

Volume I:
Vision,
Goals,
Policies,
Recommendations

City of Waterbury Plan of Conservation and Development

Prepared by

Phillips Preiss Shapiro Associates, Inc.

Wilbur Smith Associates, Inc.

for the City of Waterbury

Adopted by the Waterbury City Plan Commission

on November 9, 2005

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- Over 30 department heads and officials with City government made time to be interviewed, and provided valuable background information that has been critical to the Plan.
- Likewise, representatives of Waterbury Main Street, Waterbury Partnership for Growth, Neighborhood Housing Services, and the Greater Waterbury Chamber of Commerce; as well as individual business people, real estate professionals, and community leaders also provided valuable time and insight.
- The Central Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments has been an invaluable source of plans, reports, data, and research. Their transportation data and plans have formed the backbone for the Circulation chapter in particular.
- The volunteers serving on the Plan of Conservation and Development Steering Committee have devoted countless evenings to review data, formulate a vision, test various recommendations, and oversee the completion of the Plan.
- Finally, the citizens of Waterbury played a crucial role in shaping the plan through their participation in the public workshops and meetings.
- Special thanks go to:
 - Mayor Michael J. Jarjura
 - Steering Committee co-chairs Michael O'Connor and Steve Sasala
 - Waterbury City Planner James Sequin



Introduction

The following represents Waterbury's first full Plan of Conservation and Development since the prior plan was adopted in 1971. The intervening decades have been ones of momentous change for the City. Whole industries have departed, new immigrants have arrived, the economic base has been transformed, and major new investments in highways and infrastructure have been made. Land use patterns in many areas little resemble conditions in 1971. As a result, the City has had to rely upon an outdated road map when formulating policy and making land use and public investment decisions. The purpose of this plan is both to set forth a vision of the future of the City, and to provide a comprehensive and up to date framework for public decision making.

While the laws of most states refer to plans such as this one as a "Master Plan" or "Comprehensive Plan," the State of Connecticut has chosen the terminology "Plan of Conservation and Development." This is reflective of the dual yet intertwined purposes the plan is intended to promote: development, in appropriate areas, to meet the needs of the population for housing, jobs, goods, services and culture; and conservation, to preserve for future generations the considerable natural heritage of the State. While Waterbury is an older urban area that is significantly built out, it also is home to parks, lakes, rivers and open spaces—as well as historic buildings and neighborhoods—worthy of protection and preservation. This plan therefore seeks to balance development and conservation with the future economic and social health of the City in mind.

The vision, goals, policies and specific recommendations of the Plan have evolved as part of an extensive public and stakeholder outreach effort and under the oversight of a Steering Committee consisting of representatives of government, business, not-for-profits, the Central Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments, and citizen's groups. The Plan therefore represents a distillation of, and response to, the concerns and aspirations of Waterbury's residents.

The Plan is divided into two volumes. Volume I contains the introduction, the vision statement, a statement of goals and policies, and the detailed recommendations by topic area. Volume I

can be thought of as “the Plan.” Volume II contains the Community Assessment, which consists of all the background studies that serve as the factual and statistical basis for the Plan. Volume II is intended to serve as a resource document providing a detailed statistical snapshot of the City as of the time of writing.

The remainder of this document has the following structure. Chapter 1 contains this introduction as well as a brief history of Waterbury, and background regarding the planning process for the Plan of Conservation and Development. Chapter 2 presents the overall guiding Vision for the Plan, as well as specific Goals and Policies intended to implement the Vision. Chapters 3 through 8 present detailed Recommendations on the following topics: Land Use; Redevelopment; Circulation; Economic Development; Parks, Recreation and Open Space; and Infrastructure and Schools. Chapter 9 concludes by relating the Plan to the regional and state Plans of Conservation and Development; as well as examining the implications for affordable housing and other statutory requirements for the Plan.

This plan has been drafted at a time that Waterbury is facing enormous challenges, yet is also poised to take advantage of equally significant opportunities. It is hoped that this document will serve to guide the City in taking advantage of these opportunities over the coming decade.

Waterbury Yesterday and Today

A Brief History of Waterbury

Waterbury has had a colorful history¹. The river valley provided the native people with hunting grounds, who called the area “matetacoke.” Original settlers interpreted the name “Mattatuck” which remained until the township was recognized by Connecticut in 1686.

The original settlement of Waterbury was established in 1674 by way of Farmington, its mother town. Thirty-one families held the settlement on what is now the Town Plot neighborhood. A Proprietor’s Agreement was executed with the Indians that allowed the purchase of a township six miles by ten miles in size.

The area proved difficult for habitation, with poor soils and annual floods. The King Philip’s War drove settlers back to Farmington after the first year with a return in 1677. A Proprietor’s Committee laid out the land with a focus on the central green and transferred ownership to individuals. The land transfers ended in 1720 with the remaining land owned by the Town of Waterbury.

Governance commenced in 1681 with Townsmen, the precursor to Selectmen. The Mattatuck name was given up for Waterbury on May 15, 1686, the 28th township in the Colony at the time.

Through the 18th Century Waterbury grew slowly. By the 1750s it had 1,800 inhabitants. One

1. This historical narrative has been adapted from the City’s 1999 *Community Assessment Report*, by Buckhurst Fish & Jacquemart, Inc.



Waterbury's economic importance is evident by its many striking and historic buildings.

hundred years later approximately 5,000 people lived in the town. At the same time, Waterbury's geographic size decreased due to breakaway political activity, giving up land to Watertown in 1780, Plymouth in 1795, Wolcott in 1796, Middlebury in 1807, Prospect in 1827, and Naugatuck in 1844.

The Brass City title began to be established in the late 1700s. A fifteen percent tariff on brassware was established in 1794, reactionary to industry domination by England. The incentive allowed a small group of manufacturers to develop the brass production technology locally. Local button makers were the first to turn to brass for their principal material. In the 1820s, skilled Englishmen were

hired and machinery was brought over from England, allowing greater production and further brass strongholds. The American Pin Company acquired the rights to crucial parts enabling the creation of a pin making machine. The Waterbury Clock Company saw the demand for cheap clocks produced nearby and began producing them within the City.

Two companies were largely responsible for ensuring that Waterbury was the mainstay of the brass industry. The Benedict and Burnham company was a button manufacturer and began to produce the product in brass early on. The Scovill Company was the first in the City to roll brass from old copper kettles. Scovill hired their Englishman, James Croft, for his brass producing know-how. These two mills allowed many others to learn the craft and continue the City's manufacturing growth.

The growth of the industry required a great amount of human power. Immigrants were attracted to jobs in the brass mills. They took up residence in boarding houses, often sharing beds, clustered on the hills within walking distance of the factories. Workers were largely housed in two-, three- and four-story apartment walkup dwellings. More characteristic of Waterbury than other New England cities, worker households inhabited predominantly three-story buildings with three decks of porches. These "triple-deckers" had a proud face to the street and many are still in good repair, especially in the Hopeville and Town Plot Hill neighborhoods of the City. Unfortunately, other neighborhoods have witnessed the units deteriorating.

The brass industry and Waterbury continued strong growth through to the mid-point of the early 20th Century. The two world wars were instrumental in enabling Waterbury's production capabilities to shine. Production facilities were quickly able to shift to munitions for the war effort. After the wars, the City continued to prosper from the production of household goods demanded by an expanding economy.

Brass production started to give way to synthetic materials after the 1950s. The American involvement in off-shore war efforts did little to bring production back to the city. Instead, unemployment continued to grow with the return of veterans and increasing inflation.

Some of the brass and clock industries are still in Waterbury. The Scovill Company shifted production to small kitchen appliances under the name of Hamilton Beach. The American Brass Company was purchased by Anaconda and continues some manufacturing in the City.

Today, the City retains its strong manufacturing heritage. Stately mansions, grand architecture and proud statues line many of the streets and boulevards, especially along the Town Green and in the Hillside neighborhood. Manufacturing still retains a presence, but government offices, hospitals and retail have replaced the former mainstays of the economy.

Past Planning Efforts

The current plan builds upon past planning efforts. As noted in the introduction, the last comprehensive plan for the City was adopted in 1971. This plan contained four core elements: Land Use, Schools, Recreation, and Circulation. While land use patterns and demographic conditions and trends are completely different than they were in 1971, many of the recommendations of the plan remain either relevant today, or necessary to understand current conditions in the City.

The Land Use element set forth the zoning structure which persists to this day. Three residential classifications were proposed: High Density (inclusive of the Residential Office category); Medium Density; and Low Density (which was later split into the current RS and RL districts). The plan recognized four major retail centers: the Central Business District (CBD), the Naugatuck Valley Mall, Waterbury Plaza on Chase Avenue, and Colonial Plaza. The plan recommended that no additional major retail centers be developed, but that the expansion of these existing centers be provided for. The plan also introduced two other commercial categories: Neighborhood Commercial, for small convenience retailing in otherwise residential areas; and General Commercial, which applies to older commercial corridors radiating out from the CBD. Finally, the plan introduced two industrial districts: General Industrial and Industrial Park.

The Recreation Plan proposed a very ambitious program of park and open space expansion, by which the City was to have more than doubled its developed park inventory from 760 acres to nearly 1,600 acres. Just over 500 acres of land targeted for acquisition were identified, at an estimated cost of \$2 million in 1971 dollars (or \$4,000 per acre). Among the areas to be acquired included two waterbodies with adjacent lands—Pritchard's Pond and Larchmont Lake; land around the Great Brook Reservoir; and a sizable extension of Murray Park (including lands now developed).

The Circulation plan recommended roadway improvements for more than 20 roads. It also proposed new and connecting streets, including a completed Clough Road, a connector between Sheffield and Boyden, and the sections of Baldwin and Silver streets spanning I-84 (this latter segment was later completed as planned). The plan also addressed the bus system, noting that at the time ridership was holding steady even as car ownership increased. The plan called for service improvements and amenities for riders such as bus shelters at Exchange Place and at as many stops as feasible. Presciently, the plan also proposed a multi-modal transportation center, although a precise location was not specified.

Two economic development plans were prepared for the City in 2000 and 2001. The first plan, known as the *Inner City Business Strategy Initiative*, addressed economic development in the

core poverty census tracts in the City. Primarily a policy-oriented document, the plan's key recommendations included worker training initiatives (including expansion of the manufacturing focused Technical Training Center); a business network for metal manufactures; and programs to promote entrepreneurial development.

The second plan, known as the *Strategic Economic Development Plan*, was citywide in scope. The plan focused on four key initiatives: revitalizing downtown, redeveloping the Freight Street area, enhancing the manufacturing industries in the City, and revitalizing neighborhoods. The signature projects proposed in the plan included a new north-south connector running through the Freight Street area from Thomaston Avenue to Bank Street south of the I-84; a transportation center at the rail station; creation of "in-place" industrial parks in old industrial areas; and the redesignation of Route 8 as an interstate highway.

Although no citywide comprehensive planning has occurred in Waterbury for over three decades, a number of neighborhood, small-area and special focus plans have been undertaken. Each of these plans has been reviewed as part of this plan, and is discussed and summarized in detail in the Community Assessment Report in Volume II. These neighborhood plans include the following:

- Hillside NRZ Strategic Plan
- Brooklyn NRZ Plan
- St. Margaret-Willow Plaza Neighborhood Revitalization Plan
- Neighborhood Improvement Plan for the Walnut Orange Walsh (WOW) Neighborhood
- Walnut Street Commercial Re-use Strategy
- West Main/Willow Street Initiative—Redevelopment and Neighborhood Plan
- Willow Street Master Plan

Planning for the future



The UConn campus is one of the leaders in the renaissance of downtown Waterbury.

Statutory provisions for Plans of Conservation and Development

The authority to prepare and adopt Plans of Conservation and Development is vested in municipal planning commissions by the Connecticut statutes. These statutes set forth the standards and requirements for such plans.

Under recently amended State statute, a Plan of Conservation and development is required to contain goals, policies and standards for physical and economic development; provide for a system of principal thoroughfares, parkways, bridges, streets, sidewalks, multipurpose trails and other public ways; and be designed to promote, with the greatest efficiency and economy, the coordinated development of the municipality and the general welfare and prosperity of its people. The plan is to identify, where feasible and prudent, opportunities for compact, transit-accessible and pedestrian oriented development patterns, and recommend the most desirable types of uses and population densities. Further, the Plan must

take into account the State Plan of Conservation and Development, and note any inconsistencies with that plan. Housing is an important consideration for any municipal plan, and Plans of Conservation and Development are to address housing opportunities, including multifamily housing; and provide for an economic diversity in the housing supply, meeting the State Housing Plan. The Plan must consider focusing development and revitalization in areas with existing or planned physical infrastructure. Finally, the Plan is required to be prepared or amended, and adopted, every 10 years.

In addition to the above required elements, there are other elements which are optional. These include the following:

- Conservation and preservation guidelines for traprock and other ridgelines
- Plans for open space acquisition and greenways development
- Open space designations, necessary to qualify for grants for open space purchases, and for tax reassessment procedures
- An implementation program with schedule and budget for capital spending
- A program for enforcement of zoning and subdivision controls
- Building and housing codes, safety regulations
- An affordable housing implementation plan

Connecticut law also sets forth certain standards for the Plan. When preparing and adopting a Plan of Conservation and Development, the Planning Commission must consider:

- The Community Development Action Plan of the municipality, if any
- The need for affordable housing
- Protection of public surface and underground drinking water supplies
- Inclusion of cluster development where appropriate to soil, terrain, and infrastructure
- Energy-efficient development patterns, solar and other renewable energies, energy conservation
- Physical, social, economic and governmental conditions and trends
- Needs of the municipality, including human resources, education, health, housing, recreation, social services, public utilities, public protection, transportation and circulation, and cultural and interpersonal communications
- The State Plan of Conservation and Development
- Any Regional Plan of Conservation and Development
- The protection and preservation of agriculture

Purpose and scope of the plan

The purpose of municipal planning is to guide decision-making on the part of government, citizens, and developers. The Plan for Waterbury is intended to provide the basis for both a comprehensive rewrite of the City's zoning, as well as set the stage for the City's revitalization and renewal.

Land use occupies a central place in the plan. In a built-out city, land use planning must begin

with a detailed understanding of the current conditions on the ground. The City has never had a parcel-based land use map with which to guide land use policy—even the 1971 plan relied upon generalized land uses. With the advent of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) technology, it is now significantly easier to track and analyze land use data than in the past, once the initial task of digitizing the tax maps is accomplished. Such a land use map has been created as part of this plan, and underlies the land use and zoning recommendations.

The plan is also intended to promote the revitalization of the City. Waterbury has certain disadvantages which are unlikely to go away in the near term—a shortage of easy-to-develop sites, taxes which are high relative to neighboring towns, and a higher concentration of low-income households. However, many of the barriers to investment in the city can and should be removed—including lack of capacity in municipal government, out-of-date zoning, and blight. This plan's revitalization agenda includes an aggressive and strategic approach to blight removal and redevelopment; policies to encourage the expansion of core industries; and strategies to improve overall community quality of life. Throughout, emphasis is placed upon the need to grow both the economy and the tax base.

Finally, the plan is intended to protect and enhance those assets which continue to make the City a good place to live and work. First and foremost, these include the City's neighborhoods, each with their own unique character, assets and needs. Also included are the City's parks, its historic places and buildings, its shopping areas, and its downtown. Finally, the natural setting of Waterbury, with its rivers, lakes and hills, deserves special focus as both an asset and something in need of protection and preservation.

Listening to the public

The process leading up to the Waterbury Plan of Conservation and Development has included an extensive public and stakeholder outreach effort. This commenced with a series of five public workshops, held in May of 2004. These workshops included a presentation by the planning consultants, followed by a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) exercise with the public, and a recap at the end. The results of these workshops have been summarized in Volume II. These were followed by a series of interviews with municipal officials and community stakeholders, including business leaders, heads of local non-profit groups, real estate professionals, and citizens.

A second series of public workshops was held approximately one year later in May 2005 to present the draft Plan. Feedback was received from the public regarding the recommendations, and the draft Plan was revised in response to this feedback.

Further, the overall process has been guided by a Steering Committee including representation from government, non-profits, the business community, the Central Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments, and neighborhood leaders. The Steering Committee has helped guide the plan from start to finish, and provided valuable input into the plan's content and recommendations. A full listing of interviewees, steering committee members, and public workshop participants has been provided in an appendix.



Community Vision, Goals & Policies

Introduction

The following chapter sets forth the overall vision for the future of Waterbury, as well as a set of Policies and Goals organized by topic area. A Statement of Policies and Goals is a required part of a Plan of Conservation and Development under Connecticut law. The Vision for Waterbury provides the foundation for the specific policies, and unifies them across topic areas. In later chapters, the Policies and Goals will be used as the basis for a detailed array of recommendations intended to implement one or more goals.

The Vision presented here is a direct outgrowth of the first round of Community Workshops, as well as a special workshop, and ongoing interaction, with the Waterbury Plan of Conservation and Development Steering Committee. Likewise, the Policy and Goals statements grow out of the background research presented in Volume II, and have been tested both with the Steering Committee, key stakeholders, and the public in a second round of public meetings.

Overall Vision

The vision for Waterbury addresses three key issues identified by the Steering Committee. These are:

1. Waterbury's place and role within the Central Naugatuck Valley Region.
2. Neighborhood and community quality of life.
3. The nuts and bolts of a 'city that works.'

The rationale and vision elements for these three focus areas are described in the following sections.

Waterbury's Place in the Region

Waterbury is the center of its region, with more jobs and more population than any other town

in the Central Naugatuck Valley. It further sits at the geographic center, at the crossing of the region's two expressways. It also serves as a regional shopping destination, with the region's only enclosed mall, and more shopping center space than the rest of the region combined. Yet, its centrality within the region has been eroding with time. The City has lost jobs and population while surrounding towns have been growing. The City's downtown has lost its status as a destination for leisure and cultural activities. The Central Business District (CBD) office market has been identified as a marginal component of a regional market that is oriented towards the region's two super highways. At the same time, Waterbury provides housing and social services for the majority of the region's poor.



The fortunes of both the region and the City of Waterbury are interdependent. Waterbury's ability to attract new investment and residents depends upon a healthy regional economy; and since Waterbury accounts for 40 percent of the region's jobs, its economic vitality clearly affects that of the entire region. Increasingly, both businesses and residents look to the whole region for employment, housing and amenities. As the region's largest municipality, it must enhance its ability to compete for both jobs and residents.

Although downtown Waterbury suffered through decades of disinvestment, the Town Green remains a well-known icon of the City.

The vision for Waterbury's role within the region includes the following elements:

- Waterbury will continue to serve as the region's premier regional shopping destination, through the continued preservation and enhancement of its existing retail areas, and by encouraging new, high-quality retail development in appropriate locations.
- Building upon the recent investments in UConn, the Palace Theater, and the Arts Magnet School, downtown Waterbury will be repositioned and enhanced as a regional destination for culture, education, entertainment, dining, and specialty shopping.
- Waterbury will actively work to retain and, where possible, add to its manufacturing base by continuing to provide a skilled workforce and available industrial sites with highway access.
- Waterbury will become more competitive in the regional housing market through a combination of lower housing costs, a diversity of housing product, enhanced quality of life, and an improved educational system.
- Waterbury will continue to serve the needs of its poor and disadvantaged populations, but cannot be expected to shoulder an increasing share of the region's burdens. The Plan seeks to promote the rehabilitation and maintenance of the City's affordable housing stock, but emphasizes the need for new market-rate housing opportunities throughout the City as a cornerstone of its revitalization.

Community Quality of Life

Successful places are places where people with options choose to live. Quality of life is an all-encompassing concept that embraces the totality of the experience of living in a particular place. A place with a high quality of life should offer its residents access to stable, attractive neighborhoods; convenient and quality shopping; ample opportunities for active and passive recreation; thriving cultural venues; a visually appealing environment; and a quality school system. Even mundane matters such as regular trash collection and street cleaning affect quality of life.

The vision of Waterbury's future quality of life includes the following elements:

- The City will transform its school system through new investment and a move towards smaller, neighborhood schools. Education is fundamental to quality of life. While this Plan has no jurisdiction over the school district, it recognizes the planned investment in Waterbury's schools and proposes that this investment be used as a catalyst for improving both the schools and the neighborhoods in which they are located.
- Through zoning techniques such as cluster subdivisions and special waterfront zoning, Waterbury will leverage new development to expand its inventory of open spaces, in particular opening up access to its riverfront areas. Investments will be targeted towards lands in underserved neighborhoods as well as those with particular environmental sensitivity. Waterbury will also seek funds to rehabilitate playgrounds and recreation facilities throughout the City.
- The City will undertake a comprehensive and sustained initiative to eliminate blight throughout the City, by encouraging rehabilitation, demolition, and redevelopment.
- The City will strengthen zoning as a tool to protect and enhance existing neighborhoods, and to preserve the City's historic fabric.
- Waterbury will take effective steps to preserve from inappropriate development, and for public use, its remaining open and environmentally sensitive lands. As part of this, the City will undertake an Open Space Master Plan to serve as a basis for future land preservation efforts, as well as to serve as a precursor for securing funding for such efforts.

A City that Works

The City of Waterbury has made rapid progress in recent years to restoring fiscal solvency and building capacity within municipal government, reversing decades in which decision-making was divorced from sound public policy fundamentals. The municipal budget has been brought into balance; tax rates have been stabilized; and municipal departments are being modernized. Yet, a backlog of deferred investment and unfunded liabilities remain; and considerable work will be needed to fully restore confidence in City government. This Plan of Conservation and Development is one component of this larger undertaking.

The vision for Waterbury as a city that works includes the following elements:

- The City will update and modernize its zoning and land use codes, in order to:
 - Reduce the need and justification for variances

- Reduce the reliance on, and justification for, rezoning, including spot zoning.
- Provide greater predictability in the approvals process.
- Protect and enhance the City's built character, including its historic areas and stable residential neighborhoods.
- Remove from the land use process perceptions that it is in any way arbitrary or driven by favoritism or insider dealing.
- Reflect modern land use and growth management principles.
- The City will continue to make investments in infrastructure and community facilities with a long-term view towards minimizing future expenditures.
- The City will look for creative ways to fund critical quality-of-life initiatives, including the redevelopment of blighted areas, remediation of brownfield sites, and investment in the City's parks and recreation infrastructure.
- In spite of fiscal constraints, the City will continue to build capacity at the municipal level to ensure that government is responsive and competent, and to minimize future expenditures on costly outside contractors.
- The City will pursue and support State and regional initiatives that impact the City and region, including studies for roadways, rail transport, etc.

Goals & Policies

All Plans of Conservation and Development are required to contain a statement of goals and policies. Goals represent things that the plan seeks to achieve; policies are more specific initiatives designed to implement the goals. Later chapters will elaborate these policies into specific recommendations, which have a higher level of specificity, addressing future uses for particular sites, for example, or specific revisions to the zoning code.

The goals presented in this plan are based upon the Vision for Waterbury presented in the prior section, which in turn was the result of the public workshops and deliberations of the Steering Committee.

Economic Development

Goal: Facilitate the retention and expansion of the City's core economic sectors: health care, retail and manufacturing

Policies:

- Ensure that zoning provides for the potential expansion of the hospitals and related health-care uses.
- Work with the hospitals to identify appropriate sites for future expansion.
- Pursue policies and development projects that enhance the viability of the City's industrial lands.

Goal: Reinvigorate downtown with a lively mix of uses.

Policies:

- Promote the reuse of upper floors in downtown buildings for market-rate

housing.

- Provide for enhanced pedestrian circulation throughout the downtown.
- Promote linkages between retail areas and the downtown's cultural, civic and educational anchors.

Goal: Prepare the City's workforce for a challenging labor market.

Policies:

- Recognize the importance of a quality school system to the City's economic development.
- Partner with the schools, technical colleges, and higher education to provide programs that provide training in the skills demanded by the region's employers.
- Support innovative workforce training programs such as the Technical Training Center.

Preservation

Goal: Protect and preserve the City's historic sites, districts, and neighborhoods.

Policies:

- Use tools such as Historic District Zoning and Village District Zoning to protect historic sites and districts from demolition and inappropriate development.
- Incorporate historic preservation considerations into economic development plans and projects.

A goal of the plan is to strengthen the quality of life in each of Waterbury's unique neighborhoods.

Housing and Neighborhoods

Goal: Protect and preserve the City's residential areas.

Policies:

- Realign zoning districts and regulations with the prevailing densities in established neighborhoods.
- Plan for both reduced density and a cohesive urban fabric in the City's core neighborhoods.
- Ensure that intensive commercial uses are adequately buffered from residential areas.



Goal: Provide decent, affordable housing for every Waterbury household.

Policies:

- Work with non-profits and the Waterbury Housing Authority to rehabilitate

substandard housing.

- Zone for a range of housing types.
- Implement systematic code inspection and enforcement.

Goal: Make Waterbury's neighborhoods "neighborhoods of choice."

Policies:

- Repair and maintain neighborhood parks and recreation areas.
- Provide appropriate areas for the development of new, middle class housing.
- Promote a move to smaller schools as a component of improving the quality of the school system.
- Encourage expanded homeownership opportunities.

Redevelopment

Goal: Reduce blight and facilitate redevelopment throughout the City.

Policies:

- Proactively identify and prioritize redevelopment opportunities throughout the City.
- Use the City's powers (through its instrumentalities) to plan for redevelopment and acquire property to create a pipeline of development sites.
- Use zoning as a tool to encourage redevelopment in older areas in the City in need of new investment.

Open space

Goal: Provide every neighborhood with access to open space and recreation.

Policies:

- Work to open up riverfront areas for public access.
- Rehabilitate existing parks and recreation facilities, and provide for ongoing maintenance of same.
- Incorporate a riverfront greenway into all new developments along the Naugatuck River.

Goal: Protect the City's environmentally sensitive lands.

Policies:

- Use zoning as a tool for land conservation.
- Target sensitive areas for acquisition, particularly around waterbodies.
- Pursue creative techniques for funding open space initiatives, such as transfer taxes and fees in lieu of open space in residential districts.

Buses are the only transportation option for a large number of Waterbury residents.

Transportation

Goal: Improve the mobility of all of Waterbury's residents.

Policies:

- Improve all three dimensions of transit service: coverage, frequency, and facilities as the need for transit increases in the city.
- Coordinate all modes of transit: local bus, long-distance bus, and rail.
- Promote free circulation of traffic, but not at the expense of on-street parking in commercial corridors and pedestrian circulation.
- Partner with the CNV-COG to work closely with ConnDOT to ensure that the City's needs are met when the I-84 and state highways are widened or reconfigured.
- Promote safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle facilities in appropriate locations to meet existing and future demand.

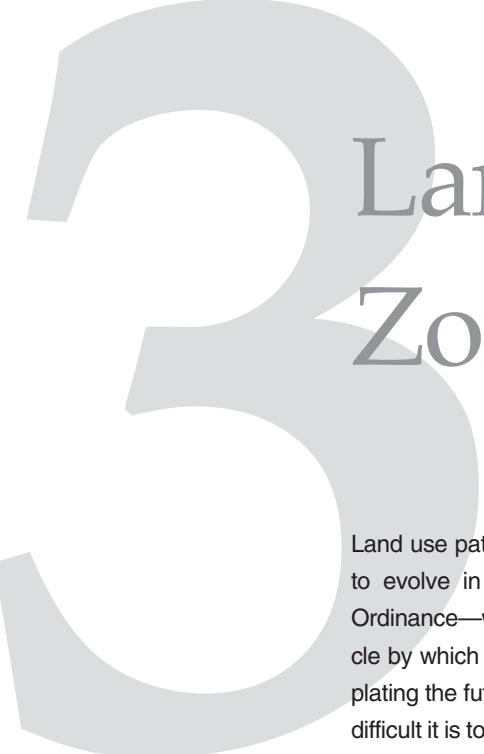


Healthy Communities

Goal: Promote public health and healthy living in Waterbury

Policies:

- Encourage outdoor exercise through the development of trails, bikeways, and demarcated bike routes.
- Improve air quality through the promotion of transit use, and encourage the eventual redesign and reconstruction of the Route 8/I-84 interchange.
- Promote Waterbury as a center for health care and services.
- Promote the abatement of lead-based paint in older residential buildings.



Land Use and Zoning

Land use patterns in Waterbury have been shaped by the City's industrial past, and continue to evolve in response to both market forces and public priorities. The City's Land Use Ordinance—which includes zoning, subdivision and site plan standards—is the primary vehicle by which the use of land is regulated. It is the first place a developer looks when contemplating the future of a piece of property, and it affects not only what can be developed, but how difficult it is to move from development proposal to site plan approval to building permit. All ordinances require regular updating to account for trends in the real estate markets and changes in neighborhoods and districts. When the regulations become too far out of sync with development trends or district character, the result is increased pressure for spot rezonings, variances, and other ad hoc deviations from the spirit and intent of the City's plans and ordinances.

The link between the zoning ordinance and a Plan of Conservation and Development is indirect—there is no mandate that zoning must reflect the Plan. However, the Plan is to form one basis for the district boundaries and regulations. Further, the Plan provides the factual basis for making decisions regarding zoning—specifically, the land use inventory and parcel map. With this in mind, this Plan of Conservation and Development sets forth a significant update to the City's Land Use Ordinance. The purpose is to greatly reduce the amount of ad hoc decision making and return land use decisions to a foundation of sound public policy. At the same time, the Plan also proposes, for particular districts of special importance, a greater level of discretionary review.

The sections below present the zoning and land use recommendations. The recommendations are organized by the major zoning categories—residential, commercial and industrial—as well as recommendations addressing all districts, and the City's subdivision and site plan standards and procedures.

Residential Districts

The major issues identified to date with Waterbury's residential zoning include the following:

- Only one district is available to regulate predominantly single-family development throughout the City, which may or may not correspond to the prevailing lot sizes in different neighborhoods.
- The ordinance does not define or set specific standards for rowhouse or townhouse development.
- Many of the districts permit heights and densities which are inappropriate for the locations in which they are mapped; and which are unlikely to be built in any event given current and anticipated market trends.
- The existing cluster regulations do not promote the purposes typically associated with cluster provisions, such as the retention of open space and protection of environmentally sensitive lands.



Waterbury has no standards specifically tailored for townhouses such as these on Willow Street.

The recommendations proposed below are intended to address these and other issues.

1. Add specific definitions and provisions to the ordinance for row house and townhouse development

Row houses (attached single family houses separated by a vertical party wall and occupying an individual fee-simple lot) and townhouses (which are similar but can include commonly-owned open space, drives and parking areas as in a condominium) provide homeownership opportunities at a lower cost than single-family development; but offer advantages over multi-family condominiums, including larger unit sizes and direct access to rear yards and front doors for every unit. However, since townhouses and row houses involve zero lot lines (i.e. lot lines that run down the middle of party walls and do not allow for side yards), they cannot be developed as-of-right in Waterbury.

Row and townhouses are not historically common in Waterbury. Only a few examples are found from the City's past—the Scovill Houses in the WOW neighborhood, and the four (heavily altered) brownstones on Meadow Street south of West Main are examples. However, the townhouse model in particular has proved popular with both developers and buyers; and townhouse developments from the past 20 years are now found in various locations throughout the City. These developments have typically been built in the RM district.

It is recommended that row and townhouses be added as permitted uses in the RM, RH and RO districts; and that specific standards for lot size and layout be added to the ordinance.

2. Create a new RS-12 district with a 12,000 SF lot size minimum

Currently, the lowest density residential district in Waterbury is the RS district. This district is extensively mapped over primarily single-family subdivisions, as well as much of the City's undeveloped land. The minimum lot size in this district is 7,500 square feet.



Lot sizes of 12,000 square feet and greater prevail in neighborhoods such as Country Club.

Based on an analysis of parcel sizes in Waterbury's residential neighborhoods, this lot size minimum is appropriate for most of the neighborhoods in which it is mapped. However, there are some areas where the prevailing lot size is 15,000 square feet or more. Assuming these lots are of sufficient width, it would theoretically be possible for many of these lots to be subdivided. Further, many other lots in these areas are 12,000 square feet or more. Finally, larger lot sizes are appropriate for much of Waterbury's undeveloped residential land, which has remained undeveloped due to challenging topography; environmental constraints; poor access; or a remote location.

It is therefore proposed that a new low-density single-family residential district with a 12,000 square foot lot size be created. This district would be primarily mapped in the western portion of the City—over the Country Club neighborhood and adjacent lands, as well as in the area north of I-84 near the western municipal border. Additional areas in the northerly and southerly extremes of the City have also been proposed for RS-12 designation. The new district would have the following parameters:

Principal permitted use:	All uses permitted in the RS district
Minimum lot size:	12,000 SF
Minimum lot width:	100 feet
Clustering:	Optional for lots of sufficient size (for proposed cluster provisions, see recommendation 4 below)

3. Create special permit categories for various types of senior housing

These include simple age-restricted (55 and older, so-called "active adult") housing; assisted living; and specialized types such as Continuing Care Retirement Communities. The nation is currently in a building boom for these types of housing, driven by demographic trends which will peak in the next decade or two before declining. Such housing meets the needs of particular and growing segments of the population, and further can provide significant fiscal benefits.

The special permit requirements would allow for increased density in certain districts subject to higher standards for design and landscaping. The increased density is needed to provide for the type of on-site amenities that are typically selling points for such developments, and is further appropriate in that the traffic and other impacts for such developments are less than for conventional residential development.

These uses should be allowed by special permit in the following districts: RL, RM, RH, RO, CO (see below), CA, and CG.

4. Replace the existing cluster ordinance with a more broadly applicable cluster option

As discussed in prior chapters, the current cluster ordinance is only available in the RL district; and is only to be applied in cases where site constraints make development under the normal RL lot standards problematic. The end result is a cluster option which does little to promote open space preservation and compact development; and which may actually hasten the development of environmentally sensitive sites.

The Plan proposes scrapping the existing language and creating a new cluster option which would be available in RS, RS-12 and RL districts, as well as any other one- and two-family districts which might be created in the future. The general provisions of the cluster option would be as follows:

- An open space set-aside of 33 percent of total tract area
- Available to all tracts of sufficient size to provide for a meaningful open space component
- Detached and attached single family and two-family uses would be permitted, but not multifamily apartments.
- Minimum lot sizes would be set at one-half the minimum for specific uses in the non-cluster option

5. Replace the RO regulations with new mixed-use zoning for areas transitioning from residential to commercial use

The RO district as currently configured is schizophrenic. It is currently mapped over two very different areas: portions of the downtown corresponding to Saint Mary's Hospital and the municipal/library complex; and portions of the Hillside Neighborhood where large single-family homes have been converted to professional offices (primarily law offices). Yet, in addition to these development types, it also permits high-rise office and residential towers, neither of which are found in the district.

The Plan proposes to remap the hospital and municipal complex to the CBD district (hospitals would be added to the list of special permit uses in the CBD zone). This allows the RO to serve the purpose that its name suggests—specifically, serving as a transitional zone for formerly residential areas that are transitioning to a mixed-use character. The revised RO district would involve the following changes:

- Allowable residential densities would be greatly reduced to a level similar to the RM district.
- Commercial uses would be limited to those which would not adversely impact adjacent residential uses, such as professional offices, small-scale retail, etc.
- Home occupations and live/work arrangements would be broadly permitted.



The revised RO district is designed for residential areas transitioning to office use.

- Suggested bulk standards would include a 3-story/37.5 foot height limit and 30 percent building coverage.

To address areas currently developed for office uses and which are mapped RO, a new CO district is proposed below in the “Commercial Districts” subsection.

Heights up to six stories are found in the RH district.

6. Reduce height and density in the RH district; allow for mixed use; and curtail the extent of RH zoning

The RH regulations date from a time when high-rise development was seen as a desirable future housing type for Waterbury. A few high rises, including two in the Hillside Neighborhood, were even built. However, this housing type has fallen out of favor outside of locations where extraordinary land costs and/or the desire to capture views drives the economics to this type of construction.

RH zoning is currently mapped over large portions of the Hillside, WOW, South End and Brooklyn neighborhoods. The allowed densities, up to 54 units per acre, and height bear little relationship to the prevailing development patterns in these areas. Further, the core area of Waterbury has been losing population and households, as discussed in the demographic map analysis in Volume II.



At the present time, there is little justification for providing as-zoned densities in Waterbury greater than about 40 units per acre, and such densities only make sense in the immediate environs of the downtown core and the portions of the South End where clusters of older apartment buildings are found. A density of 40 units per acre is sufficient to create a walk-in demand for retail goods. Therefore, mixed-use development should be permitted, while ensuring that nuisance uses (such as liquor stores) are prohibited.

The reconfigured RH district would therefore serve as a transitional district around the edges of the CBD, providing for an extension of the mixed use character of the downtown without allowing the broad range of uses and higher densities permitted in the core. The extent of RH zoning would be greatly reduced from its current scope, to cover only limited areas north of I-84, including portions of North Main and Elm Streets; as well as a more limited portion of the South End.

The proposed RH standards would require 1,000 square feet of lot area for each unit (approximately 43 units per acre); cap building height at six stories or 75 feet; and require 300 square feet of open space per unit. Neighborhood-oriented retail uses would be permitted on ground

floors only, and then only as part of a mixed use building with upper floor residential use.

7. Curtail the amount of RM zoning in outlying areas in Waterbury

The existing zoning map provides for multifamily development on a number of sites far from the downtown core. Some of these RM district have been developed, but others are mapped over primarily vacant land. The potential future build-out of these districts is significant. Yet, with the City experiencing little population growth, there is little immediate need for so much new multifamily housing, and many of these RM districts are located in areas where the prevailing character, and zoning, consists of one- and two-family houses. It is therefore proposed that many of the outlying RM district be rezoned to either RL or RS, depending upon the character of the surrounding area.

Commercial Districts

8. Adopt Village District zoning for the downtown

Village district zoning, as authorized by Section 8-2j of the Connecticut Zoning enabling statutes, is recommended as the ideal tool to protect and enhance the unique character of downtown Waterbury. Village district zoning provides for more detailed design standards reinforced with discretionary design review.

In all land use regulation, there is a tradeoff between the complexity of the regulations and the discretion granted to regulating authorities¹. Attempts to codify complex design and planning goals can lead to an ordinance which is as frustrating to interpret as any land use board—witness the three-volume New York City zoning ordinance which attempts to address every conceivable circumstance in an as-of-right manner requiring only administrative approval. The complexity of the ordinance has given rise to specialized and expensive consultants skilled in its interpretation, and caused a great deal of confusion upon the part of small-scale developers not to mention the general public.



Downtown's rich architectural fabric deserves protection.

In short, the as-of-right model is not always quicker or more predictable. When thoughtfully implemented, discretionary review can improve projects while still promoting development, as witnessed by the success stories of Columbus, Ohio and Saint Paul, Minnesota. Quality design can even help encourage development, by fostering environments which create value.

Connecticut law provides two vehicles for regulating design and undertaking design review: historic district zoning and village district zoning. (Advisory design review can occur outside of these two vehicles, but carries no enforcement power.) The Plan proposes Village District zoning for Waterbury, because it offers a number of key advantages:

- It utilizes the existing authority of the zoning commission—no new bureaucracy need

1. The “one sentence zoning ordinance,” created for illustrative purposes by noted planner and urban designer Jonathan Barnett, reads as follows: “The planning commission shall, from time to time, permit such development as it deems appropriate.”

be created.

- It does not require a two-thirds vote of affected property owners, and is therefore easier to implement.
- It is more flexible in its application, since it can address unique characteristics other than historic character. For a City looking to the future, it avoids the complaint common to historic regulation that the true intent is to freeze the downtown in time.

Design review of development projects can be implemented in a number of ways. Perhaps the simplest is for the Zoning Commission to hire an architect or planning consultant to conduct the reviews. However, this Plan suggests the creation of an Architectural Review Board (ARB) to allow for broader participation in the review process. The membership of such a board must, under law, include a registered architect, landscape architect, or AICP-certified planner. It could also include representation from Waterbury Main Street; the Zoning Commission; and other appropriate parties. An outside consultant, hired at the developers expense, could be brought in for large projects.

The quality of the Board membership is the key to its effectiveness—its members should therefore be chosen for key qualities which should include both design knowledge and personal commitment to the revitalization of Waterbury. The most effective boards do more than review plans and issue review letters and reports—they meet with developers in a collaborative context to suggest changes that will improve projects and bring them into conformance with the character of the district and the spirit and intent of the district regulations.

Common complaints against such boards are the extra layer of delay and uncertainty they are perceived as introducing into the development approval process. However, the written procedures for such boards set forth by ordinance determine the time frame for reviews; the language of the Plan and Village District ordinance provides the guidelines under which such reviews are to be undertaken; and ultimately the Zoning Commission decides the extent to which such reviews influence project approval and/or modification. In short, an ARB can be structured in such a way to allow for discretionary review to occur, by people with the necessary expertise and interest, without introducing undue delays or uncertainty into the process.

The proposed boundaries for the downtown Village District are shown on the Future Land Use map, and act as an overlay over the CBD district for the historic core of the City.

9. Introduce regulations limiting impervious coverage

The term “impervious coverage” can be defined as ‘any coverage of the surface of the ground by a material that prevents the absorption of stormwater,’ which includes buildings, parking areas, walkways, and other paved areas. Limits on impervious coverage typically address two concerns: the amount of stormwater runoff that is generated by development, and the amount of site area that must be left open and unpaved.

The current ordinance does not define nor does it limit impervious coverage. In theory, 100 percent of a commercial lot could be paved. To limit the environmental and visual impacts that

DISTINCTIVE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PROPOSED DOWNTOWN VILLAGE DISTRICT

Section 8-2j of the Connecticut zoning enabling statutes provides for Village District zoning. Under statute, “the regulations concerning the exterior of structures or sites shall be consistent with : (a) the ‘Connecticut Historic Commission—the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards of Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings,’ revised through 1990, as amended; or (b) the distinctive characteristics of the district identified in the municipal plan of conservation and development.” The following narrative is intended to fulfill the requirement for (b) above.



The facades of many older buildings have been altered through the years, losing their original historic features.

Massing and Materials

Traditional, pre-war commercial and civic buildings in downtown Waterbury are typically broken into a base, middle, and top. Prominent belt cornices often distinguish the base and top from the middle. Building entries are prominent in the façade, and face and open onto the street, not to the side or into a recessed courtyard. Windows are vertically-proportioned, deeply recessed into facades, and framed with pediments, decorative crowns, lintels, or sills. (Over time, in some buildings, the rounded or other unusual-shaped windows have been bricked in to create standard-size windows, compromising the building’s design integrity.) Building rooflines are never “bald” or plain, but rather are enriched with deep cornices and deep eaves, sometimes bracketed; or, less frequently, hipped, gabled, or mansard roof forms, and dormer windows.

The typical material palette on older, pre-war buildings in downtown Waterbury includes warm, natural materials such as marble, granite, terra cotta, rough-faced stone, and brick. The brickwork and stonework are richly textured, with decorative patterns that cast shadows & create visual interest in the façade.

Mixed-use Buildings

Since businesses depended on pedestrians for customers, typical pre-war commercial buildings in downtown Waterbury were built at or within a few feet of public sidewalks. Buildings typically contained ground-floor retail or dining space and apartments or offices overhead. These older mixed-use buildings are fairly narrow, about 30 to 60 feet wide, with the scale further reduced by a series of 20 to 30 foot vertical bays, and are typically three to five stories tall.

The design of the ground floors of these older buildings helps create a rewarding, interesting walking experience for pedestrians. The ground levels are richly detailed and decorated. Large plate glass windows let passers-by see into the building and therefore provide interesting and continually changing views and displays along the sidewalk. Storefronts are framed and shaded by fabric awnings or metal canopies which provide shade and shelter for pedestrians.

Civic Buildings

While traditional, pre-war mixed-use and commercial buildings are typically smaller in scale and broken into pedestrian-scale

elements; many public buildings in Waterbury were built grand in scale, befitting their noble public purposes as envisioned in the City Beautiful movement.

Waterbury's prominent civic buildings, such as the City Hall by Cass Gilbert and Union Station by McKim, Mead, and White (now housing the offices of the Waterbury Republican-American newspaper), typically have a grand, imposing presence with features such as wide flights of steps leading up to a raised entry, multi-story columns and arches, prominent doorways punctuated with columns and porticos, and soaring interior lobbies. Given the buildings' considerable scale, the first two levels often are designed as one grand base, using granite or other stone in a large-scale pattern, surmounted by upper levels constructed of stone or brick. Civic buildings often have large front setbacks, landscaped as public plazas, gardens, and/or lawns. These public spaces have benches, trees, water features, and art (fountains, sculptures) that make them visually attractive, enticing, and functional for visitors.

The massing and entryways to older public as well as private buildings relate to and complement important axes in downtown Waterbury. For example, Union Station marks the visual terminus of Grand Street, while the City Hall and Chase Office Buildings face each other across major public plazas. The Chase building, although originally built for private industry (the Chase Brass Company), was designed to harmonize with and reflect the City Hall. The Chase building's design considers the building's relation to the surroundings and the creation of a harmonious urban "fabric" downtown; rather than attempting solely to attract stares or distinguish itself from its neighbors, a common goal of many modern office buildings.

Artwork and craftsmanship often played a role in the design of pre-war civic buildings, with informative and interesting public art incorporated into building façades and local materials, and local craftsmen employed in building design. Of note, the façade of the Waterbury Post Office (1931) depicts the history of communication and transportation in 11 panels.

Contemporary Structures

The architectural style of newer development in Waterbury has tended to ignore the historic pattern of downtown. Newer buildings often have square or horizontal window openings, with very plain window shapes and openings. Façade materials tend to be flat and monotonous, and the ground-floor façades are often no more textured or detailed than upper stories. Some buildings have continuous glass "curtain walls" of tinted or reflective glass, which reduce visibility into the building, creating an anti-urban, unfriendly presence. Furthermore, these post-war buildings tend to be built for one use only (for example, just offices) and lack the ground-floor retail that is so important to creating lively public streets.

There are, however, some notable examples of contemporary architecture which have enhanced downtown's character and feel. One example is the entrance to the Mattatuck Museum, designed by Cesar Pelli, which provides a graceful entry point into the museum from the Green. The Rowland Office Building on the Green is a contemporary building which fits into the downtown context by virtue of its massing and setbacks, and use of strong vertical elements in the design (although the exposed side of the building is an example of a blank wall to be avoided). The new downtown campus for the University of Connecticut also promotes traditional architectural elements and urban design features including active transparency on the ground floor (the campus library has ample windows along East Main Street), stone and brick materials, arched windows, a clock tower, and a pitched roof.



A mix of residential and retail uses is found in the CN and CG districts.

such excessive lot coverage can cause, it is recommended that Waterbury incorporate impervious coverage limits along with appropriate definitions into the ordinance. The following impervious coverage limits are suggested, but may be revised based on more detailed studies of both the existing amounts of impervious in these districts and ordinance standards in comparable cities:

<u>District</u>	<u>Limit</u>
CN	90%
CA, CO	75% / 85% *
CG	80% / 90% **
CBD	n/a

* Sites greater than 5 acres / sites of 5 acres or less

** Sites greater than 2 acres / sites of 2 acres or less

10. Permit mixed-use development in the CN and CG districts

The Neighborhood Commercial (CN) and General Commercial (CG) districts are along historic retail and commercial areas that predate modern, auto-oriented retailing. The CN areas roughly correspond to places that captured a walk-in trade from nearby residents; and the CG districts are often found along former streetcar routes. In both cases, residential uses are found mixed with the commercial uses in these districts. Currently, these residential uses are non-conforming, as neither district permits residential development. Since mixed use development is fundamental to the character of these historic areas; and since both districts would benefit from the greater development flexibility that mixed use zoning would allow; it is proposed that residential uses be permitted in both districts subject to certain restrictions.

In the CN district, one- and two- family homes would be added to the list of permitted uses. Further, a variety of home occupations would be permitted. Finally, apartments (not more than 2 per lot) would be permitted only in buildings with ground floor retail. Bulk requirements would be essentially the same as the RL district, except that buildings of up to three stories would be permitted (2.5 is the current standard), subject to the same maximum height of 35 feet.

In the CG district, like the CN district, uses permitted in the RL district would be allowed, subject to the same bulk standards as the RL zone. In addition, mixed-use residential and retail buildings would be permitted subject to the existing CG bulk standards, with the proviso that the density could not exceed that permitted in the RM district. As a primarily commercial dis-

trict, the open space requirement typical for residential districts in Waterbury would be waived.

11. Place the entire downtown core, including Saint Mary's Hospital and the Freight Street area, in the CBD district

In essence, the areas currently zoned RO south of West and East Main Street would be rezoned to CBD. This would create a unified set of use and bulk standards for the entire downtown, removing existing incompatibilities between the RO standards and the built form of downtown. Areas of RO zoning, using the revised standards discussed earlier, would still be found north of the downtown, over portions of the Hillside Neighborhood, along Willow Street, and along West Main Street west of Route 8. To avoid rendering the hospital non-conforming, it is further recommended that hospitals be added as a special permit use to the CBD district.

The CBD district would also be extended west to include the Freight Street area north of I-84. This is consistent with the long term plans to deemphasize industry here and promote redevelopment for a mix of office, hotel, and retail uses. The extent of the CBD district is shown on the Future Land Use Map.

12. Rezone the Brass Mill Mall and Commons, as well as Waterbury Crossing, to CA

These auto-oriented shopping centers are so wildly different from the intent and standards of the CBD district that it makes little sense for them to be placed in the same district as the downtown. Instead, it is proposed that they be rezoned to CA, and that the special permit category under which they fall, "urban shopping centers," be added to the list of special permit uses in the CA district.



The new CO district is intended for office corridors outside of the downtown, such as Chase Parkway.

13. Create a new Commercial Office (CO) district for office sites outside of the downtown

Waterbury has a number of office developments located outside of the CBD, such as those on Chase Parkway and West Main Street. These are primarily business and professional offices, including medical offices. They are located on sites not necessarily appropriate or for desirable retail; and where the development standards for height, setbacks, landscaping and parking are very different than would be the case downtown. These developments are typically zoned RO, a district that will no longer be appropriate given the recommended changes to the standards for that zone. Other commercial districts are too broad—the CA and CN districts would permit a wide variety of retail that might not be appropriate for the areas where these developments are located. Therefore, it is recommended that a new CO district be created. The following standards are proposed:

Uses:	Professional offices, banks, hotels, outpatient clinics, restaurants
Minimum lot area:	10,000 SF
FAR:	2.0
Height:	5 stories or 60 feet
Impervious cover:	Maximum of 80 percent of lot area

Industrial Districts

14. Create a new industrial district to address older industrial areas not suitable for heavy industrial use

Waterbury has two industrial districts—an IP district covering the City's more modern industrial parks; and an IG district which is mapped over the remaining industrial areas, and is very permissive as to use. The bulk standards in the IP district would be difficult to apply in many of the City's older industrial areas, but IG zoning permits uses which may not be appropriate in all of Waterbury's industrial areas, many of which are proximate to downtown, located near residential areas, etc.

For these reasons, a new district is proposed combining the wide latitude of the IG district with regard to bulk standards with the more restrictive list of permitted uses found in the IP district. This zoning could replace the small, scattered areas of IG zoning found throughout the City; and might be mapped in other locations along the Naugatuck River where heavy industry may no longer be desirable. In particular, waste industries should not be permitted in the new district, but should only be allowed in the remaining existing IG district.

The regulations of this district are intended to be consistent with the proposal for “in-place industrial parks” discussed under Economic Development.

15. Add retail shopping centers as special permit uses in the IL district

The new IL district will be mapped over broad areas of industrial land, including in the South End between South Main and Route 8. In addition to ongoing industrial uses, there is increasing interest in retailing in this area, building off the successful Power Center development at Waterbury Crossing, and leveraging the area's flat sites and highway access and visibility. New retail development may help provide the impetus for the redevelopment underutilized industrial property and, in conjunction with the proposed waterfront zoning overlay, provide for public access amenities along the Naugatuck River.



The new IL district provides for low-impact industry in older industrial areas.

All Districts

16. Update the table of permitted uses

Waterbury's current approach to use regulation utilizes an exhaustive list of possible uses, organized as a table indicating for each district whether this is permitted, as-of-right, via special permit, or as an accessory use. The result is a table of uses much longer than is typical for cities of Waterbury's size. The Plan does not recommend a radical departure from current practice, which has the advantage of comprehensiveness; but it does recognize the current list of uses is out of date. Relatively new use categories are not listed, archaic use classifications are listed, and some simplification could be achieved by consolidating certain uses together and tightening up the definitions. The Plan therefore proposes a comprehensive updating and consolidation of the table of permitted uses, in conjunction with the updated definitions chapter.

17. Replace special exception uses with special permit uses

Special exception and special permit uses perform essentially the same function in a zoning ordinance, specifically providing an extra set of standards for specific uses regardless of which district(s) they are permitted. However, applications for special exceptions uses are heard by the Zoning Board of Appeals, while special permit applications are heard by the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission has staff resources to conduct reviews prior the application being heard by the board, while the Zoning Board does not. Since both classifications of special uses are permitted uses, it makes sense that they be reviewed by the planning staff and the Planning Commission, which typically has jurisdiction over applications where use variances are not involved. Therefore, it is recommended that special exception uses in general be reformulated as special permit uses.

18. Overhaul parking standards to discourage overparking and allow for flexibility in older developed areas

Overparking (the provision or mandating of more parking than is necessary to serve the use) has several negative impacts:

- It drives up development costs by decreasing the yield of a given tract of land while increasing the amount of non-revenue producing paved area.
- It results in higher levels of impervious coverage and stormwater runoff for a given amount of development.
- It degrades the visual environment by creating larger expanses of asphalt.

The Waterbury ordinance contains parking standards that are excessive by modern standards. It also does not account for the fact that parking demand varies by context. Downtowns and neighborhood shopping areas require less parking than do arterial shopping areas. The Plan recommends an overall reduction in parking requirements in many instances, with further reductions for the CN and CBD districts. By way of illustration:

- Retail uses are currently required to provide five spaces per thousand square feet. This might be reduced to four spaces in the CA and CG districts; and further reduced to three spaces in the CN and CBD districts.
- Restaurants are currently required to provide one space for every one hundred square feet of serving area. This might be changed to one space per three seats in the CA and CG districts; and one space per 3.5 or four seats in the CN and CBD districts.

The CBD district is unique in that the majority of the off-street parking is provided in ramp garages operated by the Waterbury Parking Authority. The current ordinance provides for parking requirements to be met by a showing that sufficient spaces are available in a Parking Authority facility located within a certain radius of the proposed use. The Plan further supplements this exemption with the following provisions:

- Permitted uses occupying existing buildings are exempt from all parking requirements.
- Uses with existing on-site ancillary parking are not permitted to remove these spaces as

part of an expansion, without a variance.

- New construction is subject to the reduced parking requirements shown above, but is still able to meet all or part of its parking requirements through approval of the parking authority.

19. Adopt either Village District Zoning or Historic District Zoning for Waterbury's historic districts

Waterbury has five National Register historic districts: three in the downtown, and two in neighborhoods: Historic Hillside and Overlook. Village District zoning was recommended for the downtown area as a way to provide protection for these resources, provide for design review, and ensure context-sensitive development. Similar protections should be put in place for the historic areas outside of the downtown. These areas should certainly include the two national-register areas of Hillside and Overlook, but may also include other areas of the City which should be recognized for their historic character.



Waterbury's historic neighborhoods should be preserved and celebrated.

20. Place Holy Land into a Special Review District

Holy Land, an interpretive recreation of biblical holy sites built in the 1950s by a visionary artist out of various (and sometimes scavenged) materials, grew into a major roadside attraction which once drew visitors by the tens of thousands. It occupies a hilltop south of I-84, which is prominently marked by a large illuminated cross. The land is currently owned by an order of nuns. Holy Land was built of non-durable materials which required ongoing maintenance. Deprived of such caretaking and exposed to the harsh elements, much of the attraction has fallen apart and prospects for its restoration are dim. Recent rumors indicate that the order may be looking to divest itself of the property.

The site is fairly large and strategically located, although the only access available today is via narrow and steep residential streets which wind up the hill. The site's prominence creates potential value for a variety of development, if access issues can be solved; and further, any development of the site will have a major impact on the image of the city due to the site's highly visible location along I-84. It is therefore important that the city be able to properly regulate any development which may occur on the site, and carefully weight its suitability for particular uses.

The site is currently zoned RM for multi-family development. While such use may be appropriate, the RM regulations do not have specific design requirements tailored for a prominent hilltop site. Therefore, it is recommended that the site be placed within a Special Review District, which will provide the City with increased powers to regulate the use and design of development on the site.

Land Use Procedures

21. Broadly require Site Plan Review for all but minor applications

Currently, developers are only required to submit site plans as part of a development application for a limited set of uses. This gives the City Plan Commission (hence the City) little disre-

tion regarding site design details for the majority of development that occurs in Waterbury. As a result, Waterbury is neither demanding nor receiving the quality of applications that it should. It is therefore recommended that site plan review be required for a much wider variety of uses.

Specifically, site plan review should be required for all development applications save for single- and two-family houses; minor expansions such as a new deck or outbuilding; and developments under a certain size threshold (say, 1,000 square feet of building area or 2,000 square feet of impervious surface). These requirements would subject nearly all commercial or mixed-use developments in the City to site plan review.

This recommendation clearly increases the workload for both City Plan staff and the City Plan Commission. Increased staffing (or the use of outside consultants) would certainly be required, and bi-monthly commission meetings would also be required depending upon application volume. However, it need not have a significant impact on the City's bottom line. These reviews could be paid for out of escrow fees posted by applicants, and planning consultants could be hired to take on reviews that the City Plan Department lacks staff to perform.

22. Streamline the development review and approval process

The Waterbury Plan is designed to achieve a higher quality of development in the City than has been the case for some time, through a combination of better regulations and standards and more comprehensive development review procedures such as site plan review. However, it is just as important to ensure that developers who do come before the City with high-quality applications meeting the City's receive a quick and predictable approval procedure. There are several ways to accomplish this goal. These would include administrative (staff) approval of conforming site plans (although this would short circuit the ability of the City Plan Commission to suggest improvements to site plans); a "one-stop shop" approach to approvals, whereby the various approvals needed (zoning, site plan, building, etc.) are expedited through a single point of contact; and pre-application meetings with the City's "development team" (consisting of the City's planner, zoning officer and building official) to head of problems and suggest improvements prior to the submission of a formal application. Also, as noted above, bi-monthly meetings of the City's planning and zoning boards would also help accelerate the review and approval process.

23. Curtail the practice of "spot zoning"

Spot zoning is generally defined as zoning that applies to a specific property, primarily benefits a particular landowner, and does not advance the public good or consistency with the community's comprehensive plan. The existing zoning map is rife with examples of spot zoning. Some of these zones are tiny, applying to a single lot of 7,000 square feet or less within a residential neighborhood. The Future Land Use Map proposes to eliminate most of these zones.

These spot zones were created in response to requests for rezonings from property owners and developers. Such requests are common due to the difficulty in obtaining a variance under Connecticut law, which only provides variance relief under circumstances of hardship. However, such spot rezonings represent poor planning, because unlike a variance, they open

the door to every use permitted in the new zone, rather than being limited to the specific project at hand, and institutionalize non-conforming uses in the midst of otherwise uniform zoning districts.

As a matter of future policy, the City should refuse to hear rezoning requests for individual properties under a certain size threshold. Owners of small properties wishing to obtain different zoning would be required to apply for an entire block front. Other affected owners would be free to support or oppose the application. Further, rezonings should only be granted upon a finding that they are consistent with the goals and policies of the Plan of Conservation and Development.

24. Shift the cost of zoning enforcement to violators

The zoning enforcement function in Waterbury is currently understaffed, and is further a cost sink in the municipal budget. As a result, zoning violations often persist, uncorrected, for long periods of time. Other municipalities, including nearby Prospect, have put in place ordinances which produce significant fines which grow over time, which both accelerates compliance as well as generating revenue that offsets the cost of enforcement. The major provisions of the Prospect ordinance are as follows:

- The fine is \$150 per day, with the clock starting after the issuance of a citation.
- Citations can be issued immediately in the case of a threat to the health, safety and welfare of the community, but normally 30 days after the issuance of a cease and desist order.
- The person cited can contest the citation within 10 days of receipt. Failure to do so in 10 days constitutes an admission of liability.
- Once a request for a hearing has been made, the accrual of fines ceases. However, should the person cited be found liable, any fines accrued during the period between the request and the hearing become due and payable.

Future Land Use Map

As a prelude to the forthcoming zoning update, a future land use map has been prepared outlining the recommended zone district boundaries for the City of Waterbury. These new boundaries reflect (1) new districts proposed in this Plan; (2) implementation of recommended land use policies regarding residential densities; and (3) adjustments to existing boundaries based upon existing land use conditions. The new zoning scheme builds upon the existing zoning map, but adds three new districts and two new overlay districts which modify the standards of the underlying zone. These new districts are as shown below:

Residential Districts	Commercial Districts	Industrial Districts	Overlay Districts
RS-12	CBD	IP	Downtown Village District
RS	CN	IG	Waterfront
RL	CG	IL	
RM	CA		
RH	CO		
RO			

Bold denotes a new district.

Major changes proposed to the zone district boundaries on the future land use map are as follows:

- A new RS-12 district is created, permitting single family houses on 12,000 square foot lots, with optional clustering for tracts of sufficient size.
- The RH district is revised—the height limit is cut in half to 6 stories or 75 feet. Limited ground floor commercial use is permitted on major streets, but only as part of a residential building.
- Revised CN and CG districts—limited residential and mixed-use residential/retail permitted.
- New CO district—replaces RO for office, medical and hotel developments outside of downtown. Hospitals remain a special permit use with different bulk standards.
- CG, CA and CO—impervious coverage and FAR regulations added to zoning.
- New IL district—based on IP use standards and IG bulk standards. Used to limit locations where heavy and high-impact industrial uses can be located.
- Downtown Village District—proposed as an overlay to CBD district for historic downtown core.
- Waterfront District—proposed as an overlay for property along the Naugatuck River as well as portions of the Mad River.

Summary Description of Proposed Land Use Categories

The following list describes in summary form the proposed land use categories, which include new land use categories, modified land use categories, and land use categories left largely unchanged since the 1971 Comprehensive Plan.

Residential Districts

RS-12 Single Family Residential. The RS-12 district is a new, low-density single-family residential district representative of existing lower density neighborhoods such as the Country Club neighborhood. The district has a minimum lot size of 12,000 square feet. Single family homes, churches, schools and parks are the principal permitted uses.

RS Single Family Residential. The RS district is an existing district which covers existing single-family areas with a smaller prevailing lot size of 7,500 to 10,000 square feet. Permitted uses are the same as the RS-12 district.

RL Low Density Residential. The RL district permits one and two family development. Single family uses can be located on lots as small as 6,000 square feet, while two-family homes require a lot of at least 7,500 square feet.

RM Multifamily Residential. The RM district permits one-, two- and three-family homes, townhouses and row houses, and low-scale multifamily buildings. Multifamily buildings can be built in a garden apartment type configuration on large sites, or in a neo-traditional configuration on urban infill sites with little or no setback. Effective densities of up to 22 units per acre are permitted.

RH Multifamily Residential. The RH district permits all the uses permitted in the RM district, but provides for buildings up to 6 stories or 75 feet in height, and densities up to 42 units per acre. Limited ground-floor retail use is permitted on major streets. Neo-traditional site planning standards (described below) are to apply in this district.

RO Residential Office District. The RO district incorporates the use and bulk standards of RL district but adds a mixed use component, permitting professional and medical offices in addition to residential. The district is intended to provide for the conversion of older residential structures for office use, or the development of new low-scale office buildings compatible with locations adjoining residential neighborhoods.

Commercial Districts

CN Neighborhood Commercial. The CN district is a mixed-use district permitting both residential uses subject to the RL standards, and retail uses serving local neighborhood needs. Retail can be provided in stand-alone, one-story buildings; or as part a mixed use building with up to two upper floor apartments. In the latter case, the bulk standards of the RL district apply. Parking standards call for a lower ratio of off-street parking.

CG General Commercial. The CG district is a mixed-use district similar to the CN district but permitting residential densities similar to the RM district. Neo-traditional site plan standards are to apply to all mixed-use projects. The district also permits stand-alone retail, but does not permit gas stations or other auto-related uses permitted in CA (see below).

CA Commercial Arterial. The CA district permits a wide variety of retail and service uses serving the auto-using public. The bulk standards are designed for shopping centers as well as free standing stores. Parking standards are the most stringent of the commercial districts.

CBD Central Business District. The CBD district is mapped over the historic downtown core and its environs. The CBD district unique in that it places no limits on residential density or lot coverage, and provides exemptions from parking requirements due to the presence of publicly-owned parking garages. Residential, office, and retail uses are permitted in the district. Zero-setback buildings are mandated to create uniform street walls, and ground floor retail frontage is encouraged.

CO Commercial Office. The proposed CO district promotes modern business and professional office development along commercial arterials outside of the downtown. Limited retail uses are also permitted. Buildings may be up to five stories in height.

Industrial Districts

IL Limited Industrial. The IL district permits distribution, fabrication, and light industrial uses which meet performance standards for noise, dust and vibration; and do not involve outdoor storage of equipment and materials. Buildings of up to 3 stories are permitted. The minimum lot size is 20,000 square feet. Shopping centers are permitted via a special permit process.

IG General Industrial. The IG district has the same bulk standards as the IL district, but permits a wider variety of industrial uses, including heavy industry and manufacturing.

IP Industrial Park. This district is mapped exclusively over the City's industrial parks, which offer larger lot sizes and more modern layouts than the City's older industrial districts. The IP district permits much the same uses as the IL district, but requires larger lot sizes and provides for bulk standards consistent with a modern industrial park development.

Other Land Use Categories

The land use categories described above correspond to existing and proposed zoning districts. However, there are other proposed land uses which are not reflected on the City's zoning map.

These include existing preserved lands and open spaces, bodies of water, cemeteries, and other land uses which are anticipated to persist due to public ownership, environmental factors, or other circumstances. These categories, which appear on the Future Land Use Map, are described below.

Outdoor recreation. This category includes public and privately-owned lands, other than public parks, open to members of the public for recreational use. Included in this category are golf courses.

Public Parks. This category primarily refers to public parks under the jurisdiction of the City of Waterbury.

Other Preserved Lands. Property in public ownership and preserved from future development is included in this category, whether or not the land is accessible to the public. Hop Brook Reservoir and the Mattatuck State Forest are examples. Cemeteries also fall within the category.

Waterbody. Any sizable surface waterbody is mapped under this category.

Riverwalks/Greenways. Public waterfront access is proposed along the full length of the Naugatuck River and portions of the Mad River. These walkways and greenways do not preclude other uses on the same property.

Table 2.1: Comparison of Existing and Proposed Zoning Coverage

Zone District	Percent of Total Land Area		Change in Land Area	
	Existing	Proposed	Acres	Percent
RS-12	0.0%	18.8%	3,489	n/a
RS	29.5%	15.8%	(2,530)	-46.3%
RL	32.8%	30.2%	(475)	-7.8%
RM	15.6%	12.3%	(613)	-21.2%
RH	1.8%	0.6%	(225)	-65.9%
RO	0.5%	0.4%	(30)	-30.4%
CN	0.3%	0.3%	(10)	-16.3%
CG	1.1%	1.5%	64	30.9%
CA	6.1%	7.1%	198	17.6%
CO	0.0%	1.0%	183	n/a
CBD	1.0%	1.6%	111	58.5%
IL	0.0%	5.2%	958	n/a
IP	4.8%	3.7%	(191)	-21.6%
IG	6.5%	1.6%	(919)	-76.0%

Table 2.2: Comparison of Existing and Proposed Major Land Use Categories

Category	Percent of Total Land Area		Change in Land Area	
	Existing	Proposed	Acres	Percent
One & two family	62.2%	64.8%	484	4.2%
Multi-family	18.0%	13.3%	(868)	-26.0%
Commercial	8.5%	11.5%	546	34.5%
Industrial	11.3%	10.4%	(152)	-7.2%

Source: Phillips Preiss Shapiro Associates, Inc.

The proposed land use changes result in a major shift in the distribution of land area located within each zone district. Future land uses, existing zoning, and proposed zoning area illustrated in Maps 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3. Tables 2.1 and 2.2 summarize the existing and proposed land use distribution for broad categories of use (residential, commercial, industrial) and for each of the proposed zoning districts.

As the tables to the left show, the proposed zoning modifications would significantly increase the amount of one- and two-family zoning in Waterbury, while curtailing the amount of multifamily zoning. Most of the reduction in multifamily zoning is due to the removal of RM districts currently mapped over vacant tracts of land in outlying locations. Some of this loss in multifamily development potential is made up for by

an expansion of CBD zoning, and the inclusion of residential use among the permitted uses in the CN and CG districts. The new land use scheme proposes an expansion of CA zoning consistent with the need to provide for future retail growth. Finally, over 900 acres of general indus-

trial land are proposed to be redesignated with the new IL district which restricts certain high-impact uses while permitting retail.

Subdivision Standards

The forgoing sections have addressed land use regulation from the standpoint of the City's zoning ordinance. However, certain aspects of land use, including subdivision design and layout, street standards, etc., are not regulated through zoning but rather through the regulations and review procedures for subdivision plats. These regulations provide detailed guidance related to lot configurations and street improvements, but lack adequate standards for stormwater management and open space. Further, certain standards do not reflect the state of the art. The following modifications are therefore recommended.

25. Incorporate neo-traditional design standards into the site plan standards and subdivision ordinance

Waterbury's historic neighborhoods epitomize many of the traditional characteristics now championed by New Urbanist planners and architects, such as grid street patterns, shallow and uniform setbacks, on-street parking, etc. The Plan recommends that these design principles be incorporated into the City's subdivision ordinance and site plan standards for all residential and mixed use development district, and for both conventional and clustered subdivisions. These standards should address the following elements:

- Relationship of buildings to the street: Uniform and shallow setbacks are encouraged so that buildings frame the street and public spaces. All buildings should provide their primary entrance as a front door facing the street. Elements such as porches and stoops are encouraged. Garage doors and blank walls on the fronts of buildings are discouraged. Commercial buildings in retail areas should provide ground floor transparency of at least a third of ground floor façade area.
- Street network: Grid street networks, which disperse traffic, are encouraged over loop and cul de sac patterns, which concentrate traffic on a few stress points. Both linear (straight) and curvilinear grids are encouraged.
- Residential alleys, with garages and trash pickup relocated to the rear of properties, are encouraged. Such alleys should have a right of way of 20 to 24 feet, but should limit pavement widths to 12 to 15 feet.
- Parking areas should preferentially be located behind or to the side of buildings. Small, broken-up parking areas are preferred to large, monolithic parking areas. Where parking must be provide in front of a building, such areas should be kept small, and clear pedestrian connections must be provided across the parking area connecting the building to the sidewalk.

These standards are mandatory for certain districts and uses (such as the CN district), and should be provided as an option in other districts. Further, the standards should be used for developments in specific locations (such as sites adjoining traditional neighborhoods) or devel-

opments of a certain type (such as townhouse developments).

26. Revise the street standards to allow for narrower residential streets

The existing subdivision street standards call for 50 foot rights of way for all new streets. This standard results in streets much wider than are typically found in many existing Waterbury neighborhoods; and which are wider than necessary for safety. In fact, wide streets can encourage speeding through residential areas, and the increased amount of pavement (streets typically account for 40 to 50 percent of impervious coverage in residential developments) increases the volume of stormwater that must be managed.

It is therefore proposed that Waterbury replace its “one size fits all” approach to residential street standards with a more flexible approach that would allow a variety of street widths depending upon the context. Street widths could be based upon 9 foot travel lanes and 7 foot parking lanes. In areas where only one or no lanes of on-street parking area needed, street widths could be kept narrower. Rights of way could remain larger in order to provide areas for snow removal; however, narrower pavement should be encouraged.

27. Provide standards for the open space in clustered subdivisions.

The new clustered regulations proposed for the RS and RS-12 districts will result in open-space set asides in new developments on tracts of over 4 acres. Often, these open space areas end up as the leftover space in between residential lots, with no clear boundaries and no real use. The subdivision regulations are an appropriate location to introduce standards for these open spaces. Such standards might:

- Require that at least a portion of the open space front along a street.
- Set minimum standards for planting, including both natural vegetation and landscaping.
- Encourage contiguity with the open spaces of adjoining developments so that over time an open space network could be created.
- Provide for the dedication of open spaces to the City for public use.
- Institute a requirement that subdivisions that do not provide sufficient open space pay a fee to an “open space fund.” The fee would be in an amount equal to 10 to 15 percent of the unsubdivided value of the parcel. All funds would be dedicated for the acquisition of open space in the City of Waterbury.

28. Require stormwater management for all new developments, consistent with Connecticut DEP requirements.

Many of Waterbury’s neighborhoods, particularly those developed outside of the City’s core, have grossly inadequate provisions for stormwater management. In some cases, these neighborhoods lack even well defined drainage swales for addressing street runoff. The new standards should provide for connections to the City’s sewer system where appropriate, or for on-site retention and recharge in other locations.

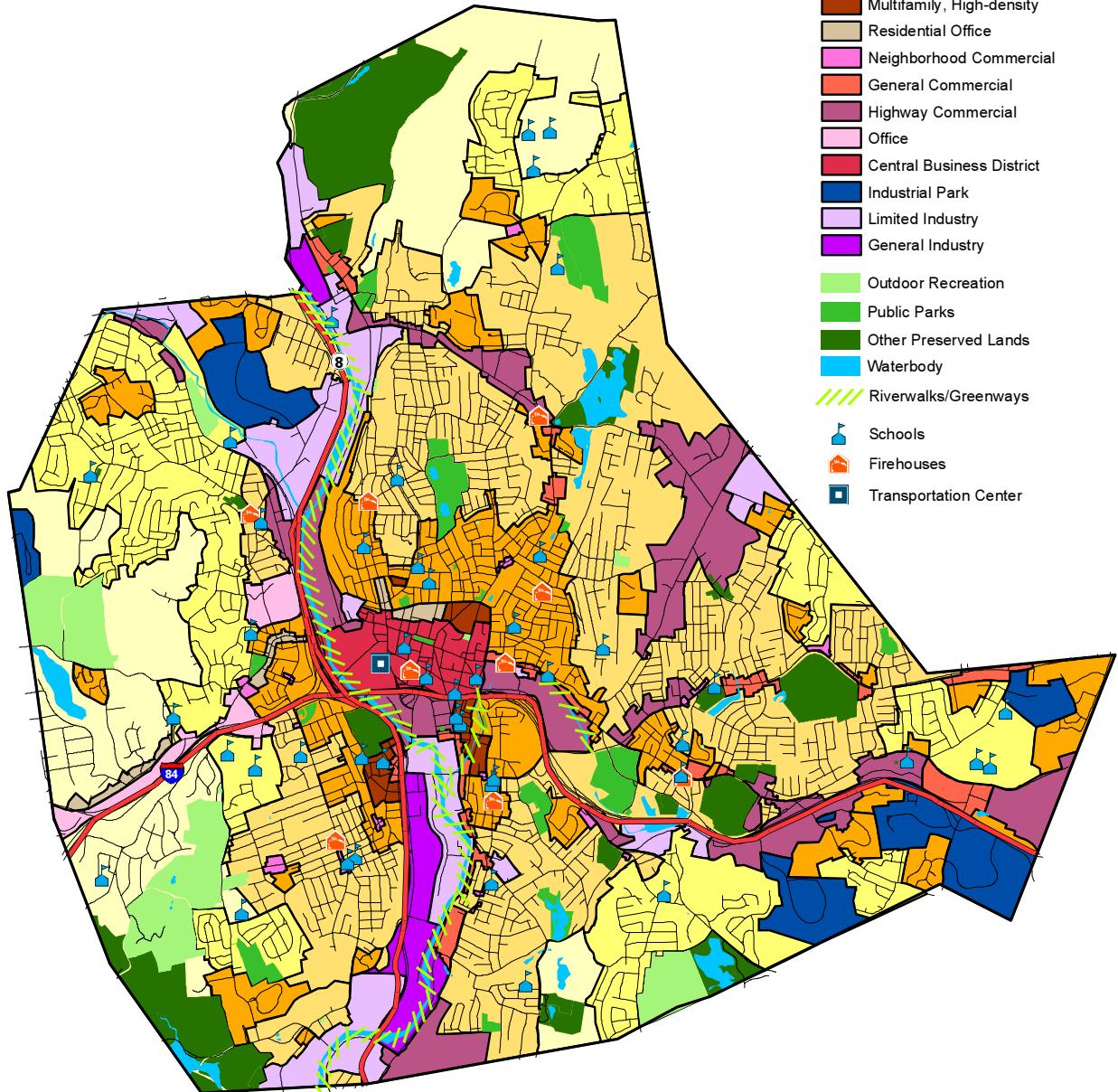
Map 3.1 Future Land Use

Legend

FUTURE LAND USE

- Single-family, Low-density
- Single-family
- One and Two-family
- Multifamily
- Multifamily, High-density
- Residential Office
- Neighborhood Commercial
- General Commercial
- Highway Commercial
- Office
- Central Business District
- Industrial Park
- Limited Industry
- General Industry
- Outdoor Recreation
- Public Parks
- Other Preserved Lands
- Waterbody
- Riverwalks/Greenways

- Schools
- Firehouses
- Transportation Center



Note: Identified wetlands are illustrated on Figure 30 in Volume II, page 89.

Source:
City of Waterbury GIS Data

Map Prepared by:
Phillips Preiss Shapiro Associates, Inc.
Wilbur Smith Associates
May 2005

0 0.5 1 Miles

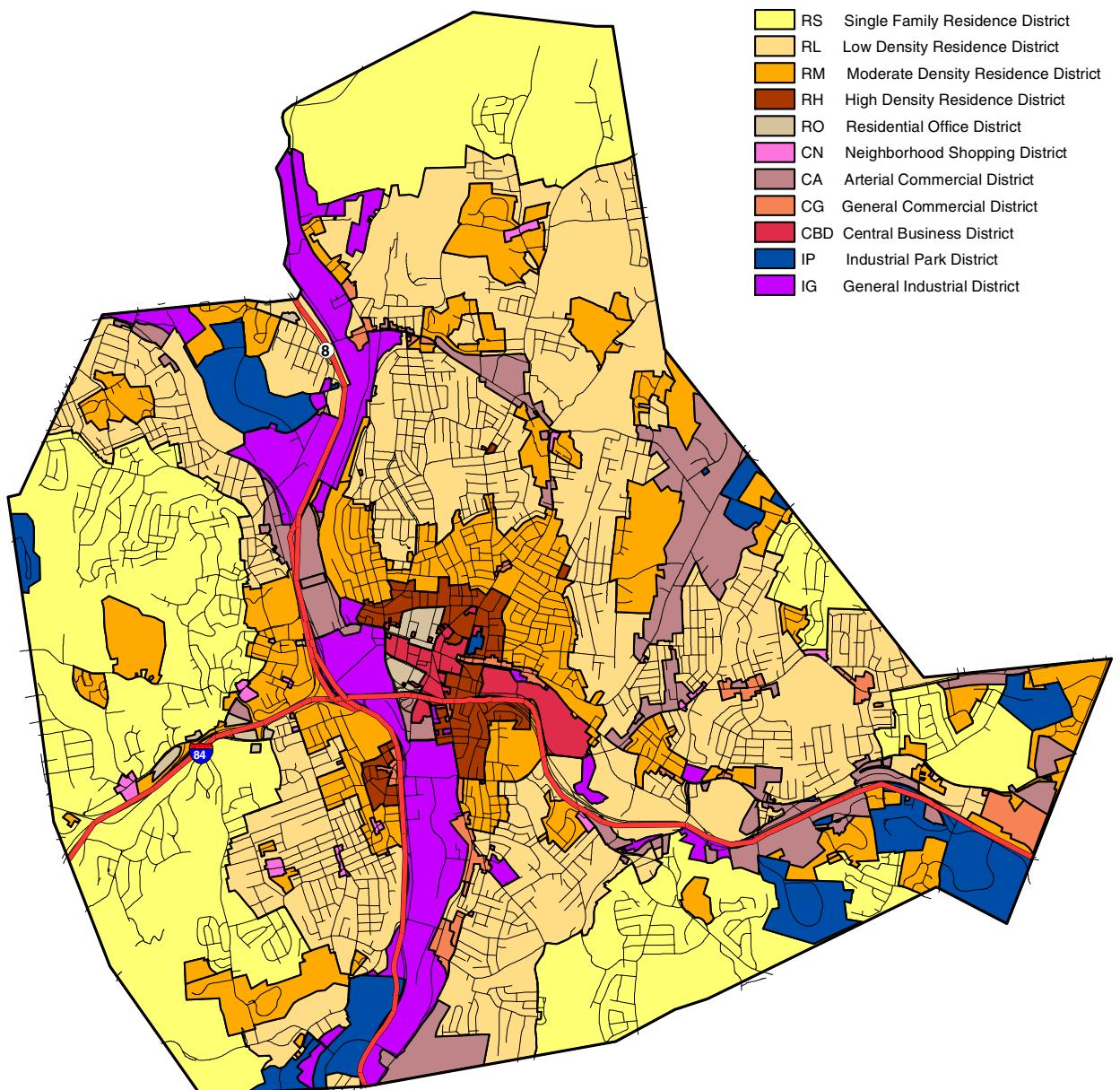


Map 3.2 Existing Zoning

Legend

EXISTING ZONING

RS	Single Family Residence District
RL	Low Density Residence District
RM	Moderate Density Residence District
RH	High Density Residence District
RO	Residential Office District
CN	Neighborhood Shopping District
CA	Arterial Commercial District
CG	General Commercial District
CBD	Central Business District
IP	Industrial Park District
IG	General Industrial District



Source:
City of Waterbury GIS Data
2003 Zoning

0 0.5 1 Miles



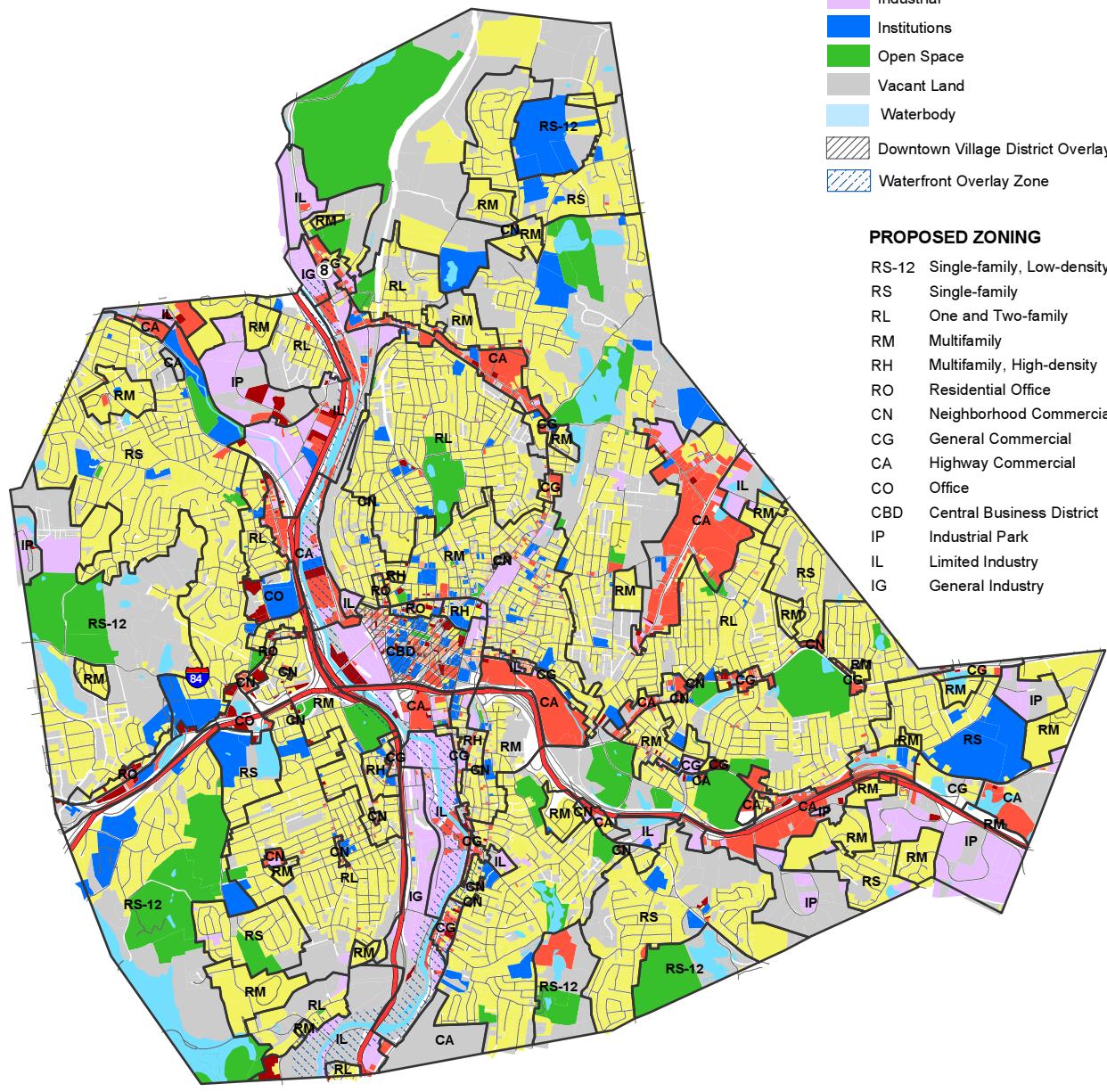
Map Prepared by:
Phillips Preiss Shapiro Associates, Inc.
May 2005

Map 3.3 Proposed Zoning over Existing Land Use

Legend

SIMPLIFIED EXISTING LAND USE

- Residential
- Retail and Personal Service
- Commercial
- Mixed Use
- Industrial
- Institutions
- Open Space
- Vacant Land
- Waterbody
- Downtown Village District Overlay
- Waterfront Overlay Zone



Source:
City of Waterbury GIS Data

Map Prepared by:
Phillips Preiss Shapiro Associates, Inc.
Wilbur Smith Associates
May 2005

0 0.5 1 Miles



4

Redevelopment

Zoning regulates new development; it has little influence on existing development. In Waterbury, there is limited vacant land available to accommodate new development. Most building that will occur in the coming decades in Waterbury will occur through redevelopment, i.e., the reuse of buildings and sites that have been put to some use in the past. In some cases, redevelopment might incorporate existing structures. In others, clearance and new construction will be the appropriate response.

Unlike greenfield (virgin land) development, redevelopment is typically complicated by a number of factors, many of which create the impetus for public sector intervention. These include potential environmental contamination, difficulty in assembling multiple small properties, and tax delinquency. Even simple factors, such as the cost of demolition, can make redevelopment sites less attractive than greenfield sites.

In short, the realm of redevelopment is not one where Waterbury can take a passive role, upholding the public interest by shaping the private market. Instead, in most cases the City must work to stimulate redevelopment. Specifically, the City must:

- Think strategically about its inventory of publicly and privately owned redevelopment opportunities, including all vacant, abandoned, severely deteriorated and tax delinquent property;
- Be proactive in recognizing redevelopment opportunities;
- Take an active role (either directly or through designated entities) in marketing sites for redevelopment; and
- Be prepared to exercise its powers with regards to property acquisition, including eminent domain, in particular circumstances and when a clear public benefit is to be realized.

In recent history, the City has not exercised its redevelopment powers directly, but has done so through its designated redevelopment and urban renewal agency. Until recently, this role was filled by the Naugatuck Valley Development Corporation (NVDC). NVDC was chartered as a

regional development corporation, but much of its work has focused on Waterbury, and NVDC directly undertook most of the large-scale redevelopment projects that have occurred in the City.

Recently, there has been a major reorganization affecting redevelopment activity in Waterbury. NVDC has been reduced in size and refocused on its regional mandate. Spun out of NVDC is the Waterbury Development Corporation, or WDC. The WDC has been conceived as more than development corporation—the City's Department of Community Development, which administers the City's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME funds, has been taken out of City government and placed in the WDC, which is incorporated as a not-for-profit 501c(3). Through this unusual (although not unprecedented) structure, it is hoped that WDC can leverage CDBG funds with other sources of grant money to undertake a variety of revitalization projects throughout the City.



Connecticut law authorizes municipalities to exercise their redevelopment powers through designated Redevelopment Agencies, Urban Renewal Agencies, Urban Rehabilitation Agencies, and Municipal Development Corporations. In the future, these roles will be filled by the Waterbury Development Authority (WDA), working in concert with WDC and under the oversight of the Mayor and Council and in conjunction with the Planning Department.

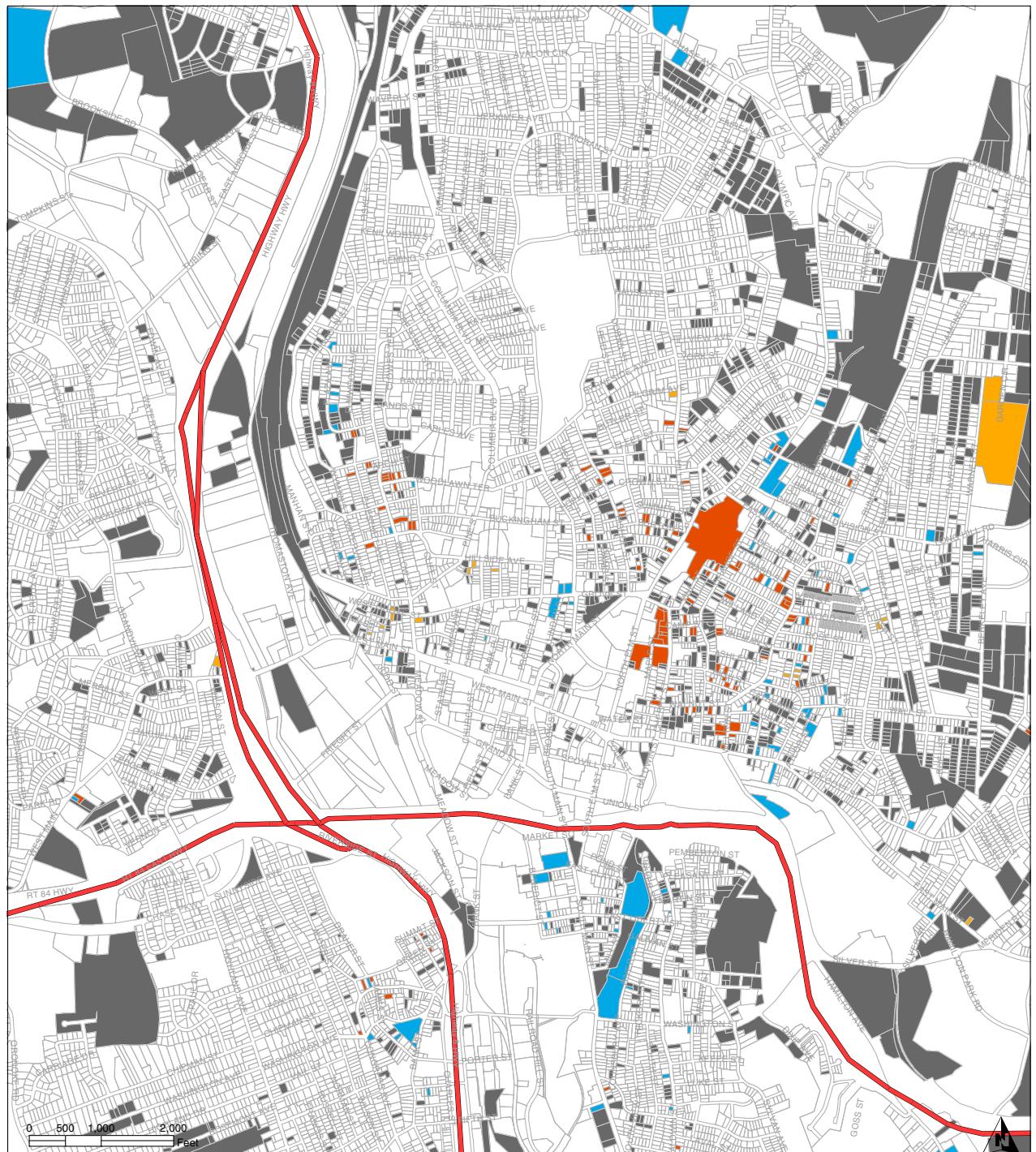
The following recommendations address actions the City can undertake to help ameliorate blight and spur redevelopment throughout Waterbury. It is implicit that these recommendations apply both to the municipal government and its designated agencies, including the WDC, the WDA, the Housing Authority, and any other entities that the City may designate to carry out redevelopment activities.

29. Use the new Geographic Information System (GIS) as a tool to track multiple blight indicators

As part of the background studies for the Plan, a field survey was undertaken to identify properties clearly abandoned and/or severely deteriorated. An example of the results is illustrated on Map 4.1. This “blight map” and associated base data can serve as an initial data source for analyzing patterns of abandonment and recognizing redevelopment opportunities. However, its real power can only be realized by ensuring that it is kept up to date, and is linked with other data that helps indicators of disinvestment and blight, including blight and crime data tracked by the Police Department; tax arrears data tracked by the Finance Department, and data maintained by the Tax Assessor (such, for example, properties where the value of land exceeds the value of improvements).

Waterbury must be in active partner in the redevelopment of abandoned, deteriorated and obsolete properties.

Map 4.1 Vacant and Deteriorated Properties



Legend

Very poor condition
 Vacant - Abandoned

Vacant - Abandoned and Deteriorating
 Vacant lot

Source:
City of Waterbury GIS Data

Map Prepared by:
Phillips Preiss Shapiro Associates, Inc.
Wilbur Smith Associates
May 2005



Many residential units are encumbered by tax liens, making redevelopment difficult.

The various data sources are already computerized, and can be linked through common identifiers, including map block and lot numbers; and/or street addresses. The IT department should be charged with linking the various systems together into a common database linked with the parcel-based GIS system. Every relevant department would therefore have access to a means of spatially tracking blight indicators and coordinating response.

30. Inventory all properties with tax liens in third party hands

In Waterbury, redevelopment is complicated by the City's past policy of bundling and selling tax liens to third parties. In many cases, the accumulated value of these liens exceeds the value of the property.

The fact that these liens are in third-party hands complicates redevelopment efforts aimed at affected properties: the City can no longer take possession of the properties through foreclosure proceedings, but must "buy back" the liens at their current value. This has the potential to greatly increase the public cost of redevelopment projects. With public dollars limited, the City will have to carefully choose when and where it makes financial and planning sense to invest public funds in the retiring of outstanding taxes.

A task force is currently studying the issue of properties encumbered by the sale of their liens to third party investment and collection concerns. Presumably, a list has been compiled or will be compiled as background to assessing the magnitude of the problem. This information should be incorporated into the GIS system.

31. Undertake an ongoing, strategic analysis of potential redevelopment opportunities

The redevelopment of blighted property, while in the City's long term fiscal interest, will typically require upfront expenditures of funds: for example, the retiring of back taxes and purchase of liens from third parties, outright acquisition of properties, etc. Even undertaking tax foreclosure proceeding involves legal and administrative expenditures. Funds for these purposes are limited, necessitating careful prioritization of opportunities to make sure that these funds have the maximum impact.

Without the proper base data, this task was all but impossible. With the new GIS system and the improvements to property tracking recommended above, it can become routine and straightforward. A redevelopment opportunity would have the a mix of the following attributes, which can be deduced by coupling the right mapping with a knowledge of neighborhood-level trends in Waterbury:

- Contiguous blighted properties of sufficient size to allow for coordinated redevelopment.
- The presence of tax arrears sufficient to justify commencement of foreclosure proceedings.
- Preferably, the absence of tax liens in third party hands.

- A location in a stable neighborhood, or a neighborhood transitioning upwards (or with the clear potential to do so).
- Preferentially a commercial site that would meet a local need, such as for neighborhood shopping, a new supermarket, etc.
- Presence of the site of either (1) buildings with architecture and morphology that makes them attractive for renovation or adaptive reuse; or (2) a preponderance of vacant land or substandard structures that would recommend total site clearance and redevelopment.

32. When looking for redevelopment opportunities, be prepared to think small

The major redevelopment projects undertaken in Waterbury to date have been “block-busters”—large shopping complexes, university campuses, etc. These big projects have big impacts, but their complexity and appetite for funds means that years can elapse between conception and execution. Moreover, the future availability of funds for such large projects is in question. In keeping with a focus on neighborhood quality of life, it is recommended that the City look to create a pipeline of potential redevelopment projects both large and small.

Such small-scale projects might include the removal of a few deteriorated houses to provide parking for an adjacent park; creating a site for a small multi-tenant neighborhood retail building; clearing an infill site for townhouse development, etc. Individually, these projects will have small impacts, but collectively, each will be advancing the City’s revitalization. In every example of urban revitalization, a multitude of little investments ultimately played as large a role as the big investments. The redevelopment strategy should seek to encourage any project, no matter how small, that measurably adds to the City’s quality of life.

The City can partner with community groups and NRZs to help identify redevelopment opportunities. In fact, some have already been proposed as part of past NRZ and neighborhood-based plans.

33. For priority sites, put in place the adopted plans and designations necessary to exercise municipal powers with regards to redevelopment

In urban contexts, the risks and costs of site assembly are often deal killers. Only municipal governments can guarantee site assembly, often only by using, or being prepared to use, eminent domain authority.

Under State of Connecticut law, eminent domain in service of redevelopment can be undertaken under the following circumstances:

- In areas where a Redevelopment Area Plan has been adopted (§§ 8-127 – 128).
- In areas where an Urban Renewal Plan has been adopted (§§ 8-141 – 144).
- In areas where a Municipal Development Plan has been adopted (§ 8-193).
- In conjunction with the implementation of a project contained within an adopted NRZ plan.

In addition, abandoned commercial or industrial property may be acquired through eminent domain by a designated Urban Rehabilitation Agency upon certification by the Building Official

that a particular property or properties are abandoned and suitable for reuse.

A proactive redevelopment strategy is predicated on the value of having redevelopment opportunities in the pipeline and ready to go when a potential redeveloper expresses interest. Since the preparation and adoption of the enabling plans is time consuming, it is recommended that the City have plans in place for priority sites. Not all of these plans need be paid for with City money—neighborhood groups, NRZs, CDCs, and others can also undertake such plans and should be encouraged to do so, albeit with the City’s participation. Such plans can even be proposed by private developers. Such plans must have the specificity necessary to meet legal requirements and protect neighborhoods from inappropriate development, but should also be flexible enough to respond to changing conditions without requiring constant amendment.

34. Limit the use of redevelopment authority to sites where the prevailing condition is clearly one of underutilization, economic stagnation, and disinvestment

Throughout the nation, the recent Supreme Court decision on the disputed Urban Renewal plan in New London has sparked a very public debate on the use of eminent domain for redevelopment. The authority under which these powers are exercised comes derives from State statutes; and the limits on such power vary greatly from state to state. In Connecticut, as in New York (but unlike New Jersey), the law is permissive as to what conditions must be found within a designated area before redevelopment powers can be used.

To provide clarity at the local level, as well as to forestall public controversy, this Plan recommends that redevelopment plans, urban renewal plans, and similar efforts only be undertaken when the prevailing condition within the target area is clearly one of underutilization, disinvestment, and economically unproductive use of land and property, and where the private market is unlikely on its own accord to make the necessary investments to improve these conditions.

35. Market target sites broadly to potential redevelopers

Once the appropriate plans are in place, the City should proactively market these sites to potential redevelopers. This marketing can be done directly, through advertised Requests for Proposals (RFPs), or through third parties, such as the CERC SiteFinder service (www.CTSiteFinder.com).

36. Incorporate redevelopment objectives into every municipal decision involving site location

Two major studies—one for the Waterbury Schools, and one of the Fire Department—call for the siting and construction of a number of new facilities. As Waterbury moves into the future, additional site location decisions will likely arise for other departments and municipal functions. Every one of these decisions should be seen as an opportunity to remove blight and further the City’s revitalization objectives. In this regard, all such site location decisions should begin with a review of the “blight map” to identify areas where the acquisition of property and construction of a new facility can have the biggest positive impact.

37. Implement a side yard program in neighborhoods with a surplus of abandoned or deteriorated structures or vacant lots.

In many neighborhoods in Waterbury, vacant structures and lots are found adjacent to occupied homes, duplexes and triple-deckers. In many cases, these neighborhoods are experiencing population loss—reuse of this individual lots for new



housing may not be appropriate or desirable. In these cases, it is recommended that the City foreclose or acquire the property with an offer to deed it over to an adjacent property at favorable terms. These properties, many of which may be informally used for parking, could become proper off-street parking and yard areas for existing residential buildings. This policy has been pursued in other cities experiencing population loss such as Baltimore and Philadelphia.

Many triple-decker neighborhoods could benefit from additional parking and green space.



Circulation

Waterbury is a mature community with a well developed roadway network (see Map 5.1: Functional Classification of Roads). As noted in the Community Assessment, however, a number of transportation improvements are planned or contemplated for the City. The most significant plans relate to the studies for reconstructing I-84 as it passes over the Naugatuck River Valley. Under study are not only a reconfiguration of the bridge itself, but significant changes to the placement and alignment of the exits serving downtown Waterbury. In addition, the COG's study of Route 69 contains a number of recommendations for improving traffic flow along this important corridor. Most of these recommendations should be implemented, although this Plan differs with respect to the removal of on-street parking along commercial streets. Finally, building upon past plans and studies, this plan strongly echoes recommendations to extend Thomaston Avenue through the Freight Street area to connect with Bank Street south of I-84.

Transit service in Waterbury is primarily provided through fixed-route buses. The current system is providing a badly needed service on a very limited budget. Given the growth in Waterbury's transit-dependent population (see Table 6.1 in Chapter 6 of this volume), there is every reason to work to improve bus service in Waterbury. However, until additional funding is committed by the State, few expensive changes are likely to be feasible.

There has been a significant amount of discussion about the inadequacy of the current bus pulse point (the location where the "spokes" of the system converge for transfers), located on the Waterbury Green. From a transit rider's perspective, the waiting areas are inadequate and do not provide protection from the elements. From the standpoint of many downtown stakeholders, the pulse point dominates the Green and creates congestion and loitering in the heart of downtown.

In the short term, the transit rider's experience could be improved through better shelters and waiting areas. However, the Green is unable to accommodate an indoor waiting area or covered transfer point. The City is currently pursuing a Transportation Center that would relocate the bus pulse point to the Waterbury train station in a new facility that would offer a much high-

er level of rider amenity, as well as direct connections with the long distance bus service and Metro North commuter rail.

According to the bus operator, the proper functioning of the current route structure, with its 30 minute to one hour headways, is dependent upon being able to provide consistent and predictable transfers at the main bus pulse point. The future move of the pulse point from its location on the Waterbury Green will propagate disturbances throughout the bus system, and must be contemplated within an overall plan for bus service. It would be an opportune time to rethink the routes and look at ways to improve the overall service.

Waterbury's Metro North rail station is woefully underutilized, as is the entire Naugatuck Valley branch. Proposed investments in the rail station might make the service more attractive, but significantly increasing ridership would require an equally significant increase in service levels, which are difficult to justify given the fact that few that 200 persons board or alight at the station on a given day. Methods to increase ridership on the Waterbury branch will be the subject of a Connecticut DOT branch line study to begin in mid-2005. Waterbury needs to ensure that its voice is heard as part of this study. Further, the City should partner with the CNV-COG and the COG to the south to bring together all the towns with a station on the Naugatuck Branch to articulate a unified position on increased service.

Roadway Improvements

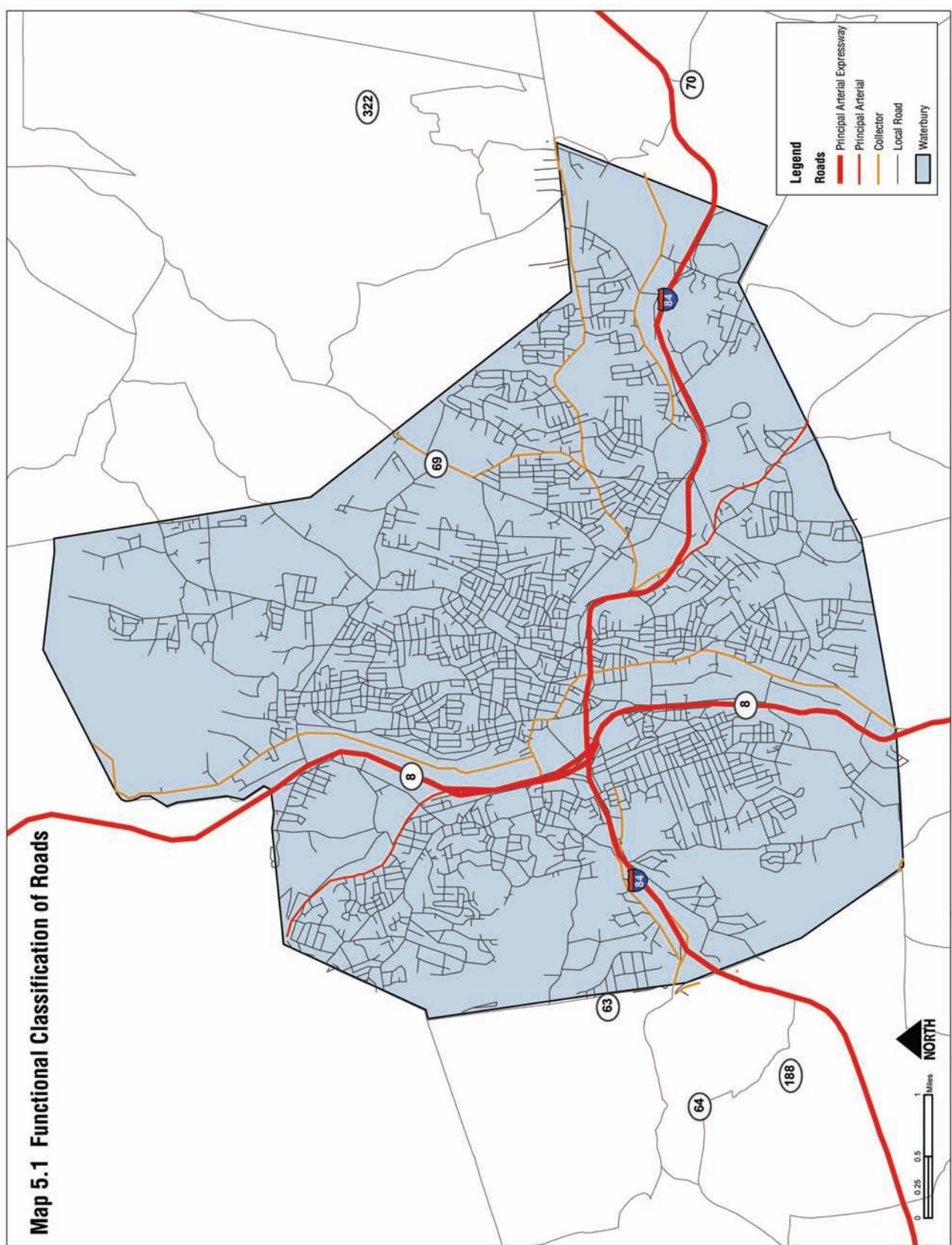
38. Extend Thomaston Avenue south through the Freight Street area to connect with Bank Street south of I-84.

This recommendation, which has been discussed for years and lately exhaustively studied in the context of Freight Street Area redevelopment, is the most significant recommended addition to the roadway network. While this planned improvement is most often discussed in terms of its economic development benefits, it would also increase desirable redundancy in the roadway network and help relieve pressure on overcrowded downtown streets such as Meadow and West Main.

39. Complete selected paper streets to improve connectivity, lower emergency response times, and disperse traffic impacts

Throughout Waterbury are located platted streets that have never been built. This circumstance has left many areas of Waterbury isolated—often significant residential areas have only one point of access. Not only is this unfavorable from a traffic point of view, but it also poses safety hazards. Emergency vehicles may have to follow circuitous routes in order to respond to calls for service in these areas. Further, a tree over the roadway could effectively block access to 50 or more homes.

In general, such streets would be built by developers during the course of their subdivision build out. However, many of these “paper” streets are located in developments that were approved long ago yet never fully developed, and where the only option is for the City to make the road-



way improvements. Fortunately, in many cases the roadway lengths are short, and so the costs may be modest. In other cases, such as the completion of Columbia Boulevard which would open up multiple land-locked properties, development should pay for much if not all of the costs of the connection.

The following connections are recommended. They are illustrated (along with the Thomaston/Jackson Connector) on Map 5.2.

- Completion of Clough Road to connect with Park Road. This would provide broad swathes of western Waterbury with much more direct access to Route 63 and I-84, and would take pressure off of Watertown Road and Bunker Hill Road.
- Extension of Forest Street to connect with Lakeside Drive.
- Extension of Goff Road to connect with Danielle Street at Rosengarten. This would provide 54 lots served by a single access point with an additional means of access.
- Completion of Boyden Road from Bucks Hill to North Main Street.
- Completion of Grassy Hill Road from Blackman to Bucks Hill Road.
- Extension of Chestnut Hill Road to connect with Farmwood Road to the South.
- Extension of Oldham Avenue to connect with Beth Street.
- Extension of Sunnyside Avenue over the Naugatuck River to provide for a new local roadway connection between the east and west sides of Waterbury. This has been proposed as part of the I-84 Study.
- Connection of Parkwood Avenue to Lakeside Boulevard East
- Connection of two segments of Farrington Avenue
- Completion of Columbia Boulevard
- Connection of two segments of Hull Street

There is a further planned connection located just outside of the Waterbury municipal limits that would improve circulation in Waterbury and is therefore supported by the City. This is the connection of Austin Road with Scott Road in Prospect. The CNV-COG is currently pursuing this project for Surface Transportation Program—Urban (STP-U) funding. In addition, while not a roadway connection, Bristol Street has been targeted for improvements. This roadway currently suffers from poor pavement conditions and abrupt grade changes and curves.

In addition to the proposed connections, it is recommended that the paper street between the proposed Forest Street extension and Wooster Street be demapped, as this street is not needed to serve any existing or future development, and runs along a stream bed which should be preserved in its natural state. The right of way can be deeded back to adjacent residential lots.

As part of the studies concerning the reconfiguration of Interstate 84 and Route 8, undertake a comprehensive study of downtown circulation.

Downtown circulation is heavily influenced by the existing routes to and from the expressways. These points of interchange may be reconfigured, moved, or removed depending upon the outcome of the traffic studies. These decisions must be made in the context of an overall circulation

strategy for downtown Waterbury, which already has several points of interchange with I-84.

41. As part of this study, evaluate the feasibility of reconfiguring the traffic pattern around the Green as a “rectangular rotary.”

Traffic circulation around the Green is problematic in several respects. Key turning movements are prohibited, making drivers go out of their way to reach their destinations. Pavement on the north side of the Green is underutilized, as most of the traffic is directed to the area south of the Green. If roadway space could be reclaimed, additional on-street parking could be provided. Finally, the bus transfer node must compete with cars for roadway space.



Downtown street patterns should be reconfigured to simplify navigation and improve pedestrian safety.

For these reasons, it is proposed that the streets surrounding the Green be reconfigured in a one-way, counter-clockwise configuration that would essentially turn the Green into something that functions like a signalized rotary, albeit rectangular in shape. The advantages of this scheme, conceptually illustrated as Figure 5.1, are several:

- Fewer lanes would be needed with a one-way pattern. For example, the roadway south of the Green could be restriped for three lanes rather than two.
- With fewer lanes, more on-street parking and shorter pedestrian crossings could be provided for.
- All turn movements from street around the Green become right turns.
- All exiting movements from the “rotary” become straight or right turn movements.
- There would no longer be a need to prohibit certain turning movements—all streets could be reached from all other streets with no more than one circuit around the Green.

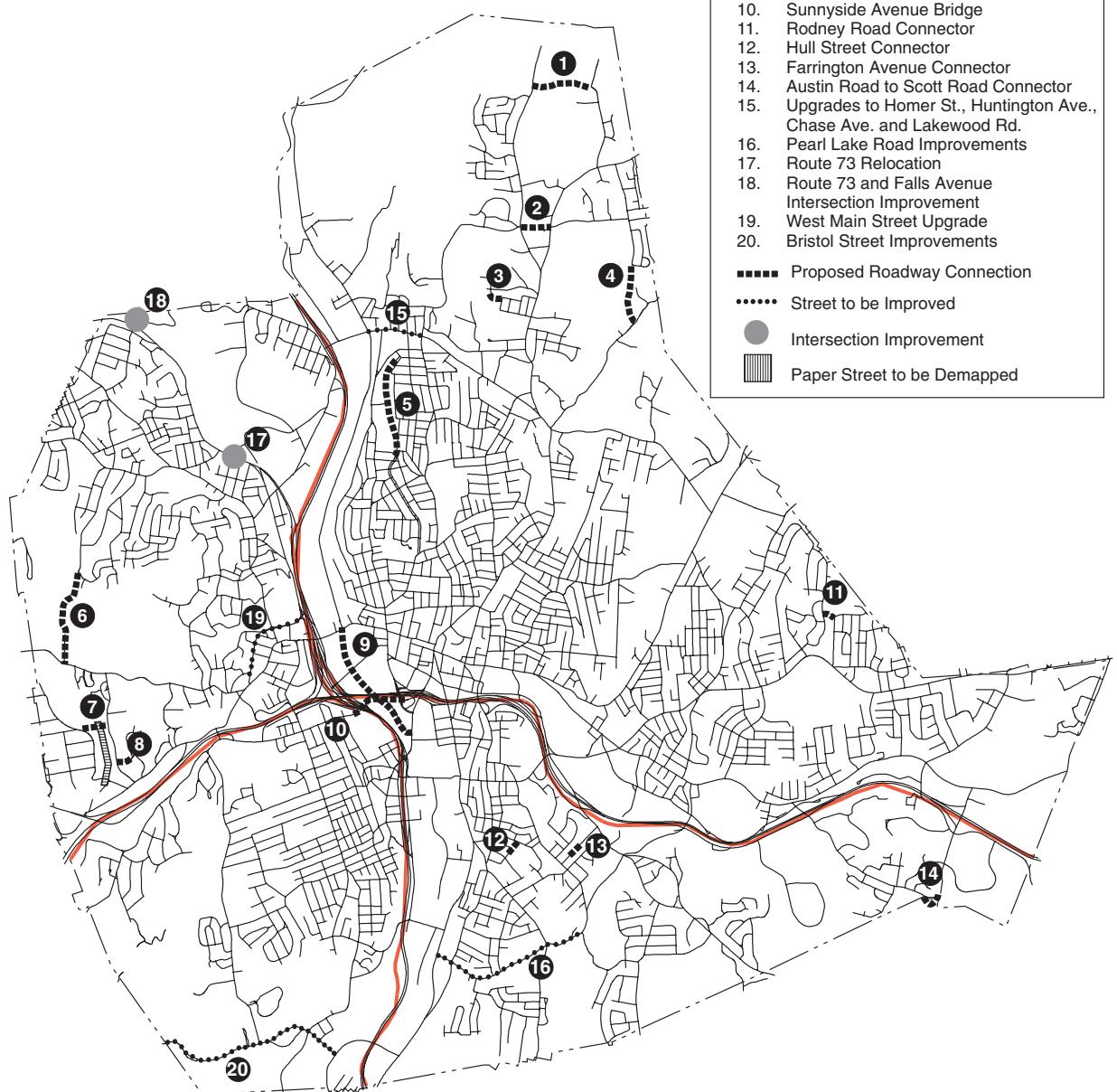
42. As an alternative, explore the possibility of converting the north side of the Green into a traffic calmed parking area.

Under this alternative, the north side of the Green would be restriped with a single travel lane (likely eastbound), and diagonal or right angle parking would be added to one or both sides. The benefits of this scheme include the additional parking to serve the green and adjacent institutions such as the Y, the Mattatuck Museum and the churches; simplification of traffic movement in the downtown; and better pedestrian connections. As part of this scheme, the existing intersection at Exchange Place would be reconfigured with turning lanes and signals to permit left and right turns from all streets entering the intersection. The advantage of this scheme, illustrated as Figure 5.2, is that it provides for a traffic-calmed area north of the Green, is operationally simple, and could provide for an expansion of the Green to the West.

43. Implement a traffic calming scheme for Grand Street

Grand Street is, along with the Green and Bank Street, the civic heart of Waterbury. Fronting along its length are County and State Courts; the municipal offices; the main Post Office, and one of the finest commercial streetscapes in the City. Further, Grand Street connects the

Map 5.2: Roadway Improvements



0 2 4 Miles

Buckingham Garage with Bank Street and the aforementioned uses. Accordingly, Grand Street experiences some of the most significant pedestrian flows in the downtown. At the same time, traffic is currently slower and lighter than for East and West Main Street which connect across town.

Therefore, a traffic calming strategy for Grand Street should be implemented with a view towards improving the pedestrian character and safety of the street. The strategy in the short term could consist of replacing signals with four-way stops; and in the long term include the same sort of geometry improvements, such as bumpouts at crosswalks, that have been successfully implemented on Grand Street. In fact, a four-way stop at Grand and Field Street was recently temporarily implemented due to a signal malfunction, and appears to have enhanced both vehicular and pedestrian flow by eliminating unused green times and decreasing pedestrian wait times.

44. Explore making Bank Street two-way south of Grand Street.

Currently, Bank Street in this location is one-way southbound. The main exit and entry point for the Buckingham parking garage, the most important garage in the downtown, is also located on the block just south of Grand Street. As a result, people leaving the Buckingham garage must either immediately merge onto I-84 or end up south of the highway. This is frustrating and confusing for people wishing to return to the downtown or to proceed to points north.

The street right of way in this location is sufficient to allow for two-way traffic. The main impediment is the use of the curbside area for long-distance bus queuing, a function that is eventually proposed to be relocated to the proposed Transportation Center. In any event, restoration of two-way traffic on Bank south of Grand will provide multiple circulation benefits and help connect the downtown with commercial areas south of the interstate, and vice versa. The reconfiguration should be studied in conjunction with the I-84 studies, and incorporated into a future redesign of the entry and exit ramps.

45. As a general rule, do not remove on-street parking in the downtown core to expand roadway capacity

When downtown streets become congested and options are limited to provide additional capacity, the removal of on-street parking is often proposed. Yet downtown streets perform many more functions than the accommodation of through traffic. They must serve and support adjacent land uses, provide for pedestrian circulation, etc. The removal of on-street parking undermines all of these objectives. Therefore, the removal of on-street parking in the downtown is strongly discouraged.

46. Improve wayfinding and directional signage in Waterbury

Waterbury is now home to a number of attractions—the Palace Theater, Time Expo, the Mattatuck Museum—that are intended to attract out-of-towners. Further, the City is a regional destination for shopping and for its two hospitals. Finally, UConn draws increasing numbers of students to its new downtown campus. Yet, the signage that would help these visitors find their destinations is lacking. This is a particular problem when coupled with Waterbury's confusing

street network, oddly configured highway exits, and restrictive downtown traffic patterns.

It is therefore recommended that a program of wayfinding signage be implemented to help motorists find their way to and from the highways to the main attractions and shopping areas in Waterbury. In the downtown particularly, this signage should be attractively designed to fit in with an overall theme or motif for the downtown. Specifically, the interchange area at Exit 21 / Bank Street should continue to be improved as an entrance to the city by providing gateway signage.

In addition, as part of the I-84 study, interstate signage deficiencies in downtown have been assessed. Signage deficiencies are shown on Map 5.3. Specific signage recommendations are as follows:

- *City Green:* Provide better signage directing drivers from the City Green to Interstate 84.
- *St Mary's Hospital:* Clear signage to guide motorists from the hospital to I-84 is needed.
- *Baldwin Street/Mill Street:* There are no signs at the Baldwin Street/Mill Street intersection to direct traffic traveling south on Baldwin Street to I-84.
- *Grand Street/Bank Street:* There are no signs on the Grand Street approach eastbound to direct traffic to both I-84 and Route 8.
- *Hamilton Street/ Silver Lane:* This intersection needs an I-84 westbound directional sign on the Hamilton Street approach northbound. Also, there are no signs to direct drivers traveling west on Washington Street to I-84.
- *Riverside Street/West Main Street:* An I-84 westbound directional sign is needed at the northbound approach on Riverside Street.
- *West Main Street/ Chase Parkway:* This intersection needs I-84 directional signs on the eastbound approach from West Main Street.
- *Chase Parkway/Country Club Road:* This intersection needs I-84 directional signs
- *Sunnyside Avenue/ Highland Avenue:* An I-84 westbound directional sign is needed on all approaches to this intersection.
- *Sunnyside Avenue/Riverside Street:* A sign is need to direct motorists to Route 8

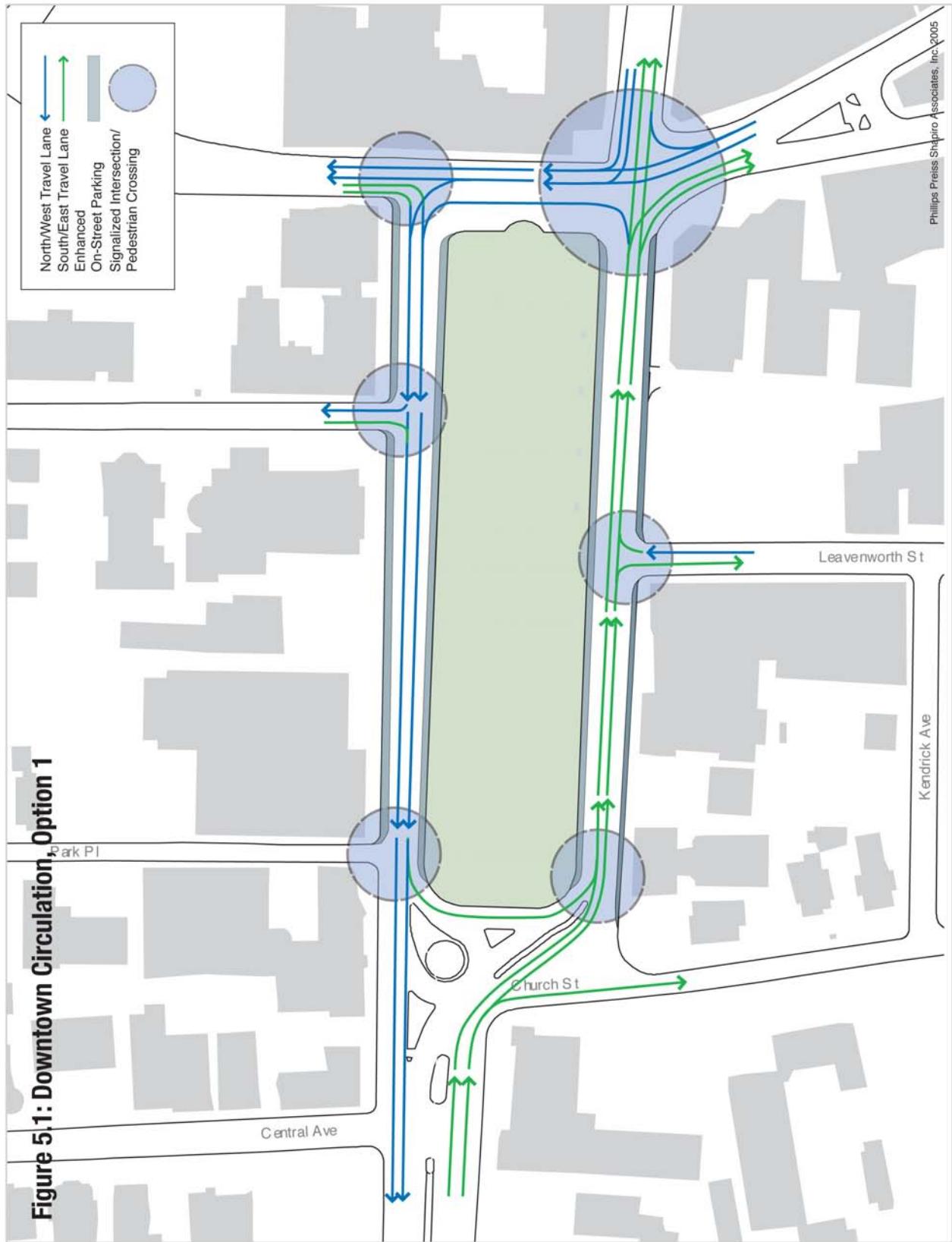
47. As part of the I-84 study, advocate for changes which serve the City's economic development goals

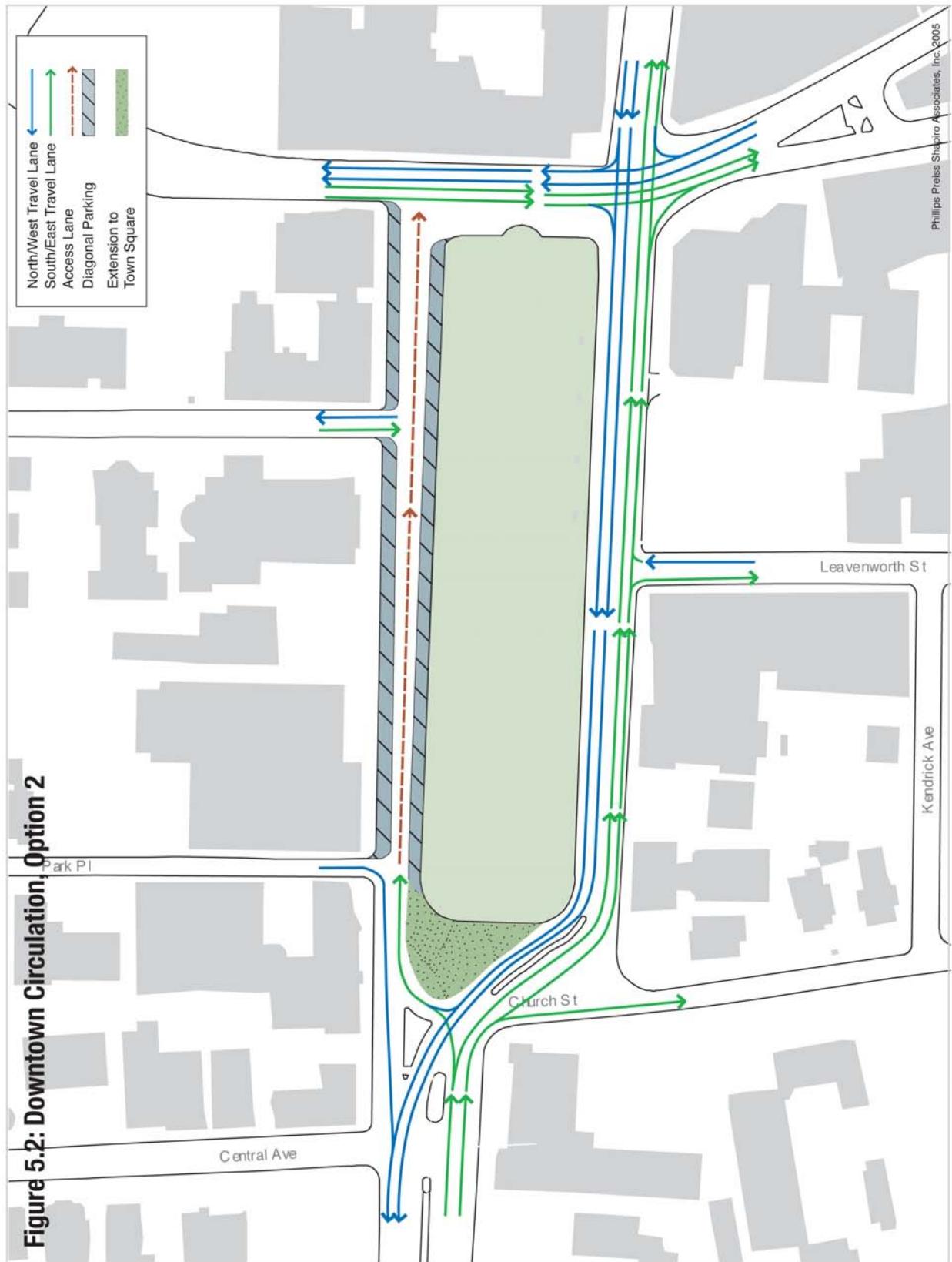
As examples, new highway exits should provide improved access to the downtown, as well as the Freight Street/Thomaston Avenue corridors. Any changes to the bridge and on-ramps should be designed in such a way so as to not consume excessive space in the Freight Street area which could be better used for development.

48. Continue to advocate for Interstate designation for Route 8

Originally proposed as part of the Strategic Economic Development Plan, such designation would increase Waterbury's visibility to national site locators, and open up new sources of Federal funding for improvements to the Route 8 corridor.

49. Reroute designated State Route 69 to better serve existing and future retail-





ing areas and provide for improved traffic flow and wayfinding

Route 69 north of East Main currently runs along two different roadways before joining with Wolcott Street—Meriden Road and Stillson Road. These roadways are relatively narrow, two-lane roads; and have a land use character emphasizing residential uses and schools as much as commercial uses. The current routing also bypasses a significant amount of the retailing along Wolcott Street, specifically everything located between Manor Avenue and Stillson Road. Merchants along this portion of Wolcott Street are therefore deprived of the greater access and visibility that a location along a state highway would provide.

For these reasons, it is recommended that Route 69 be redesignated to run as follows. From East Main, the highway would run along north-easterly along Meriden Road until Manor Avenue. Route 69 would then follow a left turn to run north-westerly along Manor Avenue to Wolcott Street. It would then turn to run north-easterly along Wolcott Street where it would join with the existing portion of Route 69 at Stillson Avenue. Both the existing and proposed designations are illustrated on Map 5.4.

The proposed routing does have some disadvantages. It introduces a new left-hand turn for northbound travelers (southbound travelers already have to make a left turn). Also, while Manor Avenue is no worse, and is some ways better, than Stillson Road from a traffic engineering point of view, the redesignation would introduce a new roadway into the Route 69 corridor, requiring the roadway to be brought up to DOT standards (likely requiring widening and the taking of property); or DOT would have to agree to waive the standards.

However, the benefits outweigh these detriments. The new left-hand turn is offset by the extra intersections and forks in the road avoided by not using Meriden and Stillson. Drivers are brought more quickly to Wolcott Street, which is a four-lane roadway north of Manor Avenue. Shoppers will have an easier time locating Wolcott Street retailers. Finally, the retailers themselves will benefit economically from the enhanced visibility afforded by the new routing.

This recommendation lessens the urgency of most of the roadway improvements proposed as part of the Route 69 study prepared on behalf of the COG. However, one key recommendation—to widen Route 69 and reconfigure the lanes from East Main Street to Manor Avenue—remains important and perhaps even more essential to the function of the proposed new routing of Route 69. This proposed improvement should therefore be implemented as part of this recommendation.

Transit

50. In the short term, improve waiting areas and facilities at the bus pulse point at Exchange Place

In the short to medium term, it is unlikely that the bus pulse point will be moved from its current location. A cost effective way of addressing the inadequacy of the current facility is to improve the quality and aesthetics of the waiting areas. This is precisely the strategy used in



The Waterbury Green at Exchange Place is the current hub of the bus service.

New Haven, which, like Waterbury, has its main transfer point located alongside the City's signature downtown park. In New Haven, the pulse point is also located at the green. Fronting on the green are Yale University, the Federal and State Courthouses, City Hall, and multiple office buildings such as the Connecticut Financial Center. The bus waiting area is outfitted with roomy and attractive metal and glass shelters with seating areas for bus patrons to help the transit facility fit in with the high-value land uses which surround it.

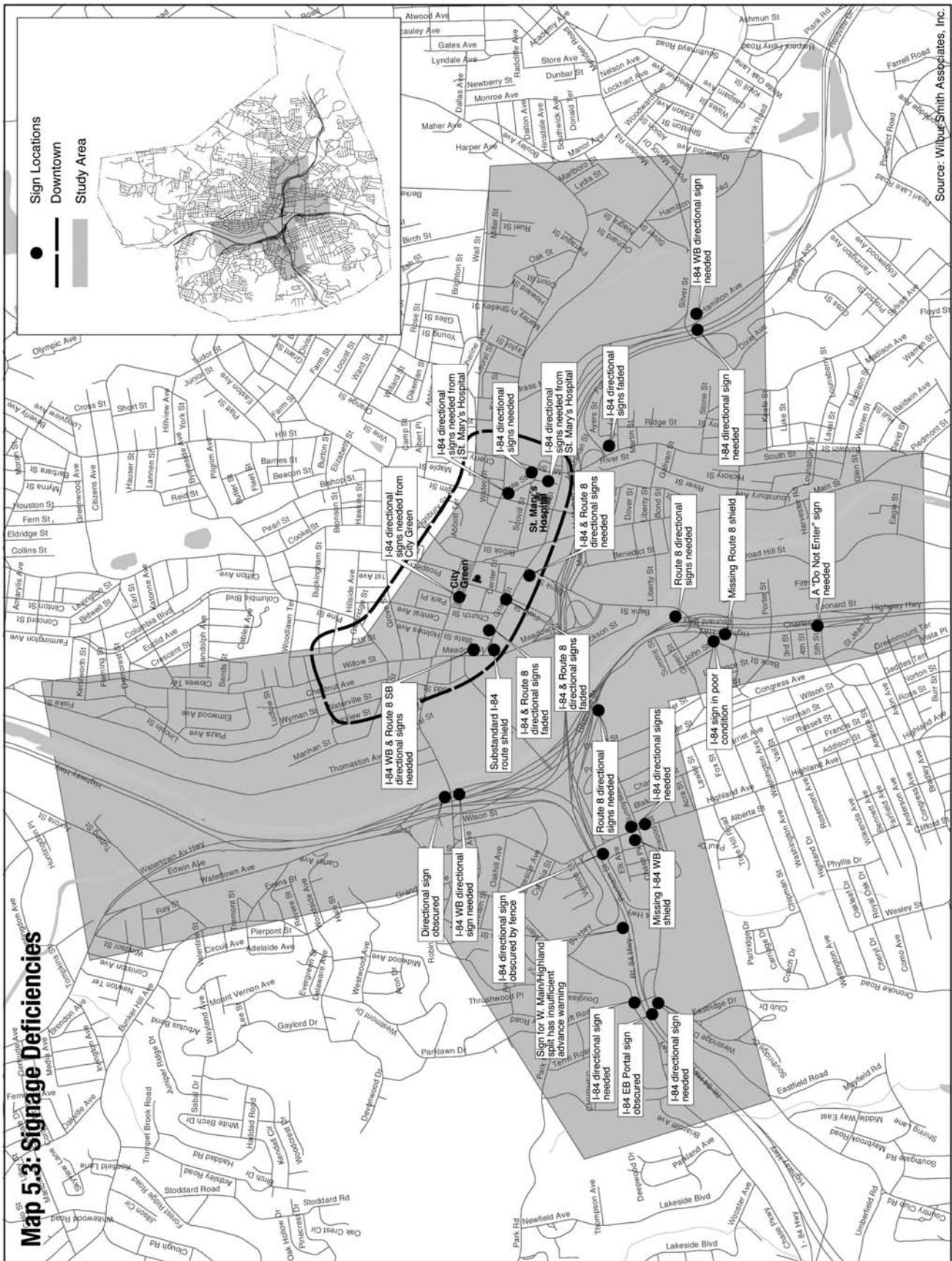
51. In the longer term, plan for a consolidation of all transit services at a new Transportation Center.

The City in concert with NVDC, Rideworks and downtown stakeholders have proposed consolidating all transit service, both local and long distance, at a new transit center to be located at or near the existing Metro North rail station. A study has been performed for transit center, and initial funding has been secured. The proposed facility would similar to the transportation center in Hartford, which combines rail with long distance bus; but would further incorporate the local bus transfer node. The benefits of the project are several:

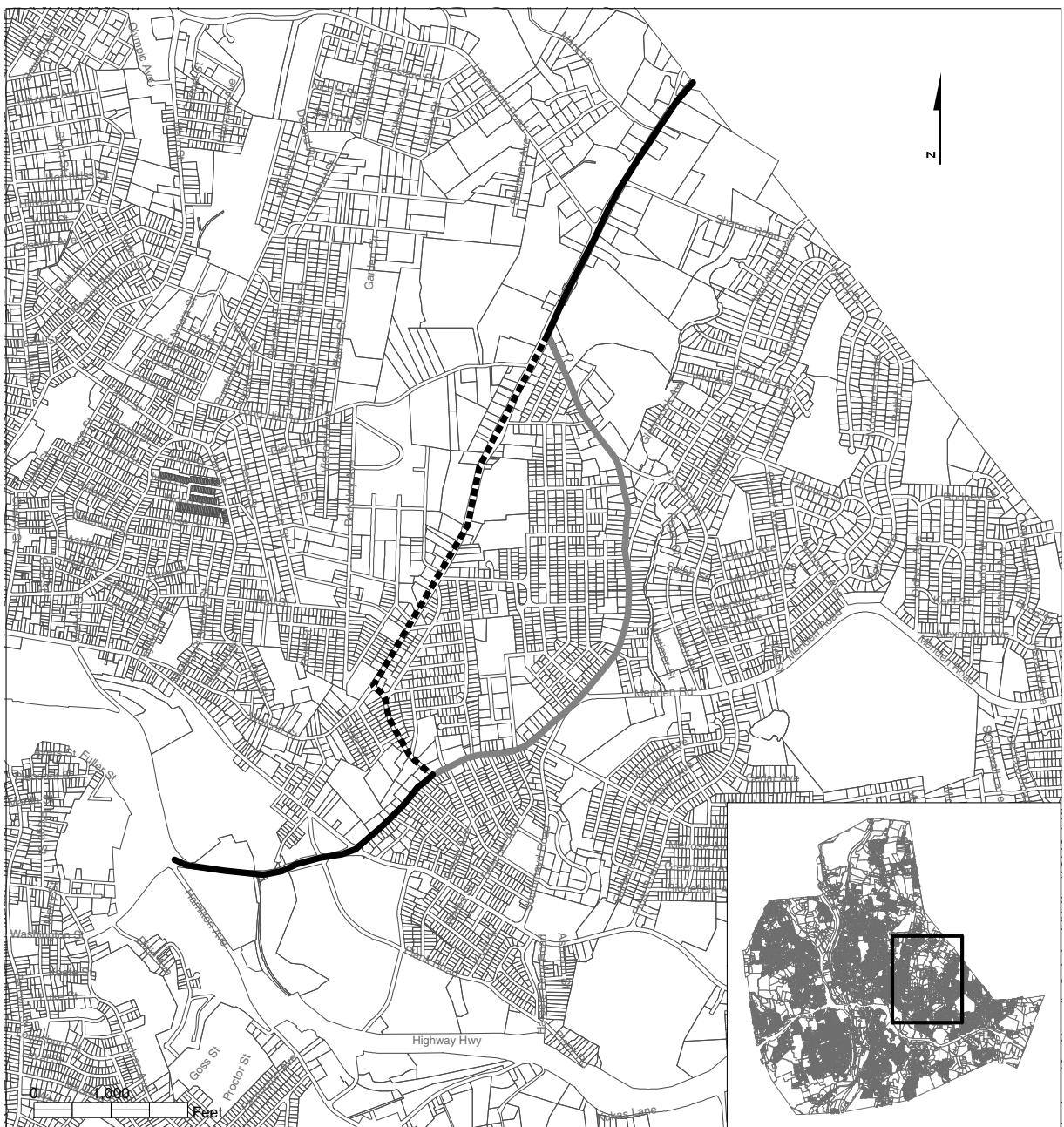
- Bus patrons would be given a weather-protected place to wait for their transfer.
- Long distance bus and train riders would be provided with a proper ticketing and waiting area with comfort facilities.
- Parking areas for the bus and commuter rail would be secure and monitored.
- Congestion would be reduced and park space reclaimed at the Waterbury Green.
- In the long run, these improvements could be expected to improve ridership for all modes of transit.

Before moving forward with the proposed Transportation Center, a comprehensive study of the associated economic, social, image, transportation and financial costs and benefits, as well as operational issues, should be completed.

Map 5.3: Signage Deficiencies



Map 5.4 Proposed Rerouting of Route 69



Legend

- Common segments of Route 69 to remain unchanged
- Proposed new routing of Route 69
- Existing routing of Route 69 to be removed

Source:
City of Waterbury GIS Data

Map Prepared by:
Philips Preiss Shapiro Associates, Inc.
Wilbur Smith Associates
May 2005

52. Throughout the bus system, add shelters and signs to bus stops.

The Waterbury bus system is all but invisible. Stops are poorly signed and marked, and do not contain schedule information. Further, few stops have shelters. As a way to both increase rider comfort, advertise the system, and grow ridership, it is recommended that bus stops be clearly marked and that new shelters be added to provide places to wait with protection from the rain, snow and wind.



Shelters can be expensive, but they can also be free or close to free. Specifically, bus shelters are an increasingly popular form of outdoor advertising. Some outdoor advertising agencies will actually pay to install shelters in return for the ability to rent advertising space; conversely, the transit provider could pay and then reap the income from leasing for advertising space. Either way, a key amenity could be provided for transit riders and very little cost to the City or transit provider.

The existing Metro North stop is the future site of a multi-nodal transportation center.

One downside is the negative aesthetic impact of the advertising, as well as the potential for advertising inappropriate for a neighborhood setting. The transit agency can address the latter concern by disallowing certain types of advertising (say, liquor and cigarettes). The former concern remains, and a tradeoff must be made between the detriment of street advertising and the benefit of shelter from the elements for bus riders. Finally, no advertising should be permitted on any shelters located on the Waterbury Green.

53. As part of the Connecticut DOT branch line study, advocate for improvements to the local branch of Metro North

The current ridership on the Waterbury Branch of Metro North, serving Naugatuck Valley, is low. However, with service levels at only two trains per day, the ridership will remain low, as the branch line is impractical for commuters to rely on for regular commutes. The Connecticut DOT is conducting a branch line study to investigate needs and deficiencies along the line and determine actions to improve the service and ridership to begin in mid-2005.

As part of the study, Waterbury should agree to improving the station area and promoting development around the station area, and encourage other branchline towns to do the same.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Needs

In the past decade in the United States, transportation officials and stakeholders have emphasized the importance of incorporating bicycle and pedestrian facilities into the general transportation system. A national survey on pedestrians and bicyclists conducted in 2002 revealed that about 80 percent of adult Americans take at least one walk lasting five minutes or longer during the summer months. The need for a well integrated transportation system eventually led to the formulation of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21), which seeks in addition to other goals, to expand and improve facilities and safety for bicyclists and pedes-

trians. Pedestrian accommodations necessary to encourage walking include sidewalks, pedestrian crossings, and street lighting.

54. Encourage cycling within Waterbury by providing for designated bike routes on selected streets

Currently, there are no state designated bicycle routes within the City of Waterbury. However, the designation of two on-street bicycle routes within Waterbury are being pursued by the COGCNV. The first is Route 73, Watertown Ave, West Main and Thomaston Ave running from Watertown, through Waterbury into Thomaston. The second includes Route 69 for its entire length within Waterbury. In the COGCNV Regional Bike Plan, bike lanes were recommended for both of these routes. The Plan supports this recommendation.

Additionally, the COGCNV is pursuing the development of a linear bicycle path along the east side of Naugatuck River in Waterbury. This project is in the preliminary stages, with property acquisition being pursued through private donation. It is envisaged that the Naugatuck Greenway will pass through the study area and any proposed transportation improvements will ensure connectivity to this system.

55. Correct sidewalk deficiencies in appropriate locations to facilitate and promote pedestrian circulation

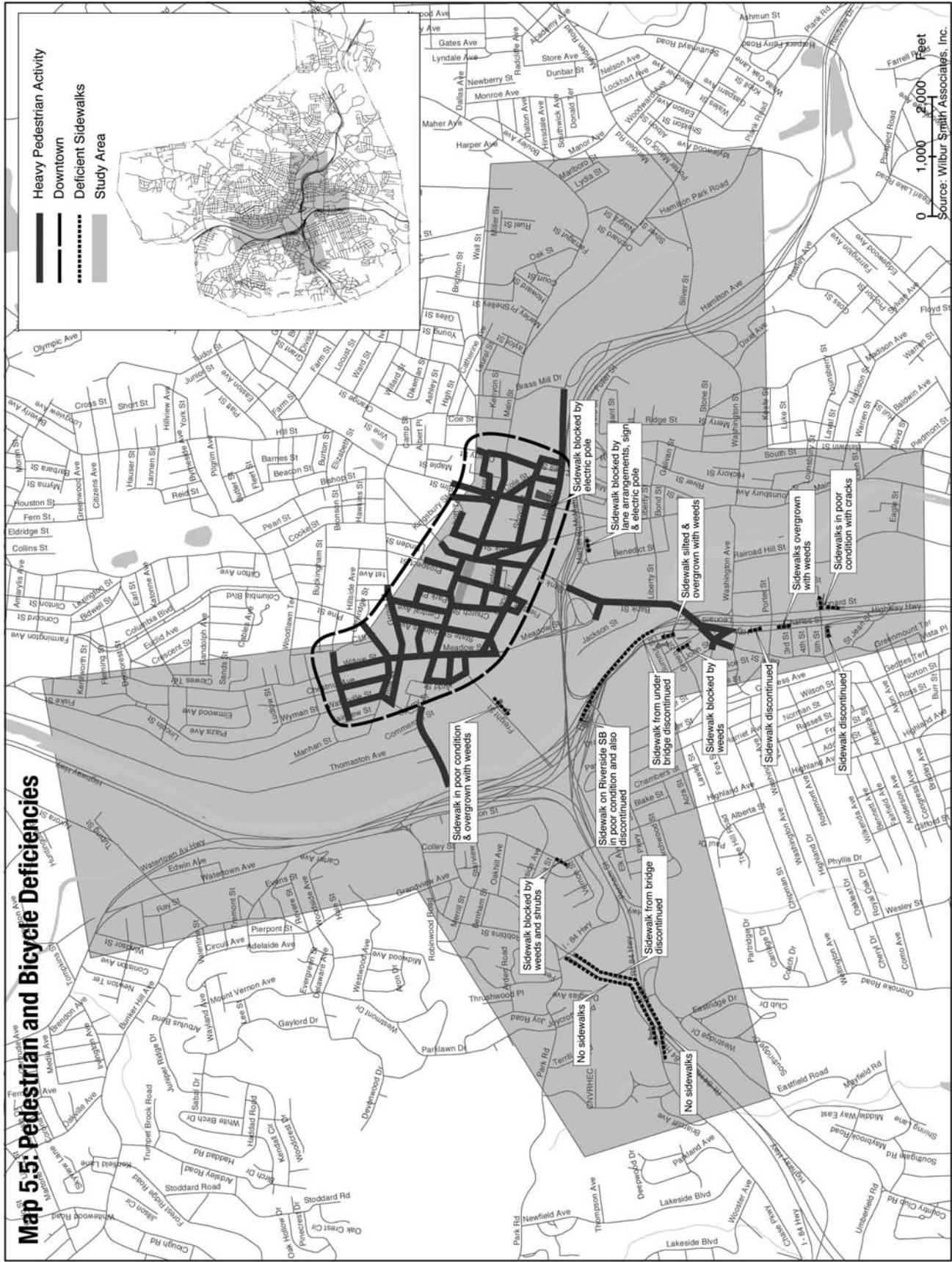
Most of the pedestrian activities in Waterbury are centered in the downtown area where a majority of the local shopping and commercial facilities are located. Map 5.5 shows the locations with heavy pedestrian activity. Most of the streets in these areas have sidewalks on both sides of the roadway. The sidewalks are well connected, generally in good condition and serve a large number of pedestrians and bicyclists.

The same map also illustrates locations with sidewalk deficiencies. At certain locations within the study area, sidewalks were non-existent while at other locations the sidewalks were discontinuous throughout the length of roadway. Some sidewalks were heavily silted and overgrown with weeds and shrubs, as a result of which, some of these sidewalks were rendered impassable. There were other sidewalks that were blocked by roadside infrastructure such as electric poles, traffic signal poles and lane arrangement signs. The following deficiencies in are need of correction:

- Union Street has a sidewalk along its entire length on the south side but no sidewalks on the north side. There are pedestrian crosswalks on Union Street at the intersections of Brass Mill Mall, Brass Mill Drive, Mill Street and South Elm Street and South Main Street. At the Union Street/Brass Mill Mall and Union Street/Brass Mill Drive intersections however, there are no pedestrian-signals even though the crosswalks at these locations are wide. Also on the north side of Union Street just before South Elm Street intersection, the sidewalk is blocked by an electric pole.
- Market Square has sidewalks on both sides. However, on the south side of Market square, just west of South Main Street, the sidewalk is blocked by a lane arrangements sign and electric pole.

- West Main Street has sidewalks along both sides; however these sidewalks are discontinuous at certain sections particularly from the I-84 Interchange 18 exit ramp to the Chase Parkway Bridge.
- Chase Parkway has a sidewalk along its whole length on the south side but no sidewalks on the north side.
- Sunnyside Avenue has sidewalks on both sides, however the sidewalk on the west side between Vernon Street and Cynthia Street is rendered impassable by weeds and shrubs.
- Riverside Street NB has a sidewalk along its east side. This sidewalk is however discontinuous from Sunnyside Avenue to Bank Street. The sidewalk is also in poor condition, overgrown with weeds and heavily silted. There are no sidewalks on Riverside Street NB along its west side.
- Riverside Street SB has no sidewalks along its entire length.
- Leonard Street has a sidewalk on the west side which is overgrown with weeds and rendered impassable.
- South Leonard Street has a tiny stretch of sidewalk from the Route 8 NB exit ramp to Fifth Street along its east side. This sidewalk however is cracked and is in poor condition. There is no sidewalk on the west side of the South Leonard Street.
- Charles Street has sidewalks along its west side from Bank Street to Fifth Street. There is a sidewalk along the east side of Charles Street, however this sidewalk is discontinued midway between Potter Street towards Washington Avenue.
- Fifth Street has sidewalks on both sides. The sidewalk on the south side is discontinued just under the Route 8 overpass, while the sidewalk on the north side is cracked and in poor condition, east of the overpass.

Map 5.5: Pedestrian and Bicycle Deficiencies





Economic Development

The recent history of economic development in Waterbury has been dominated by large-scale, State-subsidized, public and public-private development projects. This model has produced considerable successes. As examples, the Brass Mill Mall and Commons is a popular and profitable regional mall; Waterbury Crossing has further expanded the City's retail economy; and the downtown UConn campus has brought new life to East Main Street and helped the University expand its local offerings. The revamped Palace Theater and Arts Magnet School are new, but have the potential to further spur the revitalization of East Main. Without these major investments, the economic picture in the City would certainly be far worse.

Yet, it is likely that this particular model of economic development has entered a period of retrenchment. The governor's office is no longer occupied by a Waterbury native, and the State coffers are not as flush as they were during the boom time of the late 1990s. While it is assumed that the State will continue to fund projects in Waterbury, the spigot of funds will likely be flowing at a slower pace than it did for the past decade.

The Inner City Business Strategy Initiative (ICBSI) spearheaded by former Governor Rowland helped jump-start a more policy-oriented approach to economic development in the City. The resulting report identified key clusters that should be the focus for future growth in the local economy, including precision metal fabrication; health care; and retail. The policy responses addressed business networks, workforce training and preparedness, and site availability. Implementation is still ongoing.

The Strategic Economic Development Plan prepared by the Waterbury Partnership for Growth built upon the ICBSI report and echoed many of its recommendations, but added a physical planning perspective. The key recommendation of the report was an amplification of earlier thinking regarding the redevelopment the Freight Street area and the extension of Thomaston Avenue through the area to connect with Bank Street south of the interstate. The Plan also addressed downtown and neighborhood revitalization. Many of the recommendations have been reiterated and revisited as part of this Plan of Conservation and Development.

The economic sectors identified as important in the earlier plans—manufacturing, health care, and retail—remain the focus for economic development. Facilitating their continued viability and expansion is a key part of the overall economic development strategy. Yet, other existing and potential future industries cannot be neglected. If a focus on the core sectors is consistent with a strategy of leading with strengths, a focus on diversification represents an attempt to hedge against the risk that unforeseen future trends change the outlook for the core industries.

Citywide

56. Continue to pursue the redevelopment of Freight Street as a high priority economic development project

The Freight Street area is the last major redevelopment opportunity with the potential for a transformative impact on the city economy. As an area of flat land located at the intersection of two freeways, the site provides a rare commodity in a rocky and hilly region. The land area potentially available for redevelopment is as great as the entire existing downtown. With a similar intensity of use, the area could accommodate a significant amount of economic activity in a variety of configurations.



57. Facilitate the future expansion of the health care industry in Waterbury, possibly looking to Freight Street as a site for hospital expansion

Saint Mary's and Waterbury Hospitals are the City's single largest employers. They serve a role in the region that is unlikely to get competed away by the suburbs. They benefit from the centrality that a Waterbury location provides. They further occupy sites that are extremely space constrained. As the two hospitals ponder future growth, they must look for alternative locations for facilities. Yet, the nature of hospitals means that it is disruptive to spread their functions over disconnected sites.

Hospitals are capital intensive, expensive to develop, and require significant amounts of land for parking and support. Sites suitable for these uses are few and far between in the region. The Freight Street area offers a location capable of accommodating a significant amount of hospital development, up to and including the complete relocation of one or both of the hospitals to the area.

The concept is further worth pursuing as health care is one of the few industries present in the region that generates sufficient revenue to provide the capital needed to undertake the expensive site assembly and preparation that the Freight Street area requires. It therefore solves the problem of how to jump start the area's redevelopment without an identified anchor tenant.

If one or both of the hospitals move, it raises a host of planning issues regarding the reuse of the former sites. The issues are particularly complex for Saint Mary's, which occupies historic

Freight Street is the next big redevelopment opportunity in Waterbury, similar in magnitude to the Brass Mill Mall and Commons.

structures in the downtown core. However, the reuse of the hospital complex would also create significant opportunities to extend the downtown east towards the Mall; and the Mall west towards the downtown. Some of the historic buildings may be eligible for tax credits to help finance conversion to residential use (either conventional or senior-oriented).

Beyond the long-term potential of the Freight Street area, the health care industry in Waterbury, broadly defined, will continue to be a major source of employment and economic vitality. Waterbury should continue to focus not only on the expansion of the hospitals but on the development of ancillary uses including medical office buildings and outpatient clinics. These may be appropriate uses for redevelopment sites to be identified as part of the City's redevelopment strategy.

58. Continue to explore other high-value uses for the Freight Street area

In addition to the potential opportunity offered by future hospital expansion, there are other uses which would be ideally located in the Freight Street area. These include a new hotel to add to the City's successful hotel offerings—the Marriott and Holiday Inn. While the office market in the region remains soft, new office development would also be desirable if an appropriate tenant could be found. Further, the large amount of land in the area would allow the area to accommodate non-traditional office space such as flex office and other office/light industry hybrids.

59. Emphasize the importance of the transit system to economic development

Nearly a fifth of Waterbury's households had no vehicle available as of the 2000 Census, and the total number of no vehicle and single-vehicle households was up by over 1,500 from 1990 to 2000, as shown in the following table:

Table 6.1: Household by Vehicles Available

	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>Change</u>	<u>Percent Distribution (2000)</u>
Total households:	43,164	42,622		
No vehicle available	8,160	8,294	134	19.2%
1 vehicle available	16,348	17,774	1,426	41.2%
2 vehicles available	13,921	12,532	-1,389	29.0%
3 vehicles available	3,472	3,192	-280	7.4%
4 vehicles available	1,020	626	-394	1.5%
5 or more vehicles available	243	204	-39	0.5%

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

In short, a large and growing number of Waterbury households have one or more wage earners that rely on the transit system to get to work. The coverage, frequency and reliability of transit service therefore directly impacts the ability of this segment of the labor force to find and keep gainful employment.

For businesses that would potentially employ these workers, locations with access to reliable

transit therefore have a competitive advantage over locations which lack such access. This provides a an added rationale for locating business downtown, where the transit service converges; and by the same token, keeping transit service centered in the downtown helps further downtown revitalization goals.

Improvements to transit in Waterbury require an increase in State support. Such increases are appropriate in response due to increased demand for transit service, the need to spur economic development in Waterbury, and in order to promote economic mobility among Waterbury's growing economically disadvantaged population.

60. Further bolster retailing in Waterbury through the enhancement of its key commercial corridors

The market for retail development in Waterbury remains strong, due to a combination of a central location, and the dwindling development opportunities in the suburbs. Waterbury should continue to capitalize on these trends by facilitating the development of retail along its major retail corridors. In addition to appropriate zoning, other actions the city can take include improvements to vehicular access, and aesthetic improvements through better landscaping and signage standards.

61. Pursue an "in-place industrial park" strategy for older industrial areas.

In-place industrial parks, first pioneered in New York City and successfully implemented in other older industrial cities such as Paterson, New Jersey, are intended to bring the benefits of industrial parks—shared security, freedom from nuisance complaints, and improved image—to complexes of older industrial buildings constructed before the rise of trucking and auto use. An in-place industrial park typically involves selective acquisition and demolition of structures to create parking and loading areas for the remaining structures; fencing and landscaping to secure the park; shared security; and potentially centralized leasing.

Paterson has taken the concept one step further with the creation of one of the nation's few industrial Business Improvement Districts (BID), which is used to provide a higher level of landscaping, sanitation and security than the City could provide. The BID has been so successful that its area remains fully tenanted despite liabilities such as poor highway access and occasional flooding. In fact, after an extraordinary flood that temporarily shut down many businesses and damaged equipment and stocks, most tenants decided to remain in place rather than relocate.



Pursuit of such a strategy in Waterbury would likely involve both the City (for zoning and permitting) and the WDC (for property acquisition and site improvements). Funding could be sought from the State (DECD) through the Urban Industrial Parks program, or the federal Economic Development Administration (EDA) through their Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) program (the Partnership for Growth has a CEDS planning effort underway). If an

Strategic improvements can breathe new life into older industrial areas.

area were deemed successful enough, the creation of an industrial Special Services District could be considered.

62. Facilitate the development in appropriate locations of uses difficult to site elsewhere in the region but which take advantage of access to the highway network: warehousing and distribution, contractors yards, etc.

Waterbury's location makes it a logical location for transportation, distribution and logistics. Further, restrictive policies in neighboring suburbs make such uses difficult to site elsewhere. The same goes for uses which require outdoor storage, such as contractors yards. Waterbury should provide opportunities for the development of such uses in its industrial areas where such uses would not have an adverse impact on other nearby properties.

Downtown Specific

63. Work with Waterbury Main Street to fill the gaps between the big downtown projects: UConn, the Palace, and the Magnet School



The Palace Theater and Arts Magnet School are among a number of projects sparking revitalization in the downtown.



While the big new downtown projects are widely recognized as successes, the lower than expected spin-off benefits have been a recurring theme at the public workshops and among Main Street members. To fully realize the downtown revitalization potential of these projects, there are a number of smaller scale complementary actions that should be undertaken. These include:

- Tenant recruitment efforts aimed at complementary uses: restaurants, coffee shops, etc.
- Joint marketing of businesses with events
- Increased security presence downtown particular during events
- Increase security presence in the ramp garages
- Improvements to the pedestrian realm
- Enhancements to building facades and storefronts

Many of these initiatives are already taking place, and should be continued.

64. Develop a parking garage with ground floor retail on the Center Street lot

The existing surface lot located on Center Street behind the Howland Hughes store is the most centrally located parking facility in the downtown. It is currently under private ownership, and while it is ideally situated to provide convenient parking for shoppers, or for upper floor residents, it is currently dominated by downtown employees.

A parking structure on this site would increase the amount of parking available in a key location. Further, such a structure could be lined with retail space along Center Street. This would turn

Center Street, which already has retail along its north side, into a double-loaded retail corridor. With the right landscaping, what is now a service alley could become an attractive new addition to the downtown street network, and help expand the critical mass of retail in downtown.

65. Encourage the residential reuse of upper floors in downtown

The older mixed-use buildings in Waterbury, which were primarily designed as offices over retail, have a high vacancy rate. In spite of the success of the ITZ, it is unlikely that much of this obsolete office space will ever be put to office use again. Residential development, leveraging the unique architecture and location of downtown, is the best prospect for the viable reuse of upper floor space.

Downtown zoning already allows upper floor residential use. Further public action is needed to encourage its development. Some ideas in this regard include:

- Direct subsidies, such as forgiving property taxes associated with the improvements for a period of five years.
- Parking strategies, which would likely consist of the provision of temporary parking and drop-off areas in front of or behind residential buildings; combined with the issuance of low-cost annual permits allowing residents to unlimited access to the ramp garages.
- Direct marketing of downtown buildings to regional and national residential developers, through the creation of a “downtown housing prospectus.”
- Leveraging of ITZ infrastructure, and even funds, to create and market “smart apartments.”

66. Turn the entire downtown into a wireless internet (or WiFi) hotspot

As a logical marketing tie-in with the Information Technology Zone, it is recommended that all of downtown Waterbury be blanketed with wireless internet access. Following the “urban hot-zone” model first demonstrated on Newbury Street in Boston, this can be accomplished at surprisingly low cost.

The urban hotzone differs from other models in that the entire zone is served by a single high-speed line (such as T1) connected to a central antenna, which services connections with a dispersed array of hotspots in local businesses and other locations. The startup costs for a hotzone are modest, meaning that they can be sponsored by Waterbury Main Street with support from one or two business backers, and small monthly payments from merchants and property owners. These payments are so low that for many retail businesses, the attraction of a single repeat customer is sufficient to offset the annual costs. Each centralized antennae can connect hotspots up to a quarter mile away, making it ideal for compact downtown areas.

Creating a hotzone in downtown Waterbury has multiple advantages. It serves as an extra “hook” for the marketing of the ITZ. It will help attract laptop-toting workers to downtown restaurants and coffee shops. It will increase the appeal of Waterbury’s public spaces, such as the Library and its park, the Green, and the Mattatuck Museum. It would even be a unique amenity for downtown residents who might move into converted upper floor space.



Parks, Recreation and Open Space

Parks, Recreation and Open Space

Coming out of the public meeting and municipal interviews, two clear priorities emerged concerning parks and open space. First, park maintenance has suffered and needs to be improved. Second, the priority for new park land is to open up Waterbury's riverfront areas for recreational use and enjoyment.

Proper park maintenance is a question of money and manpower. Tax dollars are in short supply, and Waterbury's parks lack the wealthy neighbors that make creative fundraising vehicles such as conservancies a success in major cities. Waterbury will need to be creative in its search for park-related funding, and realistic in its goals. Wherever possible, available funds should serve multiple goals. The State is a key source of open space funds, but an Open Space Master Plan, which was beyond the scope of this plan, is a prerequisite for most such funding.

Waterbury's two primary watercourses are the Naugatuck River, which flows from north to south, the length of the city; and Mad River, which flows past the Brass Mill Mall and eventually feeds into the Naugatuck near the intersection of Washington Avenue and South Main Street. The Naugatuck River has been the main focus for riverfront access and greenways. Communities along the entire length of the river in the Central Naugatuck Valley region (CNVR) as well as in neighboring regions have voiced their support for the concept of a regional greenway along the River. The Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection has approved the CNVR portion as a State-designated greenway, and several Waterbury landowners have expressed interest in donating land to the project. Portions in Naugatuck and Beacon Falls have already been planned or constructed, and a committee at the COG is working with municipalities along the river to coordinate efforts.

Even with this momentum, many of the areas where access might be provided are encumbered by development, brownfields, and other issues that will take considerable time to resolve. A complete Naugatuck River Greenway is therefore likely many years away. Some



Waterbury's parks are priceless city assets.

more immediate opportunities might be found along the Mad River, particular in the area between I-84 and the convergence of the Mad River with the Naugatuck River. Other opportunities may be found along the Naugatuck River where it borders South Main Street. Providing more limited access improvements in the short term will help build a constituency of users for the more ambitious long-term improvements. These opportunities deserve investigation and support from the City and landowners.

As part of a recent management study, the sale of one of the City's two municipal golf courses for development was proposed as a means of providing the City with a one-time infusion of funds, as well as future revenues from taxable real estate. The Plan strongly discourages this idea for a number of reasons:

- Waterbury needs to conserve and build on its core assets. These two golf courses are unique assets which will never be replaced.
- The golf courses create value for the adjacent residential neighborhoods which help bolster the City's Grand List. The loss of this value has to be weighed against the revenue to be gained from development.
- Sale of a golf course for development runs counter to the community's goal for more, as opposed to less, open space in Waterbury.



Left: The Naugatuck and Mad Rivers can and should be focal points for recreation and enjoyment.

Right: The renovation of the River-Baldwin Recreation Center provides the opportunity to create the first leg of a Mad River Greenway.



67. Undertake an Open Space Master Plan for the City.

In order to qualify for State funding for park enhancements and land acquisition, the City needs to prepare and adopt an Open Space Master Plan. Such a plan is a prerequisite for obtaining funding under State grant programs, such as the Charter Oak Open Space Grant Program, for open space acquisition². Privately owned land identified as open space lands in the plan of development are also eligible for special tax assessments, which may help forestall the development of such lands.

While the preparation of such a plan will require an expenditure of funds, the document will allow the City to leverage many times as much funding for open space improvements. Further, as these improvements will enhance the City's quality of life, hence its desirability and real estate value, the plan will also create significant value from a tax base standpoint. For these reasons, the modest cost of preparing such a plan is one of the best long-term investments the City could make.

To oversee the planning effort, assist with compiling background data, and carry forward the implementation of the Plan, the City should create and appoint a Conservation Commission. As per the statutory provisions for such commissions (Chapter 97, Section 131a of the Connecticut General Statutes), the Conservation Commission is charged with "conducting research into the utilization and possible utilization of land areas of the municipality." The Commission may also undertake a wide variety of activities related to open space planning and acquisition/preservation.

68. Don't sell one of the municipal golf courses for development.

Waterbury's golf courses are key assets in a City with limited open space resources. They add value to the neighborhoods to which they are attached, and are a particular amenity to those who like to golf. And unlike other parks, the ability to charge user fees provides a revenue stream to provide for the maintenance of these resources. As an irreplaceable resource, the sale for development of either golf course is strongly discouraged.

2. "No municipality shall be eligible for grants under this section unless the municipality has adopted an open space plan in its plan of development," Section 7-131t.

69. Undertake a comprehensive Greenway Master Plan for the Naugatuck and Mad Rivers

As described above, the Naugatuck River has been targeted for a regional greenway enhancement which would eventually run the length of Waterbury. However, many details remain to be worked out, such as the Greenway's location, the need for bridges over the river to connect both banks, and potential links with neighborhoods and other parks. Further, no comprehensive inventory of property conditions along the Naugatuck River has been undertaken.

For these reasons, it is proposed that the City undertake, as a followup planning exercise, and in cooperation with the Council of Governments, a comprehensive Greenway Master Plan for the Naugatuck River. Since the Mad River also provides potential greenway locations that would connect the Naugatuck River Greenway to South End neighborhoods, the Mad River should also be included in this Plan. The plan should include a detailed property inventory along the river, recommend a route for the greenway, identify property and easements to be acquired, and provide an implementation plan.

70. Use the rehabilitation of the River Baldwin Recreation Center as an opportunity to provide access to the Mad River

Providing for access to Waterbury's rivers is a key objective identified in the public meetings and stakeholder outreach. The focus has been on the Naugatuck River, as the main river flowing through Waterbury; but the Mad River, which joins the Naugatuck River in the South End, provides additional opportunities.

The River Baldwin Recreation Center is located along the Mad River, and provides an opportunity to open up river access in an area where the land is already in public ownership. A grant of \$800,000 has already been obtained for the refurbishment of the facilities at the Center. As part of these improvements, it would be a relatively low cost undertaking to provide a river trail at this location. Needed would be clearance of some trees and vegetation, regrading, and the provision of a pathway. These improvements would provide an expanded open space resource in a location that is underserved for parks. Over time, this trail could be linked with additional opportunities leading down to the Naugatuck River.

71. Explore potential greenway locations along South Main Street

There are areas along South Main where the roadway adjoins the Naugatuck River with no intervening development. Such areas make for an ideal location to pursue in the short term riverfront walking and biking areas, since no land acquisition is necessary.

72. Create a waterfront zoning overlay to encourage waterfront access and greenway connections in private development projects.

This overlay would modify the bulk standards for whatever zoning district may underlie by permitting additional bulk on portions of the site in return for providing specific waterfront access amenities long the riverfronts. The overlay district is proposed for the length of the Naugatuck River and the Mad River from the Naugatuck River north to I-84. The bulk standards could be neutral with respect to the as-zoned condition if only an access easement was provided, and

Where possible, riverfront development should provide pedestrian amenities that capitalize on waterfront opportunities.



could grant additional bonuses for the provision of physical waterfront access improvements. In addition, in any remaining waterfront IG districts, the approval on any uses not permitted in the IL district would be subject to a finding by the planning commission that the proposed use would not have a significant detrimental impact on the environmental quality of the Naugatuck River, nor on the ability of the public to enjoy the required waterfront access.

73. Incorporate riverfront access into all riverfront redevelopment projects

Since most redevelopment projects require some sort of detailed planning as well as public involvement and/or subsidy, they provide a perfect opportunity to provide for public amenities as part of the project. For sites adjacent to riverfronts, public access and open space amenities on the riverfront are logical benefits to incorporate into such plans.

74. In particular, look to create a waterfront amenity as part of the redevelopment of the mill site located on South Main and Mill Street

The large mill complex which formerly occupied this site has been largely demolished. The site has the potential for redevelopment which would leverage its location along the Mad River, and could tie into the river access to be provided at the River Baldwin Recreation Center.

75. Work to preserve open space around Waterbury's other waterbodies—its lakes.

The 1971 Plan targeted much of its plan open space acquisition to Waterbury's lakes and surrounding lands. Although some of the targeted properties have since been developed, these are still logical locations to prioritize open space preservation, in view of both the recreational opportunities and the sensitive nature of the lands.

The City has limited funds available for direct property acquisition and for the creation and maintenance of new park space. Acquisition may become a realistic possibility if the State of Connecticut replenishes its funding for open space purchases. Until that time, other strategies, such as purchase of development rights, conservation subdivision designs, and conservation easements can be pursued.

76. Pursue creative means for financing open space acquisition over time

The State of Connecticut offers grant funding for open space acquisition—however, funding is currently limited, and in any event a local match is required. To expand the City's inventory of publicly-owned open space, it will be necessary for the City to be able to tap a source of funds for acquisition. However, given the current high tax rates and fiscal constraints, neither a diversion from the general funds nor a dedicated open space tax are likely options at this time. As alternatives, the following are proposed as potential sources of open space funding:

- A fee in lieu of open space, permitting developers in the RM and RH district to opt out of a portion of the zoning requirement for open space by contributing to an open space fund.
- A transfer tax on real estate sales, dedicated for open space purposes.



Infrastructure and Schools

Infrastructure

The interviews conducted with the City's engineers and public works officials did not reveal any major ongoing infrastructure issues beyond the long-term project of separating stormwater from sanitary sewer. Localized flooding in areas with inadequate stormwater systems remains a problem. In addition, several infrastructure issues emerged during the course of the planning process that will need to be addressed. The most serious of these involve inadequate water pressure for purposes of firefighting, but other issues exist including inadequate sewer capacity in one outlying area, and individual properties with no connection to the sewer system in otherwise sewered areas. Addressing these concerns will require not only capital investments but a greater level of interdepartmental information exchange and collaboration, both within City departments and with the Water Pollution Control Department, which is not part of the Waterbury General Fund.

77. As part of ongoing upgrades to the City's infrastructure, address areas with inadequate infrastructure

These areas include the following areas where the Fire Department reports inadequate water flow for fire fighting purposes:

- Bucks Hill
- Jersey/Horseshoe/Alpine/Spring Brook

Further, the Oronoke/Bristol/Highland area suffers from inadequate capacity in its sewer pipes and pumping infrastructure. Water Pollution Control has plans to upgrade pump stations in this area. Also, the Farmwood/Steep Hill/Chestnut Hill area lacks for a water connection.

In the meantime while these areas are being addressed, applications for rezonings or development in these areas must be subjected to a greater level of scrutiny with regards to the impacts on infrastructure capacity.

78. Take steps to ensure the all homes within sewer service areas are connected to the sanitary sewer system

Although the number of properties affected is not known, there are cases that have been discovered where individual homes within inner city neighborhoods, such as upper Walnut Street, have never been connected to the City's sewer system, relying instead on septic or even an on-site cesspool! Such facilities in dense in-town neighborhood pose both an environmental and a public health risk. By ordinance, such houses are required to be connected to the sewer system. Yet, often the lack of a connection is not even known until a problem surfaces, and owners are often reluctant to raise the issue to avoid liability for the significant cost of a sewer connection.

Waterbury has neither the staff nor the resources to undertake a detailed survey of properties to discover which ones might be lacking a connection, nor can the City at the current time perform verifications for every property that comes up for sale. At a minimum, a sewer connection should be verified before the issuance of a building permit (at present, Water Pollution Control is not even in the loop on such decisions), and spot checks could be performed on other properties. A first step to assist in such a undertaking would be to provide Water Pollution Control with a copy of the relevant maps showing existing connections, which currently reside at the Engineering Department.

Schools

A paradigm shift within the Waterbury school system back to smaller, neighborhood-based schools is proposed as one of the major, transformative steps Waterbury could take to fundamentally reposition the City.

The quality of the school system has more impact on people's decisions of where to live than any other single factor. Most of the operational details of the educational system are beyond the purview of a Plan of Conservation and Development, which is primarily concerned with the physical development of the City. Yet, the future direction of the Waterbury schools was a recurrent point of discussion and interest at the public meetings, and among the members of Conservation and Development Steering Committee. With the completion of the recent *Pre K – 12 Comprehensive School Facilities Plan* and the pledge of significant funding for school construction and rehabilitation by the State, the time is ripe to place these planned investments within the overall context of planning for the City.

The persistent theme in Waterbury has been the desire to move away from large centralized middle schools to smaller, neighborhood based-elementary schools with a Pre K – 8 grade alignment. The Comprehensive School Facilities Plan took steps in this direction, but stopped short of eliminating middle schools, proposing rather to repurpose Kennedy High School as a middle school, allowing average enrollments to be reduced to 950 per school (down from cur-



Quality schools are essential to a competitive city.

rent enrollments of 1,166 to 1,480). These recommendations are a step in the right direction, but fall short of the objectives expressed by the public and promoted by a growing body of research on small schools. They also create increased enrollments at the high schools (excepting the Arts Magnet School).

A small school, as defined by the Small Schools Workshop at the University of South Florida, has no more than 300 students. By this definition, almost none of Waterbury's 28 schools would be considered "small." Further, at this level a total of 46 schools would be necessary simply to accommodate current, much less projected, K – 8 enrollment in Waterbury. This nearly twice the current number of K – 5 and middle schools in the existing system. Clearly, a balance must be struck between the small school ideal and the current conditions.

Writing in a 1990 overview of the literature on school size and performance, Davant T. Williams of Clemson University wrote: "On average, the research indicates that an effective size for an elementary school is in the range of 300 – 400 students and that 400 – 800 students is appropriate for a secondary school (7-8)." Splitting the difference would argue for K – 8 schools of approximately 600 students in size. At this level, only 23 schools are needed, about the same number as currently exist. Further, all but three of Waterbury's elementary schools are at or below this size threshold.

The participants in the visioning sessions held as part of the school facilities planning process asked for Pre K – 8 aligned schools with a maximum enrollment of 750 students. This would further reduce the number of schools that would be required to meet the long-term goal of moving to a neighborhood-based, Pre K – 8 model.

The total estimated capital cost for the improvement program cited by the Comprehensive School Facilities Plan is about \$1.4 billion. The State would cover 77.5 percent of the cost of eligible projects, leaving the City to fund about \$440 million. It is uncertain whether the City, in its current fiscal condition, will be able to bond for this amount of money, which would represent a public debt of approximately \$10,300 per household. However, the City can ill afford to leave the State's money sitting on the table at a time when its school infrastructure is in need of repair and enrollments are growing.

This Plan cannot duplicate the level of analysis undertaken as part of the Comprehensive School Facilities Plan. It can, however, make some general recommendations and suggestions as to how the planned school investments might best serve the community's goals. These ideas are presented below:

79. As new schools are constructed, work to reduce busing and return the schools to a neighborhood focus

Waterbury's elementary schools are located throughout the City; but space constraints have resulted in the need to bus children across town to avoid overcrowding. As new construction helps to alleviate this overcrowding, it provides an opportunity to eliminate much of this busing and return to more neighborhood-focused schools.

80. Explore opportunities to create Pre K – 8 grade alignments in both existing and planned elementary schools

Currently, the plan is to convert Kennedy High School to a middle school, thus reducing average enrollments across all middle schools. However, this has the result of making the high schools even larger; and would appear to result in capacity within the existing middle schools going unused. Further, the resulting middle school size of 950 students is somewhat larger than the literature on small schools recommends.

As an alternative, it may be possible to shift some middle school students into the improved and expanded elementary schools planned as part of the school facilities plan. Doing this may require that these schools be made somewhat larger than currently planned. If feasible, this strategy could help relieve middle school overcrowding, and remove the need to convert Kennedy from a high school to a middle school, avoiding the planned increase in the size of the remaining high schools.

81. Make the refurbished and new school centers for the surrounding communities

Schools can provide amenities not just for students, but for the neighborhood in which they are located. These include gyms for athletic programs; playgrounds for neighborhood children; and meeting rooms for community groups. Nearly all the public meetings held for this Plan took place at Waterbury schools.

82. Consider the creation of an Academy School within Waterbury

An Academy School is a small high school run by the school district, but with a competitive admissions process based on a number of factors but stressing academic aptitude and performance. Its educational value is that it provides the learning environment appropriate for higher-performing students. Its value to the City is two-fold: (1) providing a high-quality school that gives parents of students who make the cut a reason to remain in Waterbury rather than relocating to a suburban school district; and (2) educating the next generation of leaders.

The typical criticism of Academy schools is that they are elitist; and to the extent that students are unable to gain entry due to factors unrelated to their aptitude such as difficult home and social environments, poverty, etc., the charge is not without some validity. However, if an academy school did not exist, its role would be filled either by private and parochial schools, or school districts in other municipalities, neither of which are options for Waterbury's disadvantaged families. Further, the selection process can be waited to account for differences in socio-economic status to give disadvantaged students who wish to take advantage of the educational opportunities offered a leg up in the process.

9 Other requirements

Relationship to State Growth Management Principles

Under the newly revised enabling statutes governing the contents and preparation of Plans of Conservation and Development, each plan must be prepared with due consideration to six growth management principles, and must note any inconsistencies therewith. The following section states each of these growth management principles, followed by a discussion of the Waterbury Plan's consistency with each.

Principle 1: Redevelopment and revitalization of commercial centers and areas of mixed land uses with existing or planned physical infrastructure.

As an older, built-out city, Waterbury's future economic health depends on its ability to revitalize its older commercial corridors and industrial areas. Hence, past planning in the City has focused extensively on downtown revitalization (as witnessed by the UConn campus, Palace Theater, Information Technology Zone, Waterbury Main Street, and Arts Magnet School) as well as the reuse of old industrial areas for modern retailing (i.e. the Brass Mill Mall and Commons, Waterbury Crossing). All of these developments made extensive use of existing infrastructure, including roads and highways, water and sewer, while also upgrading such infrastructure for changing needs. The Waterbury Plan continues these efforts with its continued focus on downtown revitalization; proposals for new mixed-use zoning for aging commercial strips; strategies for old industrial districts and buildings; and strategies for neighborhood revitalization.

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

Waterbury today has a built housing stock that encompasses one- and two-family houses, triple-decker three-families, garden apartments, and urban-scale apartment buildings. The Waterbury Plan adds additional housing prototypes—rowhouses and townhouses (which exist in Waterbury but which are not defined in the current ordinances), and “apartment above the

store" opportunities in mixed-use neighborhood and general commercial corridors. Multifamily opportunities have been curtailed in outlying areas where such development would be inappropriate from the standpoint of environmental considerations, neighborhood character, and the need to direct investment into existing neighborhoods. Even still, 13 percent of Waterbury's land area remains zoned for multi-family use, and another 3.6 percent is located in a mixed-use district permitting residential apartments in addition to commercial use.

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

Waterbury offers the following transportation options—automobile, bus transit, limited rail transit service to Bridgeport (with connections along the New Haven Line from New Haven to New York City), and, in the City's older, compact neighborhoods, walking and biking. Its street hierarchy ranges from local neighborhood streets, to commercial arterials, to major expressways. Bus routes tend to follow existing arterial streets which serve major destinations including the downtown, shopping areas such as the Brass Mill Mall and Commons, and the two hospitals. The proposed land use map shows that the intensity of proposed land uses is organized around these transportation corridors and nodes. The most intense and mixed-use development patterns are provided for in the most pedestrian and transit-rich locations, specifically the expanded CBD district downtown and the mixed-use zones in historic neighborhood and community centers and corridors. Along arterial roadways where auto-transport is dominant, land use patterns providing appropriately-scaled development with modern parking and site design are provided for. Finally, the plan proposes a new Transportation Center downtown, and adjacent to the City's largest future redevelopment area, as a means of both improving transit service and encouraging new transit-oriented development patterns.

Development should take advantage of downtown Waterbury's strong transit infrastructure.



Principle 4: Conservation and restoration of the natural environment, cultural and historical resources and existing farmlands

Rivers are an important and often overlooked recreational resource.

Waterbury has essentially no farmland, but it is rich with natural and cultural resources. Chief among the former are the two major rivers which flow through the City—the Naugatuck and Mad Rivers—and the City's undeveloped hills and wooded areas. Conservation of these resources is proposed through new zoning tools, including cluster subdivisions and a waterfront overlay district; and the proposal for a new Open Space Master Plan. The City's historic fabric is to be better protected through such tools as Historic District and Village District zoning, and through public decision making which incorporates historic preservation as a central goal. The City's commitment in this regard has already been shown by the recent careful restoration of the Palace Theater. The Waterbury Plan also encourages recent efforts to enhance the City's cultural life, including the creation of new venues such as the Palace Theater; continued support for existing resources such as the Mattatuck Museum; and a con-

tinued emphasis on arts, culture and heritage as a cornerstone of downtown revitalization efforts.

Principle 5: Protection of environmental assets critical to public health and safety.

The natural environment provides irreplaceable “services” key to human health and even survival—the provision of clean air and drinking water, the absorption and processing of wastes, not to mention simple enjoyment provided natural areas. As an urbanized area, Waterbury depends upon an environment which extends far beyond its borders. Even still, the Waterbury Plan does address environmental protection and resources in a number of ways. The proposed land use plan limits the range of uses which can be located along the Naugatuck River compared with current zoning. The “Healthy Communities” policy seeks improvements in local air quality through transit and roadway improvements. New street and development standards are intended to help limit the amount of impervious cover in new developments. Finally, new stormwater standards will further help protect water quality.

Principle 6: Integration of planning across all levels of government to address issues on a local, regional and state-wide basis.

The Waterbury Plan has been researched and drafted with the active participation of the Council of Governments of the Central Naugatuck Valley. Many of the recommendations in the Plan, from the Naugatuck Greenway to specific traffic improvements, respond directly to COG initiatives. The Plan also urges the City to be an active participant, alongside the COG and other local governments, in a number of regional planning issues, including improved rail service on the Naugatuck Valley line and ongoing participation in the planning for a reconstructed I-84. The Plan is also consistent with the State and Regional Plans of Conservation and Development (as discussed in greater detail below). The Plan does contain two recommendations which are inconsistent with positions taken by the COG—specifically the proposed Transportation Center at the Metro North station, and the rerouting of Route 69. Even still, the Plan encourages continued dialogue and participation between the City, the COG and State Government to address ongoing regional planning issues and initiatives.

Conformance with the State Plan of Conservation and Development Policies Map

The proposed Waterbury Future Land Use Map is generally consistent with the State Plan of Conservation and Development Policies Map. The State map classifies different lands within the City as Growth Area, Neighborhood Conservation, Regional Center, Existing Preserved Open Space, Preservation Area, Conservation Area, and Rural Lands. As per the Waterbury Plan, the areas designated Regional Center are programmed for intensive residential, commercial, mixed-use, and industrial development. In the neighborhood preservation areas, the plan the Waterbury Plan proposes land use designations more respectful of the existing built character. The Growth Areas primarily provide opportunities for new single family home development. The only discrepancies between the two policy maps are as follows:

- An area located in the southern end of Waterbury, roughly bounded by Spring Lake Road, Lake Road, Purdy Road, and Westport Drive, is designated as Rural Lands on the State Plan map. The Waterbury Future Land Use Map designates this area as low-density, single-family residential.
- An area located in the northern end of Waterbury, north of Chipper Road and Hidden Pond Road to the Plymouth town line, is designated as Rural Lands on the State Plan Map. The Waterbury Future Land Use Map designates portions of this area as low-density, single-family residential, and other portions as outdoor recreation.
- The area west of Route 69 at the Prospect town line is designated as a conservation area in the State Plan map. The Waterbury Future Land Use Map also shows this area as programmed for single-family residential development.

Regional (CNV) Plan of Conservation & Development

The Central Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments adopted a Regional Plan of Conservation and Development in 1998. As a regional document, it does not go into the same level of site-specific detail as does a municipal plan; and certain of the plan's policies and recommendations target outlying, rural and suburban municipalities more than Waterbury. However, much of the plan is directly relevant to Waterbury. Therefore, a comparison of the key recommendations of the regional plan to Waterbury's plan is in order. The following text reproduces the recommendations of the Regional Plan by topic area, followed by a discussion in *italics* of how the Waterbury Plan relates to these recommendations.

Overall Plan Goal

Improve the quality of life for current and future residents of the Central Naugatuck Valley Region by promoting orderly conservation and development of the Region as a whole, while encouraging community identity and character.

This overall goal relates directly to two major components of the Waterbury Vision, specifically (1) the emphasis on community quality of life; and (2) the emphasis on thoroughly modernized zoning regulations to guide future development in the City.

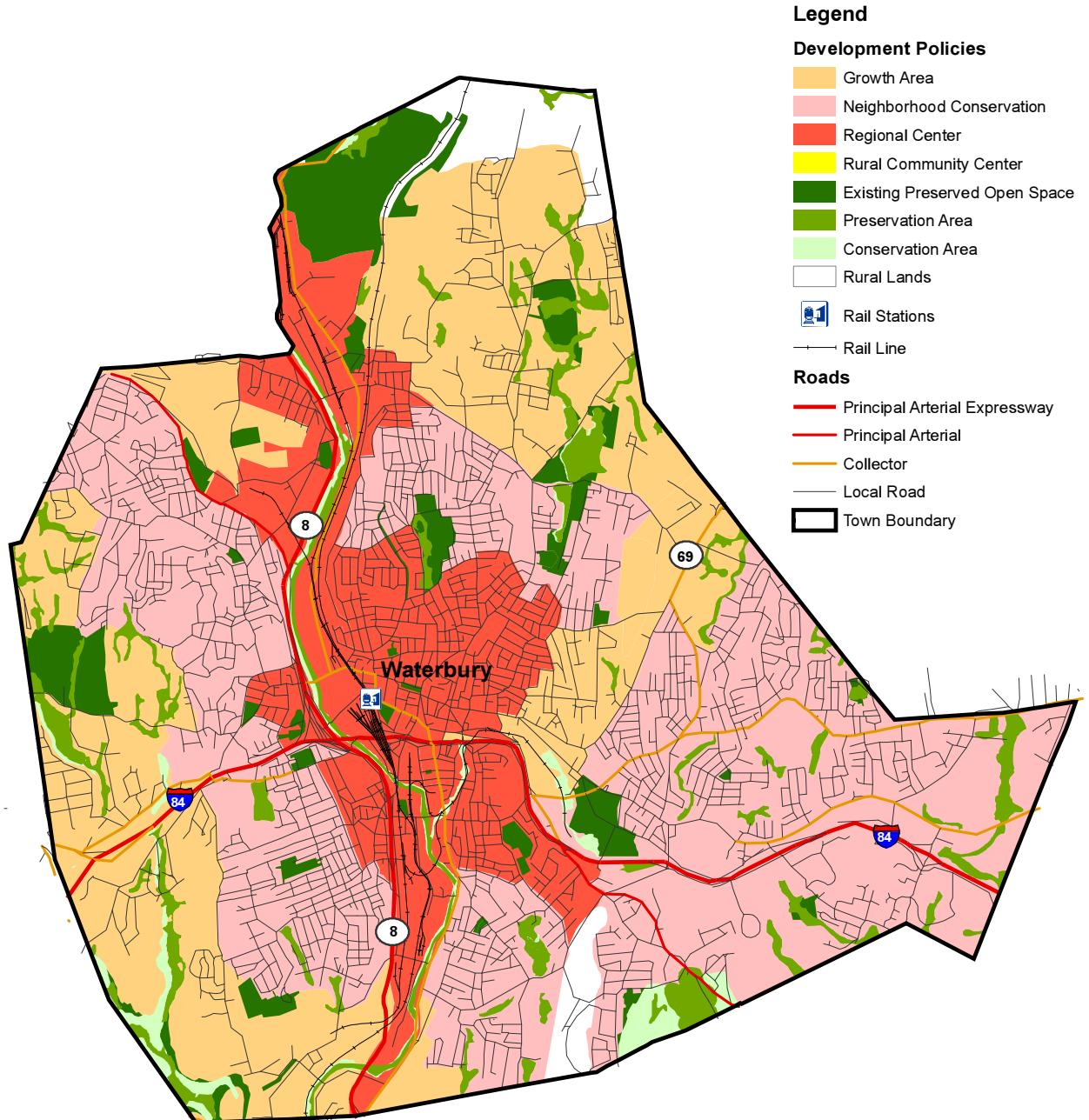
Summary and Recommendations

Land Use & Growth Patterns

Recommendations

- Guide the location of growth in the Region towards the regional center and areas with infrastructure
- Encourage settlement patterns that reduce the rate of land consumption
- Facilitate sustained and coordinated efforts to renovate brownfield sites
- Evaluate the fiscal impacts of growth within the Region
- Encourage periodic review of local land use regulations

Map 9.1 City of Waterbury Conservation and Development Policies Plan 2004-2009



Source: CT Office of Policy and Management

Map Prepared by:
Phillips Preiss Shapiro Associates, Inc.
Wilbur Smith Associates
May 2005

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The Waterbury Land Use Plan is intended to provide for lower intensity growth on the City's fringes with significant opportunities for higher-intensity development in and around the City's core. This will help direct development away from the fringes and onto various infill sites where the infrastructure is better able to support such development.

Natural Resource Conservation

Recommendations

- Protect water quality in the Region
- Relate land use intensity to the capability of the land
- Support efforts to protect natural resources
- Encourage consideration of impacts on natural resources

The Waterbury Land Use Plan creates a new, lower-density single-family residential designation and maps this new designation near existing waterbodies, areas of woodlands and steep slopes, and areas without existing sewer service. The Plan also provides for the clustering of development on larger sites with one third of site area to be set aside as open space.

Housing & Residential Densities

Recommendations

- Increase opportunities for affordable housing in the Region
- Encourage a variety of housing types throughout the Region
- Encourage settlement patterns that utilize infrastructure
- Continue efforts to enhance the character of our communities and revitalize urban housing units and neighborhoods

The Waterbury Plan provides for variety of housing types, including single family homes, two- and three-family homes, townhouses, apartments of up to six stories, and mixed-used residential/commercial buildings. The greatest density is provided for in locations that have historically been the most heavily settled portions of Waterbury, and where infrastructure exists to service such development. The Plan is also intended to protect existing neighborhood character while encouraging redevelopment.

Economic Development

Recommendations

- Nurture the Region's strength as a center of precision manufacturing
- Aggressively pursue economic development for the Region
- Guide the location of economic development to the regional center and major economic areas
- Prepare workers for current and future needs

Waterbury is the regional center for the Central Naugatuck Valley, and the Waterbury Plan seeks to maintain and enhance this status through continued growth in the retail, healthcare and manufacturing sectors. The Plan is also supportive of ongoing initiatives to prepare Waterbury's young people and existing workers for future job opportunities.

Transportation

Recommendations

- Maintain and improve the Region's highway system—the I-84 corridor is the greatest highway priority
- Improve and expand transportation options (bus, rail, bicycle, pedestrian)
- Coordinate land use and transportation actions
- Continue to plan for needed transportation improvements
- Anticipate and address future transportation needs

The redesign and reconstruction of I-84 is of particular importance to Waterbury, as the City generally the downtown area specifically have several interchanges with the interstate. The Plan emphasizes the need for these decisions to take into account the future development goals of the City. The plan also addresses the need for improved transit service and pedestrian facilities.

Open Space

Recommendations

- Protect more open space in the Region
- Focus efforts on obtaining sites for water-based recreation
- Preserve declassified water company property as open space
- Coordinate and prioritize open space preservation throughout the Region
- Encourage use of a broad range of tools to protect open space
- Manage open space effectively to maximize benefits
- Encourage efforts to preserve open space action areas, critical environmental areas, and areas threatened by development

While funds for direct acquisition are limited in Waterbury, the Plan notes the importance of pursuing policies and funding mechanisms that would protect sensitive lands and prime open space areas in the City. Like the 1971 Plan, particular emphasis is placed on lands adjoining the City's lakes and rivers.

Water Supply & Sewer Service

Recommendations

- Protect the quality of the Region's water supply
- Ensure an adequate supply of water for the Region
- Reduce the impacts of sewer discharges
- Use the infrastructure system to guide growth
- Carefully manage existing infrastructure systems
- Encourage private maintenance of septic systems
- Encourage water conservation in the Region

The Waterbury Plan recommends the inclusion of stormwater management standards into the City's subdivision ordinance.

Conformance with the Regional Plan of Conservation and Development Map

The Waterbury Plan of Conservation and Development, in particular the Future Land Use Map, is generally consistent with the Future Land Use Map contained within the regional Plan. However, a few areas of nonconformity have been identified, as follows:

- The undeveloped area in the northern part of the city adjoining the Plymouth town line is designated as rural in the regional Plan. The Waterbury Plan shows this area as low-density single-family residential.
- A significant amount of land in the eastern part of the City, south of I-84 and north of Park Road, is shown as Public and Proposed Open Space on the regional Plan map. The Waterbury Plan shows portions of this area as low-density single-family residential.

Housing choice & economic diversity

Plans of Conservation and Development must address the issues of housing choice and economic diversity. Waterbury, as a mature city that has undergone substantial economic and demographic changes over the past three decades, has a housing stock that is already very diverse and affordable compared with other towns in the region, and throughout the State. Even still, Waterbury's population still has significant housing needs, as described in the Community Assessment report. The Plan of Conservation and Development provides a foundation for meeting those needs.

Concurrently with this Plan, the City, through the Waterbury Development Corporation (WDC), has prepared its Consolidated Plan. The Consolidated Plan is a document, mandated by the federal department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), that provides for how the City will meet its affordable and special needs housing need through the various programs and funding sources offered by HUD (including CBDG). Accordingly, its primary focus is on housing, while the Plan of Conservation and Development primarily focuses on land use and physical development.

The Consolidated Plan identifies certain impediments to the provision of affordable housing in Waterbury, particularly a shortage of funding and high land costs. On the topic of zoning, the Consolidated Plan has this to say:

"Much of the City's total land area is zoned for housing densities of greater than one unit per acre³. Single family and multifamily zoning and residences exist throughout most of these zoning districts...The analysis did not find any impediments to fair housing inherent to the zoning structure of the City."

3. In fact, the lowest-density district in the current ordinance permits about 5 units per acre. The proposed ordinance changes would drop this in certain areas to 3 units per acre.

The zoning proposed under this Plan should not change this conclusion. Nearly all the areas of Waterbury that would be targeted for affordable or special needs housing production retain a density equal to their current zoning. A few areas, specifically those currently zoned RH, have lower development potential, although relatively high densities of 48 units per acres will contin-

ue to be permitted. Further, other areas have been rezoned CBD, where there is no effective limit on density. In short, the Plan will maintain socioeconomic and housing choice diversity in the City.

Housing development under the proposed plan

The Plan of Conservation and Development proposes significant reductions in density in many outlying areas of Waterbury. Even still, significant opportunities remain for providing for new housing development, both single- and multi-family, throughout the City. An aim has been to provide multifamily opportunities in areas where infrastructure and public transportation is available to support the increased density. This is a particular concern for Waterbury's lower-income households who tend to rely on public transportation to a much higher degree than do other households.

Under the proposed Plan, Waterbury will have two types of new housing opportunities. The first will be new housing development on virgin sites located in outlying locations. Under the proposed Plan, these are primarily limited to single-family development, although some virgin lands are located in the RL district, which also permits two-families. Densities ranging from a low of 3 to high of 11 units per acre are permitted in these areas.



The second type of housing development opportunities are found on infill sites located in older, more central areas of Waterbury. Most of these areas are in the RM, RH and CBD districts, which permit densities of 24 to 48 units per acre. Infill development can be accomplished through development on sites where building have been demolished; on redevelopment sites where the opportunity exists to replace deteriorated and obsolete housing; and through the adaptive reuse of commercial and industrial buildings. Quantifying the magnitude of these opportunities is beyond the scope of this Plan. However, it is estimated that significant redevelopment opportunities exist, particularly with regard to townhouse and low-scale multifamily development.

Waterbury's designation as a Regional Center provides an opportunity for the City to set a standard for surrounding communities.

Waterbury's new zoning and housing strategies have been crafted cognizant of the fact that the City has been losing rather than gaining population. In this environment, increased densities should be seen primarily as a tool for providing the economic incentives necessary to spur redevelopment, rather than as a means for accommodating a growing population. Therefore, higher densities in the Plan have been restricted to core areas where redevelopment is needed. Should population trends in the City make a dramatic turnaround, these policies would have to be reexamined.

The Plan does make one specific recommendation regarding a public housing project in Waterbury, specifically a vacant 26-unit development located off South Main Street at West Clay Street near the Waterbury Crossing shopping center. The Plan recommends that this development be demolished and that replace units be located on a variety of infill sites throughout the South End where such development can help promote neighborhood revitalization. The

rationale for this recommendation is as follows:

- The development has sat vacant for a number of years and is of an obsolete design, making rehabilitation both expensive and problematic.
- The site is an island of residential use surrounded by commercial and industrial use. The site is not connected to any functioning neighborhood, and is therefore inappropriate from a planning perspective for housing.
- The site is, however, potentially very valuable for commercial development, particularly the expansion of the Waterbury Crossing shopping center. The sale of the site could therefore generate significant funds for the construction of affordable housing elsewhere.
- The South End neighborhood is home to a number of vacant lots and abandoned and substandard buildings. The neighborhood would realize a much greater benefit from the redevelopment of such sites for affordable housing, which would help fill holes in the neighborhood fabric and remove blighting influences, than would be the case if the housing were simply rebuilt or rehabilitated in place.

Relationship to State Housing Plan

Waterbury's housing affordability needs spring less from the sale prices and rents for much of the older housing stock, which are quite low compared with other towns in the region and state averages, but from the problems of low household incomes and wealth, and the decline of entry-level and low-skill jobs with good wages. As stated in the State's 2005 – 2009 State Long-Range Housing Plan:

"Between 1990 and 2000, there have been some notable shifts in patterns of affordability, and fault line lies along an urban suburban divide. Cities have grown relatively more affordable, suburbs less so...in New Haven County, the cities of New Haven and Waterbury climbed from 24th and 19th to 1st and 2nd out of 27 [in terms of affordability], while suburban Madison and Guilford dropped from the top ten to the bottom five. So this rising affordability in the cities is a good thing, right? Not if it is the result of mediocre income growth, a dwindling population, and plummeting property values. And unfortunately, that's exactly what has happened." (p. 100)

The overall goals of the State Housing Plan are as follows:

1. Encouraging homeownership:
 - Improve the ability of low- and moderate-income residents to access homeownership opportunities.
2. Expanding the supply of quality affordable housing
 - Preserve and increase the supply of quality affordable housing available to all low- and moderate-income households, and help identify and develop available resources to assist in the development of housing.
 - Improve the ability of low- and moderate-income residents to access rental housing opportunities.
 - Assist in addressing the shelter, housing and service needs of the homeless poor and other with special needs.

Implementing these goals are three strategies:

- **Revitalizing communities:** addressing housing needs as well as economic, educational and social issues.
- **Encouraging homeownership:** as a means to build wealth, stabilize communities and encourage community involvement.
- **Expand the supply of quality of affordable housing:** to target all manner of needs including the cost burdened, those in substandard housing, those with special needs, the elderly, and the homeless.

With a primary focus on physical development, the Waterbury Plan does not address directly the funding and programmatic aspects of affordable housing. However, it does address two key strategies raised above. First, with its emphasis on redeveloping blighted areas, improving community facilities and quality of life, and building on neighborhood assets, the Plan seeks to implement the strategy of “revitalizing communities” throughout Waterbury’s neighborhoods. Second, the plan seeks to encourage homeownership by zoning for the production of more affordable homeownership products, including townhomes and two-family homes.

Relationship to housing needs identified in the State Plan of Conservation & Development

The State Plan of Conservation and Development states that “shelter is one of the most basic human needs and affordability is a basic problem to satisfying this need.” The Plan notes that median household incomes in the State grew significant more slowly during the 1980s than did the cost of owner-occupied units and median rents. As a result, the number of renters paying 30 percent or more of their household income for rent rose from 37 to 41 percent from 1980 to 1990.

The State Plan identified several reasons for declining housing affordability, including the following:

- Lengthy land use approvals processes.
- Regulatory policies that exclude certain types of units and require standards beyond what is needed for health and safety (such as large lot zoning even in areas with sewer and water service).

The State Plan notes that the response to housing needs should vary by locality. Policies aimed at rural or suburban areas may not be appropriate for urban areas. As state in the Plan, “Some urban areas with an abundance of subsidized rental housing or even a large number of vacant and abandoned structures will need to take action to demolish unneeded structures and to replace them with scattered site housing for a wider range of income groups.” Further, “it is necessary to balance the need for affordable housing with its economic impact in order to encourage investment in cities and promote economically divers urban centers.”

Waterbury’s zoning, as noted earlier, permits a wide variety of housing types and densities. The standards recommended in this Plan are in keeping with existing neighborhood character and

appropriate capacity of land within the City, and do not erect any barriers to housing production. Further, the Plan seeks to balance housing needs with the ongoing needs for economic development and redevelopment in the City, as recommended in the State Plan. In short, the proposed Plan is fully in keeping with the needs identified in the State Plan.

