



Weston 2020

Plan of Conservation & Development

Adopted June 15, 2020

Effective July 1, 2020

Prepared by

The Town of Weston Planning & Zoning Commission

with assistance from



MILONE & MACBROOM

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Introduction

Section 8-23 of the Connecticut General Statutes requires municipal planning commissions to prepare and adopt a plan of conservation and development once every 10 years. The plan must address key aspects of a municipality's conditions, policies, and goals. The 2020 Plan of Conservation and Development for the Town of Weston (the "Plan") describes and assesses current conditions in Weston; captures the values expressed by the community through an open and transparent planning process; documents the vision, goals, and objectives for Weston over the coming decade; and provides direction on how the Town can advance its objectives. Above and beyond meeting the State's regulatory requirements, development of the Plan has provided a valuable opportunity for the community to express its views regarding the Town's needs and priorities for the next decade and beyond.

The Plan emphasizes appropriate development that supports Weston's residents, existing and potential new businesses, and small-town character, while acknowledging the importance of protecting the natural and cultural resources as the Town progresses into the next decade.

One of the focus areas of the Plan is housing options and affordability for the Town's shifting demographics. In 2017, the State amended the CT General Statutes by adding Section 8-30j, which requires all municipalities to adopt and revise an Affordable Housing Plan every five years. To that end, the Plan, particularly Goal 5, serves to meet the housing plan mandate.

The Planning and Zoning Commission (the "Commission") has conducted a comprehensive process to develop a sense of the community's opinions and objectives, and we wish to thank the public for its engagement in this process. A full description of our process in preparing the Plan is set forth in Appendix A.

Town of Weston Planning and Zoning Commission

Jane Connolly

Ken Edgar, Chairman

Harry Falber

Sally Korsh

Britta Lerner

Don Saltzman, Vice Chairman

Richard Wolf

Who we are now

The Town of Weston combines a beautiful exurban environment, emphasizing open space and parks, with single-family housing on predominately large lots and relatively little commercial activity. It has a strong commitment to the excellence of its schools, a sense of community, and stewardship of its natural resources. Its population tends to be highly educated and affluent. This section discusses where Weston stands today, including its perceived challenges going forward.



Our People

A significant resource for Weston is its residents. Our Town population of just over 10,000 is relatively stable, with some increases forecast over the next 10 years (see chart D).

Like many communities in Connecticut, Weston is experiencing demographic shifts within its population, notably a growing senior population and a smaller young adult and school-aged population (see chart C). Weston's median age increased from 43.4 in 2010 to 44.6 in 2016, as baby boomers opted to age in place in Weston.¹

Weston is considered one of the wealthiest towns in Connecticut and one of the wealthiest in Fairfield County. According to the American Community Survey (ACS), the median household income in Weston in 2016 was \$218,152, which is 200% higher than the State's median income (see chart B). Weston residents tend to be highly educated, with 85% of residents between age 25 and 64 holding at least a bachelor's degree (ACS).

According to the survey conducted by the Town in late

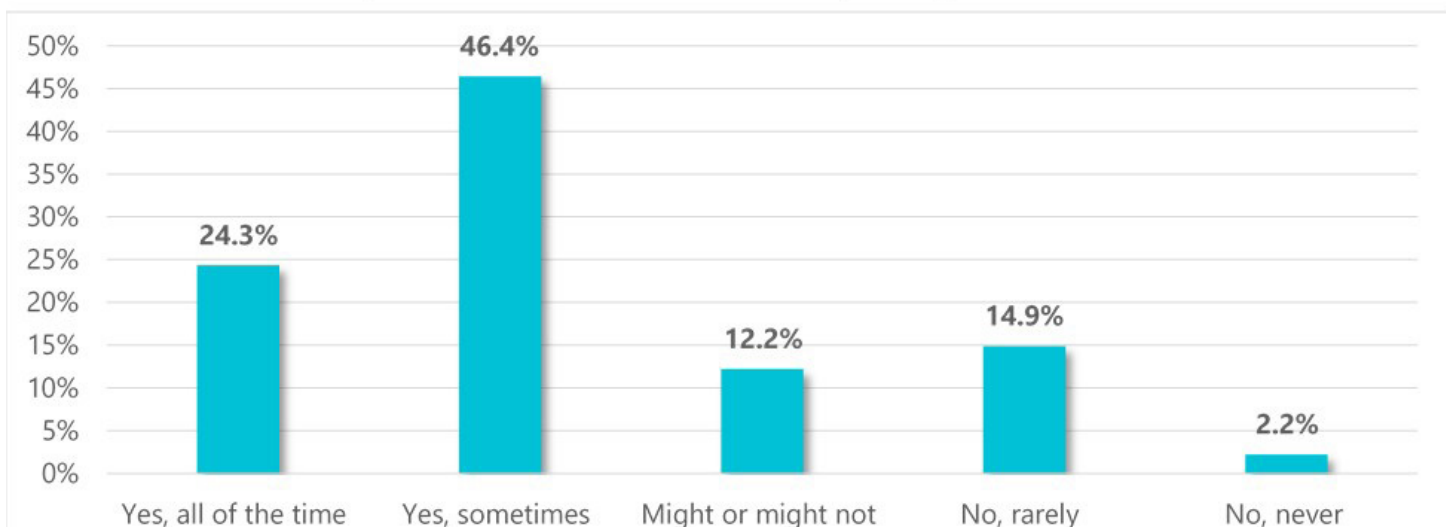
- 1 For more detail on Weston's population, see Appendix D, pp. D-3 to D-11.
- 2 The full Town Survey can be found in Appendix B.

2018 (the "Town Survey"),² Weston residents tend to be very satisfied with living in Town and feel well connected to the community at large.

Community involvement manifests itself in the vibrant volunteer activities of Westonites. Our governing boards and commissions consist almost entirely of unpaid volunteers, as do our emergency medical technician (EMT) and fire departments, which are sustained by the generous contributions of the Townspeople. In addition, Weston supports a robust non-profit community, including Kiwanis (one of the largest chapters in the northeast), the Lachat Farm, the Historical Society, and Weston Arts. These non-profits greatly enhance the Town's quality of life and sense of community. Weston also offers extensive opportunities for our young people, including scouting, and youth sports, and a variety of after-school programs.

Westonites strongly support sustainability efforts in Town. They have voted to ban plastic bags (now a Statewide ban) and fracking waste from Town. In addition, our Town's

Chart A Do you feel a sense of community living in Weston?



Weston Town Survey, 2018

Select Committee on Sustainability advocates for measures that will help ensure Weston's long-term future as a leader in environmental issues. These measures include an emphasis on LED lighting, charging stations for electric vehicles and conducting a Town energy audit. As a result of the Town's efforts, Weston has been awarded a Bronze certification by Sustainable CT for its accomplishments.

Finally, in response to past severe weather events, Weston has created a unique Emergency Response Committee, in which neighborhood captains throughout Town monitor their neighborhoods in the event of such an occurrence and report on local conditions to assist the Town Administration and its police, fire, and rescue services in responding to areas in need.

The Town Survey also reveals an emerging trend in our working population that could affect Weston going forward. Among respondents who are employed (or self-employed), over 20% reported that they work exclusively in and from their homes. Combined with an increasing senior population and homemakers, this means that there is a growing local population that does not leave Weston every weekday for employment. The net effect of this trend should be a positive one for local businesses in Weston.

Chart B Median Income for All Households, 2016

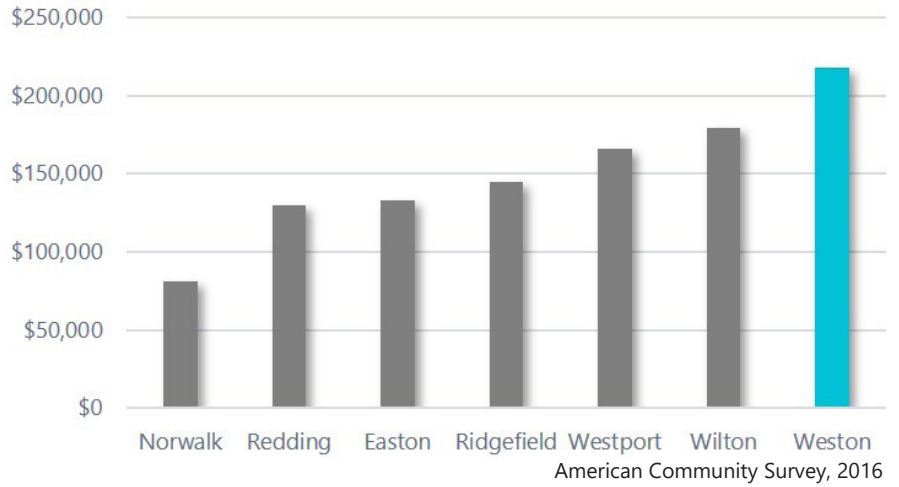


Chart C Age Composition, 2016

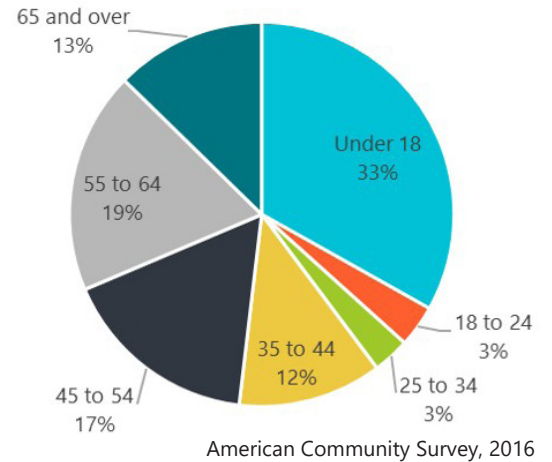
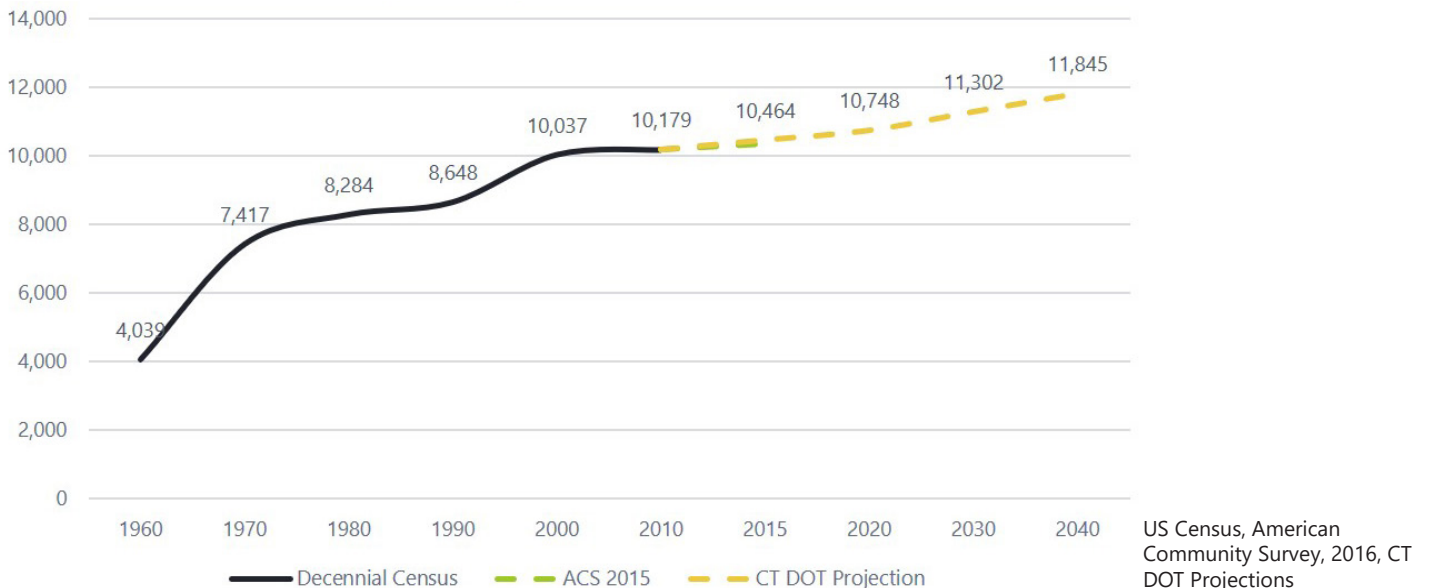


Chart D Historic & Projected Population in Weston 1960 - 2040



Our Development

As mentioned, Weston is primarily an exurban residential community. Nearly the entire Town is zoned for single-family residential and farming, with minimum lot size of two acres. As a result, 98.5% of housing units are single-family homes (ACS). However, in some older areas of the community, houses on smaller lots predate the adoption of the first zoning regulations.

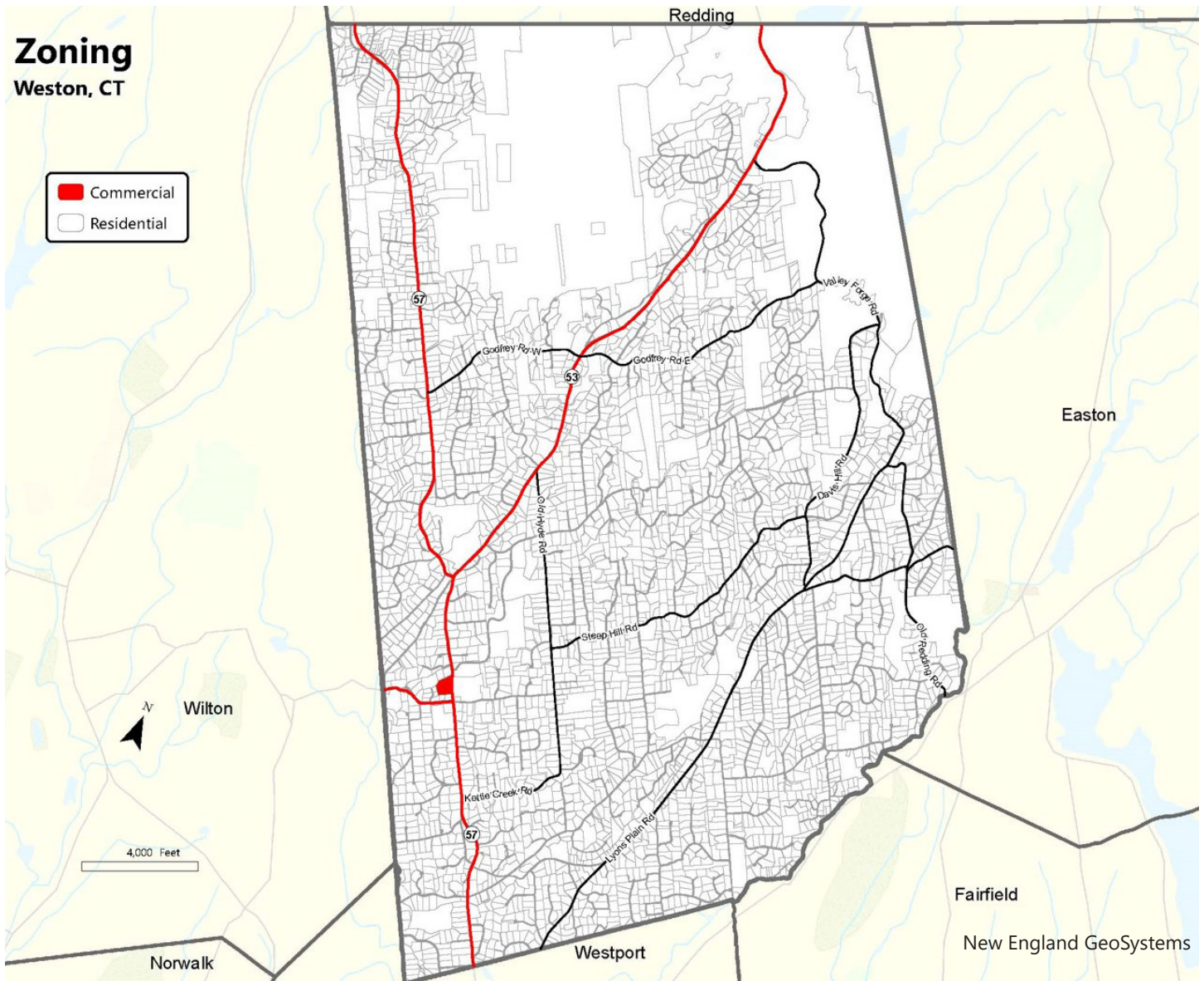
We have a small commercial center with 6.6 acres zoned for commercial use. While not the geographic center of Town, this area and the adjacent municipal campus serve as the community's civic and cultural center, providing our residents with Town services and basic shopping options such as groceries, dry cleaning, banking, wine and spirits, as well as a small restaurant, a gas station, and a post office. An additional 7.9 acres of land are used for commercial

purposes that either predate our regulations or are operated via special permit. This includes the Cobbs Mill Inn and Weston Gardens properties.

In 2015, Weston conducted a build-out analysis of five large parcels of land under the current zoning regulations. Those parcels were deemed suitable for 85 new home lots. However, 58 of those potential lots were on parcels of land that have since been purchased by the Nature Conservancy and the Aspetuck Land Trust for open space protection. From 2016 through 2019, 21 new homes had been permitted, leaving little additional room for growth. There are only seven "affordable housing" units (as defined by §8-30g of State law), and very few multi-family residences.³

One commercial property, the Cobbs Mill Inn, has been

3 For more detail on Weston's housing, see Appendix D, pp. D-13 to D-26



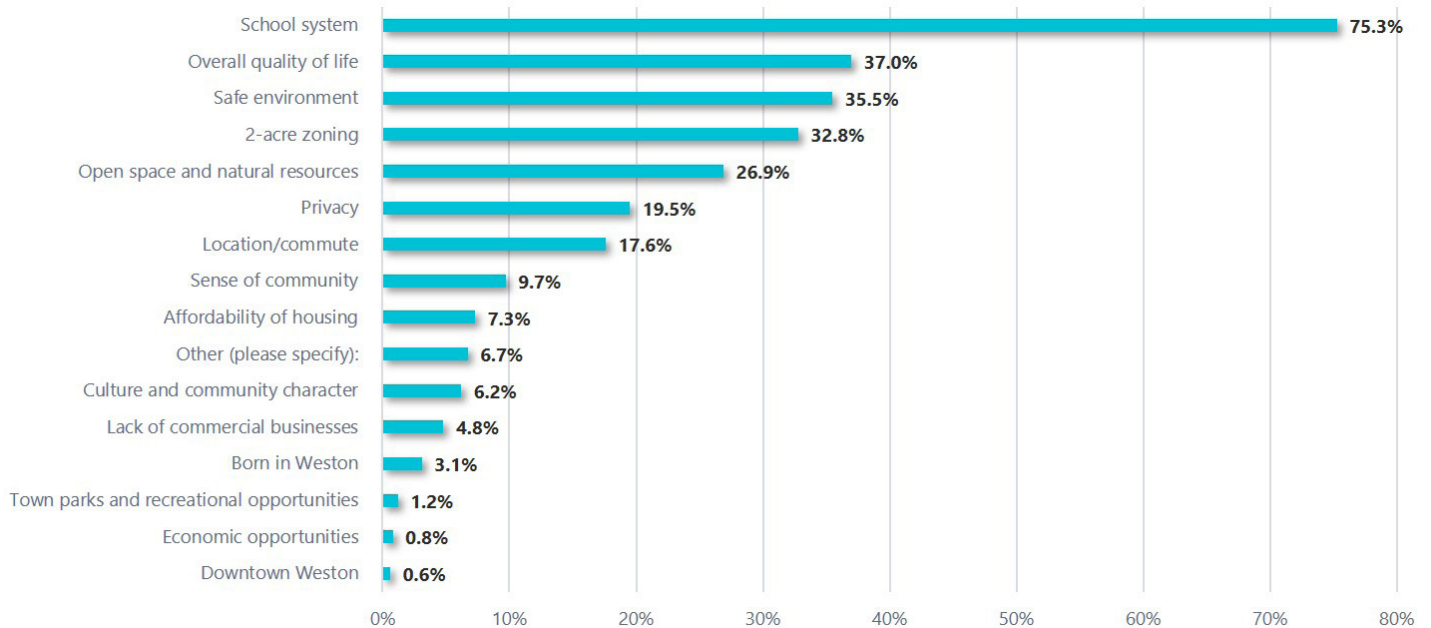
of particular interest to Westonites due to its historical importance and the fact that it is currently unoccupied and for sale. While there has been interest from prospective buyers, at this writing the future of Cobb's Mill is unclear.

From 2010 to 2019, particularly the latter part of that decade, two entities, the Lachat Farm and the Weston Historical Society, have witnessed significant revivals. Once a crumbling structure and fallow land area, the Lachat farmhouse and its outbuildings, which are Town owned, have been wholly renovated, and now serve as an operating Town Farm where residents can grow their own vegetables. It also functions as a gathering place for concerts, a farmers' market, and other social events. This has been a wonderful success story in the Town.

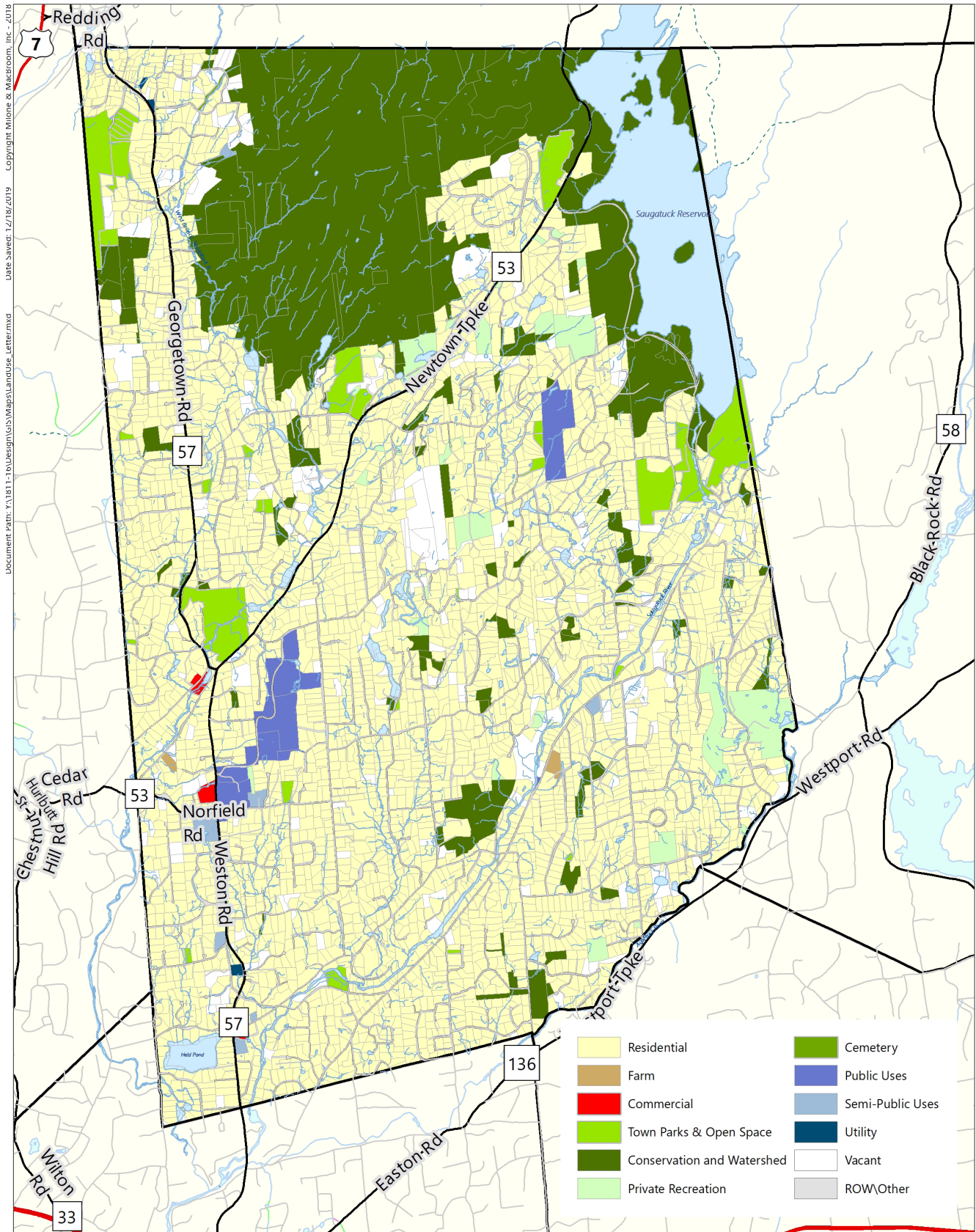
Similarly, the Weston Historical Society has been revitalized. The Coley House, which is at the heart of the Society's grounds, is in the process of a total renovation. The Society's Museum space now provides a platform for exhibits, concerts, and social events as well as a climate-controlled environment for preserving Weston's archives.



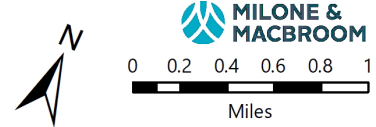
Select the Top 3 Reasons You Chose to Live in Weston



Weston Town Survey, 2018



Existing Land Use
 Weston Plan of Conservation & Development
 Town of Weston



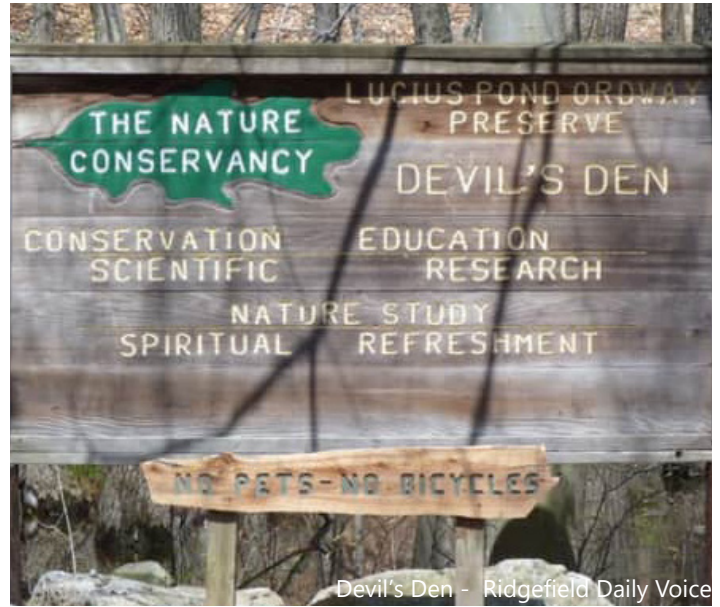
MILONE & MACBROOM

Document Path: Y:\1811-1\Design\GIS\Map\LandUse_Letter.mxd Date Saved: 1/27/19/2019 Copyright Milone & Macbroom, Inc. - 2019

Our Natural Resources & Open Spaces

Weston's 3,847 acres (approximately 29% of Weston's land) of parks, open space, and conservation lands significantly contribute to the rural character of the Town, quality of life, and the protection of the Town's water resources. Of this open space, a significant portion is devoted to parks, trails, and playing fields, giving residents full access to outdoor recreational activities. The community's culture of environmental stewardship and predominant two-acre residential zoning help to ensure the preservation of natural resources. Since the 2010 Plan, the Aspetuck Land Trust has acquired 42 contiguous acres of land, and the Nature Conservancy has also purchased over 75 acres of land on the western side of the Devil's Den Preserve near the border with Redding, thus increasing the community's protected open space.

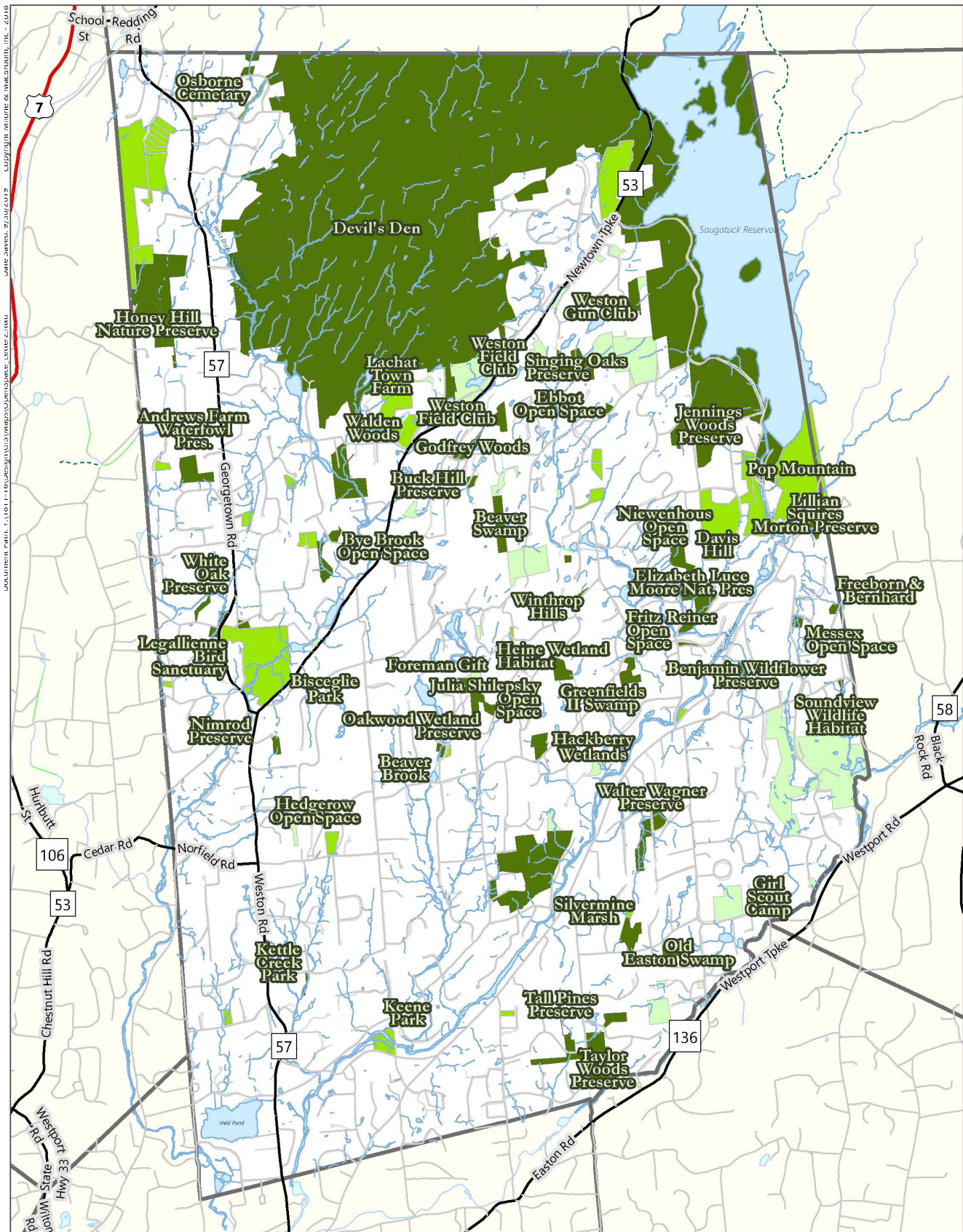
With few exceptions, Weston households, schools, government buildings, and commercial establishments rely on wells for their water. The Town's extensive open space resources not only provide abundant recreational opportunities, but also protect and preserve the Town's water resources and natural environment, both of which are critical for a community that is heavily reliant on well water and served by private septic systems. Weston Water Supply serves approximately 100 people and Aquarion Water Company serves some portions of south Weston. Weston has no sewer system other than a closed Advanced Treatment Sewer System for on-site disposal that services the school system.



Devil's Den - Ridgefield Daily Voice

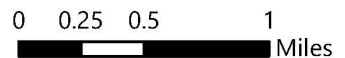


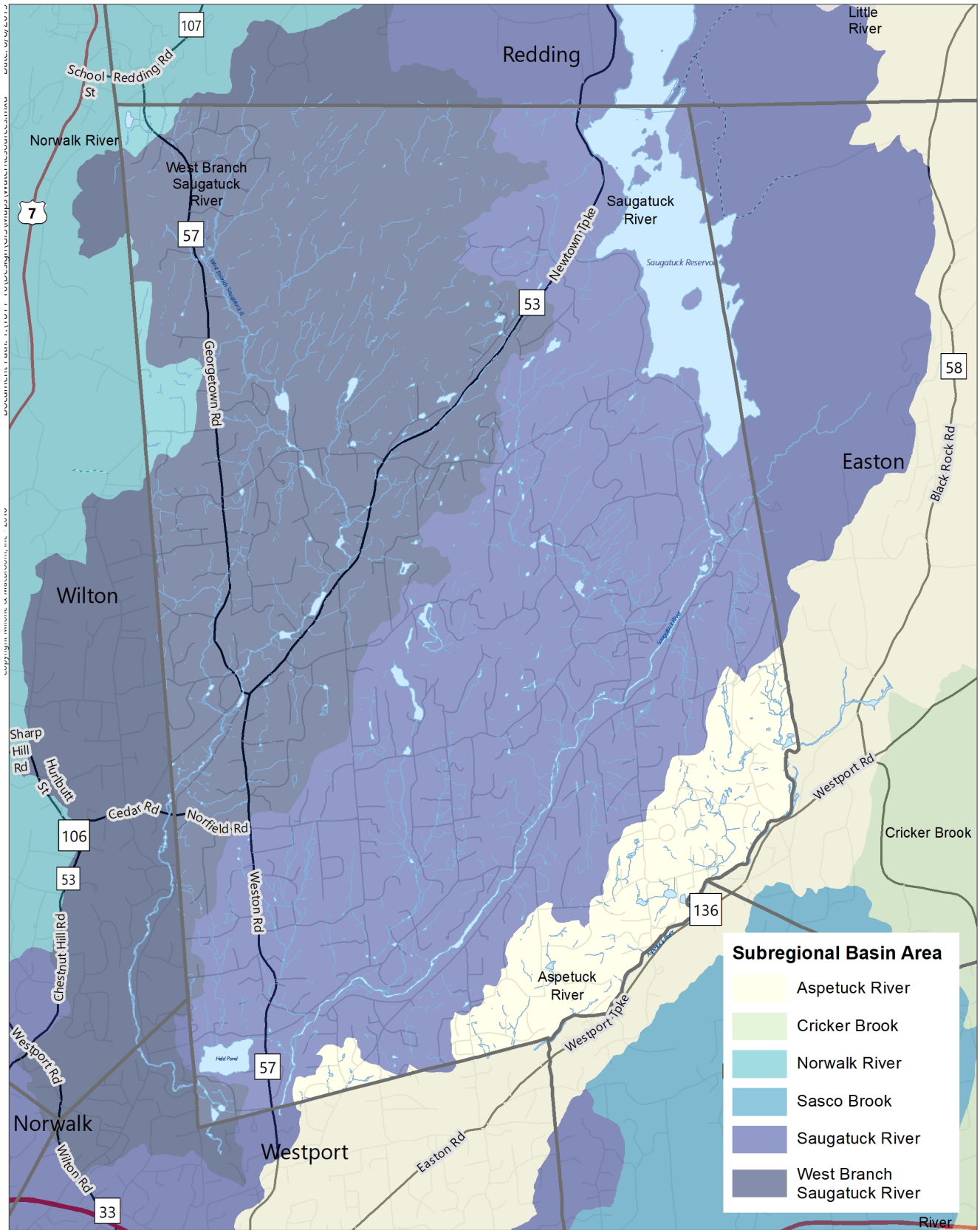
Dog Jamboree 2018 - Weston Today



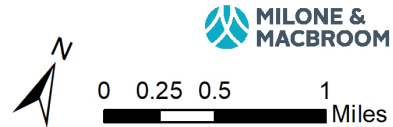
Open Space Inventory

Weston Plan of Conservation & Development
Town of Weston





Watersheds
 Weston Plan of Conservation & Development
 Town of Weston



Our Transportation Network

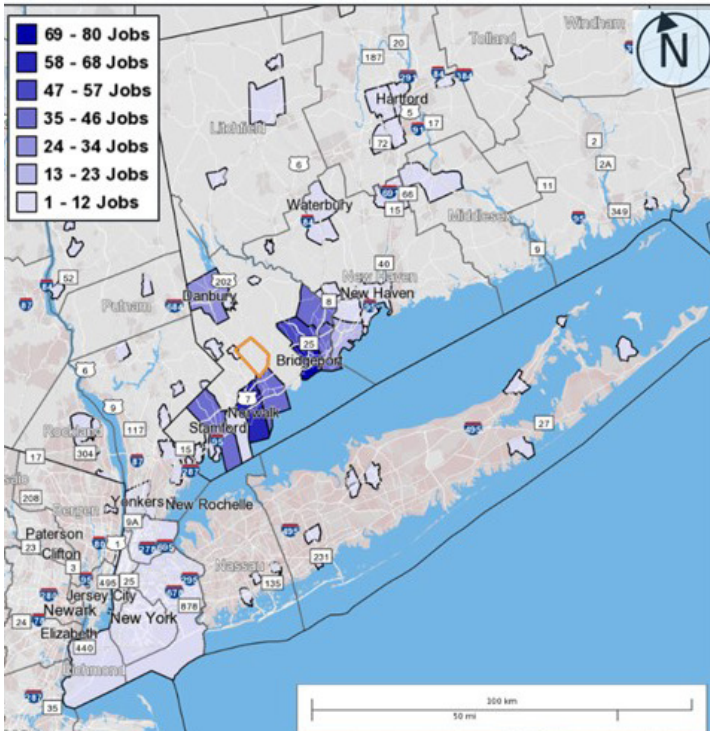
With extremely limited public transportation choices in Town, it's no surprise that the main mode of transportation in Weston is private car. In fact, 67% of employed persons living in Weston commuted to work by private car in 2016, and 4% via carpool. Two arterials, Norfield Road/Newtown Turnpike (Route 53) and Weston Road (Route 57) are the main thoroughfares. Despite the lack of transit opportunities in Town, Weston is proximate to several stations of the Metro-North railroad. According to the 2016 American Community Survey, 11% of Westonites commute to work via train. That Survey also indicated that 17% of Westonites regularly work from home, which is much higher than in Fairfield County (5.7%) and Connecticut generally (4.6%). The Town Survey found that approximately 58% of respondents (over 1,200 people) work from home at least one day per week, including the 20% of respondents who work exclusively from home every day. These statistics emphasize the changing nature of commuting and the changing needs (i.e. faster internet speeds and improved cellular service) of current and future residents.

According to data collected from the U.S. Census using information from W-2s, Weston residents in 2015 were primarily employed by businesses in New York City and Lower Fairfield County. Those employed by businesses in Weston primarily resided in nearby towns along the I-95 corridor and the Route 7 corridor.

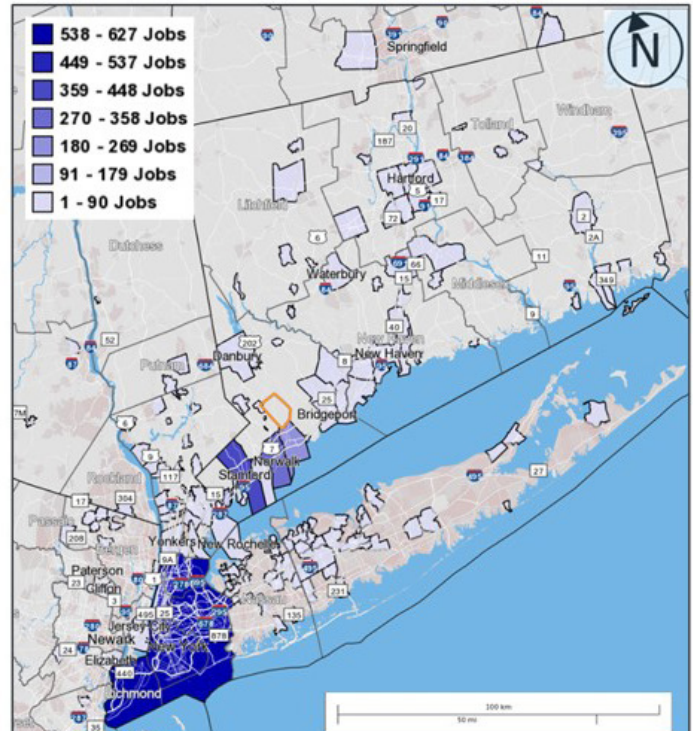
Travel Mode to Work (2016)		
Travel Mode	Number	Percent
Drove alone	3,116	67%
Car or van pool	169	4%
Bus	0	0%
Rail	526	11%
Walk or Bike	40	1%
Other	22	<1%
Worked at Home	775	17%
Total	4,648	100%

American Community Survey, 2016

Where do Weston Workers live?



Where do Weston Residents Work?



US Census, OnTheMap, 2015

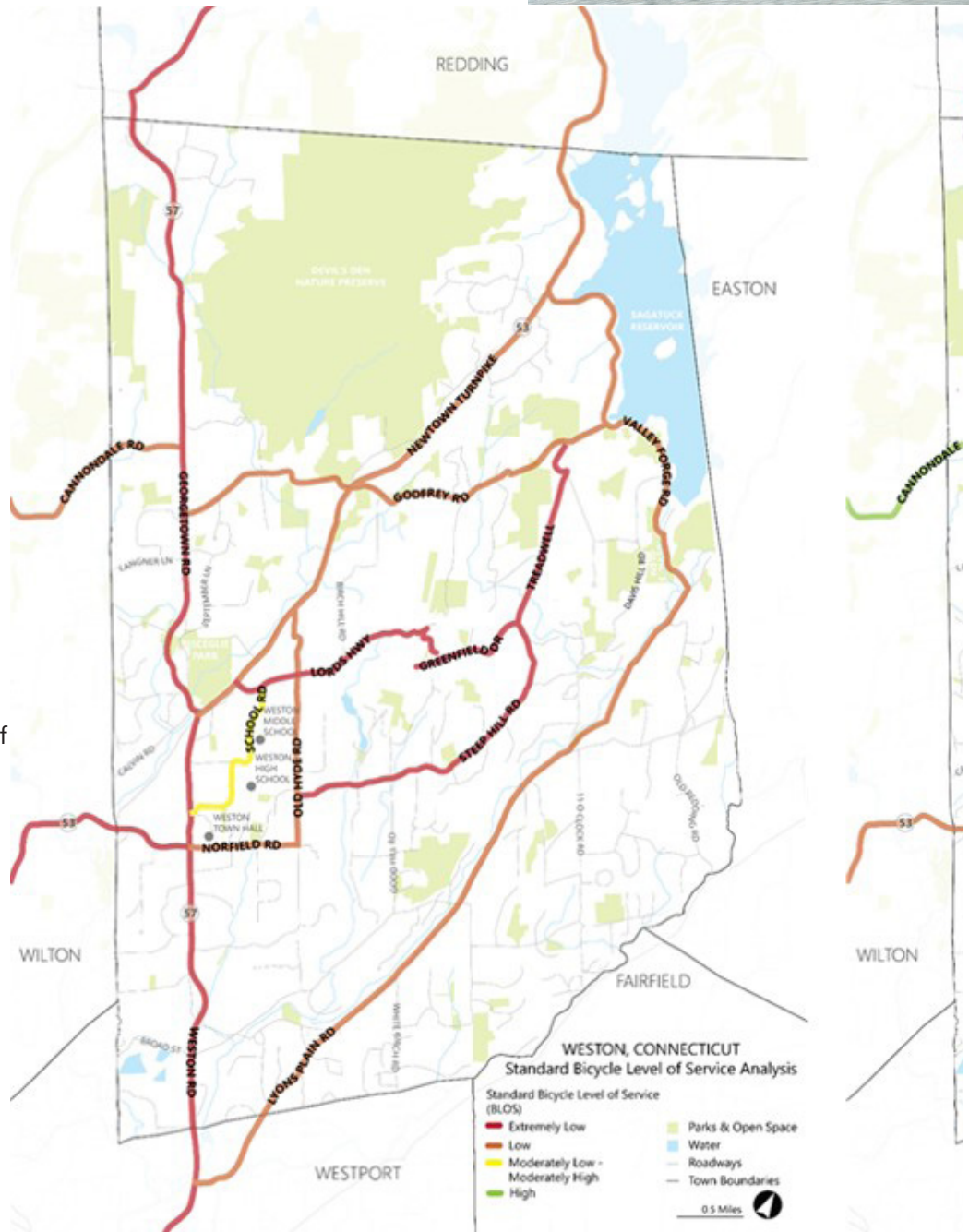
While not commonly used for commuting, biking and walking are popular outdoor activities in Town. With many winding, narrow roads, not all areas of Town are conducive to biking, nor are they pedestrian friendly.

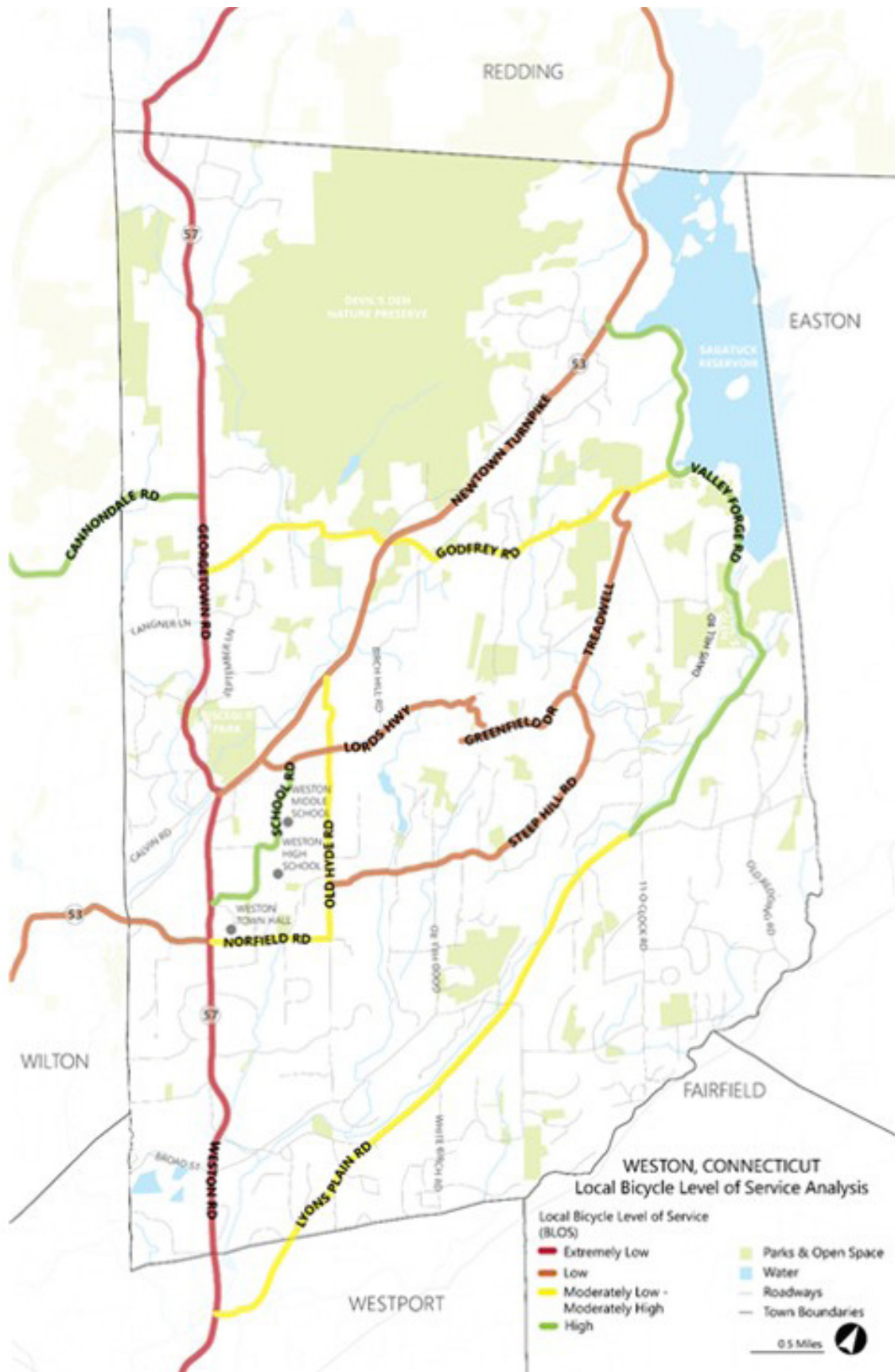
A Bicycle Level of Service (BLOS) Analysis was conducted through fieldwork, data analysis, and interviews by Milone & MacBroom, Inc. (MMI) to classify roadways by accessibility. The BLOS Analysis considers the widths of lanes and shoulders, average daily traffic, pavement conditions, and road complexity (i.e. curvature and slope). Compared to national standards, none of the roadways in Weston that were studied provide a high BLOS. However, using a local level of service standard, which accounts for Weston’s character and winding, country-type roads, high levels of service were found on School Road (1.1 mi), Valley Forge Road (3.7 mi), and Cannondale Road (0.4 mi). This totals 5.2 miles of suitable bicycle routes. These routes, however, are fragmented and do not connect to each other. In both analyses, extremely low levels of services were found on Route 57.

The Town has a small, disconnected sidewalk network and a lack of safe street crossings. In the Town Center, transportation issues that discourage or prevent safe walking and biking have been well documented in previous studies and plans, most recently in the Connecticut Department of Transportation’s (CTDOT) 2016 Road Safety Audit and the 2012 Western Connecticut Council of Governments (WestCOG) study of the intersection of Route 57 and School Road.



Explore Valley Forge 2018 - Weston Today



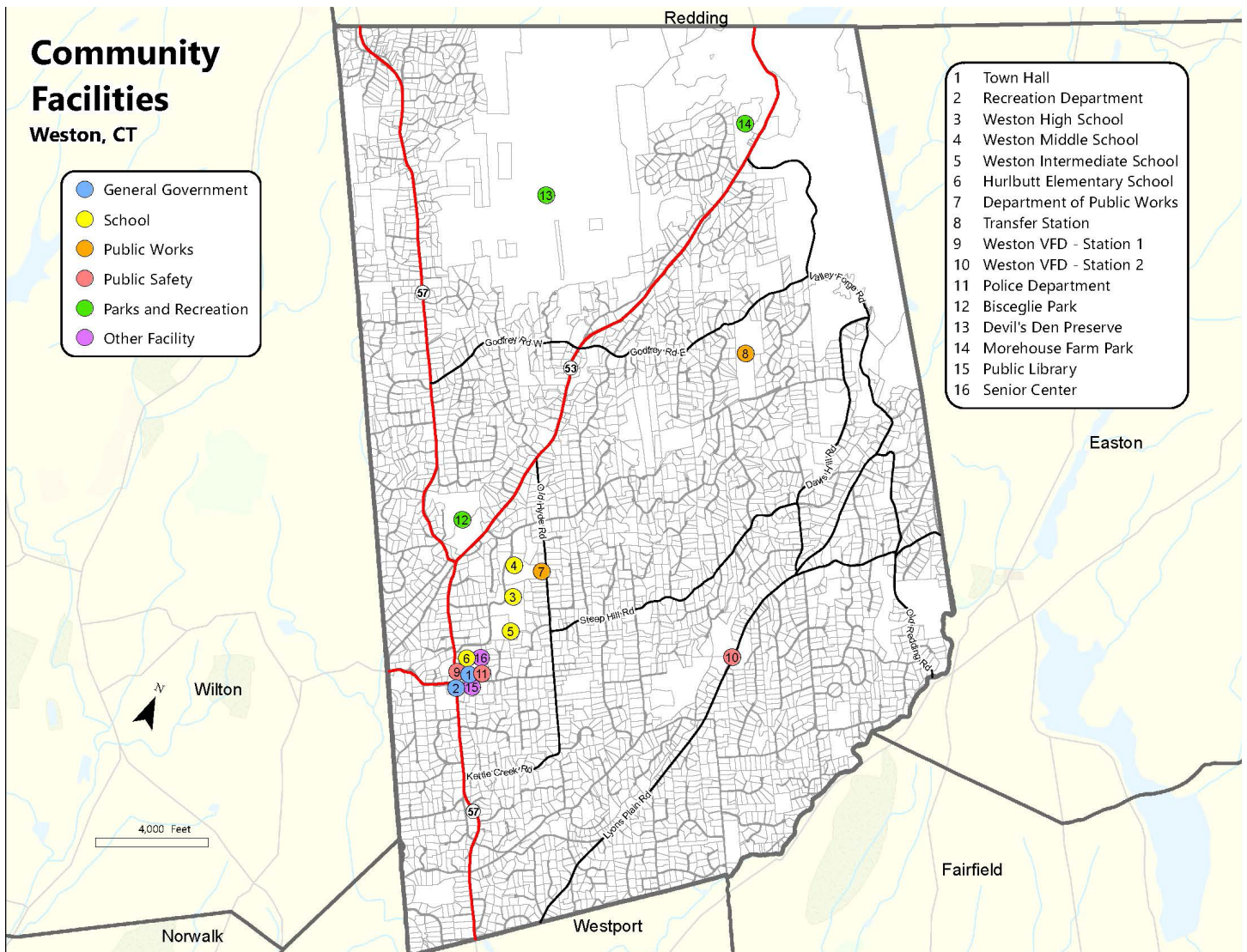


Our Town Services

As is the case with our neighboring towns, Weston has its own police, fire, EMT, library, and associated Town services. It maintains a robust and highly trained volunteer fire department and EMT team.

Our Town Hall provides services from our First Selectman and Town Administrator to our Town Clerk, Tax Assessor, and Registrars, and our annex provides land use and social services. Weston also maintains a very active public library. Most community facilities, especially those that interface regularly with the public, are in and around the Town Center.

Currently, part of the school campus is utilized as the Town's senior center, providing valuable resources to the Town's senior citizens. As our population has aged, the senior center has expanded. The Town Survey results indicate that a significant majority of seniors (65 and over) either do not, or rarely, use the senior center. Approximately 26% of senior respondents, however, do use the center. Of those that do, 77% highly rate the facility and 87% highly rate its programs.



New England GeoSystems

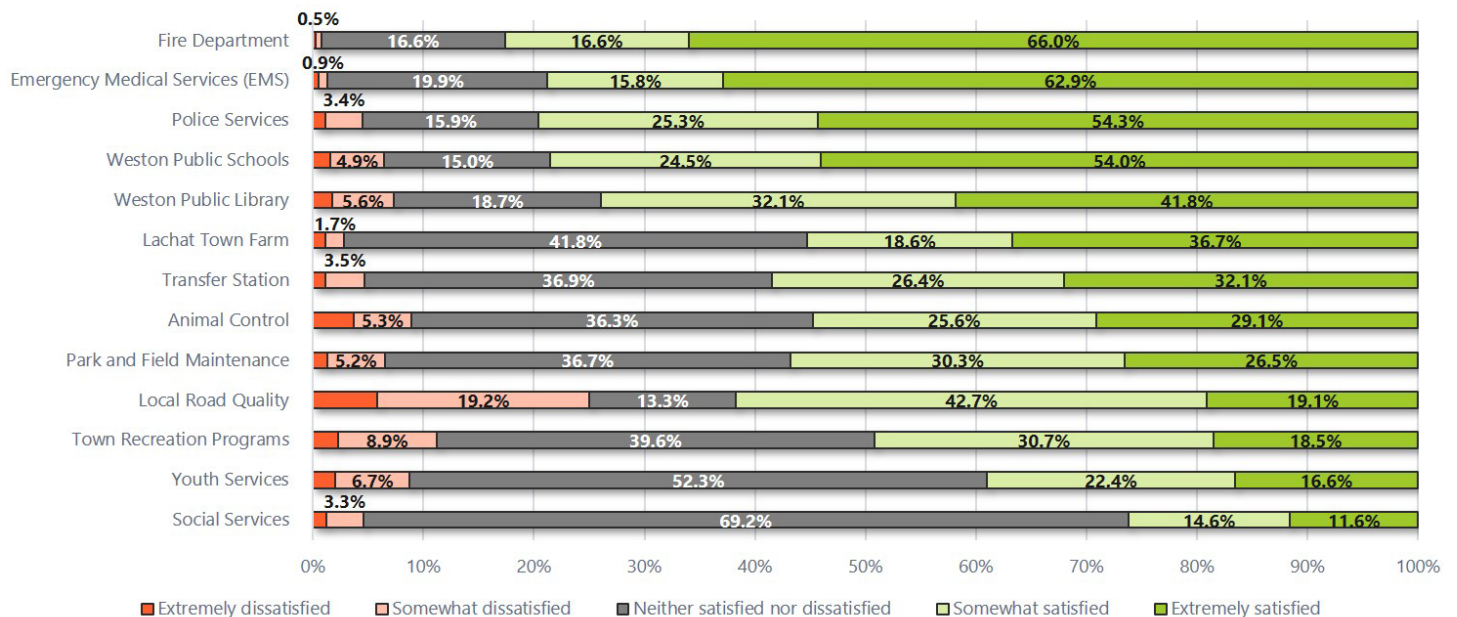
In the Town Survey, Weston residents gave high marks to most Town services. The Fire Department, EMS, Police Services, and Public Schools topped the list. Notably, Weston is one of the safest communities in the State. Social Services, Youth Services, and Recreation Programs were the least known or used by respondents. Local Road Quality was the lowest rated; however less than a third of respondents were dissatisfied.

Our Town administration is also supporting sustainability efforts by, in addition to passing ordinances on plastic bags and fracking waste, entering into a virtual net metering agreement with Eversource for access to solar power on the Town campus and conducting a lighting audit of Town buildings.



M. Wirtenberg

Rate Your Satisfaction with the Following...



Weston Town Survey, 2018

Our Schools

Weston has an excellent public school system, which is nationally recognized as one of the top school districts in Connecticut. It is currently ranked second in the State by U.S. News & World Report. Weston High School was designated a "Blue Ribbon School" in 2013 by the US Department of Education. More recently, Weston High School has annually been named an "AP Honor Roll District" by the College Board, and was designated as a "Green Ribbon School" by the US Department of Education for being one of a select number of schools exemplifying environmental education, promoting sustainability, and striving to improve the wellness of students and staff. The average graduation rate from Weston High School is 98%. Of the classes of 2016, 2017, and 2018, 94% attended a four-year college, and 98% of graduating seniors from the Class of 2013 and 2014 completed college in five years or less. Weston features small class sizes, a wealth of curricular and co-curricular opportunities (including a wide array of athletic, artistic and performing arts programs), and a unique campus containing all four schools, thereby maximizing the connections among and between students and educators across all grade levels. The schools are a significant factor in quality of life, real estate values, and the Town's appeal to new residents. The Town Survey responses indicated that our schools were a major factor in attracting over 80% of our newer residents to Town.



Graduation 2019 - Westport News

Our Challenges

Providing a superior school system and high-quality Town services does not come without cost. This is amplified by the fact that Weston has virtually no commercial tax base. For comparison, 93% of Weston’s tax base is residential properties, compared to a State average of 79%.

As a result, Weston taxes are high. The per capita tax levy is \$6,520 for 2017, which is well above the State average of \$2,872, and the 2nd highest in the State. As of 2017, it also has the 3rd highest mill rate of surrounding towns.

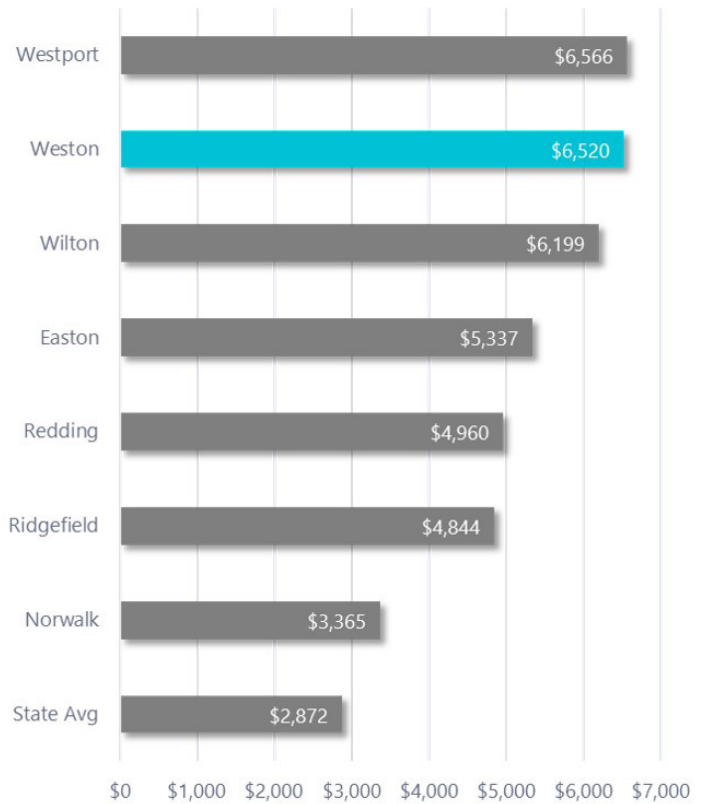
In the Town Survey, Westonites were asked to name Weston’s three greatest challenges going forward. Finances (particularly taxes); housing prices and housing values; and attracting new and retaining current residents topped the list. Notably, however, the Town itself is in excellent financial condition and maintains a AAA bond rating, giving it the flexibility, if necessary, to address unforeseen developments.

The homogeneous nature of our housing stock presents challenges to attracting new residents and retaining aging residents. Not everyone may wish to maintain a home and two acres of land during different life phases.

As previously discussed, Weston lacks a cohesive Town Center, with poor connectivity between the commercial center, the schools, Town Hall, and the library. The Town also lacks safe bicycle connectivity to promote active transportation and recreation.

Finally, Weston faces infrastructure challenges, as elements of the school campus age. In particular, the Town/Weston Public School annex has reached its useful life and the current Middle School will need significant refurbishing in the near future. In addition, our senior citizens have expressed a desire for an expanded senior center, as evidenced by a Space Planning Analysis dated October 26, 2018. That analysis recommended expansion of the Senior Center, a different setting for the Center, and an increase in available parking.

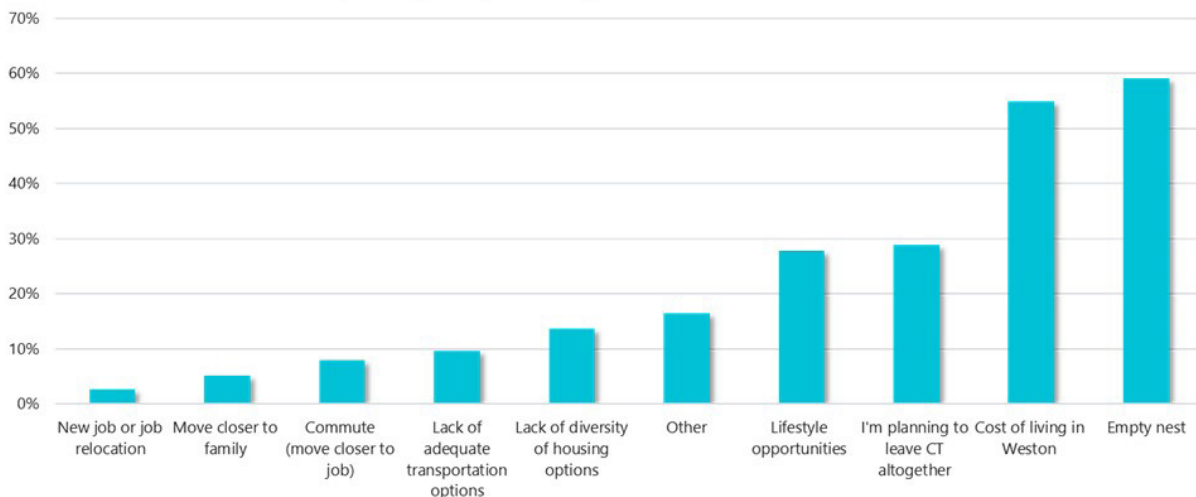
Property Tax Levy Per Capita FYE16



Source: Connecticut Office of Policy and Management (OPM)
Municipal Fiscal Indicators Fiscal Years Ended 2012 to 2016
Published December, 2017

American Community Survey, 2016

Why are you planning to move out of Weston?



Weston Town Survey, 2018

What do we want?

While its residents are generally quite satisfied with the quality of their lives in Weston, they have expressed a clear desire for improvements. Weston residents want more amenities to be offered in Town Center, as evidenced by a significant majority (71%) of Town Survey respondents. Respondents favor improved pedestrian access and enhanced biking opportunities. Weston residents want to be responsible stewards of the Town's natural resources and to preserve its history. Town Survey responses indicated that some of the most important components of Weston residents' quality of life are its schools and services, which should be maintained at high levels into the future.

This Plan maintains and enhances those aspects of Weston's character that contribute to its high quality of life while being responsive to evolving needs of the community and environment by:

- Envisioning managed and incremental growth in the Town Center to increase amenities for its residents, civic pride, and community interaction.
- Advocating for the protection of open space, natural resources, and water quality.
- Encouraging Town infrastructure that improves safety and opportunity for pedestrians and bicyclists.

- Exploring avenues to improve housing choices.
- Supporting a more sustainable future.
- Continuing to provide a high quality of life through Town services.

This Plan will guide the conservation and development of the Town for the next 10 years. It balances the preservation of the existing community while embracing managed growth.

Weston is a unique community with extraordinary resources. While the Plan is not a legally binding document, it is the Commission's hope that the Plan guides Weston's development and conservation efforts in a manner that preserves and protects the things that make Weston a remarkable place to live. It is also our hope that the Plan will assist Weston in meeting many of its challenges creatively and decisively.



5k Race - Weston Today

How do we get there?

This Plan is intended for the next decade and beyond, and includes clear, attainable, and actionable items, recognizing that:

1. the Commission can only recommend and facilitate change;
2. some of our goals will be aspirational, some will be achieved, and some will change as circumstances vary from our present-day reality.

Set forth below are our recommendations regarding the physical and economic development of Weston.

Goal 1: Create a Town Center that fosters community interaction and promotes a high quality of life

Our residents clearly favor a more vibrant Town Center, offering more amenities, better pedestrian access, and improved safety crossing Weston Road, without changing the fundamental character of the Town. Amenities favored by the public include food services, small medical offices, and a community center.

Objectives:

Complete Funded Projects

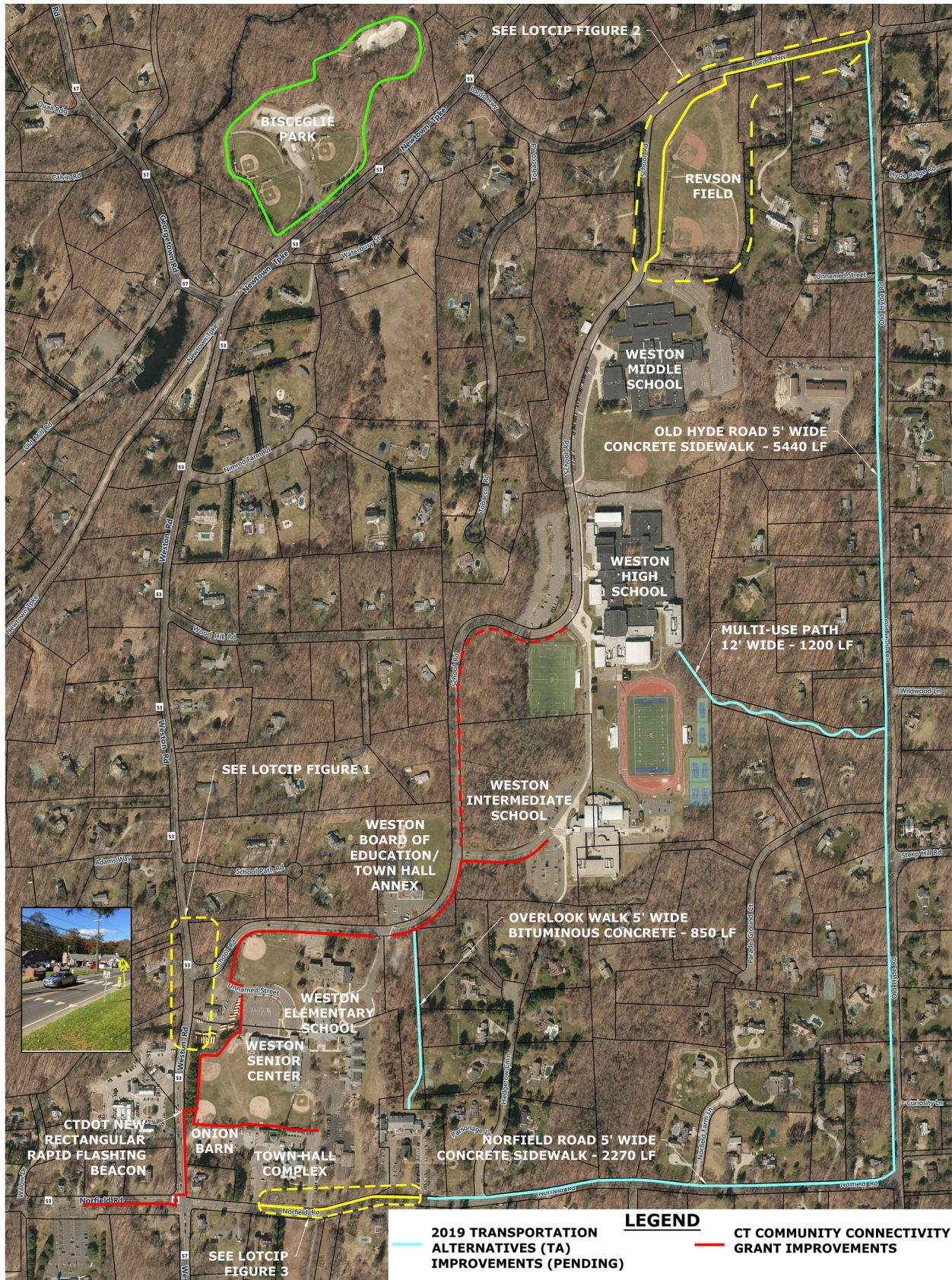
Weston has received grant funding from the Local Transportation Capital Improvement Program (LOTICIP) and the Connecticut Community Connectivity Grant Program (CCCGP). The projects funded by these grants will begin constructing the much-needed sidewalk network in the Town Center. It will also provide traffic relief on Weston Road at the entrance to School Road by improving that intersection. This includes creating a 150-foot right-turn lane on the northbound side of Weston Road's approach to School Road and a dedicated left turn for southbound traffic onto School Road, building a "bump out" on the southbound side to relieve congestion, and replacing the traffic light and improving its timing.

Implement the Sidewalk Master Plan

The funded projects mentioned above are the initial phase of the Town's recently created Sidewalk Master



Onion Barn - Noroton



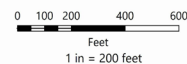
Pedestrian Connection Plan

TOWN OF WESTON MASTER PLAN
 PEDESTRIAN SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS
 JUNE 2020

2019 TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES (TA) IMPROVEMENTS (PENDING)
LOTICIP INTERSECTION AND PEDESTRIAN SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS

LEGEND

CT COMMUNITY CONNECTIVITY GRANT IMPROVEMENTS
BISCEGLIE PARK TRAIL AND OUTDOOR CLASSROOM



MILONE & MACBROOM
 99 Realty Dr
 Cheshire, CT 06410
 230-271-1773

Plan. Additional phases include sidewalk improvements on Norfield Road and Old Hyde Road in between Norfield Road and Lords Highway, and a path around Bisceglie Park. The Town is actively pursuing grants to fund these phases. In addition, the Town should consider extending sidewalks north on Route 53 to Godfrey Road and on Godfrey Road to the Lachat Farm, and south from Town Center to the Historical Society on Route 57.

Implement Elements of the Master Plan for Town Center

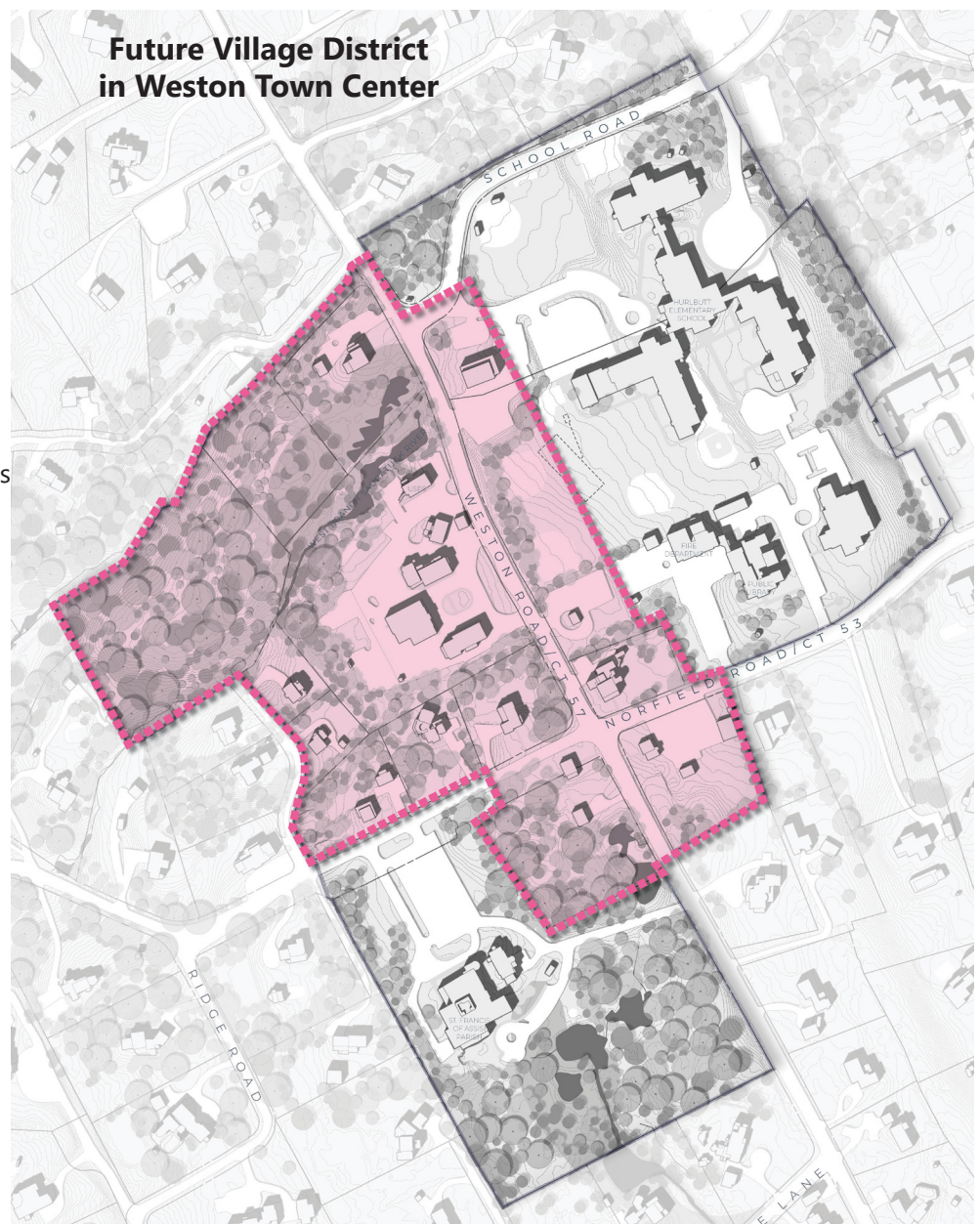
A key component of the Plan is our Town Center Master Plan. It is our opinion that we should expand our definition of Town Center beyond the current commercially zoned shopping center area.

MMI was engaged to conduct a study of that expanded area and its potential for development, and to present us with a Town Center Master Plan, containing specific recommendations for the future of that area. After considering the results of the Town Survey, conducting two public workshops, and conferring with the Commission and Town leadership, MMI made a series of recommendations regarding Town Center⁴, that are summarized below:

- Reconfigure the existing Town Center commercial area; create sidewalk connectivity within the Center as well as across Weston Road.
- Move the function of the school bus depot from its current location and repurpose the existing bus depot building.
- Rezone the Town Center to allow for commercial uses and expanded housing choices.
- Encourage the development of commercial areas on the four corners of the intersection of Weston Road and Norfield Road.
- Construct new sidewalks throughout the enlarged commercial area.
- Increase available parking areas to be consistent with future uses.
- Create a greenspace between the existing bus depot and the Onion Barn on that side of Weston Road to provide a community gathering space.

- Consider relocating the Onion Barn to Norfield Road.

In order to facilitate development in the Town Center, the Commission intends to adopt, after appropriate public input obtained in public hearings, changes to its zoning regulations that will permit commercial development to occur on both sides of Weston Road extending from the current commercial area on one side, and the bus depot on the other, to and across the intersection of Weston Road and Norfield Road, to include the properties on all four corners of that intersection. The Commission will also consider expanding housing choices within the Town Center area, and further west on the north side of Norfield Road. In the latter case, our primary goal would be to



⁴ The complete Town Center Master Plan is contained in Appendix C.

Weston Town Center Recommended Master Plan



- 1 RECONFIGURATION OF TOWN SHOPPING CENTER TO INCLUDE (5) TWO-STORY BUILDINGS WITH APPROX. 26,150 SF OF COMMERCIAL SPACE. 2ND STORY CAN ACCOMMODATE RESIDENTIAL OR OFFICE. INTERIOR SIDEWALKS CONNECT OUTDOOR PLAZAS TO THE SCULPTURE PARK ACROSS WESTON ROAD
- 2 MAINTAIN THE EXISTING CROSSING AND INCLUDE DESTINATION PLAZAS. PROVIDE PAINTED "SHARROWS" ALONG WESTON ROAD AND CONSTRUCT NEW SIDEWALKS AND INSTALL STREET TREES AND LIGHTING
- 3 DECORATIVE CROSSWALKS AND INTERSECTION STREET PRINT
- 4 CONVERT EXISTING COLONIAL HOME INTO COMMERCIAL SPACE AND CONSTRUCT (3) NEW SMALL COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS OF APPROX. 14,000 SF
- 5 REMOVE EXISTING HOME AND CONSTRUCT A SERIES OF (3) INTERCONNECTED BUILDINGS OF APPROX. 11,000 SF
- 6 MAINTAIN OVERFLOW PARKING ON CHURCH SITE AND CONSTRUCT NEW SIDEWALKS ALONG NORFIELD ROAD THAT CONNECT TO TOWN AMENITIES
- 7 CONVERT EXISTING COLONIAL HOME INTO COMMERCIAL SPACE AND ADD (3) NEW BUILDINGS OF APPROX. 7,500 SF. CONSIDER OFFICE OR RESIDENTIAL ON 2ND FLOOR AND PROVIDE DEDICATED PARKING
- 8 POTENTIAL LOCATION FOR RELOCATED ONION BARN AS A GATEWAY STATEMENT
- 9 CONVERT EXISTING COLONIAL HOME INTO COMMERCIAL SPACE WITH DEDICATED PARKING

- 10 RELOCATE ONION BARN AND CONSTRUCT (2) TWO-STORY MUNICIPAL OR COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS (10,300 SF) AND ADD DEDICATED PARKING
- 11 EXPAND EXISTING TOWN HALL PARKING LOT
- 12 FUTURE MEMORIAL WALK/ TOWN GREEN PROJECT
- 13 OPEN LAWN, LINEAR SCULPTURE PARK LINKS THE SCHOOLS AND SENIOR CENTER TO THE TOWN CENTER CORE. INSTALL 4' HT. MASONRY WALL OR FENCE, A VEGETATIVE BUFFER, SCULPTURES AND LANDSCAPING ALONG PATHWAYS
- 14 CONVERT BUS DEPOT BUILDING INTO A COMMUNITY/ ART CENTER WITH ASSOCIATED PARKING AND OUTDOOR EVENT SPACE AND RELOCATE BUS DEPOT FACILITY
- 15 DEDICATED PICK-UP/ DROP OFF AREA - DOUBLES AS FOOD TRUCK PARKING AREA

facilitate senior-friendly housing. Finally, the Commission intends to rezone the approximately 7-acre undeveloped parcel contiguous to the commercial zone as an additional commercial area.

We intend to achieve this zoning change by creating a "Village District" encompassing the Town Center area as depicted on page 20. Using this approach, the Commission can control the nature of the development by imposing enforceable guidelines on any development in that area, including architectural design features.

Concerns were raised that additional commercial development in the Town Center would increase traffic along Norfield Road, Weston Road, and at the intersection of School Road. This led the Commission to request that MMI conduct a traffic impact study of that area. This study considered the planned improvements to be funded through the LOTCIP grant at Weston Road and School Road as well as a full build-out of the Town Center Master Plan within the next 30 years. The traffic study analyzed the existing level of service at the intersections of Norfield Road and Weston Road and that of School Road and Weston Road. Using a 30-year time horizon, the study found that conditions would be improved at the intersection

with School Road with the LOTCIP enhancements. At the intersection with Norfield Road, an already poor level of service may worsen. However, based on projected annual increases in traffic volumes alone, these conditions are projected to worsen over the next 30 years regardless of development. Fortunately, the remedies for this projection are likely to be rather non-invasive, such as additional striping or minor widening. The complete MMI traffic study can be found on the Town's website.

While the Commission cannot compel the following changes, we strongly urge the Town and the Board of Education to move the school bus depot, and the Town to repurpose the existing bus depot, as well as create the greenspace recommended by MMI. In addition, we will recommend to the Town that it consider moving the Onion Barn and enhancing parking as provided in the MMI report.

Increased signage, both at major entry points to Weston and at the boundaries of our Town Center, is necessary to help differentiate Weston as a unique community. It will also alert passers-by when they are entering Weston's commercial and municipal zone. Such signage should identify the location of our principal municipal services and facilities to make them more readily available to the public.



Goal 2: Preserve small-town character, natural resources, and open spaces

“Open space” is generally defined as natural and human-influenced landscapes that remain relatively undisturbed. Open space may consist of several land categories, ranging from pristine preserves of high ecological significance to active recreational trails and playgrounds. With approximately 29% of Weston’s land as open space, these areas provide recreational opportunities, ensure water resource protection, and serve conservation purposes.

The importance of open space to a town like Weston cannot be overstated. It is integral to our character and limits density in a manner that is critical to the sustainability of our aquifers. Weston’s open space provides many benefits to our community, direct and indirect, short- and long-term. Varied recreation areas, including ball fields, scenic trails, and protected open space, contribute to Weston’s character and quality of life. Weston’s open spaces range from large preserves such as Devil’s Den (1,746 acres, most of which are in Weston) and Trout Brook (730 acres) to small playgrounds and parks such as Keene Park on River Road. These provide a place for recreation, exercise, personal revitalization, and socialization. They also protect underground water resources and allow natural habitats to remain intact and ecologically healthy.

The Commission supports the current policy of preserving our open space and properly husbanding our natural resources, as well as policies that enhance our ability to sustain and improve our environment. We generally support the sustainability principles advocated by our Town’s Select Committee on Sustainability (see “Our People”). Those sustainability principles include efforts that encompass public and private property to affect: siting and landscape; water protection and efficiency; energy and atmosphere; materials and resources; indoor environmental quality; and innovation and sustainable initiatives.

We must practice conservation of resources if we wish to preserve the character of Weston and protect our environment, including our trees, from natural and man-made hazards. This would involve the avoidance of “clear cutting” of trees in connection with new construction and enforcement by the Conservation Commission, the Board of Selectmen, and the Commission of their regulations protecting our environment, including those that control development in special flood hazard areas. These efforts could also include measures, such as sustainable stormwater management practices, to meet environmental challenges.

Weston residents indicated in the Town Survey that they favor retaining open space in Town where it currently exists but do not generally support expansion of that space through purchases by the Town. They wish to preserve the rural character of Town and its natural resources, parks, and other recreational areas.

Please see Appendix E for implementation guidelines relating to sustainability initiatives in Town that are mentioned in this Plan.

Objectives:

Maintain the Quality and Utility of Existing Open Spaces

Approximately 29% of land in Weston is devoted to open space and recreation. These lands not only contribute to the clean air and water in Weston, but also to the rural perception of the community. Looking toward the future, the Town should continue to maintain these spaces and the recreational facilities in them.

Foster Open Space Connectivity and Wildlife Corridors

Linking open space increases ecological benefits and enhances habitats for wildlife. Weston should continue to be involved in regional open space programs like the Aspetuck Land Trust’s Green Corridor and the Pollinator Pathway.

Collaborate with Public and Non-Profit Partners to Protect Environmentally Sensitive Areas

Non-profit entities own most of the protected open space in Weston. The Town should continue to communicate and collaborate with these parties to protect lands with high ecological value and to foster appropriate conservation.

Reduce Stormwater Runoff and Non-point Source Pollution to Preserve and Improve Water Quality

Weston must comply with State and Federal standards to reduce pollutant discharge from its stormwater system, including the Municipal Separate Stormwater System (MS4). The Town should continue to implement and maintain its current Stormwater Management Plan. The Stormwater Management Plan identifies control measures to prevent and/or treat polluted runoff discharged into Connecticut’s water bodies.

Groundwater Quality

Nearly all of Weston’s population uses wells and relies on the high quality of the groundwater. As of 2019, there is one Level A Aquifer Protection Area (as defined by CTDEEP) in the southwest corner of Weston. The Commission recommends that the Westport Weston Health District consider suggestions that would further encourage the public to maintain the high quality of Weston’s well water.

Weston should encourage its citizens to minimize the use of toxic pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers that leach into ground water. The Sustainability Committee should, in cooperation with the Westport-Weston Health District, articulate for the public best practices to preserve clean water in accordance with CT DEEP guidelines.

Protect Our Native Trees

Native trees provide critical habitat for our local wildlife and are well suited to thrive in our area with minimal intervention needed. Weston should consider requiring

that all new trees planted on Town property be native.

Commit to Native Plants

The Sustainability Committee should educate the public to create community guidance for landscape design that minimizes the use of pesticides and herbicides and promotes native/ naturalized landscapes. This would include guidelines limiting use of pesticides and herbicides. The Town should attempt to ensure that all new plantings on Town-owned properties are at least 70% native species, and prohibit planting of any non-native invasive species. The Sustainability Committee should educate the public regarding managing and removing existing non-native invasive species.

Engage in Environmentally Friendly Land Management

Town-maintained landscapes and parks should, where feasible, be maintained with minimal fossil-fuel-powered equipment. Where feasible, the Town should (i) as equipment needs to be replaced move to electric powered mowers and blowers, (ii) adopt low-maintenance processes that are better for the environment, such as less frequent

mowing, a return to meadow where turf is not needed, no-mow grass where turf is needed, and letting leaves lie where they are in the fall, and (iii) follow organic and IPM standards and practices.



Green Up Day 2018 - Weston Today

Goal 3: Increase pedestrian and bicycle connectivity to enhance quality of life

Weston has little in the way of public transportation. As a result, our residents are reliant on automobiles for their local transportation. Therefore, road maintenance and safety must be ongoing priorities for the Town. Fortunately, the Town, with State funding, has been able to spend significant resources to support those efforts.

The majority of respondents to the Town Survey believe that Weston had too few sidewalks and bike trails. This is especially acute in the Town Center, where few feel safe crossing the street and biking there.

Objectives:

Complete Funded Projects

The LOTCIP and CCCGP funding mentioned previously will improve traffic flow and safety in the Town Center for pedestrians and motorists. The implementation of these projects will catalyze momentum for extending the improvements to appropriate areas throughout Town.

Implement Sidewalk Master Plan

As previously mentioned, the Town is pursuing grants to fund successive phases of the Sidewalk Master Plan. Improving the sidewalk network is an essential component of increasing connectivity and quality of life.

Enhance Bicycle & Pedestrian Connectivity

Beyond the Sidewalk Master Plan, other areas in Town should be examined to increase connectivity. Areas to be explored for sidewalks include connections to Bisceglie Park, Lachat Farm, and the Historical Society. The desire for biking on Routes 53 and 57 and Valley Forge Road was expressed at the Plan workshops. This may warrant the committee of biking stakeholders further exploring options and recommendations for these ideas.



Explore Valley Forge 2018 - Weston Today

Goal 4: Support and promote sustainability and resiliency

In order to continue to preserve Weston's natural resources and to plan for the future, sustainability and resiliency should be a key focus for the next 10 years. With its willing and engaged citizenry, Weston has the opportunity to become a leader in this arena. Weston recently received a Bronze Certification from Sustainable CT. The objectives below could bolster sustainability efforts and may push the Town into a higher certification tier.

Objectives:

Encourage Sustainable Waste Management Practices

Weston operates its own Transfer Station, which allows the Town a level of influence regarding waste management. In addition to providing sustainable waste management education to the public, the Town should explore expanding the scope of Transfer Station operations to accommodate composting and a "Swap Shop" where residents can leave reusable household items for use by others. There are many successful models of Swap Shops, such as the one in Wellfleet, Massachusetts. The Town may also wish to explore raising the per bag cost of disposal at the Transfer Station to encourage residents to reduce waste and compost at home. The Town may wish to consider publicizing the availability of the transfer Station and the alternatives offered for disposal and recycling of household waste on the Town website. The Town should plan to join HRRRA, a regional waste management group. The Sustainability Committee should educate the public regarding best organic waste practices.

Strengthen Resiliency to Climate Change and Improve Disaster Preparedness

Storms and other weather events are becoming increasingly more extreme. To combat the damage these events can inflict on Town functions and facilities, the Town should evaluate our existing infrastructure and, where feasible, modify them to improve our performance. This may take the form, among other projects, of burying powerlines, widening culverts, or trimming and removing trees. The Commission should continue to enforce its floodplain management regulations. We also support the continuation of the Emergency Response Committee to assist in the protection of our citizens in the event of severe weather episodes, and the continued implementation of the mitigation strategies identified in the regional Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Encourage Energy Efficiency and Green Energy Generation

The Town should continue to support community efforts to increase public and private use of renewable energies. The Town should analyze the best way forward. As Town buildings are renovated and constructed, energy conservation techniques for design and construction should be considered throughout the process. To assure that the

Town stays informed of best management practices, active participation from the Select Committee for Sustainability should be encouraged and welcomed.

Continue Virtual Net Metering Program

Weston currently participates in a Virtual Net Metering (VNM) program. VNM gives participants energy billing credits for renewable solar electricity generated at a location not physically connected to the account. Weston has recently partnered with the Town of Wilton in a two-megawatt program. This program combines renewable energy, cost savings, and regional partnerships into one successful program. This program should not only be continued, but should also be expanded where feasible.

Incorporate Low-Impact Development Best Practices into Zoning

Low-Impact Development (LID) involves designing and undertaking land development in a way that minimizes the effect of rainwater runoff and contaminants that pollute our water. This may include, where appropriate, limiting the amount of impervious surfaces on a site, encouraging the use of native plants in rain gardens, and rainwater retention. As the Commission reviews zoning for Town Center, incorporating best practices for LID should be an emphasis.

Support Electric Vehicle Technology

As Town vehicles reach the end of their natural lives and need to be replaced, serious consideration should be given to a transition to electric vehicles. This can include police cars, school buses, town maintenance vehicles, shuttle buses, and any other vehicles needed. Additional consideration should be given to building infrastructure to support EV charging at the town Administration complex, School Road, and other strategic locations.

Support Toxin Free Building and Maintenance Materials

Where feasible, the Town should use (i) LEED certification guidelines when planning all Town construction projects to promote cost effective, efficient, and non-toxic structures and (ii) eco-friendly, non-toxic cleaners in municipal buildings. The Sustainability Committee should encourage residents and business owners to use such non-toxic cleaners as well.

Goal 5: Improve housing options for all life stages and lifestyles, while protecting existing community character

The Commission recognizes that results from the Town Survey and Plan Workshops support more variation in Weston’s housing stock, including the addition of more affordable housing and senior-friendly housing. The Commission has also heard some concern about the ability to sustain cluster housing and multi-family housing from an environmental, water usage, and waste perspective. These concerns need to be evaluated and will be addressed as new housing strategies are considered.

The State of Connecticut requires that the issue of affordable housing be addressed in each municipality’s 10-year plan (Section 8-23(e)(1)(H)). The State legislature has also established an Affordable Housing Land Use Appeals Act, commonly referred to as Section 8-30g, to aid with development of affordable housing throughout the State.

While the requirements to qualify as affordable housing can be somewhat complex, the simplified illustration below provides an example of how they can be applied. The basic idea for a housing development to be “affordable,” is that 30% of dwelling units in the development need to be made available, by terms of the underlying deed to the property, to persons with income equal to or less than 80%⁵ of the lesser of (i) the median income of State residents or (ii) median income in the Weston area.

The State median income, which in 2017 (the most recent available) was \$74,168, is less than the Weston area median income. For a unit to be “affordable,” persons and families should not be required to pay more than 30% of their income to rent or buy the unit.

Example:

State median income = \$74,168

80% of median income = \$59,334.40 (i.e. 0.8 x \$74,168)

30% of the above amount = \$17,800.32 (i.e. 0.3 x \$59,334.40)

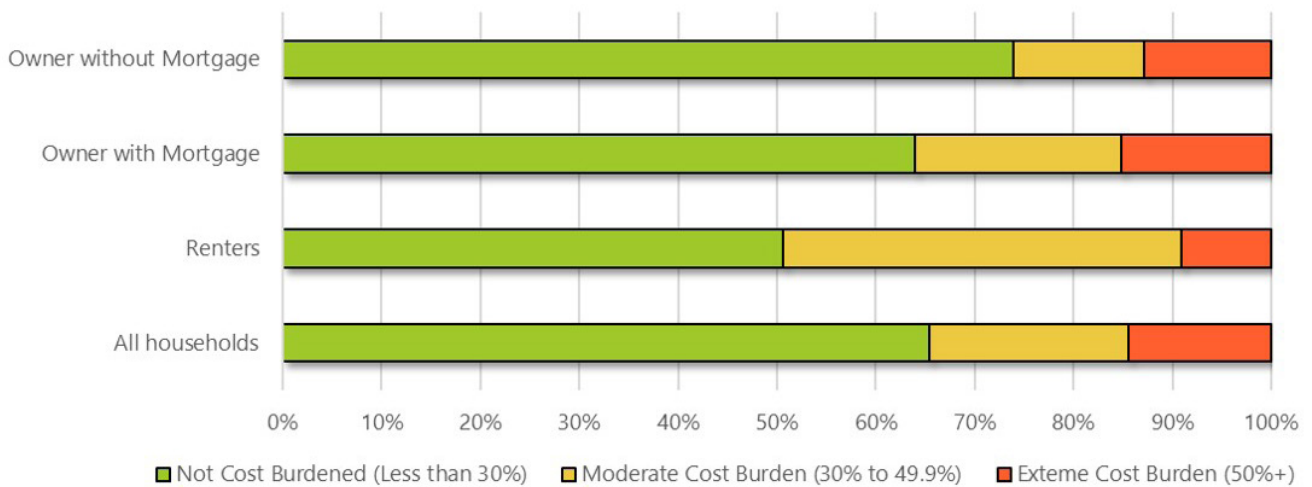
Therefore, this person should not spend more than \$17,800.32 per year (which is less than \$1,500 per month) to live in an “affordable” unit.

Under Connecticut law, when a municipality has fewer than 10% of its total housing units qualify as “affordable,” developers who are denied requests to build affordable housing developments can appeal that decision. In such cases, regardless of the standards of the applicable local zoning regulations, the municipality must demonstrate that the public health, safety, or welfare interests justify their denial of that proposed development.

The State has determined that Weston has seven units that qualify as affordable under Section 8-30g. The State, however, in defining “affordability,” for this provision does not include affordably priced dwelling units that are not deed-restricted to require sale or rental at affordable levels in its count of affordable units. There are a variety of unrestricted units in Weston that may otherwise serve as affordable homes for the Town’s population. One way to increase the number of “affordable” units in Town under Section 8-30g could be to encourage homeowners, whose homes would be deemed affordable except for the lack of deed restriction, to voluntarily add deed restrictions. This

5 This 80% number is reduced to 60% for half (i.e. 15%) of the units

Affordability of Weston's Housing by Tenure, 2016



American Community Survey, 2016

could be incentivized by a corresponding tax abatement.

In addition, there are housing units in Weston that could be considered affordable utilizing the area median household income for Fairfield County. In another part of its laws, the State defines "'affordable housing' as housing for which persons and families pay 30% or less of their annual income, where such income is less than or equal to the area median income for the municipality in which such housing is located, as determined by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development" (Section 8-39a). The area median income for a family of four in Weston would be \$114,300. Under this definition, a Weston family of four with 80% of the median household income (i.e. \$91,440) should not spend more than \$27,432 per year or approximately \$2,286 per month, to live in an affordable housing unit. Our zoning regulations have permitted small accessory apartments and roomers and boarders within the principal or main dwelling since the 1960s. A number of these units may serve as affordable dwelling units for the Town's residents.

Weston can, in a planned manner, preserve its existing affordable housing and increase the percentage of affordable housing, and thus work toward meeting the State goal. Recommendations from the State include: requiring a minimum of 10% affordable units in multi-family housing; providing for a greater variety of housing options as part of mixed-use development areas; expanding access to affordable housing suitable for retirees and the elderly; and increasing access to Connecticut Housing Finance Authority (CHFA) mortgages to expand access to homeownership.

Weston residents are generally in favor of our current two-acre residential and agricultural zoning regulations. A majority of Town Survey respondents, however, were concerned about the lack of diversity in housing options in Town, noting that there is little in the way of affordable or senior housing options. Allowing a diversity of housing options would create housing attainable for Weston's workforce and seniors. The Commission can continue to permit the creation of accessory apartments within existing homes. Within Town Center, there is the opportunity to allow for the development of more housing options, such as mixed-use development, or single-family homes, including senior-friendly housing whether standalone or attached.

Another option is to explore "open space," also known as "cluster," subdivisions in Town. Approximately 63% of participants in the Plan Workshops indicated that they would welcome such exploration. Development outside of Town Center beyond the current two-acre, single-family housing approach would however require a significant analysis of the effect of such development on the Town's resources.

Objectives:

Improve availability of quality, attainable housing for Weston's workforce and senior population

The Town Survey and Plan Workshops showed a clear appetite for exploring how to allow for more housing choices in Weston, especially in the Town Center. Over the next decade, the Commission should work to improve housing diversity that is in harmony with Weston's character and protects its natural resources. To that end, the Commission will review the impact of several zoning strategies, including the analysis of detached accessory apartments, and, in the Town Center, allowing single-family homes (attached or unattached) on smaller lots, and allowing second floor apartments. These strategies received a majority of positive reactions from participants in the Town Survey and workshops. Attendees also supported the idea of exploring the possibility of "open space" or "cluster" subdivisions in the remainder of Town. It may be worth reexamining this latter topic before the next Plan.

Would Weston Plan for Housing in the Future?

ker strategy you support or a Red strategy you do not support

In-law
A small home, that typically sits in the backyard of a main house.

Open Division
Option for new development where density is determined for a specified area, rather than lot-by-lot. In specified area, there's greater flexibility to place homes and preserve open space.

Do Nothing
Density determined lot-by-lot (2 acre) zoning through out all of town.

Within Town Center

Second Floor Units
Modify Town Center zoning so it could allow second floor units above commercial uses.

Allow Smaller Lots
Most existing detached houses in Town Center are on 1/4 acre lots. Modify Town Center zoning so it could allow detached homes on less than 2-acre lots.

Allow Townhomes
Modify Town Center zoning so it could allow townhomes.

Goal 6: Maintain Town services and plan for future trends

Weston residents are overall very satisfied with the services provided by the Town. There is also broad support for sharing services of various types, apart from Town Hall services and police services. Sharing these services with other towns will be a long-term process and may warrant additional study.

Like those of many Connecticut communities, Weston's population is aging. The Town provides a variety of services that affect seniors, including a Senior Center that occupies part of the Hurlbutt Elementary School. To address the needs of seniors who would like to see the Senior Center upgraded and relocated, the Town should explore creating a community center with broader usage and include provisions for senior use.

As mentioned, schools are identified as Weston's greatest asset, an indication that we are quite satisfied with the quality of public education offered by the Town. This will remain a priority going forward.

Objectives:

Ensure the built environment is accessible to anyone regardless of age, disability, or other factors

Ensuring accessibility to public spaces makes Weston welcoming to everyone. It is also critically important especially as Weston ages. As the Town renovates and builds new facilities and infrastructure, compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act is necessary.

Evaluate and explore opportunities to improve communications infrastructure

Trends indicate that more people are opting to work part- or full-time from home. To accommodate this desire, communications infrastructure should be upgraded to keep Weston competitive with other communities and provide a vital service to residents. To that end, the Town should prepare for the rollout of 5G service and other subsequent innovations, which will increase internet connection speeds, connectivity, and phone service quality. Exploring opportunities to upgrade, extend, and open the Nutmeg Network to private connections should also be considered in the coming decade.

Engage with neighboring communities regarding the sharing of services

While the majority of Weston's services received high marks in the Town Survey, some were underutilized. It may benefit Weston to consider combining these services with neighboring towns to improve service quality and save money.

Collaborate with the Board of Education for facility planning

Weston Public Schools recently completed Phase 1a of the School Master Plan. As of this writing, the next phase is underway to evaluate three-school alignment options. This may affect the Senior Center and the Town Center. Collaboration on the subsequent phases will be key to reaching a mutually beneficial plan for the future of these facilities. The Town has established a Facility Optimization Assessment Committee to make recommendations regarding Town facilities generally, including school buildings.

Anticipate future Town needs regarding new facilities and programs

The Commission has already approved a new addition to the public library as well as needed upgrades of our police and EMT facilities, both of which will enhance our Town services for our current and future residents. Other services and facilities should be examined as needed to ensure that they are meeting demand and providing high quality service.



Curb Cut - KFM

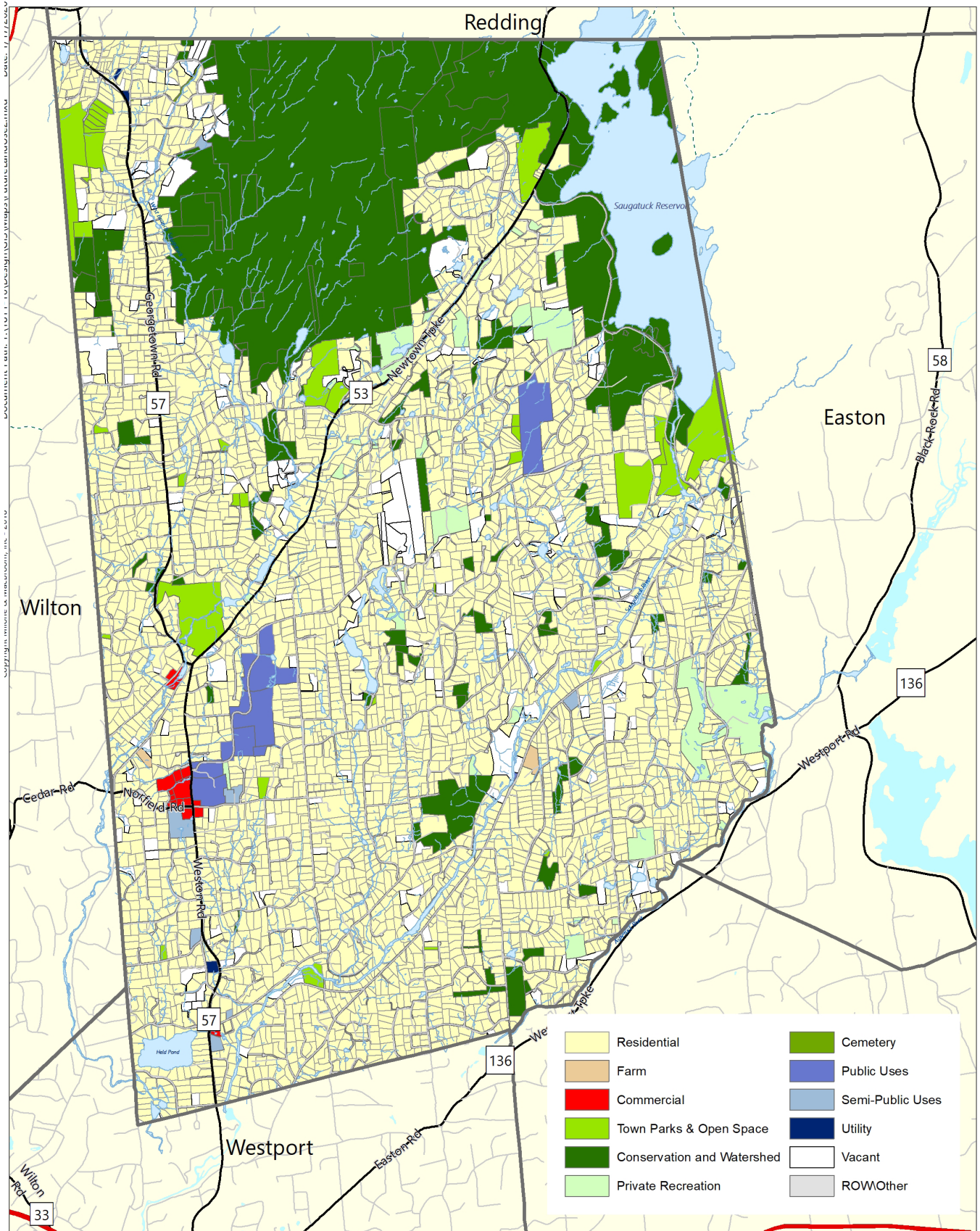


Weston Intermediate School - Noroton

Future Land Use Plan

The Future Land Use Map (see page 31) reflects the Town's vision and goals for desirable future development over the next decade. The map depicts appropriate locations for and relationships between general categories of use and intensity, ranging from priority areas for economic development and the creation of housing opportunities to low-density rural, residential lands. The Future Land Use Plan graphically represents the general outcomes anticipated from implementation of the strategies contained in this Plan. Due to its generalized nature, there may be inconsistencies between the uses shown on this map and the actual use of individual properties. The Future Land Use Plan does not encourage future development within natural hazard areas. (See Future Land Use & Flood Hazard Areas Map (see Appendix E).

The Future Land Use Plan looks very similar to the current Land Use Map. However, there is an important change for commercial uses. Going forward, commercial uses in Weston should focus on providing services and amenities for residents in a "neighborhood" style, small storefronts that create a village feel and allow for community interaction. The Future Land Use Map also offers the opportunity to provide new housing types in the newly defined Town Center.



Future Land Use
 Weston Plan of Conservation & Development
 Town of Weston

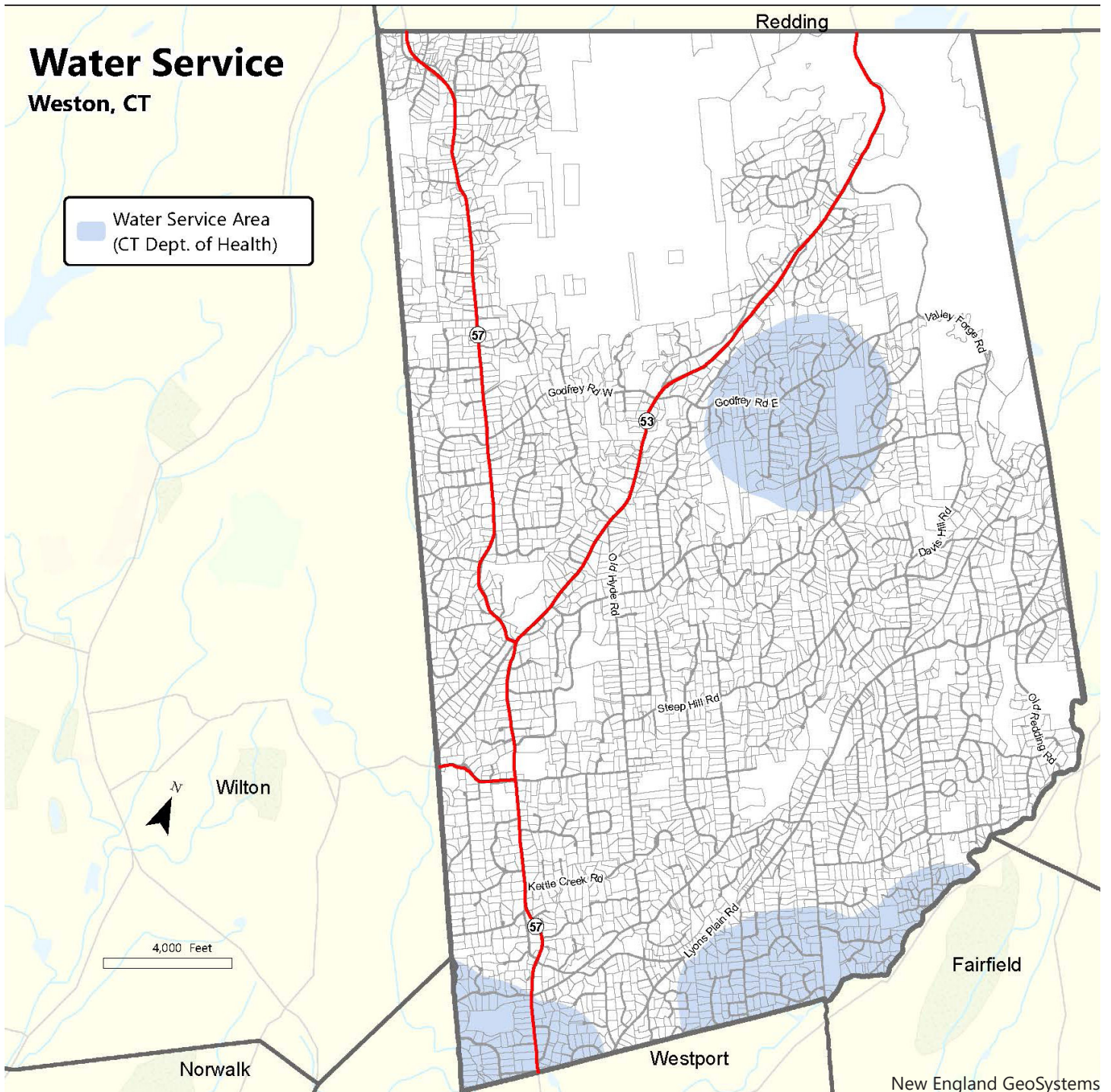


Water and Sewer

With few exceptions, Weston households, schools, government buildings, and commercial establishments rely on wells. Weston Water Supply serves approximately 100 people. Aquarion Water Company serves multiple towns, including small sections of southern Weston.

There is no sewer service in Weston with the exception of Weston Schools, which use a closed Advanced Treatment

Sewer System (ATS) for on-site disposal. In 1979, Weston entered into an agreement to participate in the area Sewer Avoidance Program (pursuant to the State Public Act 78-154 as a part of the federal Clean Water Act). The steps taken by the Town to comply with the requirements of the program include the adoption of a heat pump ordinance, an erosion and sediment control regulation, and ongoing testing of water quality.



Consistency with Regional and State Plans

Chapter 126, Section 8-23 of the Connecticut General Statutes requires that local 10-year plans take into account the State Conservation and Development Policies Plan and note any inconsistencies. While a draft update to the State Plan was completed in 2018, it has not yet been adopted by the Connecticut General Assembly. Therefore, the 2013-2018 State Plan was reviewed. Generally, Weston’s Plan is consistent with the State’s six growth-management principles as described in the following table.

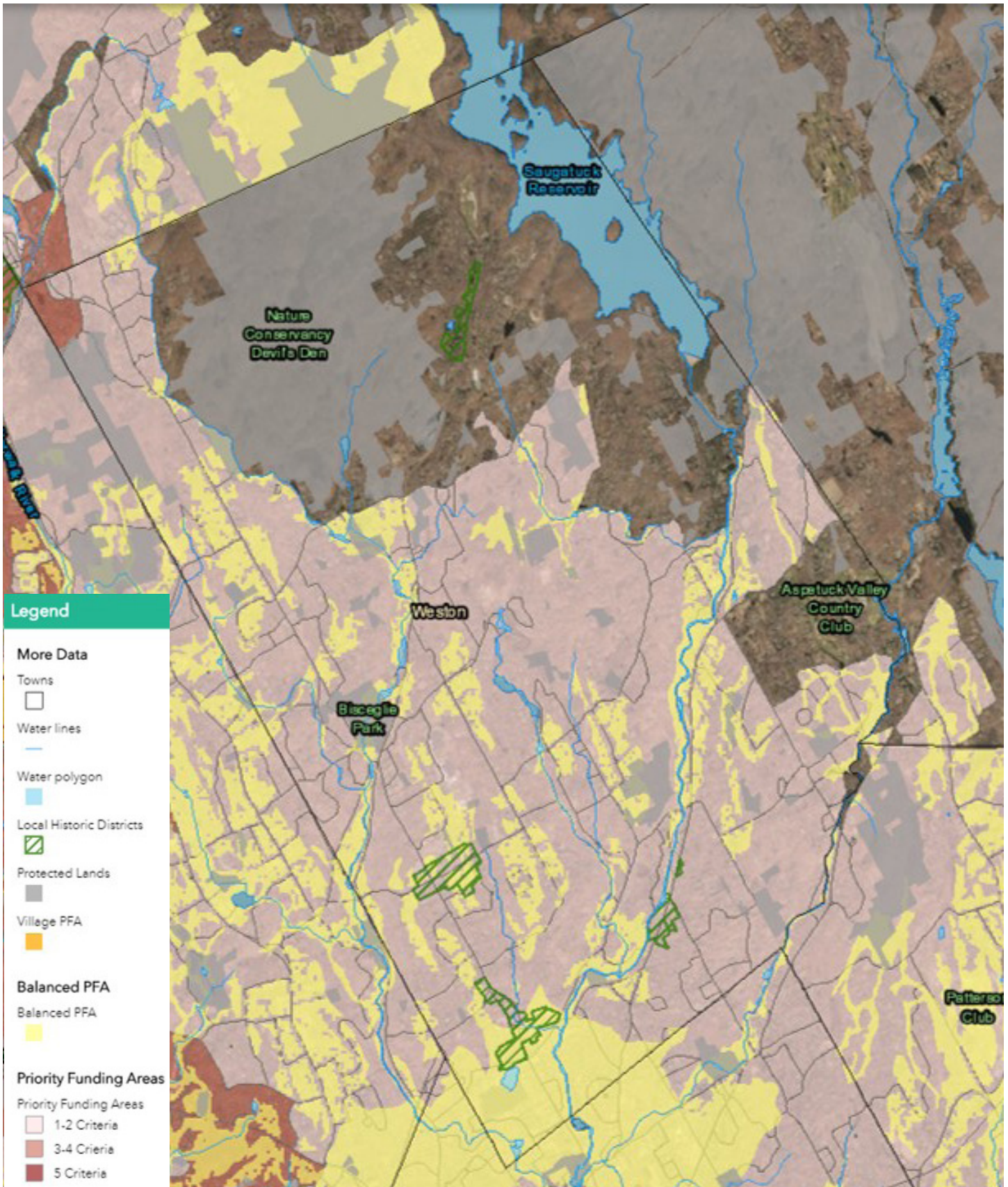
The State Plan classifies land into priority funding areas, protected lands, conservation areas, and balanced priority funding areas. These land use categories are shown on the following “Locational Guide Map” (see page 34). Overall, the Locational Guide Map aligns well with the Future Land Use Plan in this Plan. Priority development areas identified in the Weston Plan are generally recognized in the State’s plan as priority funding areas including the Town Center. Because the State uses larger Census Block Groups as the building blocks of its Locational Guide Map, the State’s priority funding areas spill over into the adjacent low- and rural-density residential areas. Weston’s Future Land Use Plan contains a higher level of detail and concentrates

development within the Town Center while largely preserving the surrounding residential neighborhoods. Balanced priority funding areas recognize both conservation and development objectives. Priority funding areas are generally supportive of development. It should be noted that the proposed 2018-2023 Locational Guide Map significantly converts balanced priority funding areas in rural- and low-density residential areas to conservation areas, which better corresponds with the objectives of this Plan. The State’s priority conservation areas are concentrated within the public water supply watershed.

The Regional Plan of Conservation and Development was developed by the Western Connecticut Council of Governments (WestCOG) and adopted in 2020. The goals of the Weston POCD align well with the goals of the Regional POCD, specifically regarding stormwater management, communications infrastructure, renewable energy, affordable housing, historic preservation and tourism, water supplies, and the protection of open space and forests. These areas of agreement may enable future opportunities for collaboration between the Town and the Region.

State of Connecticut Growth Management Principles	Weston POCD Consistency Analysis
1. Redevelop and Revitalize Regional Centers and Areas with Existing or Currently Planned Physical Infrastructure	Weston's POCD promotes development and around the existing Town Center area.
2. Expand Housing Opportunities and Design Choices to Accommodate a Variety of Household Types and Needs	This POCD recognizes the need to diversify Weston housing stock and recommends strategies to achieve these objectives.
3. Concentrate Development Around Transportation Nodes and Along Major Transportation Corridors to Support the Viability of Transportation Options	This Plan promotes strategic development along Route 57 and Route 53.
4. Conserve and Restore the Natural Environment, Cultural and Historical Resources, and Traditional Rural Lands	Weston's open and green spaces are critical to its identity, success and Weston depends on healthy, accessible, and preserved resources. Several recommendations are included to protect and enhance these assets.
5. Protect and Ensure the Integrity of Environmental Assets Critical to Public Health and Safety	This POCD makes several recommendations designed to protect surface and subsurface waters, improve the Town's resiliency to natural hazards and enhanced sustainability.
6. Promote Integrated Planning across all Levels of Government to Address Issues on a Statewide, Regional, and Local Basis	Weston's POCD addresses opportunities for increased intermunicipal, regional, and State collaboration.

CT State POCD 2013-2018 Locational Guide Map & Priority Funding Areas (PFA)



Appendices

Appendix A: The Process

The Commission began its planning process in 2018 by soliciting bids from consultants to help it meet its obligation under Connecticut law to produce the Plan. After reviewing the proposals and conducting interviews, the Commission chose as its consultant MMI to perform the necessary research, interviews, studies, and initial drafting of the Plan.

The Commission asked MMI to prepare a Master Plan for the Town Center area that reflected community input as well as the results of interviews with property owners in that area. In addition, MMI was asked to assess bicycle and pedestrian transportation conditions, to make recommendations and articulate strategies to support bicycling and walking, and to evaluate and make recommendations regarding certain Town-owned properties.

As the project developed, and in response to community concerns, our request was modified to eliminate that last set of evaluations and recommendations for Town properties and instead substitute a traffic study in the Town Center area to further inform the Commission and the public regarding the effect of more commercial development in that area.

In late 2018, the Commission, in consultation with the Town's Survey Committee, conducted a comprehensive online survey publicized through postcards sent to each residence in Weston and signs posted strategically throughout Town, as well as articles in our local online paper, *Weston Today*. The survey ran from November 15 to December 15, 2018. The response to the Town Survey was quite impressive, as we received 2,675 responses from a potential total of approximately 6,800 registered voters in Town, a response rate of over 30% that provided a very accurate guide to the community's opinions and objectives. The results of the Town Survey can be found in Appendix B. The feedback received helped MMI create exercises for a series of public community workshops. Two workshops focused on Town Center and two spoke to the remainder of Town.

In April and May 2019, MMI led Town Center workshops. The Discovery Session workshop in April 2019 was attended by over 120 Town residents, and an online version of the workshop was also available for those who could not make it to the in-person workshop. The focus of this workshop was to determine what residents would like to see in the opportunity areas within the Town Center, as well as to expound on traffic and pedestrian issues identified in the Town Survey.

At the second workshop, MMI presented two example concepts of how the Town Center could develop if different standards and strategies were employed. The intention was to build consensus about what the goals for the Town Center should be, and what kind of look and feel would unify the space. In this workshop, participants indicated their design preferences and discussed different configurations of buildings. They were also given the opportunity to do so online.

In fall 2019, MMI led two more workshops. The first was focused on open space and natural resources, pedestrian and bicycle connectivity, sustainability, and housing. The second reported back on the results of the first fall workshop, received feedback on draft objectives, and pointed the way forward for the completion of the Plan.

In addition, MMI prepared and delivered to the Commission data analyses contained in Appendix D as well as a Weston Town Center Master Plan that is included here as Appendix C.

Finally, the Commission, in addition to coordinating with the Town's First Selectman and Town Administrator, invited the Chairs of the following Boards and Commissions to share their perspectives with the Commission: the Conservation Commission, the Board of Education, the Historic District Commission, the Commission on Aging, the Police Commission, the Parks and Recreation Commission, the Select Commission on Sustainability, and the Beautification Committee.



M. Wirtenberg

Appendix B: Town Survey Report

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The results for the **Town of Weston's 2018 Planning Survey** gave clear direction for the future of the town. A total of 2,675 residents were surveyed, and the resulting margin of error was between 1.4% and 1.7%. The online survey methodology included wide publicity via postcards, road signs and social media. Respondents were able to access the survey on their desktop and mobile devices, or at town government buildings.

Weston is perceived as a very desirable **place to live**, with 84% of residents satisfied overall with the town. Weston receives high marks for its **schools, fire, police** and **EMS** departments, the town's most important services. 2 out of 3 residents felt they had made the right decision in moving to Weston. Respondents overwhelmingly cite the **school system** as key to their decision to move to Weston, followed by the **overall quality of life, safety** and **two-acre zoning**. That said, there is a belief among a minority of residents (30%) that the **quality of life** in the area is declining, and their concerns – centered around high taxes and cost of living, declining home values, poor local road quality and lack of amenities – should be taken into account in the 10-year planning process.

Residents are generally open to the idea of **sharing services** with neighboring towns, with more than half of residents supporting a shared senior center, shared animal control, shared public safety dispatch and shared recreation programs. Strong support for a shared **senior center** (62%) is likely the result of low usage (16%), even among those residents who are aware and eligible (93%). That said, satisfaction among those who use the senior center is high.

When asked about Weston's **land use priorities** over the next ten years, residents' highest priorities centered around optimizing Town Center – both retaining current and attracting new businesses. **Town Center** is an area of opportunity generally – 70% of residents feel it needs more amenities, and in open-ended comments residents frequently mention making Town Center more attractive and walkable.

Making Weston **more bicycle and pedestrian friendly** is also a high priority for land use (second only to Town Center) and was a recurring theme in the survey generally. 71% of residents feel we have too few sidewalks (the #1 underserved amenity), and over half feel we have too few biking trails (#4). And when asked specifically about Weston's transportation infrastructure, **sidewalks** and **bike lanes** were the top needs. There is also some desire for a **teen center** – mentioned both as an underserved amenity (#3) and in the open-ended comments on needed improvements.

The majority of residents agree that Weston maintains the right amount of single-family homes. Half feel that we have too little **senior housing**; however, when asked where they see themselves living 10 years from now, only 2% of residents mentioned senior housing. Which begs the question – if we build it, will they stay?

Half of respondents have no **plans to leave** Weston while the rest are making short- and long-term plans to move. ~1 in 5 plan to leave within the next 5 years; respondents cite an **empty nest** and the **high cost of living** as reasons for moving.

METHODOLOGY

The Town of Weston’s 2018 Survey was conducted from November 15 through December 15 of 2018. The survey was publicized widely (through postcards, road signs, social media, etc.) and was conducted online through the Town of Weston website. The survey was also available at the town library, the senior center, and other government buildings. 2,087 respondents completed the survey in full; an additional 588 respondents partially completed the survey. This resulted in a margin of error between 1.4% and 1.7%. Potential respondents were screened with regards to being over the age of 18.

The survey instrument consisted of 46 core questions. Respondents were asked to rate town services, town amenities, land use priorities and Weston as a place to live. There were open-ended questions examining Weston’s greatest assets and challenges, and an opportunity to provide general feedback on the town. The survey incorporated eleven demographic questions.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SAMPLE

Figure 1. Sample: Age Distribution

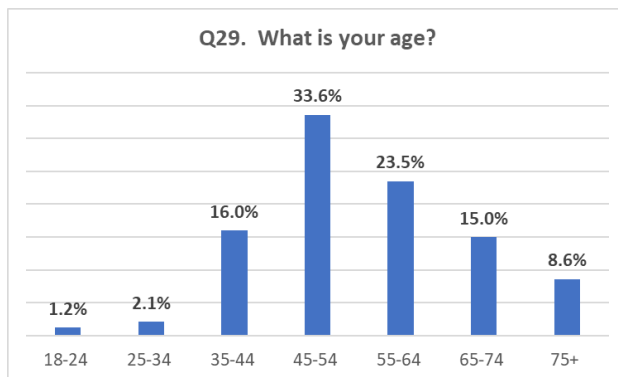


Figure 2. Sample: Years Lived in Weston

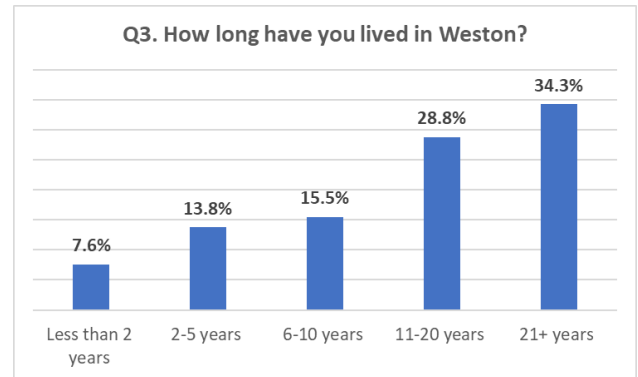
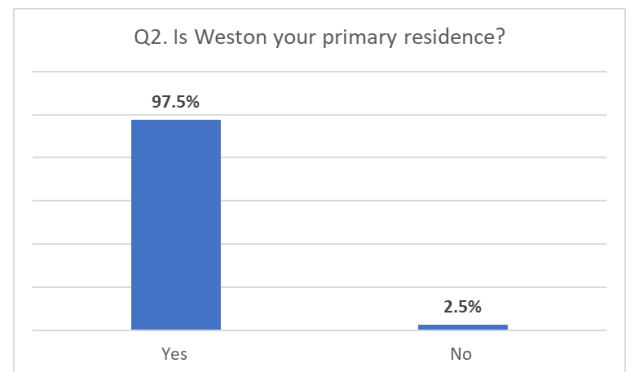
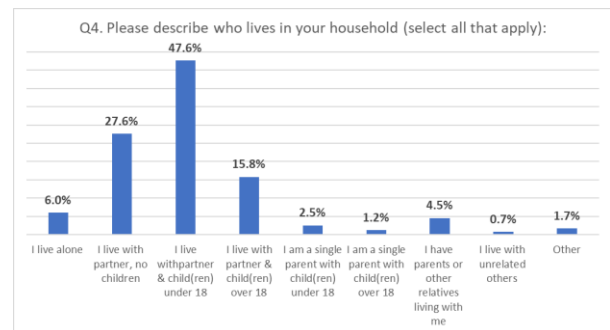


Figure 3. Primary Residence



Figures 4, 5 & 6. Household Composition



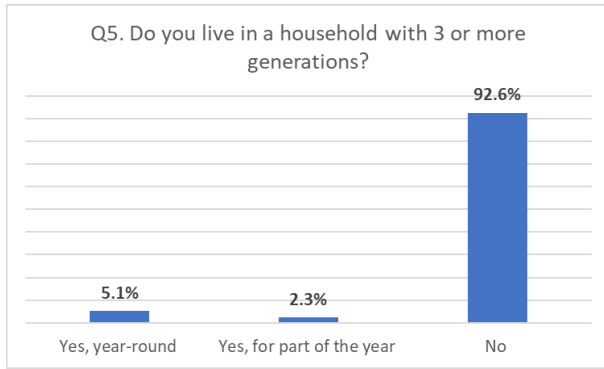


Figure 9. Sample: Gender

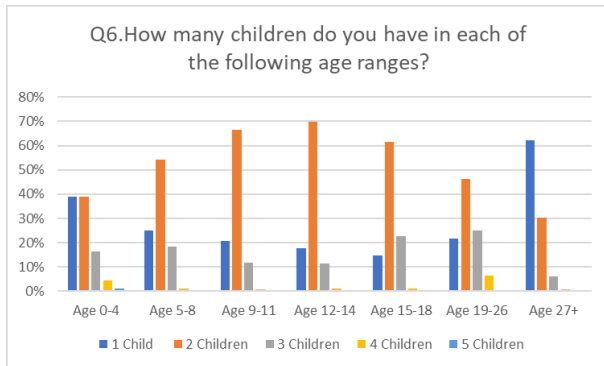
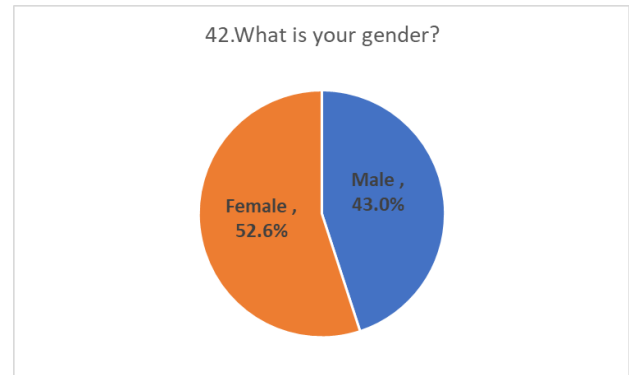
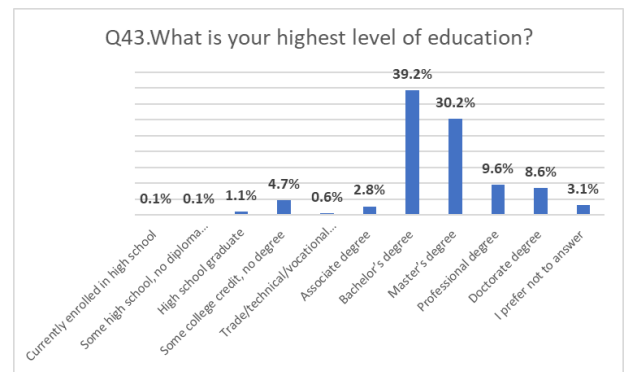


Figure 10. Sample: Education Level



Figures 7 & 8. Rent or Own

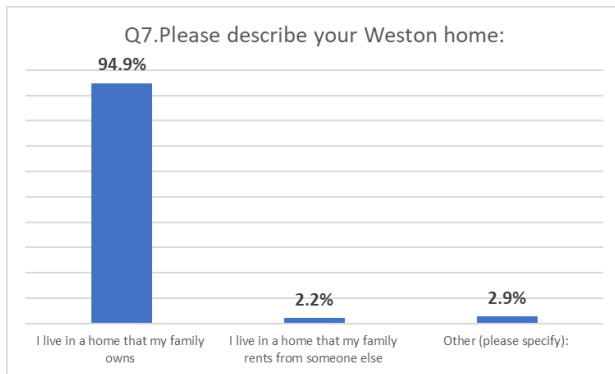
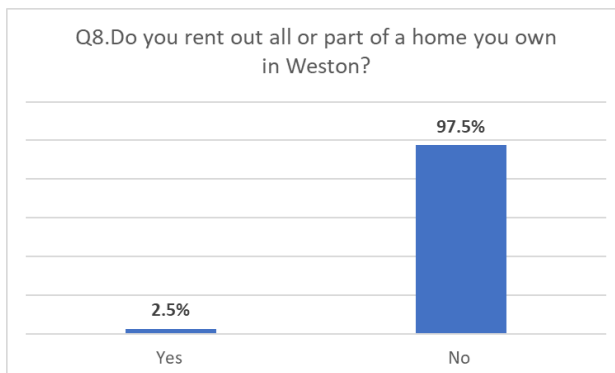
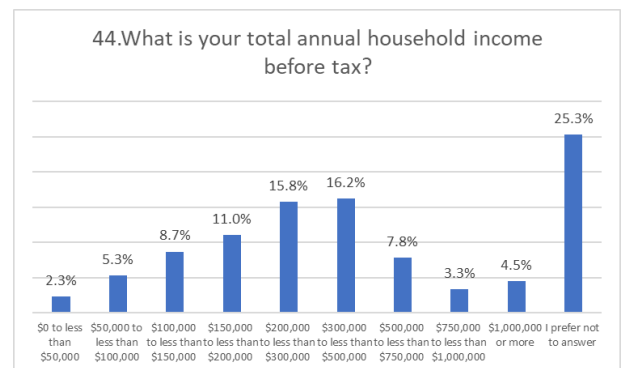


Figure 11. Sample: Income



The demographic profiles of the sample are exhibited in Figures 1-11. The age profile of the sample is illustrated in Figure 1. Approximately half of respondents were under age 55 and half were over age 55, with the largest portion in the 45-54 (33.6%) and 46-55 (23.3%) age categories. Figure 2 shows the number of years the respondents had lived in Weston. There

were large percentages for living in town for 11-20 years (28.8%) and over 20 years (34.3%).

In terms of education, a large percentage (87.6%) of the respondents graduated with a 4-year college degree, including 48.4% earning a graduate or professional degree (Figure 9).

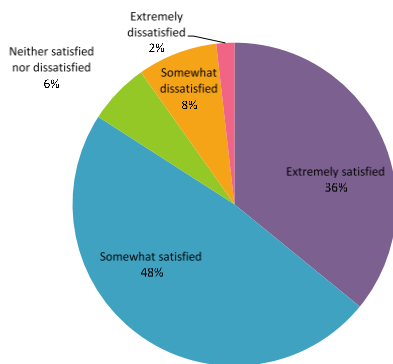
There were high levels of household income for the sample (Figure 10). This is illustrated in the large percentage of respondents in the over \$200,000 (47.6%) income categories, including 4.5% in the over \$1M income category.

In terms of gender, 43% of the sample were male and 53% were female (Figure 8, 4% preferred not to answer). The vast majority of respondents (95%) owned their own home (Figure 7).

WESTON OVERALL AS A PLACE TO LIVE

The respondents were asked to rate their overall satisfaction with Weston as a place to live using a 5-point scale from extremely satisfied to extremely dissatisfied. Chart 22 indicates that Weston is perceived as a very desirable place to live (84.1% satisfied). More telling was the fact that less than 10% of respondents (9.8%) are on the dissatisfied side.

22. Please rate your overall level of satisfaction with Weston as a place to live:

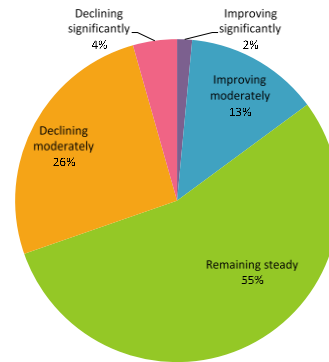


n=2,346

QUALITY OF LIFE IN WESTON

The perception of the quality of life in Weston over the past few years was assessed with a 5-point scale. The response categories for this question were improving significantly, improving moderately, remaining steady, declining moderately, and declining significantly. Overall, a large proportion of the respondents (55%) perceived the quality of life in Weston as “remaining steady” over the past few years (Chart 24). One concern is the percentage on the “declining” side of the scale exceeded the percentage on the “improving” side by 30.4% to 14.9%.

24. Over the past few years, do you think the overall quality of life in the local area has been improving, remaining steady or declining?

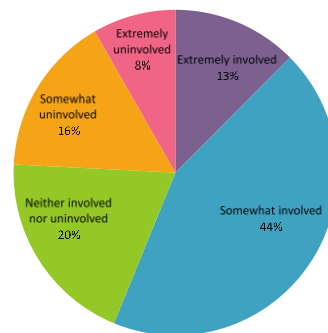


n=2,337

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Respondents were also asked about their level of involvement in the community (Chart 32). More respondents felt they were “involved” (56.2%) than not, but the numbers were fairly evenly split.

32. How would you describe your level of involvement in the Weston community?

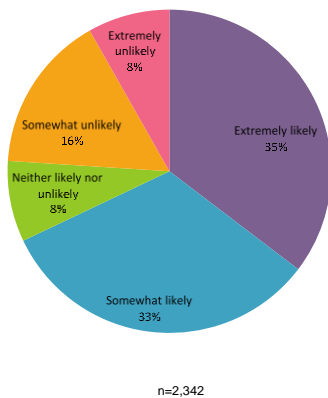


n=2,216

LIKELIHOOD TO SELECT WESTON AS A PLACE TO LIVE

The respondents were asked if they would select Weston as a place to live if they were to make the decision over again. 2 out of 3 respondents felt they had made the right decision in moving to Weston, with 68% of the respondents answering they would be “likely” to select Weston as a place to live if they were making the decision today. 24% of residents would be “unlikely” to select Weston again (Chart 23).

23. Thinking back to when you initially made the decision to move to Weston, how likely would you be to select Weston as a place to live again?



REASONS FOR MOVING TO WESTON

When asked the top three reasons they originally moved to Weston, respondents overwhelmingly cited the school system (75.3%) (Table 21). In the second tier were overall quality of life (37%), safety (35.5%), two-acre zoning (32.8%) and open space and natural resources (26.9%). Very few respondents mentioned town parks and recreational opportunities (1.2%), economic opportunities (0.8%), or downtown Weston (0.6%). 6.7% of respondents gave other reasons (not listed) for moving to Weston – these often included mentions of nearby family and more value for the money when compared to Westport.

21. Please select the top three reasons you chose to live in Weston:	Percent
School system	75.3%
Overall quality of life	37.0%
Safe environment	35.5%
2-acre zoning	32.8%
Open space and natural resources	26.9%
Privacy	19.5%
Location/commute	17.6%
Sense of community	9.7%
Affordability of housing	7.3%
Other (please specify):	6.7%
Culture and community character	6.2%
Lack of commercial businesses	4.8%
Born in Weston	3.1%
Town parks and recreational opportunities	1.2%
Economic opportunities	0.8%
Downtown Weston	0.6%

We see slight differences between new residents to town (less than 2 years, 2-5 years in Weston) and established residents. (Table 21a). The school system was more important to newer residents’ decisions to move to Weston (80.2%, 85.8%) than it was to long-established residents (62.7%; 21+ years in Weston). Similarly, open space & natural resources and a sense of community over-index for newer residents, while privacy over-indexes for long-established residents. Safety was more of a factor in the decision to move to Weston for medium-term residents (2-20 years in Weston) than for either our newest (less than 2 years) or longest-established (20+ years) residents.

Table 21a	3. How long have you lived in Weston?				
21. Please select the top three reasons you chose to live in Weston:	Less than 2 years (n=172)	2-5 years (n=332)	6-10 years (n=354)	11-20 years (n=687)	21+ years (n=815)
School system	80.2%	85.8%	83.1%	79.8%	82.7%
Overall quality of life	32.0%	32.5%	34.2%	38.0%	40.4%
Safe environment	29.1%	39.8%	38.7%	37.7%	31.9%
2-acre zoning	30.2%	31.6%	31.4%	33.2%	34.2%
Open space and natural resources	36.6%	25.0%	25.1%	22.1%	30.3%
Privacy	15.7%	18.4%	18.6%	18.6%	22.0%
Location/commute	18.6%	17.5%	15.8%	17.2%	18.5%
Sense of community	11.6%	12.0%	11.6%	10.8%	6.6%
Affordability of housing	10.5%	8.7%	7.1%	6.0%	7.2%
Other (please specify):	6.4%	4.2%	5.4%	6.3%	8.7%
Culture and community character	6.4%	6.3%	5.9%	6.6%	5.9%
Lack of commercial businesses	4.1%	3.9%	3.4%	4.4%	6.4%
Born in Weston	1.2%	1.2%	0.8%	2.0%	6.1%
Town parks and recreational opportunities	3.5%	0.6%	3.4%	0.6%	0.6%
Economic opportunities	0.6%	0.9%	0.3%	0.7%	1.0%
Downtown Weston	1.7%	0.0%	0.8%	0.7%	0.5%

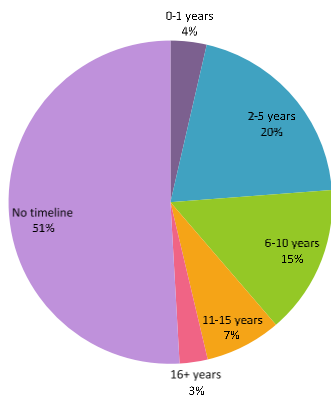
Those who responded that they had a timeline for moving were then asked their reason for planning to leaving Weston. (Table 11). Primary reasons mentioned were an empty nest (59.1%) and the cost of living in Weston (55.0%). 16.5% of respondents cited “other” (not listed) reasons for planning to move – high taxes and lack of town amenities were mentioned most often.

11. Why are you planning to move out of Weston? (please select all that apply):	Percent
Empty nest (children grown and no longer living at home)	59.1%
Cost of living in Weston	55.0%
I'm planning to leave Connecticut altogether	28.9%
Lifestyle opportunities	27.8%
Other (please specify):	16.5%
Lack of diversity of housing options in Weston	13.6%
Lack of adequate transportation options in Weston	9.6%
Commute (move closer to job)	8.0%
Move closer to family	5.1%
New job or job relocation	2.7%

PLANS TO LEAVE WESTON

Respondents were asked about their timeline for moving out of Weston. (Chart 10). Few are planning to leave in the next year (3.6%). However, ~1 in 5 respondents (20.2%) is planning to move out over the short term (2-5 years). That said, half of respondents (50.9%) have no plans to leave Weston (no timeline).

10. Are you planning to move out of Weston in the next:



n=2,422

TOWN SERVICES

The performance of various Weston town services was assessed with a set of two questions – satisfaction with each service (Table 25) and the importance of each service (Table 26). In terms of satisfaction, top performing town services included the Fire Department (82.6% satisfied), EMS (78.7%), Weston Public Schools (78.5%), and Police Services (79.6% satisfied). The lowest performing town service is Local Road Quality, at 25% dissatisfied.

26. Please rate the following services from extremely important to not at all important to you:	Extremely important	Very important	Moderately important	Slightly important	Not at all important
Weston Public Schools	72.4%	12.5%	7.1%	2.4%	5.5%
Fire Department	72.0%	21.2%	5.8%	0.7%	0.1%
Emergency Medical Services (EMS)	70.2%	21.9%	6.0%	1.3%	0.5%
Police Services	65.9%	23.6%	8.2%	1.4%	0.9%
Local Road Quality	41.3%	45.1%	12.1%	1.4%	0.1%
Weston Public Library	32.9%	31.6%	24.0%	7.9%	3.7%
Youth Services	23.8%	27.6%	24.2%	9.6%	14.7%
Town Recreation Programs	19.5%	32.0%	27.2%	11.4%	9.9%
Transfer Station	19.0%	28.8%	31.4%	11.5%	9.4%
Animal Control	17.5%	31.3%	33.7%	12.1%	5.5%
Park and Field Maintenance	16.4%	34.6%	32.1%	10.3%	6.6%
Social Services	13.6%	25.3%	33.5%	14.2%	13.4%
Lachat Town Farm	13.6%	20.2%	29.1%	17.0%	20.1%

The services that are most important to respondents track closely with the areas where they are most satisfied: Weston Public Schools (84.9% extremely or very important); Fire Department (93.2%); EMS (92.1%); and Police Services (89.5%). One area where we see a disconnect is in Local Road Quality, which is very or extremely important to 86.4% of respondents, but where satisfaction lags at 61.8% satisfied. Town Recreation Programs and Youth Services are two additional areas where importance slightly outpaces satisfaction.

25. Please rate your level of satisfaction with the following services available to Weston residents:	Extremely satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Extremely dissatisfied
Fire Department	66.0%	16.6%	16.6%	0.5%	0.2%
Emergency Medical Services (EMS)	62.9%	15.8%	19.9%	0.9%	0.5%
Weston Public Schools	54.0%	24.5%	15.0%	4.9%	1.6%
Police Services	54.3%	25.3%	15.9%	3.4%	1.1%
Weston Public Library	41.8%	32.1%	18.7%	5.6%	1.7%
Lachat Town Farm	36.7%	18.6%	41.8%	1.7%	1.1%
Transfer Station	32.1%	26.4%	36.9%	3.5%	1.1%
Park and Field Maintenance	26.5%	30.3%	36.7%	5.2%	1.3%
Animal Control	29.1%	25.6%	36.3%	5.3%	3.7%
Local Road Quality	19.1%	42.7%	13.3%	19.2%	5.8%
Town Recreation Programs	18.5%	30.7%	39.6%	8.9%	2.2%
Youth Services	16.6%	22.4%	52.3%	6.7%	2.0%
Social Services	11.6%	14.6%	69.2%	3.3%	1.2%

SHARED TOWN SERVICES

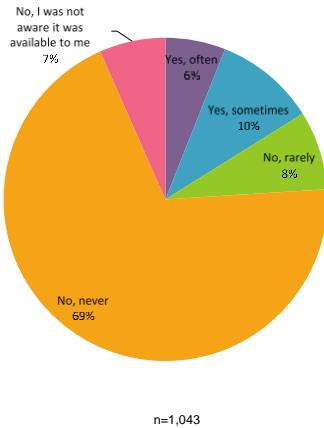
We asked respondents to give us their thoughts on sharing services with neighboring towns, where the cost of each service would be shared proportionally (Table 27). Support for this idea was generally strong. There was strongest support for a shared senior center (62.4% support) and shared animal control (60.4% support). Opposition was strongest to a shared police force (43.0% oppose).

27. How do you feel about Weston sharing the following services:	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Neither support nor oppose	Somewhat oppose	Strongly oppose
Shared Senior Center	35.7%	26.7%	23.9%	8.3%	5.3%
Shared Animal Control	33.1%	27.3%	24.2%	8.4%	7.0%
Shared Public Safety Dispatch Center	31.2%	24.6%	19.1%	12.8%	12.3%
Shared Recreation Programs	30.5%	28.8%	23.3%	11.0%	6.4%
Shared Library	26.9%	22.1%	18.5%	16.2%	16.3%
Shared Transfer Station	25.8%	22.5%	27.7%	13.1%	10.9%
Shared Police Force	22.2%	21.1%	13.7%	18.7%	24.3%
Shared Town Hall Services	21.7%	21.3%	21.6%	19.4%	15.9%

SENIOR CENTER

Questions about use and satisfaction with the services available to seniors in town was asked of respondents age 55+. While use of the senior center is low at 16.1%, awareness is high at 93.4%. (Chart 30)

30. Do you use the Weston Senior Center?



Among respondents who use the senior center satisfaction is high for both the programs (68.4%) and the facility (63.2%) (Table 31).

31. How satisfied are you with the following:	Extremely satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied
Senior Center Programs	36.4%	32.0%	25.6%	4.4%	1.6%
Senior Center Facility	29.6%	33.6%	26.0%	8.8%	2.0%

n=250

WESTON AMENITIES

When asked whether Weston has too many, the right amount, or too few of certain amenities, most agreed that the town has the right amount of hiking trails (78.1% neither too many nor too few) and sports fields (76.8%) (Table 28). Areas where respondents feel that Weston lacks are: sidewalks (70.9% too few); public transportation (61.6%); a teen center (53.8%); and biking trails (52.7%).

28. Do you agree or disagree that Weston has too many, too few, or the right amount of:	Far too many	Slightly too many	Neither too many nor too few	Slightly too few	Far too few
Hiking Trails	1.3%	3.2%	78.1%	12.6%	4.7%
Ball fields (baseball and softball)	6.5%	10.3%	76.8%	5.6%	0.9%
Multi-purpose fields (soccer, football, lacrosse)	4.8%	7.5%	75.8%	9.4%	2.6%
After-school programs	1.2%	1.4%	72.1%	17.6%	7.8%
Before-school programs	1.3%	0.7%	72.1%	16.1%	9.9%
Open Space	4.3%	7.6%	71.0%	11.1%	6.0%
Tennis courts	1.3%	1.7%	69.0%	19.8%	8.2%
Town-provided Pre-K	2.7%	1.9%	67.1%	16.0%	12.4%
Playgrounds and playscapes	1.8%	3.5%	66.2%	20.1%	8.4%
Places to skate and skateboard	2.1%	1.4%	58.7%	17.6%	20.2%
Community Events	0.9%	1.3%	57.1%	29.4%	11.3%
Swimming areas	0.9%	1.2%	51.5%	25.9%	20.5%
Ice skating pond	1.4%	0.7%	46.8%	22.7%	28.4%
Biking Trails	1.0%	1.5%	44.8%	23.2%	29.5%
Teen Center	1.1%	0.5%	44.6%	21.6%	32.2%
Public Transportation	1.0%	0.4%	37.1%	23.5%	38.1%
Sidewalks	2.1%	1.3%	25.8%	21.0%	49.9%

n=2,223

WESTON TOWN CENTER

The majority of respondents agree that while they make an effort to support the center’s existing shops (76% agree), they wish Weston’s Town Center had more amenities (70.7%). And while respondents generally feel safe in Town Center (54.7%), there is concern about crossing Weston Road (51.5% disagree it is “easy”) and bicycling (52.8% disagree it is “safe”) to the area.

33. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about Town Center:	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
We need more amenities there	40.7%	30.0%	15.7%	6.9%	6.7%
I try to shop/eat there to support local merchants	37.8%	38.2%	13.8%	7.0%	3.2%
I feel safe walking there	32.2%	22.5%	14.7%	15.1%	15.5%
The buildings feel appropriate in size relative to the setting	25.7%	39.3%	20.9%	9.5%	4.6%
I'd like to see a village green/gazebo in the center of Weston	18.2%	20.2%	32.2%	14.9%	14.6%
Parking is easy	16.0%	36.5%	19.1%	21.2%	7.1%
I feel the bus depot should be relocated	15.9%	12.1%	57.6%	6.7%	7.6%
It is visually attractive	15.8%	34.5%	19.8%	20.7%	9.1%
I like it just the way it is	12.5%	20.0%	21.8%	28.2%	17.6%
There is a good mix of shops, restaurants and amenities	8.0%	19.5%	13.6%	32.3%	26.6%
It is thriving	7.8%	22.6%	31.2%	26.1%	12.3%
It is easy to cross the state road	6.1%	17.4%	25.0%	27.8%	23.7%
I feel safe biking there	5.8%	8.9%	32.5%	22.4%	30.4%

A follow-up question was asked regarding the types of additional amenities respondents would like to see in town center. Answers ranged from attracting specific kinds of businesses (improved hardware store; coffee shop; wine bar; nail salon) to general comments on improving the attractiveness (“quaint”) and accessibility (“walkable”) of the area.

34. Are there additional amenities you'd like to see in Town Center?

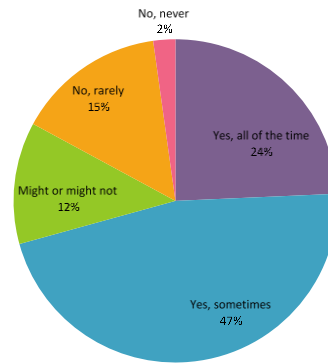


COMMUNITY EVENTS

The majority of respondents agree that Weston provides the right amount (57.1%) of community events for its residents, although a sizeable percentage of respondents would like to see more (40.7%) (Table 40). Respondents generally find out about community events through word of mouth (63.2%) and signs around town (61.9%).

40.How do you usually find out about community events? (please check all that apply)	Percent
Word of mouth	63.2%
Signs around town	61.9%
Social Media (please specify):	41.2%
Weston Today	30.2%
Town Website	19.9%
Westport News	11.1%
Other (please specify):	16.3%
Norwalk Hour	3.2%
Community Access TV (Channel 78, 79)	3.1%
Stamford Advocate	0.7%

20.Do you feel a sense of community living in Weston?



n=2,369

SENSE OF COMMUNITY

The respondents were asked if they felt a sense of community living in Weston. The response categories for this question were: yes, all of the time; yes, sometimes; might or might not; no, rarely, and no, never. Most residents do feel a sense of community, with 67.7% selecting “Yes.” (Chart 20). Only 2.2% of respondents “Never” feel a sense of community.

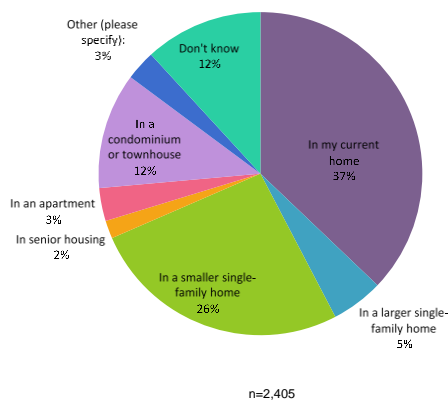
LAND USE PRIORITIES

The survey included several questions examining what Weston’s land use priorities should be over the next several years (Table 9). The majority of respondents agree Weston maintains the right amount of large, single family homes (78.1%), with about half of respondents feeling the same when it comes to small, single family homes. The greatest area of need is for senior housing (51.9% disagree).

9. Do you agree or disagree that Weston has the right amount of the following housing types:	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
Large, single-family homes	59.4%	18.7%	14.6%	5.1%	2.2%
Small, single-family homes	26.2%	26.4%	19.5%	19.2%	8.7%
Affordable housing (not age restricted)	20.1%	11.4%	26.2%	19.9%	22.4%
Affordable senior housing (age restricted)	13.3%	6.4%	28.4%	19.8%	32.1%
Senior housing of any type	12.7%	6.7%	28.6%	20.6%	31.3%

In 10 years’ time, most respondents see themselves living in their current home (37.1%) or downsizing to a smaller single-family home (26.1%) (Chart 12). Very few see themselves living in senior housing (1.8%), which contrasts with respondents’ belief that we have too little.

12. What type of housing do you see yourself living in 10 years from now?

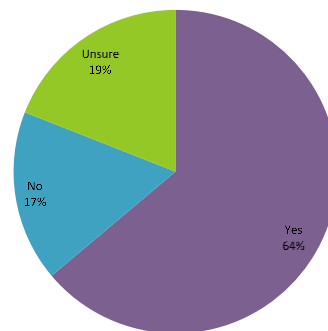


Respondents feel that the town’s highest priority should be to retain existing businesses in Town Center (92.7% high/medium priority), followed by expanding businesses in Town Center (73.2%) (Table 36). There is also high desire to make Weston more bicycle and pedestrian friendly (76.3%). There is little appetite for the town to either purchase more open space (38.7%) or reduce the amount of open space already owned (36.7%).

36. What should be Weston's land use priorities over the next 10 years?	High Priority	Medium Priority	Low Priority	Not a Priority
Retain businesses in Weston Center	68.2%	24.5%	4.5%	2.7%
Expand businesses in Weston Center	46.7%	26.5%	15.4%	11.4%
Make the Town more bicycle and pedestrian friendly	45.8%	30.5%	15.1%	8.6%
Preserve historic buildings and properties	33.3%	39.7%	18.5%	8.4%
Preserve currently undeveloped land owned by the Town for open space	33.5%	31.0%	21.3%	14.2%
Provide more housing options for seniors	26.2%	34.3%	22.8%	16.7%
Provide more housing options for young professionals	22.4%	31.7%	26.1%	19.8%
Provide more housing options for families with children	19.2%	29.8%	26.7%	24.3%
Purchase more Town-owned undeveloped land for open space	15.6%	23.1%	30.2%	31.1%
Reduce Town-owned undeveloped open space	13.6%	23.1%	27.3%	35.9%

When asked, most respondents (63.8%) would support a town ordinance to reduce blight (Chart 37).

37. Would you support a Town ordinance that prohibits privately owned real estate from being in a state of disrepair and from being considerably unkempt?



WESTON INFRASTRUCTURE

Respondents were asked to comment on Weston’s transportation infrastructure (Table 35). Top areas of need include sidewalks (66.9%) and bike lanes (64.4%). Tracking with the general feedback about Weston Center, about half of residents believe traffic is a concern in town center. However, very few respondents believe traffic is a concern in their own neighborhoods (76.4% neutral or disagree).

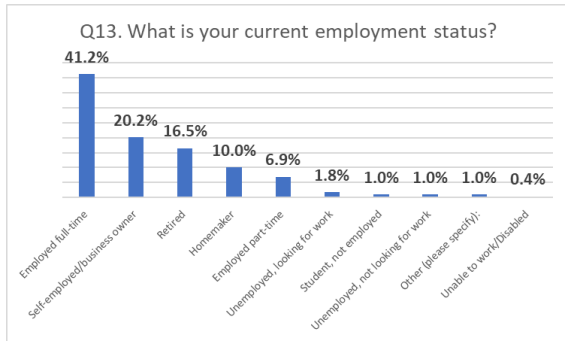
35. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about Weston's transportation infrastructure:

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
Weston needs more sidewalks	41.6%	25.3%	14.0%	7.7%	11.3%
Weston needs more bike trails/bike lanes	34.7%	29.7%	21.5%	8.1%	6.1%
Traffic is a concern in the Weston Center area	16.1%	34.2%	29.7%	13.3%	6.8%
Traffic is a concern on School Road	15.8%	27.0%	39.1%	12.2%	5.9%
Traffic is a concern on Route 57 (Weston Road)	15.6%	32.5%	30.5%	13.9%	7.5%
Traffic is a concern on Route 53 (Newton Turnpike)	11.8%	23.3%	40.6%	16.5%	7.8%
Traffic is a concern in my neighborhood	10.2%	13.0%	22.4%	21.0%	33.4%

n=2,174

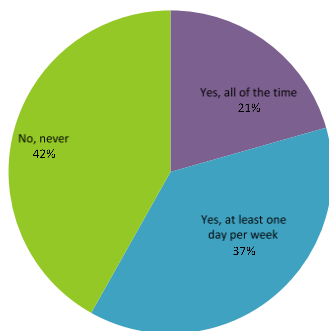
WORKING IN WESTON

We asked respondents about the experience of working in Weston through a series of six questions. Less than half of respondents are employed full time (41.2%); 1 in 5 are self-employed (20.2%), and a similar percentage (16.5%) are retired. (Chart 13). Very few respondents are unemployed and looking for work (1.8%).

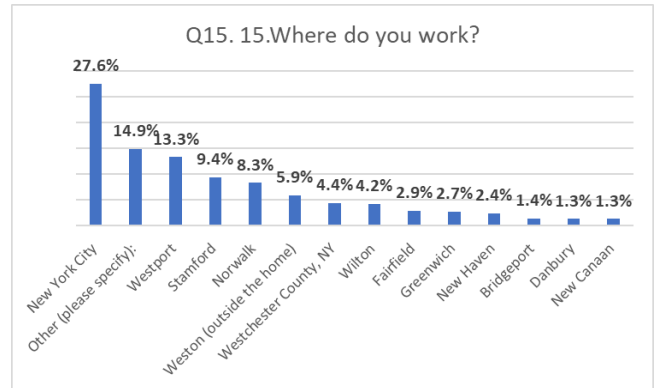


Of the working respondents, ~1 in 5 work from home full time (20.6%) (Chart 14). 2 in 5 are full time commuters (41.9%), and the remainder split their time between home and the office (37.6%). (Chart 14)

14. Do you currently work from home?

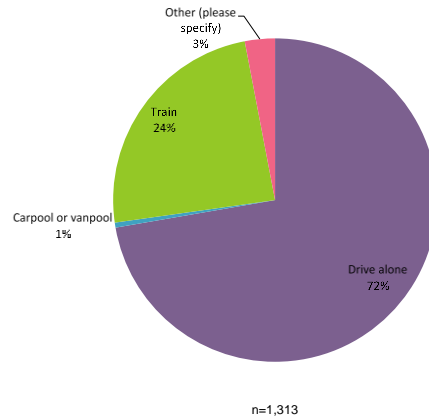


The largest percentage of respondents who work outside the home commute to New York City (27.6%), followed by "other" (14.9%, largely includes respondents who travel between multiple cities) and Westport (13.3%) (Chart 15). All other cities support less than 10% of Weston commuters.



The majority of respondents (72.2%) commute to work by car, with an additional 24.2% using the train (Chart 16). Very few (less than 1%) carpool or vanpool.

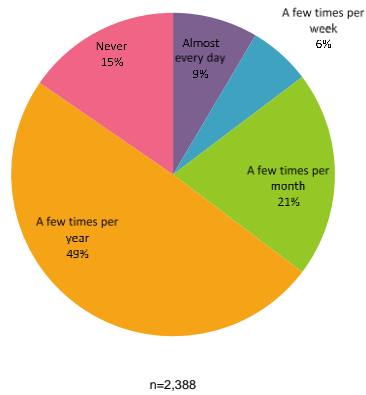
16. What is your primary mode of travel to work?



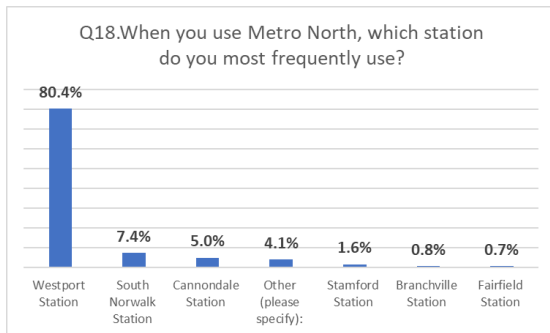
METRO NORTH

Less than 10% of respondents ride Metro North almost every day, outpacing those who “never” ride the train (15.4%) (Chart 17). Half of respondents (49.3%) ride Metro North a few times a year.

17.How often do you use Metro North?



Westport is by far the most frequently used Metro North station (80.4%) (Chart 18).



ASSETS AND CHALLENGES

Two open-ended question asked respondents what they feel are the Town of Weston’s greatest assets and challenges. (Charts 38 & 39).

The responses show that respondents overwhelmingly feel the schools are Weston’s greatest asset, with 2-acre zoning in second place.

In terms of challenges, high taxes ranked number one, with declining home values second.

38. In your opinion, what are Weston's three greatest assets?



39. In your opinion, what are the three greatest challenges facing Weston over the next 10 years?



FINANCIAL CONCERNS

Finances and taxes do appear to be top of mind for many respondents (Table 19). Only 25.0% of respondents believe the taxes in Weston are fair and reasonable, with 74.5% agreeing that the taxes make it difficult to afford living in Weston. Cost of living generally is a concern, with over half of respondents (55.3%) agreeing that finances are a constant concern.

19. How much do you agree or disagree that:

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
The taxes in Weston make it difficult to afford living here	40.2%	34.3%	13.8%	7.6%	4.0%
Finances are a constant concern for my household	23.5%	29.2%	23.1%	13.2%	11.0%
The taxes in Weston are fair and reasonable	4.1%	21.9%	15.7%	28.8%	29.5%

n=2,375

Appendix C: Town Center Plan

WESTON TOWN CENTER MASTER PLAN

WESTON, CONNECTICUT





North Bound Gateway into Weston Center



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INTRODUCTION

Milone & MacBroom Inc. (MMI) is preparing a 2020 Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) for the Town of Weston, Connecticut. As a part of this process, the project team was charged to give in-depth consideration to and provide recommendations for enhancing Weston Town Center, approximately 72 acres around the intersection of Norfield Road (CT-53) and Weston Road (CT-57).

This area was featured prominently in the 2010 POCD. During that POCD process, it was clear that residents were interested in more commercial development in town, but only in the immediate vicinity of the existing Shopping Center. According to the 2010 POCD, *“Support for additional commercial development both in the public and on the Committee, stems from the desire for additional services and places to gather as a community.”* Over the course of the current planning process, similar desires were expressed and elaborated upon.

Unlike many traditional New England communities, Weston lacks a town green or town center that would have historically functioned as the hub for civic, commercial, and community activity. Through the Town Survey and the outreach efforts of MMI, it became clear that the vast majority of residents want a location to serve these functions. It is the intent of this report to provide actionable recommendations for achieving a shared vision for this area, which serves all current and future residents.

The Weston Town Center Master Plan is a road map that the Town of Weston can follow to achieve the Community’s collective vision for a Town Center. The Weston Town Center Plan has two components: the Preferred Conceptual Plan and Implementation Recommendations. This Plan is aspirational in nature and depicts the overall vision for the Town Center. It shows the layout of sidewalks, buildings, green spaces, parking areas, and public amenities and reflects what the Town Center strives to be. It is important to keep in mind that the Town Center Plan is conceptual in nature and that actual development may not look exactly like what is depicted on the Plan. Development will occur over time, and therefore, the Plan needs to be flexible so that it can adapt to unknown future economic conditions, consumer preferences, technological capabilities, and demographic characteristics as well as the unique features of each development site. However, it is important that the underlying guiding principles of the Town are adhered to as development occurs over time. The Implementation Recommendations are a road map that outlines the steps that are needed to achieve the vision depicted in the Plan.



Weston Town Center Master Plan Study Area



CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT

The area considered in this assessment concerns 17 parcels on approximately 72 acres of land surrounding the intersection of Norfield Road (CT-53) and Weston Road (CT-57). 6.6 acres of this area are zoned for commercial use and are the only lands zoned for commercial use in all of Weston. All other land is zoned for residences and agricultural uses with a minimum lot size of 2 acres. In addition to commercial uses, the Town Center area includes municipal functions (Town offices), community spaces (the public Library, Hurlbutt Elementary School, the Senior Center, playing fields, and churches), as well as residences and offices, which are on lots of less than one acre.

The Town Center sits on the western side of RT 57, near the border with Wilton, and slightly south toward the border with Westport. While not the geographic center, this area has been the historical and cultural heart of Weston since its founding, anchored by the Norfield Congregational Church. It should also be noted that the southern portion of the study area partially overlaps with the Norfield Historic District.

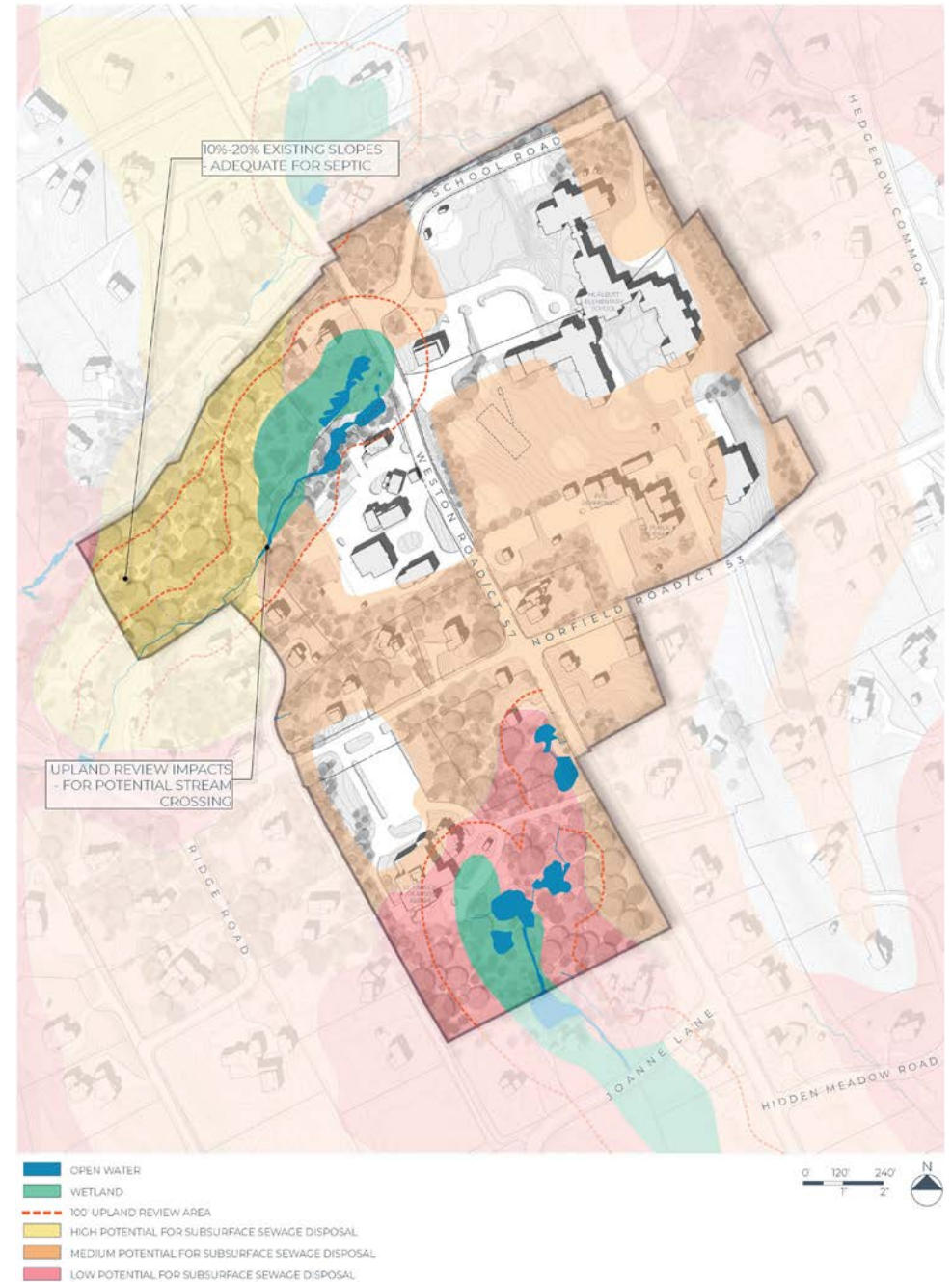
Site Conditions

The topography of Town Center is mostly level. The area contains a small, unnamed watercourse and several wetlands that, combined with their respective upland review areas, make a large portion of the area unsuitable for intensive development. Weston does not have public water or sewer in this area, further limiting how much development the area can sustain. However, most of the Town Center has suitable soil types for septic systems.

Transportation

Vehicular access to the Town Center is provided by the two main thoroughfares. Average daily traffic counts from the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT) estimate that 12,100 vehicles per day traverse Weston Road/RT 57 near the Shopping Center. Currently there are circulation, access management, and parking issues throughout the area and especially in the Shopping Center.

Taking into account the local roadway character, which includes winding country-esque roads, MMI developed a local bicycle level of service analysis. High levels of service can be found on School Road, but extremely low levels of service can be found on Weston Road and on other roads in and around the Town Center.



Site Conditions



CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT

Walking conditions are also less than ideal with a disconnected sidewalk network and a lack of safe street crossings.

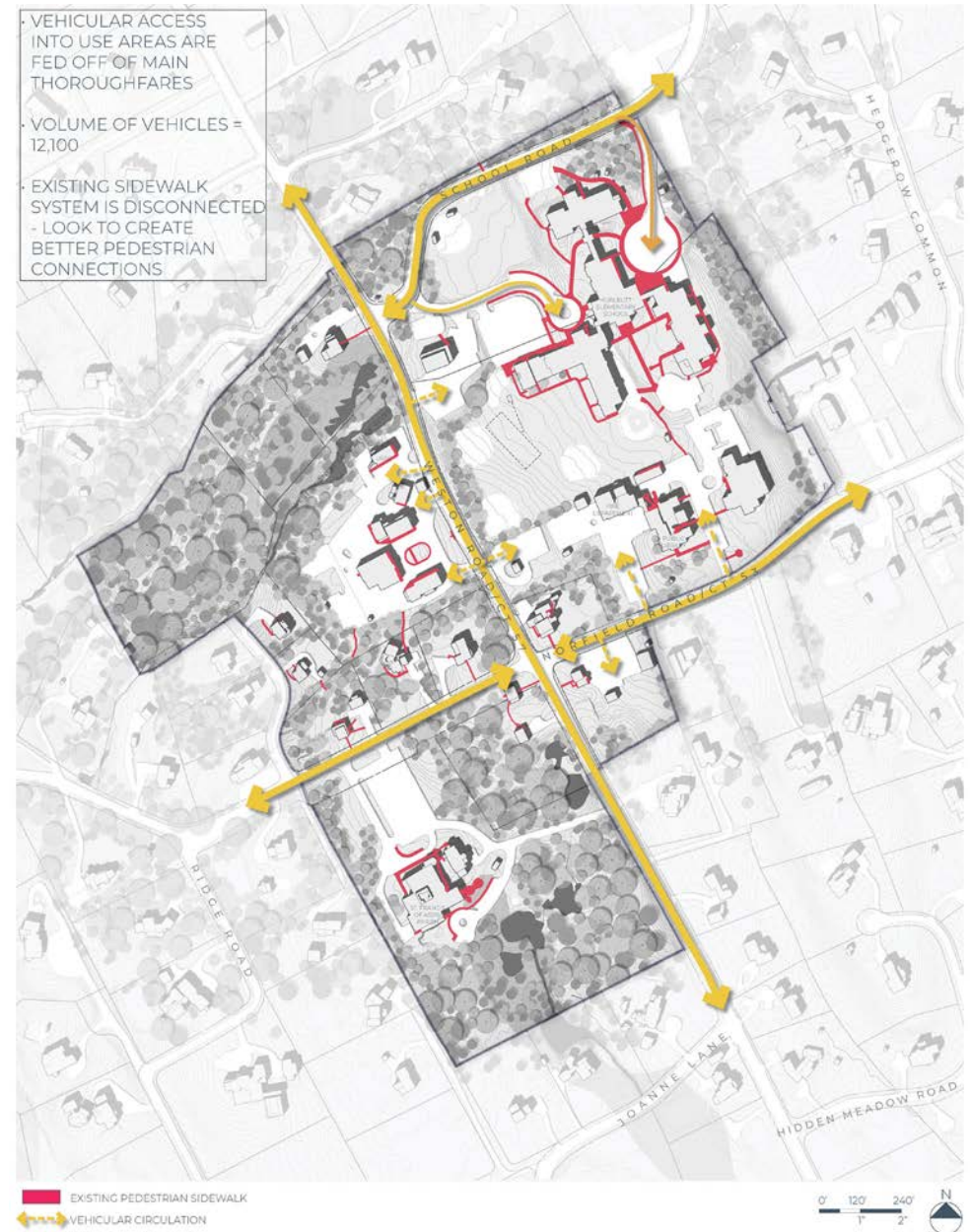
Transportation issues in the Town Center have been well documented. In 2012, the intersection of Weston Road and School Road was studied by the WESTCOG, regional planning agency. In 2016, CTDOT conducted a Town Center Road Safety Audit (RSA) of the existing conditions of walking and biking routes, and identified the issues that discourage or prevent safe walking and biking. These two documents established specific areas of concerns and needs for the Town Center area.

Building upon the recent planning efforts and the RSA, Weston pursued and was recently awarded grant funding to improve transportation issues from the Local Transportation Capital Improvement Program (LOTICIP) and the Connecticut Community Connectivity Grant Program (CCCGP). The projects funded by these grants aim to construct a pedestrian network, as well as provide traffic relief on Weston Road at the entrance to School Road by improving that intersection. This entails creating a 150-foot right-turn lane on the north bound side of Weston Road's approach to School Road, building a "bump out" on the south bound side to relieve congestion, and replacing the traffic light and improving its timing.

The Town is also in the process of pursuing additional grants and funding opportunities such as the Transportation Alternatives (TA) Set-Aside Grant for pedestrian improvements.

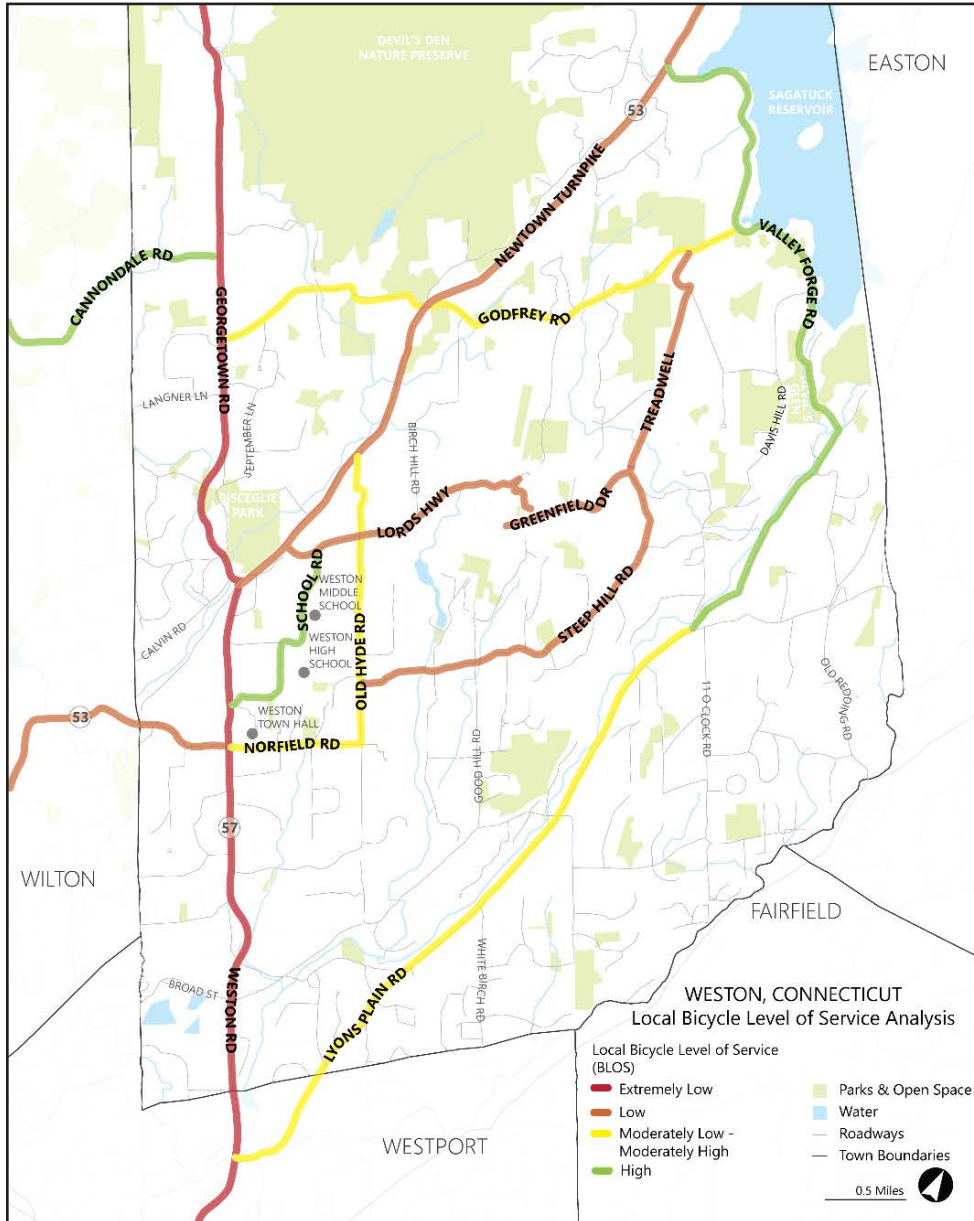
Projects on the Horizon

Several projects may further shape the Town Center in the near future. The Senior Center was recently studied for anticipated future needs, which may entail an expansion and the Library is considering an addition that would include a makerspace. The Beautification Committee is redesigning the landscape in front of the Town Hall to create a Town Green, and Veterans Memorial. EMS facilities are as well being considered for improvements. Phase 1a of the Weston Schools Master Plan was recently completed. The Board of Education is now evaluating alignment options for three schools as part of the next phase. These projects indicate growth and investment in Weston and further highlight the importance of the Town Center area.



Vehicle & Pedestrian Circulation

CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT



Pedestrian Mid-block Crossing on RT 57 into the Shopping Center



Accessible Drop Ramp without Sidewalk Connection at the Corner of RT 57 and Norfield Road

CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT



Horizontal & Vertical Road Alignments and a Lack of Roadway Shoulder Limit Safe Bicycle Activity



Non-handicap Accessible Access to Destinations in the Town Center

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

To create a vision for the Town Center, the project team engaged in an iterative planning process of public engagement. The team also met with property owners and key stakeholders in the Town Center area.

Town Survey

Initiating this process, the Town of Weston Survey Committee created and launched a town-wide survey, which was open from November to December of 2018. The online survey gauged the opinions of over 2,500 respondents on a wide range of issues relevant for the future of the Town. From the survey, the importance of and opportunities within the Town Center were underscored. Respondents' highest land use priority was Town Center, especially as it relates to retaining current and attracting new businesses. Approximately 70% of respondents felt that the area needs more amenities and needs to be more attractive and walkable.

Making Weston more bicycle and pedestrian friendly was the second highest land use priority. 71% of respondents felt there were too few sidewalks and over 50% felt there were too few biking trails. Sidewalks and bike lanes were identified as the top infrastructure needs in town. Crossing Weston Road was also a major concern for respondents. The results of the survey guided the project team as they created conceptual plans.

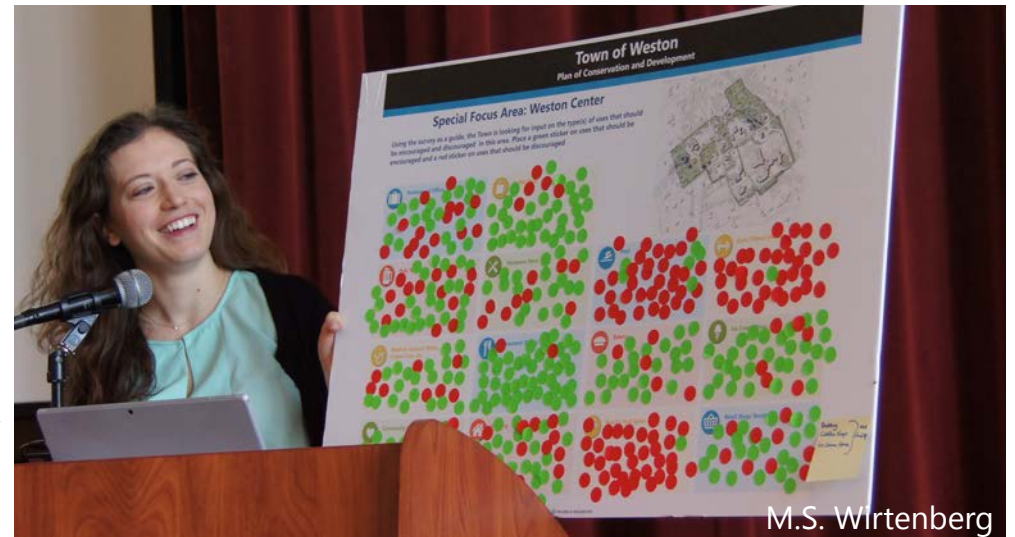
Use Areas

The project team conducted a public Discovery Session workshop in April 2019, attended by over 120 town residents. An online version of the workshop was also available for those who could not make it to the in-person workshop. The focus of this workshop was to determine what residents would like to see in the opportunity areas within the Town Center, as well as expound on traffic and pedestrian issues identified in the Town Survey.

Workshop participants agreed that food service businesses, small medical offices, and a community center are desirable for the Town Center. Participants were split in their opinions of other retail, housing, and professional offices. Personal services like gyms and beauty salons, as well as a town pool were not desired within the Town Center. However, the town pool may warrant some discussion as a part of the broader POCD process. When discussing transportation, participants brought forward many of the themes from the Town Survey. They

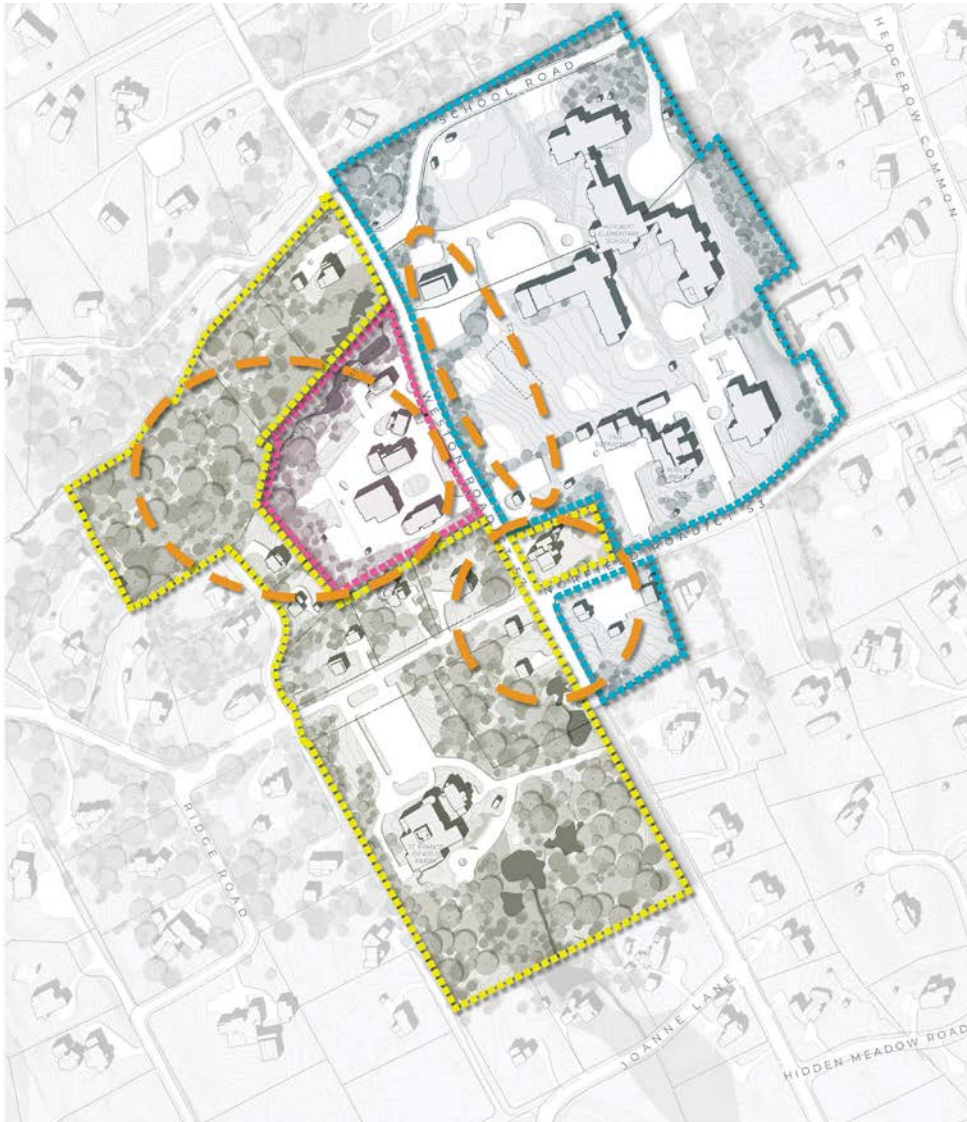


M.S. Wirtenberg



M.S. Wirtenberg

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROCESS



- RESIDENTIAL
- COMMERCIAL
- MUNICIPAL
- OPPORTUNITY AREAS

Opportunity Areas

agreed that improving pedestrian access to the Town Center, especially crossing Weston Road, was important. They also had concerns regarding the traffic flow on School Road and navigating through the Weston Shopping Center. Participants nearly all agreed that the school bus depot should be relocated outside of the Town Center.

The team presented three generalized conceptual use plans for consideration. Common elements that most participants agreed upon across the three plans were; adding more commercial space, in particular having four corners of commercial space around the intersection of Weston and Norfield Roads; creating placemaking gateways to the center; relocating the bus depot and using that land for a community space; preserving historic structures; and creating a sidewalk network.

When asked to write how they would like the Town Center to look in 10 years, participants repeated many of the same adjectives; beautiful, vibrant, quaint, charming, antique, heritage, bustling, and rural. It was in that spirit that the project team created the illustrative conceptual plans.



M.S. Wirtenberg



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

Welcome to Weston Town Center in 2029
Describe what you see:



WHAT A CHARMING TOWN CENTER. LOVED THE OUTDOOR CAFE, THE COMMON SPACE THAT ATTRACTS THE COMMUNITY.

Welcome to Weston Town Center in 2029
Describe what you see:



Small town feel that incorporates facilities that would attract both young and old. Ex. coffee shop good for homework, or for retired ppl. to talk w/ friends. A place like Wilton or Westport, you can go as a place to hang out but no specific purpose of going — you can just walk around and explore. A place to be rather than your home and don't have to spend all the time

Welcome to Weston Town Center in 2029
Describe what you see:



I just returned and I'm saddened to see the rail salon and Starbucks just like every other town with a strip mall. Weston failed to keep its charm.

Just kidding! What a quaint New England town, bristling with a great market, cafe and medical services. I think my family would like to vacation here and rent the B+B. Our financial health depends on us getting it right. Lets keep the charm in our town, while continuing to grow and offer residents services that we need + want.

Welcome to Weston Town Center in 2029
Describe what you see:



So happy to still be able to enjoy the peace & tranquility in the natural beauty of Weston while moving in the future 😊

Welcome to Weston Town Center in 2029
Describe what you see:



Great to see the vibrant town center Ooh and the sidewalks are even extended to Bisceglie Park so the kids grab a snack and go play in the park!

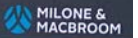
Welcome to Weston Town Center in 2029
Describe what you see:



A beautiful CT town center - quaint, with an antique feel, relating to our long town heritage. Chipboard store fronts, much like fishing villages in the area. Sidewalks connecting town center to town municipal areas, churches & schools. Truck parking designated in a special area. A few more shops and restaurants providing necessary services.

Conceptual Organizational Plan #3

Town of Weston
Plan of Conservation and Development



RELOCATION OF BUS DEPOT PROVIDES OPTION FOR COMMUNITY SPACE

Like moving School Rd gives Flexibility

NEW COMMERCIAL ALONG WESTON ROAD WITH SCHOOL SECURITY BUFFER

POTENTIAL INTERIOR PEDESTRIAN LINK

Like adding space - Restaurant - Popularity - Pedestrian - Urgent Care

Like green w/ corners if bus depot is being relocated

Love if for notes idea like shopping school

Like

Need outdoor place for people/birds to hang out

UNDER NEW SCHOOL ACCESS DRIVE

RESIDENTIAL OPTION TO TOWN CENTER NEW LIVING OPTIONS FOR SENIORS AND MILLENNIALS

NEW COMMERCIAL MIX WHILE ADDING AMIX OF USES

TRUCK AND PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIONS LINK USES AND CREATES A WALKING CIRCUIT THROUGH THE CENTER OF TOWN

COMMUNITY CENTER - coffee - ice cream - pizza - work space

RESIDENTIAL

COMMERCIAL

MUNICIPAL

GREENSPACE

Please Share Your Thoughts & Ideas
Place a Post-It Note with your suggested improvements

Welcome to Weston Town Center in 2029
Describe what you see:



Wow, I love what has happened to Weston. The expanded area by the union barn + ball fields, cobblestone street, town green. What a wonderful town it's become. More to offer but still keeping Weston's rural charm.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

Illustrative Concepts

In May 2019, the project team presented two example concepts of how the Town Center could develop if different standards and strategies were employed. The intention was to build consensus about what the goal for the Town Center should be, and what kind of look and feel would unify the space. In this workshop, participants indicated their design preferences and discussed different configurations of buildings. They were also given the opportunity to do so online.

Common elements that the majority of participants agreed on were; parking should be away from the road, behind buildings; new buildings should be restricted to 2.5 stories; new buildings should be in the contemporary farmhouse style; pedestrian plaza spaces outside and between buildings linked together by walkways; and in prominent and visible locations the new streetscape should include high-end finishes that reflect the historic nature of the town.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROCESS



Contemporary Farmhouse



2.5 stories



Contemporary Light Poles



Stone Hardscape



Naturalized Landscaping



Contemporary Planters



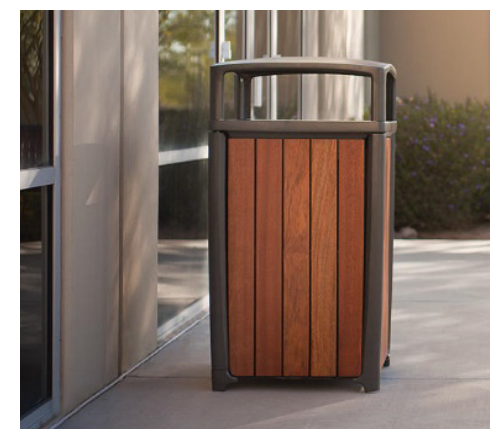
Cobblestone Crosswalk



Seating in front of building along sidewalk
(building setback from sidewalk)



Contemporary Benches



Contemporary Receptacles



PREFERRED CONCEPT

Through the feedback received from stakeholders, the Town Survey, and the workshops, it was clear that the community is calling for a pedestrian-focused center that caters to residents and fills critical gaps in services and resources. The project team developed a preferred concept for the Town Center. This concept takes the elements for which participants found consensus and imagines what the Town Center would like look if these elements were fully implemented. The Preferred Concept Plan revolves around creating a community-centered place that balances the Town's civic and community uses; with well-designed parks and green spaces balancing the new mixed-use commercial spaces. An improved pedestrian network of sidewalks will be created to connect residents not only within the Town Center but also beyond.

Community & Civic Space

The Preferred Concept includes new and expanded spaces for community and civic functions. The Onion Barn is relocated to Norfield Road to create a gateway statement (#8). The Onion Barn's current location then becomes the location of a new 2-story municipal or commercial building (#10). Associated parking has been added. The bus depot is converted from its current use to a community/art center with an outdoor event space (#14). Dedicated parking has been added. The function of the bus depot is moved to another location away from the Town Center.

Green Spaces & Placemaking

Along the east side of Weston Road, a "central park" has been created that will connect the community/art center to the Town Hall and Shopping Center (#13). A masonry wall and landscaping has been installed to separate the public park from the school. This park not only provides pedestrian connections, but also allows many opportunities to exhibit outdoor sculpture and host community events. At the southern end of the park there is a loop for pick up/drop off for events or that can be used as dedicated food truck parking to further activate the space (#15). In addition to the public greenspace, the Preferred Concept includes opportunities for plazas and outdoor dining associated with new businesses and uses. These areas provide additional opportunities for people to enjoy the rural landscape. Throughout the Town Center there will be landscape features that lend to the sense of place. Perhaps the most visible of these features is the gateway elements on either end of Weston Road (#3). These not only identify Town Center but also invite people to walk in the heart of the community.

Expanded Commercial Uses

New commercial space has been expanded to new properties in the Preferred Concept. The three historic colonial homes around the four corners are converted to commercial space (#4, 7, 9). On the larger lots, small buildings are added as infill and have a commercial use (#4, 7). Dedicated parking is provided on each lot. On the northwest corner, the existing home has been razed, and 11,000 square feet of new commercial building has been constructed (#5). Along with this new construction and the infill on the other three corners, an additional 32,500 square feet of new commercial area has been constructed around the four corners. The Preferred Concept also envisions the Weston Shopping Center reconfigured to integrate better with Weston Road (#1). The Concept includes six 2-story buildings with approximately 26,000 square feet of commercial space. The second stories host offices and residences. Along with the buildings, the parking has been reorganized. Interior sidewalks in the Shopping Center connect the outdoor plazas to the sculpture park across Weston Road. It is estimated that if partially or fully implemented, the Preferred Concept could provide between 30,000 and 60,000 square feet of additional commercial space.

Pedestrian Amenities

In addition to an improved streetscape, the Preferred Concept includes many improvements to the pedestrian experience. At both intersections in the Town Center, decorative crosswalks with intersection streetprint have been installed (#3). By making the intersections visually distinct from the roadway, motorist will more easily recognize them as pedestrian crossings and will be more aware of people moving through the spaces. Weston Road is refreshed with new sidewalks, street trees, and lighting (#2). "Sharrows" have been painted on the roadway to warn motorists to be aware of bicyclists. The existing crossing has been improved and includes plazas at either end. The eastern plaza connects to the open lawn and linear sculpture park along Weston Road (#13). The new central park links schools and the Senior Center with the Town Center core. On the park's eastern edge there is a 2-foot masonry wall or fence with a vegetative buffer, separating the school from the park.



PREFERRED CONCEPT



- 1 RECONFIGURATION OF TOWN SHOPPING CENTER TO INCLUDE (5) TWO-STORY BUILDINGS WITH APPROX. 26,150 SF OF COMMERCIAL SPACE. 2ND STORY CAN ACCOMMODATE RESIDENTIAL OR OFFICE. INTERIOR SIDEWALKS CONNECT OUTDOOR PLAZAS TO THE SCULPTURE PARK ACROSS WESTON ROAD
- 2 MAINTAIN THE EXISTING CROSSING AND INCLUDE DESTINATION PLAZAS. PROVIDE PAINTED "SHARROWS" ALONG WESTON ROAD AND CONSTRUCT NEW SIDEWALKS AND INSTALL STREET TREES AND LIGHTING
- 3 DECORATIVE CROSSWALKS AND INTERSECTION STREET PRINT
- 4 CONVERT EXISTING COLONIAL HOME INTO COMMERCIAL SPACE AND CONSTRUCT (3) NEW SMALL COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS OF APPROX. 14,000 SF
- 5 REMOVE EXISTING HOME AND CONSTRUCT A SERIES OF (3) INTERCONNECTED BUILDINGS OF APPROX. 11,000 SF
- 6 MAINTAIN OVERFLOW PARKING ON CHURCH SITE AND CONSTRUCT NEW SIDEWALKS ALONG NORFIELD ROAD THAT CONNECT TO TOWN AMENITIES
- 7 CONVERT EXISTING COLONIAL HOME INTO COMMERCIAL SPACE AND ADD (3) NEW BUILDINGS OF APPROX. 7,500 SF. CONSIDER OFFICE OR RESIDENTIAL ON 2ND FLOOR AND PROVIDE DEDICATED PARKING
- 8 POTENTIAL LOCATION FOR RELOCATED ONION BARN AS A GATEWAY STATEMENT
- 9 CONVERT EXISTING COLONIAL HOME INTO COMMERCIAL SPACE WITH DEDICATED PARKING
- 10 RELOCATE ONION BARN AND CONSTRUCT (2) TWO-STORY MUNICIPAL OR COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS (10,300 SF) AND ADD DEDICATED PARKING
- 11 EXPAND EXISTING TOWN HALL PARKING LOT
- 12 FUTURE MEMORIAL WALK/ TOWN GREEN PROJECT
- 13 OPEN LAWN, LINEAR SCULPTURE PARK LINKS THE SCHOOLS AND SENIOR CENTER TO THE TOWN CENTER CORE. INSTALL 4' HT. MASONRY WALL OR FENCE, A VEGETATIVE BUFFER, SCULPTURES AND LANDSCAPING ALONG PATHWAYS
- 14 CONVERT BUS DEPOT BUILDING INTO A COMMUNITY/ ART CENTER WITH ASSOCIATED PARKING AND OUTDOOR EVENT SPACE AND RELOCATE BUS DEPOT FACILITY
- 15 DEDICATED PICK-UP/ DROP OFF AREA - DOUBLES AS FOOD TRUCK PARKING AREA



PREFERRED CONCEPT



The Intersection of Norfield & Weston Roads Imagined

RECOMMENDATIONS

Car Traffic & Parking

Along with the parking constructed for the new commercial, community, and civic buildings, the Preferred Concept doubles the size of the parking lot for Town Hall (#11). Attached to the Town Hall parking area, a dedicated pick-up/drop-off loop has been added (#15). This area can also serve as food truck parking to support community events in the new park. The Preferred Concept also includes overflow parking at both churches with sidewalks connecting to Town Center (#6). The Concept also illustrates the anticipated School Road intersection improvements from the LOTCIP grant.



Recommendations

To enable positive change to occur the Town Center, Town leadership can employ several strategies and initiatives to spark private and public projects.

Zoning Tools

Zoning refers to laws and ordinances that regulate land use in a given jurisdiction. It can govern the allowable use of land, regulate lots and structures by dimensions, and influence and guide development decisions. Changes to the existing zoning regulations are incumbent upon the Weston Planning and Zoning Commission to vet and adopt. The zoning tools described here are presented as a starting point for these discussions.

Traditional Zoning

Traditional Zoning focuses on the separation of land-use types, permissible property uses, and the control of development intensity through numerical parameters (e.g., Floor Area Ratio, dwellings per acre, height limits, setbacks, parking ratios, etc.). Development quality, scale, and uses allowed in a given area are dependent on a community's planning objectives which are translated through local land use regulations including zoning, building, and public infrastructure standards. Some uses can be permitted "as of right," meaning they require no special review, while others can be designated as "conditional" uses that require a public hearing in which special conditions may be created to address a project's unique impacts.

Design Guidelines

Design guidelines may be used to supplement traditional zoning but are typically advisory. Under design guidelines, new projects have the responsibility to sensitively respond to their context and existing patterns of development while being of their moment. They are not intended to prescribe solutions or limit creativity, but rather to establish a flexible aesthetic framework that respects the town's past, addresses its present needs, and encourages innovation in the future.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Design guidelines can provide a series of recommendations for topics including but not limited to:

- Architecture
- Landscaping
- Materials
- Open Space
- Sense of Place
- Site Development
- Sustainability

With traditional zoning, design guidelines define the goals and principles for a location. As projects are implemented with design guidelines, the identity of space will be reinforced.

Village District

State law allows municipalities to establish village districts. Village district regulations can be integrated into the existing zoning regulations. Village districts enable greater local control over the design and construction, or rehabilitation of buildings than traditional zoning alone. It provides an extra layer of control for local zoning commissions to protect the distinctive character, landscape, and historic structures within the district.

A village district is established through an amendment to zoning regulations. It requires that all applications for new construction and substantial reconstruction in the district that are visible from the road must undergo architectural review. An architect or architectural firm, contracted by the commission and designated as its consultant for the application, must conduct the reviews and submit their recommendations to the commission within 35 days after the commission receives the application. The consultant's report must be entered into the public hearing record and the commission must consider it in making its decision. Traditional zoning does not usually incorporate such reviews.

If the district is created, the construction of new buildings and demolition of existing buildings require a certificate of appropriateness from the commission, as does the alteration of exterior architectural features of existing buildings. State law specifies the factors the commission must and may consider in making its decision.

If a municipality establishes a village district, the new regulations must provide that:

1. Proposed buildings and modifications to existing buildings be harmonious with their surroundings and their terrain, and to the use, scale, and architecture of nearby buildings to which they are functionally or visually related
2. Spaces and structures visible from the road be designed to enhance the visual amenities in the area around the proposed building or modification
3. The characteristics of residential or commercial property, such as its color and materials, be evaluated for their compatibility with the local architectural motif, and the maintenance of views, historic buildings, monuments, and landscaping
4. Removal of or disruption to historic, traditional, or significant structures or architectural elements be minimized

Under State law, all development in the district must be designed to meet various compatibility objectives. Among other things, the arrangement and orientation of any proposed building or site improvement must be like those in the immediate neighborhood; and exterior signs, lighting, and accessory structures must support a uniform architectural theme and present a harmonious relationship to the neighborhood. However, it does not guarantee that construction and alterations in the district will be historically accurate.

A village district can also include the maintenance of public views; the design, paving materials, and placement of public roads; and other elements the commission considers appropriate to maintain and protect the district's character. Village district regulations can cover open spaces as well as buildings.

Several municipalities have established village districts, including Chester, East Haddam, Madison, and Ridgefield, just to name a few.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Zoning Recommendations

Through the public outreach process, it is clear that many Weston residents are in favor of expanding commercial zoning within the Town Center area and revising the existing commercial zoning regulations. It is understood that the Planning and Zoning Commission will undergo further study and public discussion on zoning implementation. The recommendations below should be viewed as a starting point for those discussions.

Configuration

All the properties abutting Weston Road from the intersection of School Road to the intersection of Norfield Road should be zoned as commercial. The properties on the four corners of the intersection of Weston Road and Norfield Road should also be zoned commercial.

To encourage a lively pedestrian environment, it is recommended that the zoning stipulates the ground floor of buildings will be used for commercial uses, like food service and retail, while the upper floor may be used for office or residential uses. The arrangement will also help create a concentration of employers, customers, and residents in the Town center, further improving housing options and improving the market feasibility of development.

Participants in the workshops supported having outdoor spaces for commercial use between the sidewalk and the building. To achieve this, it is recommended that the Town Center zoning encourage a minimum setback of 10 feet and maximum setback of 20 feet.

Due to Weston's limited transit options, parking will play an important role in the success of the Town Center. One of the key elements of this Master Plan is to diffuse parking and create an environment that encourages people to walk to and from points of interest and maintains the small-town rural character that Weston desires. While parking will be essential, large parking lots detract from the Town Center's sense of place. To maintain this balance, shared parking agreements between property owners should be encouraged, especially with properties with large lots and limited hours of operation, like the two nearby churches.

The Planning and Zoning Commission should give consideration for shared parking provision, which is a tool through which adjacent properties share their parking lots and reduce the number of parking spaces that each would provide on their individual properties. Shared parking is not a new concept. In fact, it has been used extensively in neighborhood commercial zones, town centers, and downtowns for decades. Shared parking is particularly effective when adjacent land uses have different peak hours of parking demand such as when municipal uses overlap with evening restaurant uses. The two main approaches to shared parking are contractual agreements between adjacent uses and through the creation of a parking management district.

Another way to help preserve and protect the small-town character is by regulating the placement of parking. By not only diffusing parking but also placing it behind buildings, the appearance of a small-town main street is enhanced. The zoning regulations should stipulate that parking must be placed behind and to the rear of buildings.

Scale

To maintain Weston's rural charm as it develops, the scale of development must be carefully considered. It is recommended that the following restrictions be included in the zoning for new commercial uses:

- Individual buildings may not exceed 11,000 square feet in area.
- All buildings on a parcel may not exceed 25% coverage of their respective parcel.
- Buildings may not exceed 2.5 stories in height.

Uses

As a starting point, it is recommended that zoning allows for the uses that were positively received in the public outreach sessions, such as food service uses, namely restaurants and dining, coffee shops, bakeries, ice cream shops, as well as pubs and bars. Medical offices and community spaces were also desired for the Town Center. Participants were split on their desire for retail, housing, and professional offices, however it is recommended that these uses are allowed in order to encourage a vibrant and diverse experience. We also recommend that outdoor seating for food service uses be allowed within the new zoning.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Implementation

In regard to the zoning tools listed above, it is recommended that Weston's commercial zoning is amended, and that design guidelines are adopted. Much of the function of a village district is accomplished through the historic district that covers the southern portion of the Town Center. In addition, a village district may be too restrictive, cumbersome, and at this time would be premature, limiting the aesthetic improvements to the Town Center. Once the Town Center is established, a village district may be more appropriate.

Municipal Development

While revising the zoning enables private enterprise to develop privately held properties, much of the Town Center area is under municipal control. This allows for much of the Town Center to move into the future without waiting for the mechanics of private investment.

Relocation of Municipal Services

Relocating and reorganizing some municipal services will create opportunities for more engaging uses in this area. There is overwhelming support for moving the bus depot from Town Center. The Town should assess the property to determine the appropriateness and cost associated with the reuse of this structure as a community space. The Town should conduct a facility condition assessment that includes a Phase I ESA and a hazardous building materials assessment in order to understand the cost and applications for reuse.

The Parks and Recreation Department currently occupies one of the four corners at the intersection of Weston and Norfield Roads. There is no advantage to that specific location for the Department, enabling it to be moved. Once the department is moved, the Town could sell the property for reuse. As departments are moved and spaces are reassessed, there is potential for some municipal functions currently in the Town Hall Annex to move into the Town Hall proper. Prior to the development of the east side of Weston Road as a community park with a sculpture walk, the current ballfields will have to be relocated. The Town should conduct a site selection analysis for additional areas in the community for the relocation of these fields.

Improve Pedestrian Environment

One strategy to fast track the implementation of the Town Center Master Plan is to focus on creating the pedestrian infrastructure to better connect pedestrians within the Town Center. To ensure a unified pedestrian environment, the Town will likely have to take the lead and improve these areas in Town Center. The recently received grant funding will jumpstart this process. The LOTCIP grant will address some of the traffic concerns on School Road, and along with the CCCGP will begin the construction of the sidewalk network. Following the Master Plan as a guide, the Town should continue to seek funding to improve pedestrian crossings and sidewalk connectivity. Coupled with the improved pedestrian environment, the Town should seek to implement unified wayfinding signage and gateway improvements to strengthen the sense of place.



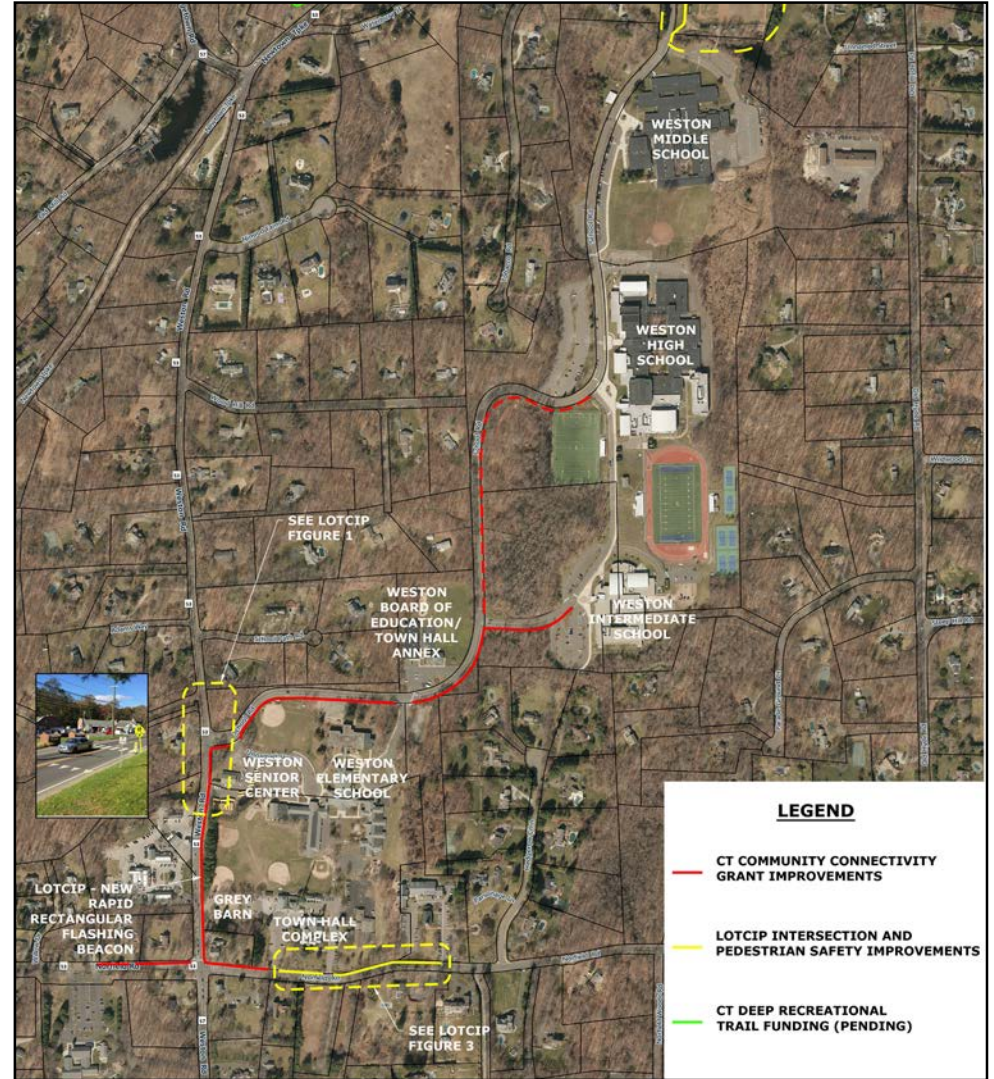
Lack of Sidewalks Leading to Crosswalk

RECOMMENDATIONS

Phases of Development

The Weston Town Center Master Plan envisions new development through renovation of existing buildings and new construction; however, as with any master plan, change occurs incrementally over an extended period of time due to market factors and the interest and willingness of property owners. Therefore, the plan was broken down into phases. The initial phase is likely to happen over the next 5 to 10 years, and the success of these projects will make the later development phase more viable. The phases of development also help organize and prioritize the Town's implementation efforts, site acquisition, assembly, and other tasks.

It is important to note that development may not occur sequentially as laid out in the Phasing Plan. Rather, the Phasing Plan is intended to direct the Town's focus in making the Master Plan come to fruition. As market conditions and other circumstances change, later-phased projects may be easier to implement than earlier-phased projects.



Grant Funded Sidewalk Improvements

IMPLEMENT FUNDED TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS

Phase I: Laying the Groundwork

Phase I of the Weston Town Center Master Plan is to complete ongoing and funded projects as well as prepare for future projects.

Maintain Momentum

Implement funded transportation projects (LOTICIP and CCCGP).

These projects will ease congestion on Weston Road and will begin the much-needed sidewalk network in the Town Center. The sidewalks depicted in the Preferred Concept expand upon the work that will be initiated by these two grants.

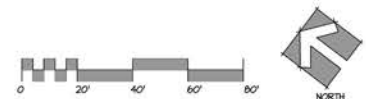


**LOTICIP INTERSECTION & PEDESTRIAN SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS
WESTON (ROUTE 57) &
SCHOOL ROAD INTERSECTION**

WESTON, CONNECTICUT NOVEMBER 2018



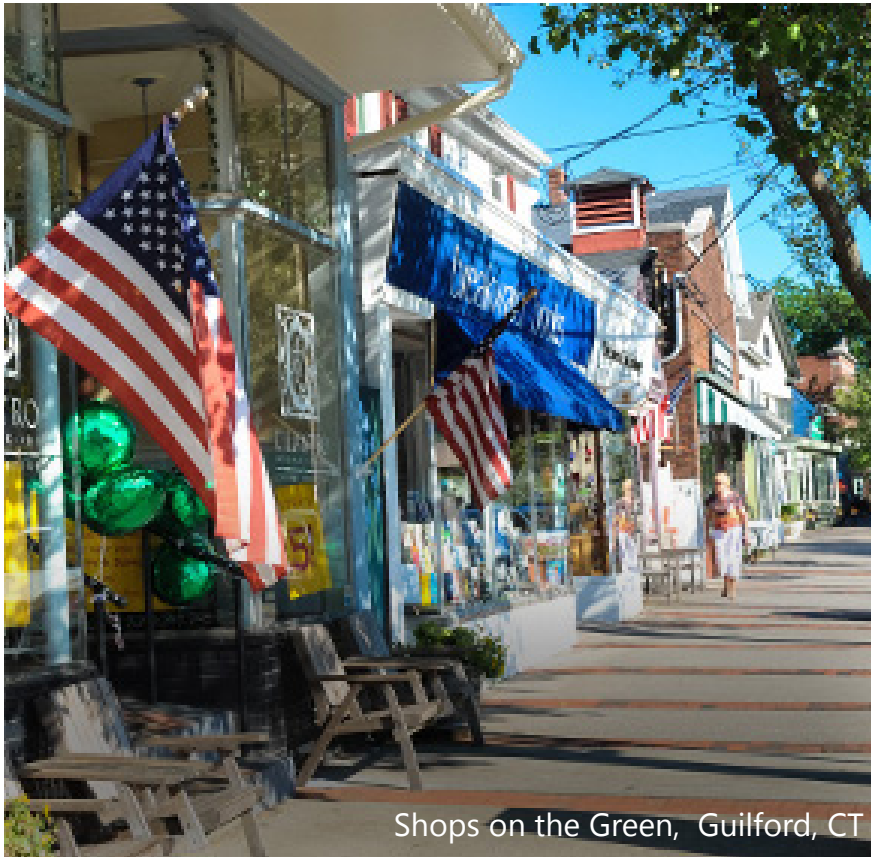
FIGURE 1



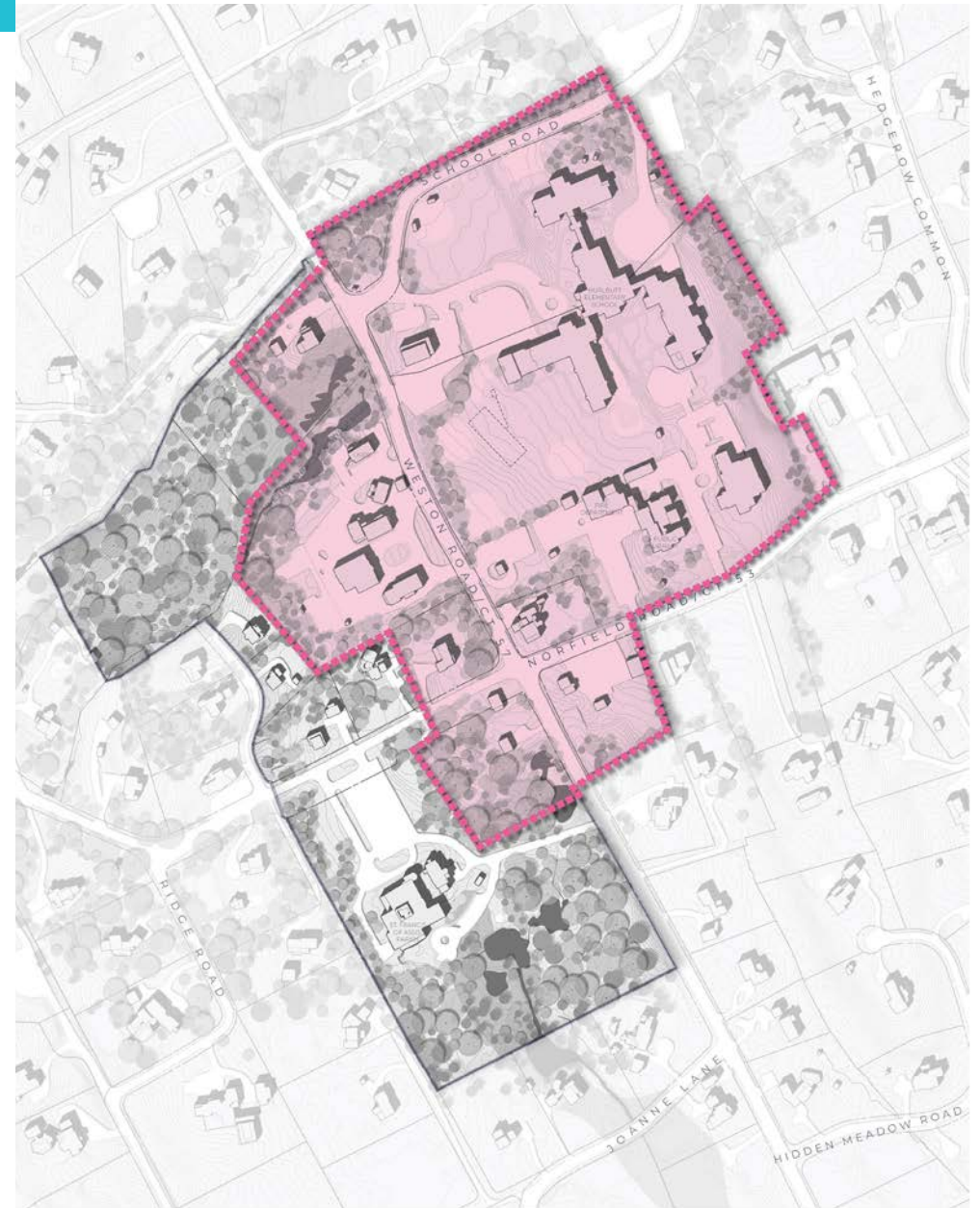
REVISE ZONING REGULATIONS

The Planning and Zoning Commission should work to create the Commercial Zoning District Map and revise Zoning Regulations.

Weston could follow the leads of many Connecticut towns and not only revise their zoning but also create design guidelines for the Town Center with assistance from the Historic District. Towns like Guilford, New Canaan, Old Saybrook, and Old Lyme have all worked to create such standards.



Shops on the Green, Guilford, CT



Proposed New Commercial Zoning District



COMPLETE MEMORIAL TOWN GREEN PROJECT

With the Beautification Committee, complete the design and construct the Memorial Town Green Project.

“Weston Town Green has been designed to be an enhanced civic space on Weston Town Hall’s front lawn. An elliptical path leads visitors to a new war memorial and memorial garden, a refurbished gazebo and new park benches. In addition to a hardy lawn replacement, an extensive planting program will feature a red, white and blue perennial garden, a pollinator meadow and a copse of red bud trees. Sponsored by the Town of Weston’s Beautification Committee and supported with private donations, the Town Green has been designed as a gift to the town by Thiel Architecture + Design.” – Nancy Thiel

a pollinator meadow and a copse of red bud trees. Sponsored by the Town of Weston’s Beautification Committee and supported with private donations, the Town Green has been designed as a gift to the town by Thiel Architecture + Design.” – Nancy Thiel



Prepared by Thiel Architecture + Design for the Weston Board of Selectmen / June 6th, 2019



REORGANIZE MUNICIPAL PROPERTY

Work with various Town Departments to efficiently reorganize municipal property.

This will entail finding a new location for the Parks and Recreation Department. It may also include future improvements to EMS facilities and the relocation of offices from the Town Hall Annex to the Town Hall proper.



ASSESS BUS DEPOT OPTIONS

Work with the Board of Education to assess the options for the Bus Depot.

While many residents agree the bus depot should be moved, figuring out where it should go and what the property should become will be a larger problem to tackle.

- Conduct a study to identify a new location for bus depot and develop costs associated with relocating the operation.
- Assess existing bus depot building for community reuse.
- Develop a community vision for the property that identifies the preferred community uses to be housed at this location.
- Conduct a facility condition assessment of the current bus depot to understand the fit and constraints, and cost to reuse the facility.
- Develop an operational plan for reuse of the bus depot site.



SCULPTURE PARK

Fund and conduct a design process for implementing the sculpture park.

The design for the park should include building a barrier to contain school children and prevent unauthorized guests from entering the play area. Pieces or exhibits for the park should be selected by a local arts and culture commission. Madison, Connecticut is an excellent [example](#) of a successful public art program. In addition to designing the new park, a new location for the displaced ball fields must be identified and the new fields need to be designed and constructed.



TOWN HALL PARKING LOT

Fund and conduct a design process to reconfigure the Town Hall parking lot and add an access point on Weston Road.

The Preferred Concept configuration adds an additional 45 parking spaces to the municipal campus and provides additional access on Weston Road. There is a loop for pick up/drop off for events or that can be used as dedicated food truck parking for community events and gatherings in the new park. No matter what design is chosen, these features are recommended.



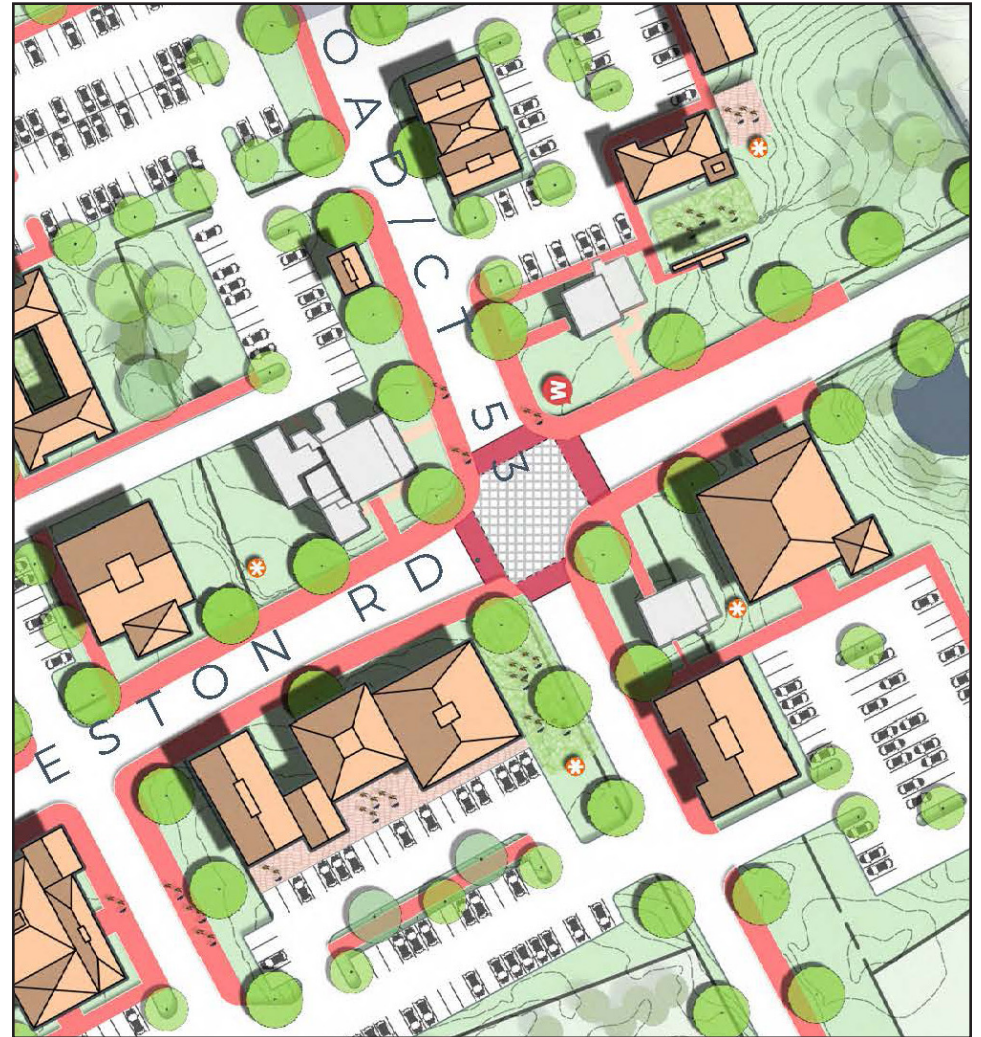
Food Truck Friday, Bethel, CT



RELOCATE THE ONION BARN

Work with the Historic Commission to find a new location for the Onion Barn.

The Onion Barn could be an excellent component of a gateway element for the Town Center. In a more appropriate location, it could not only set the historical tone for the Town Center but also continue to serve its more contemporary function as a message board for local news and events.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Phase II: Digging In

Phase II of the Weston Town Center Master Plan takes the project plans created in Phase I to fruition.

At the Parks and Recreation Department Property:

- Relocate the Parks and Recreation Department.
- Develop a Request for Proposals (RFP) for developers for the Parks and Recreation Department property.
- Select a development proposal for the Parks and Recreation Department property.

At the ball field:

- Construct the new park.
- Develop programming and identify lead organization for sculpture walk.

At Town Hall:

- Implement the Town Hall parking lot plan. In the Preferred Concept, circulations issues are alleviated and 45 additional spaces are added.
- Fund and construct the Memorial Walk Town Green project.

Along the street:

- Fund and construct additional streetscape elements such as lighting, planters, wayfinding signage, street furniture, etc. Additional streetscape elements should be prioritized according to the Sidewalk Plan and available funding.
- Work with the Historic District and the Beautification Committee to develop a style guide for public realm amenities. The images from the visual preference session on page 10 is a good starting point for this work.
- Work with the Historic district to relocate the Onion Barn.

Conclusion

Weston has enormous potential to enhance the community's quality of life through the Town Center. This plan lays out a road map of how the community's aspirations for this area could be accomplished. By setting the zoning and design framework, improving the pedestrian infrastructure, and highlighting properties for reinvestment, the Town can serve as the catalyst for positive progress. Changes of this nature will take a number of years and require continual collaboration between Town officials, boards, commissions, stakeholders, and residents. Together these parties can contribute to a stronger Center and Weston community.





Appendix D: Existing Conditions

TOWN OF WESTON

Plan of Conservation and Development

Existing Conditions

ACRONYMS & DEFINITIONS

Acronyms:

ACS – American Community Survey

ADT – Average Daily Traffic

CTDEEP – Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection

CTDOT – Connecticut Department of Transportation

CTDPH – Connecticut Department of Public Health

CTECO – Connecticut Environmental Conditions Online

CTOPM – Connecticut Office of Policy and Management

CTSDC – Connecticut State Data Center

FEMA – Federal Emergency Management Agency

HMP – Hazard Mitigation Plan

NDDB – Natural Diversity Database

POCD – Plan of Conservation and Development

WestCOG – Western Connecticut Council of Governments

WPCF – Water Pollution Control Facility (Sewage Treatment Plant)

Definitions

American Community Survey (ACS) – The ACS is a data collection program overseen by the U.S. Census Bureau that collects demographic and housing data for individuals and households. The ACS surveys approximately 3 million households across the nation per year (roughly 2.5% of households) and aggregates the data on multi-year intervals. Because it is based on a multi-year sample, it is not directly comparable to the Decennial Census, which is based on a 100% population count every ten years.

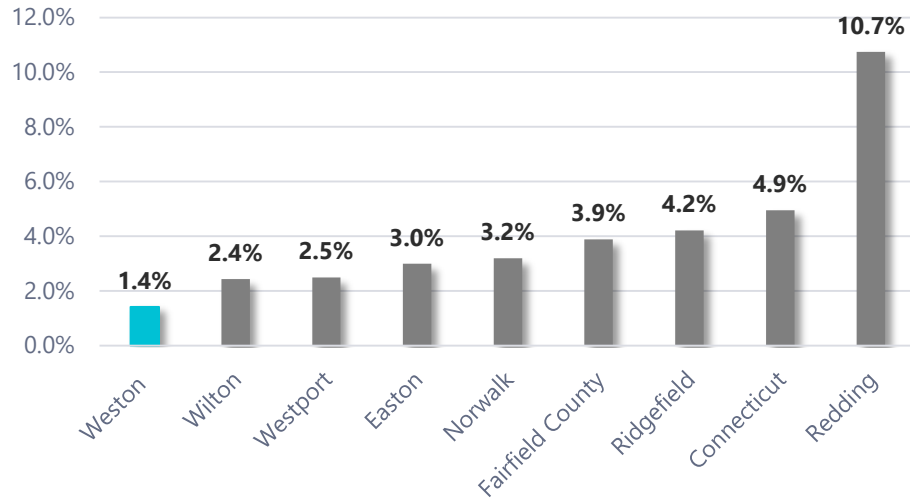
Census Block Group – A geographic unit developed by the U.S. Census Bureau to analyze Census and ACS data at the neighborhood level. Bethel contains 13 Census Block Groups, and the average Census Block Group in Bethel has just under 1,500 residents.



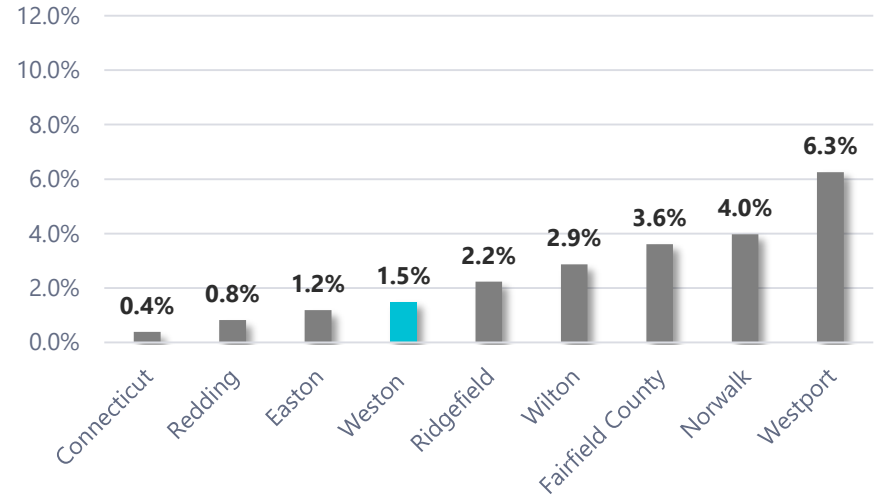
DEMOCRAPHICS

POPULATION

Percent Change in Population 2000 - 2010



Percent Change in Population 2010 - 2017

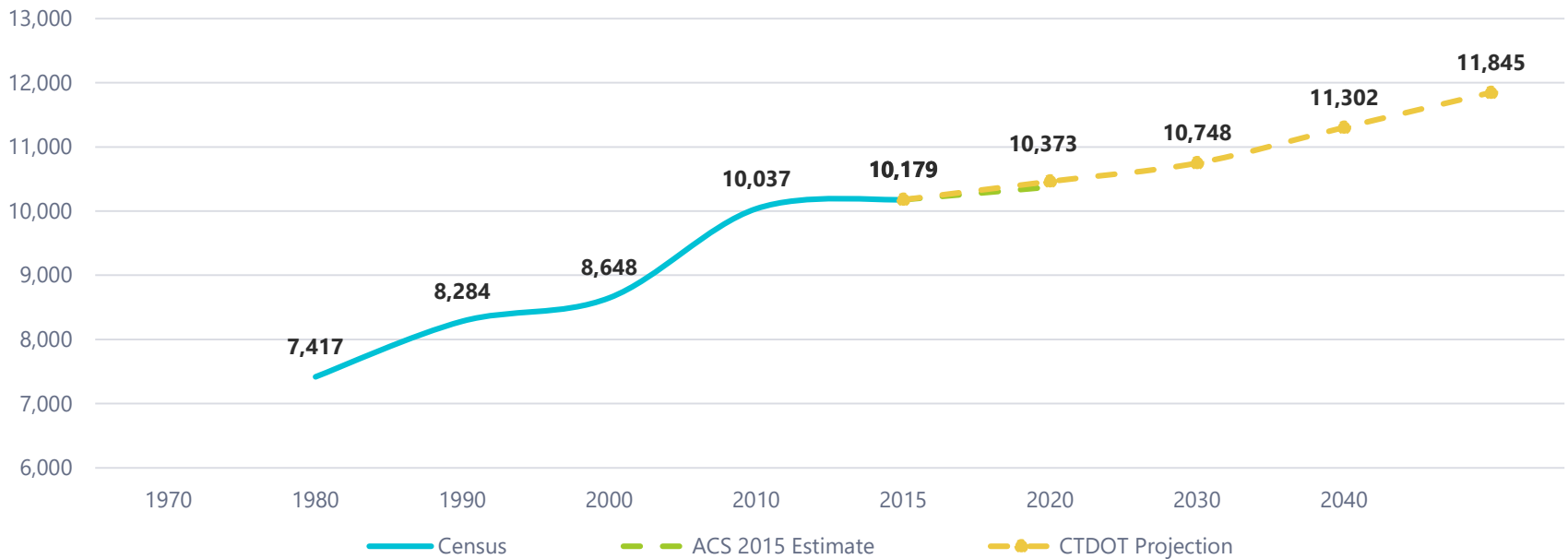


Source: U.S. Census 2000 & 2010, CT DPH 2017 Population Estimates

- Weston had the smallest percent population change compared to neighboring towns between the 2000 and 2010 census.
- Between 2010 and 2017, Weston's growth was similar to the previous decade. It grew faster than the state.

POPULATION

Historic & Projected Population in Weston 1970 - 2040



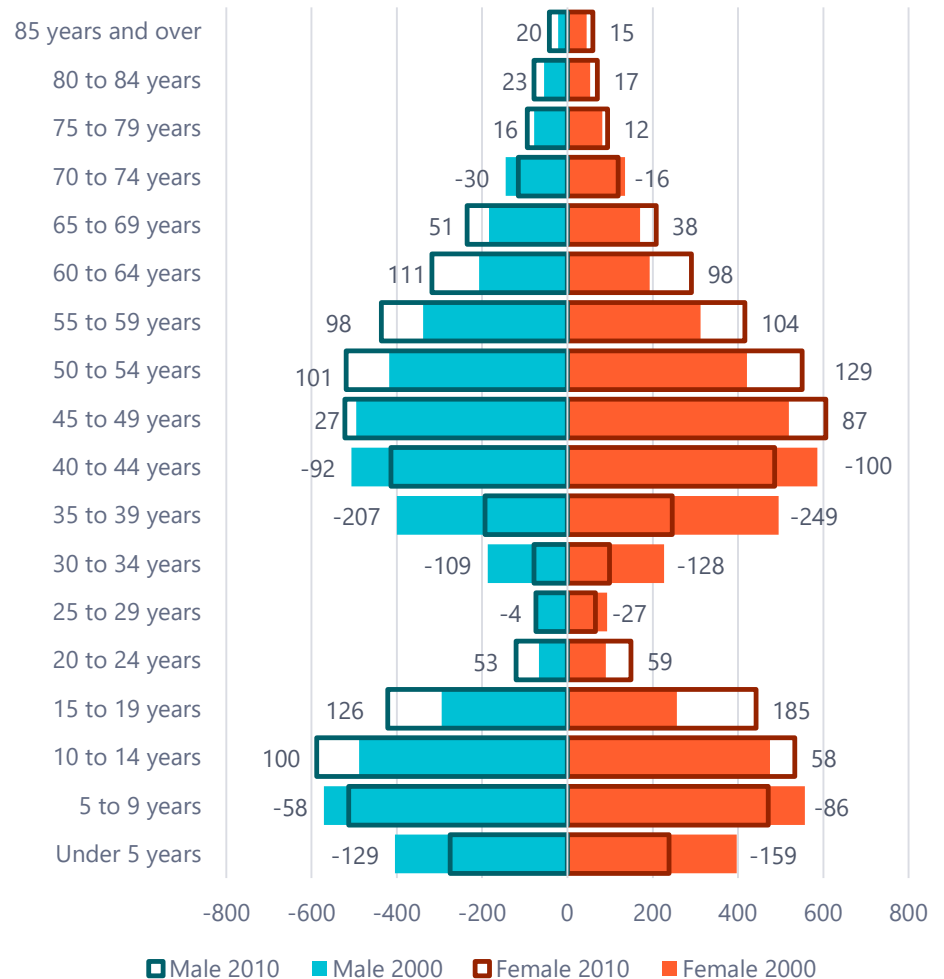
Sources: U.S. Census Bureau Decennial Census, 1970-2010. 2015 ACS 5-Year Estimates. Projected Population by CTDOT.

- CTDOT projects a small increase in Weston's population between 2015 to 2030, reaching 11,302 by 2030.
- 2015 ACS population estimates shows that **Weston is on pace with CTDOT Projections**

AGE

- Weston continues to age.**
 The median age of Weston residents increased from 39.1 in 2000 to 43.4 in 2010. 2016 estimates show that Weston's median age has continued to grow and is now 44.6 years old.
- Decline in 30 to 44 age cohort, and corresponding drop in children under the age of 10.
- Largest population growth in the 45 to 64 age cohort – corresponds with the aging of the “baby boomers.”

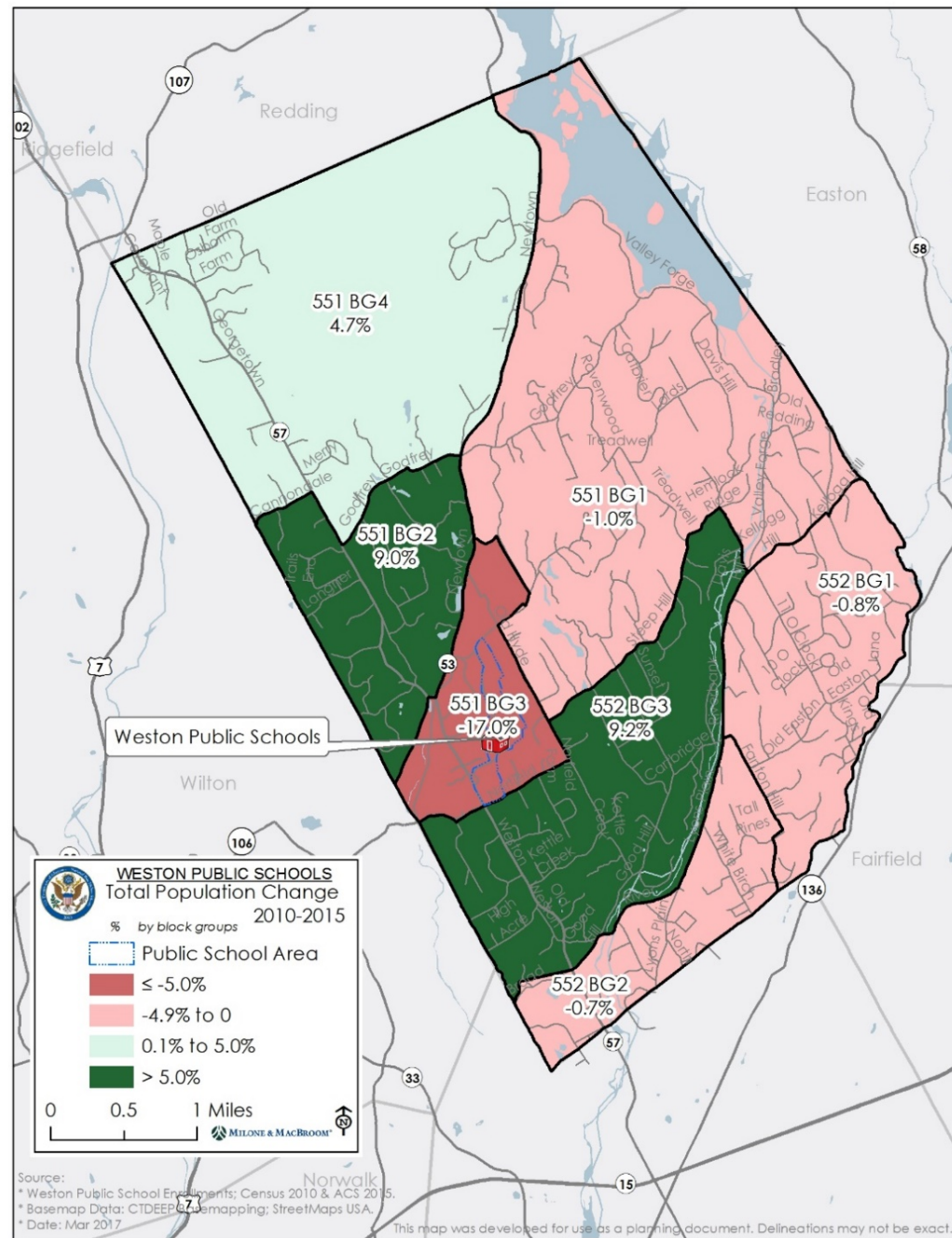
Age Composition in Weston: 2000 to 2010



Sources: U.S. Census Bureau Decennial Census 2000, 2010.

POPULATION CHANGE

- Growth in the first half of 2010s unevenly distributed throughout the town.
- Greatest percentage gains in western neighborhoods closer to the Town Center and amenities in Wilton.



HOUSEHOLDS

- Total number of housing units increased 5% from 2010 to 2016.
 - **Average household size is holding steady.** Average household size remained at 3 persons per household.
 - Owner-occupied housing units with homeowners age 65 or older increased 14.6%, indicating stock with greater potential for future turnover

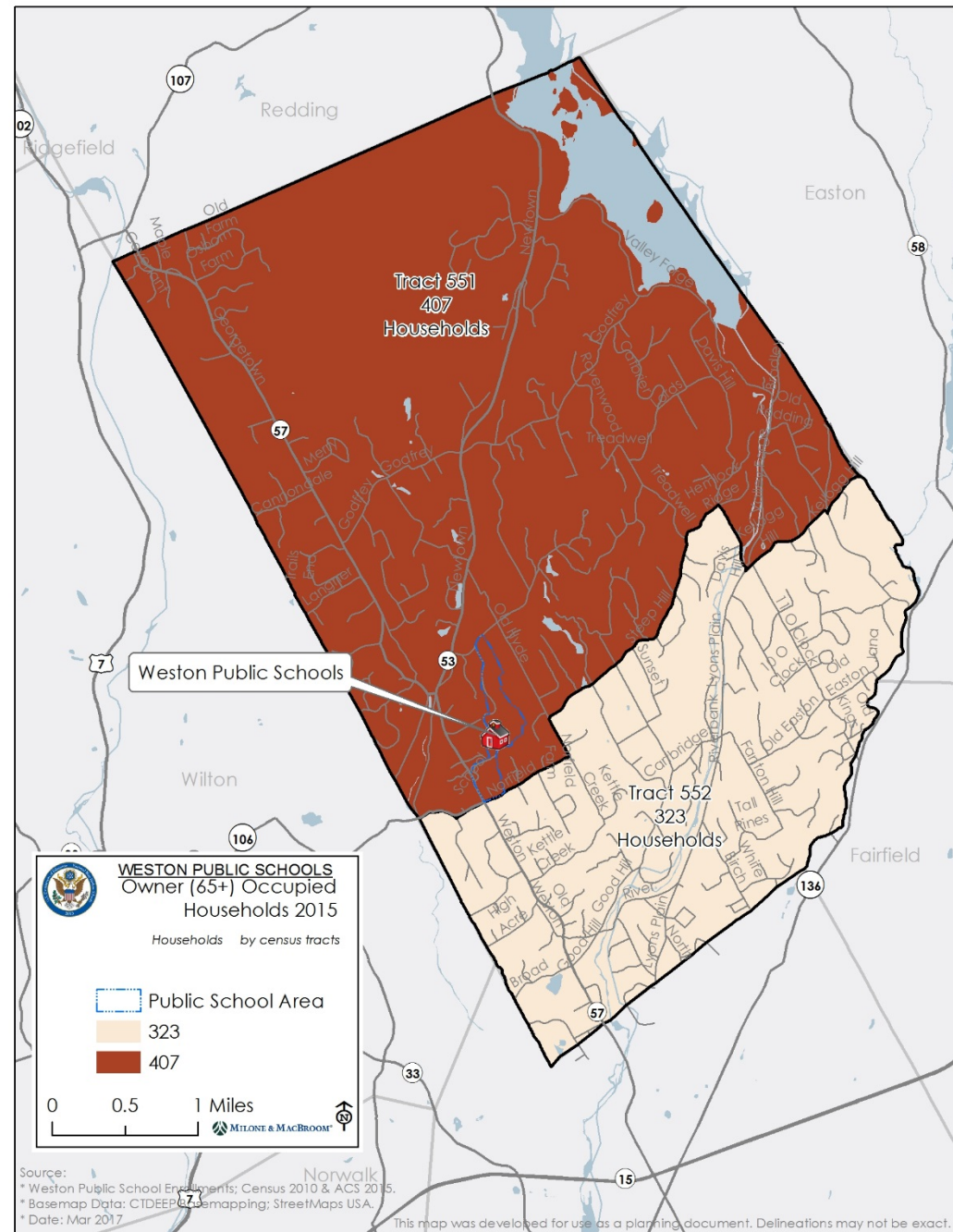
Owner Occupied Housing Units and Households, 2000-2016

	Weston				
	2000	2010	2016	Change 2010-2016	
				Number	%
Total Population	10,037	10,179	10,347	168	1.7%
Total Housing Units	3,532	3,674	3,859	185	5.0%
Total Occupied Housing Units	3,312	3,379	3,440	61	1.8%
Owner Over 65 Occupied Housing Units	577	652	747	95	14.6%
Total Households	3,312	3,379	3,249	-130	-3.8%
Family Households	2,811	2,854	2,780	-74	-2.6%
With Own Children Under 18	1,649	1,647	1,632	-15	-0.9%
Married Couple Family	2,597	2,557	2,564	7	0.3%
With Own Children Under 18	1,511	1,482	1,556	74	5.0%
Female Householder, No husband Present	166	222	170	-52	-23.4%
With Own Children Under 18	109	125	114	-11	-8.8%
Non-Family Households	501	525	469	-56	-10.7%
Householder Living Alone	372	421	406	-15	-3.6%
Householder 65 Years and Over	161	196	194	-2	-1.0%
Average Household Size	3	3.0	3.0	0.04	1.3%
Average Family Size	3.3	3.3	3.3	0.01	0.3%

Source: U.S Census 2000 and 2010, ACS 2016

DEMOGRAPHIC SPOTLIGHT: SENIORS

- For the purposes of the POCD, seniors are defined as persons age 65 years old and over
- Households headed by someone age 65+ are a good indicator of future housing turnover and demand for senior services.
- **Senior population more concentrated in the northern section of town.**



RACE & ETHNICITY

- **The population of Weston is diversifying**
 - The Asian population grew by 100 people (51.3%) between 2000 and 2010.
 - Growth in the “Some Other Race” (228%), Two or More Races (98%), Black or African American (48.9%).

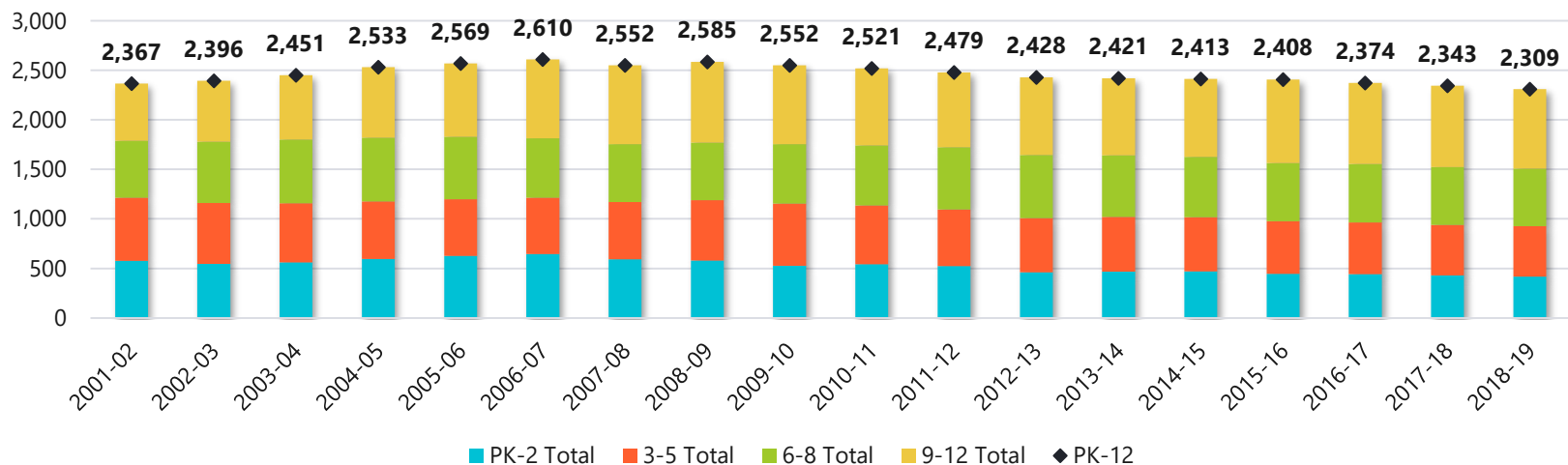
Mutually Exclusive Racial or Ethnic Group	2000		2010		Change 2000 to 2010	
	Count	% of Total	Count	% of Total	Net	Percent
Not Hispanic or Latino	9,831	97.9%	9,843	96.7%	12	0.1%
American Indian	11	0.1%	12	0.1%	1	9.1%
Asian	195	1.9%	295	2.9%	100	51.3%
Black or African American	88	0.9%	131	1.3%	43	48.9%
Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	13	0.1%	2	0.0%	-11	-84.6%
Some other Race	25	0.2%	82	0.8%	57	228.0%
Two or More races	98	1.0%	194	1.9%	96	98.0%
White	9,443	94.1%	9,463	93.0%	20	0.2%
Hispanic or Latino (of all races)	206	2.1%	197	1.9%	-9	-4.4%
Total Population	10,037		10,179		142	1.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau - 2000 and 2010 Decennial Census

SCHOOL ENROLLMENT TRENDS

- Most recent enrollment peak in 2006-07 with 2,610 students
- Enrollment dropped by about 12% between 2006-07 and 2018-19
- Enrollment has decreased by an average of 1.4% over the last three school years
- Elementary enrollment has been on a downward trend since 2006-07;
 - These grade levels are most responsive to changes in births, migration, and housing conditions
 - Rate of decline has slowed over the last five years

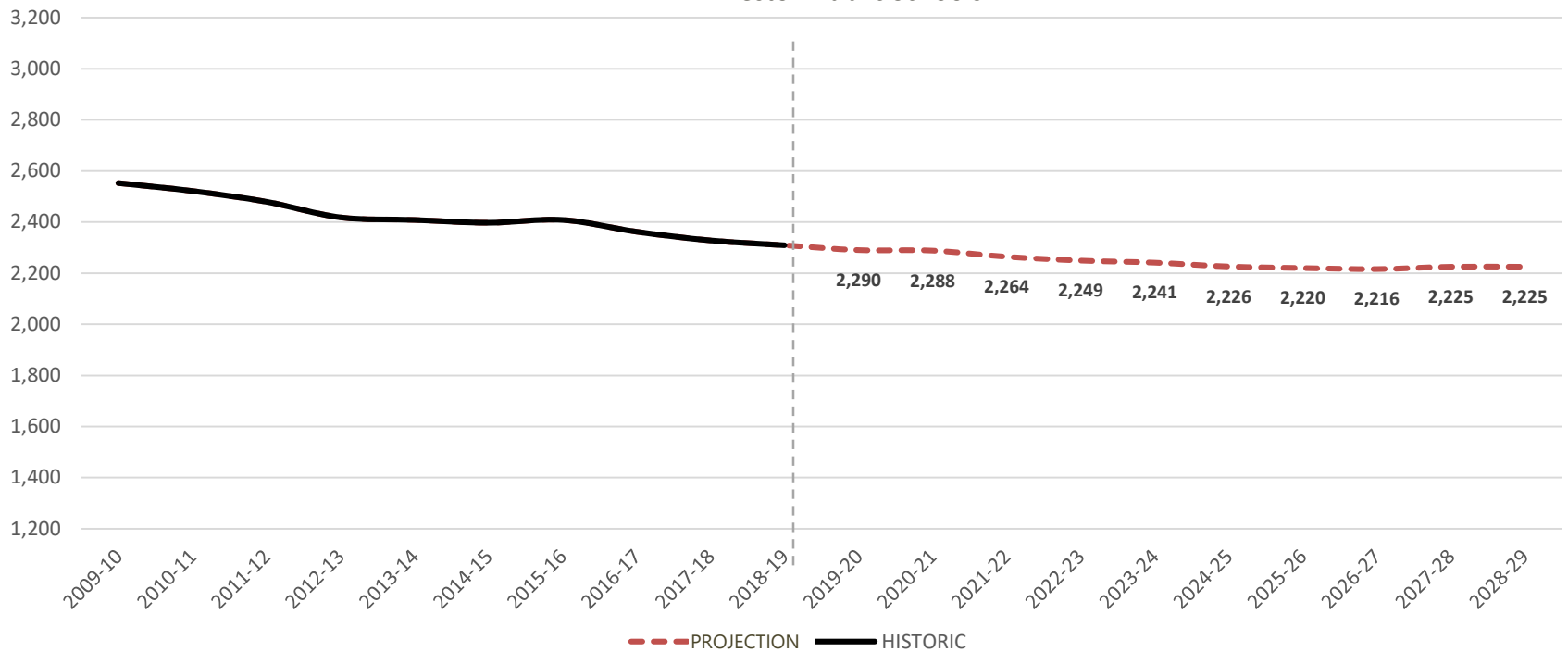
Weston Historic Enrollments, 2001-02 to 2018-19



Source: Connecticut State Department of Education; EdSight Enrollment database

Enrollment Projections (PK-12)

Weston Public Schools



- Although not a steep decline, Weston Public Schools is likely to continue to experience declining enrollments over the next decade
- Declines at the K-2 grade levels are projected to be of a smaller magnitude than upper grade levels and are likely to stabilize or slightly increase after 2019-20
- Intermediate, middle, and high school grade levels are projected to experience some decline over the next decade
- Decline corresponds to decrease in children under 10 and women of childbearing age

A photograph of a white house with green shutters and a brick chimney, with the word 'HOUSING' overlaid in large white letters. The house has white horizontal siding and a gabled roof. A red brick chimney is visible on the left side. The word 'HOUSING' is written in a bold, white, sans-serif font across the center of the image.

HOUSING

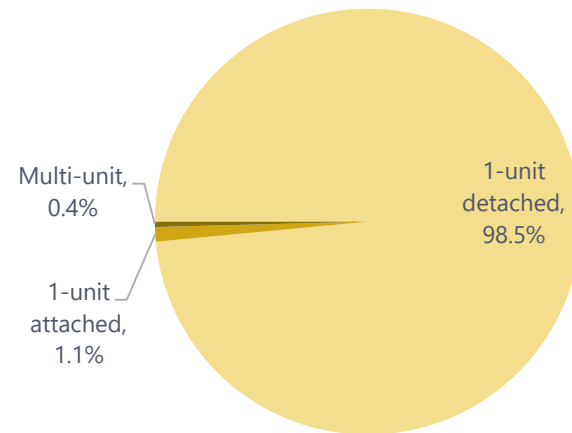
HOUSING STOCK

- Since 2010, Weston has added 39 housing units.
- **The growth rate lags behind the county and the state but is on par with the neighboring communities of Easton and Westport**
- As of 2016, the vast majority of Weston's housing units (98.5%) were single-family detached units.
- Multi-family housing made up 0.4% of Weston's housing stock.
 - Multi-family is 8.9%, 11.9%, 13.4% of housing stock in Westport, Wilton, Redding respectively.

Municipality	Housing Units		
	2010	2017	Change
Weston	3,674	3,713	1.1%
Easton	2,715	2,748	1.2%
Norwalk	35,415	36,919	4.1%
Redding	3,811	3,813	0.1%
Ridgefield	9,420	9,584	1.7%
Westport	10,399	10,542	1.4%
Wilton	6,475	6,521	0.7%
Fairfield County	361,221	371,239	2.7%
Connecticut	1,487,891	1,514,065	1.7%

Source: Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development

Weston Housing Units in Structure:
2016

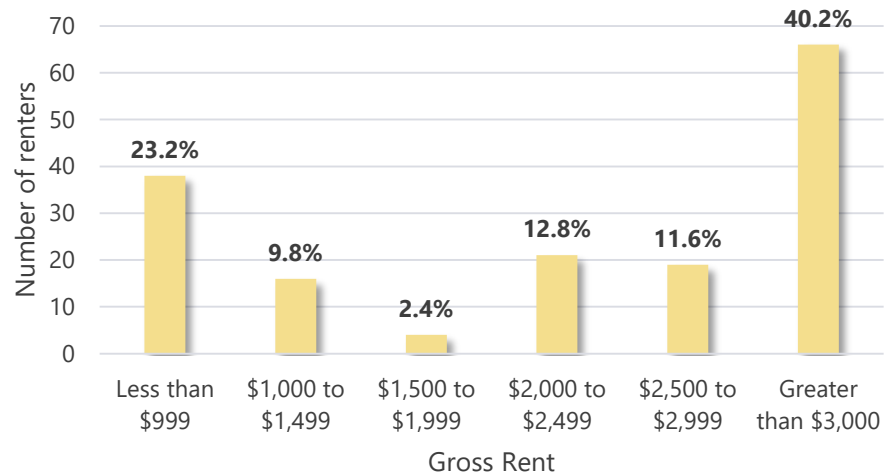


Source: American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates: 2012-2016

GROSS RENT & HOME VALUE

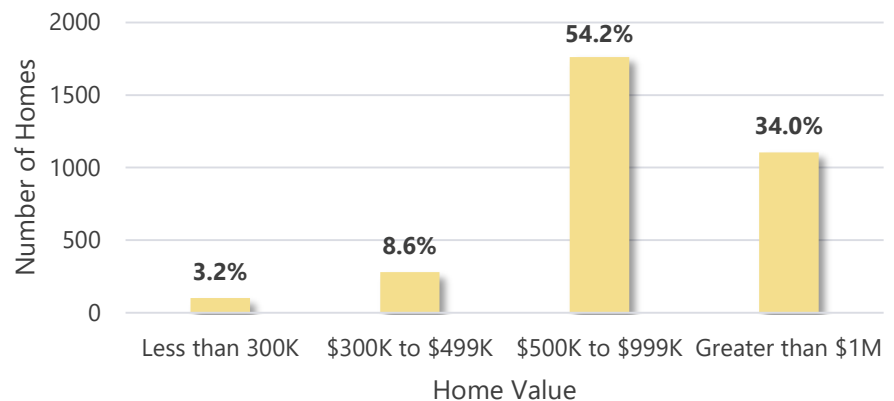
- The 2016 ACS reports 191 total rental units
- All renters live in single-family homes
- 51.8% of gross rent higher than \$2,500

Distribution of Gross Rent



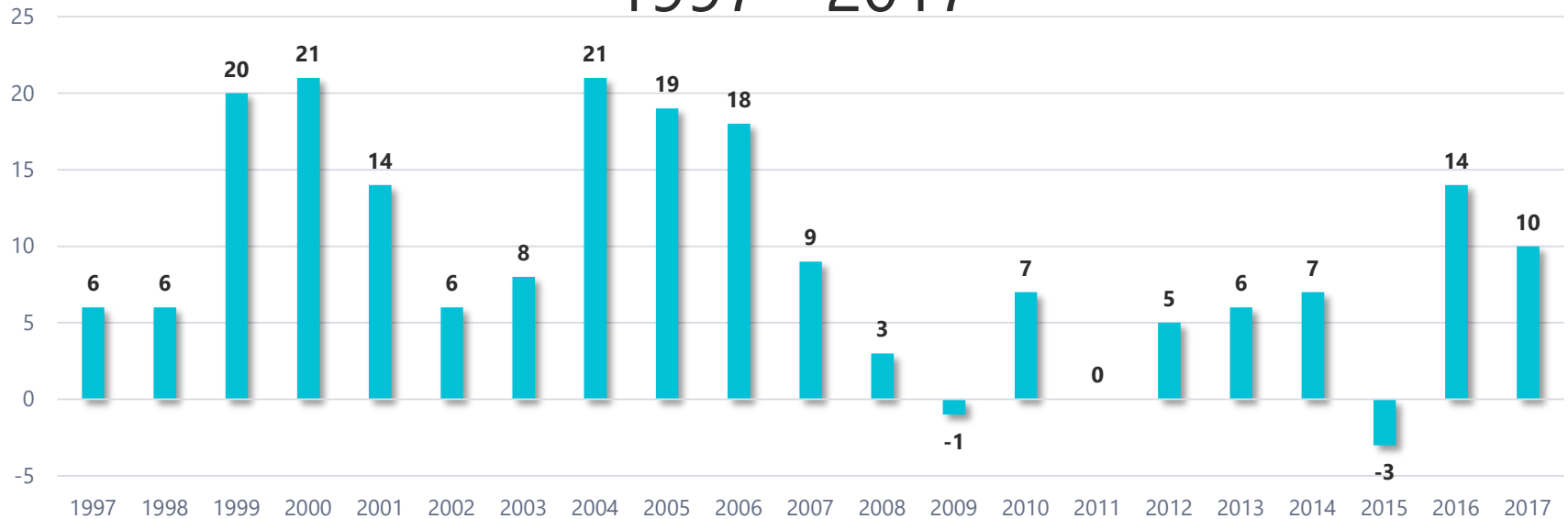
- 3,249 Homes in 2016
- 99.5% of home owners live in single-family homes
- 0.1% live in 2 – 4 unit homes
- 0.4% live in homes with five or more units

Home Value Distribution



Source: American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates: 2012-2016

Net Housing Permit Activity in Weston: 1997 - 2017



CT DECD Annual Housing Permit Data: 5/2/2018. *This figure subtracts demolitions from building permit to estimate the number of new houses constructed each year

- **Housing starts have improved since the Recession**
- Over the last four years, building permit activity has averaged 10 units per year - similar level to the early 2000's
 - 32 building permits in 2000 was the highest number of annual permits issued over the last 20 years. (There were 12 demolitions.)
 - 12 demolition permits in 1998, and 2005 were the highest number of annual permits issued over the last 20 years (There were 18 and 31 constructions, respectively)

Age 65+ Occupied Housing Units, 2016

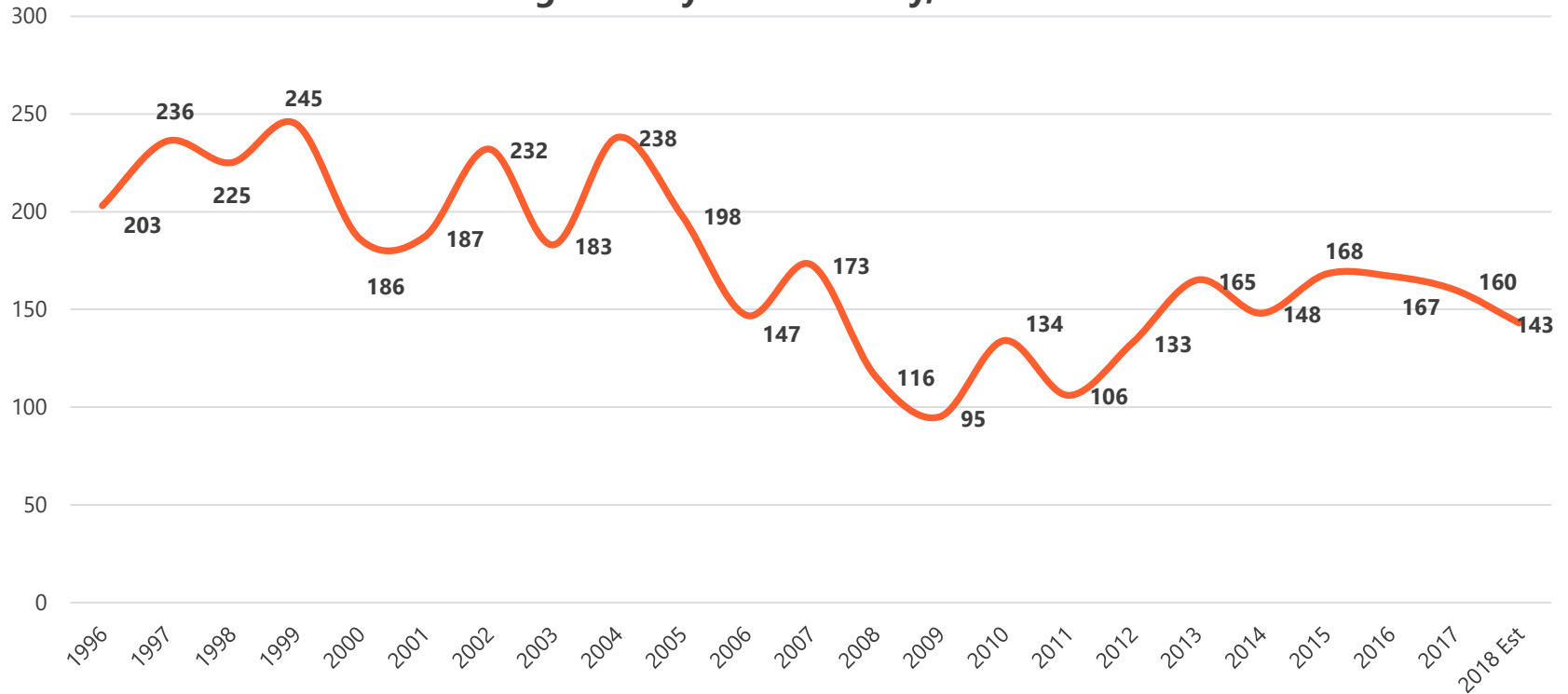
Total Population	10,347
Total Occupied Housing Units	3,440
Total Owner Occupied Housing Units	3,249
Owner Over 65 Occupied Housing Units	747
% of Owner Occupied Housing Units, Aged 65+	23%
Housing Units With a Mortgage, Aged 65+	382
Housing Units Without a Mortgage, Aged 65+	369
Total Renter Occupied Housing Units	191
Renter Over 65 Occupied Housing Units	18
% of Renter Occupied Housing Units, Aged 65+	9.4%

Source: ACS 2016

- 23% of owner-occupied units are headed by a householder age 65 years old and over
- About half of the Aged 65+ population own their home “free and clear”
- These units will likely have greater potential for turnover in the next ten years

REAL ESTATE MARKET TRENDS

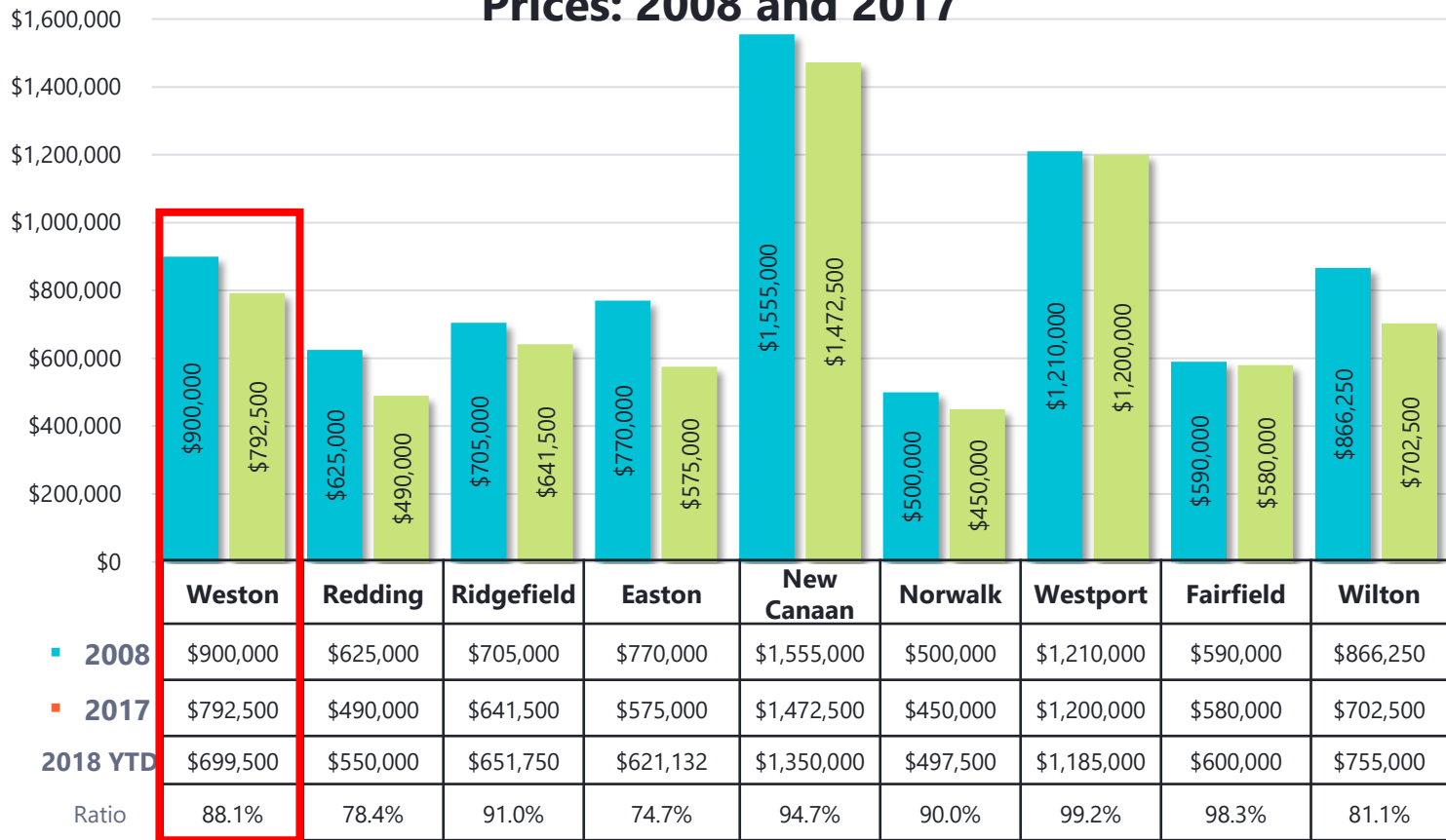
Weston Single Family Sales Activity, 1996 – 2018 YTD



Source: CT DECD and The Warren Group, 2017

- Sales have improved since the Recession

Comparison of Median Single-Family Home Sale Prices: 2008 and 2017



Source: The Warren Group

- **Median single-family home sale prices are still well below their 2006 peak.**
- 2017 median single family sale price: \$792,000
- Median prices in Weston have remained more affordable than Westport/ New Canaan, on par with Wilton, and well above other central Fairfield County towns

AFFORDABILITY OF HOUSING

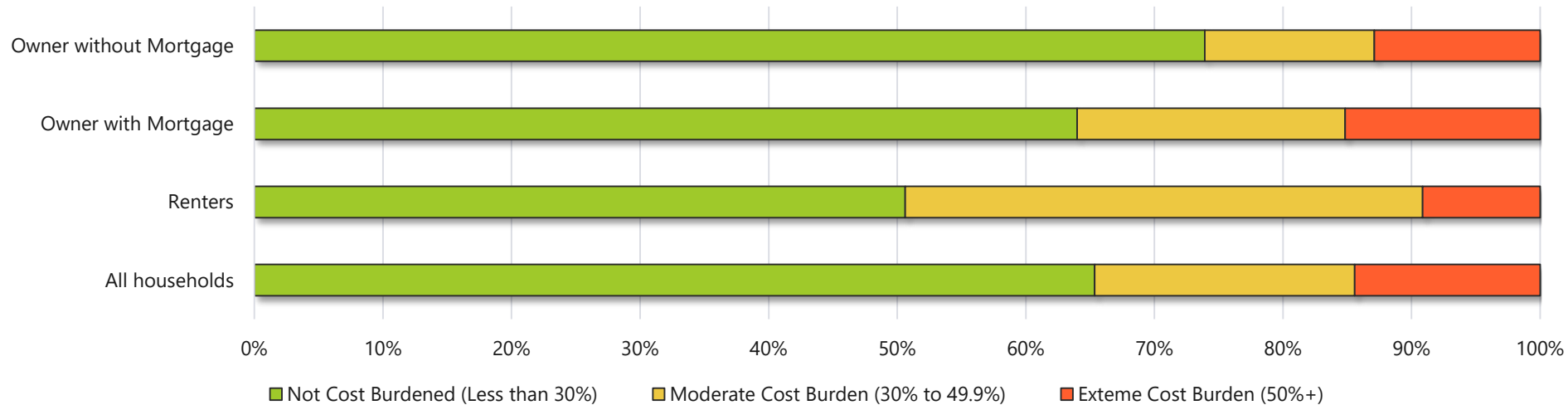
- The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) recommends that no more than 30% of household income be spent on housing. This includes mortgage or rent, property taxes, HOA fees, insurance, and utilities.
- Households that spend more than 30% of their income on housing may have difficulty affording other necessities such as food, clothing, transportation, and medical care.
- HUD determines Fair Market Rents which identifies maximum rental limits for HUD tenant rental assistance programs. These limits are determined based on area incomes (cost of living taken into account) and assumes that recipient households pay no more than 30% of their income towards housing.

HUD Fair Market Rents for the Town of Weston, by Number of Bedrooms: FY2019

Year	Efficiency/ Studio	One Bedroom	Two Bedroom	Three- Bedroom	Four Bedroom
Fair Market Rents FY19	\$1,211	\$1,517	\$1,885	\$2,404	\$2,752

AFFORDABILITY OF HOUSING

Affordability of Housing by Tenure, 2016



Source: American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates: 2012-2016, Table B25091; B25093

- **About 34% of Weston's households pay more than 30% of their income towards housing and are considered "cost burdened."** Weston has a similar share of cost burdened households as neighboring towns. However, the town has a slightly lower share of cost burdened households compared to the State or region as a whole.
 - **20% have a Moderate Cost Burden** (30% to 49% of income spent on housing)
 - **14% have an Extreme Cost Burden** (50%+ of income spent on housing)
- Renters are more likely to be cost burdened (49%) than homeowners (36%)
- Income does not include assets or equity

AFFORDABILITY OF HOUSING

All Households

Senior Households

Median Household Income: 2016

\$218,152

\$105,991

Maximum Monthly Housing Budget
(30% of Household Income)

\$7,029 per month

\$2,650 per month

Maximum Monthly Homeowner Costs

\$4,153 Mortgage P&I
\$1,658 Property Taxes
\$1,209 Utilities/Insurance

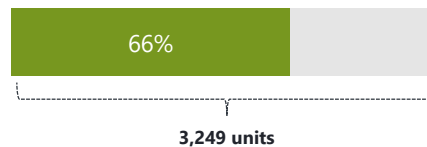
\$1,586 Mortgage P&I
\$626 Property Taxes
\$456 Utilities/Insurance

Maximum Affordable Home Value

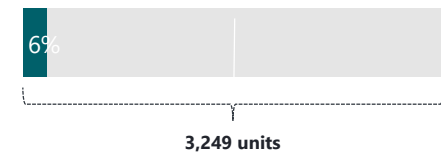
\$766,000

\$365,000

The average household in Weston can afford to buy 66% of owner-occupied units in town



The average senior household in Weston can afford to buy 6% of owner-occupied units in town



AFFORDABILITY OF HOUSING

Affordable Housing Units in Weston by Type 2017	
Total Housing Units 2010	3,674
Governmentally Assisted	0
Tenant Rental Assistance	1
Family CHFA/USDA Mortgages	3
Deed Restricted Units	0
Totally Assisted Units	4
Percent Affordable	0.11%

Source: Connecticut Department of Housing – Affordable Housing Appeals List: 2017
 CHFA – Connecticut Housing Finance Authority
 USDA United States Department of Agriculture

- In 2017, there were 4 affordable housing units in Weston, or roughly 0.1% of all housing units.
- **Weston needs at least an additional 360 affordable units to meet state’s 10% affordable housing goal.**
- In 2007, Weston had 2 affordable housing units

How Many Housing Units Does Weston Need to Reach the State’s 10% Affordable Housing Goal?

Assuming Weston only added affordable units, it would need...

8 existing affordable units + **360 new units** = **368 affordable units**
 3,674 existing housing units + **360 new units** = **4,035 total housing units**

CLUSTER DEVELOPMENT

Cluster development subdivides a lot and concentrates housing on one portion of a building site while the remainder of the parcel remains protected farmland or open space.

- Introduces new type of housing stock.
- Decreases development cost.
- Many towns in Connecticut use this tool:
 - Essex
 - Madison
 - Milford
 - Simsbury

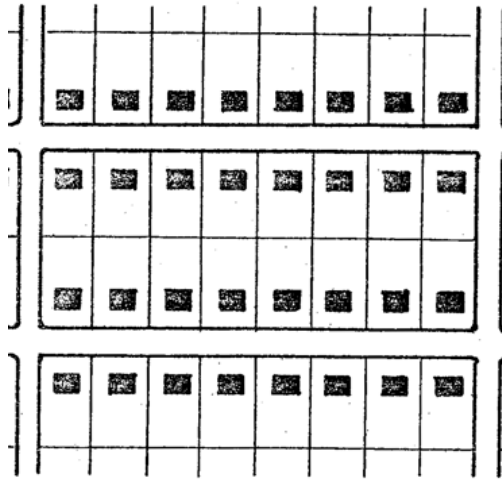


Figure 1a
Conventional Planning

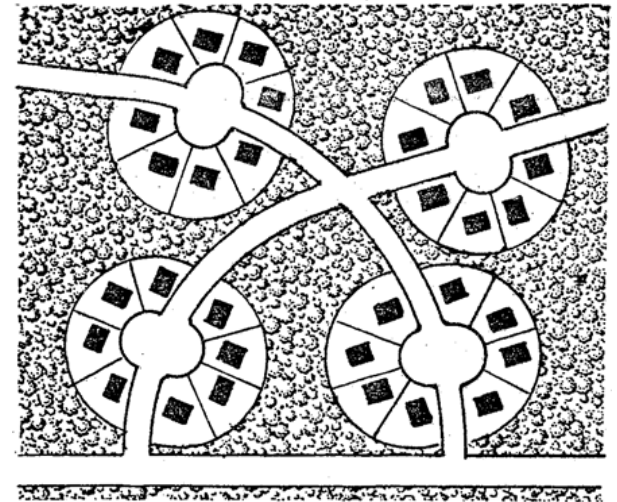


Figure 1b
Cluster Zoning

Source: American Planning Association

CLUSTER DEVELOPMENT

Opportunities

- Allows communities to protect development from hazard areas, and/or conserve sensitive habitat.
- The footprint of new development is reduced, therefore reducing needs for grading, paving roads, and laying infrastructure.
- Less infrastructure means that long-term maintenance costs are reduced.
- Common Ownership lots
- Homeowner does not need to maintain 2 acres
- Can be tailored to any community.
- Property values may rise.
- Varies housing stock.

Challenges

- Less developable land.
 - Without proper implementation, developers may have to build smaller homes on smaller lots, making it difficult to maximize profit.
- Higher open space maintenance costs.
 - Depending on the particular subdivision, the burden of maintaining the protected or open areas could become the responsibility of the developer, municipality, or homeowners association.

CLUSTER DEVELOPMENT

Examples in Simsbury

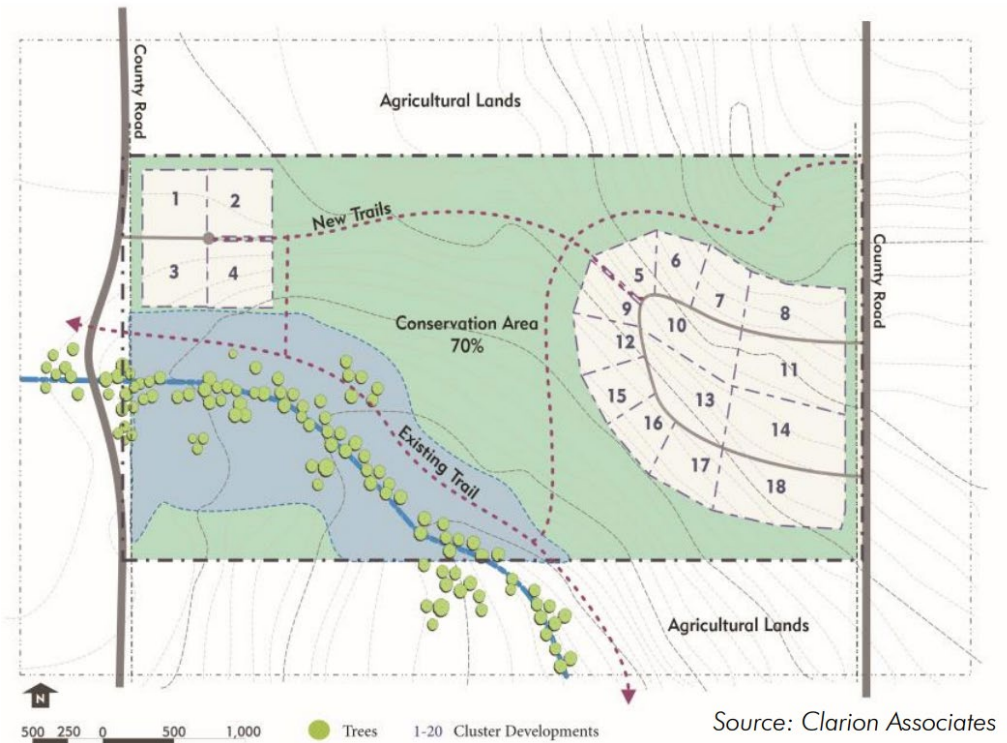


- Cluster Developments highlighted in yellow
- Notice difference in number of streets and lot size inside and outside of the cluster zone

CLUSTER DEVELOPMENT

Additional Resources on Cluster Development:

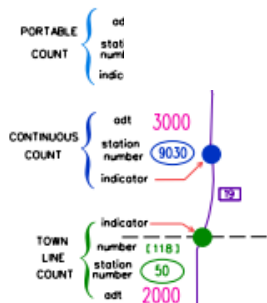
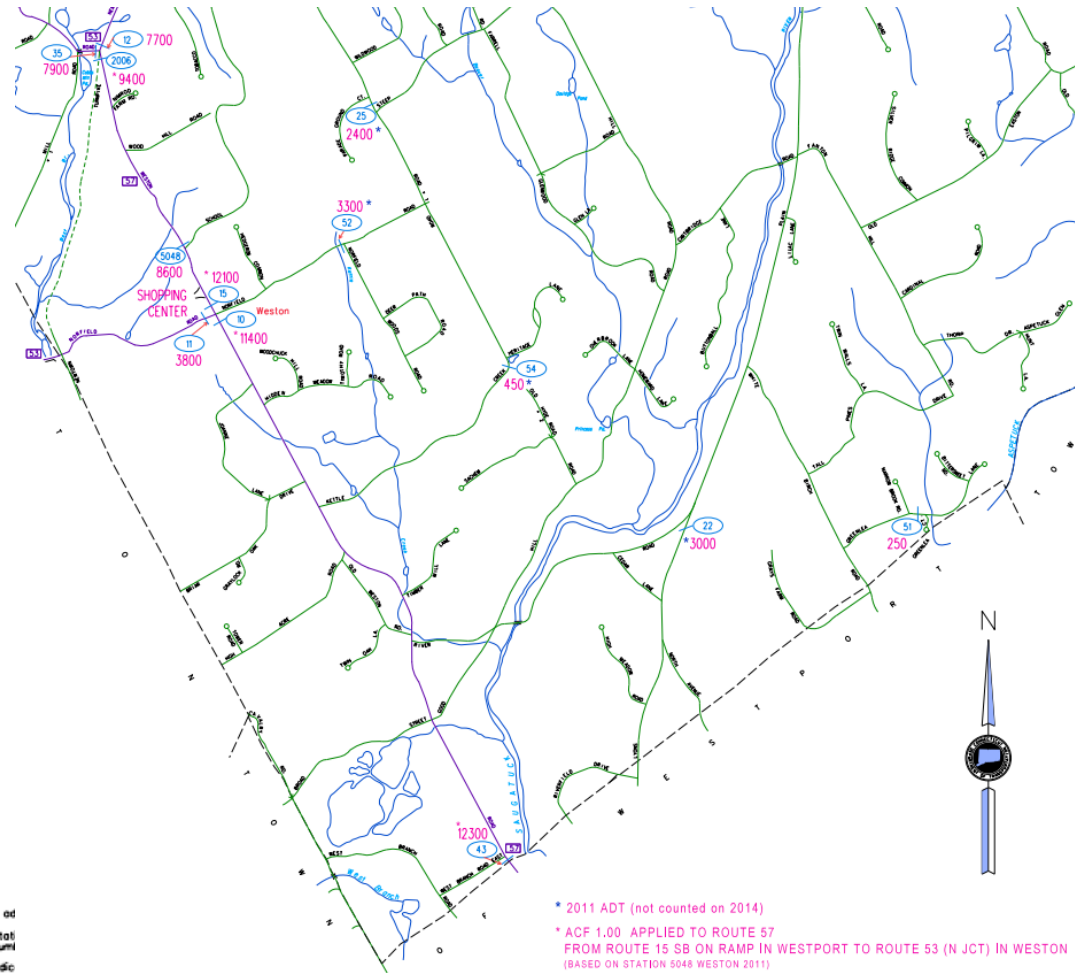
- ***Essential Smart Growth Fixes for Communities*** by The EPA
- ***Cluster Subdivisions*** by the American Society of Planning Officials
- ***Cluster Development - Zoning Practice*** by Stuart Meck, FAICP
- ***Planning for Hazards*** by The Colorado Department of Local Affairs



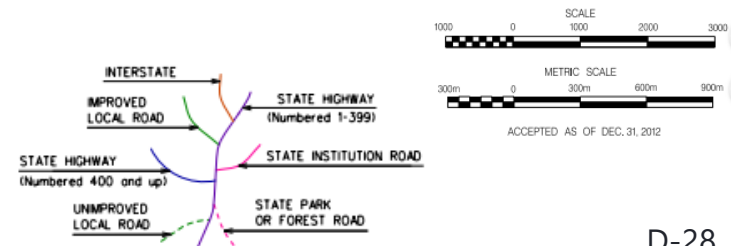
TRANSPORTATION

TRAFFIC VOLUMES

- In 2014, CT-57 had the heaviest average daily traffic (ADT) volumes (vehicles per day) with between 5,800 (north) and 12,300 (south) cars
- The ADT for the shopping center declined from 15,000 vehicles per day in 2008 to 12,100 vehicles per day in 2014
- Through out Weston, traffic volumes have declined an estimated 18% since 2008



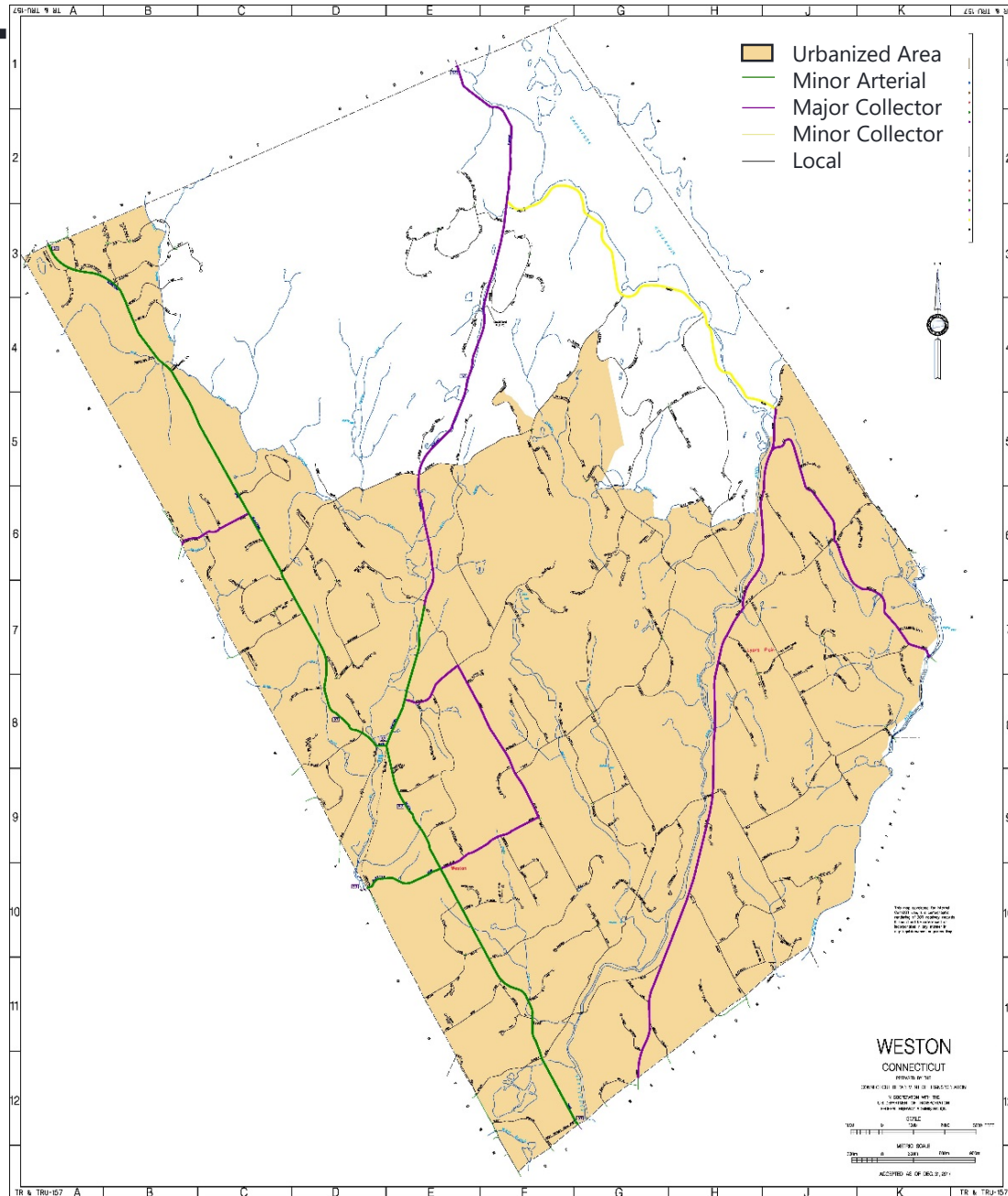
* 2011 ADT (not counted on 2014)
 * ACF 1.00 APPLIED TO ROUTE 57 FROM ROUTE 15 SB ON RAMP IN WESTPORT TO ROUTE 53 (N JCT) IN WESTON (BASED ON STATION 5048 WESTON 2011)



ACCEPTED AS OF DEC. 31, 2012

STATE FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION

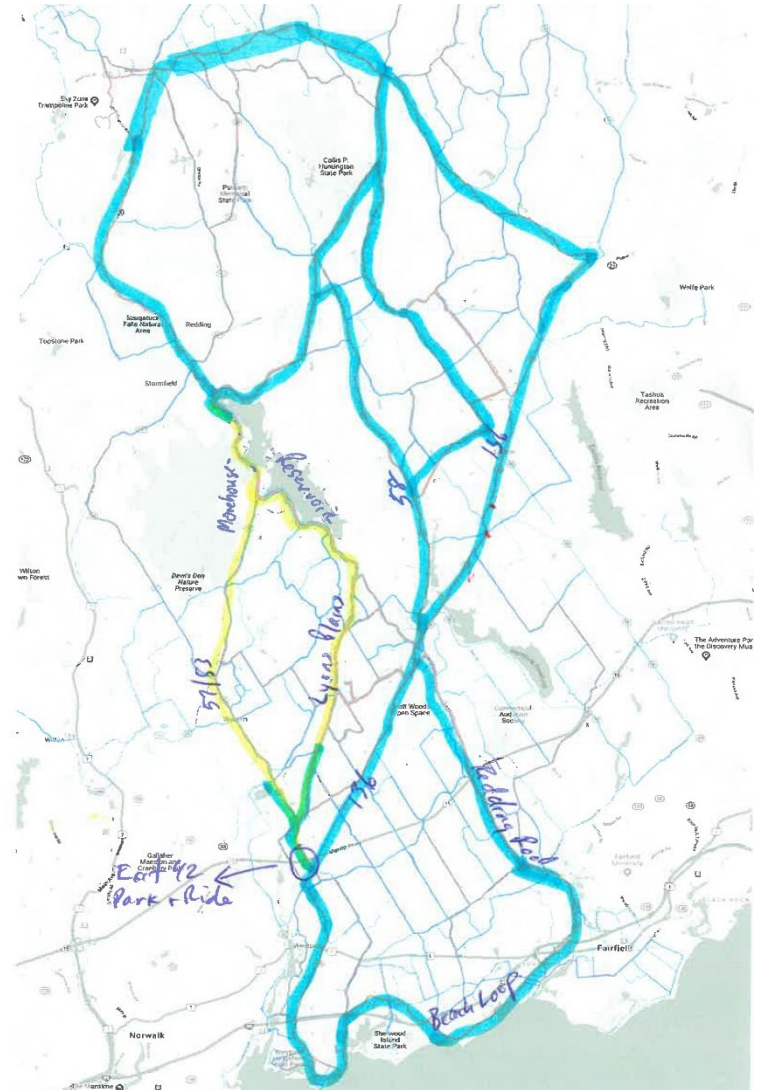
- Functional Classification is a roadway hierarchy that is used to determine eligibility for federal transportation funds.
- Roads classified as **collectors and arterials are eligible for state and federal funding programs**, including:
 - Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG)
 - Local Transportation Capital Improvement Program (LOTICIP)
- Collectors:
 - Newtown Turnpike (Route 53)
 - Lyons Plain Road
 - Old Hyde Road
 - Norfield Road
 - Old Redding Road
 - Valley Forge Road
- Arterials:
 - Georgetown Road (Route 57)
 - Weston Road (Route 57)



WALKABILITY & BIKEABILITY

As part of the POCD, the Town desires to develop a framework to make Weston more bicycle and pedestrian friendly.

- Transportation Planners met with stakeholders. Key findings include;
 - Pedestrian and bicycle accessibility to the Town Center is critical
 - A Complete Streets Policy for Town is needed
 - Bicycle parking needed
 - Active transportation education and programming is important and should be geared towards all ages (not just children)
 - Signage and sharrows signaling bicycle use is important
 - Events centered on bicycling build community
- A Bicycle Level of Service (BLOS) Analysis was conducted through extensive field work, to classify roadways by accessibility.



Map from meeting with Jonathan Brostoff

WALKABILITY: EXISTING CONDITIONS

PEDESTRIAN ACCESSIBILITY



- Key safety concerns include:
 - Lack of sidewalks
 - Lack of crossing infrastructure
 - Poor visibility (curving roads and cresting hills)
 - High vehicular speeds on arterial roads
 - Lack of awareness from drivers of pedestrians' presence
 - Snow maintenance (narrows roadway)



- Presently, pedestrians in Weston typically walk:
 - To schools
 - On low traffic neighborhood streets
 - On park trails
- Walking groups:
 - Aspetuck Land Trust (Hiking)
 - Senior Center Group (Hiking - no longer in existence)

BIKEABILITY: EXISTING CONDITIONS

BICYCLE ACCESSIBILITY



- Key safety concerns include:
 - High vehicular speeds / speeding
 - Lack of bicycle infrastructure
 - Poor visibility (curving roads and cresting hills)
 - Lack of awareness from drivers of bicyclists' presence
 - Snow maintenance (narrow roadway)
- Presently, bicyclists in Weston typically ride:
 - Key corridors include Lyons Plains Rd, Route 136, Route 57, Route 53, Godfrey Rd, Valley Forge Rd, Lord's Hwy, Treadwell Ln)
 - Mountain Bike Trails
- Bicycling groups:
 - Informal group rides (often departing from Merritt Parkway / Route 53 Park & Ride)
 - Sound Cyclists Bicycle Club (Regional Group)

BIKEABILITY: EXISTING CONDITIONS

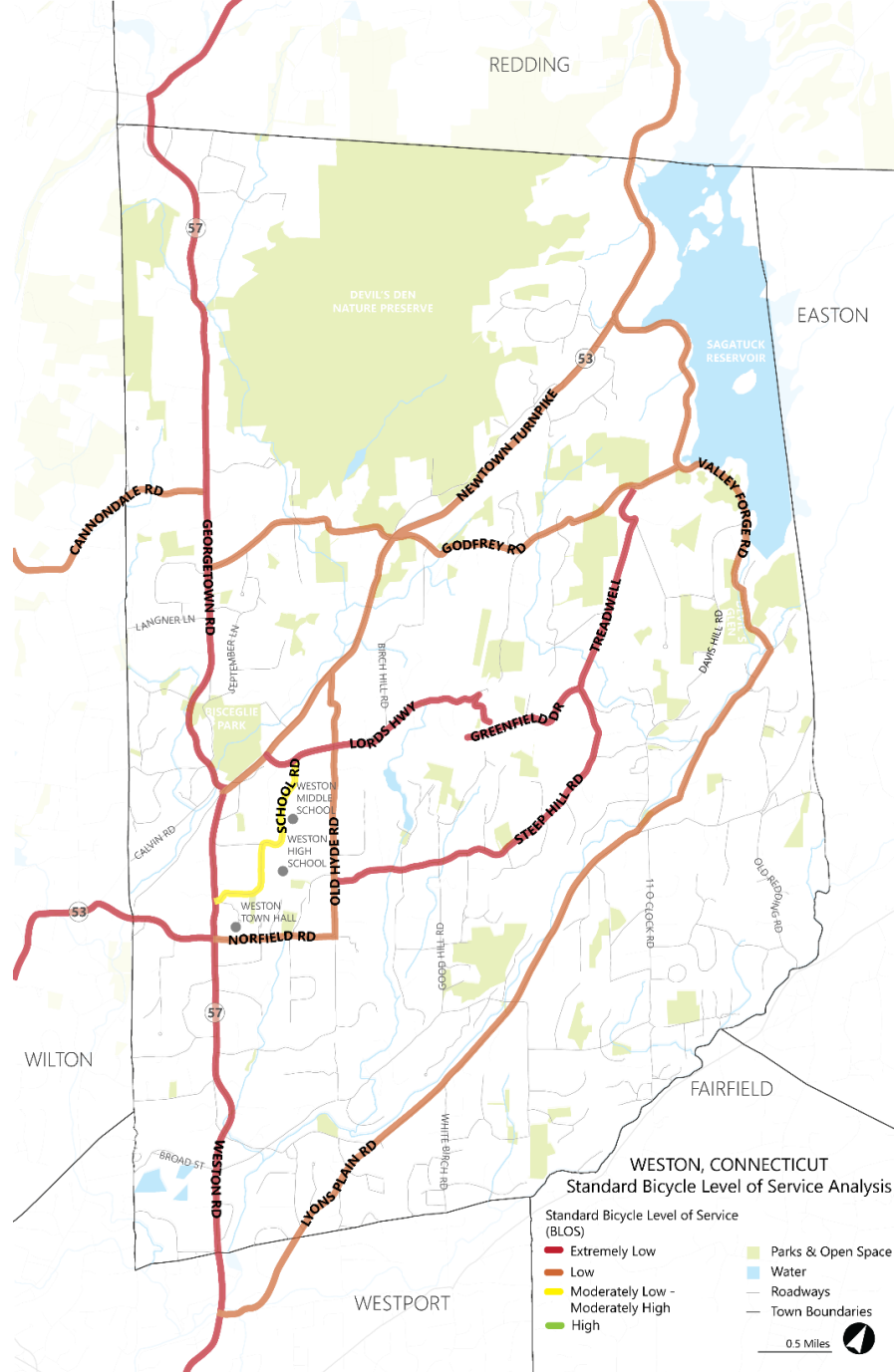
BICYCLE LEVEL OF SERVICE (BLOS)

Lane Width	Score	Shoulder Width	Score	AADT	Score	Pavement Condition	Score	Road Complexity	Score
14+	3	5+	3	<2000	5	New	3	Simple	2
12-13	2	4	2	2000 – 3500	4	Good	2	Moderate	1
10-12	1	3	1	3501 – 4500	3	Fair	1	Complex	0
<10	0	0-2	0	4501 – 6500	2	Poor	0		
				6501 – 8500	1				
				8501+	0				

Classification	Standard BLOS	Local BLOS
High	>3.5	>1.7
Moderately Low - Moderately High	2 – 3.49	1.6
Low	1.5 – 1.9	1.4 – 1.5
Extremely Low	<1.5	<1.4

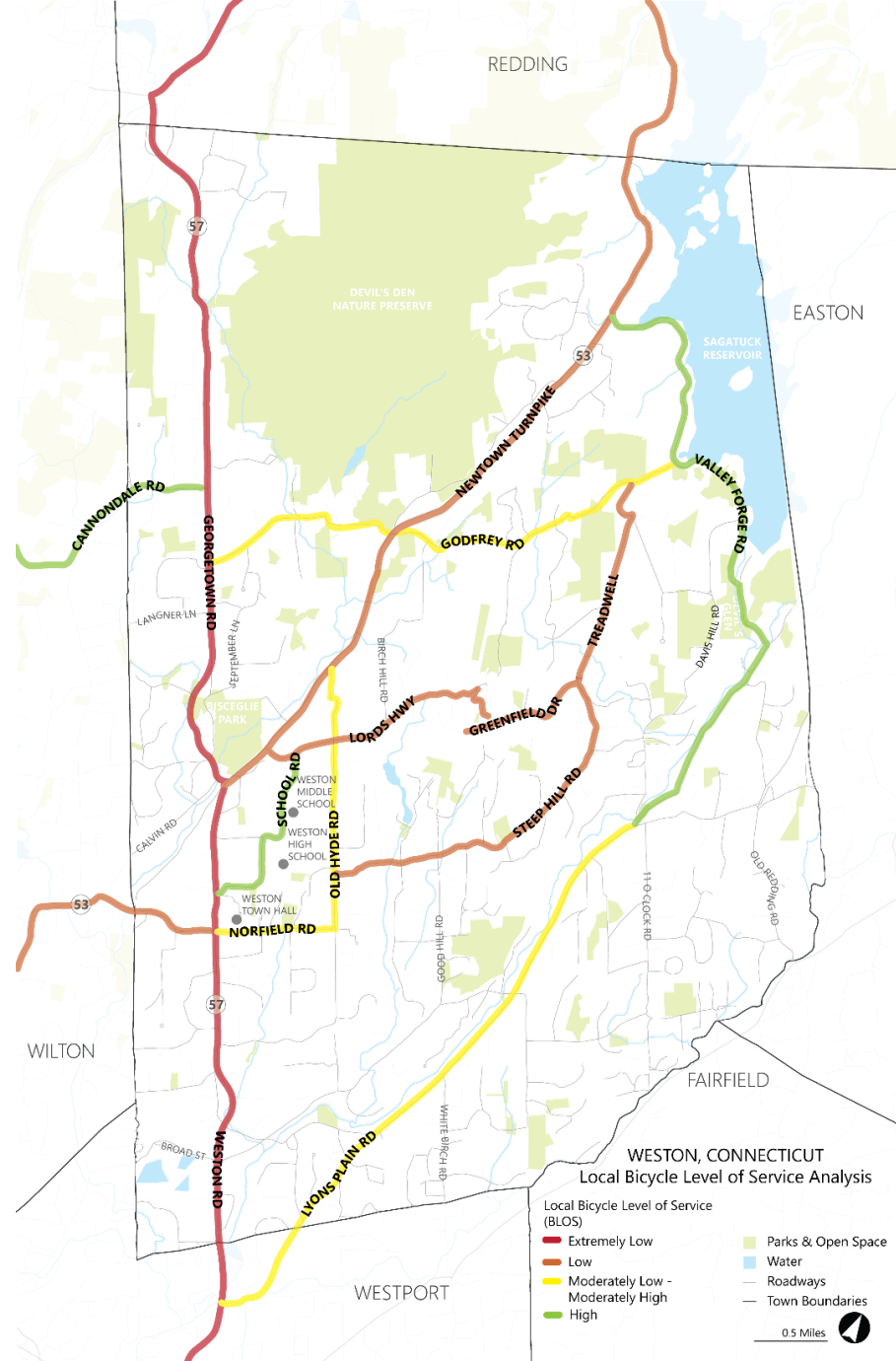
BIKEABILITY: STANDARD LEVEL OF SERVICE

- Compared to national standards, none of the road ways in Weston that were studied provide a high bicycle level of service
- The highest level of service is on School Rd.
- The lowest level of service on Route 57



BIKEABILITY: LOCAL LEVEL OF SERVICE

- Taking into account the local and Town character, which includes winding country-esque roads, we developed a local level of service analysis
- High levels of service can be found on School Rd. (1.1 mi), Valley Forge Rd. (3.7 mi), and Cannondale Rd. (0.4 mi)
 - Totalling 5.2 miles of fragmented biking
- Extremely low levels of service can be found on Route 57.
- This is an initial analysis. Strategies and recommendations will be forthcoming as part of the POCD update process.
- Based on our analysis and expertise, the LLOS is the more appropriate rating system for this road network.



TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS

Recently Completed Projects

- 2016 Town Center Road Safety Audit (RSA)
- 2012 Weston Route 57-School Road Intersection Study

RSA Recommendations (Unfunded)

- Clear overgrown vegetation on School Road and Weston Road
- Upgrade existing school zone signs and activate flashing lights
- Upgrade all pedestrian and advanced warning signage to dayglow green
- Evaluate traffic signal timing at the School Road and Norfield Road intersections
- Install a Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon at the crosswalk located in front of the Center plaza.
- Evaluate access management and consider consolidating driveways at the Center plaza
- Install sidewalk on the western side of Weston Rd to connect the School Rd crosswalk with the plaza

Longer Range Projects (Unfunded)

- School Road – CT 57 - Town Hall Sidewalk
- CT 57/ School Rd Intersection Improvements
- CT 57/ Norfield Rd Intersection Improvements
- CT 57 (Georgetown Rd)/ CT 53 (Newton Tpke) Intersection Study
- CT 57 (Weston Rd)/ Good Hill Rd Intersection Study

GRANT APPLICATIONS

The Town submitted a LOTCIP grant application to make Weston Center safer and more pedestrian-friendly.

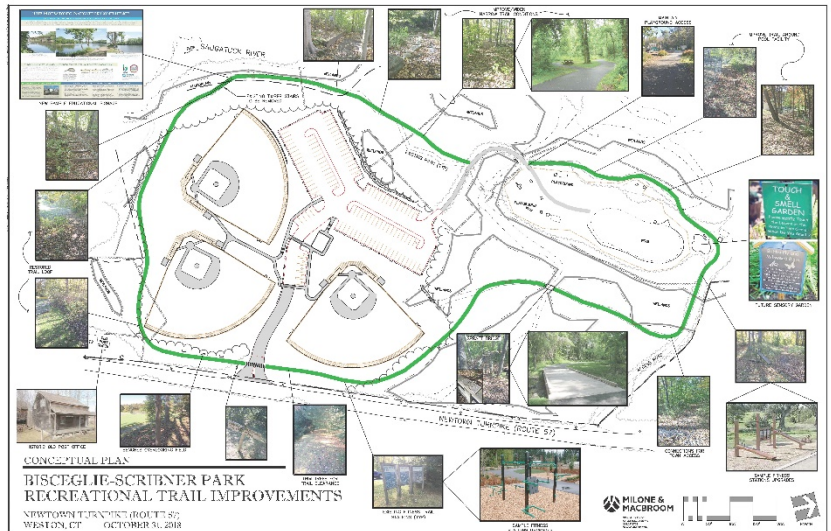
If funded the project would:

- Construct a sidewalk network
- Provide traffic relief on Rt 57 at the entrance to School Rd.
- Improve the intersection at School Rd.
- Create a 150-ft right turn lane on the N-bound Rt 57 approach to School Rd.
- Build a “bump out” on S-bound side to relieve congestion
- Replace traffic light

The town also submitted a Recreational Trails application to improve the trail network in Bisceglie-Scribner Park.

If funded the project would:

- Replace fitness stations with more modern equipment
- Physically improve the trail and reconnect the trail loop

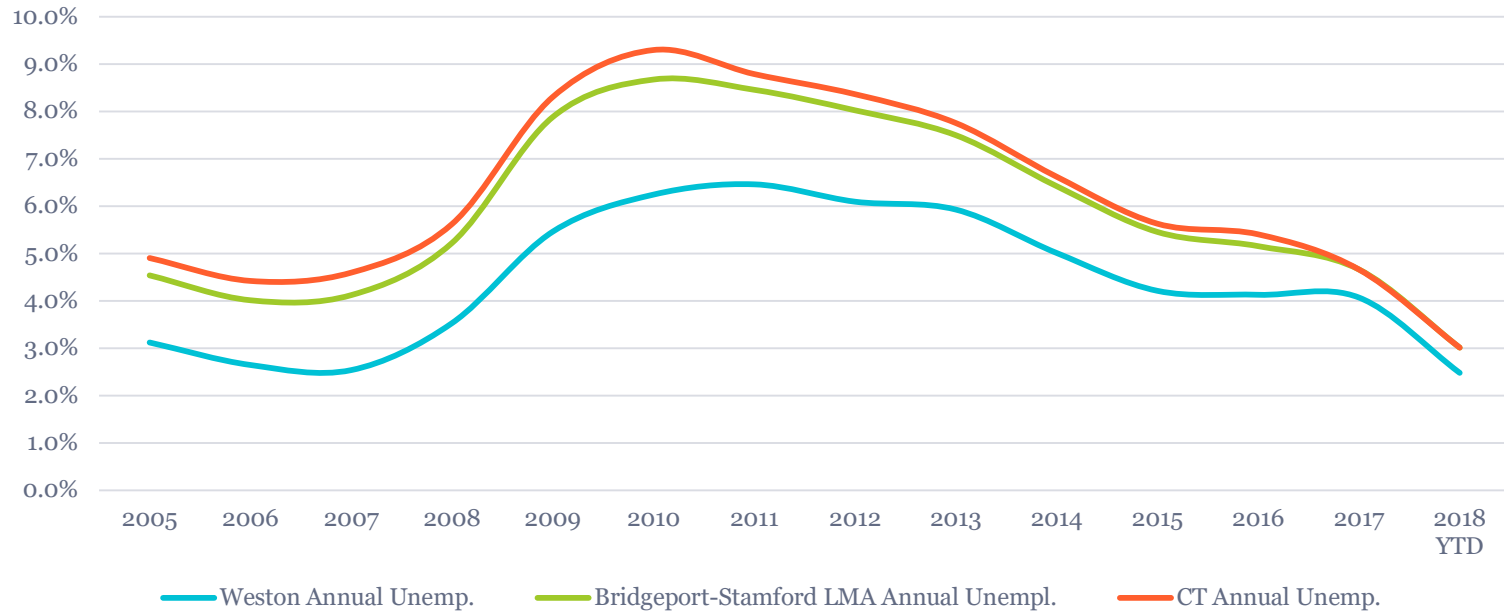


A photograph of a brick building with a parking lot full of cars, with the text "ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT" overlaid in large white letters. The building has a gabled roof and several windows. The parking lot is paved and contains several vehicles, including a silver SUV, a dark sedan, a silver sedan, a grey sedan, a white pickup truck, a dark SUV, and a dark pickup truck. The background shows green trees and a blue sky with light clouds.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

EMPLOYMENT

Weston and CT Unemployment Rates, 2005 - 2018 YTD



Source: CT Department of Labor

- Weston unemployment rate is historically lower than the Bridgeport-Stamford LMA and Connecticut State Unemployment Rates
- Unemployment in Weston has decreased from a high of 6.5% in 2011 to 3% in 2018

WESTON EMPLOYMENT SECTORS

Industry (2017)	Units	Annual Average Employment	Total Annual Wages	Annual Average Wage
Total - All Industries	326	1,251	\$88,008,845	\$70,332.06
Construction	13	41	\$2,817,025	\$69,129.45
Wholesale Trade	43	61	\$11,005,654	\$180,914.86
Information	23	23	\$4,244,037	\$183,195.84
Finance & Insurance	21	36	\$5,250,360	\$147,897.46
Real Estate, Rental & Leasing	3	3	\$443,222	\$136,376.00
Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services	66	69	\$6,856,845	\$99,254.69
Management of Companies & Enterprises	5	5	\$710,154	\$137,449.16
Admin. & Support & Waste Mgmt. & Remed. Services	11	27	\$2,993,381	\$110,524.84
Health Care & Social Assistance	7	25	\$741,639	\$30,270.98
Other Services (except Public Administration)	79	109	\$3,595,930	\$33,142.21
Unclassified establishment	3	2	\$125,000	\$83,333.33
Local Government	10	524	\$38,188,181	\$72,947.81

Source: CT Department of Labor

- 42% of workers in Weston are employed by the local government
- Service sectors are also large employers

PRINCIPAL EMPLOYERS

Sector	Units	Employment, 2017
All Industries	327	1,236
Construction	14	43
Wholesale Trade	47	63
Retail trade	8	95
Other Services (except Public Admin.)	84	116
Total Government	10	514

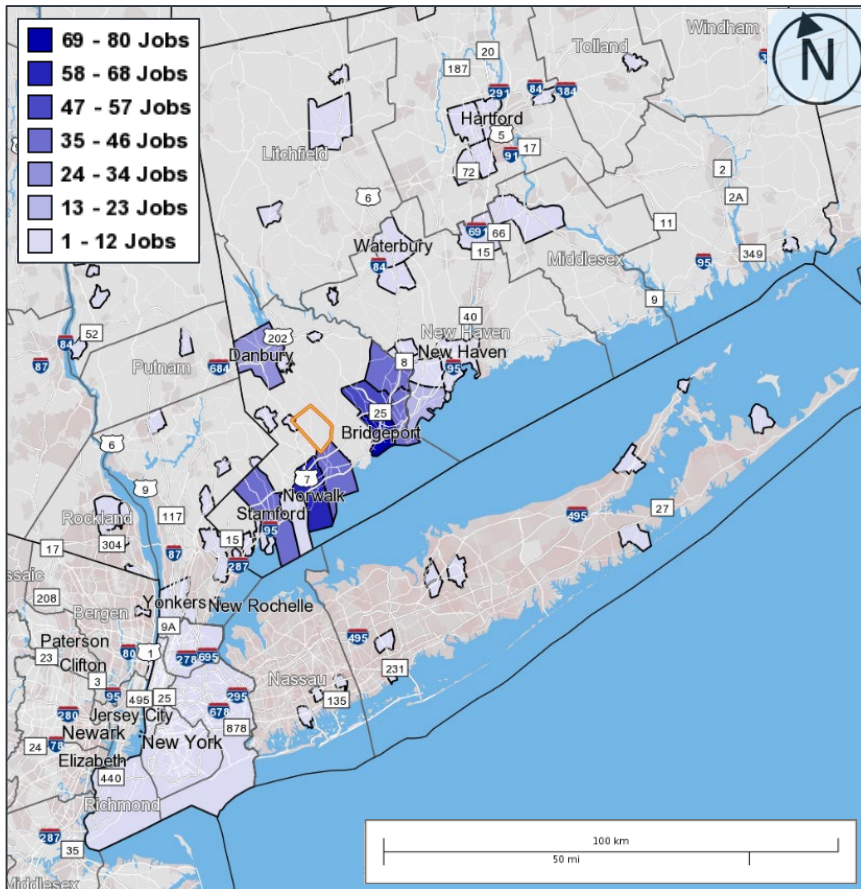
CERC Town Profiles, 2017

Major Employers, 2016
Weston Board of Education
Aspetuck Valley Country Club
Fairfield County Bank
Town of Weston
Peters Market

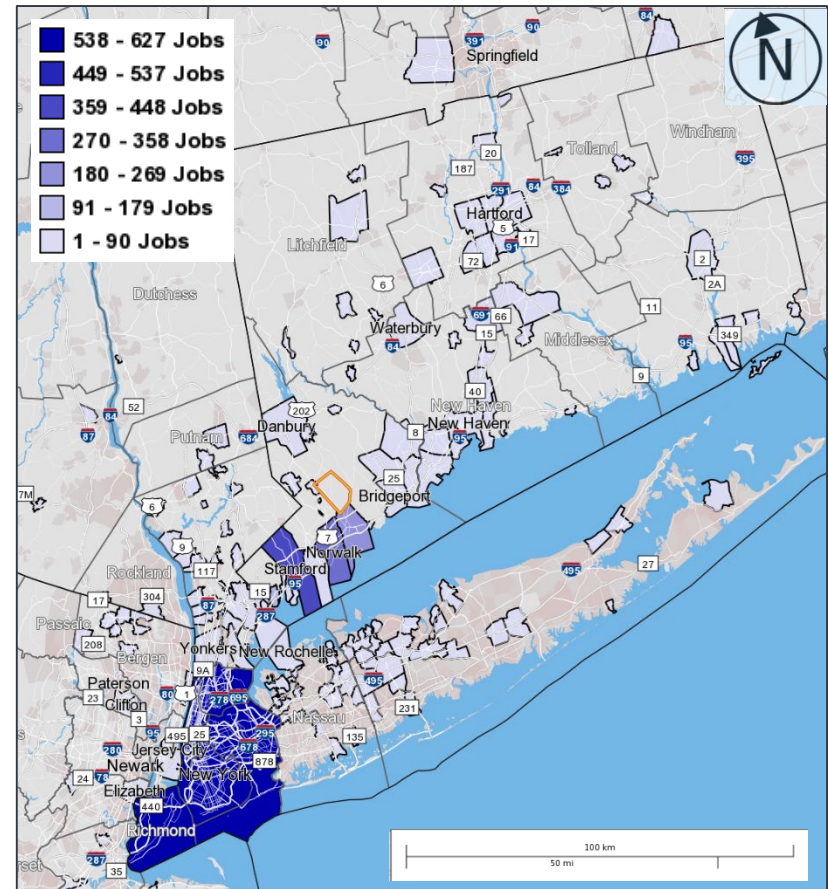
- No major changes since the 2010 POCD

COMMUTER TRENDS

Where do Weston Workers live?



Where do Weston Residents Work?



- Workforce primarily commutes to Weston along the I-95 corridor and along the Route 7 corridor

- Weston residents primarily commute to New York City and Lower Fairfield County.

COMMUTER TRENDS

Travel Mode to Work (2016)		
Travel Mode	Number	Percent
Drove alone	3,116	67%
Car or van pool	169	4%
Bus	0	0%
Rail	526	11%
Walk or Bike	40	1%
Other	22	<1%
Worked at Home	775	17%
Total	4,648	100%

Travel Mode to Work (2010)		
Travel Mode	Number	Percent
Drove alone	2,739	65%
Car or van pool	72	2%
Bus	9	0%
Subway or elevated	42	1%
Rail	733	18%
Walk or Bike	61	1%
Other	33	<1%
Worked at Home	499	12%
Total	4,188	100%

Sources: ACS 2016, Census 2010

- According to the US Census and the American Community Survey, there has been a large increase in the number of employed residents between 2010 and 2016 corresponds with improved economic conditions
- 71% of residents commute to work in a car
- Most also drive alone
- 11% of residents commute by rail
- **17% of residents work at home**
 - Much higher than Fairfield County,(5.7%) and CT (4.6%) rates.

INCOME

Median Households Income

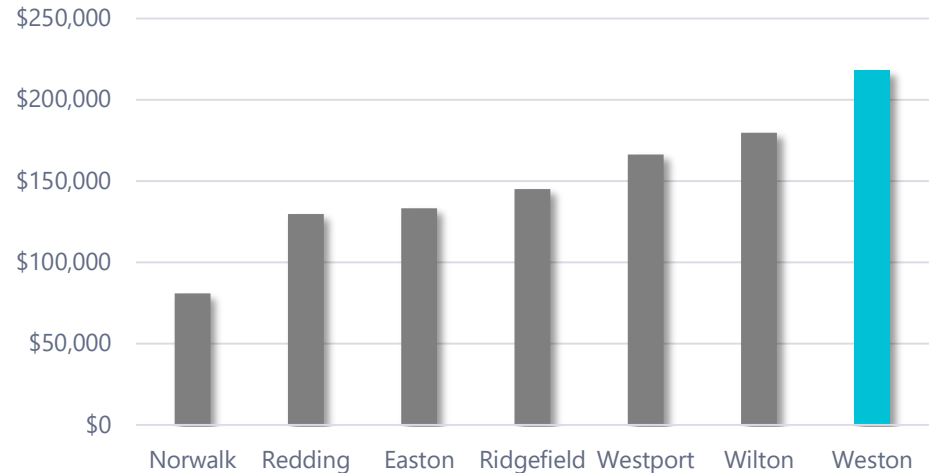
All Households: \$218,152

Family Households: \$250,000+

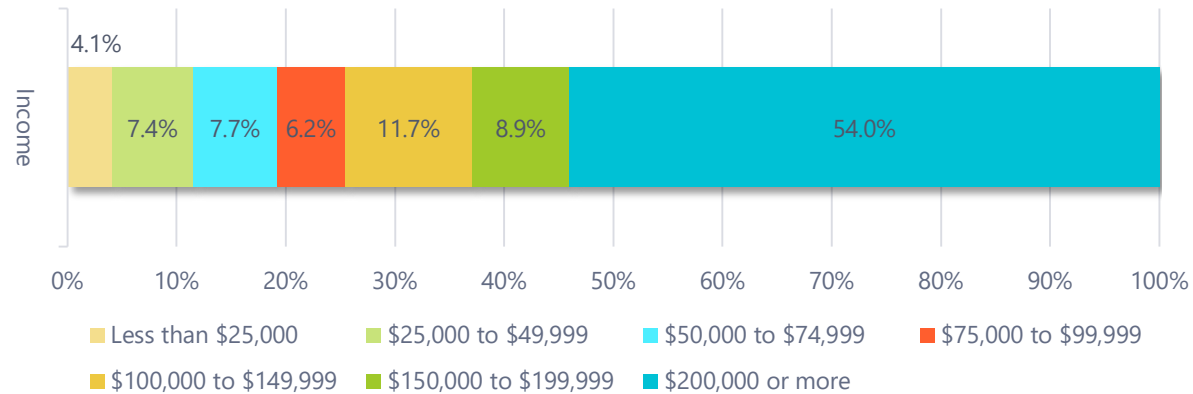
Non-Family Households: \$55,956

- Median Household Income in Weston is about 200% higher than state median, and is higher than neighboring towns,
- Median income for family households is more than quadruple that of non-family households (single people, unrelated persons living together).

Median Income for All Households 2016



Household Income Distribution in Weston, 2012-2016

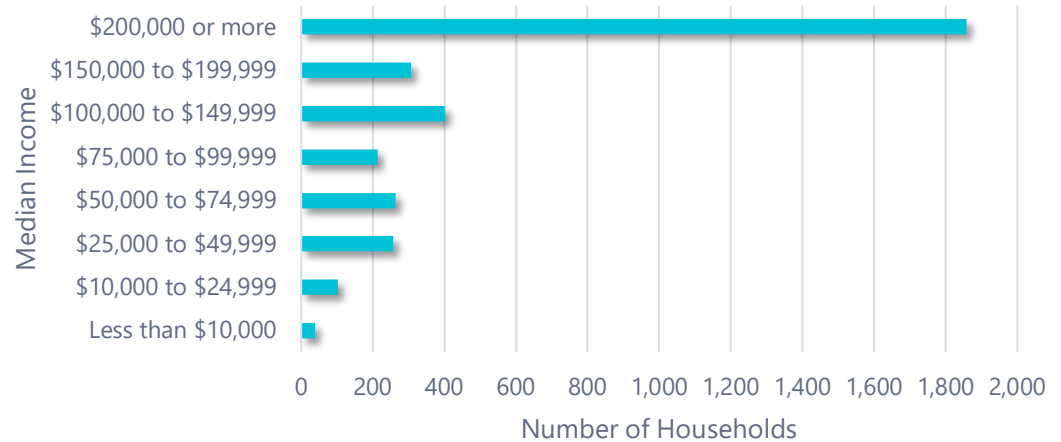


Source: 5YR American Community Survey 2016

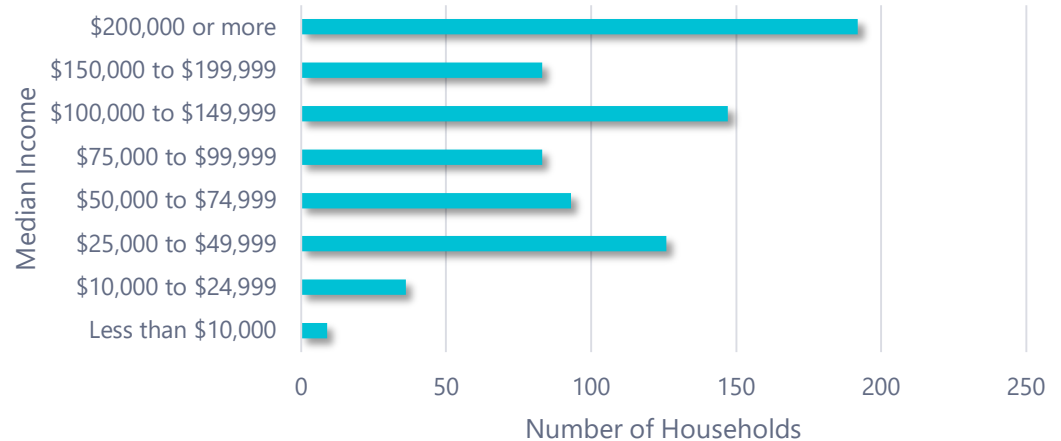
INCOME

- More than half of households earn more than \$200,000 per year
- Median Household Income for seniors is \$105,991
- Over 20% of senior (65+) households make less than \$50,000 per year
- Income does not include assets or equity

Household Income Distribution, 2016



Income Distribution of Householders 65+, 2016



Source: 5YR American Community Survey 2016

MUNICIPAL FISCAL INDICATORS

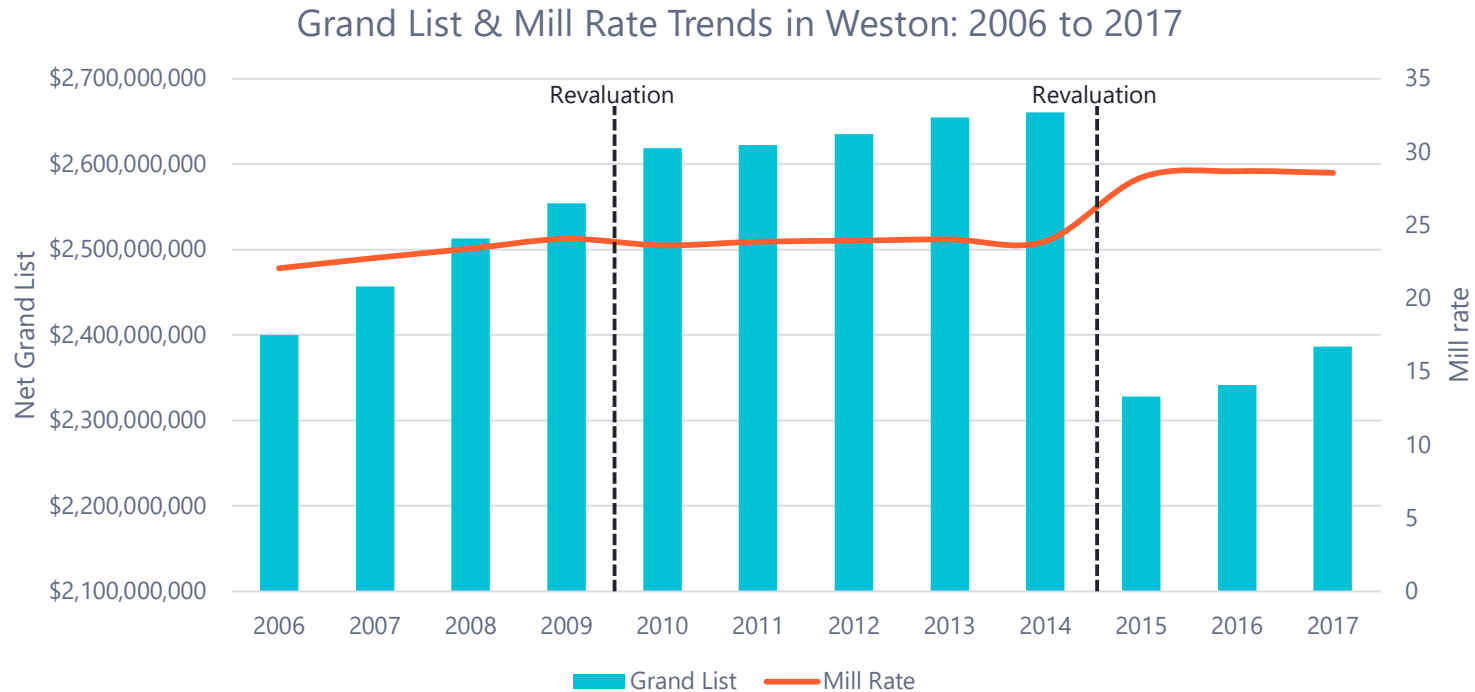
Debt Per Capita for Weston and Neighboring Towns, GLY 2015



- Weston has \$4,552 in debt per capita – higher than the state average and many neighboring towns
- As of November 2017, Weston had AAA bond rating from Moody.

Source: Connecticut Office of Policy and Management
Municipal Fiscal Indicators Fiscal Years Ended 2012 to 2016
Published December, 2017

MUNICIPAL FISCAL INDICATORS

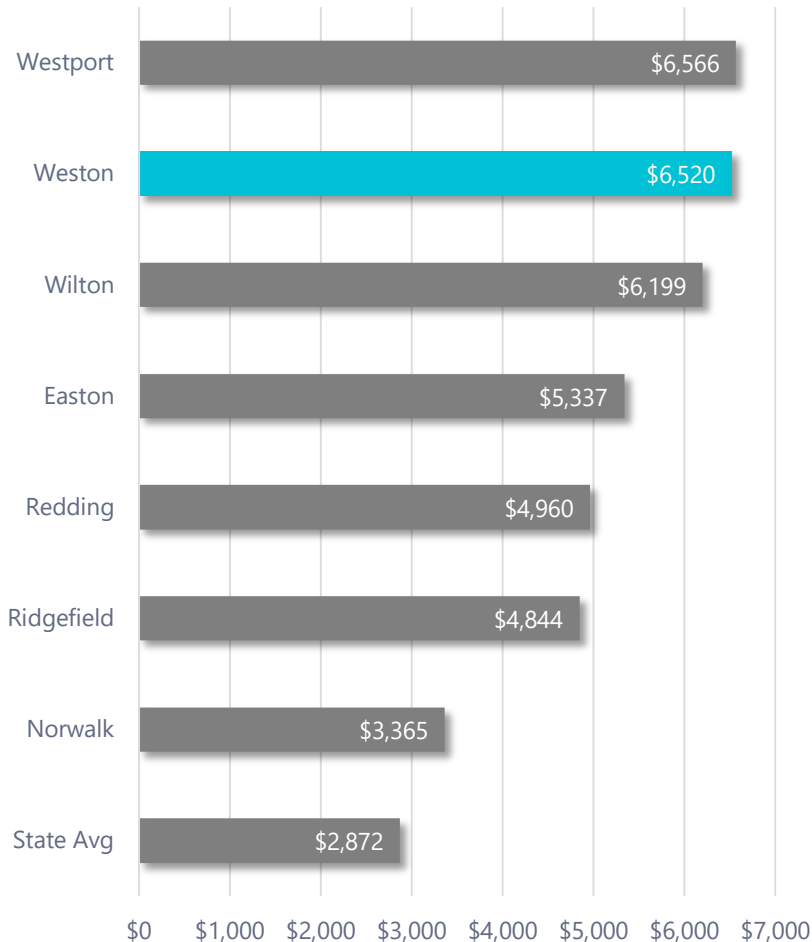


Source: Connecticut Office of Policy and Management, Municipal Fiscal Indicators

- Strong correlation between property values and mill rate.
 - Revaluation completed in 2014 led to a large fluctuation in valuation and mill rate.
- Grand List grew 2% between 2016 and 2017

MUNICIPAL FISCAL INDICATORS

Property Tax Levy Per Capita FYE16



- Per capita tax levy is \$6,520 - well above state average of \$2,872, and the 2nd highest in the state
- Third highest mill rate of surrounding towns, higher median home values raise overall tax burden on the “average” home

Municipality	FY19 Mill Rate	Median Home Value**	Estimated Taxes on Median Home Value
Redding	31.72	\$603,300	\$13,396
Easton	31.38	\$629,200	\$13,821
Weston	29.39	\$857,700	\$17,645
Wilton	28.1875	\$812,100	\$16,024
Ridgefield	27.78	\$673,900	\$13,105
Norwalk*	26.605	\$416,800	\$7,762
Westport	16.86	\$1,087,700	\$12,837

*Residential district with garbage pickup

** ACS 5-Year Estimates 2016

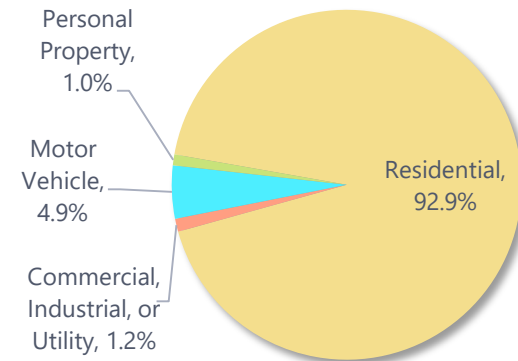
Source: Connecticut Office of Policy and Management (OPM)
2017 Grand List Year 2019 Fiscal Year

Source: Connecticut Office of Policy and Management (OPM)
Municipal Fiscal Indicators Fiscal Years Ended 2012 to 2016
Published December, 2017

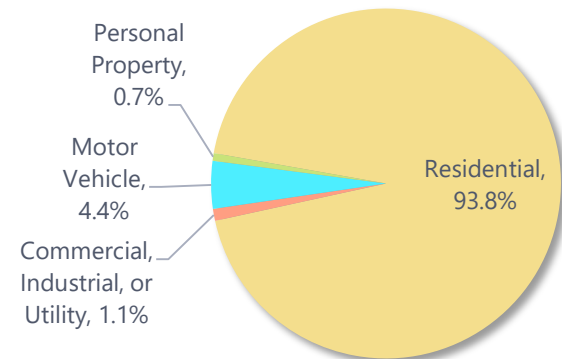
TAX BASE

- Grand List composition is much more reliant on residential than the state average (79%)
- Between Grand List Year (GLY) 2011 and 2015, commercial, industrial, and utilities increased from 1.1% to 1.2% of the Grand List
 - During same time period, residential uses decreased from 93.8% to 92.9% of the Grand List
- 7.8% of Grand List is tax exempt
- Weston's Equalized Net Grand List* (ENGL) per capita is \$342,981, which is ranked 11th in the state and is higher than all neighboring towns

Weston Grand List Composition (GLY 2015)



Weston Grand List Composition (GLY 2011)



*ENGL is a ratio of assessment to market value calculated from real estate sales

Source: Connecticut Office of Policy and Management
Municipal Fiscal Indicators Fiscal Years Ended 2012 to 2016
Published December, 2017

TAX BASE

TOWN OF WESTON COMMERCIAL TAXPAYERS: 2017

Top Five Grand List (2017)	Amount
Connecticut Light & Power	\$19,640,000
Aspetuck Valley Country Club Inc.	\$10,532,540
Financial Serv Veh Trust	\$8,000,747
Aquarion Water Company of CT	\$6,631,180
Toyota Lease Trust	\$6,463,602
Net Grand List (SFY 2015 – 2016)	\$2,341,794,069

CERC Town Profiles, 2017

In 2012:

1. Connecticut Light and Power Inc.
2. Aspetuck Valley Country Club
3. Aquarion Water
4. Weston Shopping Center
5. Benenson family LLC

CT Data Collaborative

REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Overall CEDS Goals:



Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

Projects Impacting Weston Mentioned in CEDS:

- Regional Transit Service Plan
- Coordination Plan for Industry Needs for Higher Education
- Regional Tourism Development and Marketing Plan
- Regional Agricultural Viability Study

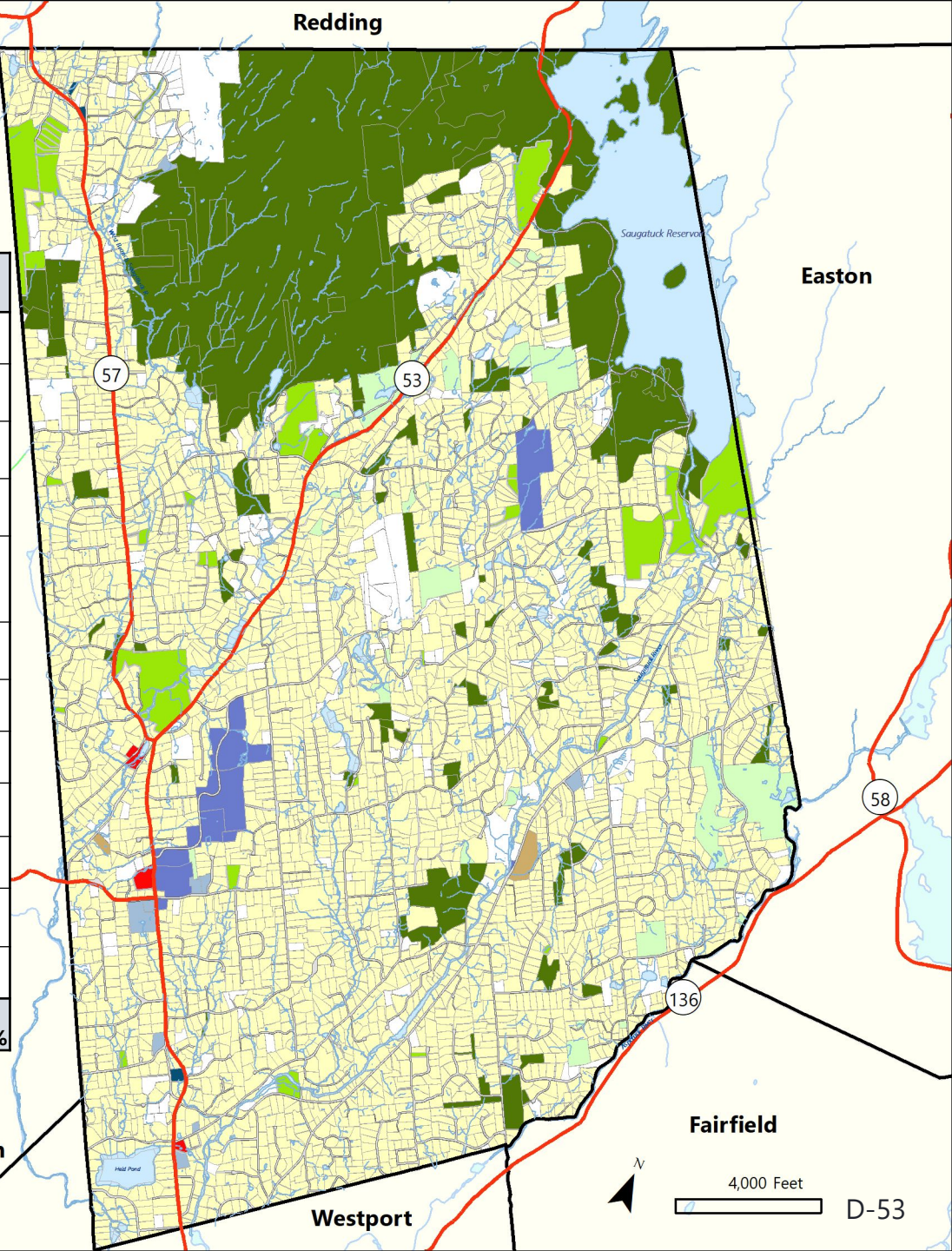


LAND USE & ZONING

DRAFT

Existing Land Use Weston, CT

Legend	Land Use Category	Land Use Description	Acres	% of Total
	Residential	Family dwellings	7,746.3	58.4%
	Farm	Dirt Road Farm, Viv's Veggies, Well Hills Farm	17.6	0.1%
	Commercial	Weston Shopping Center, Weston Gardens, & 12 Old Mill Rd	14.5	0.1%
	Town Parks & Open Space	Town owned parks & preserved open space	356.6	2.7%
	Conservation & Watershed	State parks, land owned by land trusts, The Audubon Society, & The Nature Conservancy	3,109.5	23.5%
	Private Recreation	Country & field clubs, camps, subdivision common areas	293.6	2.2%
	Cemetery	Cemetery	1.7	0.0%
	Public Uses	Town facilities	176.4	1.3%
	Semi-Public Uses	Churches & other non-profits	36.3	0.3%
	Utility	Connecticut Light & Power	5	0.0%
	Vacant	Land that has not been conserved or improved	781.9	5.9%
	ROW	Roads, rights of way	719.5	5.4%
Total			13,259	100%



Fairfield
4,000 Feet
D-53

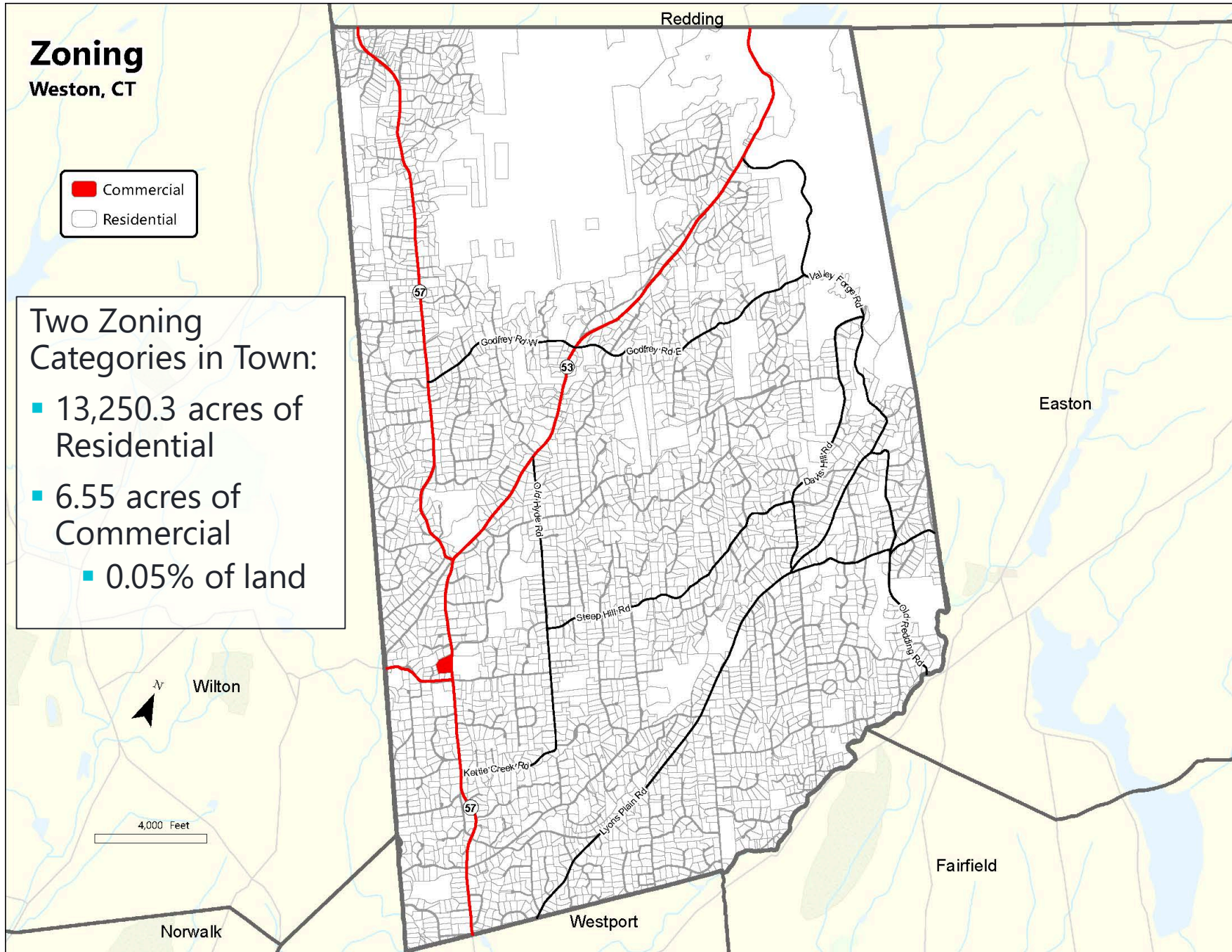
Zoning

Weston, CT



Two Zoning Categories in Town:

- 13,250.3 acres of Residential
- 6.55 acres of Commercial
 - 0.05% of land



WESTON CENTER: EXISTING CONDITIONS

- Mostly level, limited pedestrian and bicycle amenities
- Has local conveniences: schools, town governments, restaurants, retail, post office, other services
- Town is seeking \$1.5 million for intersections and sidewalks in the center
- Comprehensive Master Plan effort will begin in the Spring



Source: Google Maps

POTENTIAL BUILD OUT

- In 2015, it was estimated that there is spaces for 85 new homes in Weston under the current 2 acre zoning*
- Since 2015, there have been 21 net housing starts



*Crafting a Strategic Plan for Weston's Future: Phase 1, 2015



WATER & SEWER

Water Service

Weston, CT

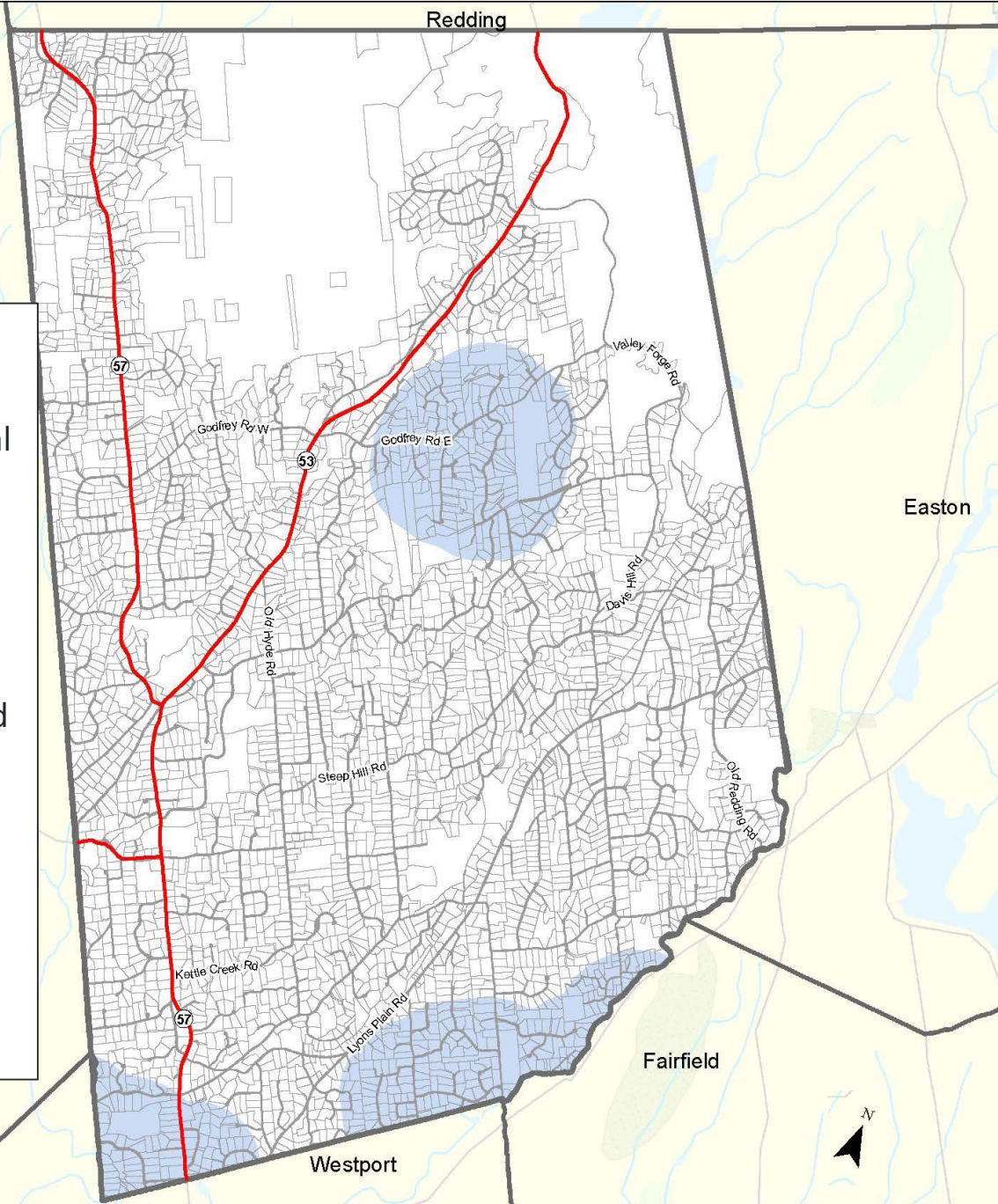
Water Service Area
(CT Dept. of Health)

With few exceptions, Weston households, schools, government buildings and commercial establishments rely on wells

- Weston Water Supply serves 100 people
- Aquarion serves multiple towns and sections of south Weston

Sewer Service

- Weston Schools use an Advanced Treatment Sewer System (ATS) for onsite disposal

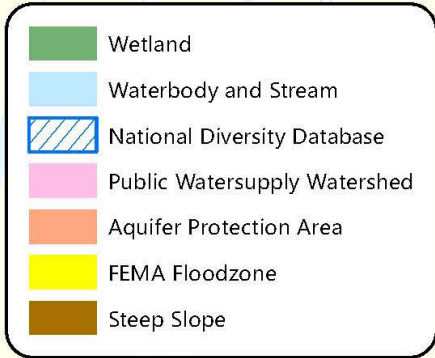




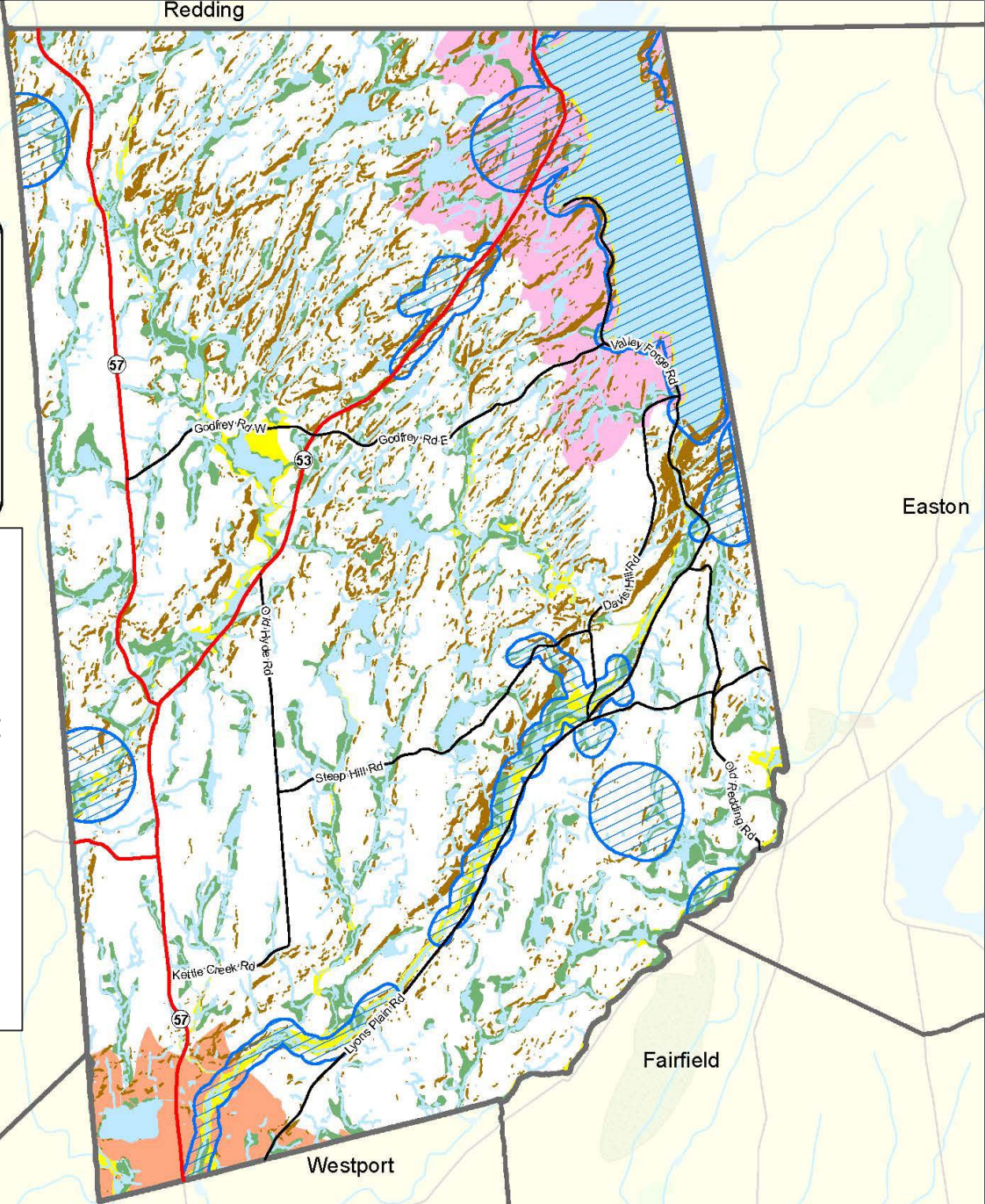
NATURAL RESOURCES

Water Resources

Weston, CT



- Wetlands, slopes > 10%, and other protected spaces limit development
- Flood zones have not changed significantly since 2010 (amended in 2014 and 2017)
- Saugatuck River newly classified as a Natural Diversity Area since 2010

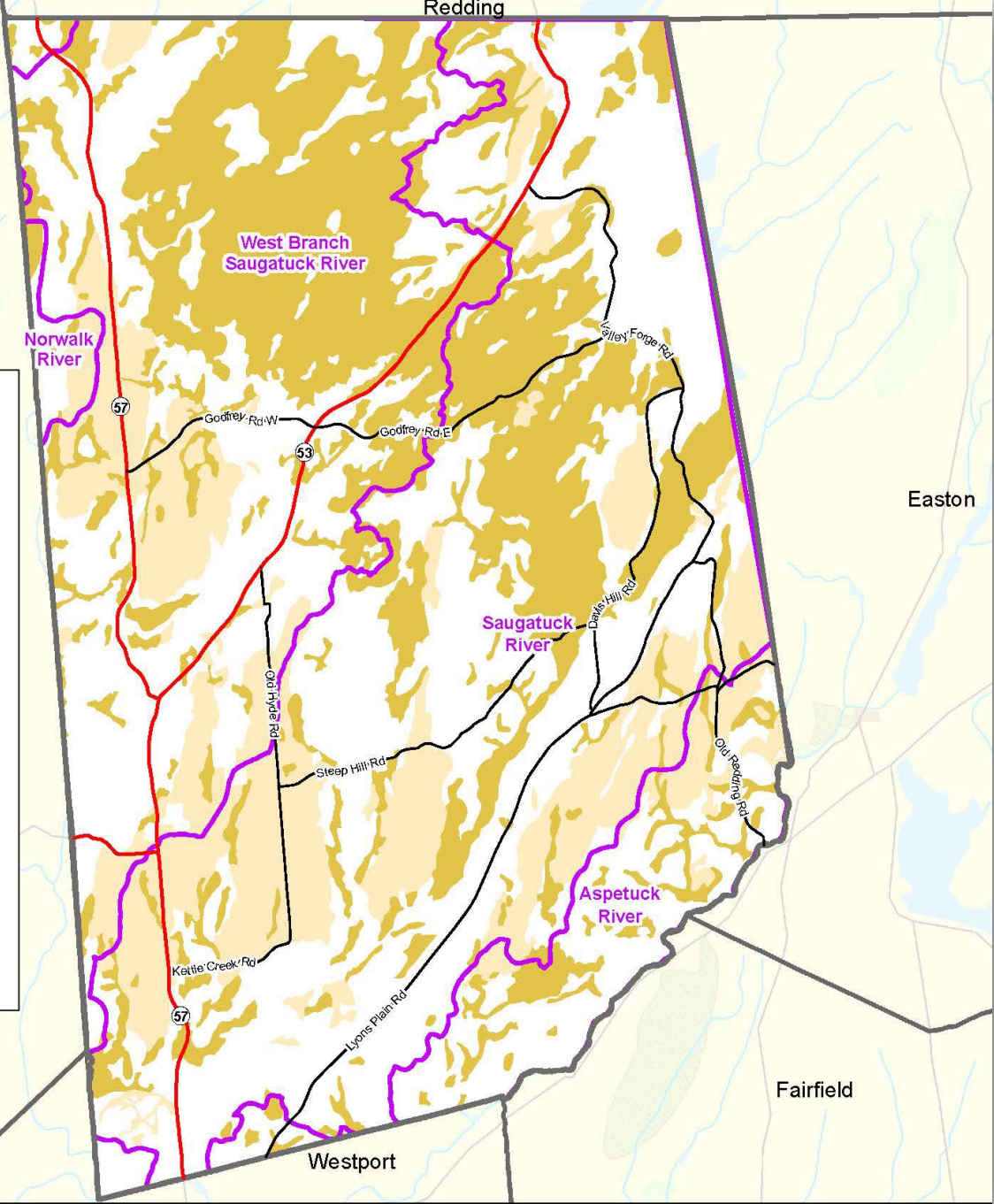


Hydrologic Soils

Weston, CT

- Well or Very Well Draining
- Somewhat Restricted
- Restricted or Very Restricted
- Watershed Boundary

- Soils is categorized based on its runoff potential
- 3,887.4 acres of Restricted/ Very Restricted Soil
 - 29.3% of land
- 6,956.8 acres of Well or Very Well Draining (Including Water)
 - 52.5% of land



2016 HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN

Severe storms and flooding pose the greatest threats to Weston

- Winter storms impact roofs and tree limbs, resulting in debris and power outages
- Tropical storms and summer storms with heavy rain and wind have been observed to generate debris and cause minor to moderate flooding

Key Recommendations:

- Elevate critical systems in wet and flood prone areas
- Update Weston Environmental Resource Manual
- Start water monitoring program
- Create Stormwater management system
- Assess vulnerability of existing critical facilities
- Develop a Capital Plan for Fire Ponds and Hydrants, and maintain existing
- Improve telecommunication infrastructure and emergency communications
- Procurement of emergency backup power

WATER RESOURCES: MS4 PLAN

The Town MS4 plan is underway and is working to address the 6 minimum control measures with the best management practices. However, lack of funding from state remains a challenge to fully implementing the MS4 Plan.

1. Public Outreach and Education

Disseminate Educational Brochures, Fact Sheets, Videos, Newspaper Articles, Publications, host seminars & Workshops, Household Hazardous Waste Days and Catch Basin Stenciling.

2. Public Involvement and Participation

Implement a public involvement and participation program, public meetings and compliance with Local Public Notice and FOI requirements.

3. Illicit Discharge Detection & Elimination

Map Town Drainage Systems, implement an Illicit Discharge Elimination Program, review ordinance & revisions, and provide Outfall Inspection Monitoring & Training.

4. Construction Site Stormwater Runoff Control

Implement regulation reviews & revisions, develop fact sheets, a plan review, inspection & inspection training.

5. Post-Construction Stormwater Management

Develop post- construction regulations, inspections & maintenance, plan review, and staff training.

6. Pollution Prevention & Good Housekeeping

Train staff, street sweep annually, evaluate the street sweeping program, implement a structured stormwater cleaning program, evaluate stormwater systems for upgrades and repairs and inventory the town facilities & procedures.

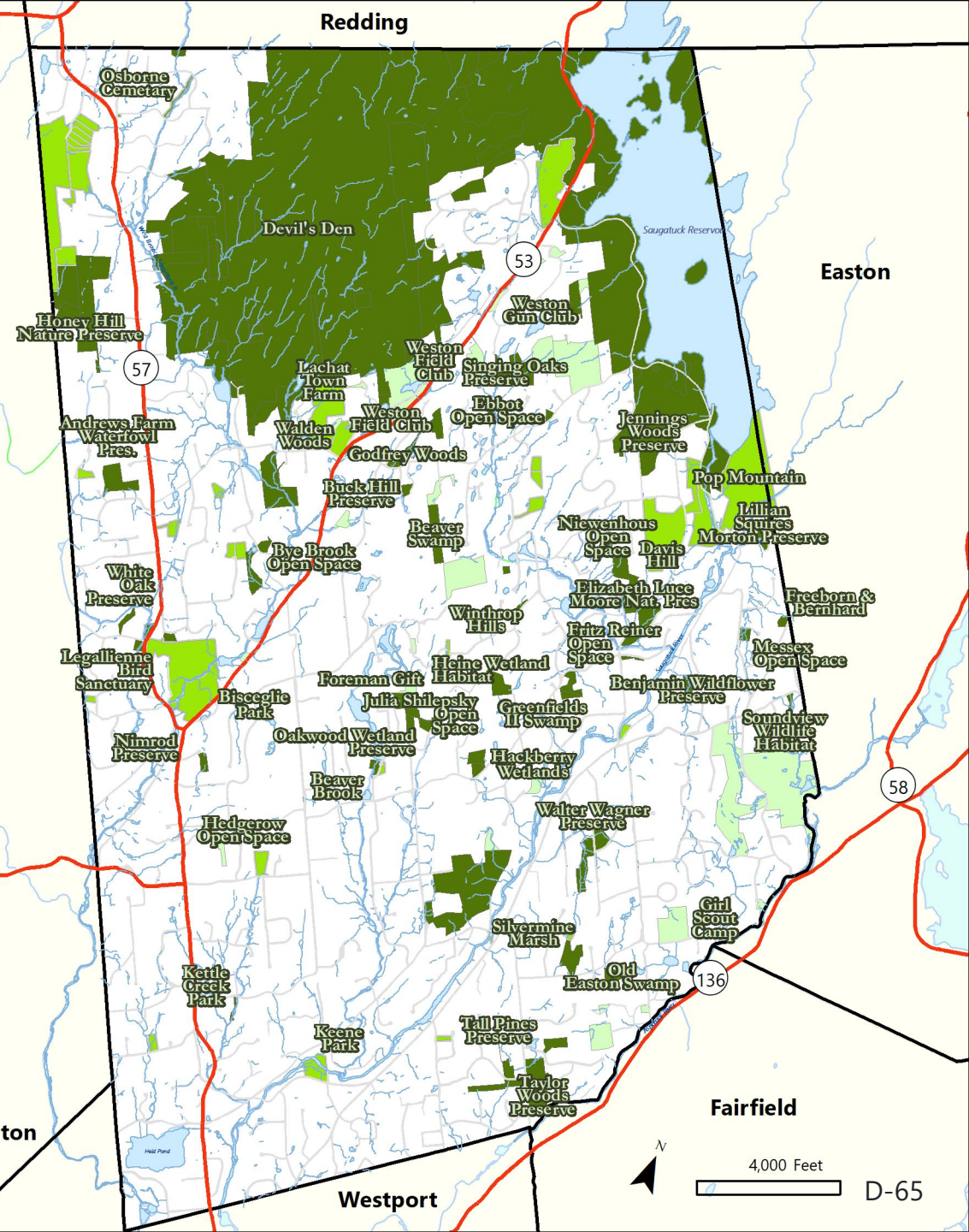


PARKS, OPEN SPACE & RECREATION

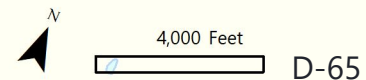
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Open Space Weston, CT

Legend	Land Use Category	Ownership Type\Proposed Definition	Acres	% of Town
	Town Parks & Open Space	Town owned parks & preserved open space	356.6	2.7%
	Conservation & Watershed	State parks, land owned by land trusts, The Audubon Society, & The Nature Conservancy	3,109.5	23.5%
	Private Recreation	Country & field clubs, camps, subdivision common areas	293.6	2.2%
	Cemetery	Cemetery	1.7	0.0%
Total Acres			3,761.4	28.4%



Source: Town of Weston, Aspetuck Land Trust, CT DEEP & The Nature Conservancy



OPEN SPACE ACQUIRED SINCE 2010

- 2018 - Aspetuck Land Trust has completed the purchase of 38 acres of forest in Weston off of Wampum Hill Road, expanding its existing 86-acre Honey Hill Preserve that extends into Wilton
- 2014 - Aspetuck Land Trust was bequeathed 6 acres



Honey Hill Nature Preserve. Photo Courtesy of Dour Elliman Real Estate

WESTON'S RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Parks & Recreation offers a range of services including adult programs, sport camps, and after school programming, utilizing both indoor and outdoor facilities

Active Recreational Facilities

- School Campus
 - 8 diamond fields
 - 6 rectangle fields
 - 6 tennis courts
 - 3 basketball courts
 - 2 play areas
 - 1 track
 - 1 swimming pool
- Morehouse Farm Park
 - 3 diamond fields
 - 5 rectangle fields
- Bisceglie-Scribner Park
 - 3 diamond fields
 - 1 playground
 - Walking & Fitness trail
- Moore Property
 - Dog Park (planned)

Passive Recreational Facilities

- Devil's Den Preserve
- Lachat Town Farm
- Bisceglie-Scribner Park – picnic, playground areas and swimming pond

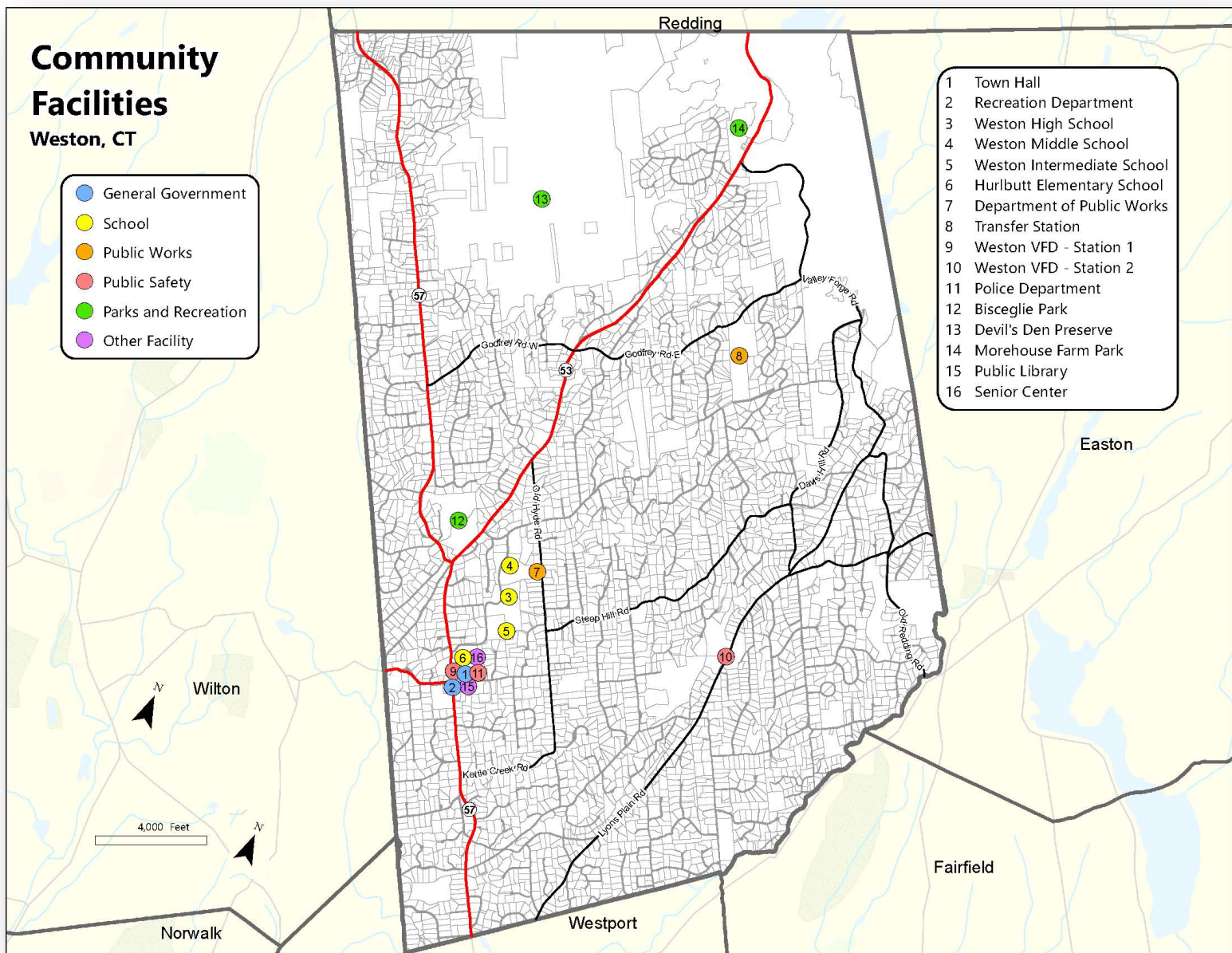


Town of Weston School Campus. Photo Courtesy of Weston Parks and Recreation

A photograph of Weston Intermediate School, a modern brick building with a prominent tower. The building features large glass windows and a covered entrance. The sky is clear and blue. The foreground is a paved plaza with some landscaping.

WESTON INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

COMMUNITY FACILITIES



Source: NE GEO

- Town is seeking improvement to existing EMS and Police Department
- Weston BOE is undergoing School Master Plan

SUSTAINABILITY

Recent Accomplishments

- Virtual Net Metering for Solar. Entered into an agreement with Eversource for a 2 MGW solar farm in eastern CT.
 - 0.5 MGW is going to be added soon.
- Lighting audit was completed for Town buildings
- Town and schools have replaced conventional bulbs with LED lighting in parking lots
- Recently passed a plastic bag ban and a fracking waste ban
- Active Sustainability Commission
 - Invasive species workshop

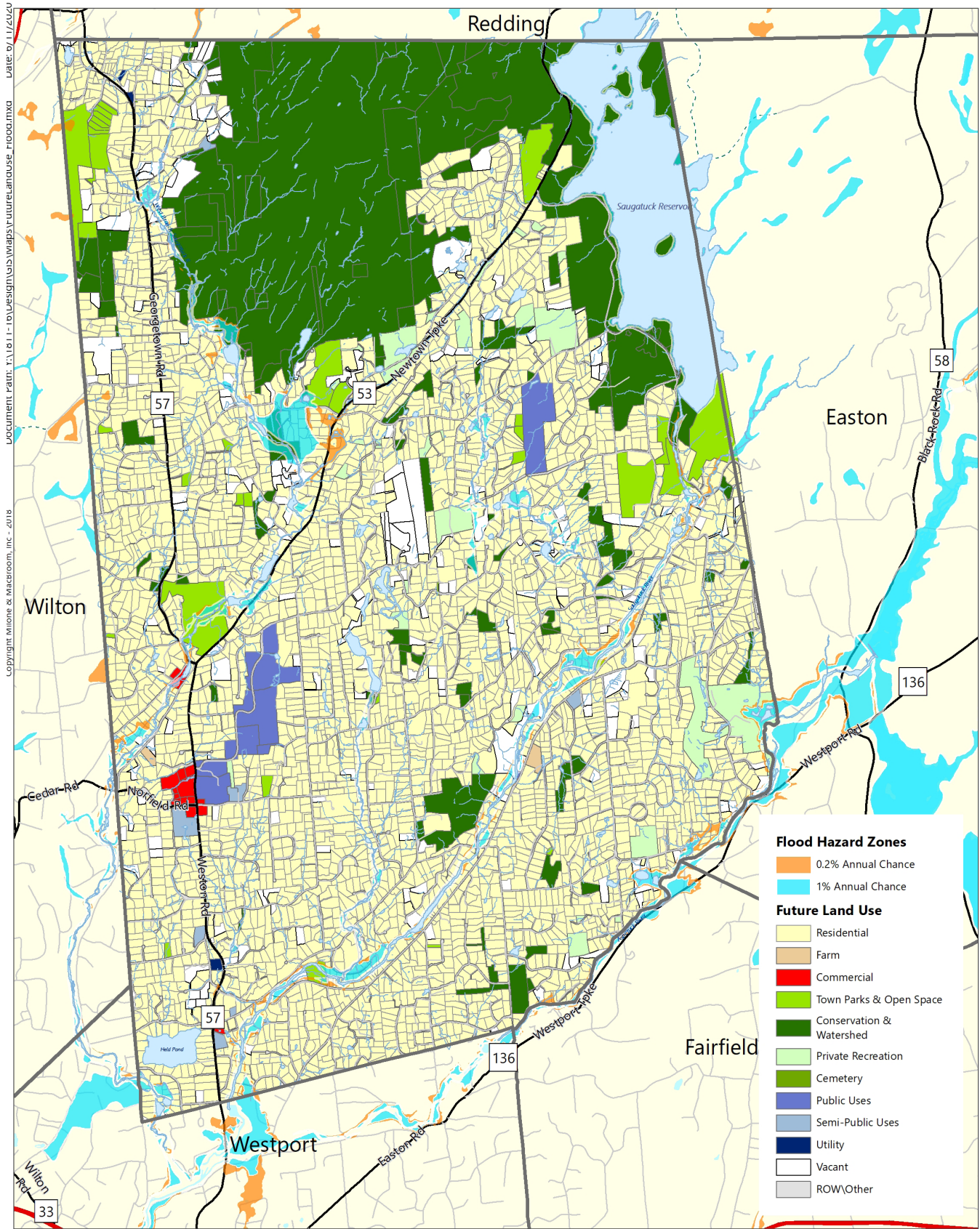


Source: Weston Today

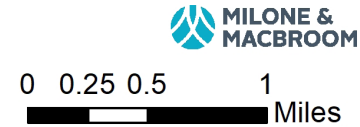
Potential Goals

- Acquire street lights to convert to LED
- SustainableCT Certified in 2019
- EV Charging Station
- Town energy audit

Appendix E: Map & Implementation Guidelines Relating to Sustainability



Sustainability - Future Land Use & Flood Hazard Areas
 Weston Plan of Conservation & Development
 Town of Weston



Document Path: T:\1811-10\design\GIS\mapst\futurelanduse_flood.mxd Date: 9/11/2018
 Copyright Milone & Macbroom, Inc. - 2018

Goal 1: Create a Town Center that fosters community interaction and promotes a high quality of life				
Action	Next Step	Who	When	Resources
<p>Complete Funded Projects Weston has received grant funding from the Local Transportation Capital Improvement Program (LOTICIP) and the Connecticut Community Connectivity Grant Program (CCCGP). The projects funded by these grants will begin constructing the much-needed sidewalk network in the Town Center. It will also provide traffic relief on Weston Road at the entrance to School Road by improving that intersection. This includes creating a 150-foot right-turn lane on the northbound side of Weston Road's approach to School Road and a dedicated left turn for southbound traffic onto School Road, building a "bump out" on the southbound side to relieve congestion, and replacing the traffic light and improving its timing.</p>	<i>To Be determined</i>	Town Staff, Board of Selectmen	Short-term	Staff Time, State and local funding
<p>Implement Elements of the Master Plan for Town Center</p>	<i>To Be determined</i>	Town Staff, Board of Selectmen	Long-Term	Investment, Developers, Community partnerships
Goal 2: Preserve small-town character, natural resources, and open spaces				
Action	Next Step	Who	When	Resources
<p>Maintain the Quality and Utility of Existing Open Spaces Approximately 29% of land in Weston is devoted to open space and recreation. These lands not only contribute to the clean air and water in Weston, but also to the rural perception of the community. Looking toward the future, the Town should continue to maintain these spaces and the recreational facilities in them.</p>	<p>Sustainable Weston and community organizations (Aspetuck Land Trust, Nature Conservancy, etc) should identify threats to these spaces and collaborate on education and events that will enhance the public's interaction with them. Through the connectivity of the different organizations, opportunities to further connect these spaces and enhance wildlife corridors can be found and the town will be involved if needed.</p>	Sustainable Weston; Community Partners	On-going	Volunteer Time
<p>Foster Open Space Connectivity and Wildlife Corridors Linking open space increases ecological benefits and enhances habitats for wildlife. Weston should continue to be involved in regional open space programs like the Aspetuck Land Trust's Green Corridor and the Pollinator Pathway.</p>				
<p>Collaborate with Public and Non-Profit Partners to Protect Environmentally Sensitive Areas Non-profit entities own most of the protected open space in Weston. The Town should continue to communicate and collaborate with these parties to protect lands with high ecological value and to foster appropriate conservation.</p>				

Goal 2: Preserve small-town character, natural resources, and open spaces				
Action	Next Step	Who	When	Resources
<p>Reduce Stormwater Runoff and Non-point Source Pollution to Preserve and Improve Water Quality Weston must comply with State and Federal standards to reduce pollutant discharge from its stormwater system, including the Municipal Separate Stormwater System (MS4). The Town should continue to implement and maintain its current Stormwater Management Plan. The Stormwater Management Plan identifies control measures to prevent and/or treat polluted runoff discharged into Connecticut's water bodies.</p>	<p>Sustainable Weston will work with outside organizations to identify potential pollutants that are commonly used and educate the public on alternatives and work with the town on potential ordinances regarding their use. Engage with CTDEEP and the Health District on suggestion to improve and maintain water quality</p>	<p>Sustainable Weston; Board of Selectmen, Town Administrator, CT DEEP, Weston Westport Health District</p>	<p>short-term</p>	<p>Volunteer Time</p>
<p>Groundwater Quality Nearly all of Weston's population uses wells and relies on the high quality of the groundwater. As of 2019, there is one Level A Aquifer Protection Area (as defined by CTDEEP) in the southwest corner of Weston. The Commission recommends that the Westport Weston Health District consider suggestions that would further encourage the public to maintain the high quality of Weston's well water. Weston should encourage its citizens to minimize the use of toxic pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers that leach into ground water. The Sustainability Committee should, in cooperation with the Westport-Weston Health District, articulate for the public best practices to preserve</p>				
<p>Protect Our Native Trees. Native trees provide critical habitat for our local wildlife and are well suited to thrive in our area with minimal intervention needed. Weston should consider requiring that all new trees planted on Town property be native.</p>	<p><i>Work with town to determine how this could be implemented (e.g. ordinance, voluntary standard). Engage local environmental organizations and arborists</i></p>	<p>Sustainable Weston, Board of Selectmen</p>	<p>short-term</p>	<p>Staff Time Volunteer Time</p>
<p>Commit to Native Plants. The Sustainability Committee should educate the public to create community guidance for landscape design that minimizes the use of pesticides and herbicides and promotes native/naturalized landscapes. This would include guidelines limiting use of pesticides and herbicides. The Town should attempt to ensure that all new plantings on Town-owned properties are at least 70% native species, and prohibit planting of any non-native invasive species. The Sustainability Committee should educate the public regarding managing and removing existing non-native invasive species.</p>	<p><i>Work with town to determine how this could be implemented on town property. Engage local environmental organizations on educating public and on developing guidelines for the town.</i></p>	<p>Sustainable Weston, Parks</p>	<p>short-term</p>	<p>Staff Time Volunteer Time</p>
<p>Engage in Environmentally Friendly Land Management. Town-maintained landscapes and parks should, where feasible, be maintained with minimal fossil-fuel-powered equipment. Where feasible, the Town should (i) as equipment needs to be replaced move to electric powered mowers and blowers, (ii) adopt low-maintenance processes that are better for the environment, such as less frequent mowing, a return to meadow where turf is not needed, no-mow grass where turf is needed, and letting leaves lie where they are in the fall, and (iii) follow organic and IPM standards and practices.</p>	<p><i>Work with town to determine how this could be implemented on town property. Engage local environmental organizations on educating public and on developing guidelines for the town.</i></p>	<p>Sustainable Weston, Parks</p>	<p>short-term</p>	<p>Staff Time Volunteer Time</p>

Goal 3: Increase pedestrian and bicycle connectivity to enhance quality of life				
Action	Next Step	Who	When	Resources
<p>Complete Funded Projects</p> <p>The LOTCIP and CCCGP funding mentioned previously will improve traffic flow and safety in the Town Center for pedestrians and motorists. The implementation of these projects will catalyze momentum for extending the improvements to appropriate areas throughout Town</p>	<i>To Be determined</i>	Town Staff, Board of Selectmen	Short-term	Staff Time, State and local funding
<p>Complete Funded Projects</p> <p>Weston has received grant funding from the Local Transportation Capital Improvement Program (LOTICIP) and the Connecticut Community Connectivity Grant Program (CCCGP). The projects funded by these grants will begin constructing the much-needed sidewalk network in the Town Center. It will also provide traffic relief on Weston Road at the entrance to School Road by improving that intersection. This includes creating a 150-foot right-turn lane on the northbound side of Weston Road's approach to School Road and a dedicated left turn for southbound traffic onto School Road, building a "bump out" on the southbound side to relieve congestion, and replacing the traffic light and improving its timing.</p>	<i>To Be determined</i>	Town Staff, Board of Selectmen	Short-term	Staff Time, State and local funding
<p>Enhance Bicycle & Pedestrian Connectivity</p> <p>Beyond the Sidewalk Master Plan, other areas in Town should be examined to increase connectivity. Areas to be explored for sidewalks include connections to Bisceglie Park, Lachat Farm, and the Historical Society. The desire for biking on Routes 53 and 57 and Valley Forge Road was expressed at the Plan workshops. This may warrant the committee of biking stakeholders further exploring options and recommendations for these ideas.</p>	<i>To Be determined</i>	Town Staff, Board of Selectmen	Short-term	Staff Time, State and local funding
Goal 4: Support and promote sustainability and resiliency				
Action	Next Step	Who	When	Resources
<p>Encourage Sustainable Waste Management Practices. Weston operates its own Transfer Station, which allows the Town a level of influence regarding waste management. In addition to providing sustainable waste management education to the public, the Town should explore expanding the scope of Transfer Station operations to accommodate composting and a "Swap Shop" where residents can leave reusable household items for use by others. There are many successful models of Swap Shops, such as the one in Wellfleet, Massachusetts. The Town may also wish to explore raising the per bag cost of disposal at the Transfer Station to encourage residents to reduce waste and compost at home. The Town may wish to consider publicizing the availability of the transfer Station and the alternatives offered for disposal and recycling of household waste on the Town website. The Town should plan to join HRRRA, a regional waste management group. The Sustainability Committee should educate the public regarding best organic waste practices.</p>	<p><i>Work with town to determine how this could be implemented (e.g. ordinance, voluntary standard). Sustainable weston to review options and help recommend options</i></p>	Sustainable Weston, Public Works	short-term	Staff Time Volunteer Time

Goal 4: Support and promote sustainability and resiliency				
Action	Next Step	Who	When	Resources
<p>Strengthen Resiliency to Climate Change and Improve Disaster Preparedness. Storms and other weather events are becoming increasingly more extreme. To combat the damage these events can inflict on Town functions and facilities, the Town should evaluate our existing infrastructure and, where feasible, modify them to improve our performance. This may take the form, among other projects, of burying powerlines, widening culverts, or trimming and removing trees. We also support the continuation of the Emergency Response Committee to assist in the protection of our citizens in the event of severe weather episodes.</p>	<p><i>To be determined</i></p>	<p>Sustainable Weston, Public Works</p>	<p>medium-term</p>	<p>Staff Time Volunteer Time</p>
<p>Encourage Energy Efficiency and Green Energy Generation The Town should continue to support community efforts to increase public and private use of renewable energies. The Town should analyze the best way forward. As Town buildings are renovated and constructed, energy conservation techniques for design and construction should be considered throughout the process. To assure that the Town stays informed of best management practices, active participation from the Select Committee for Sustainability should be encouraged and welcomed.</p>	<p><i>Sustainable Weston to continue to promote energy efficiency and solar through programming and to support solarize and other similar campaigns. Sustainable Weston to support town implementing further energy efficiency measures in conjunction with eversource</i></p>	<p>Sustainable Weston, Eversource, Town Staff</p>	<p>medium-term</p>	<p>Staff Time Volunteer Time</p>
<p>Continue Virtual Net Metering Program Weston currently participates in a Virtual Net Metering (VNM) program. VNM gives participants energy billing credits for renewable solar electricity generated at a location not physically connected to the account. Weston has recently partnered with the Town of Wilton in a twomegawatt program. This program combines renewable energy, cost savings, and regional partnerships into one successful program. This program should not only be continued, but should also be expanded where feasible.</p>	<p><i>Town with the support of Sustainable Weston to identify other opportunities for VNM or municipally sited solar. Town can take advantage of the CT Green Bank's Solar MAP program.</i></p>	<p>Sustainable Weston, CT Green Bank, Town Staff</p>	<p>medium-term</p>	<p>Staff Time Volunteer Time</p>
<p>Incorporate Low-Impact Development Best Practices into Zoning Low-Impact Development (LID) involves designing and undertaking land development in a way that minimizes the effect of rainwater runoff and contaminants that pollute our water. This may include, where appropriate, limiting the amount of impervious surfaces on a site, encouraging the use of native plants in rain gardens, and rainwater retention. As the Commission reviews zoning for Town Center, incorporating best practices for LID should be an emphasis.</p>	<p><i>Planning and Zoning to engage CCM and CTDEEP on best practices for implementation</i></p>	<p>Planning and Zoning, CCM, CT Deep, Town Staff</p>	<p>medium-term</p>	<p>Staff Time Volunteer Time</p>
<p>Support Electric Vehicle Technology. As Town vehicles reach the end of their natural lives and need to be replaced, serious consideration should be given to a transition to electric vehicles. This can include police cars, school buses, town maintenance vehicles, shuttle buses, and any other vehicles needed. Additional consideration should be given to building infrastructure to support EV charging at the town Administration complex, School Road, and other strategic locations.</p>	<p><i>Sustainable Weston with the support of the Selectmen and the town manager to engage municipal departments to determine when vehicles are due to be replaced.</i></p>	<p>Sustainable Weston, Public Works, other departments</p>	<p>short-term</p>	<p>Volunteer Time Potentially vehicles</p>

Goal 4: Support and promote sustainability and resiliency				
Action	Next Step	Who	When	Resources
<p>Support Toxin Free Building and Maintenance Materials. Where feasible, the Town should use (i) LEED certification guidelines when planning all Town construction projects to promote cost effective, efficient, and non-toxic structures and (ii) eco-friendly, non-toxic cleaners in municipal buildings. The Sustainability Committee should encourage residents and business owners to use such non-toxic cleaners as well.</p>	<p><i>Work with town to determine how this could be implemented (e.g. ordinance, voluntary standard). Engage local environmental organizations and arborists</i></p>	<p>Sustainable Weston, Board of Selectmen</p>	<p>short-term</p>	<p>Staff Time Volunteer Time</p>
Goal 5: Enable housing options for all life stages and lifestyles, while protecting existing community character				
Action	Next Step	Who	When	Resources
<p>Enable the development of quality, attainable housing for Weston’s workforce and senior population</p> <p>The Town Survey and Plan Workshops showed a clear appetite for exploring how to allow for more housing choices in Weston, especially in the Town Center. Over the next decade, the Commission should work to improve housing diversity that is in harmony with Weston’s character and protects its natural resources. To that end, the Commission will review the impact of several zoning strategies, including the analysis of detached accessory apartments, and, in the Town Center, allowing singlefamily homes (attached or unattached) on smaller lots, and allowing second floor apartments. These strategies received a majority of positive reactions from participants in the Town Survey and workshops. Attendees also supported the idea of exploring the possibility of “open space” or “cluster” subdivisions in the remainder of Town. It may be worth reexamining this latter topic before the next Plan.</p>	<p><i>Planning and Zoning Commission to review zoning options</i></p>	<p>Planning and Zoning</p>	<p>Long-term</p>	<p>Staff Time Volunteer Time</p>
Goal 6: Maintain Town services and plan for future trends				
Action	Next Step	Who	When	Resources
<p>Ensure the built environment is accessible to anyone regardless of age, disability, or other factors</p> <p>Ensuring accessibility to public spaces makes Weston welcoming to everyone. It is also critically important especially as Weston ages. As the Town renovates and builds new facilities and infrastructure, compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act is necessary.</p>	<p><i>review municipal buildings to ensure access and review proposed building projects when proposed</i></p>	<p>Town staff</p>	<p>on-going</p>	<p>staff time, incremental funding for access during capital projects</p>
<p>Evaluate and explore opportunities to improve communications infrastructure</p> <p>Trends indicate that more people are opting to work part or full-time from home. To accommodate this desire, communications infrastructure should be upgraded to keep Weston competitive with other communities and provide a vital service to residents. To that end, the Town should prepare for the rollout of 5G service and other subsequent innovations, which will increase internet connection speeds, connectivity, and phone service quality. Exploring opportunities to upgrade, extend, and open the Nutmeg Network to private connections should also be considered in the coming decade.</p>	<p>to be determined</p>	<p>Town staff</p>	<p>on-going</p>	<p>staff time</p>

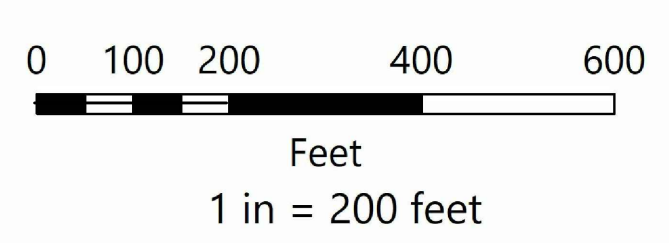
Goal 6: Maintain Town services and plan for future trends				
Action	Next Step	Who	When	Resources
<p>Engage with neighboring communities regarding the sharing of services While the majority of Weston's services received high marks in the Town Survey, some were underutilized. It may benefit Weston to consider combining these services with neighboring towns to improve service quality and save money.</p>	to be determined	Town staff, board of selectmen	on-going	staff time
<p>Collaborate with the Board of Education for facility planning Weston Public Schools recently completed Phase 1a of the School Master Plan. As of this writing, the next phase is underway to evaluate three-school alignment options. This may affect the Senior Center and the Town Center. Collaboration on the subsequent phases will be key to reaching a mutually beneficial plan for the future of these facilities. The Town has established a Facility Optimization Assessment Committee to make recommendations regarding Town facilities generally, including school buildings.</p>	to be determined	Town staff, board of selectmen, Board of Education	on-going	staff time
<p>Anticipate future Town needs regarding new facilities and programs The Commission has already approved a new addition to the public library as well as needed upgrades of our police and EMT facilities, both of which will enhance our Town services for our current and future residents. Other services and facilities should be examined as needed to ensure that they are meeting demand and providing high quality service.</p>	to be determined	town staff, board of selectment, board of finance	on-going	staff time, funding for capital projects

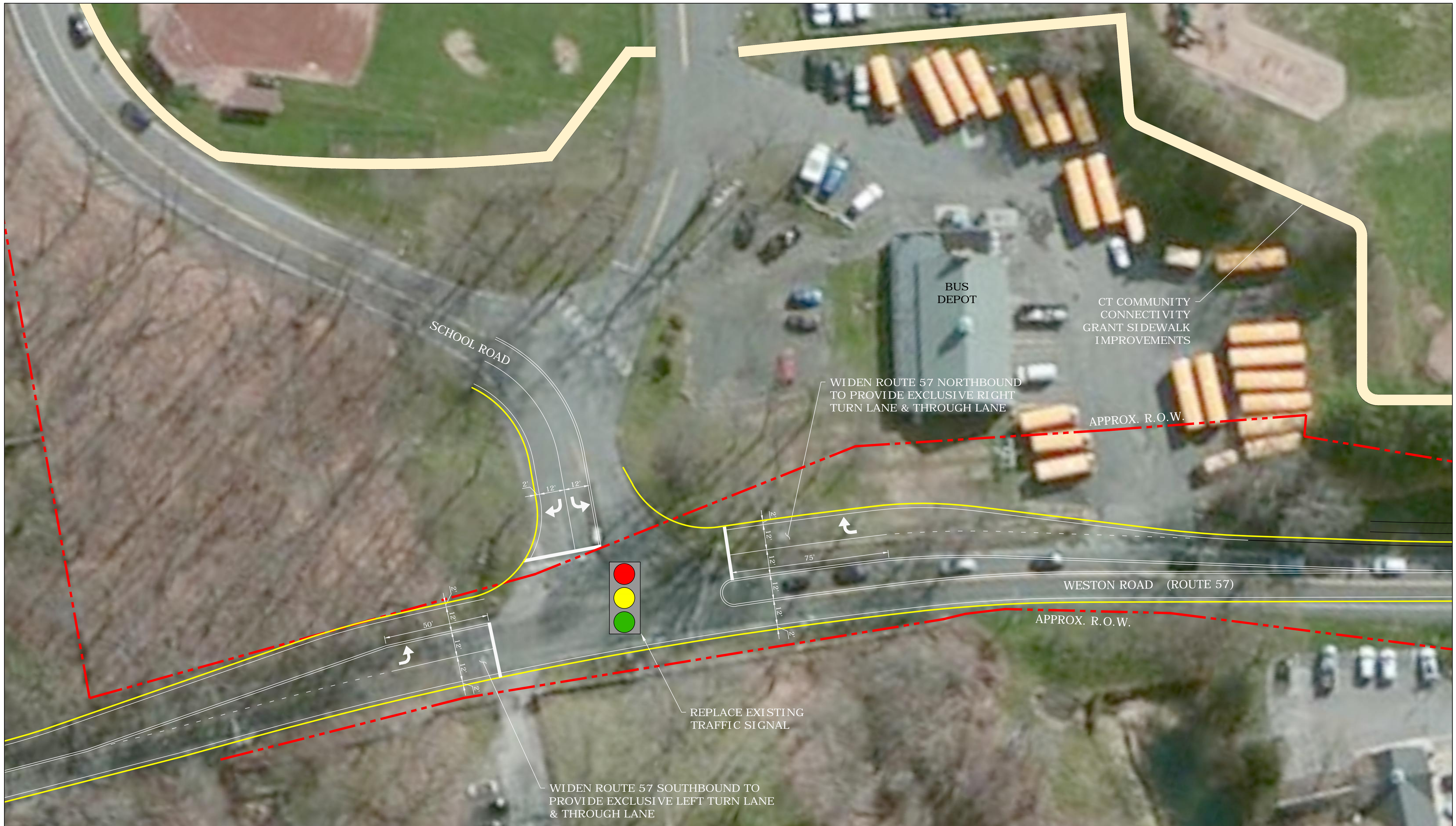
Appendix F: Transportation Improvements Maps & Figures



LEGEND

- 2019 TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES (TA) IMPROVEMENTS (PENDING)
- CT COMMUNITY CONNECTIVITY GRANT IMPROVEMENTS
- LOTCIP INTERSECTION AND PEDESTRIAN SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS
- BISCEGLIE PARK TRAIL AND OUTDOOR CLASSROOM

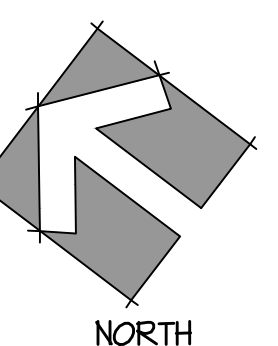
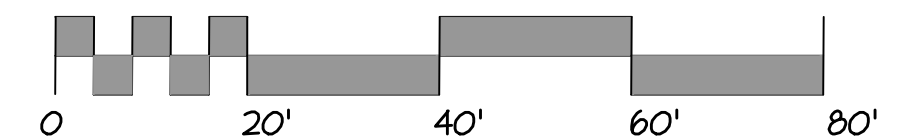




LOTICIP INTERSECTION & PEDESTRIAN SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS
WESTON (ROUTE 57) & SCHOOL ROAD INTERSECTION
 WESTON, CONNECTICUT JUNE 2020

FIGURE 1

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LOTICIP PEDESTRIAN SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS
LORDS HIGHWAY & SCHOOL ROAD
AT REVSON FIELD

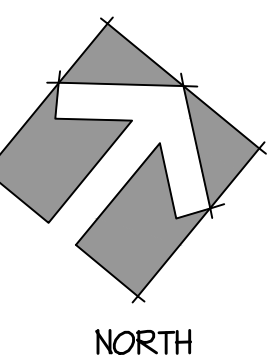
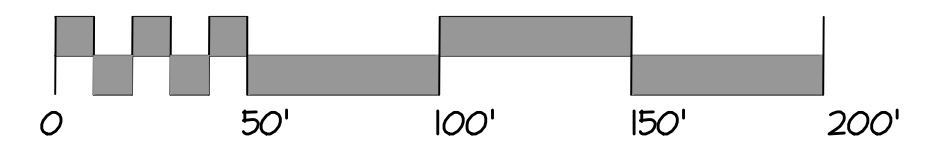
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FIGURE 2





LOTICIP PEDESTRIAN SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS
NORFIELD ROAD

FIGURE 3

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