evaluation of environmental liability and the selection of a suitable framework to avoid this liability.

- 1 Property Becomes Tax Delinquent
- 2 Private Tax Collector Notifies City
- 3 Evaluation of Interest
- 4 City Facilitates Site Control Without Assuming Liability
- 5 Launch





Brownfield Strategy Acquisition Roles & Options:

As the City proceeds through the FAB process, various levels of its involvement will become apparent, ranging from simply advising a private developer on the local approval process (Level 1) to gaining site control or acquiring a tax delinquent brownfield property (Level 4). While the City's and private tax collector roles are necessarily inter-dependent, the roles of the current property owner and prospective purchaser (if not the City) will be defined by decisions made by the City.

Depending on the presence of contamination and the risk of assuming liability involved with the redevelopment goals of a property, consideration may be given to involving a non-profit community development corporation (CDC), such as the Torrington Development Corporation. Such an entity may be exempt from property transfer regulations. If structured correctly and the redevelopment was successful, the TDC could generate funds from the sale of the property to support staff and retain technical consultants.

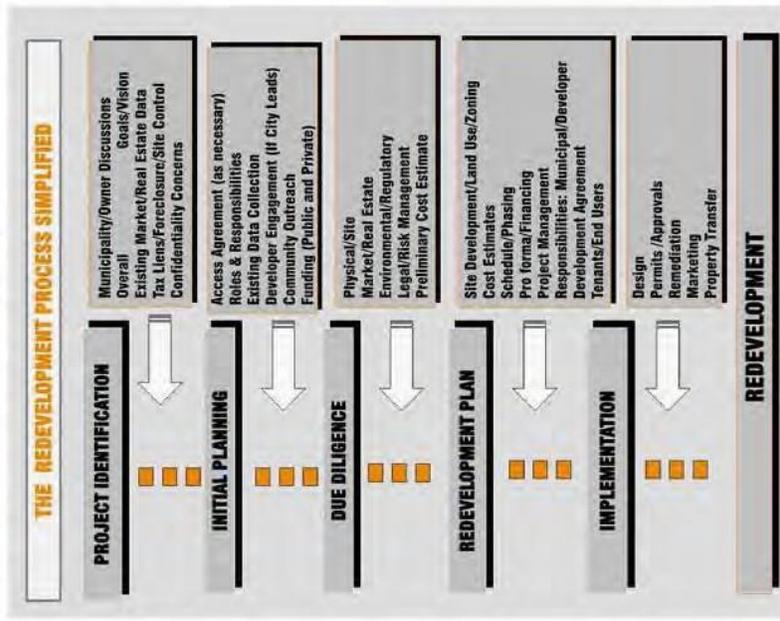
Using legislation enacted in 2017, a qualified Land Bank may also play a role in acquisition and/or redevelopment. Under the law, the Land Bank may be eligible to receive state and local grants, accept tax exempt contributions and may be exempt from local real estate taxes. Similar to the non-profit CDC, Land Banks may be exempt from property transfer regulations, but do not eliminate the need for someone at some point in the process to fully investigate and remediate the on-site releases in accordance with the requirements of the RSRs.

- Level 1** – Non-delinquent Private Sale
- Level 2** – Tax Delinquent Property Retained by Tax Collector
- Level 3** – Tax Delinquent Liens Auctioned by Tax Collector
- Level 4** – City Gains Site Control of Tax Delinquent Property

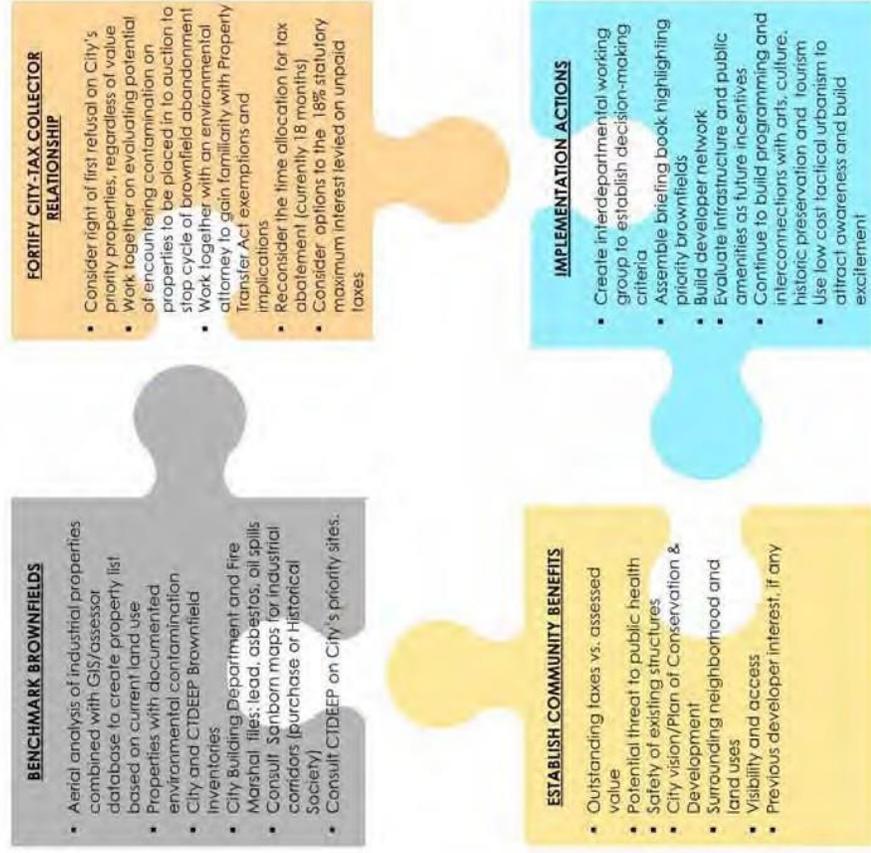
BROWNFIELD STRATEGY ACQUISITION OPTIONS

OPTIONS INVOLVEMENT	LEVEL 1		LEVEL 2		LEVEL 3		LEVEL 4	
	Non-delinquent Private Sale	Tax Delinquent Property Retained by Tax Collector	Tax Delinquent Liens Auctioned by Tax Collector	City Acquires Lien to Tax Delinquent Property	Tax Collector dialogues with Tax Collector, consults known sources to ascertain potential contamination; reviews POCD, existing economic development and community objectives; may informally facilitate potential buyer interest.	City maintains dialogue with Tax Collector; consults known sources to ascertain potential contamination; reviews POCD, existing economic development and community objectives; may informally facilitate potential buyer interest.	City notifies Tax Collector of interest; initiates initial due diligence through Technical Assistance Team to ascertain potential contamination; City attorney evaluates liability and confirms Transfer Act not triggered; proceeds with brownfields redevelopment process and if warranted, engages non-profit or sanctioned land bank	City notifies Tax Collector of interest; initiates initial due diligence through Technical Assistance Team to ascertain potential contamination; City attorney evaluates liability and confirms Transfer Act not triggered; proceeds with brownfields redevelopment process and if warranted, engages non-profit or sanctioned land bank
CITY OF TORRINGTON	Responds to inquiries from property owner or prospective buyer, provides input on consistency with POCD, shares publicly available information on potential contamination; provides guidance on planning, zoning, wetland, building process	Initiates discussion with tax collector regarding desirable outcomes; shares information on potential contamination	City maintains dialogue with Tax Collector; consults known sources to ascertain potential contamination; reviews POCD, existing economic development and community objectives; may informally facilitate potential buyer interest.	City notifies Tax Collector of interest; initiates initial due diligence through Technical Assistance Team to ascertain potential contamination; City attorney evaluates liability and confirms Transfer Act not triggered; proceeds with brownfields redevelopment process and if warranted, engages non-profit or sanctioned land bank	City notifies Tax Collector of interest; initiates initial due diligence through Technical Assistance Team to ascertain potential contamination; City attorney evaluates liability and confirms Transfer Act not triggered; proceeds with brownfields redevelopment process and if warranted, engages non-profit or sanctioned land bank	City notifies Tax Collector of interest; initiates initial due diligence through Technical Assistance Team to ascertain potential contamination; City attorney evaluates liability and confirms Transfer Act not triggered; proceeds with brownfields redevelopment process and if warranted, engages non-profit or sanctioned land bank	City notifies Tax Collector of interest; initiates initial due diligence through Technical Assistance Team to ascertain potential contamination; City attorney evaluates liability and confirms Transfer Act not triggered; proceeds with brownfields redevelopment process and if warranted, engages non-profit or sanctioned land bank	City notifies Tax Collector of interest; initiates initial due diligence through Technical Assistance Team to ascertain potential contamination; City attorney evaluates liability and confirms Transfer Act not triggered; proceeds with brownfields redevelopment process and if warranted, engages non-profit or sanctioned land bank
PRIVATE TAX COLLECTOR <i>(Under contract with City)</i>	Collects taxes due, if any, based on closing	Notifies City of delinquency within 90 days; decides to retain property; may reconsider based on potential contamination	Conducts auction 2 times each year. Prior to auction, notifies City of tax status. Works with City in the event contamination is known or perceived	Works cooperatively with the City under public-private partnership	Works cooperatively with the City under public-private partnership	Works cooperatively with the City under public-private partnership	Works cooperatively with the City under public-private partnership	Works cooperatively with the City under public-private partnership
PROPERTY OWNER	Discloses information to buyer under applicable State statutes	After notification of delinquency, may elect to pay taxes	After notification of delinquency, may elect to pay taxes	Owner or other party has right to pay taxes	Owner or other party has right to pay taxes	Owner or other party has right to pay taxes	Owner or other party has right to pay taxes	Owner or other party has right to pay taxes
PROSPECTIVE PURCHASER / DEVELOPER	Evaluates property based on financing, insurance, investment objectives & requirements.	Not applicable	Interested parties should conduct due diligence to a level consistent with financing, insurance, investment objectives & requirements	Under public-private partnership, city works with interested buyer; economic, community and public health benefits are considered in development; proof of financing and other provisions must be met	Under public-private partnership, city works with interested buyer; economic, community and public health benefits are considered in development; proof of financing and other provisions must be met	Under public-private partnership, city works with interested buyer; economic, community and public health benefits are considered in development; proof of financing and other provisions must be met	Under public-private partnership, city works with interested buyer; economic, community and public health benefits are considered in development; proof of financing and other provisions must be met	Under public-private partnership, city works with interested buyer; economic, community and public health benefits are considered in development; proof of financing and other provisions must be met
NON-PROFIT / LAND BANK / CDC	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Provides mechanism to avoid environmental liability; evaluates interest; demonstrates ability to accept property and capacity to remediate/redevelop	Provides mechanism to avoid environmental liability; evaluates interest; demonstrates ability to accept property and capacity to remediate/redevelop	Provides mechanism to avoid environmental liability; evaluates interest; demonstrates ability to accept property and capacity to remediate/redevelop	Provides mechanism to avoid environmental liability; evaluates interest; demonstrates ability to accept property and capacity to remediate/redevelop	Provides mechanism to avoid environmental liability; evaluates interest; demonstrates ability to accept property and capacity to remediate/redevelop

The Redevelopment Process Simplified: Redevelopment is often considered a complicated process, regardless of whether a municipality is taking the lead or not. In this graphic, the process is broken down into definable steps to build familiarity with the tasks associated with each step and to help guide the user in customizing the process to reflect the unique roles and issues of a specific project.



Brownfield Strategy Elements: Depicted as four pieces of a puzzle, these elements offer short-term areas of focus to assist with jumpstarting the City's Brownfield Strategy. The content within this puzzle is intended to spur not just assignments of duties, but inter-departmental dialog.



Complete the Brownfield Assessment

The assessment grant will allow Torrington to develop an inventory of Brownfield properties, from which properties will be prioritized and assessed in a streamlined and cost-effective manner, and further action needs will be determined in order to facilitate the properties' redevelopment.

These goals will be accomplished by site-specific and non-site-specific assessment activities. Non-site-specific tasks include developing and periodically updating the inventory of potential brownfield properties, obtaining contractor services to provide technical assistance and oversight, and conducting public outreach workshops and preparing outreach materials relevant to the project.

Site-specific tasks include performing assessments, preparing site sampling plans, consulting with, and enrolling appropriate sites in, the State Voluntary Cleanup Program (VCP), and determining whether further assessment, cleanup, or no action is required before redevelopment can occur.

Utilize the Brownfield Revolving Loan Program

The Revolving Loan Fund will provide Torrington the ability to offer the necessary incentives to allow interested parties to undergo the expense of the clean-up of these sites and the ultimate redevelopment of them. The Revolving Loan fund will offer low interest loans to eligible parties to clean and redevelopment abandoned or vacant sites.

Continue to Support Education

The success of our business community relies on a skilled and educated workforce. Programs like the Litchfield County Compact for Higher Education (see sidebar) help promote that need. This initiative complements the Northwest Chamber of Commerce's "School to Career Pathways" program ("SCP"). This highly successful program matches local students with local companies. The student benefits from the experience of working for a local company, and the company benefits by determining what skills and education is needed in future employees.

Together the LCC and SCP programs help our students learn what skills are sought after by businesses and also allow our colleges to design a curriculum to help develop those skills. By meeting the needs of local businesses, these programs help to retain and recruit new businesses to Torrington. In addition, Torrington High School and Oliver Wolcott Technical High School provide outstanding high school educations. Torrington High is an accredited four year high school, and Oliver Wolcott is a four year state technical school. Both schools have developed programs connecting students with businesses in Torrington and the Northwest Region.

Business Development Strategies

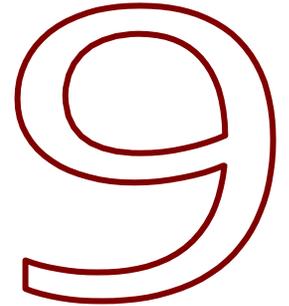
	TASK	DESCRIPTION
8-1	Encourage Downtown redevelopment	Work with the Torrington Development Corporation on the Downtown Municipal Development Plan. Update the City Tax Abatement Program to entice Downtown Redevelopment. Work with the Historical Preservation Trust to obtain funding to assist with leasing of empty storefronts. Continue to work with the Arts and Culture Commission to sponsor events in Downtown.
8-2	Utilize smart growth measures	Work with the Brownfield Committee to assess vacant industrial buildings to remove the impediments to development. Work with developers that are experts in remediation and redevelopment of Brownfield properties. Market the Brownfield Revolving Loan to these developers to spur interest in existing structures.
8-3	Retain existing businesses	Continue the Business Retention program with the Mayor's office. Visit a minimum of 10 businesses a month. Collaborate with the Northwest Regional Chamber of Commerce to support initiatives that support and retain small business. Encourage businesses that are facing difficulties to schedule a meeting with SCORE. Include the SCORE information on the City's website.
8-4	Recruit new industry	Update the City's website utilizing color, and appropriate contact information placement to make it more user-friendly. Include available property information on the City's website, add a link to CERC for additional real estate information. Attend networking events such as CORENET, and ICSC. Work closely with DECD, CERC and Northeast Utilities, to communicate up to date information about Torrington. Collaborate with the Chamber; participating in the Chamber's annual Bus Tour.
8-5	Foster the creation of small businesses	Market the Micro-loan program in order to assist small businesses with financing. Collaborate with local commercial banks to offer commercial financing to appropriate applicants. Act as a liaison with the CT Small Business Development Center to offer support and counseling to small business owners. Encourage small business to become members of the Chamber of Commerce.
8-6	Continue to promote tourism	Work with the ACT (Art, Culture, Torrington commission) to support existing art and culture organizations. Actively market Torrington events on the State culture and tourism website. Work closely with the Litchfield Office of Art and Tourism to improve awareness of events. Participate in Connecticut's Culture and Tourism Annual Open House event. Market local hotels and B&B on the City's website. Collaborate with the Warner, Nutmeg and local hotels and restaurants to create events that will target tourists. Appoint a representative to the board of the Litchfield Hills Convention Visitor's Bureau of Northwest CT. Work with the Northwest Arts Council to include Torrington's events on their monthly calendar. Create a pictorial database to submit to the film industry division of the State Arts and Culture Department.
8-7	Continue to provide tax incentives	Update the current local tax abatement program. Market the Enterprise Corridor Zone Abatement program. Work with companies already certified to assure they file the necessary annual forms. Work with State Enterprise Corridor Zone officials and with the local tax assessor to assure program is working and managed correctly.
8-8	Continue to provide a façade improvement program	Market the Revolving Loan Fund, using targeted mailings and solicitation. Create a DVD to market the Fund. Attend the annual brownfield convention. Work with the local Brownfield Committee to establish a city-wide brownfield database. Update and add to the Brownfield section of the website. Target developers that specialize in brownfield remediation and redevelopment. Continue to work with the State Office of Brownfield Remediation as well as with Torrington's EPA Project Manager.
8-9	Continue to offer enterprise zone benefits	
8-10	Continue to identify business incentive programs	
8-11	Promote brownfield remediation	

HOUSING

POCD

"Mid pleasures and palaces though we may roam, be it ever so humble, there's no place like home. "

John Howard Payne

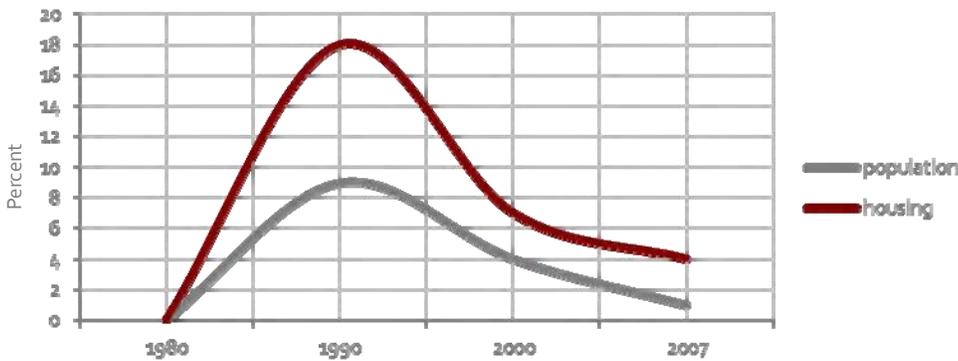


In Litchfield County, Torrington has the largest population, largest number of housing units, and is also the largest employment source.

Housing issues in Torrington involve concerns about housing conditions, adequacy of existing housing units to meet future needs and the need for housing in Downtown to support overall community goals.

While population growth has slowed in Torrington, the number of new housing units has not. Housing growth has been at two-times larger than population over the past 20 years. This growth is a result in changes in household size.

Percent Change – Housing and Population 1980-2007



Census

Housing Units

Year	New Units ¹	Total Units
1980	-	12,784
1990	2,377	15,161
2000	986	16,147
2001	66	16,213
2002	100	16,313
2003	103	16,416
2004	98	16,514
2005	103	16,617
2006	55	16,672
2007	54	16,726

New 2000-2007
579

¹ Net Gain Census; CT DECD

Change in Average Household Size

1970	2.96
1980	2.55
1990	2.38
2000	2.33
2005	2.33

Census

Older housing stock



Condominiums (above); New housing development (below)



Housing Units

	Total Units	Change
1980	12,791	--
1990	15,161	2,370
2000	16,147	986
2007	16,726	579

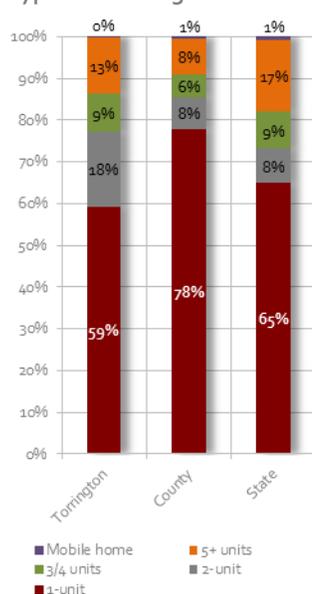
Census and DECD

Tenure

	City	State
Owner - Occupied	59%	63%
Renter - Occupied	32%	31%
Vacant	9%	6%

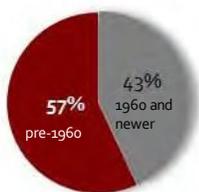
Census (2000)

Types of Housing Units

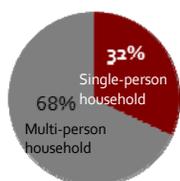


CT Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD)

Age of Housing Units



Single-Person Households



Diverse, But Older Housing Stock

Overall, Torrington's may be in a better position to meet future demands because it has a diverse housing portfolio compared to the County and State. More than 40 percent of housing units are in two-family or multi-family buildings and one-third of housing units are renter-occupied. A diverse housing portfolio provides more choices in housing type and rental options.

However, most of Torrington's housing units (about 57 percent) were built before 1960. For older residents, older housing units may require more upkeep and need updates, particularly to make more accessible. For families, older units may have lead paint or other issues that may be of concern.

Torrington's Population is Aging, and Aging Population Has Different Housing Needs

Similar to the rest of the State, Torrington is expected to see growth in its age 55 and over population, while other age groups either shrink or see modest changes.

An aging population can impact the housing needs of a community:

- less turnover of housing – people remain in their homes for a longer period of time than in the past, reducing the availability of houses;
- housing may not meet needs – older persons have different needs, which may not be satisfied with the existing housing stock; and
- income may not be sufficient – alternative financial solutions may be needed to “out live” retirement savings.

Household Size is Declining

Torrington has seen its average household size shrink from 2.96 in 1970 to 2.33 in 2005. Part of the reason for a shrinking household size is the increase in single-person households. Torrington has a higher percentage of single-person households than the County or State and that percentage increased from 1990 to 2000.

A smaller household size means that a community needs more housing units for its population; this higher demand can drive up prices. In addition, households with a single-wage earner may be more limited in terms of income available for housing.

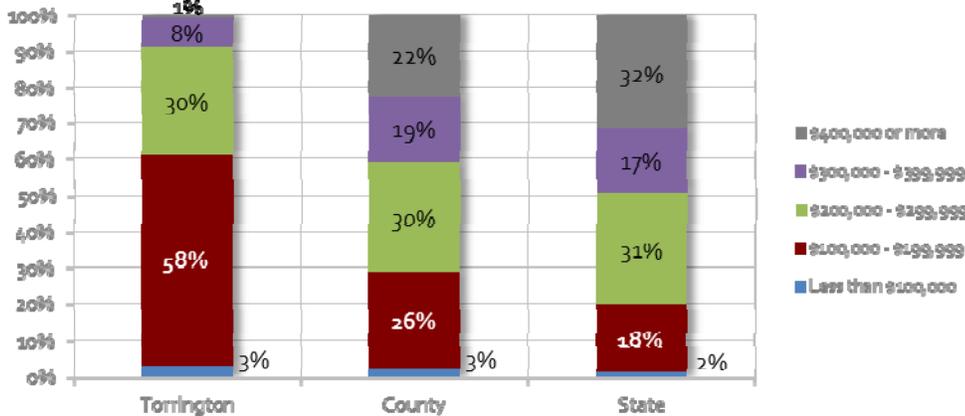
Single-person Households Are Growing

In 1990 there were about 4,000 single-person households in Torrington. This number has increased to about 4,700 residents, an 18 percent increase. Single-person households make up about one-third of Torrington's households.

Housing Prices are on the Rise

Housing units that are not protected as affordable units are also vulnerable. Over 60 percent of the house sales in Torrington have been in the lower-price range houses (houses valued up to \$200,000). Houses are selling at a more affordable rate than in the County and in the State. Torrington has a lower percentage of sales of more expensive houses (houses valued at \$400,000 or more)

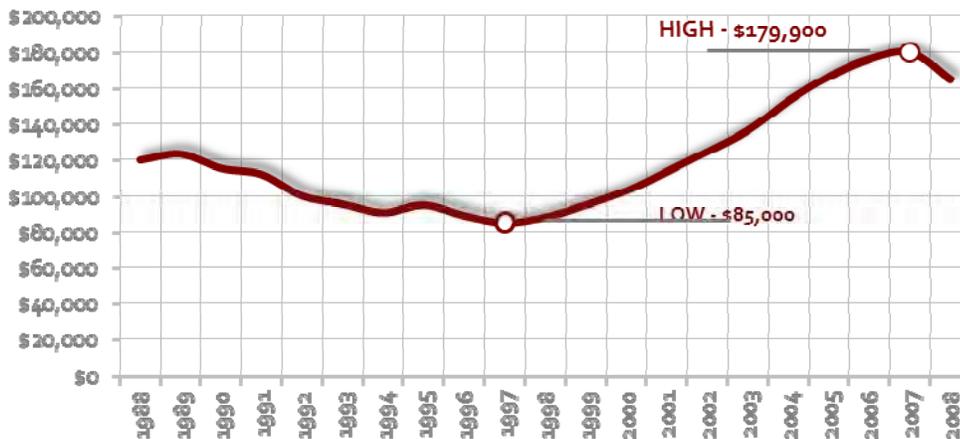
House Sales in Torrington, Litchfield County and the State



CERC 2007

While house sales are in the lower price range, Torrington has seen an increase in house sales price over the past 20 years. House sales prices hit a low in the late 1990s. There is concern that house prices in adjacent communities might result in a loss of lower-priced homes in Torrington. While increasing house values increase the Grand List, it is important that people that live and work in Torrington are not forced out by rising house prices.

House Sales Prices – 1988-2008



Warren Group

As prices increase, Torrington may lose some of its Workforce Housing.

Housing Affordability

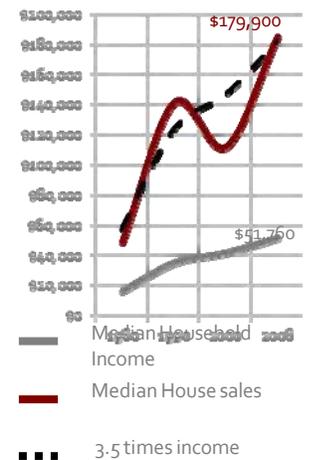
According to economists, a lack of workforce housing results in lower economic growth and a more fragile housing market.

This becomes even more pronounced as energy costs rise since people are less able to afford to travel to jobs, especially if they are lower paying jobs as might exist for some service businesses.

Research has shown that affordability becomes an issue when the median priced home sells for more than 3.5 times the median income for the area.

For the most part, house sales prices have been at or below 3.5 times the median household income.

Income and House Sales Trends 1980 - 2008



Workforce Housing

Workforce housing is typically housing that can be purchased by households earning 80-120 percent of the Area Median Income (AMI - \$86,700 - The Area is Litchfield County).

Torrington's Median Household Income is identified as \$51,706 (2008), about 60% of the AMI. CERC

For Torrington, the workforce housing income range is \$69,360 to \$104,040, which means housing priced at \$150,000 to \$330,000, or rental units at \$1,300 to \$2,000 per month.

Assumptions: 1,000 monthly debt payment, no down payment, 5.5 percent interest rate, \$3,500 annual taxes, \$1,000 insurance

"Designated" or "Recognized" Affordable Housing

Occurs when programs have been created to maintain housing cost (i.e. deed-restrictions, rent control).

Why is Workforce Housing Important?

Housing for Torrington's workforce is important. The workforce relies on the availability of both "well-priced" market rate housing units and "price-controlled" housing units (also known as Recognized Affordable Housing). Over time the affordability of workforce housing may become an issue in Torrington, as it has in other Connecticut communities.

While many of the housing units in Torrington may be considered affordable to some standard or another, housing that is susceptible to market forces can become unaffordable to people that Torrington rely on, such as firefighters, teachers and the like.



First-time buyer (above); Emergency service workers (below)



Trends in other parts of Connecticut indicate that housing affordability issues are spreading to areas where it was never expected as people "drive until they qualify" in the quest for suitable housing. This trend appears to be occurring in Torrington as median sales prices for houses have been increasing and recognized affordable housing has been decreasing.

Vulnerability of Losing Workforce Housing Units

Review of housing trends, particularly Recognized Affordable Housing and House Sales Value, may be indicators of future workforce housing affordability issues. However, there is no single indicator, because the affordability of workforce housing is impacted by a number of different factors, and the basic economic principle of supply and demand.

Potential Impact on Municipal Employees and Services

For Torrington, the Median Family Income is listed as \$86,700 in 2009 (Use HUD AMI for Litchfield County). A quick review of City employee salaries show that for some of the key positions (Police and Fire) the Average salary is in the range of \$58,000 (fire personnel) to \$66,000 (police personnel).

In some areas of Connecticut communities have found it difficult to attract and retain critical employees, particularly because of pay and housing costs issues. While this may not be a problem in Torrington today, it is certainly an emerging issue that the community should be paying attention to.

Prepare for Changing Housing Needs

People are living longer and healthier lives. The older age group (age 55+) will continue to grow. The 'baby boom' (people born between 1946 and 1964) has entered or will enter this age group during the next 20 years.

By the year 2020 adults aged 55 and over will comprise up to 50 percent of the total population of Torrington, up from 30 percent in 1970. There is a potential that an increased number of elderly residents will constrain the number of housing units that are in the market. This reduction in housing supply and an increase in demand for worker housing will further stress housing affordability.

Torrington Towers



Active adult housing (above); Elderly needs (below).



Torrington needs to prepare for these changes, as:

- 80 percent of seniors want to "Age in Place," and
- 20 percent of seniors will want other housing choices, such as assisted living.

Torrington may want to consider adopting policies that integrate housing and transportation with active aging principles to allow older residents to "Age in Place" (see sidebar).

Provide for Senior Accessibility and Mobility

Accessibility will be an increasingly important issue because Torrington has an aging population. Making housing and other places "visit-able" is important. Visitability involves creating inclusive home designs that are accessible to all. To accomplish this objective, Torrington may need to evaluate zoning setback requirements for ramps and other structural features that may be required.

Torrington may also want to evaluate pedestrian road crossings to improve ramps and pedestrian signals. It is particularly important that pedestrian signals provide adequate time for older residents to cross safely and that crosswalks are highly visible, especially in areas with housing for the elderly.

Encourage the Construction of ADU's (Accessory Dwelling Units)

A state law passed in 2021 loosened the restrictions that municipalities may place on the construction or conversion of ADU's and the process for local approvals. These units are a great way to provide for workforce housing, housing for seniors or as rental income for property owners. Torrington should evaluate ways to incorporate ADU's into all zones that allow for single family dwellings as an as-of-right use to comply with statutory changes.

Age in Place

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

Housing Needs of an Aging Population

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 need more assistance to maintain their homes,
- aging residents require additional healthcare services which requires workers to perform those services, and
- older persons have different lifestyle needs, which may not be satisfied in a mature housing stock.

Torrington Housing Authority

A City agency that provides housing for 428 elderly and disabled persons.

Incentive Housing Zone

A new land use tool has recently been developed to encourage additional affordable housing units in the State of Connecticut. It provides financial incentives to towns that create Incentive Housing Zones allowing for mixed-income housing at higher densities.

In 2009, Torrington was awarded a grant to investigate using this tool in Downtown Torrington. A study is on-going.

Task Force on Blight

Neighborhood blight can have a significant impact on quality of life in a community. In November of 2002, the City of Torrington created a Blight Task Force to address properties with multiple Blight Ordinance, Building Code or Fire Code violations.

This program is part of a bigger quality of life initiative that is ongoing in Torrington: *Torrington Renaissance* program. The program is based on the idea that, through concentrated efforts of City officials, staff, residents, civic groups and developers, Torrington can shine in a lasting new way.



The program's goal is to improve the public perceptions, and overall appearance, to create environmental and economic benefits for the City.

Consider Using the Incentive Housing Zone Tool

Communities have found a variety of different programs to address workforce housing. Because Torrington is relatively affordable, the most meaningful strategies might result from maintaining the current housing stock and providing new housing choices.

Incentive Housing Zoning (see sidebar) is a new way to encourage housing in areas where infrastructure is already in place and residential density might be appropriate. In addition, the State will provide Incentive Payments to communities that approve this type of housing.

Policies that promote new housing opportunities in Downtown and along transit corridors make sense from a sustainability perspective. Torrington is already evaluating how this tool might work and should complete this process and consider adopting the recommendations generated by that study.

Encourage Housing Rehabilitation

Because Torrington has an older housing stock, helping homeowners maintain their properties is important. A property owner's inability or unwillingness to maintain their property can lead to residential blight. Local investment can be "jump started" with Government assistance and programs, such as:

- CDBG loans for building rehabilitation,
- development of an affordable housing trust fund to purchase and rehabilitate properties for lower incomes households, and
- organizing neighborhood cleanups.

Promote Sustainable Residential Development

Torrington has identified that new business growth should be "Smart Growth" to the extent possible. This goal is also part of the overall residential development strategy.

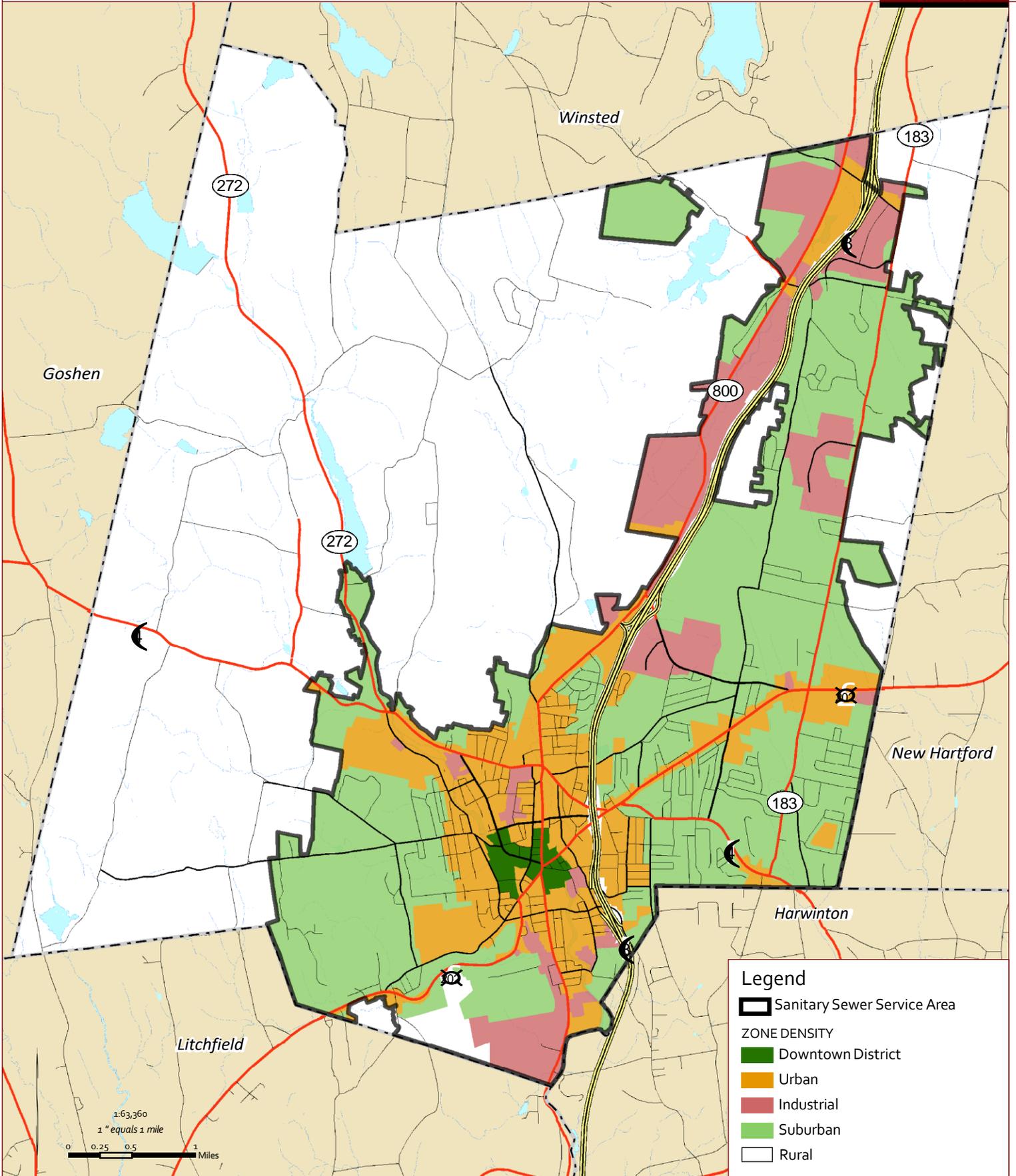
Smart growth promotes the use of higher density residential development in downtowns, developed neighborhoods and along transit routes. This approach also works well for older residents and people with disabilities.

New residential development should be encouraged as follows:

<i>Downtown</i>		City center area where higher density land uses are located. Mixed uses on a site may be appropriate in this area. High priority area for infill development and redevelopment.
<i>Urban</i>		Areas where higher density residential and commercial uses are located. Mixed uses on a site may be appropriate in this area. Moderate priority area for infill development and redevelopment.
<i>Suburban</i>		Areas where moderate density residential and commercial uses are located. Separation of residential and commercial uses is appropriate for this area. Low priority area for infill development and redevelopment.
<i>Rural</i>		Areas where low density residential uses are located. Commercial uses (other than agricultural uses) are not appropriate for this area. Infill development is not encouraged.

See map on facing page

ZONE DENSITY PLAN



Housing Affordability Plan 2022-2027

A State law passed in 2017 (Statute 8-30j) requires every municipality to prepare and adopt an affordable housing plan at least once every five years. In 2021, the City of Torrington received a grant from the Connecticut Department of Housing to undertake a proactive planning process and lay out a strategy for meeting the housing needs of existing and future residents and workers.

A Housing Plan Steering Committee was appointed which met monthly to provide feedback throughout the planning process and to ensure that the community was engaged in the conversation around housing affordability needs and possible strategies for meeting those needs. The plan was adopted in October 2022, and contains Goals and Strategies for implementation by the City over the five-year duration of the plan.

Follow the link below to view the plan:

https://www.torringtonct.org/sites/g/files/vyhlf5091f/uploads/torrington_housing_affordabilityplansept2022.pdf

Preserve the Existing Single-Family Zones

Recently the Planning and Zoning Commission has determined that multi-family residential uses are not appropriate in the single-family zones. Torrington should continue to promote this overall development objective.



Single-family homes (above and below)



Residential Neighborhood

Housing Strategies

	TASK
9-1	Consider using the Incentive Housing Zone tool
9-3	Promote sustainable residential development
9-4	Prepare for changing housing needs
9-5	Consider adopting policies that integrate housing and transportation with active aging principles to allow older residents to "age in place"
9-6	Evaluate zoning and other constraints to mobility and visitability
9-7	Preserve the existing single-family zones
9-8	Encourage housing rehabilitation

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

POCD

10

"We take stock of a city like we take stock of a man. The clothes or appearance are the externals by which we judge."

Mark Twain

As part of the preparation of the Plan of Conservation and Development, a City Department Head Questionnaire was developed and Department Heads were asked to comment on current and/or anticipated needs of their departments during the planning period. In regards to community facilities they were asked to comment on the greatest need for their departments over the next five to ten years and in particular major needs to be considered in the Plan.

Also included in the questionnaire were questions relating to other department needs as well as the City's greatest challenges, things to be encouraged by the City as well as types of things to be discouraged.

Goal - To provide adequate community facilities to meet the needs of current and future residents



Torrington Library



Torrington YMCA (above); Besse Pond Pool (below)



Community Facilities include:

- recreation facilities,
- administrative buildings,
- schools, and
- public safety.

Recreation Facilities

Park Master Plan

In 2003, in recognition of the necessity of expand and enhance the quality of the community's recreational assets and opportunities, the City of Torrington's Parks and Recreation Department identified a strategic initiative to develop a Recreation Master Plan.

The focus of the master plan effort was to:

- comprehensively inventory existing conditions,
- determine current and future needs with the community,
- synthesize needs and recommend proposed improvements,
- focus on properties with development potential,
- develop an implementation strategy, and
- assemble findings into a working document for the City's implementation.



New greenway trail (above); Santa's arrival at Christmas Village (below)



Torrington High School at Besse Pond

The Recreation Master Plan identifies a number of community needs including an Indoor Aquatic Facility/Community Center, additional ball fields and a Dog Park. The Plan also identifies the role each type of facility plays and the ideal Program Area needed. Torrington should continue to implement the Recreation Master Plan.



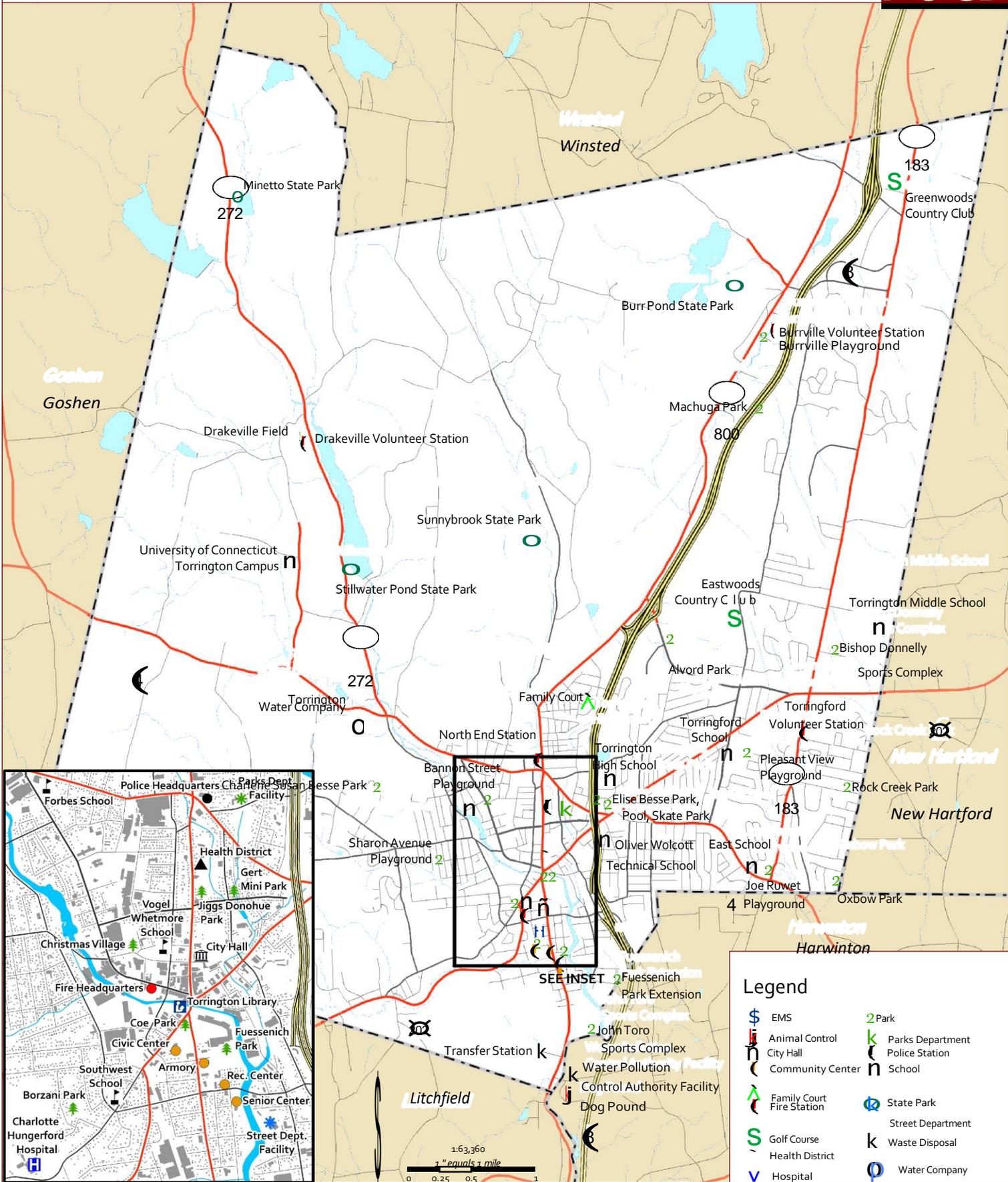
Popular bicycle races (above); Skate Park (below)



Playgrounds are being upgraded

Greatest needs are securing capital funding for completing facility improvements and updates. A central complex for park maintenance is recommended. Development fees for park development and improvements should be evaluated. There is a need for a multi-purpose community center.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES



Facility Management

The Recreation Master Plan also recognized the role that the school-managed properties play in providing recreation space in Torrington. These properties provide game courts/fields, and the use of playgrounds as neighborhood parks. With cooperative management, these resources can reduce the number of new facilities or fields to be built, can give the City flexibility in scheduling game locations and can provide windows of time for normal maintenance activities or occasional renovation or repair.

It is important to recognize the school properties are prioritized for the school's needs. However, through improved maintenance practices, game fields may be able to offer more opportunity for use of programs outside of the daily, or seasonal, school calendar.

For example, the school's use of the baseball fields at the high school and middle school is focused on the spring season; however, additional maintenance applications would allow these fields to be more useful to athletic leagues in the summer. The Parks Department is taking a more active role in supporting schools with summer maintenance and the City should continue to explore ways in which the mutual benefits might be realized.

Information Technology

Torrington should upgrade the City's computer network to a Self-Managed Fiber-Optic network connecting all the City's buildings and facilities. This network would reduce data costs and provide all departments with faster data and more infrequent loss of data access. Torrington might also consider expanding the Fiber Optic network to the business community as an economic development tool.

Towns such as Burlington, Vermont have found it advantageous and profitable to install fiber-optic networks within their municipal boundaries. The city started building its infrastructure in 2005, signed its first customer in 2006, went "cash flow positive" in 2007, and is set to become profitable this year.

Burlington started its network with municipal government offices. Large businesses took up the network next, with residents soon following. Burlington's service provides cable television, telephone, and broadband cable service to its customers. www.converanet.com

Comptroller

The greatest need for the Comptroller is to promote finance and purchasing shared services between the City government operations and Board of Education operations. This project might also include sharing services between the Department of Public Works and Board of Education as well. The Department needs a software update to create greater efficiency and provide better analysis data.

Public Safety

Evaluate and Improve Fire Protection

In Torrington, fire protection is provided by a paid department operating out of two fire stations and three volunteer departments. The single most critical factor in fire extinguishment is time; once a fire starts it grows exponentially. The sooner the fire fighters arrive, the smaller the fire is and the more easily, quickly, safely, and successfully it can be extinguished.

Fire station location obviously affects how quickly the Fire Department can respond. The Insurance Services Office, an organization that rates fire departments and influences insurance rates, recommends that no property be more than 1.5 miles from a fire station.

Areas where Torrington might improve Fire Protection:

- improve the level of fire protection service to achieve an Insurance Services Office rating of 3;
- provide land for future fire stations to maintain or improve existing response times.
- insure an adequate water supply for fire protection;
- Policies require the extension of water mains to new subdivisions where appropriate;
- as part of the subdivision approval, continue to require where appropriate, fire ponds with dry hydrants in areas without water mains;
- review proposed subdivisions, especially on the City's west side, for potential acquisition of property for a fire station; and
- encourage developers to provide sprinkler systems in homes that in remote locations and in all commercial and industrial buildings.

Update the Police Headquarters

The Police Department occupies a former school building, which was renovated in 1990. As the renovations of this building approach the 20-year mark a number of issues are starting to be identified. Torrington should:

- upgrade the heating and cooling system to reduce maintenance problems and costs,
- improve communications technology,
- provide additional parking, and
- maximize the use of interior space.

Upgrade Emergency Dispatch Services and Facilities

Currently there are plans to combine all public safety dispatching for Police, Fire and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) into one location, Police Headquarters. If this proposal is implemented, there will have to be a complete overhaul of the dispatch office in order to accommodate all of the activity that will take place.

Grants have been applied for to upgrade equipment and to construct a temporary dispatch until the final plan and project is completed. It is imperative for this project to be completed if the Centralized Dispatch project does in fact take place. The current dispatch and the temporary dispatch will not be adequate for the project in the long term.

Fire Headquarters

11 Water Street

Police Department

576 Main Street

The City of Torrington Police Department is comprised of 83 sworn officers and 25 civilian staff. It is the largest municipal police department in Litchfield County. The Department is a full service police agency providing service to the city seven days a week, 52 weeks a year.

In 2008 officers of the Department handled 46,501 calls for service and it is expected that the 2009 call volume will exceed this number.

Over the past four years calls for service have increased by 30 percent.

Dispatch Facility Needs

Any upgrade of the Dispatch Center should consider:

- new radio frequencies,
- technology upgrades,
- information storage,
- telephone systems,
- ergonomics,
- adequate and appropriate levels of staffing, and
- construction methodology.

City Buildings

City Hall

140 Main Street

Improve Access to Information at City Hall

While improvements are being made to the physical elements of City Hall, Torrington should use the internet as a way to conserve paper, manpower and energy. The City should also enable the use of debit or credit cards to pay fees when purchasing or filing documents. Other identified needs include a large centralized voting facility, additional parking and a new parks and recreation building. The greatest challenge foreseen involves language barriers.

Board of Education

355 Migeon Avenue

Continue to Address Public Work's Space Needs

Greatest need is for Department of Public Works (DPW) Storage and operations space. A facilities study completed by Fletcher Thompson Inc, in 2001 identified City Hall, 104 Main Street, City Barn, Winthrop Street and Public Works Facility located at 107 Arthur Street. The study identified building/site improvements required and several items in need of repair and replacement.

Torrington is the largest school district in Litchfield County with an enrollment of approximately 5,000 students in grades pre-K through 12.

The Vision of Torrington Public Schools is to be recognized as a high achieving, future-oriented learning community dedicated to embracing all people as individuals who contribute purposefully to our diverse and dynamic society.

Currently the City Hall building is being completely renovated and a new maintenance building for the Traffic Departments storage has been built at the Winthrop Street location. The DPW Storage and operations space needs identified in the study have not been met.

The Board of Educations' Mission is to graduate all students with the knowledge, skills, ethics, attitude and confidence to succeed in their future.

The Fleet Manager also identified the need for a new facility for equipment maintenance. The Public Works Director identifies traffic improvement upgrades called for in the Municipal Development Plan at the five-way intersection Downtown and making Kennedy Drive/Dibble Street a State Highway as other major needs for inclusion in the Plan.

Continue to Support Torrington Schools

Torrington Schools

Torrington High School
Torrington Middle School
Elementary Schools:

- East School
- Forbes School
- Southwest School
- Torrington School
- Vogel-Wetmore School

Greatest need is the ability to equip, modernize and sustain a level of maintenance for school facilities and grounds. The Plan should consider the capital plan expenditures for school facilities outlined in the Torrington Board of Education's "Five Year Capital Improvement Plan 2009/2010 – 2013/2014," approved by the Board of Education April 1, 2009. A new municipal sports complex would reduce the strain and over use of the City's and Board of Education facility buildings and grounds.

www.torrington.org



Forbes School (above); Southwest School (below)



Torrington Middle School

Improve the Sullivan Senior Center

Greatest Department need are building and Americans with Disability Act (ADA) upgrades to the Sullivan Senior Center. A café addition for the nutrition program was identified as a future need. The greatest challenges identified are Torrington’s changing demographics and a need for better transportation. Concerns were raised over the mixing the populations of disabled and elderly in subsidized housing.

Sullivan Senior Center

88 East Albert Street

The Sullivan Senior Center, a multipurpose center and focal point for people age 60 and over.

The mission of the Senior Center is to provide a facility where people meet for the purpose of participating in social, nutritional, educational and support services in order to enhance and enrich their lives. The Center strives to meet the needs of the older population by developing programs utilizing local, State and Federal resources.

www.torringtonct.org

Card game at the senior center



Sullivan Senior Center (above and below)



Replace the Dog Pound

Torrington’s dog pound is currently located on City-owned property in Harwinton adjacent to the WPCA and the Naugatuck River. The facility is undersized and in poor condition. All efforts should be made to construct a new facility within the City boundaries.

Torrington Dog Pound



Doug Pound (above and below)



The new facility should meet all required Dog Pound Regulations and expand those requirements to include a holding areas for cats and other pets that may need to be seized as well as improved examination areas, and a location for offices and adoptions.

Address Concerns that Regional Problems are Solved Locally

Torrington should continue to encourage a regional dialog about social service needs and that social services should not be concentrated in one community. As a regional center it is recognized that Torrington is ideally situated to headquarter certain initiatives. However, some initiatives do not require a geographically-based concentration to operate efficiently. In those instances, service providers should seek opportunities to expand in other communities within the region.

Community Facility Strategies

	TASK
10-1	Continue to implement the Recreation Master Plan
10-2	Evaluate the management of City-owned facilities
10-3	Evaluate and improve fire protection
10-4	Update the Police Headquarters
10-5	Improve access to information at City Hall
10-6	Address public work's space needs
10-7	Continue to support Torrington Schools
10-8	Improve the Sullivan Senior Center
10-9	Replace the dog pound
10-10	Address concerns that regional problems are solved locally
10-11	Upgrade emergency dispatch services and facilities
10-12	Consider expanding the fiber optic network to the business community

UTILITIES

"We have to invest in our infrastructure if we are going to go forward in our city and our state."

Carolyn Maloney

11

Utility infrastructure refers to services such as

- piped utilities (public water, public sewer, storm drainage and natural gas),
- wired utilities (electric, telephone and cable),
- wireless services, and
- individual services (private septic systems and wells).

Installation of new water main



Sewer inspection (above); Utility line maintenance (below)



On-site Sewerage Disposal

Wastes from homes and businesses are either carried away by public sewers to a municipal treatment plant or discharged into an on-site septic system.

Preventive maintenance and repair of a private septic system is the responsibility of the property owner.

The Permit to Discharge that is issued by the Torrington Area Health District (TAHD) to start using the septic system requires maintenance of the septic tank every 3-5 years.

This periodic maintenance is the best way of avoid a septic system failure.

The Torrington Area Health District (TAHD) has records of most septic systems installed in the past 43 years and we can be helpful in providing information and advice to owners of septic systems and wells.

Soon, the TAHD will be asking for proof that these maintenance procedures were done in conformance with their Permit to Discharge.

Continue to Provide Capacity Management for Municipal Sewer

Torrington has taken a leadership role in managing the Water Pollution Control Facility and system, which is in-line with State goals and policies, by being one of the first Connecticut communities to adopt a Sewer Service Area. The Water Pollution Control Authority (WPCA) has developed policies that limit future users of the system to properties within the Sewer Service Area.

Priorities for the Allocation of Treatment and Collection Capacity

GALLONS PER DAY	PERCENT OF TOTAL CAPACITY	DESCRIPTION
5,500,000	78.6%	Existing development within the Sewer Service Area
1,134,000	16.2%	Potential Future development meeting current zoning and within the Sewer Service Area. Including sub-surface disposal systems within the Sewer Service Area.
150,000	2.1%	Town of Litchfield
77,000	1.1%	Town of Harwinton
140,000	2.0%	Existing development outside the Sewer Service Area that is served by on-site disposal systems.

Continue Policy of Sewer Avoidance

The WPCA has established that sewer avoidance is a desirable policy in rural areas where sewers do not currently exist and has adopted a policy to designate all areas outside the boundaries of the Sewer Service Area as Decentralized Wastewater Management Areas. As a result, the Water Pollution Control Authority will not extend, nor permit the extension of its sanitary sewer infrastructure to serve areas or individual properties outside the boundaries of the Sewer Service Area.

The only exception to this sewer avoidance policy is when municipal sewers are the only means of mitigating water pollution problems caused by the failure of multiple subsurface disposal systems located in the same geographic area and in existence as of March 7, 2005.

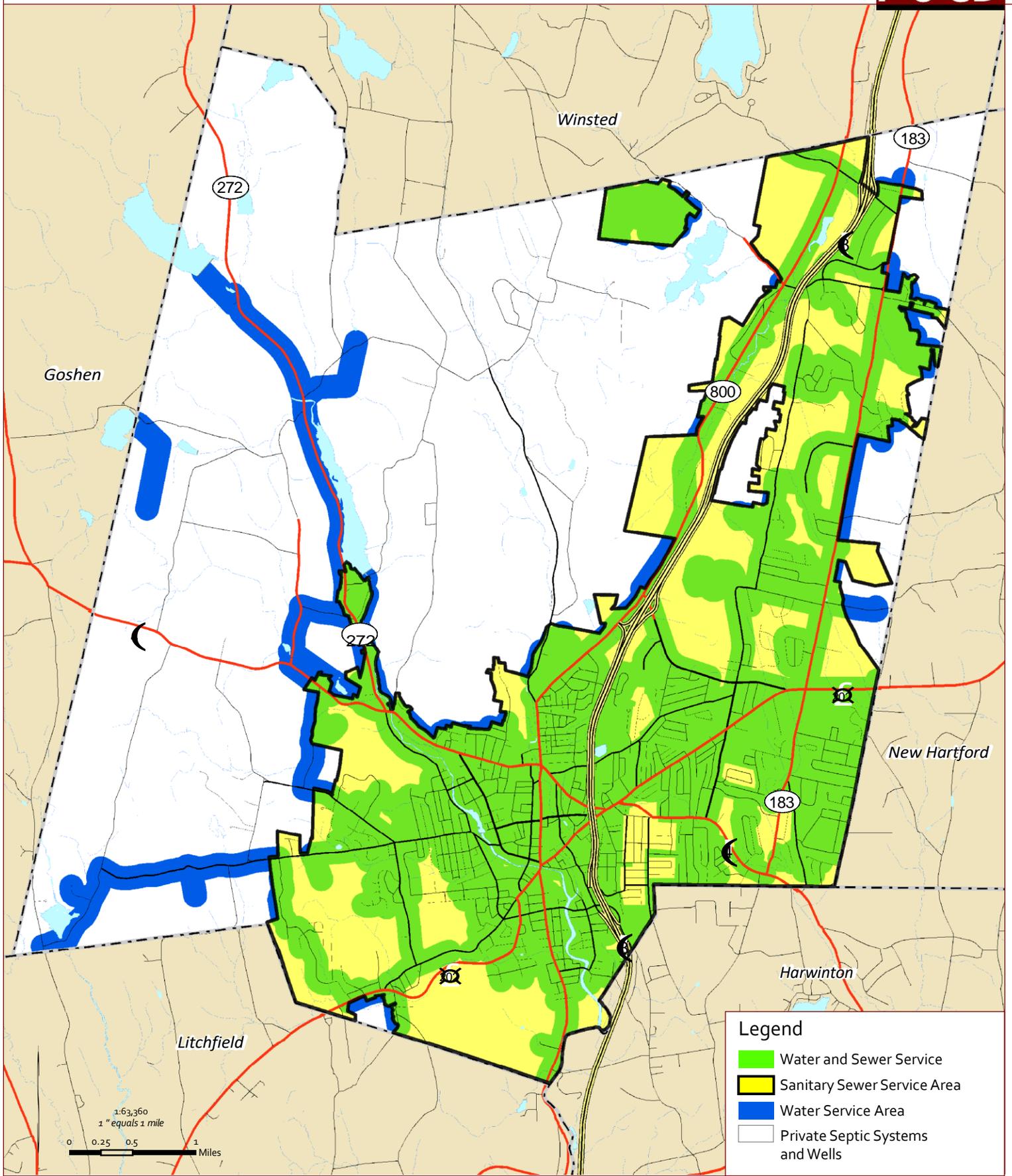
New development and construction outside the boundaries of the Sewer Service Area shall not exceed the capacity of the land on which it is located to adequately support a sub-surface disposal system. The WPCA policy relies on inter-agency cooperation, including the Planning and Zoning, Building, and Health departments.

Future Needs

Long-term needs include modifications and upgrades of wastewater pumping stations and the wastewater treatment facility. In addition, some of the public sewer pipes are over 100 years old and replacement will be necessary. The City should continue to develop a plan and approach to implement this action.

Elimination of inverted siphons where possible, long term elimination of sewers that cross or are laid in river and streambeds should be considered.

UTILITIES -- WATER AND SEWER



Torrington Area Health District

350 Main Street

The Torrington Area Health District (TAHD) was the second health district formed in Connecticut.

Initially, the TAHD was needed to enforce State regulations dealing with septic systems, wells, food inspections, and other environmental health mandates.

Today, the health district is a wide-ranging agency addressing traditional public health responsibilities as well as collaborating with many other Federal, State and local organizations on emerging issues.

www.tahtd.org

Stormwater Utility

A stormwater utility is a special fee-based program established to generate revenue specifically for stormwater management.

Stormwater utilities typically fund:

- maintenance of the storm drain system,
- development of drainage plans,
- flood control measures, and
- water quality programs.

Septic Systems

While the majority of the developed area in Torrington is served by public sewers, there are still areas that will continue to rely on individual septic systems. One of the biggest issues with un-sewered areas can be the lack of maintenance of septic systems.

Torrington, and the Torrington Area Health District, should consider adopting a septic management ordinance that helps to ensure that septic systems in the community are maintained on a regular basis. This ordinance might help educate people who move to Torrington but have had little experience managing a septic system. This will help protect water quality.

Properties with septic systems would be notified every three years that their septic system should be pumped. Properties that do not get pumped (tracked by septic pumping records at the sewage treatment plant) would be inspected and targeted for enforcement. Septic pumping companies could also report on the overall condition of the tank and the septic field.

Stormwater Management

Storm drainage historically has been an issue that communities have not focused on. This tends to be the largest infrastructure element that does not have a good management plan in place. With changes to state and federal laws, towns and cities are now being required to manage the drainage infrastructure more carefully.

Torrington maintains a number of pipes and catch basins that have been designed to “catch and convey” the water from a problem area to a wetland or watercourse. As in most communities, the stormwater management goal has been to move water from one area to another to reduce localized flooding.

Torrington should continue to map the stormwater collection system and identify areas where improvements can be made to enhance water quality and reduce flooding. Techniques such as green infrastructure and low impact development should also be utilized when conditions are appropriate.

In addition, Torrington should investigate the feasibility of a user-based stormwater utility to create a fair way to pay for stormwater services and system improvements. Connecticut’s Municipal Stormwater Authority Pilot Program, established in 2007 by Public Act 07-154, should be reviewed after the pilot city’s programs have been established to see if a future program is appropriate for the City of Torrington.

Utility Strategies

	TASK
11-1	Continue the policy of sewer avoidance in rural areas
11-2	Address long-term sewer and Water Pollution Control Authority needs
11-3	Consider adopting a septic management ordinance
11-4	Continue to map the stormwater collection system
11-5	Make improvements to the stormwater system to reduce flooding and improve water quality
11-6	Apply low impact development techniques to the stormwater system
11-7	Investigate the feasibility of creating a user-fee based stormwater utility

TRANSPORTATION

"There can be no doubt that the transportation sector is the most critical sector of our economy."

Robert Brady

12

Torrington's State and local streets and public transportation services are the primary elements of its transportation system. The design development and improvement of this system is crucial to effective planning for the orderly development and support of the City and the surrounding region.

Attractive North End Street



East Main Street – improve streetscape (above);
New residential street (below)



Torrington's transportation system includes:

- a network of local and state roads and highways,
- a multi-purpose trail,
- a network of sidewalks and off-road trails and paths,
- NWCT Transit District bus routes, and
- an unutilized rail line.

Road Network

Torrington has 163 miles of roadways and 600 streets and roads.

There are approximately 60 electronic traffic signals helping to control the proper and orderly flow of traffic.

Provide for a Comprehensive Transportation System

Transportation typically focuses on roads and the automobile. Torrington should provide for a transportation system that is comprehensive and addresses all transportation needs.

- provide a safe, convenient highway and local street system;
- support transportation improvements that will improve travel safety, protect existing land-uses and guide future land-use consistent with the overall goals of Plan of Conservation and Development;
- focus on use and improvement of the existing highway and street system;
- support plans for the improvement of Downtown to enhance the safety and convenience of traffic movements (automobile, bicycle and pedestrian) and provide adequate off-street parking facilities;
- balance the need for traffic and road safety improvements with the need to protect and preserve existing land-uses and historic structures;
- continue Torrington's long-range pavement management program;
- encourage cooperation and coordination of the local pavement improvements and in-street utility construction to avoid unnecessary disturbances to newly improved public streets;
- develop model streetscape plans for commercial zones; and
- continue the practice of requiring site development plans for business with coordination of landscape and streetscape improvements along street frontage.

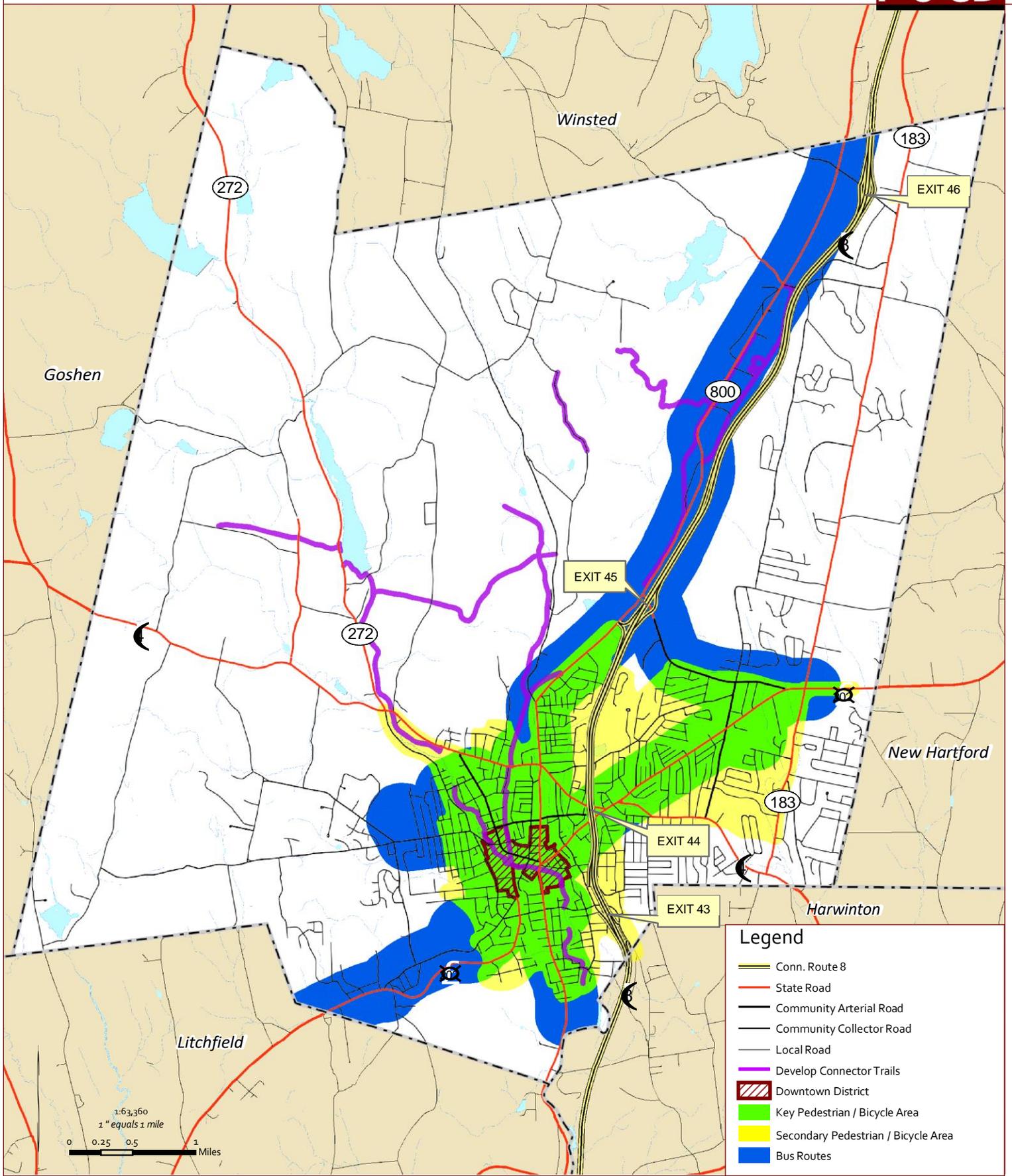


Sidewalks that are not part of the road network (above); Improve pedestrian safety (below)



Sidewalks in Downtown are very important

BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN



Provide Safe Routes for Pedestrians and Bicyclists

A comprehensive transportation plan must also provide safe pedestrian access in Downtown, densely developed residential neighborhoods, near schools or recreation areas and along major city collector roads.

Major streets in Torrington in need of sidewalk construction or sidewalk maintenance are Winsted Road, East Main Street, etc. Development and subdivision applications that include frontage on a major collector street should be evaluated for sidewalk needs. In major new subdivisions sidewalk should be planned along the main interior subdivision roads at a minimum.



Provide bike racks (above); Provide bike lanes (below)



Bicycling Downtown

Bikeways are also valuable for both transportation and recreation purposes. Federal and State funds are available to design and construct bike and walking paths. It is recommended that Torrington support regional efforts to urge use of State and federal funds for high priority sidewalk construction.

The five-mile Sue Grossman Still River Greenway project, along the abandoned rail line parallel to Winsted Road, can be replicated in other sections of Torrington. The Regional Transportation Plan recommends consideration of a rails and trails bikeway along the active rail line in Downtown, which could be extended southerly along the Naugatuck River through Thomaston.

As with sidewalks, major collector-streets should be designed to be bicycle-friendly. The Regional Plan recommends that when a State highway in Torrington is improved, the roadway should include a minimum shoulder width of at least four feet for safe bicycle use.

Support Transit and Commuting Opportunities

Public transportation is an important part of any city transportation plan, especially in metropolitan city centers. Large, densely developed city centers have public bus service with multiple routes and continuous service. Small cities, such as Torrington, do not, have a sufficient population base to support extensive transit services; nevertheless, these services are essential to segments of the population and can play an important role in Downtown development.

Bus and other mass transit services require governmental subsidies to continue operations. Without a critical mass of potential public transit patrons Torrington's expenses per capita will be higher than larger cities.

Easy Street Carpooling Vans



Preserve the old train station (above);
Provide bus shelters in key locations (below)



Torrington public bus services are provided through the regional Northwestern Connecticut Transit District. This model enables the costs of providing this service to be spread out among all of the communities served. Goals for public transit are:

- maintain, improve and where feasible expand bus transportation service to major existing and proposed employment sites, the city center area and major developed residential neighborhoods with services designed especially for elderly, handicapped and others with no automobile;
- encourage creation of a centralized transit facility for Northwestern Connecticut Transit District for vehicle storage and maintenance, centralized dispatching and administrative functions and
- cooperate with major local employers to support and encourage ride-sharing, car-pooling and use of commuter parking facilities.

Boarding the Rural Transit Bus



The City Hall Candystriper Stop (above)



Rail Network

The original Naugatuck Railroad was chartered in 1845, to be built between Bridgeport and Winsted, adjacent to the Naugatuck River. Construction began in April, 1848, and was completed by May, 1849. The first regular train service began June 11, 1849.

The Railroad Museum of New England, Inc. (RMNE), a not-for-profit educational and historical organization, now leases the line from the Connecticut Department of Transportation.

RMNE operates excursion trips along the line. These trips are primarily run from Thomaston to Waterbury.

www.rmne.org

Promote Rail Use for the Future

The Litchfield Hills region has two operational rail lines. One of these lines extends into Torrington and connects to the City of Waterbury. This former Penn Central line is now owned by the Connecticut Department of Transportation and operated privately. No freight service is currently provided on the line, but the State Department of Transportation is evaluating improvements to the line.

Limited seasonal excursion service was re-established in 1997 providing a scenic ride through the beautiful Naugatuck River Valley in restored historical rail passenger cars. However the rail line has been out of service since a rockslide north of the Thomaston dam blocked the tracks.

Removal of the rock blockage and other costly improvements to the Torrington-Waterbury rail line are needed to upgrade it for either freight or commuter passenger service. This is not a top priority in the State Transportation Plan but it is important to the future of Torrington's transportation system and economic development.

Torrington should continue to encourage appropriations of the. State and Federal aid to reinstate a higher level of service on this rail line. Potential actions include:

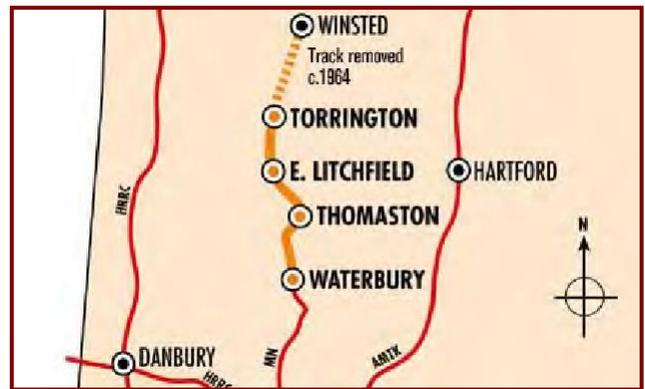
- support continuation of Torrington-Waterbury rail branch line for tourist-passenger use and promote increased use of rail service by local industry;
- Encourage development of new bus service from Torrington area to Metro-North's Upper Harlem Line for commuting to New York City and White Plains; and
- encourage development of abandoned rail right-of-way lines for public use as a transportation or recreational facility or develop them as a shared rails and trails transportation opportunity to be ready when rail use becomes more important to the area. .



Housatonic Railroad (above);RMNE (below)



Photos from www.rmne.org



Naugatuck Railroad (RMNE)

Torrington should work with the New England Railroad Museum to keep the track maintained and useable with a long-term goal of using the rail for tourism, freight and public transportation.

Continue to Encourage 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.

Interconnected drives reduce need to use Route 202



Examples of properties with interconnected driveways (above and below)



Torrington should evaluate land-use activities along major routes to find opportunities to employ access management, either at the time new development is proposed or as part of a City initiative. Potential actions include

- continue to promote access management for land-use activities and consolidate curb cuts when possible; and
- continue implementation of advanced traffic planning and management techniques, including completion of GPS sign inventory system and traffic signalization program.

Continue to Encourage Traffic Calming

Traffic calming involves changing the way roads are used to reduce speed and provide safety on the roads. Traffic calming techniques can be classified as either education, enforcement or engineering-based solutions:

- *education* programs involve training motorists to cautiously approach certain areas within the transportation system,
- *enforcement* programs can be accomplished through an increased police presence, speed awareness signage or other measures, and
- *engineering* solutions typically involve managing the transportation system by reducing pavement widths on roads and installing devices that cause motorists to slow down, such as speed bumps.

Speed bump



Narrow road (above); Curving road (below)



Address Other Transportation Issues

Torrington should also monitor other transportation-related issues. Potential issues include:

- communication and coordination of traffic planning with land-use site development reviews and engineering department’s road capital improvement program and
- NW transit authority has been awarded a Federal grant to develop a new transportation facility for their bus fleet and is in the process of locating a facility. Progress on this project will not occur until State funding has been provided. Torrington should continue to support this facility and consider whether it might serve as a transit-oriented development site. A transportation hub or facility, combining commuter, parking, inner-city bus, as well as future rail traffic both freight and passenger is important for Torrington.

	TASK
12-1	Provide for a comprehensive transportation system
12-2	Provide safe routes for pedestrians and bicyclists
12-3	Support transit and commuting opportunities
12-4	Promote rail use for the future
12-5	Continue to encourage access management
12-6	Continue to encourage traffic calming
12-7	Address other transportation issues: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve coordination between traffic planning and capital improvements • Evaluate transit-oriented development at new regional transit hub when State funding becomes available for this facility

SUSTAINABILITY OBJECTIVES

POCD

13

"Sustainable development is a dynamic process which enables all people to realize their potential, and to improve their quality of life, in ways which simultaneously protect and enhance the Earth's life support systems."

Forum for the Future Annual Report (2000)

Overall Principles of Sustainability

For Torrington, the following principles of sustainability will be used:

- meet human needs fairly and efficiently, giving priority to basic needs of citizens and the needs of the community (needs such as housing, jobs, food, mobility, municipal services, affordable taxes, and quality of life),
- reduce dependence upon fossil fuels, underground metals and minerals in ways can we meet needs for energy, heating and cooling buildings, moving about from home to work to shopping while reducing dependence upon fossil fuels,
- reduce dependence upon chemicals and synthetic compounds. Landscape, garden, farm, build, use or create products and services at home and work, that reduce or eliminate use of chemical and synthetic substances, and
- reduce encroachment upon nature by planning and designing development that minimizes encroachment on undeveloped land, woods, and wildlife habitat, and protects the quality of water.

Low Impact Development

Low impact development (LID) involves site design strategies intended to maintain or replicate a site's natural hydrology systems through the use of small-scale controls integrated throughout the site to manage runoff as close to its source as possible.

LID may involve the use of environmentally friendly site design elements (e.g. rain gardens, swales and pervious pavement), to manage water quantity and quality.

Solar Power



Conserve water (above); Recycle (below)



Throughout this Plan of Conservation and Development, Torrington is seeking to respect and address these principles. Doing so is not just a locally altruistic gesture towards a global concern, but rather commonly involves an action that is of local benefit as well as making some contribution at a larger scale.

Optiwind

On June 25, 2009, the Torrington Planning and Zoning Commission granted a Special Exception Permit for the installation of a wind turbine on Klug Hill Road. When built, this will be the first wind turbine in Torrington.

The turbine will be located on property used for dairy farming. It will reduce energy costs for the farm.

There are an estimated 72 TW (terawatts) of commercially-viable wind energy on earth.

This roughly seven times the current global demand for electricity.

Every year, an average Optiwind 300 turbine will save over 450 tons of carbon-dioxide emissions.

Over its life, that is the equivalent of planting over 1.25 million new trees.



www.optiwind.com

FuelCell Energy

FuelCell Energy manufactures fuel cell power plants that generate electricity with up to twice the efficiency of conventional fossil fuel plants – and with virtually no air pollution.

FuelCell Energy owns and operates a manufacturing plant in Torrington with a capacity of 50 MW per year.



www.fuelcellenergy.com

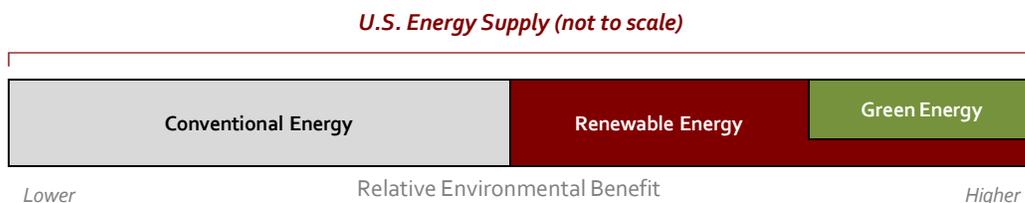
Conserve Energy

At present energy supply is significantly hydrocarbon dependent while prices for these commodities have more than doubled in the past year. Historically petroleum prices have undergone spikes and it remains possible that current price levels will subside during the Plan's 10-year period.

Nevertheless the realities remain: supply is not infinite and hydrocarbon emissions pollute the environment. As such it is important that Torrington be mindful of the manner in which it consumes energy and, in the long-term, optimizing available resources is a sensible strategy.

Use and Encourage the Use of Green Energy

In 2006 Torrington committed to becoming a Connecticut Clean Energy Community. The Connecticut Clean Energy Communities Program, funded by the Connecticut Clean Energy Fund, provides communities with an opportunity to support clean renewable energy. In the process, communities can earn free clean energy systems. Torrington has committed to purchase 20 percent of it's energy from clean generators by the year 2010. Torrington should also review regulations to eliminate restrictions on the use or generation of green energy.



Green Power is a subset of renewable energy and represents those renewable resources (solar, wind, biogas, biomass, low-impact hydro and geothermal) that provide the highest environmental benefit. Torrington should evaluate local land use regulations and create regulations that permit alternative energy production (such as solar and wind energy), when appropriate.

Reduce Energy Use

The City should be aggressive in the use of current and developing technology to conserve and reduce pollution and employ new sources of renewable energy as they become available.

Funding will be required for a wide variety of initiatives to optimize and increase energy efficiency including, but not limited to:

- developing a City Energy Plan,
- guidelines and regulations for municipal construction projects consistent with these goals, including new construction and renovation of the City infrastructure, such as buildings, streetlights, parking lot lights, to lower water and power consumption and reduction of maintenance costs,
- conversion to sources of renewable resources where available,
- purchase of vehicles with decreased energy consumption and renewable fuel sources,
- implementing educational outreach programs, and
- developing a long-term plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Become An Energy Star

The first step in a community-wide energy efficiency project is to identify which municipal activities and facilities use the most energy. An energy audit will pinpoint those areas and suggest the most effective measures for cutting energy costs.

Torrington should conduct an energy audit of City-owned buildings and take corrective measures to reduce energy use. In addition Torrington should consider reducing the energy budget to force changes in energy use. An energy audit can often find a way to reduce energy consumption by 10 percent.

One area where energy use can be reduced involves street lighting. Most communities currently use old, inefficient light fixtures with drop-down lens fixtures that spill and waste light to the sides and upward to the sky. In addition, street lighting is one of a community's more expensive utility bills.

Through a community-wide streetlight initiative to remove unneeded lights, and upgrade older fixtures, Torrington can save money, reduce energy use, and cut down on night time light pollution.

Conserve Water

Torrington, along with many communities in New England, has faced a drought advisory at various times during the past ten years which has forced residents to conserve water. While Torrington normally receives between 48-50 inches of rainfall annually, small changes in precipitation, along with additional impervious coverage can reduce the ability to recharge aquifers. There are also concerns about the future availability of water and this will continue to be an issue that Torrington will have to monitor.



Lawn irrigation



Running water (above) ; Drought (below)



Changes in how properties are used, even little things such as creating a lawn rather than retaining a natural wooded environment, reduces the amount of water that is deposited into the aquifers. This water typically runs-off the land and can be lost as a future drinking water resource. This is an important issue because approximately 50 percent of Torrington's land area is served by private wells. Reducing irrigation use and providing infiltration of runoff are two ways that the water balance can be restored.

Energy Star

The Energy Star program is a dynamic government/industry partnership that offers businesses and consumers energy-efficient solutions, making it easy to save money while protecting the environment for future generations.



www.energystar.gov

LEED

LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) is an internationally recognized certification system that measures how well a building or community performs across all the metrics that matter most: energy savings, water efficiency, CO₂ emissions reduction, improved indoor environmental quality, and stewardship of resources and sensitivity to their impacts.

Developed by the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC), LEED provides building owners and operators a concise framework for identifying and implementing practical and measurable green building design, construction, operations and maintenance solutions.

www.usgbc.org

Volatile Organic Compounds

(VOCs) are emitted as gases from certain solids or liquids. VOCs include a variety of chemicals, some of which may have short- and long-term adverse health effects.

The ability of organic chemicals to cause health effects varies greatly from those that are highly toxic, to those with no known health effect.

www.epa.gov

LEED and Green Buildings

There is growing interest in creating buildings that are more environmentally responsible. While efforts to date have largely been voluntary on the part of owners and builders, Torrington should become a leader in this area.

The most recognized program in the United States promoting the design, construction, and operation of buildings that are environmentally responsible is the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building Rating System. This program was put together by the United States Green Building Council (USGBC), a non-profit organization working to promote buildings that are environmentally responsible, profitable and healthy places to live and work. More information is available at www.usgbc.org.

At the present time LEED is a voluntary national rating system for developing high-performance, sustainable buildings. Based on published standards, LEED emphasizes state-of-the-art strategies for sustainable site development, water savings, energy efficiency, materials selection and indoor environmental quality.

Torrington should adopt some level of LEED certification for new buildings and major renovations of both public and private buildings. Torrington should also evaluate local regulations to find ways to incorporate low impact development techniques into new site development. These techniques may also be an appropriate to retrofit existing public and private stormwater systems.

Create Green Municipal Facilities

Torrington residents have indicated that they want an environmentally-sound community. Recent actions by community leaders have indicated that this is the responsible thing to do.

Reducing energy requirements, using natural and renewable products in building construction, reducing light pollution, lessening chemical lawn care techniques and improving indoor air quality through non-Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC) products are things that we expect others to do. Torrington could also promote groundwater recharge and potentially reduce flooding through the use of rain gardens and rain barrels on public properties.

Torrington should use these techniques when building or improving City-owned facilities.

LEED and Green Neighborhoods

Just as standards have been developed for green buildings, standards are also being developed for environmentally responsible, sustainable developments. These standards are also part of the LEED program

While not yet finalized, the LEED for Neighborhood Development Rating System integrates the principles of smart growth, urbanism, and green building into national standards for neighborhood design.

Some of the criteria being considered include:

Theme	Sample Elements (partial)
Smart Location & Linkage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • proximity to wastewater infrastructure • natural resource conservation • floodplain avoidance • brownfield redevelopment • reduced automobile dependence
Neighborhood Pattern & Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • compact development • diversity of uses / housing types • walkable streets / transit facilities • access to public spaces • community outreach and involvement
Green Construction & Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pollution prevention • resource efficiency in buildings • building reuse and adaptive reuse • minimize site disturbance • best management practices
Innovation & Design Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • innovation • exemplary performance

At some time in the future, Torrington should consider incorporating some level of LEED certification for new development or include it as a consideration in discretionary zoning approvals.

Provide Education

Torrington should work with other communities and organizations to promote energy conservation and environmental issues. The community should also partner with organizations that provide educational tools and guidance about best practices. One organization, the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI), has developed a Cities for Climate Protection campaign as a resource and Torrington should consider joining this or similar programs.

Benefits of Developing a LEED for Neighborhood Development Community

Encourage healthy living
LEED for Neighborhood Development emphasizes the creation of compact, walkable, vibrant, mixed-use neighborhoods with good connections to nearby communities.

Research has shown that living in a mixed-use environment within walking distance of shops and services results in increased walking and biking, which improve human cardiovascular and respiratory health and reduce the risk of hypertension and obesity.

www.usgbc.org

Cities for Climate Protection

The Cities for Climate Protection (CCP) Campaign is an ICLEI program that assists cities to adopt policies and implement quantifiable measures to reduce local greenhouse gas emissions, improve air quality, and enhance urban livability and sustainability.



ICLEI was established as the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives. The organization is now officially ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability.

www.iclei.org

Simple Steps Towards Sustainability

Simple tasks, such as replacing employee garbage cans with recycling bins can reduce the amount of recyclable paper that is mixed with regular waste.



First Green Roof

Torrington recently received an application proposing a 32,000 square foot green roof. This proposal is part of the proposed Torrington Senior Living project on Litchfield Street.

Expand Recycling Programs and Promote Waste Reduction

An often overlooked element of community infrastructure involves the waste generated by businesses, residents and community facilities. Waste prevention and recycling programs are integral to a community that is environmentally, economically, and socially sustainable over the long-term.

In 1993 the State of Connecticut increased the recycling/source reduction goal from 25 percent to 40 percent. This goal intends to encourage consumers to reduce the waste they generate by making simple shopping decisions such as not buying over-packaged products, avoiding disposables, and selecting durable, reusable items.

Few communities have developed a plan to achieve or surpass this goal. Torrington should identify stakeholders and develop a plan to become a leader in waste reduction and recycling efforts and litter prevention.



Frequency of garbage removal (above); Solar-powered garbage can (below)



Recycling fundraising programs

Torrington's operations involve purchasing decisions and Torrington should expand efforts to purchase products made from recycled material. Torrington could also do more to emphasize the reduction of waste in municipal and community facilities and to expand educational programs about the value of recycling.

Prepare for Climate Change

While there is disagreement about the impacts and causes of Climate Change, there appears to be growing consensus in the scientific community that change is happening. Forecasts indicate that climate change will affect all areas of the United States, but each area will have to prepare for different impacts.

It is anticipated that communities in the Northeastern United States will be dealing with:

- More frequent days with temperatures above 90° Fahrenheit ,
- A longer growing season,
- Less winter precipitation falling as snow and more as rain,
- Reduced snowpack and increased snow density,
- Earlier breakup of winter ice on lakes and rivers, and
- Earlier spring snow melt resulting in earlier peak river flows.

What we can do to prepare...

Ultimately, the issues concerning climate change are beyond the scope and control of the City of Torrington. Some people even debate whether climate change is a real problem. While the problem as a whole may be something we cannot impact by ourselves, we can adopt local policies that create some meaningful change, and that improve the community's quality of life.

The following table identifies areas where small local decisions could positively impact climate change. If other communities follow suit, the impact of these changes multiply. It is these multipliers that have the ability to impact the larger system.

	POTENTIAL ACTIONS
Reduce emissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• post "Do not idle" signs at municipal facilities, especially in areas where diesel engines are prone to run for an extended period of time.• evaluate City-owned traffic signals to determine if they are optimally programmed.• evaluate streetlights and reduce the total number.• purchase hybrid vehicles.
Plant Trees	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• develop a public tree planting program.
Promote the use of Green Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• develop Green Energy regulations to promote the use in areas where it will work.• purchase Green Energy for public buildings.• promote the use of the CT Clean Energy Program• conserve energy.
Improve Stormwater Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• voluntarily comply with the NPDES Phase II stormwater program requirements.• identify and reduce unnecessary impervious surfaces.

CASE STUDY

Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions

The Town of Windsor has made great strides in cutting greenhouse gas emissions and conserving energy, from purchasing hybrid vehicles to saving money and energy at Town-owned buildings.

In 2004, Windsor completed a greenhouse gas inventory for all Town-owned buildings and vehicles.

The Town purchased its first hybrid vehicle and did a complete retrofit of interior lighting with occupancy sensors at the Public Works Complex, resulting in a savings of approximately 20,200 kwh per year.

www.ctclimatechange.com



Connecticut Climate Change

Wind energy



Plant trees (above); Emissions (below)



Create Alternative Transportation Choices

- repair, maintain and improve sidewalks and extend to areas where appropriate.
- create City-wide bicycle routes and a “share the Road” bicycle safety program.
- encourage the installation of bicycle racks at all City-owned facilities and require bicycle racks for new commercial development.
- work with local transit providers to expand transit programs, awareness and ridership.

Promote local food production

- continue to promote the Torrington Farmers Market year-round.
- develop a farmers marketplace in Downtown.
- work with farmers to increase farm viability.

Enhance Water Quality

- incorporate Low Impact Development techniques into local land-use regulations for new development.
- upgrade the public stormwater system so that it will appropriately address water quality.
- encourage property owners to use native landscaping materials and limit pesticide/herbicide usage.



Corn field (above); Water quality (below)



Support Local Farms

FUTURE LAND-USE PLAN

POCD

"My interest is in the future, because I am going to spend the rest of my life there."

Charles Kettering

14

The recommendations of each of the preceding chapters can be combined to present an overall Future Land-use Plan for Torrington.

The Future Land-use Plan is a reflection of the state goals, objectives and recommendations of the Plan, as well as an integration of the preceding elements of the Plan of Conservation and Development. In essence the Future Land-use Plan is a statement of what Torrington of tomorrow should look like.

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.

Enhance Access to Open Space



Preserve local farms (above); Encourage Downtown redevelopment (below)



The Future Land-use Plan will serve to guide the Planning and Zoning Commission as it makes changes to the official Zoning Map.

Descriptions of Future Land-use Categories

The Future Land-use Plan contains the following categories:

Residential Areas

Developed areas used or intended for residential uses.

Map Legend

-  Rural
-  Medium Density
-  High Density
-  Downtown District (mixed-use)

Business Areas

Developed areas used or intended for mixed use residential, business or industrial uses.

Map Legend

-  Downtown District (mixed-use)
-  Commercial
-  Industrial

Open Space

Areas with existing or desirable open space and greenway trails.

Map Legend

-  Open space

Institutional / Community Facility

Existing or desired uses that will help meet community needs.

Map Legend

-  Institutional/ Community Facility
-  Sewer Service Area

Natural Resource Constraints

Areas where natural resource protection is a priority of the Plan.

Map Legend

-  Steep Slopes, Wetlands or Floodplains

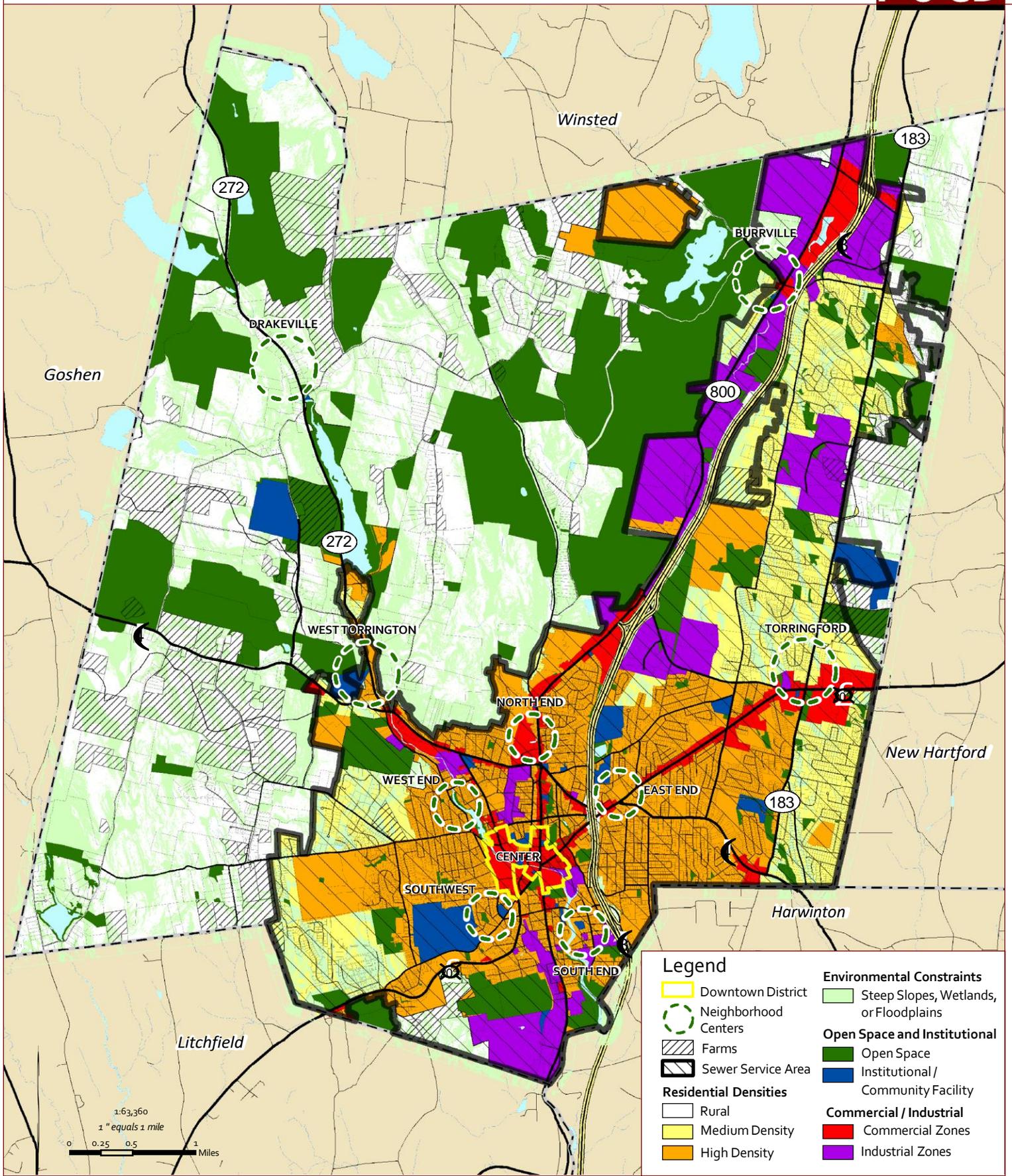
Important Community Resources

Areas with important community character elements.

Map Legend

-  Downtown District
-  Neighborhood Centers
-  Farms

FUTURE LAND USE PLAN



Legend

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Downtown District | Environmental Constraints
Steep Slopes, Wetlands, or Floodplains |
| Neighborhood Centers | Open Space and Institutional
Open Space |
| Farms | Institutional / Community Facility |
| Sewer Service Area | Commercial / Industrial
Commercial Zones |
| Residential Densities
Rural | Industrial Zones |
| Medium Density | |
| High Density | |

1:63,360
1" equals 1 mile
0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles

CONSERVATION



DEVELOPMENT



INFRASTRUCTURE



IMPLEMENTATION

PLAN CONSISTENCY

"Consistency is the foundation of virtue."

Francis Bacon

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 Regional 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.

Grow economically in the center of town



Coordinate services (above); Protect housing and rural character (below)



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 Torrington 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

In accordance with Connecticut General Statutes Section 8-23, the Plan of Conservation and Development has been evaluated for consistency with State-wide growth management principles.

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 the revitalization of Downtown Torrington and the use of existing physical infrastructure, including limiting the expansion of critical infrastructure, such as sewer, 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 demographic and affordability needs. It also looks at ways to capitalize on the existing housing stock and to encourage appropriate new housing development.

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 Downtown Torrington.

Principle 4

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

The Plan of Conservation and Development contains a chapter that identifies strategies to:

- protect natural resources,
- preserve open space,
- protect historic resources, and
- protect and enhance community character.

These strategies will help conserve and restore the 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 Torrington a sustainable community.

Principle 6

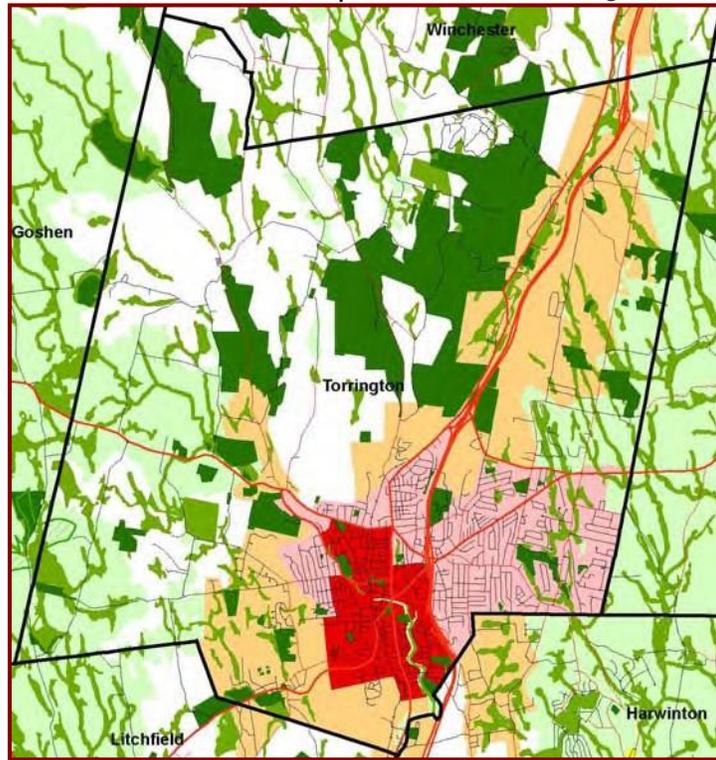
Integrate planning across all levels of government to address issues on a local, regional, and statewide basis.

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.

State of Connecticut –
Conservation and Development Policies Plan 2005-2010



LEGEND

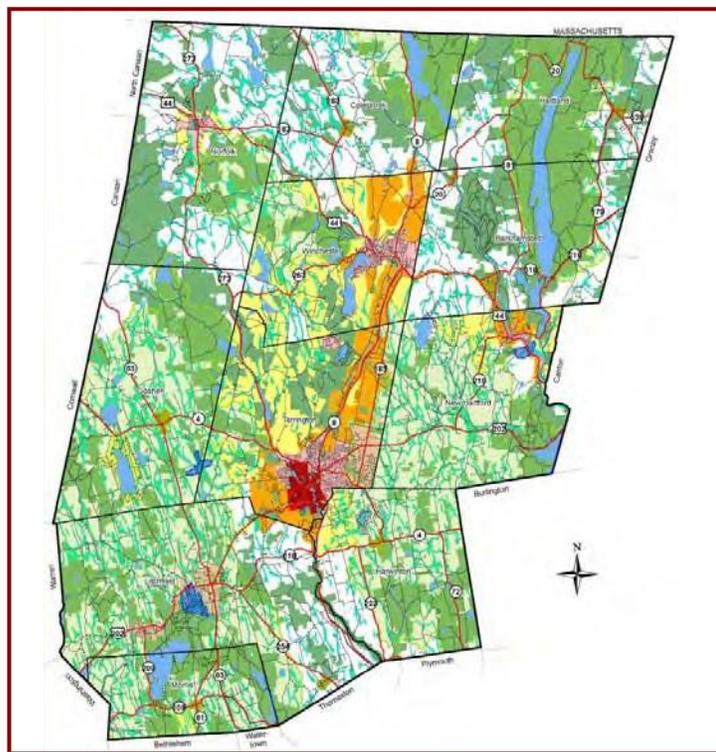
- Regional Center
- Neighborhood Conservation
- Growth Area
- Rural Community Center
- Existing Preserved Open Space
- Preservation Area
- Conservation Area
- Rural Lands
- Aquifer Protection Area
- Historic Districts
- Tribal Settlement Area
- Rail Stations
- Rail Line
- Primary Highways
- Secondary Highways
- Local Roads
- Town Boundary

City of Torrington
As Depicted in the Conservation and Development Policies Plan for Connecticut 2005-2010 Locational Guide Map

0 0.3 0.6 1.2 1.8 2.4 Miles

CCSU GIS/Computer Cartography Laboratory
For CT Office of Policy and Management
June 2005

Litchfield Hills - Regional Plan of Conservation and Development – Growth Policy Map (DRAFT)



LEGEND

- Central Areas to be Served with Public Sewer & Water Utilities
- Regional Center
- Primary Growth Area
- Village Centers and Developed Neighborhoods
- Outlying Areas That Should Generally Develop Without Public Sewer or Water Utilities
- Small Community Centers
- Low Density Neighborhood Areas*
- Rural Areas**
- Areas Without Development
- Existing Preserved Open Space
- Preservation Area
- Aquifer Protection Area
- Public Water Supply Watershed***

- LHCEO Town Boundaries
- Major Roads
- Local Roads
- Water

DATA SOURCES
Connecticut DEP: Base Data
Connecticut DPM: Areas and Centers, Open Space
Housatonic Valley Association: Enhanced Open Space

This map is for informational purposes only and is subject to change.

HVA
Map prepared on 11/16/05 by
Kirk Smuall, PhD, GIS Manager
Housatonic Valley Association
Email: kvmaps@optonline.net
Phone: 860-672-6676

2023 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Planning and Zoning Commission

Greg Mele Chair
Gregory J. Perosino Vice Chairman

James Bobinski
Donna Greco
Donovan Riley

Diane Carroll Alternate
Thomas Telman Alternate
Starley Arias Alternate

City of Torrington

Elinor Carbone Mayor

Conservation Commission

Economic Development Commission

The Residents of Torrington, in particular:

Mark McEachern Torrington Historical Society

City Staff

Jeremy Leifert, AICP City Planner
Nate Nardi-Cyrus Ass't. City Planner / Zoning & Inland Wetlands Officer
Ashley Clement Blight Enforcement Officer
Ray Drew Public Works Director
Paul Kundzins City Engineer
David Scherf Manager of GIS/Tech Services
Rista Malanca, AICP Economic Development Director
Lona Kirk Administrative Assistant

Technical assistance provided by:

