

FAIRFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

11-28-2023, 7:30 PM
501 Kings Highway East, CO Board Room
Regular Meeting Agenda

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:

This meeting will be conducted in-person only. There will be no opportunity to call-in with public comment.

The best way to listen or watch the meeting remotely is:

1. FairTV's cable channel (78 for Cablevision); or
2. Webex*: Call **408-418-9388**, and use Meeting Number (access code): **233 586 49354**
*(*Audio only. All callers will be automatically muted and will not be heard by the BoE.)*
3. [FairTV Education Channel and Livestream](#)
To view all agendas, minutes and enclosures, please click [here](#).

Please Note: Guidance on public comment is per [BoE Bylaws](#), Article V, Section 6.

1. Call to Order of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education and Roll Call
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Student Reports
Fairfield Ludlowe High School: Ms. Agatha Freitas, Mr. Louis Cazeneuve
Fairfield Warde High School: Ms. Alexandra Geremia-Kafadar and Mr. Jayri Engram
Walter Fitzgerald Campus: Ms. Samantha Marroquin and Ms. Madeleine Beggs
4. Public Comment
5. Presentations
 - A. Recognition of PTA
 - B. Town of Fairfield Planning and Zoning Presentation
Plan of Conservation and Development, Ms. Emmeline Harrigan and Mr. James Wendt
(Enclosure Nos 1, 2)
 - C. Update and Discussion of the Fairfield District Improvement Plan, District Leadership
(Enclosure No. 3)
 - D. Update and Discussion: Gifted and Talented Programming
6. Old Business
 - A. Adoption of Policy 6133.33: Instruction, Therapy Dogs
Recommended Motion: "that the Board of Education adopt Policy 6133.33: Instruction, Therapy Dogs"
7. New Business
 - A. First Read of Policy 5111: Students, Admission/Placement
(Enclosure No. 4)

B. First Read of Policy 5141.5: Suicide Prevention

(Enclosure No. 5)

8. Approval of Minutes

Recommended Motion: “that the Board of Education approve the 11-14-2023 BoE Regular Meeting Minutes”

(Enclosure No. 6)

9. Superintendent’s Report

10. Committee/Liaison Reports

11. Open Board Comment

12. Public Comment

13. Adjournment

Recommended Motion: “that this Regular Meeting of the Board of Education adjourn”

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Wednesday, December 6, 2023	7:30 PM Special Meeting	CO Board Room 501 Kings Highway East
Thursday, December 7, 2023	7:30 PM Town Hall Meeting	CO Board Room 501 Kings Highway East
Tuesday, December 12, 2023	7:30 PM Regular Meeting	CO Board Room 501 Kings Highway East

RELOCATION POLICY NOTICE

The Fairfield Public Schools System provides services to ensure students, parents and other persons have access to meetings, programs and activities. The School System will relocate programs in order to ensure accessibility of programs and activities to disabled persons. To make arrangements, please contact the office of Special Education, 501 Kings Highway East, Fairfield, CT 06825, Telephone: (203) 255-8379.

Proposed Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD)



Enclosure No. 1
November 28, 2023
Regular Meeting

TOWN OF FAIRFIELD

*Plan of Conservation and
Development*

July 28, 2023 DRAFT



Fairfield CONNECTICUT

Jim Wendt, AICP – Planning Director

Emmeline Harrigan, AICP, CFM – Assistant Planning Director

FAIRFIELD'S LAST POCD (2000/2016):

WHAT'S NEW IN THE STATE STATUTE?

Content:

- Sewer Service Map
- Target Development Areas with Existing Infrastructure
- Mixed Use and TOD Identification
- Agriculture Protection & Preservation
- Sea Level Rise Consideration
- Housing for Aging Populations
- Technology Infrastructure

Tasks:

- Post Plan on Website
- Increase Regional COG review time
- Local Legislative Approval requirements
- Discretionary Funding Linked to Updated Plan every 10 years



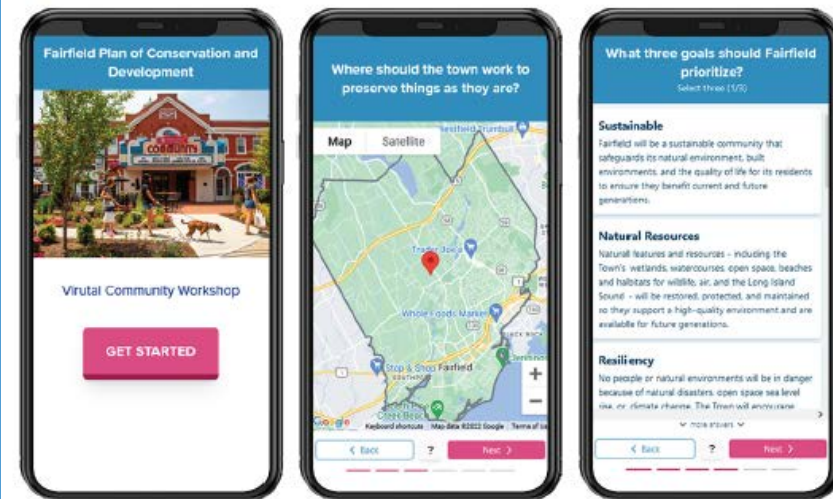
Previous Plan Review

- 2013 - Bicycle And Pedestrian Master Plan
- 2015 - MetroCOG Comprehensive Plan
- **2017 - POCD**
- 2017 - Creating A Strategic Vision for Fairfield
- 2017 - MetroCOG Regional Framework for Coastal Resilience
- 2018 - Resiliency for Downtown Fairfield Using Green Infrastructure
- 2019 - Transit Oriented Development Study
- 2019 - Fairfield & New Haven Counties Coastal Storm Risk Management Study
- 2020 - Sustainability Plan 2020
- 2020 - Strategic Plan - "One Town; One Vision" (Including Supplemental Documents)
- 2022 - Affordable Housing Plan
- 2022 - Parks and Recreation Plan

Figure 4. Topic-Focused Workshops



Figure 5. Virtual Workshop Examples



The virtual workshop was designed "mobile-first" and available in multiple languages to make it as accessible as possible.



Vision Statements / Themes

Fairfield will be...

1. A Resilient Community
2. An Environmentally Rooted Community
3. A Community that is Home for All
4. A Sustainably Prosperous Community
5. An Interconnected Community
6. A Community Where People Come Together

Figure 6. POCD Open House



Fairfield CONNECTICUT

A Resilient Community

A. Background

- Technical
- Community Engagement

B. Resilient Neighborhoods

C. Resilient Hubs

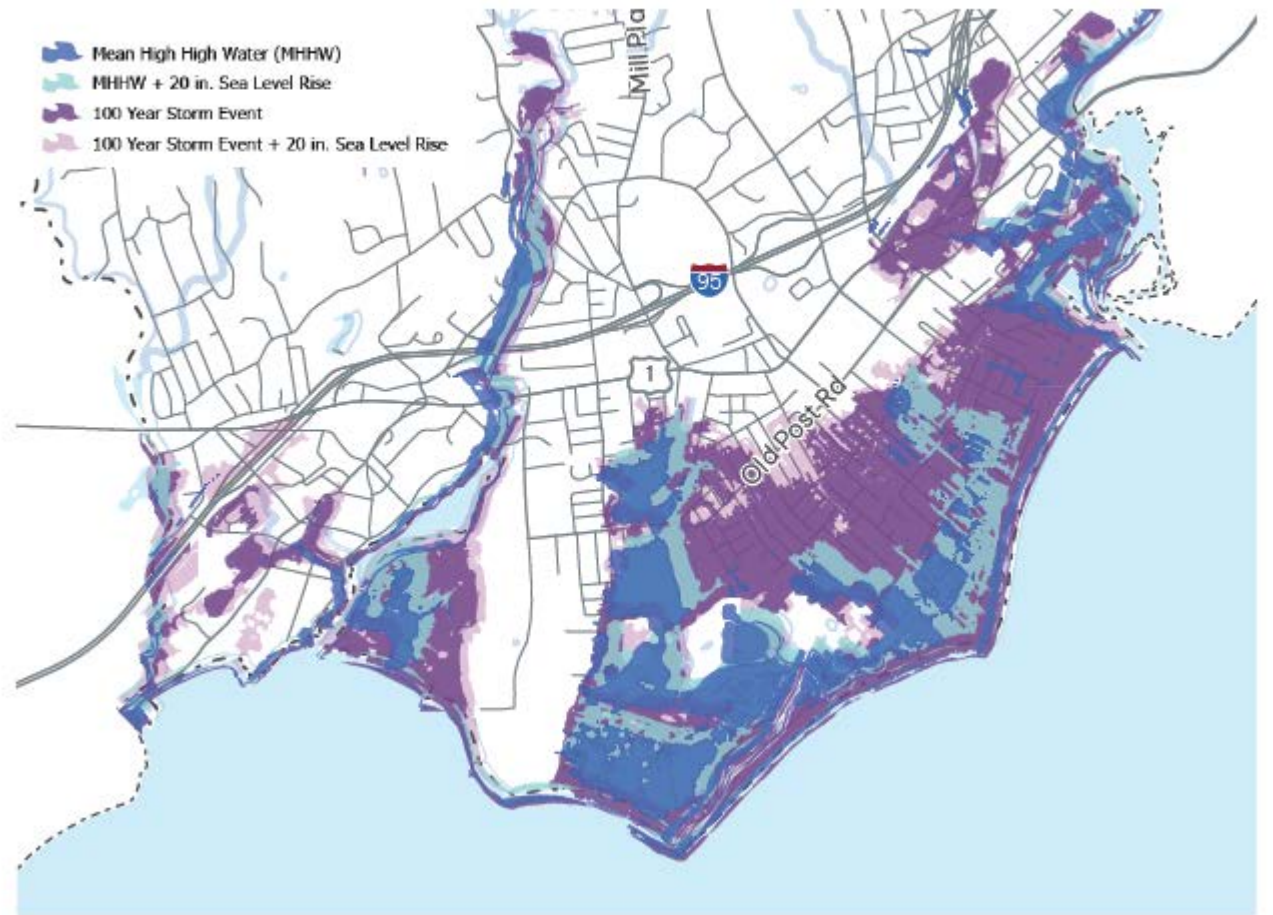
D. Resilient Corridors

E. Individual Hazard Mitigation

F. Coordinated Hazard Mitigation

G. Downzone in Strategic Locations

Figure 9. Sea Level Rise Scenarios



An Environmentally Rooted Community

A. Background

- Technical
- Community Engagement

B. Expand Greenways

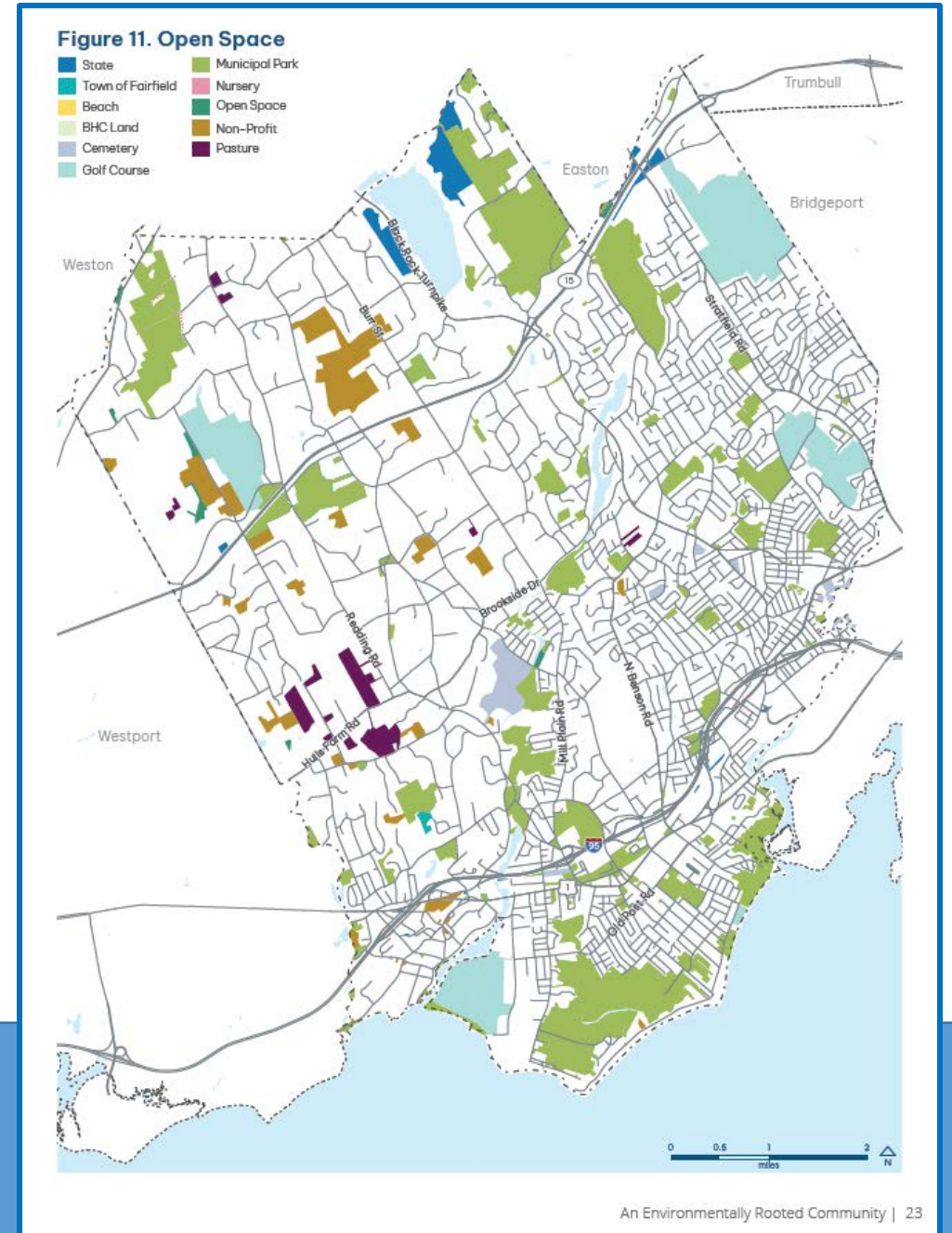
C. Maintain and enhance existing open space assets

D. Protect beaches and coastal resources

- The tidal marsh restoration north of Fairfield Beach Road between Reef and Rowland Roads
- Jennings Beach Restoration

E. Promote a sustainable Fairfield (*an Action Plan for a Sustainable Fairfield*)

- Use CT High Performance Standards on new construction & renovation
- Support water conservation
- Continued renewable energy support
- Continued education



A Community that is Home for All

- A. Background
 - Technical
 - Community Engagement
- B. Promote More Mixed-Use Opportunities
- C. Promote More Missing-Middle Housing
- D. Promote Housing near Transit Facilities



A Community That Is Home To All Recommendations

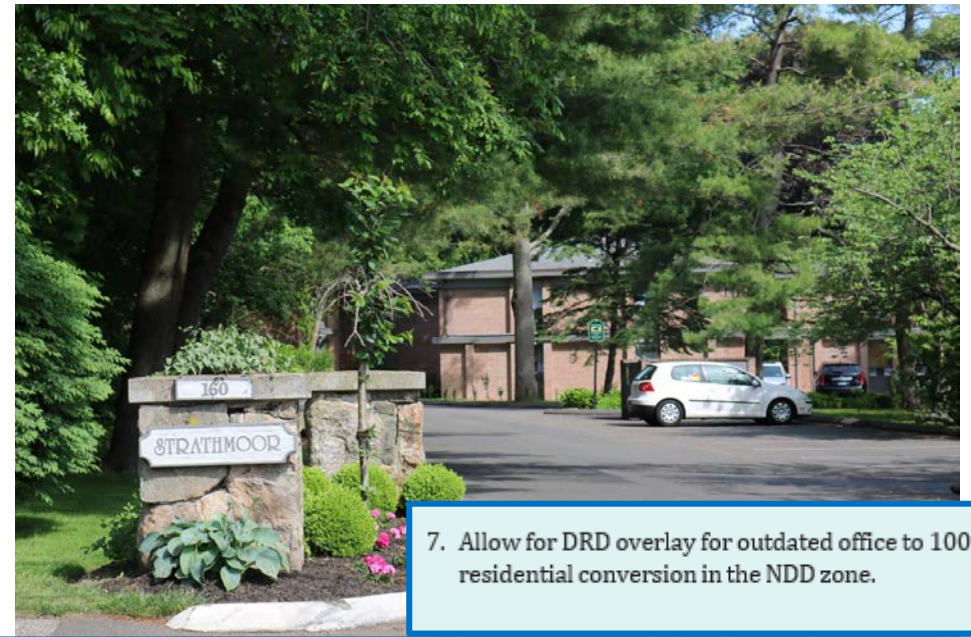
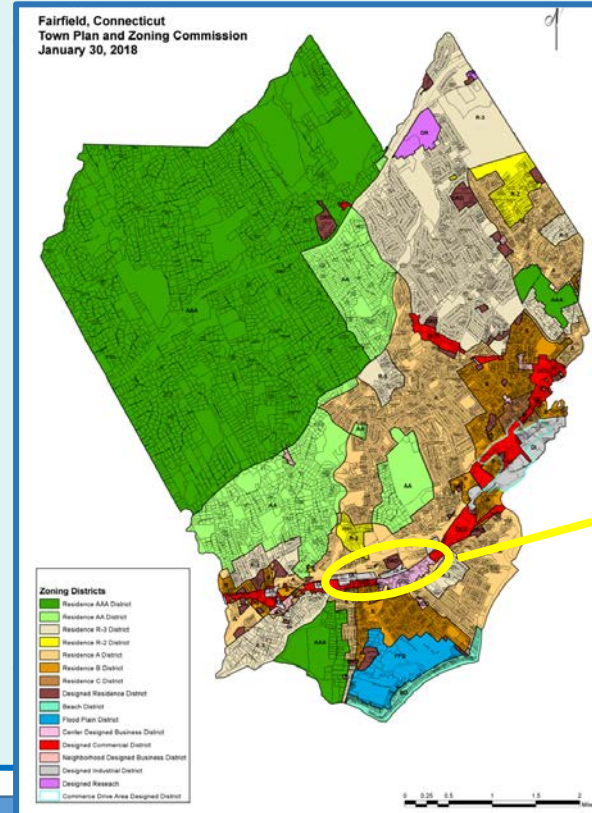
Strategy A: Maintain historic districts and legacy neighborhoods.

1. Maintain the current zoning standards for Residence AAA, AA, A, R-3, and R-2 districts.
2. Continue to support efforts to preserve and protect historic districts.

Strategy B: Diversify housing options in strategic locations.

1. In the Center Designed Business District and the Designed Commercial District, eliminate the requirement that residential uses may not exceed 50% of a buildings floor area. Applicants should still be required to provide ground floor commercial space.
2. In the Center Designed Business District and the Designed Commercial District, permit ground floor residential for secondary rear buildings for campus-like projects. Require that all buildings located on a public right-of-way have ground floor commercial facing primary street frontages that meet the design standards of the zone.

3. Expand the Center Design Business District to the west along Route 1 / Post Road as illustrated in Figure 20. This will expand opportunities for new mixed use construction with design standards, and support a more walkable environment along the Post Road.



7. Allow for DRD overlay for outdated office to 100% residential conversion in the NDD zone.

Figure 20. Expansion of Center Design Business District



A Community that is Home for All

5. Increase the type of permitted housing options in close proximity to Fairfield Metro by rezoning the area identified in Figure 22 on page 38 from B to C.
6. Undertake a study to identify missing middle housing types and where they might be permitted. Based on that study, explore permitting additional residential density in select areas and regulating it through appropriate design standards.

Figure 21. Rezoning from A to B

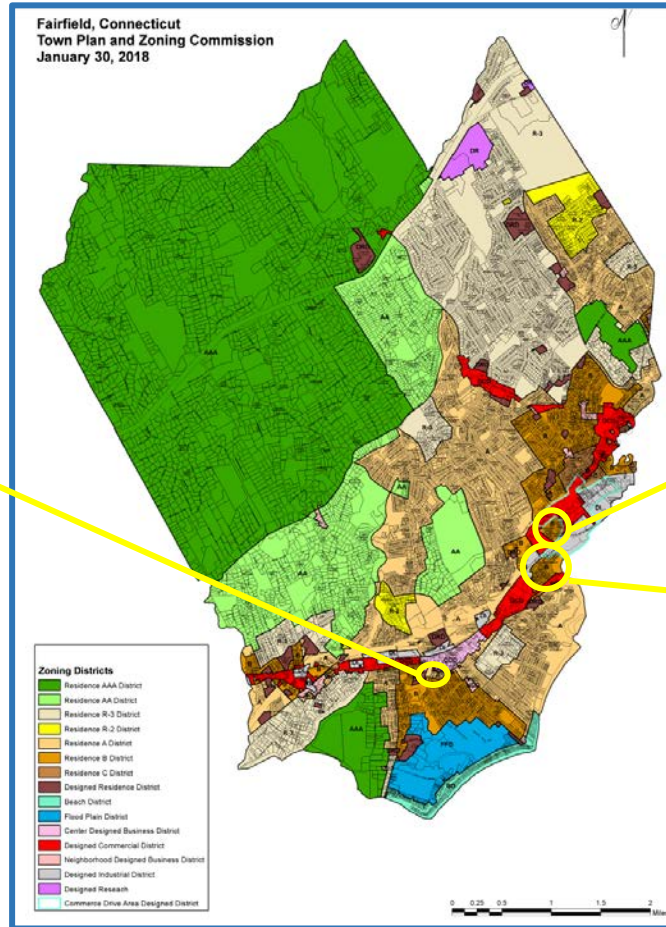


Figure 22. Rezoning from B to C



A Community that is Home for All

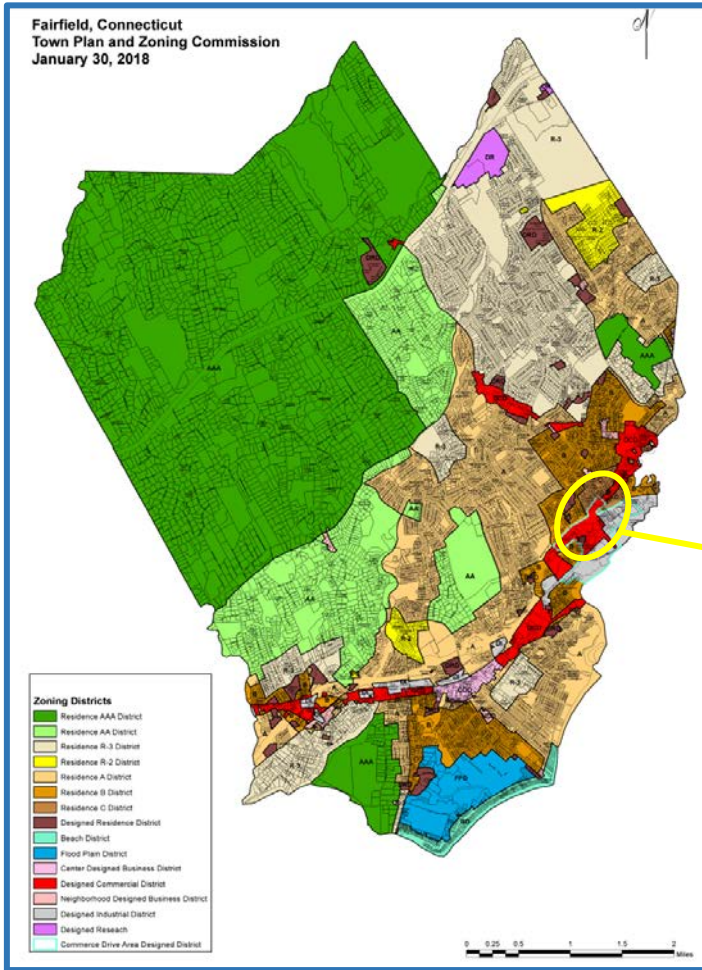
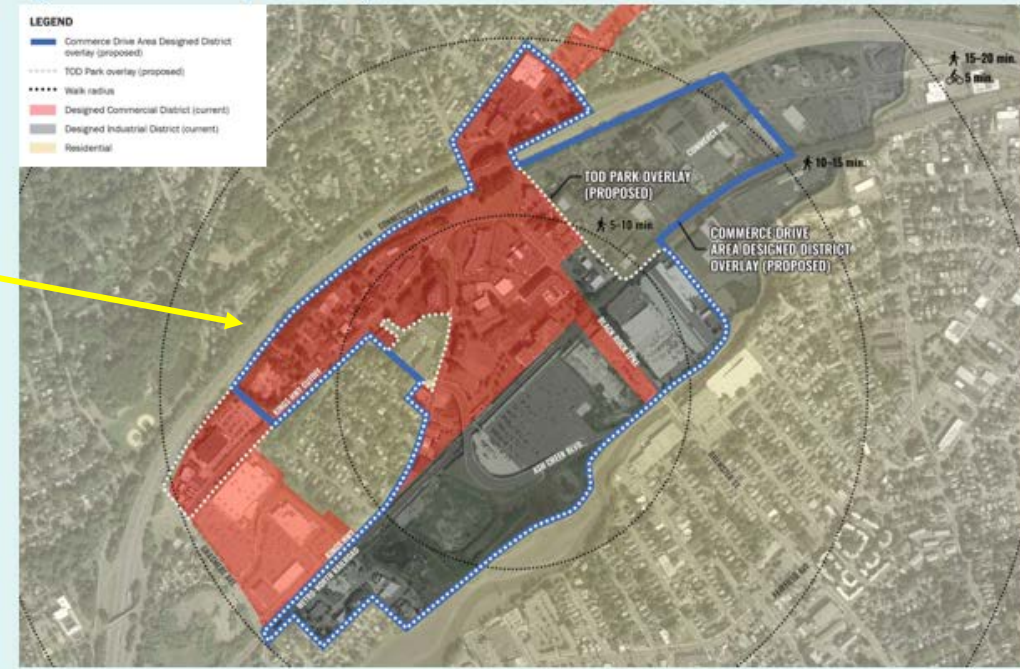


Figure 23. TOD Park Proposed Overlay



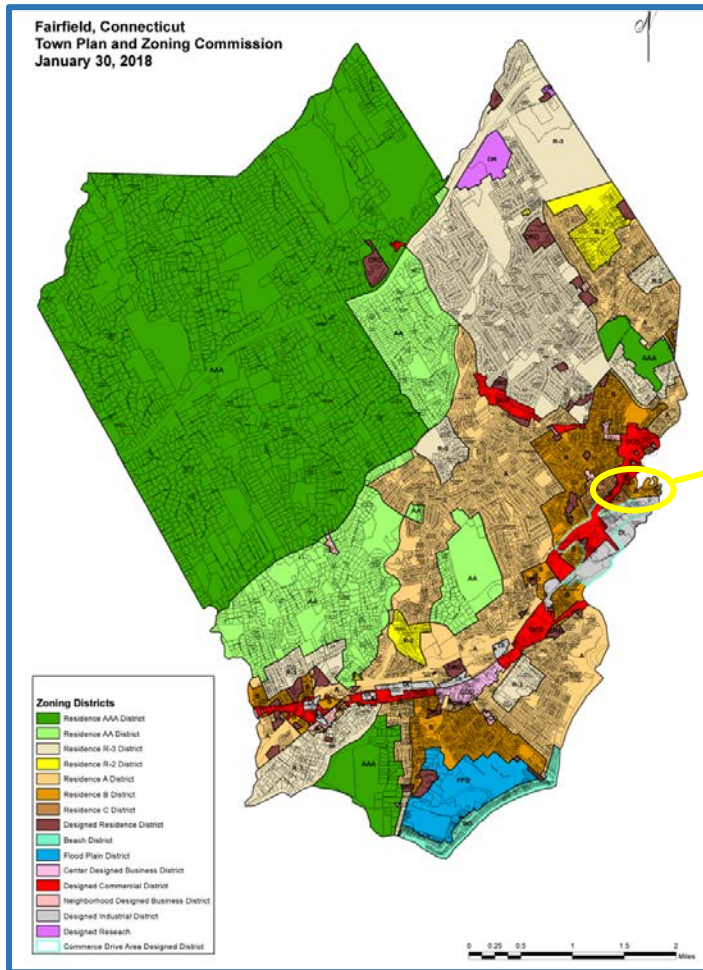
Strategy C: Promote housing near transit facilities by adopting the recommendations of the Fairfield Transit Oriented Development Study.

1. Establish a maximum height in the CDBD of 4 stories but increase the overall allowable height to 52 feet to permit high-value spaces while maintaining the overall appearance of building massing and height to a limit that closely matches the existing context. The Town should also consider a minimum height of 15 feet for the ground floor story to ensure that buildings are designed to best serve retail and dining uses as envisioned.
2. In the CDBD, increase the FAR limit to 3 to enable development of buildings in the 3- to 4-story range. This scale is fully consistent with existing building scale and the intent of the current zoning.
3. Redraw the Park TOD overlay to align with the boundary suggested in the TOD Study, as illustrated in Figure 23 on page 39.
4. Reduce the minimum lot size for the TOD Park overlay and its subsequent regulations from 35,000 square feet to 10,000 square feet would match the minimum lot size of the CDAD overlay, providing for consistency in development across all station-area parcels.
5. Adjust the height requirement in the TOD Park overlay in the following ways to balance a desire to create higher floor-to-floor heights while limiting the overall scale of buildings:
 - Establish a height limit of no more than five stories.
 - Establish a ground floor height of at least 15 feet in order to promote high-value



Fairfield CONNECTICUT

A Community that is Home for All



Strategy D: Increase the supply of affordable housing.

1. Study increasing the affordability set-aside requirements to 15% in all zoning districts.
2. Review the Design Residence Districts (DRD) to identify the extent to which the following recommendations from the affordable housing plan would produce meaningful increases in affordable housing:

- Reduce the minimum parcel size requirement for the DRD
- Increase the maximum density limitation.
- Require that deed-restricted units be provided.
- Allowing DRD development by special permit if it were connected to public water and sewer, near arterials or collector roads, or near transit service.
- Reviewing lot coverage, building coverage, and floor area limitations

3. Explore hybrid form-based zoning as a way of introducing more missing-middle housing typologies that will be more affordable than currently permitted housing options.

4. Consider amending Zoning Regulations to increase the term of the affordable housing set-aside requirements beyond the State minimum of 40 years.

Figure 24. Rezoning to Residence A



Strategy E: Reduce Density in the FEMA Floodway.

1. Change the zoning in area identified in Figure 24 Residence A.

Strategy F: Reduce parking requirements to reduce unnecessary burden on the construction of new residential units.

1. Require two (2) spaces per dwelling unit unless fewer spaces are permitted because of special conditions (e.g., located in a Transit Oriented Design Overlay)
2. The Town should reduce the number of visitor parking spaces to 1/4 space per unit in the Designed Residential District.

Strategy G: Bring residential zoning into conformance with State statutes.

1. The Town should eliminate minimum unit size requirements so as to conform with Statute.



Fairfield CONNECTICUT

A Sustainably Prosperous Community

A. Background

- Technical
- Community Engagement

B. Promote Commercial Development in Strategic Locations

- Downtown
- Bus depot area near former GE/Sacred Heart West
- Office overlay for home-based businesses
- Former Exide Battery plant
- Fairfield Metro

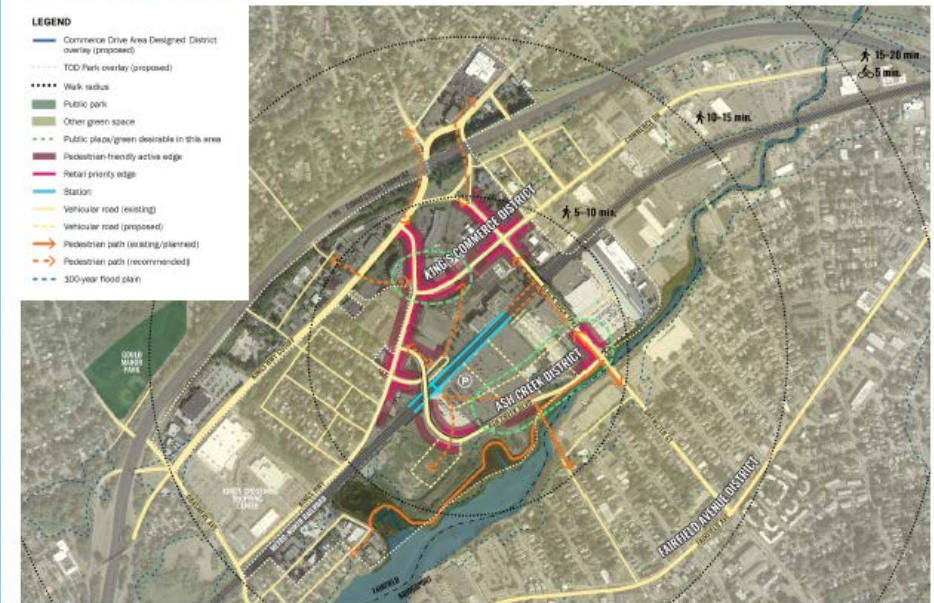
C. Reexamine DCD

- Broaden use categories
- Reexamine parking standards
- Examine residential requirements
- Cross access easements

D. Cross References to other Sections

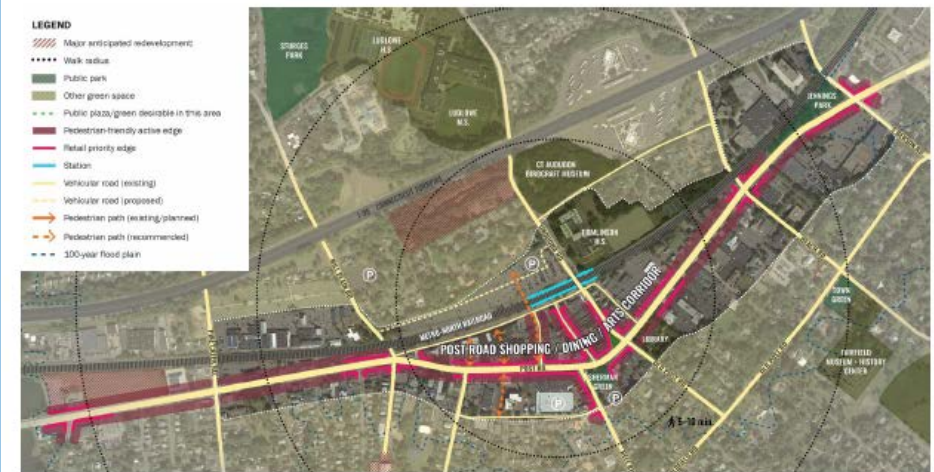
- Modify CDD
- Promote Housing near Transit
- Multi-family at strategic locations

Figure 26. Fairfield Metro TOD Plan



Fairfield Transit Oriented Development Plan (2017)

Figure 27. Fairfield Downtown station area TOD



Fairfield Transit Oriented Development Plan (2017)



An Interconnected Community

A. Background

- Technical
- Community Engagement

B. Build a Stronger Bicycle and Pedestrian Network

- Bicycle Route Network
- Sidewalk Network

C. Address Critical Roadways and Intersections

- Walk audit on Post Road

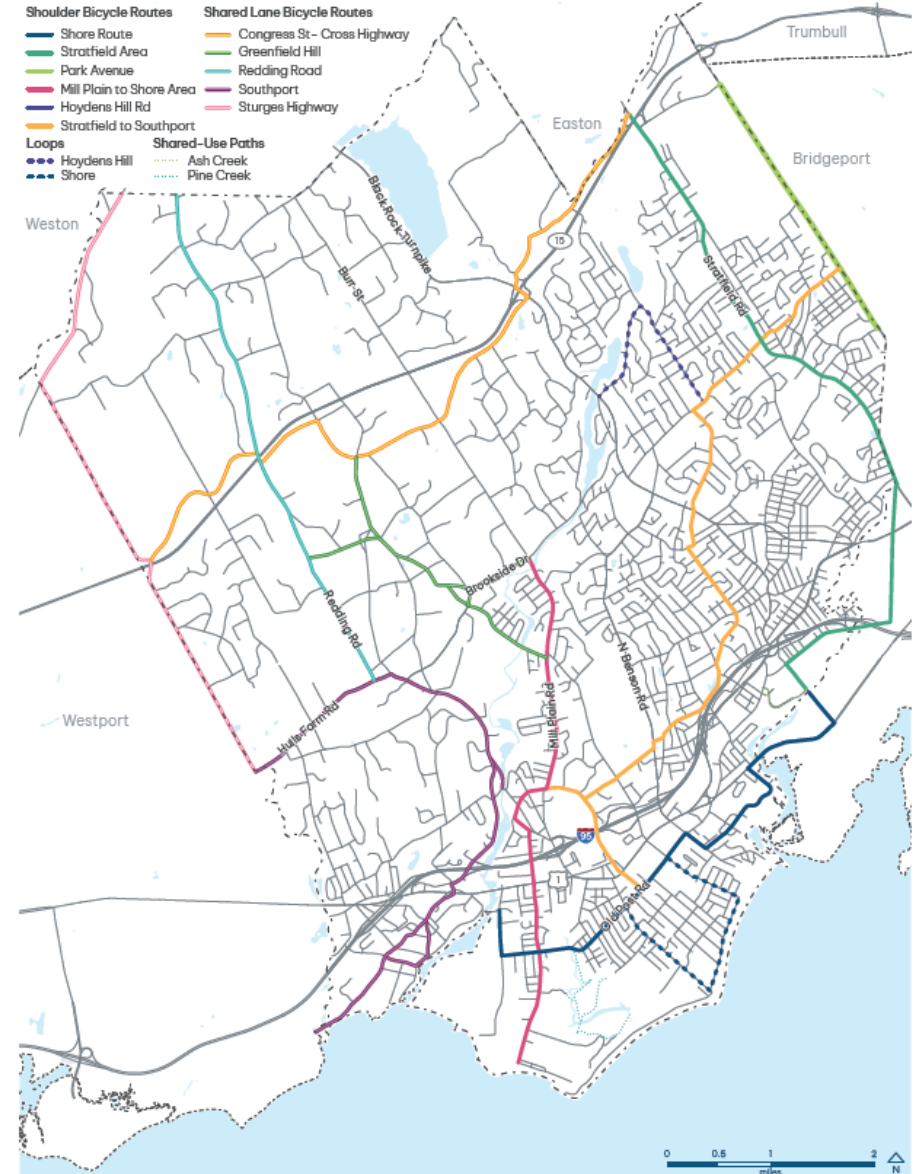
D. Update Regulations & Standards

- Bike and Ped Plan as part of site approval
- Update Subdivision to require sidewalks where they are identified on sidewalk network
- Develop Complete Street Design Guide

E. Address Student Parking

- Parking utilization study
- University partnerships

Figure 33. Bicycle Network



A Community Where People Come Together

From Parks & Recreation Master Plan

- A. Background
- B. Build new athletic fields and make improvement to new fields
- C. Repair and Update Playgrounds
- D. Enhance parking, ADA access and pathways in existing parks
- E. Explore opportunities for indoor gym and pool space
- F. Enhance bicycle facilities in parks
- G. Explore green infrastructure in parks

“ participant quote

Community centers with activities for all ages, access to swimming and aquatic facilities, educational opportunities for seniors.

“ participant quote

Easier/safer crossings and more gathering places for tweens and teens to go with friends.

“ participant quote

More creative outdoor parks, activities for young families. More activities for the 30-40 something.



LOCAL, REGIONAL + STATE PoCDs - CONNECTING THE DOTS AND UNLOCKING FUNDING

Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program – Planning Grants and Capital Construction Grants

The [Bipartisan Infrastructure Law \(BIL\)](#) established the new Reconnecting Communities Pilot (RCP) discretionary grant program, funded with \$1 billion over the next 5 years. The program's funds can support planning, capital construction, and technical assistance to equitably and safely restore community connectivity through the removal, retrofit, mitigation, or replacement of eligible transportation infrastructure facilities that create barriers to mobility, access, or economic development.

Notices of Funding Opportunity – Coming in Summer 2022

The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) will determine whether to issue one or more Notices of Funding Opportunity (NOFOs) for the RCP program. The Department anticipates posting the NOFO(s) for RCP program grants and technical assistance in summer of 2022. Once NOFO(s) are posted, eligible parties may submit application(s) for grants. Award announcements are expected to be made in early 2023.

If you wish to learn more about this program, [sign up for email updates here](#).

Link(s) to the NOFO(s) will be posted on this webpage when available.

You may send questions to ReconnectingCommunities@dot.gov.

Tips for Getting Ready

- Begin to identify your community's challenges related to connectivity and barriers, safety and mobility.
- Consider the history of the neighborhood or facility. Is there a legacy of harm?
- Consider whether eligible facilities are located in underserved, overburdened, or disadvantaged communities. Is your community experiencing systemic disadvantage per, [DOT Transportation Disadvantaged Census Tracts?](#)



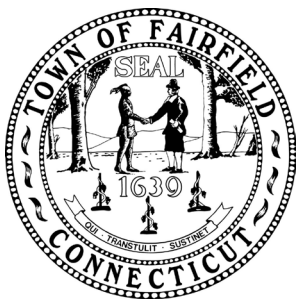
Fairfield CONNECTICUT



TOWN OF FAIRFIELD

Plan of Conservation and Development

July 28, 2023 DRAFT



Town of Fairfield, Connecticut
Plan of Conservation and Development
Fairfield Plan & Zoning Department

Prepared with the support of FHI Studio



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Introduction

What is a Plan of Conservation and Development?

A Plan of Conservation and Development is a document that guides land use and infrastructure investment priorities over a 10-year horizon. The POCD acknowledges the context of how the town evolved with its successes and challenges, but its purpose is to identify how to best move the municipality forward into the future. This plan seeks to incorporate the best policies and goals to meet the needs of the changing influences of demographic trends to improve quality of life for long-term residents and those who visit, work in, and want to move to Fairfield. The POCD examines data and conditions related to population and economic growth, housing cost relative to incomes, and changing needs relative to employment, transportation, and cultural norms – all with the input of its residents.

How is this Plan organized?

This POCD is organized around a series of statements that reflect the values of Fairfielders and articulate a vision for what Fairfield should be. They include:

- A Resilient Community
- An Environmentally Rooted Community
- A Community that is Home for All
- A Sustainably Prosperous Community
- An Interconnected Community
- A Community Where People Come Together

A chapter is dedicated to each of these statements. Those chapters include an overview of the background information that was gathered during the POCD process, a summary of the community input, and a list of the strategies and recommendations that will help the Town advance its goals.

An initial chapter details the information about previous planning efforts, core trends and conditions, and summarizes the community engagement process. It also includes a list of the specific goals that the recommendations are designed to advance.

The final chapter of the POCD articulates the Future Land Use vision for the Town, which serves as the foundation for zoning.

Plan Foundations

Previous Planning Summary

The following summarizes where Fairfield stands, as expressed through previous planning documents. It establishes a foundation for the discussion and recommendations presented in the following elements of this plan.

Reconnect Region: A Comprehensive Plan for the MetroCOG Region

MetroCOG is the regional planning organization that covers Fairfield and several of its neighboring communities. In 2015, MetroCOG released its plan of conservation and development (which they referred to as their Comprehensive Plan) that was organized around three guiding principles:

- Reconnected
- Revitalized
- Resilient

That plan identifies a future land use framework for Fairfield that divides the Town into four areas, as illustrated in Figure 1. This strategy sets the foundation for regional investments in the Regional Center and Urban Core that promote more intensive development with an integrated mix of uses that are supportive of, and are supported by, a regional transportation network.

Local Planning Efforts

Overall, Fairfield is a hybrid of urban and suburban development that has proved attractive to families and long-time residents. It has been fully developed, and future changes to land use will come through redevelopment.

Located along the Long Island Sound, the community has a variety of wetlands, watercourses, habitats for wildlife, parks, and beaches that significantly contribute to the character of the community and help sustain

Previous Planning Work

2013 - Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan

2015 - MetroCOG Comprehensive Plan

2017 - POCD

2017 - Creating A Strategic Vision for Fairfield

2017 - MetroCOG Regional Framework for Coastal Resilience

2018 - Resiliency for Downtown Fairfield Using Green Infrastructure

2019 - Transit Oriented Development Study

2019 - Fairfield & New Haven Counties Coastal Storm Risk Management Study

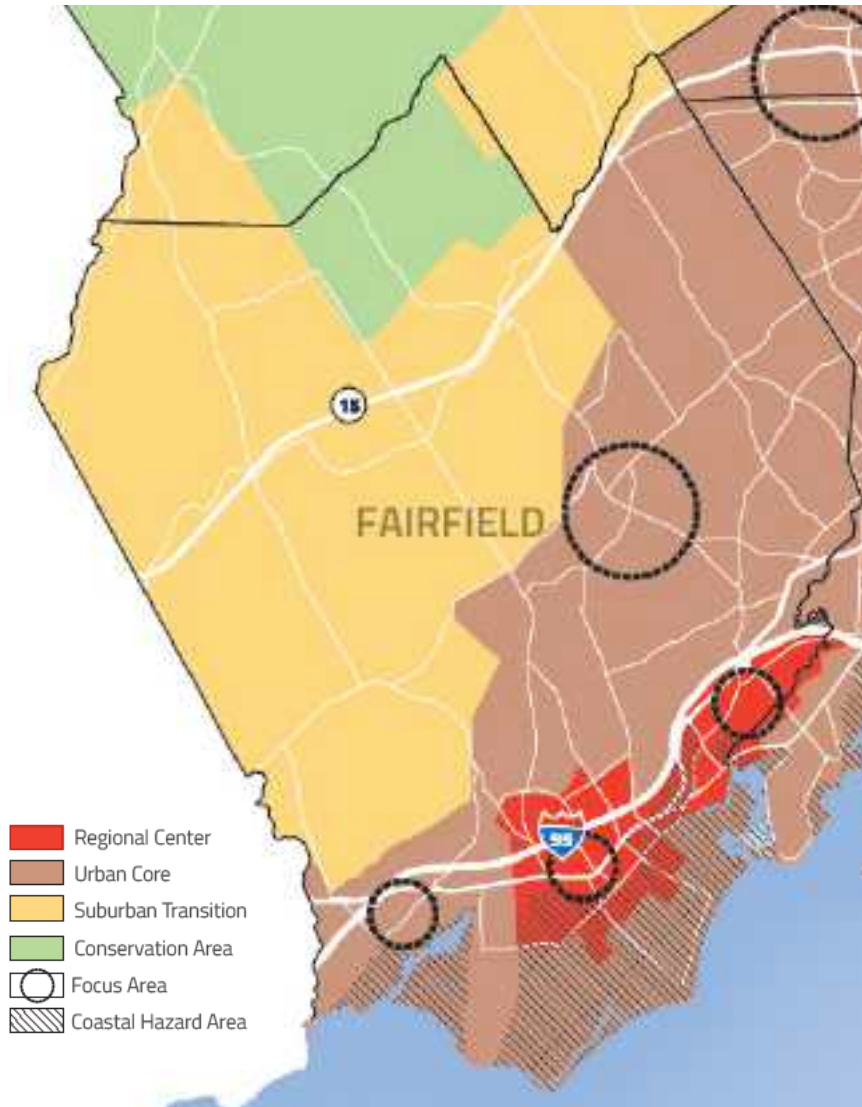
2020 - Sustainability Plan 2020

2020 - Strategic Plan - "One Town; One Vision" (Including Supplemental Documents)

2022 - Affordable Housing Plan

2022 - Parks and Recreation Plan

Figure 1. MetroCOG - Future Land Use Framework



Reconnect Region 1: A comprehensive Plan for the MetroCOG Region (2015)

its residents. The Town has recently completed a Parks and Recreation Plan that includes a strategy for enhancing the existing network over the next 10 years.

The proximity of the Town to these natural amenities also poses a risk. These areas can transform into areas of substantial danger during natural disasters. Likewise, human intervention poses significant long-term risks to some of the community’s natural environments and threatens the long-term existence of important ecosystems. Creating short- and long-term strategies to mitigate the risks associated with these events will be critical to the long-term viability of the community.

Many Fairfielders strongly identify with their neighborhoods and see the quality of the residential communities as a key reason

to live in Town. Fairfield’s population is projected to continue to increase, which, along with changing housing preferences, means there will be more demand for housing. In addition, the Town will need to provide a larger variety of housing options and choices to meet the changing needs of households, especially younger and older residents. The Town, like many communities in Connecticut, is experiencing substantial increases in housing prices which makes it a less accessible place to live for moderate- and lower-income residents. Going forward, Fairfield will have to strategically balance its need for more and different housing with neighborhood and character preservation efforts.

Although predominantly residential, Fairfield has significant commercial and industrial corridors focused around a state highway system owned and maintained by the Connecticut Department of Transportation. Previous plans have noted the importance of encouraging redevelopment along these corridors to expand the Town’s commercial tax base.

The Metro -North New Haven Rail Line passes through the Town, establishing an important transit connection to regional destinations.

Over the past ten years, there has been substantial interest

in the redevelopment of these station areas to support transit-oriented development. By prioritizing mixed-used, walkable communities, supporting adaptive reuse and redevelopment, and allowing higher density in strategic parts of Town, Fairfield can increase its property tax revenues and attract both millennials and downsizing baby boomers. In 2019, the Town completed a Transit Oriented Development Study that included recommendations for how the Town can support those efforts.

Since the last POCD, Fairfield has taken significant steps to support walking and biking for transportation, recreation, exercise, and quality of life. However, there is more to be done. This includes improving sidewalk conditions, expanding the bicycle and sidewalk network, and addressing issues that make streets less safe and accessible.

Looking to ensure that the high-quality community that residents currently enjoy is available for future generations, the Town of Fairfield is striving to make the community more sustainable. This includes improving air quality, providing people with alternatives to traveling by personal vehicle, maintaining a healthy supply of drinking water, and supporting energy efficiency and conservation, among other topics.

Core Trends & Conditions

This plan presents most trends and conditions in the most relevant element. This ensures that the information is easier to find and connects to the respective recommendations. However, the following provides a summary of some core demographic data.

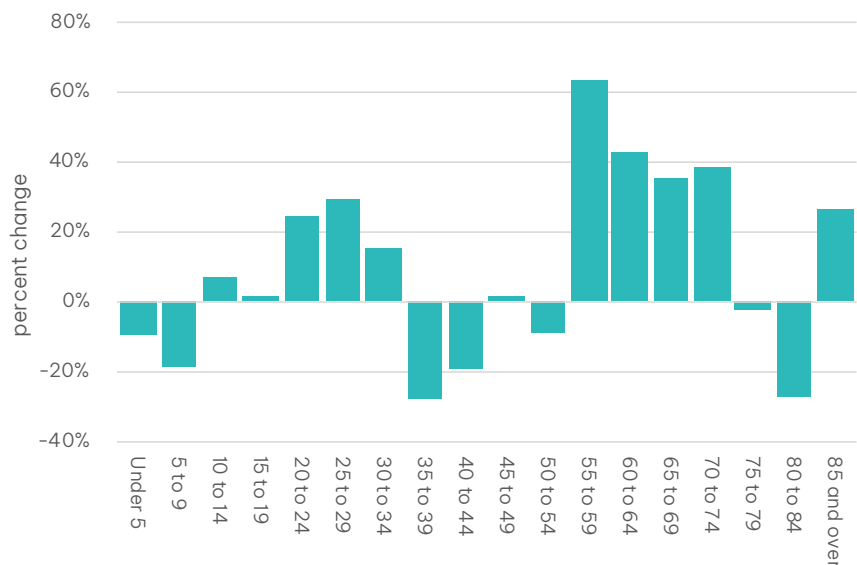
Since 2010, **the Town has seen a moderate increase in residential population** (4% / 2,108 residents), increasing from 59,404 to 61,512. This is in line with the growth in the County (4%) and outpaces the growth rate for the state (1%). **A large portion of that growth has been the result of increases in the number of Hispanic residents.** There are 1,807 more Hispanic residents than in 2010, a 60% increase. This is significantly faster growth than the County (32%) and State (30%).¹

As illustrated in Figure 2, **the Town has seen increases in the number of young and older adults.** The presence of a walkable downtown and transit-accessible housing may be one of the drivers of this change since both demographics have shown a preference for these conditions nationally. Conversely, **Fairfield has seen a decline in the number of children over the past 10 years: there are 1,286 fewer children, a 9% decline.**

As illustrated in Figure 3, **Fairfield has seen substantial growth in its Hispanic population.** This growth has far outpaced the

¹ National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) as published by the Connecticut State Department of Public Health at portal.ct.gov/DPH/

Figure 2. Population Change 2010 - 2020



US Census Bureau. American Community Survey, Five-Year Estimates (2020 and 2010)

growth of the Town as well as any other race or ethnicity in Town. Of particular importance is the growth in the number of Hispanic children which has helped to offset a larger decline in non-Hispanic white children.²

Otherwise, **Fairfield’s population profile has remained steady over the past ten years.** Residents largely own their own homes

Figure 3. Population Changes

Population	Age	Change		
		State	County	Fairfield
total	total	1%	4%	4%
total	adults	4%	8%	8%
total	children	-10%	-6%	-9%
Hispanic of any race	total	30%	32%	60%
Hispanic of any race	adults	35%	34%	73%
Hispanic of any race	children	20%	30%	37%

National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) as published by the Connecticut State Department of Public Health at portal.ct.gov/DPH/

(82%), have at least a high-school diploma (96%), and live outside of poverty (5%). Those identifying as white make up a larger share of the population (84%) than the state (66%). Approximately 8% of residents identify as Latino, 5% as Asian, 2% as Black, and 4% as some other race or ethnicity. Approximately 13% of residents were born outside of the US.

Fairfield is also an economic center and home to just under 26,000 jobs, with the largest share in the Health Care and Social Assistance sector. For people’s primary jobs in the private sector, 84% of jobs are filled by people commuting into Town while 85% of residents commute out of Town to work.³

² *National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) as published by the Connecticut State Department of Public Health at portal.ct.gov/DPH/*

³ *U.S. Census Bureau. LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (2002-2020) accessed at onthemap.ces.census.gov*

A Community-Driven Plan

The creation of this POCD included a substantial amount of community, stakeholder, commission, and department engagement. The engagement efforts started before the start of the 2020 COVID pandemic, were placed on hold, and then restarted in 2022. The specific findings from these engagement efforts are detailed within the respective chapters. The following summarizes the pre- and post-pandemic engagement efforts.

Initial Engagement

Departments, Boards, and Commissions

Public outreach for the POCD began with internal meetings with Department heads and local Boards and Commissions in the summer of 2017 to discuss how their agencies might contribute to the plan and to remind them of the POCD's important role in grant-writing and public support of future projects and planning efforts.

Harvest Festival Pop-Up

The Harvest Festival in October 2018 was the general public's first opportunity to brainstorm with Planning staff in a casual setting. Set up between craftspeople, farmers, and food vendors, Fairfield residents visited our planning tent and filled two boards each with ideas of "What they Love" and "What Fairfield Needs." Fairfielders love their local restaurants, beaches, libraries, schools, culture and arts events and facilities (Fairfield Theater Company and the Quick Center in particular), Lake Mohegan, and the two local universities. Participants identified the need to include sidewalks and additional recreation facilities, such as a town pool. These have been discussed, and where appropriate, incorporated into the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

Initial Workshops

The Plan and Zoning Department also held workshops related to Sea Level Rise (July 2018) and did presentations regarding Housing to the Fairfield Senior Advocates (April 2019). A preliminary public Open Space meeting was held with the Conservation Commission. A joint Economic Development and Planning Commission meeting was also held.

Topic-Focused Workshops

In January and February of 2020, the Town held in-person town-wide POCD workshops with members of the public at the Sacred Heart University West Campus, Fairfield University, and Penfield Pavilion. The workshop series sought to focus on three key areas: Conservation, Economic Development and Housing, and Infrastructure, including a mandated discussion of Sea Level Rise.

As shown on Figure 4, community members were broken into smaller table settings where they could discuss the three major focus areas with corresponding maps to provide their input in ways specific to sites and locations that residents had familiarity with. People could mark up the maps with notes and suggestions and use provided photos for examples of what they would like to see. The interactive workshops were well attended, and residents provided feedback about how much they enjoyed participating.

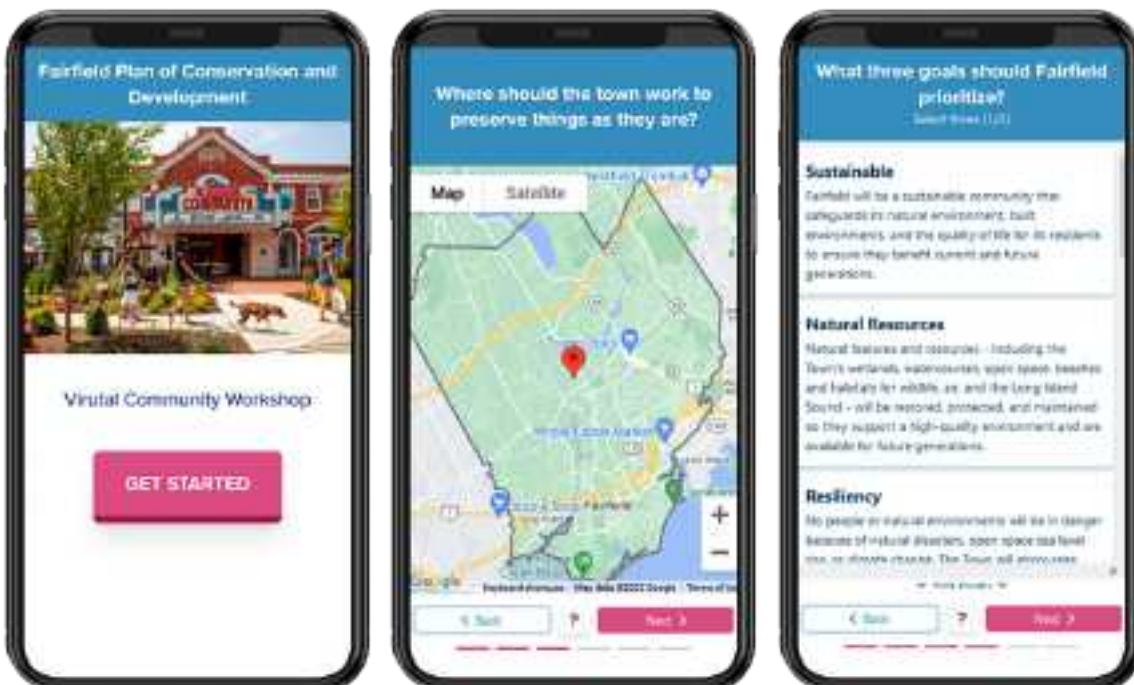
COVID Pause

Following the outbreak of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic in March 2020, in-person public meetings were limited. The following summarizes the engagement efforts that were conducted when the project was restarted in 2022.

Figure 4. Topic-Focused Workshops



Figure 5. Virtual Workshop Examples



The virtual workshop was designed “mobile-first” and available in multiple languages to make it as accessible as possible.

Follow Up Engagement

Department and Committee Meetings

Following the restart of the engagement process, the Town and its consultant re-engaged departments and commissions in a variety of meetings to confirm and update the findings from the initial engagement.

Virtual Workshop

In the Fall of 2022, the Town launched a virtual workshop (Figure 5) that allowed participants to:

- Identify Town strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.
- Identify priorities for improvements.
- Map locations where they believe places should be preserved, enhanced, or transformed.
- Share their big ideas for changes in Fairfield.
- Submit feedback on how the COVID

pandemic would change their behaviors going forward.

The virtual workshop had more than 200 participants, allowing for a significantly larger number of people to provide input into the plan.

Open House

In April of 2023, the Town hosted an open house at the Osborn Hill School. Facilitators presented those in attendance with an overview of the work that had been done to date, including a summary of the community engagement efforts. Participants were then encouraged to circulate to six different stations that corresponded to the chapters in this POCD.

At each station, participants were given an overview of some of the key background information relevant to the topic as well as a summary of the key recommendations. They were encouraged to talk with staff, identify ideas they did or did not support, and submit additional comments for consideration.

Figure 6. POCD Open House



Plan Goals

The following goals are based on the comprehensive review of previous plans and community engagement efforts. They provide clarity on what the recommendations, across all chapters of the POCD, are striving to achieve.

1. Fairfield will be a sustainable community that safeguards its natural environment, built environments, and the quality of life for its residents to ensure they benefit current and future generations.
2. Natural features and resources – including the Town’s wetlands, watercourses, open space, beaches and habitats for wildlife, air, and the Long Island Sound – will be restored, protected, and maintained so they support a high-quality environment and are available for future generations.
3. People and places will be protected from natural disasters, sea level rise, or climate change. The Town will encourage land protection within natural hazard areas and minimize development or redevelopment within natural hazard areas.
4. Excellent recreational and community facilities will serve the diverse needs of residents of Fairfield.
5. Quality residential areas, that include historic districts, will continue to be the predominate land use in the community.
6. People of all ages, creeds, races, incomes, and physical disabilities will have access to diverse and affordable housing options.
7. High-quality commercial areas will be visually attractive and support additional vibrant economic activity.
8. Areas around train stations will be places where people can work, live, learn and play.
9. Residents will have safe and convenient spaces where they can walk and bike as a means of transportation, recreation, and exercise.
10. The Town government will be transparent, efficiently provide services, and professionally implement policies through sound leadership and the use of best practices.
11. Fairfield University and Sacred Heart University and their students, faculty, and staff will be integrated into the community and will be important drivers of local growth.

A Resilient Community

Background

Community resilience can be defined as having the capacity or ability to withstand and recover quickly from an event. In general, there are four components of resilience: prepare, withstand, recover, and adapt. As a resilient community, the Town of Fairfield is already implementing and incorporating these four components throughout the community:

Prepare the community, residents, and infrastructure for the impacts of floods, severe storms, and extreme heat. This might include education and outreach, planning for events and emergencies, or ensuring emergency response supplies and measures are in place.

Withstanding an event includes supporting infrastructure, homes, and buildings that will be minimally damaged during a flood or severe storm, and educating the population so they understand available resources during these events, including heat waves.

Recovering from storms or floods means having the emergency response capabilities to assist those in immediate need, the mechanisms and fiscal avenues to rebuild and repair, and the support system for the community in the wake of an event such as SuperStorm Sandy.

Adapting to changes can include tangible or visible modifications or actions, such as flood protection systems or elevating structures to help reduce damages in the future; or modifying how the community prepares, withstands, and recovers as storms become more frequent and severe, and as climate change results in increased heat waves and rising sea levels.

Fairfield understands that fostering a whole-community resiliency approach will help prepare the community to flourish even as climate change impacts become more challenging.

Existing Conditions

Floods

Flood risks in Fairfield can be characterized using resources developed and supported by FEMA. FEMA Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHAs) are found along rivers and streams, as well as in the broad coastal floodplain generally located south of the Post Road. (Figure 7)

The SFHA is the area that has a 1% chance of flooding any given year and is more commonly known as the 100-year flood zone. A property in the SFHA has about a 25% chance of being flooded over the course of a 30-year mortgage.

SFHAs located along rivers and streams are likely to flood as a result of heavy precipitation events where the streams rise and overtop the banks. Some of the more extensive SFHAs in Fairfield can be found along watercourses such as the Rooster River, Mill River, Sasco Brook, Great Brook, and Browns Brook.

A broad, wide, low-lying coastal area extending from Southport to Ash Creek, excluding Sasco Hill, is mostly coterminous with the coastal SFHA. This area experiences flooding from a variety of sources such as storm surges related to tropical systems and nor'easters, wave action, king tides, and severe precipitation events that overwhelm drainage systems or cannot be drained due to tidally-submerged outlets or downstream tide gates responding to high tide conditions.

The 1% annual chance flood is assumed to cause flooding from one edge of a SFHA to another. In reality, the lowest portions of a SFHA nearest to stream corridors and the beachfront, Ash Creek, Pine Creek, or Mill River estuary are likely to experience frequent floods.

The mean higher high water (MHHW) is a convenient figure to help understand frequent

coastal flooding. The MHHW is the average of the higher high water levels of each daily tide. The MHHW is typically slightly higher than the mean high water (MHW) which is the average of all water heights. For example, the NOAA tide gauge in Bridgeport reports a MHHW of 3.48 feet, and a MHW of 3.15 feet. Some residents may already be experiencing flooding attributed to water levels that slightly exceed the MHHW. This flooding might be referred to as “sunny day flooding” and could be occurring during king tides or even during a prolonged period of onshore winds. Some of the properties surrounding Pine Creek and Ash Creek may be experience occasional king tide or sunny day flooding.

Turning attention to more severe floods that occur less often, the most recent examples are from Superstorm Sandy in October 2012 (for the coastal flood zone) and the flood of September 2018 (for riverine flood zones) that ravaged the Rooster River corridor.

Flood inundation from Sandy is one of the most closely aligned events to the delineated 100-year floodplain, and most practitioners believe the storm surge approximated a 50-year flood event.

The Rooster River flood is more difficult to assign to a return period. Sasco Brook hit about 1580 cfs according to USGS, which is about equivalent to a 10% storm, or ten-year flood. However, most people believe the flood of the Rooster River was somewhat more severe. The seven inches of precipitation in the Rooster River watershed is more aligned with a 25- or 50-year flood, based on precipitation figures in NOAA Atlas 14.

Flooding in Fairfield often occurs outside of FEMA-delineated areas of risk. Downtown

Figure 7. Flood Hazard Areas



Fairfield is known to flood from short-duration but intense precipitation events of only one to two inches of rain. The causes of this flooding are documented in the Downtown Fairfield Green Infrastructure Study and Plan (2018) and, in general, are related to limited stormwater collection and conveyance systems. Flooding in the downtown area can occur at the Metro-North parking lots and at the Post Road, Sanford Street, and Unquowa Place. Flooding is also frequent at the four railroad underpasses closest to downtown (North Pine Creek Road, Mill Plain Road, Round Hill Road, and North Benson Road).

Other Climate-Driven Challenges

The State of Connecticut has recognized extreme heat as a major health concern and invested resources into characterizing the impacts of extreme heat events, sometimes known as heat waves. The Connecticut Institute for Resilience and Climate Adaptation (CIRCA) developed the climate change vulnerability index (CCVI) to characterize extreme heat vulnerabilities based on the sensitivity, exposure, and adaptive capacity scores in 200-meter (10 acre) grid cells distributed throughout the state. In Fairfield, extreme heat vulnerability causes vary from exposure to high temperatures associated with pavement and development (I-95, other State and local roads, large parking areas at the railroad stations, dense development, etc.) in the southern part of the town, to social factors such as elderly people living alone and distances to cooling centers in the northern part of the town.

Future Conditions

Sea Level Rise

CIRCA prepares sea level rise planning figures as required by Public Act 18-82, and these figures are required for use in POCDs and other municipal plans. (Figure 8) The current planning threshold for the year 2050 is 0.5 meter, or

20 inches. Adding 20 inches to the MHHW by the year 2050 is an elevation of 5.15 feet. Properties along Fairfield Beach Road, French Street, and properties between Rowland Road and Eunice Avenue could be faced with more frequent sunny day and king tide flooding under these conditions. In most shoreline towns in Connecticut, the estimated increase in nuisance sunny day flooding is a tenfold increase in number of days by 2050. This figure will vary somewhat based on the specific location.

Similar to MHHW plus sea level rise, the 100-year storm event flood extent is also expected to increase with an additional 20 inches of sea level. Because of the Fairfield topography along the fringes of the coastal floodplain, much of the projected areal increase is relatively minimal. However, one area expected to see the largest inundation area of increase is surrounding the Reef Road and Oldfield Road Intersection. Flooding to this extent will not only impact properties, but will pose incremental access and egress challenges beyond those already being experienced.

Precipitation Trends

Increasing precipitation volumes and intensities will contribute to more frequent flooding of streams, rivers, the four underpasses mentioned above, and downtown Fairfield. Consider the following:

- The 4th National Climate Assessment (2018) notes that the recent dominant trend in precipitation throughout the Northeastern United States has been towards increases in rainfall intensity, with increases in intensity exceeding those in other regions in the contiguous United States. Further increases in rainfall intensity are expected, with increases in precipitation expected during the winter and spring with little change in the summer. Monthly precipitation in the Northeast is projected to be about 1 inch greater for December through April by end of century (2070-2100) under a higher

Figure 8. Sea Level Rise Scenarios

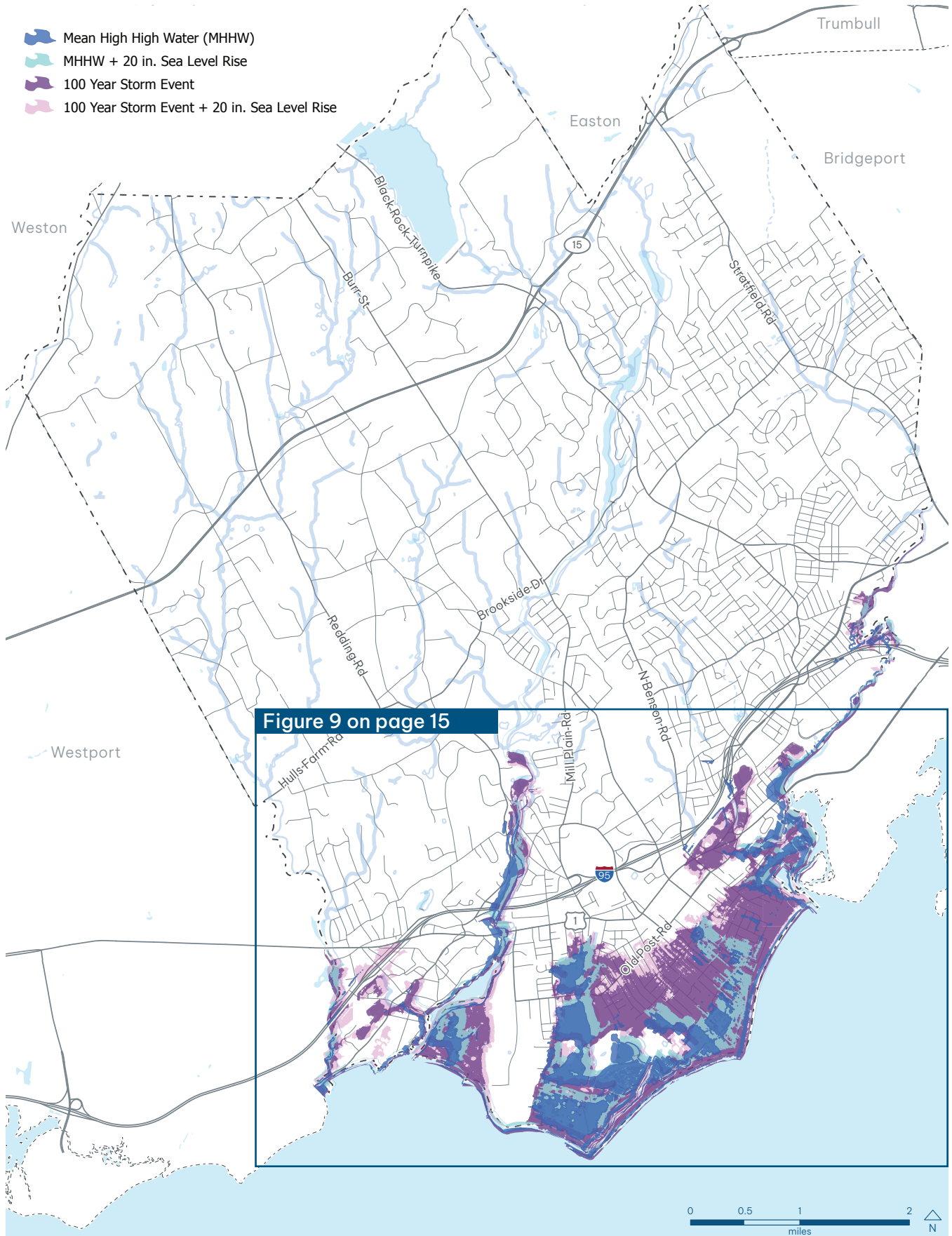
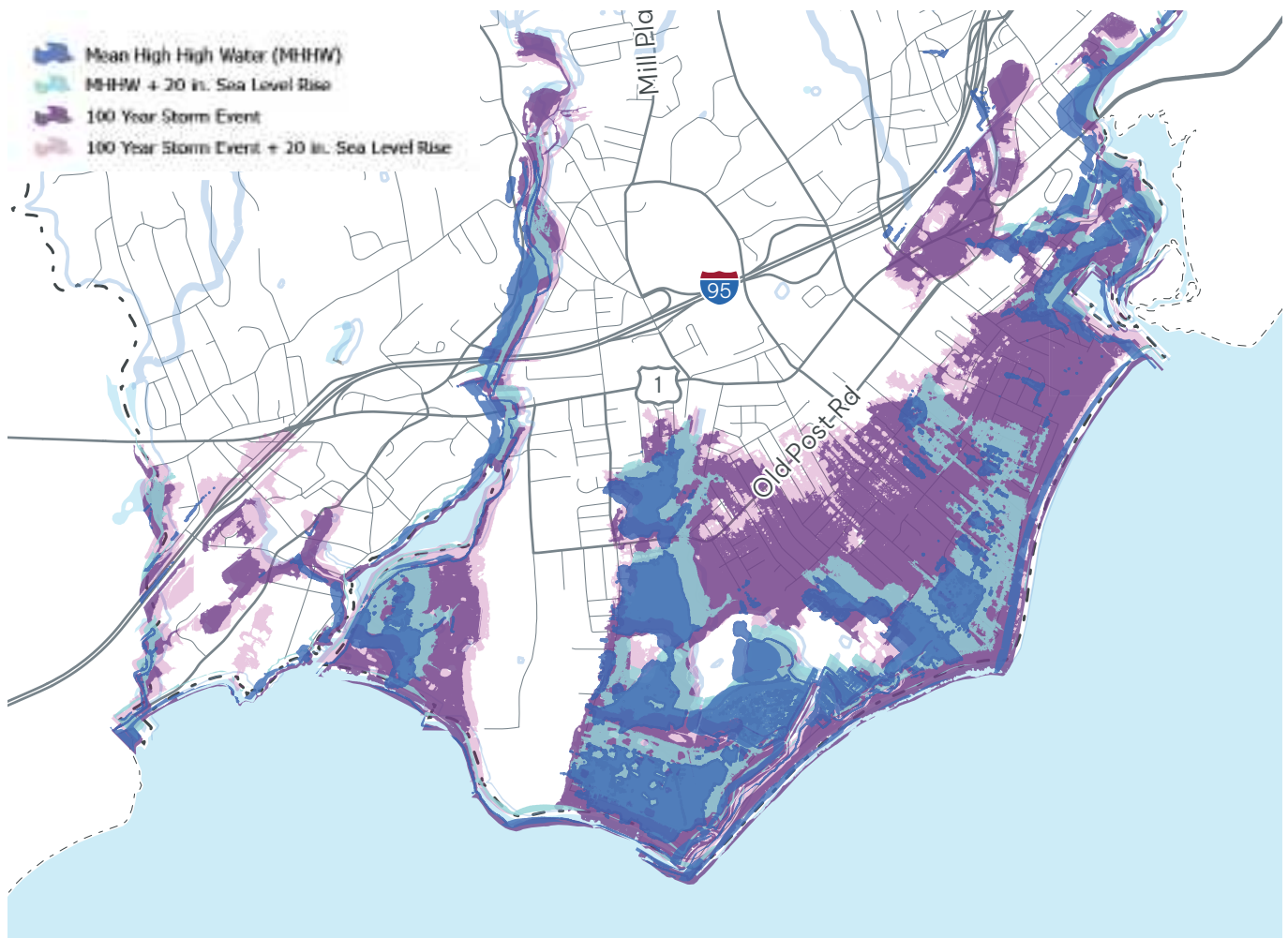


Figure 9. Sea Level Rise Scenarios



emissions climate change scenario. Although future projections of major floods remain ambiguous, more intense precipitation events have increased the risk of some types of inland floods.

- The Connecticut State Water Plan (2018) precipitation projections are variable, although consistently project a wetter future for all four climate scenarios evaluated. The largest precipitation increases are projected for the wetter months (higher percentiles) including extreme wet months; and the seasonality plots in the plan show that winter and spring precipitation changes are projected to be larger than summer and autumn changes.
- The Connecticut Physical Climate Science Assessment Report (2019) notes that average annual precipitation is expected to increase 8%, and the number of days with heavy precipitation will rise from three to five days, with the maximum one-day precipitation increasing.
- The NCEI State Climate Summary (2022) for Connecticut notes that annual precipitation has been highly variable, with a slight increase since 1895; but increases in the frequency and intensity of extreme precipitation events are projected, as are increases in winter and spring precipitation. Increases in total precipitation and in the

number of extreme precipitation events may increase inland flooding risks.

While summertime precipitation volumes are not necessarily projected in the above resources, the NWS has demonstrated that summer precipitation events (whether thunderstorms or tropical systems) remain among the most severe and flashy causes of flooding in the northeast. In other words, these summer flood events will continue to challenge Fairfield even as winter and spring flood events may be increasing in frequency.

Other Climate-Driven Challenges

The number of days experiencing warm temperatures is expected to increase over the coming decades. Projections show that by late-century, the number of “summer days” is expected to increase, along with the number of warm-spell days. A warm spell is defined as an “annual count of warm spell days, where a warm spell is six or more consecutive days with temperatures >90th percentile”. The number of summer-like days could increase from around 80 days (in the 1950s) to more than 140 days by 2100. Models also show that in the 1950s the number of warm spell days was fewer than three per year, and could rise to about 50 days by 2050, and more than 120 days by the year 2100. Absent efforts to reduce exposure and sensitivity, extreme heat vulnerabilities in the CCVI described above will lead to increased risks.

Climate projections are less certain about the future conditions relative to severe wind events. A warming atmosphere is expected to allow thunderstorm conditions to occur more frequently and may allow hurricanes to remain stronger as they move through or past Connecticut. However, the frequency of severe wind events is not projected to decrease.

A Resilience Framework

The Town of Fairfield is embracing a resiliency framework that ensures all parts of the community will remain resilient to flooding or become more resilient over time by reducing risks. (Figure 10) The framework also works in the context of other climate-driven challenges such as extreme heat and severe wind events. The framework is centered on five types of areas represented in Fairfield:

- Resilient Neighborhoods
- Resilient Hubs
- Resilient Corridors
- Individual Risk Reduction
- Coordinated Risk Reduction

For more details on the justification for the establishment of the five tiers of community resilience to address natural hazards and climate change, see Appendix A.

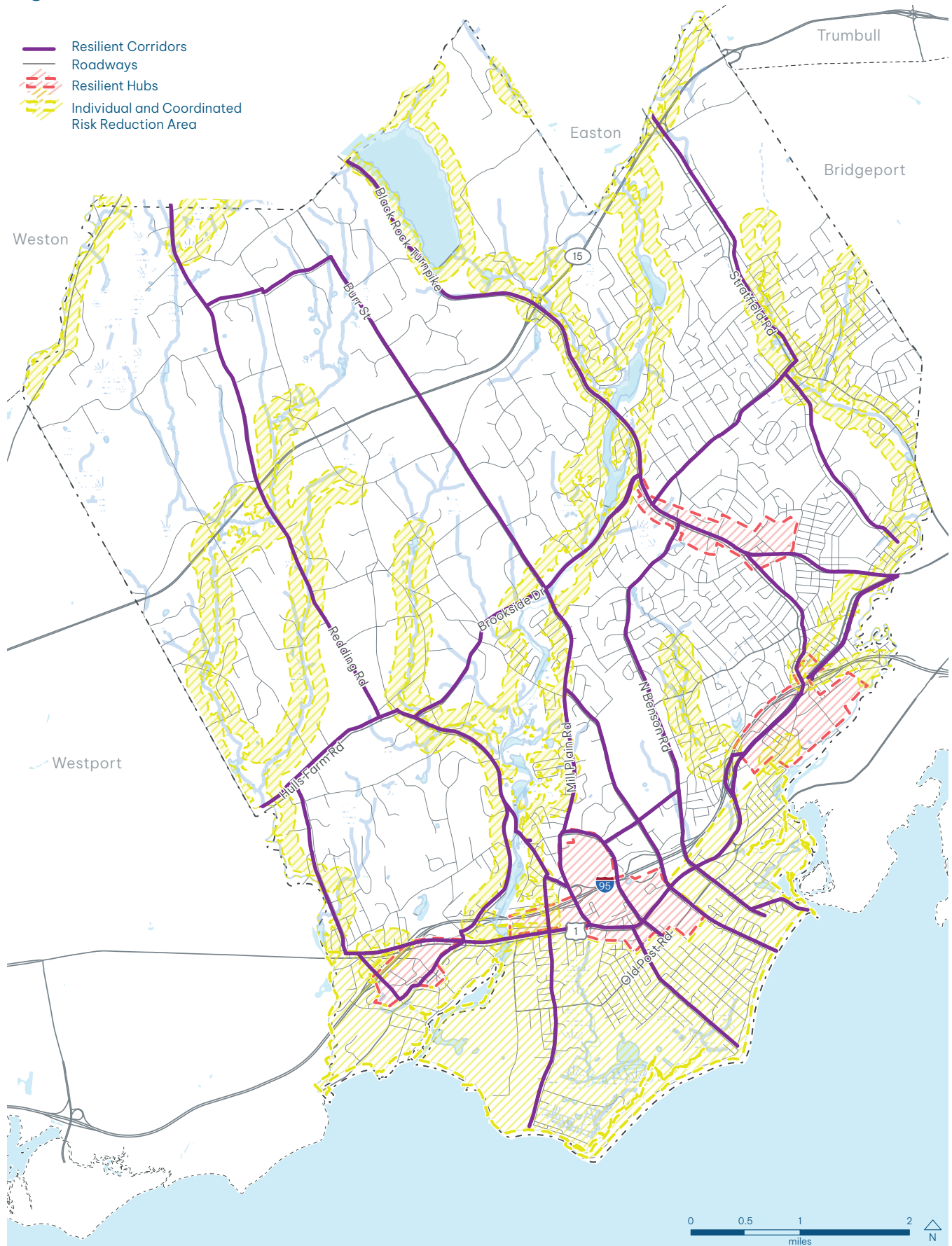
Resilient Neighborhoods

These are located throughout the central and northern parts of Fairfield. These are areas where much of the existing development is situated outside areas of flood risk along rivers and streams. Nevertheless, river and stream flood zones are present. Aligning future uses of

A Strategy Built on a Strong Foundation:

Resilient hubs and resilient corridors are concepts borrowed from CIRCA’s work within the *Resilient Connecticut* planning framework. CIRCA’s work has been used in the master plans of other communities; for example, the Town of Hampton (New Hampshire) Master Plan promotes protection of resilient hubs and corridors as strategies in the community’s overall flood risk reduction and resiliency framework.

Figure 10. Resilience Framework



these corridors with open space goals will be important to maintain neighborhood resiliency. Securing and promoting open space and continuing low density development will have co-benefits related to managing extreme heat risks, as exposure will generally be lower. Care must be taken to ensure that risks related to severe wind events are balanced by electrical grid strengthening and redundancies.

Resilient Hubs

These are locations where the Town's critical facilities, essential services, historic and cultural resources, regional assets, and key economic development are clustered. Resilient hubs are situated largely outside current and future flood zones, but these risks may be nearby. For example, downtown Fairfield is a resilient hub surrounded by FEMA flood zones to the west, south, and east; and affected by stormwater flooding. Investment in reducing flood risk is justified and desired in and at the margins of resilient hubs. Overall, public investment is desired in resilient hubs, but is not meant to preclude investment elsewhere. Resilient hubs will be critical to Fairfield's ability to manage other climate-driven challenges such as extreme heat, as cooling centers will tend to be clustered in resilient hubs.

Resilient Corridors

These are the roads and the adjacent land uses that must move people, goods, and services during and after severe storms, floods, and other disasters. Resilient corridors are more than evacuation routes; in fact, emergency managers must have the flexibility to change evacuation routes. Resilient corridors are the roads and land uses where investment must be possible, even where they cross areas of current and future flood risk. Resilient corridors will also become more important in managing other climate-driven risks, as transit and transportation will move people to areas of respite during extreme heat events or before severe wind events.

Individual Risk Reduction

These areas are located where current and future flood risks will present challenges to the Town and its residents. Overall, the goal for managing risk and fostering resiliency is to allow property owners to make resiliency improvements while ensuring that rapid recovery is possible after storms and floods. Strategic Town investments may be needed in these areas from time to time, and some critical facilities and Town assets will remain located in these areas. For example, the wastewater treatment plant and adjoining critical facilities are located in the area of Individual Risk Reduction. However, the majority of the properties in this area of Individual Risk Reduction are privately-owned. An example of a strategic Town investment is the potential South Benson Road pumping station, which would help remove floodwaters from a large area.

Coordinate Risk Reduction

Coordinated Risk Reduction areas are located where current and future flood risks will present challenges to the Town and its residents, but (in contrast to the Individual Risk Reduction area), the Town may need to help develop complex coordinated approaches for reducing risks and fostering resiliency. Strategic Town investments will likely be needed in these areas from time to time. An example is the Rooster River watershed, where Town-funded flood detention projects are poised to reduce flooding along the Rooster River. This effort does not preclude property owners along the Rooster River from elevating their own homes.

A Resilient Community Recommendations

Strategy A: Focus Investment in Resilient Hubs

1. Continue efforts to reduce flood risks in resilient hubs, such as further implementation of the Downtown Fairfield Green Infrastructure Study and Plan.
2. Consider requiring green infrastructure techniques for redevelopment in downtown Fairfield, focusing on properties that drain toward the stormwater systems with limited capacity or toward the underpasses.
3. Pursue recommendations of the *Resilient Connecticut* underpass flood study due for completion in fall 2023.
4. Support appropriate development in resilient hubs, such as TOD near the Metro Fairfield passenger rail station.
5. Ensure that each resilient hub in Fairfield is served by a shelter or backup shelter and a cooling center.
6. Ensure that critical facilities in resilient hubs are served by standby power.
7. Evaluate the appropriateness of microgrids to serve resilient hubs.

Strategy B: Invest in Resilient Corridors

1. Prepare a list of resilient corridors including critical road segments that connect the southern and northern parts of the town while connecting resilient hubs.
2. Reduce flood risks along resilient corridors through judicious road segment elevations, improved stream and creek crossings with appropriate conveyance, and promotion of adjacent land uses that facilitate resilient

corridor investments (rather than making them more difficult; for example, land uses that require more complicated driveways).

Strategy C: Look for opportunities to maintain the low-risk, resilient character in Resilient Neighborhoods

1. Obtain and set aside open space in riverine flood zones when possible, remaining mindful of open space goals for this part of Fairfield.
2. Ensure that low impact development is utilized where possible.
3. Work with UI/Avangrid to ensure that the grid is resilient through hardening, redundancies, and judicious tree trimming that is carefully coordinated with the Town's Conservation Department.
4. Add multi-modal streetscape and tree planting initiatives where possible for cooler streets and corridors to address future intense heat issues.

Strategy D: Facilitate resilient choices in the Individual and Coordinated Risk Reduction areas.

1. In connection with the Town's CRS participation, ensure that property owners understand their flood risks and their options for reducing flood losses.
2. Continue to support home elevations that

meet or exceed the flood damage prevention sections of the Town's regulations and the State Building Code.

Strategy E: Make progress on resiliency efforts in the Individual and Coordinated Risk Reduction areas.

1. Look for opportunities to acquire properties in the Camden/Rutland neighborhood.
2. Proceed with flood detention projects in the Rooster River watershed.
3. Continue to look for funding to advance segments of flood protection systems to help reduce flood risks in the coastal floodplain if the subject segments present tangible benefits on their own merit.
4. Continue to look for funding for the South Benson Road pumping station.
5. Consider adopting a schedule of required updates to the Town's Flood Mitigation Plan, developed by the Flood and Erosion Control Board (i.e., every five years).

An Environmentally Rooted Community

Fairfield has a very diverse environment that has several conditions that help to make it unique.

Coastal Environment: Fairfield has a significant coastal presence, with a portion of its territory situated along the Long Island Sound. The coastline offers scenic views, sandy beaches, and coastal habitats. The coastal environment plays a crucial role in the town's recreational activities, tourism, and natural beauty.

Inland Geography: Moving away from the coast, Fairfield transitions into a more inland geography characterized by rolling hills, forests, and open spaces. There are several parks, nature reserves, and green spaces within the town, providing opportunities for outdoor activities such as hiking, picnicking, and wildlife observation.

Biodiversity: The diverse environmental conditions in Fairfield support a range of plant and animal species. The town is home to various tree species, including oaks, maples, pines, and birches. The coastal areas provide habitats for marine life, shorebirds, and migratory birds. Inland, you can find a variety of wildlife such as white-tailed deer, squirrels, foxes, and a variety of bird species.

Watersheds: The Town of Fairfield has documented eleven individual watershed areas which contain the tributaries and inland wetlands to three major riverine systems. These systems, known as the Mill River, Sasco Brook and Rooster River/Ash Creek, all flow south into their respective tidal marshes and estuaries before transitioning into Long Island Sound. All wetlands and watercourse play a very important and ever increasing role in the quality of surface water and habitat/ecosystems, stormwater management, water supply and recreational uses.

Background

Open Space

As illustrated on Figure 11, the Town of Fairfield owns over 1,100 acres of open space that includes upland forest, lakes, rivers, salt marsh, wetlands, and meadows throughout inland and coastal Fairfield. These recreational parcels provide opportunities for uses such as hiking, leisurely walking, horseback riding, and cross-country skiing. In addition, they enhance and conserve natural resources, protect fish and wildlife habitats, serve as outdoor classrooms for nature study, and contribute significantly to the beautiful rural characteristics that are so much a part of the Town of Fairfield. In addition, an extensive network of trails is open to the public free of charge.

Biodiversity Preservation

Fairfield residents have joined together to support efforts to protect and support pollinators as an important part of the community's environmental protection efforts. The goal is to establish public and private pesticide-free corridors of native plants that provide nutrition and habitat for pollinating insects and birds. Even the smallest green spaces, like flower boxes and curb strips, can be part of a pollinator pathway. These efforts have been supported by the Aspetuck Land Trust, Connecticut Audubon Society, Fairfield Forestry Committee, and the Mill River Wetland Committee.

Flooding and Sea Level Rise

As a result of its geography and topography, the Town is susceptible to flooding. These issues can become especially hazardous during hurricanes and coastal storms. At the same time, increased sea level is expected to result in more flooding and increased height of storm surges for coastal communities. The section on A Resilient Community deals with these issues in more depth.

Sustainability

The State of Connecticut has set an ambitious goal: to be carbon-free by 2040. As a sustainability leader in the state, The Town of Fairfield has a long history of support for sustainability initiatives. To advance sustainable practices in Town, the Sustainable Fairfield Task Force (SFTF) presented an updated Sustainability Plan, which builds on the original plan released in January 2018. It assesses achievements, challenges, and action plans across a broad array of eighteen sustainability modules. The goals within the modules have been set for the year 2030; some goals can and should be achieved sooner, while others may need longer to achieve.

Coastal Management Act Consistency

State Statute requires that for "any municipality contiguous to Long Island Sound, such plan [of Conservation and Development] shall be A) consistent with the municipal coastal program requirements of the Coastal Management Act sections 22a-101 to 22a-104, B) make reasonable consideration for restoration and protection of the ecosystem of Long Island Sound, and C) designed to reduce hypoxia, toxic contaminants, and floatable debris in Long Island Sound." 22a-101b(1) requires municipalities to identify and describe immediate and long-term major coastal-related issues and problems. Those issues are identified in Figure 12 and Figure 13,

Green Infrastructure

The Town of Fairfield experiences challenges relating to an excess of urban stormwater runoff coupled with a restrictive storm drainage system that is inadequate to handle the large volume of runoff generated by the town's impervious surfaces. Due to the high-density surface and subterranean infrastructure, it is impossible to fully condition the storm drainage system to handle the current and future stormwater

Figure 11. Open Space

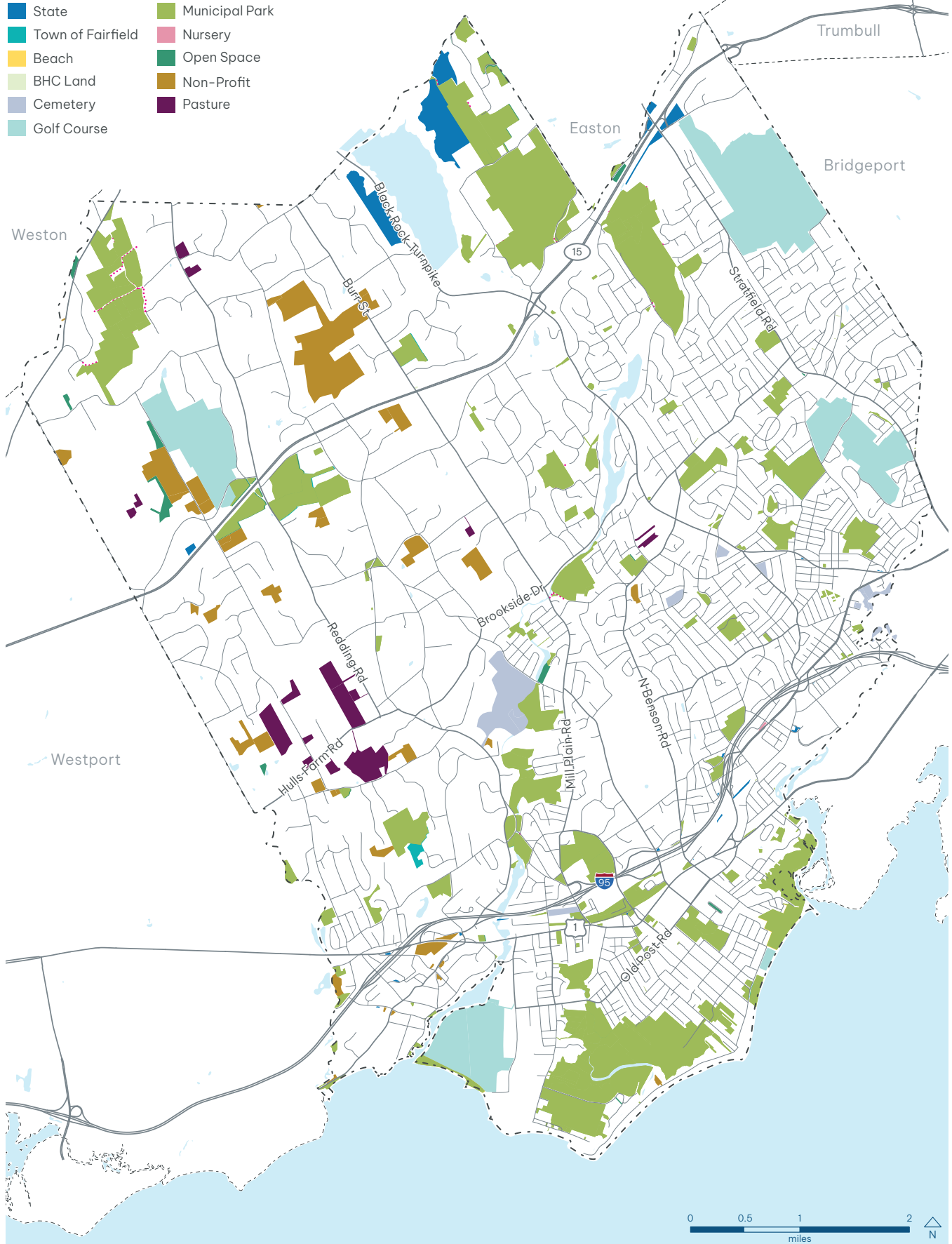


Figure 12. Coastal Management Act Consistency - 22a 101b(1)

22a 101b(1) requires municipalities to identify and describe immediate and long-term major coastal related issues and problems. Those issues are identified below.

Statutory Requirement	Fairfield Conditions
Erosion	<p>Fairfield is subject to beach erosion in several locations. These beaches include Town-owned facilities such as Southport Beach, Sasco Beach, South Pine Creek Beach, Jennings Beach, and Penfield Beach; and private beaches such as those in the greater “Fairfield Beach” region associated with Fairfield Beach Road. The Town has conducted beach nourishment at Jennings Beach and Penfield Beach. The privately-owned section of beach between Penfield Beach and Shoal Point was the subject of a beach nourishment and dune ridge concept in the Regional Framework for Coastal Resilience, but the project has not yet been pursued.</p> <p>Some erosion also occurs along the tidal creeks and estuaries of Fairfield including Pine Creek and Ash Creek. A component of this erosion is occurring along tidal marsh fringes. Erosion is also occurring along private properties that line parts of these creeks. In particular, the bulkhead along Pine Creek on the back side of Fairfield Beach has experienced some erosion and failure over time.</p>
Flooding	<p>Fairfield has a wide and broad coastal floodplain extending from Sasco Hill to Ash Creek that is developed with thousands of houses, several key critical facilities, and important public access to the shoreline (the aforementioned Penfield Beach and Jennings Beach). This entire area was flooded by SuperStorm Sandy, and much of the Town’s work toward resiliency is focused on this area. The Fairfield Flood Mitigation Plan is updated as needed by the Flood and Erosion Control Board and operates as a key companion to the MetroCOG Hazard Mitigation Plan, providing more detail than the multi-jurisdiction hazard mitigation plan. Coastal flooding also occurs in the Southport area, but the density of residential development and critical facilities is lesser in this area compared to the region east of Sasco Hill. Coastal flood risk extends along all the tidal estuaries of Fairfield such as the Mill River, Pine Creek, and Ash Creek/Rooster River.</p>
Recreational facilities	<p>As noted above, the Town-owned beach facilities are Southport Beach, Sasco Beach, South Pine Creek Beach, Jennings Beach, and Penfield Beach. Other coastal recreational areas include the Ash Creek/Riverside Drive Open Space and Old Field Marsh Open Space. Several recreational parks and athletic fields, such as Old Dam Road, Veterans Park, and the Senior Center, are located in the coastal flood zones, but do not provide coastal recreational access.</p>
Utilization of port facilities	<p>Public marinas include Fairfield Marina (located at Ash Creek) and private marinas include the docks and mooring fields in Southport Harbor. In addition, there is boat and kayak access for the Harbor Road Site in Ye Yacht Yard. In general, the Town lacks the significant port opportunities that other towns and cities have in Connecticut. Frequent dredging is necessary to maintain access to Fairfield Marina from Long Island Sound.</p>
Boards & commissions who enforce Coastal Program	<p>Plan & Zoning Commission, Harbor Commission, Flood and Erosion Control Board. Municipal agencies consult with the DEEP’s Office of Long Island Sound Programs (OSLIP)</p>

Figure 13. Coastal Management Act Consistency - 22a 102b(1)

In accordance with 22a 102(b), the following criteria shall be considered:

Statutory Requirement	Fairfield Conditions
Character and distribution of coastal resources	The Town’s coastal resources are dominated by beaches, tidal estuaries, and tidal wetlands, which is consistent with the geography and surficial geology of the town and its position along Long Island Sound. Rocky outcrops and bluffs are less common than they are in other shoreline communities. Fortunately, the Town has secured and maintains five Town-owned and managed public beaches, which is a considerable resource and significant benefit to residents. The Town has also taken steps to protect remaining tidal wetlands and marshes, recognizing that development more than 50–100 years ago eliminated some of these tidal wetland resources.
Capacity and limitations to support development	The Town’s coastal development has largely been residential; and focused on public access and recreation (including the five Town beaches, the Town marina at Ash Creek, and Ye Yacht Yard). Fairfield lacks suitable locations and typologies for developing water-dependent uses such as Ye Yacht Yard (i.e., some protection from waves, deep water, etc.). Likewise, Fairfield lacks suitable locations, infrastructure, and zoning for major development projects along the shoreline. Nevertheless, some of the major development projects in the Fairfield Metro TOD region are located within the coastal boundary associated with Ash Creek.
Types and methods of development compatible with the wise use, protection, and enhancement of such resources.	Through the Coastal Site Plan Application review process, projects are thoroughly reviewed for appropriateness. Based on the intersection of the Fairfield Metro TOD and the coastal boundary associated with Ash Creek, most of this development review is focused on that part of the town. However, as potential projects are proposed in the Southport and Fairfield Beach areas, the Town appropriately reviews them for consistency with coastal management principles.
Nature and pattern of existing development	This has mostly been addressed in the responses to the above questions. Residential and commercial properties exist in the Southport area and along Southport Harbor; residential, critical facilities, and beach/public access uses are found in the broad coastal floodplain from Sasco Hill to Ash Creek; and mixed TOD-type uses (residential, commercial, and industrial) are found near the upper Ash Creek estuary. Marina and boat yard development is very limited in Fairfield relative to other shoreline towns.
Need for public services	The Town desires flood protection, flood mitigation, and other resiliency projects to reduce the adverse impacts of flooding. Several efforts are underway in consultation with the Town’s Flood Erosion Control Board. The WWTF has also recently been protected by an elevated bulkhead and berm.

volumes. Additionally, climate change projections indicate that future storms may be more intense, with greater rainfall totals in shorter amounts of time.

In July 2018, the Town developed a study titled, “Resiliency for Downtown Fairfield using Green Infrastructure.” The project was developed to help the Town identify green infrastructure improvements to the Downtown that could support and replace “grey” infrastructure like catch basins and stormwater conveyance systems. Green infrastructure relies directly on

natural ecosystem services or natural design concepts to assist, enhance, and, in some cases, replace “grey” infrastructure like catch basins and stormwater conveyance systems.

Figure 14 is a conceptual plan for green infrastructure in the Downtown. The plan includes recommendations for a variety of solutions including, but not limited to permeable paving systems, tree trenches, bioretention basins, infiltration swales, and green roofs.

Figure 14. Conceptual Plan for Green Infrastructure



Resiliency For Downtown Fairfield Using Green Infrastructure (2018)

Community Input

Participants in POCD engagement efforts identified parks, beaches, and open spaces as Fairfield's biggest strengths. Likewise, participants felt that protecting the Town's natural resources should be of the highest priority. Participants identified the following key themes.

Preserve and enhance natural resources:

Protect Fairfield's prized network of parks, beaches, and green spaces through stricter zoning regulations. Fairfielders wanted to see creative ways to expand and enhance the network through pocket parks and development restrictions.

Sustainable Practices: Reducing waste and mitigating pollution creates a better quality of life and allows Fairfielders to enjoy the nature that is in their backyard. Investing in green infrastructure and increasing the tree canopy adds beauty while creating a more sustainable Fairfield.

Ecosystem preservation: There was consistent support for efforts that would protect and enhance habitats for wildlife, including support for pollinator pathways and the use of native plant species.

“ participant quote

More land should be conserved to ensure biodiversity in the town. Even parcels in between houses needs to be preserved, with zoning restricted to encourage green space and trees.

“ participant quote

The Post Road also needs many more shade trees to beautify, provide much-needed shade, cool buildings, absorb storm water run-off, and enrich outdoor dining.

“ participant quote

I think that Street Scapes and Pocket Parks, especially at Gateway corridors and entrances into the Town are very important.

“ participant quote

Preserve tidal areas, salt marshes, woods.

An Environmentally Rooted Community Recommendations

Strategy A: Expand greenways and open space corridors.

1. Leverage the DEEP Open Space Grant program and other funding sources to acquire properties that:
 - Support habitat and pollinator corridors;
 - Help promote resiliency efforts; and/or
 - Provide opportunities for improved trail connections.

Strategy B: Maintain and enhance existing open space assets.

1. Coordinate across Town departments to apply for grant funding opportunities to maintain and enhance existing open spaces.

Strategy C: Protect beaches and coastal resources.

1. Restore the tidal marsh north of Fairfield Beach Road between Reef and Rowland roads.
2. Advance the Jennings Beach dune restoration.
3. Continue to partner with Bridgeport on Ash Creek restoration efforts.
4. Prioritize tree plantings to enhance tree canopy and create cooler urban streets.

Strategy D: Advance the recommendations from An Action Plan for a Sustainable Fairfield.

1. Study and promote sustainable neighborhood design techniques (20-minute neighborhoods)
2. Support individual efforts on water conservation efforts and promote a culture of water conservation.
3. Continue to support individual efforts to install renewable energy on private properties.

A Community that is Home to All

Fairfield is largely a residential community. The Town's residential areas consist mostly of single-family housing, of which there is a great variety. The Town's residential areas can be divided into two distinct areas: those east of the Mill River and those to the west.

The Town's lowest-density housing can be found in Greenfield Hill, an area that is predominantly low-density housing on two-acre wooded lots with large colonial-style homes. Like Greenfield Hill, Mill Plain is an area that is primarily single-family residential development, but lots sizes are smaller (one-quarter to one-acre lots) with large older homes, set close to the street and surrounded by mature trees. Samp Mortar is also primarily a single-family residential area, with many homes sitting on one-half to one-acre lots. However, there is some condominium development adjacent to the Black Rock Turnpike commercial area.

There are areas in the northern part of town that are home to a wider variety of housing types, including Strafield and Holliand Hill / Grasmerer. These areas can have a wide diversity of housing, including luxurious to modest single-family homes usually on one-half and one-third acre lots, a substantial number of condominium units, and other multi-family housing.

Tunxis Hill is an example of a community that developed during the first wave of population growth after World War I. The area is characterized by relatively small lots, a high concentration of two, three, and four-family

dwelling, and a dense network of grid-pattern streets.

Southport is the only area of town that straddles the interstate. The area to the north is primarily residential while the area to the south is a community with the visual character of an old colonial waterfront, with many old historic homes. Much of Southport Village has been designated as a historic district.

The shore is a defining element of Fairfield and the residential area nearest to it has its own unique characteristics. It is a densely developed residential area of one-quarter acre or smaller lots, with many two-family dwellings. This area has experienced significant change because of rebuilding after superstorm Sandy. It is also home to many students who share single-family homes.

Both the Downtown and Commerce Drive are evolving into mixed-use districts. The Metro Center TOD area has seen significant growth in multi-family housing which has helped to diversify the Town's housing option. The Downtown is also an area experiencing residential growth, with this wide variety of commercial uses, pedestrian orientation, and transit accessibility. The overall goal is to preserve existing single-family residential neighborhoods and focus more diverse housing options in the commercial corridors and adjacent to the Fairfield downtown and Metro Center train stations.

Background

Housing Stock Profile

Eighty-five percent (85%) of all housing in Fairfield is single unit, with a majority of those being detached homes. Eleven percent (11%) of units are in small multi-family buildings: those that have between 2 and 9 units. These “missing-middle” housing typologies have gained national attention as communities look to encourage more multi-family housing that can better blend with single-family neighborhoods. Only about 3% of all units are in larger, multi-family buildings.¹

Since 2010, the town has seen approximately a 6% increase in the number of housing units, according to construction data provided by the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development. New construction has largely occurred at opposite ends of the spectrum: about 1/2 of all units are in new single-unit homes while 40% occur in 5-or-more unit buildings. The American Community Survey 5-Year estimates include a larger range of building types and reports that almost all that growth was in buildings with 20 or more units.²

Household Composition

Households refers to residential dwellings occupied by one or more individuals who are related by blood, marriage, or adoption, and who share common living spaces and resources

¹ US Census Bureau - American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates (2020)

² Ibid.

within the same premises. These households live in the various housing units across Fairfield:

- 73% are family households.
- 60% are married couples.
- 36% include a child under the age of 18 living at home.

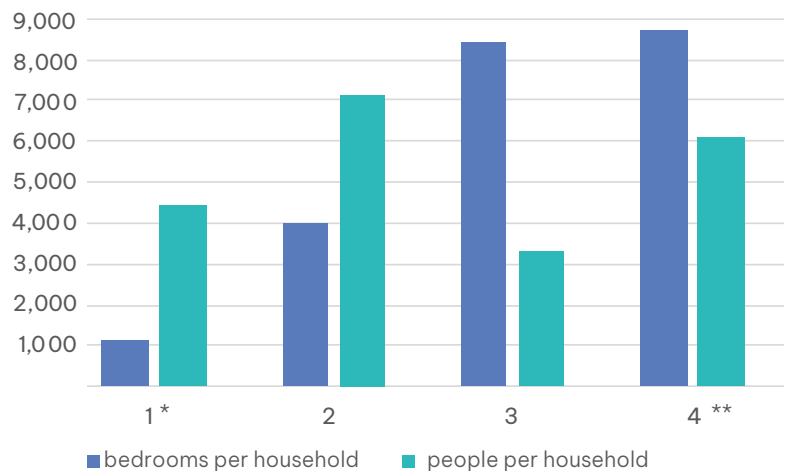
Since 2010, there has been very little change in these areas. There has, however, been a change in the size of households. Between 2010 and 2020, Fairfield experienced a 10% growth in the number of households. As illustrated in Figure 15 the town has seen as substantial growth in the number of 2-person households since 2010 and a modest increase in the number of households with 4 or more people. These trends underscore the growing need for more diverse housing stock in Fairfield to accommodate the evolving demographics and ensure a thriving and inclusive community for years to come.

Figure 15. Change in Household Size

Household Size	2010	2020	Change
1-person	4,190	4,480	6.9%
2-person	5,977	7,192	20.3%
3-person	3,460	3,364	-2.8%
4-or-more	5,593	6,140	9.8%

US Census Bureau - American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates (2020) and US Census Bureau- 2010 Census.

Figure 16. Home Size vs Household Size



* Includes studios ** Includes homes with 4 or more units

US Census Bureau - American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates (2020)

Housing Stock and Household Comparisons

Fairfield's housing stock was built to service an overwhelmingly single-family market. However, this has left the Town with a shortage of small units and an over-supply of larger units, relative to its household composition. Figure 16 compares how many 1-, 2-, 3-, and 4-bedroom homes there are relative to how many 1-, 2-, 3-, and 4-person households there are. Although some households may need more bedrooms than people (e.g., for an office) this data shows that there are far fewer one-bedroom and studio housing units than there are one-person households. The result is that single people and non-family couples are likely unable to find smaller housing that meets their needs.

This under-supply of smaller homes is likely having two effects. First, smaller households are likely paying more for housing than they need to be. Second, it likely increases housing costs for mid-sized households (3- and 4-person households) as they have more competition for mid-sized homes (2- and 3-bedroom units). Based on this analysis, it is likely that the production of smaller units will not only help make housing more affordable for singles and couples, but also for mid-size families who will have less competition for the housing that meets their needs.

Affordable Housing

In 2022, Fairfield adopted its Affordable Housing Plan. That plan noted that, according to the United Ways "ALICE" metric (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed), more than one-quarter of all households in Fairfield (28%) are likely struggling with the overall cost of living. According to the US Census Bureau's American Community Survey, housing un-affordability is an especially difficult problem for renters: more than half of all renters reported that they spent 30% or more of their household income on rent. This is especially troublesome because of some

of the obstacles that renters have when trying to purchase homes in Fairfield:

- More than 50% of all homes in Town are estimated to be worth more than half a million dollars. First-time homeowners with higher education debt or no family wealth are going to have a harder time saving to make the down payment, even if they can afford the monthly mortgage payments.
- In 2021, the median housing cost for homeowners with a mortgage in Fairfield is \$3,570. The median rental cost of living is \$1,977.³ If most renters are already cost-burdened, then there may be a whole segment of the resident population that simply cannot afford the mortgage payments on a home in Fairfield.

The high cost of for-purchase homes is also a barrier for many prospective buyers. The Census estimates the median household value to be nearly \$645,00 with a 67% of homes valued at more than a half-million dollars.⁴

Housing Trends

As Fairfield plans for housing over the next 10 years, it should take into consideration the following trends which are likely to have an impact on housing.

Aging Population

Fairfield has experienced an aging population over the past decade. The baby boomer generation has been reaching retirement age, leading to an increased demand for downsizing options, such as smaller homes, townhouses, or retirement communities. This shift has affected the types of properties in demand and the availability of larger-family homes.

³ US Census Bureau - American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates (2021)

⁴ *Ibid.*

Millennial Homebuyers

Millennials have reached the age where they are starting families and seeking home ownership. They are attracted to areas with good schools, family-friendly neighborhoods, and access to amenities, making Fairfield an appealing destination. Fairfield is fortunate in that many of its residents (and prospective residents) have strong incomes. Nonetheless, these higher-income workers are professionals with higher-education degrees which has saddled them with more debt than previous generations. Fairfield may start to see more families looking for rental opportunities so they can establish themselves in town before buying a home.

Influx of Young Professionals

Fairfield has also experienced an influx of young professionals over the past decade. These individuals are typically drawn to areas with employment opportunities, vibrant social scenes, and access to amenities. As young professionals settle in Fairfield, they contribute to the demand for rental properties, particularly in areas with proximity to job centers and urban amenities.

Diversity and Immigration

Fairfield has seen an increase in diversity and the presence of immigrant communities. As highlighted in the Plan Foundations element, Fairfield's population is on the rise, leading to a noticeable increase in the town's diversity, particularly with a growing number of Hispanic residents. This demographic shift is likely to generate new demands for different housing and neighborhood amenities that can more effectively cater to the evolving needs of this community.

Shifts in Lifestyle Preferences

Over the past decade, there has been a shift in lifestyle preferences among homebuyers. Many individuals and families prioritize walkable neighborhoods, access to parks and green spaces, and proximity to amenities like shopping and dining. These preferences have influenced the demand for housing options in neighborhoods that offer these features.

Figure 17. Examples of Missing Middle Housing

Four-plex Stacked



Courtyard



Cottage Courtyard



Daniel G. Parolek. "Missing Middle Housing: Thinking Big and Building Small to Respond to Today's Housing Crisis" (2020)

Multi-Generational Households

The past decade has also seen an increase in multi-generational households, where multiple generations of a family live together under one roof. Economic factors, cultural traditions, and changing family dynamics have contributed to this trend. One outgrowth of that change has been the increased demand for accessory dwelling units. Multi-generational housing may also help keep larger homes (those with 4 or more bedrooms) in demand.

Transit-Oriented Development

Transit-oriented development (TOD) focuses on creating mixed-use communities around public transportation infrastructure. The practice has gained considerable traction over the past year as communities look to promote housing that is more sustainable and accessible to people who do not have a car (or wish to have fewer cars). The goal is to foster vibrant, walkable neighborhoods near transit infrastructure. Fairfield's Transit-Oriented Development Study provides a strong framework for how the Town can support this type of growth in the community. The result can be substantial increases in property values near the station, which contribute to the Town's tax base while expanding housing options.

Missing Middle Housing

Over the past decade, there has been growing awareness that not all multi-family housing needs to happen in larger condo or apartment buildings. This "missing middle" housing includes a range of buildings with multiple units that are compatible in scale and form with detached single-family homes. As communities have looked to diversify their housing stock, this category of housing has been an important area of focus.

Harm Reduction and Resiliency

As communities across the country face the realities of a changing climate, they have

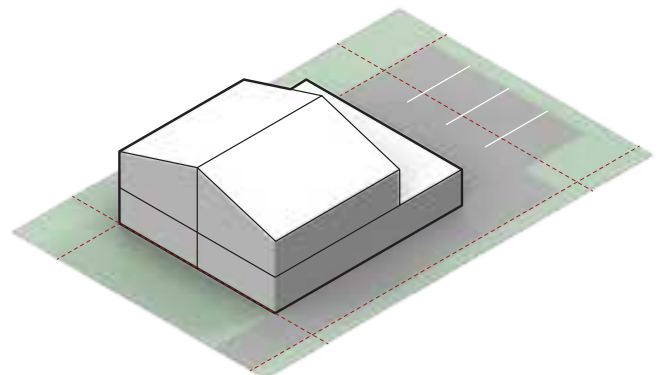
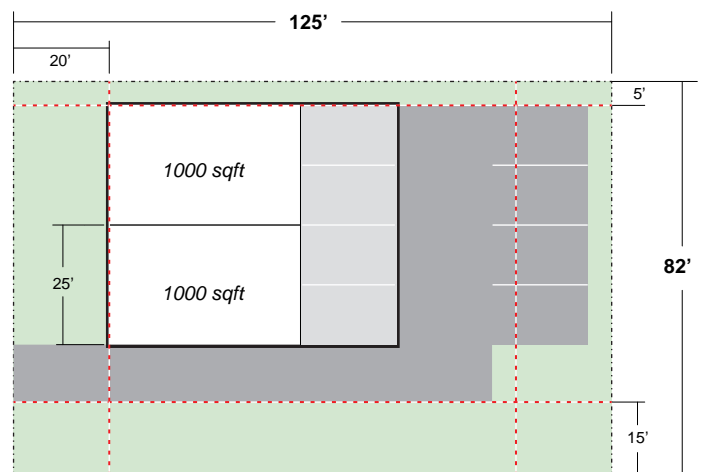
been re-examining their zoning ordinances to determine how they can limit new construction in hazardous areas. For many communities, this has meant reducing permitted housing densities in flood-prone areas that may become isolated or difficult to evacuate.

Regulatory Barriers

C Zone Standards for Four-Family Homes

Section 5.1 of Fairfield's zoning ordinance requires that all four family dwellings have a minimum lot of 12,500 square feet. These four-unit buildings are quintessential "missing middle" housing and can provide multi-family housing options that fit well within one- and two-family neighborhoods. However, the 12,500 square foot minimum reduces the number of parcels that could accommodate such homes: under

Figure 18. Four-Family Building on 10,250 sqft Lot



this standard, only 35 parcels would meet the requirement. As illustrated in Figure 18, a four-family building could be accommodated on a 10,250-square-foot lot while still meeting all the setback requirements and accommodating the necessary parking. If the minimum lot requirements were reduced, an additional 15 parcels in the C zone to meet the minimum lot

Figure 19. Parking Requirements

Properties with	Spaces per family
dwelling units for 1 to 4 families	2
dwelling units for 5 to 10 families	2.5
dwelling units for 11 or more families	3

Section 28.6.1

requirements without any significant impact on the character of the area.⁵

Parking Requirements

Fairfield currently requires parking according to the following schedule.

There is no evidence that properties that accommodate multiple units require more parking per family. This approach to parking regulation increases the cost of developing multi-family housing and discourages the development of missing middle housing. It also creates excess impervious surfaces that have a negative impact on the environment. It is generally best practice to regulate parking either on a per-unit basis or a per-bedroom basis, irrespective of the number of units in the housing development.

The requirement that the Design Residential District include a minimum of 1/2 space per unit of visitor parking is also excessive, given the requirement to have at least 2 spaces per dwelling unit.

Ground floor Commercial Requirements

Fairfield’s zoning ordinance currently prohibits ground-floor residential uses in the in the Designed Commercial District (DCD) and Center Design Business District (CDBD). These standards intend to ensure that commercial corridors remain active. However, there are sites – including the former Exide Battery site – that are substantially deeper than most properties. For these types of sites, it is unlikely that ground-floor retail or commercial space will be economically viable if it were to be located deep within a site. Permitting residential uses on the ground floor and behind commercial uses would make these sites more economically viable while also permitting more residential uses in Town.

Residential 50% Standards

As discussed in the Sustainably Prosperous Community Element, the Center Designed Business District (CDBD) and Design Commercial District (DCD) prohibit residential uses from occupying more than 50% of the total floor area of any building constructed in those districts. (See page 38 for more details) This requirement unnecessarily limits the development of new residential projects that can help meet the Town’s housing needs.

Center Design Business District Standards

The Fairfield TOD Study identified the following regulatory issues that create barriers to the construction of more transit-oriented residential units in Fairfield Downtown.

Building height: The CDBD zoning allows for up to 5-story buildings or a total building height of 50 feet, whichever is less. In practice, with modern construction techniques and the desirability of taller ground floor heights to accommodate retail and dining space, this means that buildings will not achieve 5 stories.

Floor Area Ratio (FAR): FAR is a measure of

⁵ FHI Studio analysis of parcel data using geographic information system (GIS) software.

the gross floor area of a building in comparison to the size of its parcel of land. Currently, the CDBD has a FAR limit of 2, This limits applicants who wish to use the full lot coverage (90% maximum) to 2 stories, rather than the 5 stories currently permitted in the district. This FAR limitation is inconsistent with the goal to increase residential and commercial activity in the Downtown.

Parking requirements: The Downtown station area has the strongest walkable character of any area of Fairfield, with shopping, dining, community uses, schools, and workplaces all located in the area. It also has the same level of train service as the Fairfield Metro station and on-street parking is regulated. Yet the area is subject to the same parking standards as less walkable and transit-accessible areas.

Parking and open space design: There are several areas where the Town currently does not have standards to protect and promote an active pedestrian environment. This includes a lack of standards for landscape buffers around parking lots, green stormwater management strategies, and standards for active ground floor uses along parking structures.

Fairfield Metro TOD Station Standards

The Fairfield TOD Study identified the following regulatory issues that create barriers to the construction of more transit-oriented residential units.

TOD Park Overlay District: This overlay district currently only applies to parcels at least 35,000 sf in size within the Commerce Drive Area Designed District (CDAD). The CDAD and TOD Park overlays together incorporate important changes from the base zoning to encourage transit-oriented development, including reducing parking requirements, allowing taller buildings, and ensuring pedestrian-friendly uses and architectural standards. However, the way the standards are drawn limits the ability of the Town to encourage smaller-scale infill that promotes walkable development near the Fairfield Metro Station.

Density requirements: Fairfield has a density cap for residential development within the TOD Park overlay of 50 bedrooms per acre. This density cap is lower than the number of units that could feasibly be provided within the floor area and building envelope allowed under current regulations. Because developers typically aim to develop as much revenue-producing floor area as they are entitled to under regulations, a project developer will likely increase the size of units to fill the allowable floor area. This strategy encourages excessively large units, which are expensive and serve only a segment of the market for TOD housing.

Inclusionary zoning requirements: The TOD market study found that the Town could reasonably increase the minimum share of inclusionary units to at least 12% without discouraging housing production.

Residential square footage requirements: The TOD Park overlay limits residential use to a maximum of 70% of the gross floor area of a development. The balance of 30% or more of the floor area within a development must be occupied by other permitted commercial uses such as office, retail, and dining. This requirement is overly restrictive of residential development and may not align with market conditions in a Post-COVID era.

Community Input

Fairfielders understand the importance of maintaining and encouraging strong neighborhoods and communities. Among respondents to the virtual works, nearly 1 in 2 identified “Housing or Neighborhood Quality” as one of Fairfield’s strengths. However, it was also identified by people as the top weakness and greatest opportunity for improvement. Zoning was also identified as the second most important opportunity for improvement.

A careful reading of the reasons participants gave for their answers shows that these answers are not contradictory. Instead, they come from an important acknowledgment that there is a tension in Fairfield between the desire to provide more housing diversity and affordability, while also being worried about the impact of new development on community character.

While there is divergence around these two issues, there were several themes that emerged that were shared by many participants in the various engagement efforts:

Open space access: To the greatest extent possible, the Town should maintain and encourage neighborhood access to parks, beaches, and open spaces.

Architectural quality and continuity: New development should generally fit into the existing community in terms of architectural quality and character.

Walkability: The Town should encourage and support residential development that allows people to walk to access amenities, work, and recreational opportunities. The Town should pursue funding to retrofit pedestrian infrastructure where deficient or needed.

“ participant quote

Change the zoning laws to protect our neighborhoods from over development.

“ participant quote

The town should have a plan to find areas throughout town (not just in a few neighborhoods) for affordable housing and work with developers and others to create this housing. Small and mid-sized affordable housing that blends with the neighborhoods in town will benefit those who buy or rent that housing, by integrating them more into the life of the town, and the neighbors, who will not be confronted with mammoth apartment complexes.

“ participant quote

Fix the zoning regulations to stop building apartment buildings all over the place.

“ participant quote

Now that we have so many people paying attention to the concept of affordable housing due to the recent proposals, we have an opportunity to engage more members of the community to come up with creative solutions to the challenge.”

“ participant quote

Rethinking zoning rules around density issue so that we can create more sustainable housing in an affordable manner.

“ participant quote

We need more diversity with the types of housing stock so that we can attract and retain younger people with fresh ideas and energy”

A Community That Is Home To All Recommendations

Strategy A: Maintain historic districts and legacy neighborhoods.

1. Maintain the current zoning standards for Residence AAA, AA, A, R-3, and R-2 districts.
2. Continue to support efforts to preserve and protect historic districts.

Strategy B: Diversify housing options in strategic locations.

1. In the Center Designed Business District and the Designed Commercial District, eliminate the requirement that residential uses may not exceed 50% of a buildings floor area. Applicants should still be required to provide ground floor commercial space.
2. In the Center Designed Business District and the Designed Commercial District, permit ground floor residential for secondary rear buildings for campus-like projects. Require that all buildings located on a public right-of-way have ground floor commercial facing primary street frontages that meet the design standards of the zone.

3. Expand the Center Design Business District to the west along Route 1 / Post Road as illustrated in Figure 20. This will expand opportunities for new mixed use construction with design standards, and support a more walkable environment along the Post Road.
4. Increase the type of permitted housing options in close proximity to downtown and the Fairfield Station by rezoning the area identified in Figure 21 on page 38 from A to B.
5. Increase the type of permitted housing options in close proximity to Fairfield Metro by rezoning the area identified in Figure 22 on page 38 from B to C.
6. Undertake a study to identify missing middle housing types and where they might be permitted. Based on that study, explore permitting additional residential density in select areas and regulating it through appropriate design standards.
7. Allow for DRD overlay for outdated office to 100% residential conversion in the NDD zone.

Figure 20. Expansion of Center Design Business District

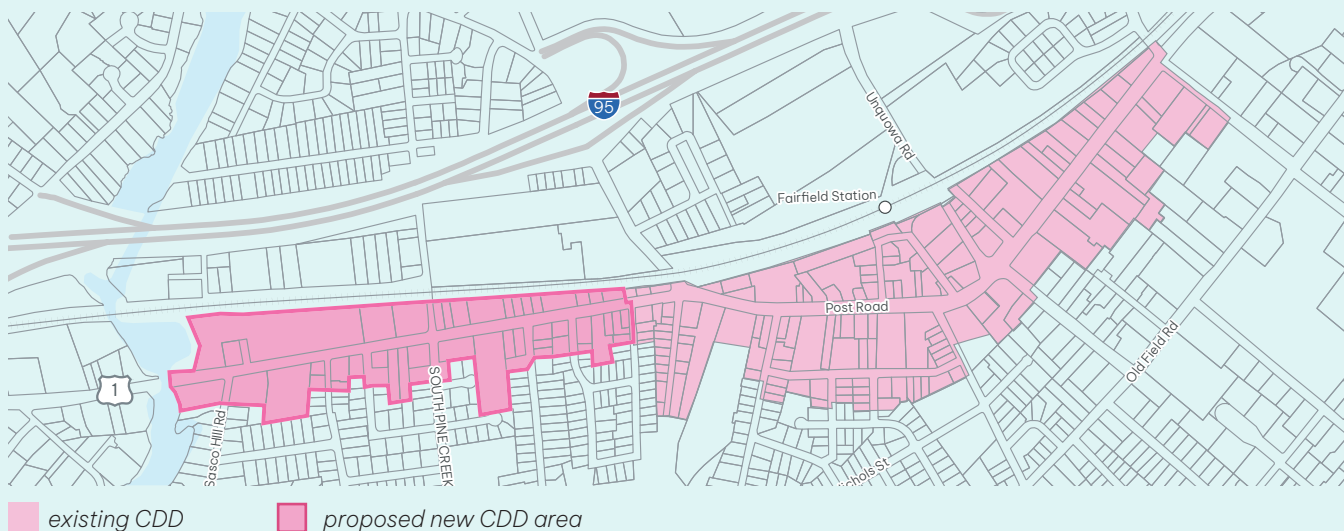


Figure 21. Rezoning from A to B

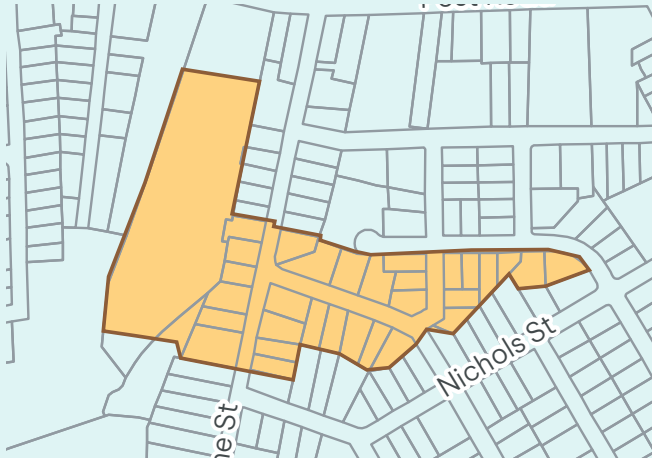
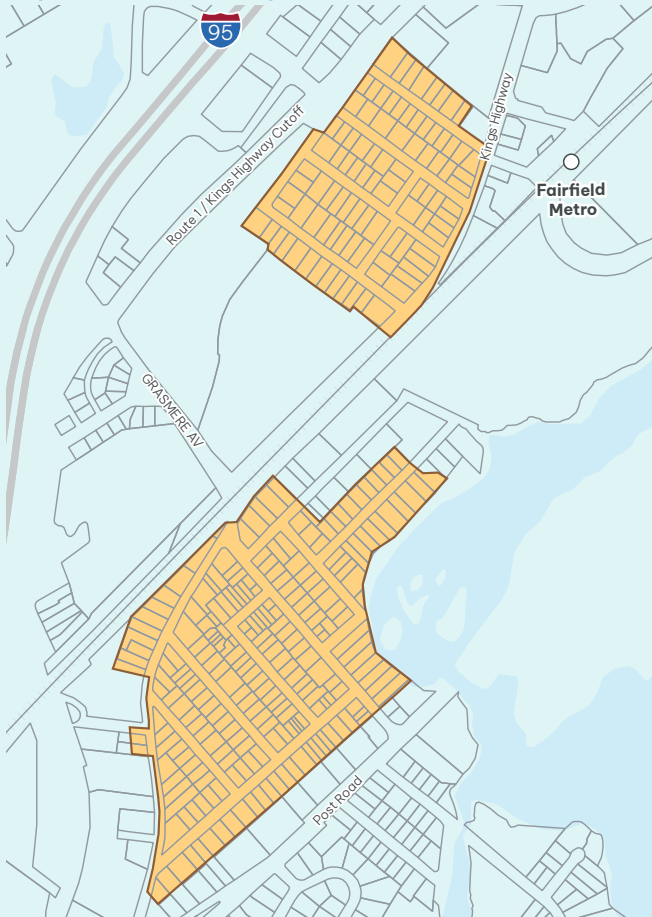


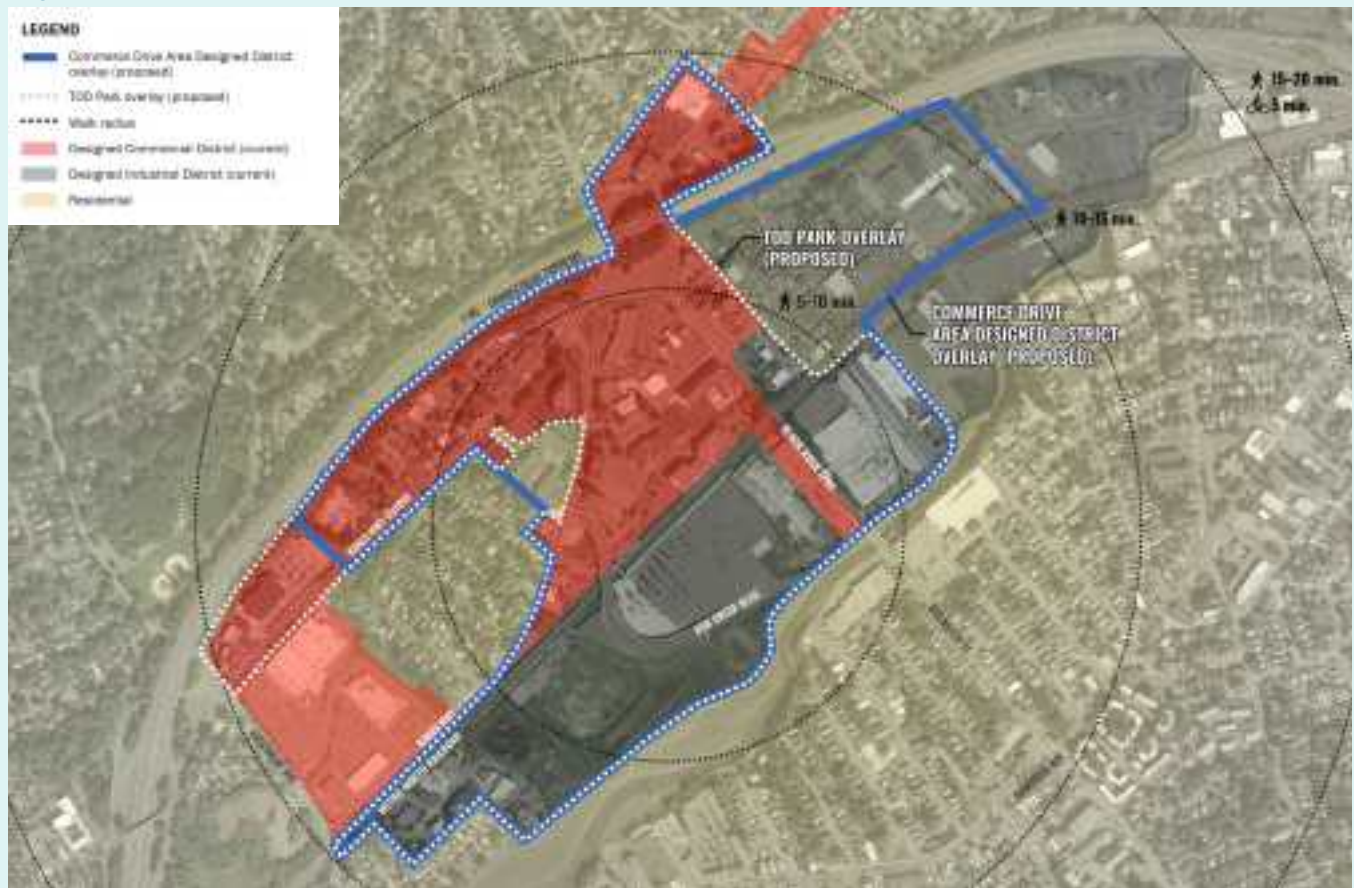
Figure 22. Rezoning from B to C



Strategy C: Promote housing near transit facilities by adopting the recommendations of the Fairfield Transit Oriented Development Study.

1. Establish a maximum height in the CDBD of 4 stories but increase the overall allowable height to 52 feet to permit high-value spaces while maintaining the overall appearance of building massing and height to a limit that closely matches the existing context. The Town should also consider a minimum height of 15 feet for the ground floor story to ensure that buildings are designed to best serve retail and dining uses as envisioned.
2. In the CDBD, increase the FAR limit to 3 to enable development of buildings in the 3- to 4-story range. This scale is fully consistent with existing building scale and the intent of the current zoning.
3. Redraw the Park TOD overlay to align with the boundary suggested in the TOD Study, as illustrated in Figure 23 on page 39.
4. Reduce the minimum lot size for the TOD Park overlay and its subsequent regulations from 35,000 square feet to 10,000 square feet would match the minimum lot size of the CDAD overlay, providing for consistency in development across all station-area parcels.
5. Adjust the height requirement in the TOD Park overlay in the following ways to balance a desire to create higher floor-to-floor heights while limiting the overall scale of buildings:
 - Establish a height limit of no more than five stories.
 - Establish a ground floor height of at least 15 feet in order to promote high-value

Figure 23. TOD Park Proposed Overlay



- retail, dining, entertainment, and even office
 - Establish a maximum height of 70 feet across the overlay.
- 6. Adjust the minimum inclusionary zoning requirement to 12%.
- 7. Promote a higher standard of accessible development in the Park TOD area by requiring 5% fully accessible units and 15% Type A adaptable units in projects with over 20 units.
- 8. Implement the urban design and building scale recommendations from the Fairfield TOD plan, including:
 - Increase 70% maximum residential floor area requirement or eliminate the requirement and require ground floor commercial uses.
 - Require retail and dining to be located at corners of prominent intersections and areas with high levels of pedestrian activity, rather than throughout the TOD district.
 - Require 15% usable open space for all projects that include residential units in the Park TOD area.
- 9. Evaluate consolidating Fairfield Metro zoning districts into a single district to aid usability and marketability of the area.

Strategy D: Increase the supply of affordable housing.

1. Study increasing the affordability set-aside requirements to 15% in all zoning districts.
2. Review the Design Residence Districts (DRD) to identify the extent to which the following recommendations from the affordable housing plan would produce meaningful increases in affordable housing:
 - Reduce the minimum parcel size requirement for the DRD
 - Increase the maximum density limitation.
 - Require that deed-restricted units be provided.
 - Allowing DRD development by special permit if it were connected to public water and sewer, near arterials or collector roads, or near transit service.
 - Reviewing lot coverage, building coverage, and floor area limitations
3. Explore hybrid form-based zoning as a way of introducing more missing-middle housing typologies that will be more affordable than currently permitted housing options.
4. Consider amending Zoning Regulations to increase the term of the affordable housing set-aside requirements beyond the State minimum of 40 years.

Figure 24. Rezoning to Residence A



Strategy E: Reduce Density in the FEMA Floodway.

1. Change the zoning in area identified in Figure 24 Residence A.

Strategy F: Reduce parking requirements to reduce unnecessary burden on the construction of new residential units.

1. Require two (2) spaces per dwelling unit unless fewer spaces are permitted because of special conditions (e.g., located in a Transit Oriented Design Overlay)
2. The Town should reduce the number of visitor parking spaces to 1/4 space per unit in the Designed Residential District.

Strategy G: Bring residential zoning into conformance with State statutes.

1. The Town should eliminate minimum unit size requirements so as to conform with Statute.

A Sustainably Prosperous Community

Fairfield is a largely built-out community with most of its commercial and industrial properties located along major transportation corridors. More than 40% of the jobs in Fairfield are within two primary sectors: Educational Services (26%) and Health Care and Social Assistance (17%). These “eds and meds” industries provide an important foundation for the Town’s economy, employing people with a wide variety of incomes. Commercial properties make up the next largest segment of employment: approximately 13% of jobs are in the retail trade and 10% are in the accommodation and food services. Combined, these four industries account for about two-thirds of all jobs in the community.

Many Fairfielders strongly connect the quality of the Town with the quality of its residential communities. As such, there is little opportunity or appetite for the Town to grow its economy through the expansion of its commercial and industrial areas. Thus, economic growth will be driven by adaptive reuse and redevelopment.

Background

Tax Base

The importance of expanding the tax base was a key point of the Town’s 2020 “One Town, One Plan” strategic vision document and corresponding 2017 economic development analysis conducted by the Connecticut Economic Resource Center, Inc (CERC).¹ The strategic vision noted the importance of expanding the economy to ensure that Fairfield can continue to provide high-quality services and amenities without unduly burdening residents with higher taxes, which runs the risk of making the Town a less

¹ See *Creating A Strategic Vision For Fairfield, 2017*

attractive place to live and puts strain on lower-income households and those on fixed incomes.

CERC noted that, on average in Connecticut, the residential component of the grand list is approximately 68%, while it makes up 82% of Fairfield’s grand list. As illustrated in Figure 25, this means that the Town of Fairfield has less of its tax revenue generated by land uses (e.g., commercial uses) which tend to have a lower fiscal impact on town finances.

Key Economic Drivers

Eds and Meds

Four in ten jobs in Fairfield are in the Educational Services and Health Care and Social Assistance (HCSA) industries. Fairfield University, Sacred Heart University, and the school district are the major employers that contribute to the Educational Services sector.²

Fairfield’s HCSA sector is diversified with no entity employing more than 10% of the people in the industry. Employment is in a diversity of medical-related settings from doctors’ offices and outpatient medical facilities to nursing homes and assisted care facilities.

² U.S. Census Bureau. LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (2002-2020) accessed at onthemap.ces.census.gov

Fairfield should expect the healthcare industry to be strong going forward. As detailed in the State’s 2015 Economic Development Strategy:

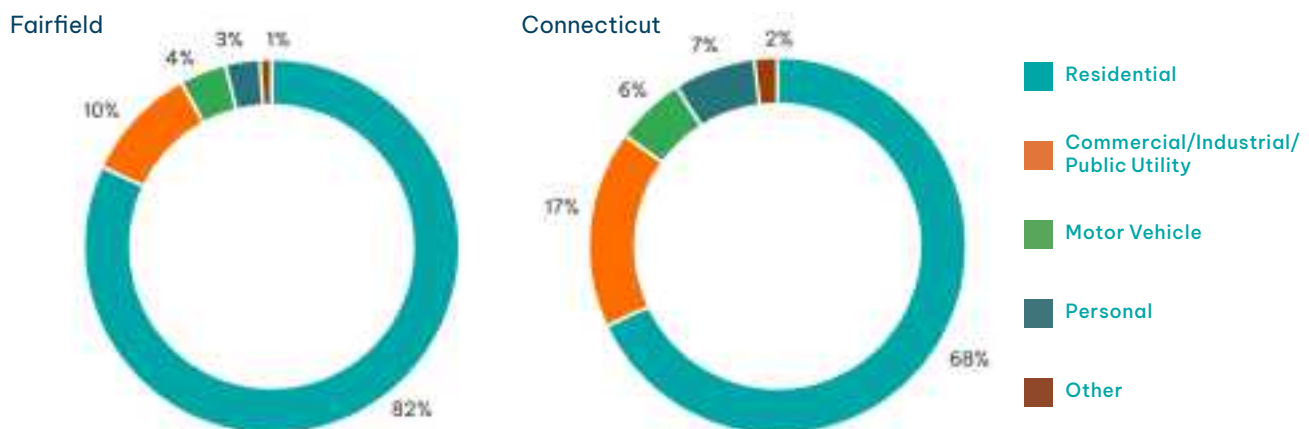
Healthcare promises to be a strong driver of employment the coming decades. Traditional healthcare jobs in healthcare delivery will grow due to the aging of the baby boomers and their need for additional healthcare services. Connecticut also will see growth from its strong position in life sciences (including pharma, medical devices, and genomics) due to the strength of the university research community and the strong array of companies expanding their R&D and manufacturing.

The Town should expect the education sector to remain stable, with little indication that any of the core employers anticipate major growth or declines.

Residents

The Town’s strong residential communities are an important driver of its economy. The Town’s high-quality neighborhoods and communities attract residents who are generally wealthier than residents of the state as a whole. The median household income in Fairfield is approximately \$150,000 compared to \$83,500

Figure 25. Components of Net Equalized Grand List for Fairfield and CT



Source: Connecticut Office of Policy and Management Municipal Fiscal Indicators as cited in “Creating a Strategic Vision for Fairfield.” (2017)

Figure 26. Fairfield Metro TOD Plan



Fairfield Transit Oriented Development Plan (2017)

Figure 27. Fairfield Downtown station area TOD



Fairfield Transit Oriented Development Plan (2017)

for the state.³ More than 1 in 3 households in Fairfield make more than \$200,000 a year.⁴ Since Fairfield has a higher concentration of high-income earners, there are more dollars available for local businesses to capture.

An indication of the spending power of Fairfielders (and residents of surrounding communities) is that nearly one-quarter of the jobs in Fairfield are in the retail trade and accommodation and food services industry.⁵

Roadway Infrastructure

The Town's major commercial areas are concentrated along the Post Road and Black Rock Turnpike, both regional transportation corridors. The auto-orientation of these roadways has served a valuable purpose: they connect the areas to the region and expand the Town's market catchment area.

However, as traffic along them has increased, the corridors have become more congested. This auto-orientation of the corridors has made the public realm more fragmented, less attractive with more paving, and more dangerous for pedestrians and cyclists. The result is that many Fairfielders feel that these areas have come to embody a quality that contradicts the quality of the residential communities.

Transit Infrastructure

The Town has significant opportunities to encourage transit-oriented development (TOD), as documented in the 2019 Fairfield Transit-Oriented Development Study. At Fairfield Metro, TOD development could transform the station area into a mixed-use neighborhood.

³ US Census Bureau. *American Community Survey, Five-Year Estimates (2021)*

⁴ US Census Bureau. *American Community Survey, Five-Year Estimates (2021)*

⁵ U.S. Census Bureau. *LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (2002-2020)* accessed at onhemap.ces.census.gov

Walkable multifamily residential and mixed-use development can create a cohesive, distinctive district that enhances the Town's tax base (Figure 23 on page 39). At Fairfield Downtown, small-scale infill development will support the continued vitality of Fairfield's beloved downtown shopping and dining district. The significant market demand for transit-oriented development in Fairfield means that minor revisions to land use and development regulations can unlock significant potential and economic development.

As documented in the 2019 Study, leveraging these opportunities will require the Town to make some regulatory changes, which are discussed in the recommendations section of this element. The Town has also identified the need to establish urban design standards and an investment strategy to ensure that the public realm supports, and is supported by, new investment around Fairfield Metro.

Key Trends

Work from Home

In 2018, before the COVID pandemic, the Census Bureau estimated that approximately 9% of Fairfield workers over the age of 16 worked from home. By 2021, that number had doubled to 18%.⁶ The result is that there are approximately 2,000 more people in Fairfield during a given work day than there were before the pandemic.⁷ As such, there will likely be more demand for supporting commercial uses. (E.g., coffee shops, quick-grab food, office services, etc.) Fairfield will also likely see more households investing in dedicated office spaces.

When asked about the long-term impacts of COVID, participants in the virtual workshop

⁶ US Census Bureau. *American Community Survey, Five-Year Estimates (2021)*

⁷ *Approximately 83% of residents travel outside of Fairfield to go to their primary employment. (U.S. Census Bureau. 2021. LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics from On the Map.*

noted that they will be decreasing the amount of commuting. As one said, “Remote work is here to stay for most professionals.”

Multi-Family Housing

Fairfield does not need to only rely on commercial properties to expand its economy and tax base. As previously discussed, Fairfield’s residential population is an important driver of the economy. In addition, there is strong demand for multi-family housing that will expand the market of people who can find a place to live in Fairfield, including recent graduates, newly married couples, young professionals, and downsizing baby boomers. By providing more opportunities for multi-family housing, the Town will expand its consumer base which, in turn, can help drive demand for higher and better uses of its commercial properties.

Multi-family housing can also help Fairfield expand its tax base. Unlike single-family housing, multi-family housing:

- Is denser and therefore requires less infrastructure to support which costs less to maintain on a per-person basis.
- Attracts fewer children and therefore has less of an impact on the school budget.
- Produces higher land values compared to single-family homes and low-density commercial properties and so generates more taxes on a per-square-foot basis than alternative land uses.

Place-Based Retail & Downtowns

Communities across the country have learned that their downtowns and central business districts have unique characteristics that allow them to attract retail and dining options. These communities have emphasized creating multi-modal access and strong streetscapes, providing cultural programming, and encouraging businesses to spill out onto the street (e.g., street cafes and outdoor displays).

To that end, MetroCOG has emphasized the importance of these areas to its regional economic development strategy. They identify Downtown Fairfield, the Metro Center station, and Black Rock Turnpike Commercial District as “Focus Areas”, which are places that are centers of commerce and employment for the surrounding community, and which are ideal locations for transit-oriented development. MetroCOG recommends that towns focus on:

- Placemaking strategies to increase the visual appeal and unique character of the area and support.
- Encouraging the development of multi-family housing that can capitalize on proximity to transit and major employers and support retail and restaurant uses.
- Establishing Downtown partnerships that meet regularly to coordinate investment and work collaboratively to solve problems.

Regulatory Barriers

Residential 50% Standards

The regulations for the Town’s Design Commercial Districts (DCD) restrict residential uses. Section 12.4.18 states:

Residential uses provided it shall not be located on a ground floor and not to exceed more than 50 percent of the total floor area of the building, and not to exceed more than 70 percent of the total floor area of the building, when located within the Commerce Drive Area Designed District, and no building of mixed residential business shall contain more than two stories devoted to residential use.

Similar language is in the Center Designed Business District in Section 12.3.16,

These standards substantially and unnecessarily limit the amount of mixed-use development that can occur in the DCD. As illustrated in Figure 28, there are two configurations that

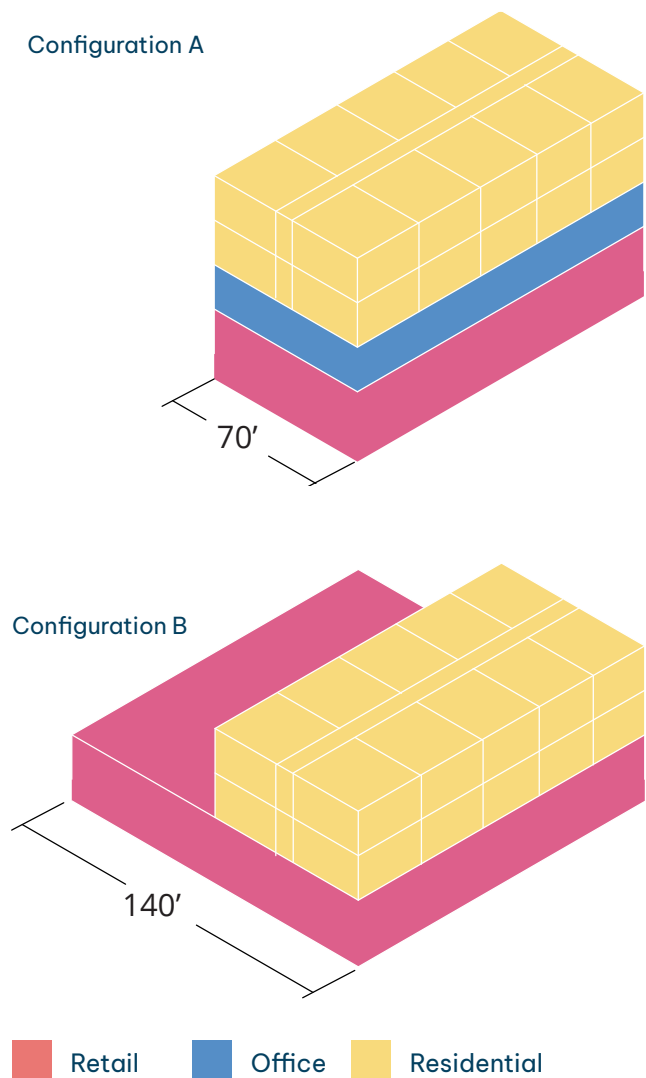
would allow an applicant to maximize the residential square footage to proceed under these standards. In Configuration A, an applicant would be required to provide second-story commercial space to meet the 50% requirement. In many areas, including the Town’s commercial districts located along major thoroughfares, this second-story office space would have a low market value and would likely be difficult to rent. Configuration B would require the construction of a very deep building that would not be appropriate for most retailers looking to locate in mixed-use buildings. Although these are not all the potential scenarios, they are representative of the challenges that an applicant would face in meeting the 50% requirement.

As a result of these standards, Fairfield is restricting the ability of property owners to support the Town’s economic goals by creating new mixed-use projects that would expand the amount of commercial space, increase the amount of high-quality commercial space, and provide new residential opportunities.

Equalize Parking Requirements

Currently, the Town has higher parking requirements for dining uses as compared to office and retail uses. The result is that it is discouraging investment in this desired growth sector by complicating conversion or re-tenanting of spaces from retail to dining or vice versa and encouraging excessive amounts of off-street parking. The issues were highlighted in the Fairfield TOD Study, but it is also applicable across Town.

Figure 28. Illustration of DCD 50% Floor Area Standards



Community Input

Fairfielders want to see sustainable economic growth that supports a growing population while maintaining Fairfield's charm and small-town feel. Several themes emerged from the community engagement process:

Encourage walkable local businesses:

Fairfielders want to see the Town's local businesses close to residential areas, creating walkable communities.

Encourage unique businesses: Participants in the process noted that they would like to see more unique local businesses that cater to Fairfield's diverse communities.

Revitalized commercial corridors: Participants emphasized the importance of revitalizing core commercial areas, including the Black Rock Turnpike Shopping District. Fairfielders noted the disjointed nature of development in this area and the need to make the area more attractive.

Enhance downtown aesthetics: There was a desire to see the maintenance of Downtown shops improve and the Town to encourage public space improvements. Suggestions for improvements included murals and more trees.

Better access management: Participants would like the Town to encourage better access to the town's commercial areas for all users. This includes better pedestrian and bicycle access. In the Downtown, there was a desire to have better wayfinding, especially for parking. Along Black Rock Turnpike, there was a desire to see better access management.

“ participant quote

Too many empty commercial spaces that appear not well maintained. Find ways to incentive commercial building owners to lease space to community members and small businesses.

“ participant quote

More affordable, centrally located smaller commercial space to be created for service-oriented or boutique retail businesses. Not big box stores.

“ participant quote

Our neighborhoods need small mixed use opportunities so that we can have coffee shops, little general stores, and other services we can walk to or bike to.

“ participant quote

There are not a lot of stores that appeal to my demographic. And some buildings go many months, some years, before new tenants move in. I wish Fairfield could inspire more businesses to open shop anywhere else other than on the Post Road at an affordable rent.

“ participant quote

Provide targeted tax incentives for downtown/ Black Rock/ neighborhood shopping areas, to promote: efficient auto, bike and foot traffic flow; parking; connectivity; and good design.

A Sustainably Prosperous Community Recommendations

Strategy A: Promote redevelopment in strategic locations that will strengthen the economy and grow the local tax base.

1. Promote transit-oriented development by implementing the recommendations for Fairfield Metro and Downtown that are identified in A Community that is Home to All. (See *Promote housing near transit facilities by adopting the recommendations of the Fairfield Transit Oriented Development Study. on page 38*)
 2. Extend the Center Design Business District west to include the former Exide Battery site to encourage redevelopment of that property.
 3. Explore a home-professional office overlay for Black Rock Turnpike and Tunxis Hill Cut-off that would permit owner-occupied housing to include appointment-based professional businesses such as lawyer, therapist, psychiatrist, and accountants to be located on the ground floor.
 4. Encourage the redevelopment of bus depot on Easton Turnpike near the former general electric site (now Sacred Heart University).
 5. Explore the possibility of leveraging brownfield funding to support redevelopment along Kings Highway.
- Eliminate the 50% maximum residential floor area requirement.
 - Permit ground-floor residential in the DCD and CDBD on the condition that it is not within 50 feet of the front or side setback and that an equal amount of commercial space separates the right-of-way from the residential uses.
 - In all other instances, require that the ground floor be occupied by a commercial space or any of the other non-residential permitted uses in the district.
2. Reexamine the permitted uses in the Design Commercial District (DCD) and the Center Design Business District (CDBD) to modernize the list of permitted uses and make the code easier to use.
 3. Explore amending the parking requirements for all retail uses, including restaurants, to 4 parking space for every 1,000 square feet and office parking to 3 spaces for every 1,000 square feet.
 4. Explore expanded shared parking opportunities to reduce the amount of land dedicated to surface parking.

Strategy B: Encourage development in existing commercial districts.

1. In the Design Commercial District (DCD) and the Center Designed Business District (CDBD):

An Interconnected Community

The Town of Fairfield has a well-developed transportation network that provides various options for residents and visitors to move around the area. However, more improvements can be made to better accommodate bike and pedestrian infrastructure

Road Network: A defining feature of Fairfield is its major highways which make it easily accessible by car. Interstate 95 (I-95), which runs along the eastern coast of the United States, passes through the town. I-95 runs east-west locally, a convenient connection within town. Additionally, the Merritt Parkway (Route 15) is another major highway that passes through Fairfield, offering an alternative route for commuting and travel. In addition, Route 1 bisects the community and is home to most of the Town's major commercial development.

Public Transportation: The town is served by public transportation systems, primarily operated by the Greater Bridgeport Transit Authority (GBT). GBT operates several bus routes within Fairfield and connects the town to other neighboring cities and towns. These buses provide transportation options for commuting to work, schools, shopping centers, and other destinations within the area.

Train Service: Fairfield is also well-connected by train service, with the Metro-North Railroad providing convenient access to New York City and other parts of Connecticut. The Fairfield Metro, Fairfield Center, and Southport all located in the town, offer commuter rail services

on the New Haven Line. This allows residents to easily travel to and from various locations in Fairfield County and beyond.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Infrastructure: Over the past 10 years, Fairfield has made efforts to create a safer and more enjoyable walking and bicycling network. The town has implemented bike lanes, multi-use trails, and sidewalks. Additionally, there are bike-sharing programs available in some locations, encouraging eco-friendly transportation options.

Airports: While Fairfield does not have an airport, it is conveniently located near several airports. Bradley International Airport (BDL), Laganardia, John F. Kennedy International Airport, and Newark Airports are all within a two-hour drive.

Background

Commuting Patterns

Only 2.4% of households in Fairfield do not have access to a vehicle, which makes driving one of the primary ways people move through Town. Nonetheless, only 61% of Fairfielders drove to work in 2019. This is a substantial decline in the share of people who did so from 2009, when 76% of residents did so. This change is the direct result of a large increase in the number of Fairfielders who reported working from home in 2019 (18%). In 2009, only 7.5% of residents did so.

Most commuters traveled outside of town to go to work (82%). Just over 1/3 of all workers travel to the five metropolitan areas identified in Figure 29. This is consistent with historic development patterns which include most major transportation infrastructure running north-south along I-95 and passenger rail corridors going in and out of New York City.

Safety

Figure 30 illustrates the location of crashes in the Town as well as traffic fatalities. Figure 31 highlights pedestrian and bicycle crashes specifically. These maps illustrate something that is well known in Fairfield: that the state and federal highways experience the most crashes in Fairfield. The maps point to several areas of concern:

Black Rock Turnpike Shopping Center: The commercial area is home to mostly auto-oriented commercial businesses that have evolved through a patchwork of developments. The result is a sometimes-chaotic environment that is difficult to navigate. The space is particularly dangerous for pedestrians because of the numerous curb cuts, long crosswalks, and narrow sidewalks. The lack of any bicycle infrastructure makes the area largely inaccessible to those users. The Black Rock Turnpike Safety Study seeks to improve these

Figure 29. Commuting to Work

Household Size	2010
Drove Alone	61%
Carpooled	4%
Public Transportation	12%
Walked	3%
Other	2%
Worked from Home	18%

US Census Bureau - American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates (2017 - 2021)

Figure 30. Destination of Commuters

Destination	Share of Workers
Stamford, CT	10.6%
New York City, NY	7.5%
Norwalk, CT	7.2%
Bridgeport, CT	6.1%
New Haven, CT	4.0%

U.S. Census Bureau. LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (2002-2020) accessed at onlinemap.ces.census.gov

conditions as well as opportunities to pursue funding to implement projects.

Exit 24: The exit off I-95 that intersects with Route 1 is the location of a considerable number of crashes in Town. This area is home to a major traffic circle that goes under the interstate and includes seven feeder roads. The result is an environment that can be difficult to understand and navigate. Moreover, there are a limited number of sidewalks and few crosswalks. The result is that this major intersection is not a safe or convenient place for pedestrians and serves

Figure 31. Crashes and Fatalities

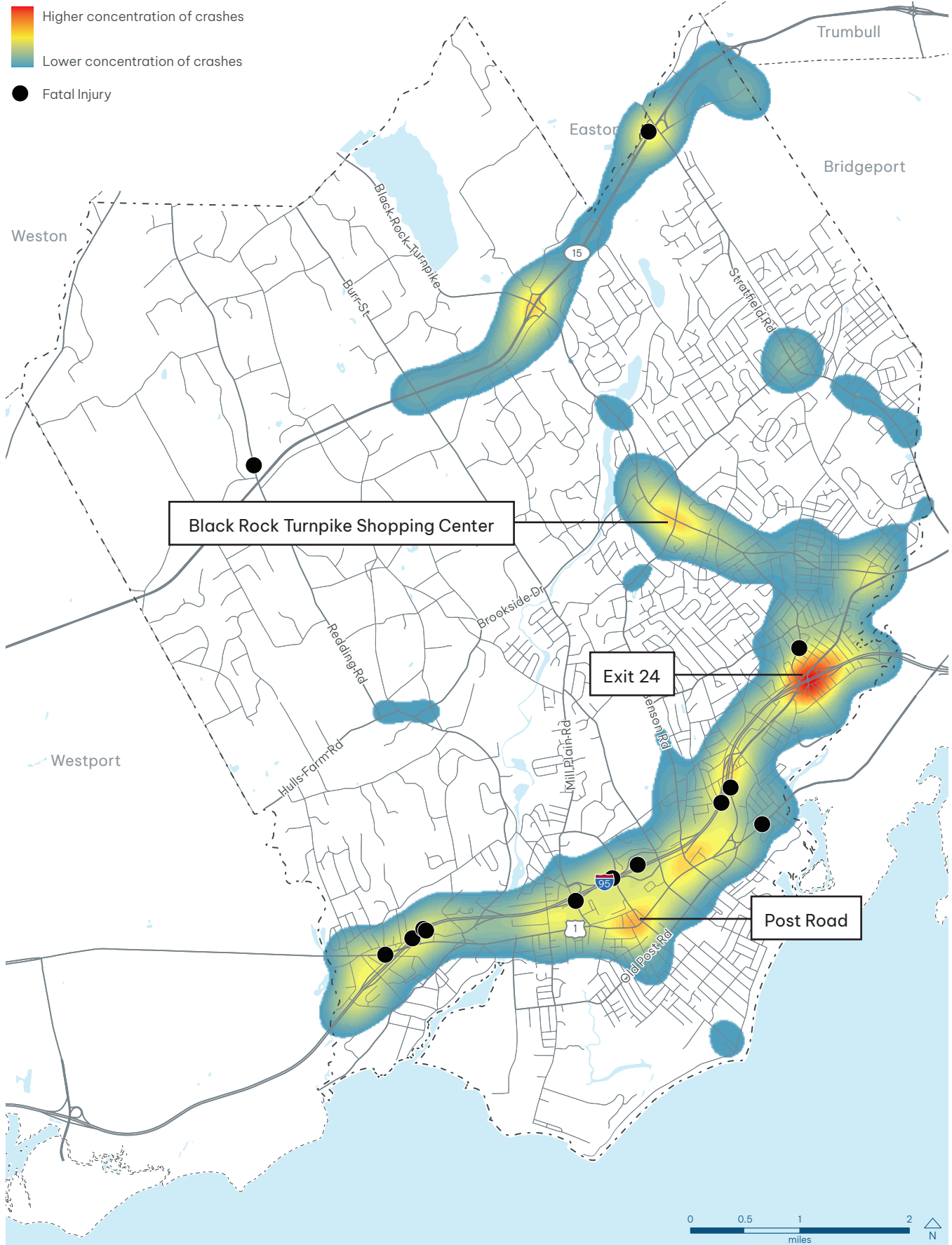
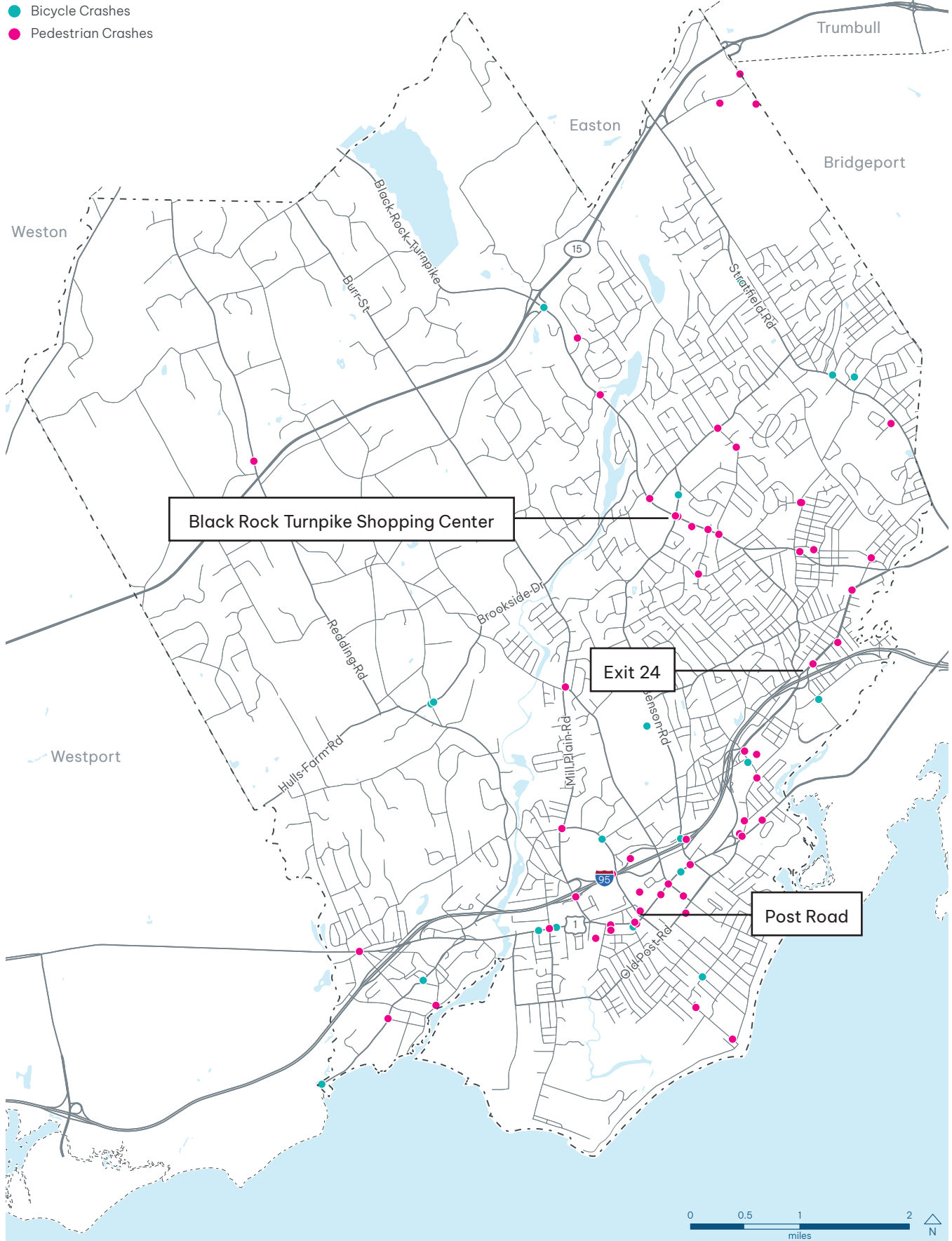


Figure 32. Bicycle and Pedestrian Crashes



as a major pedestrian barrier between the north and south sides of town.

Post Road: The Post Road around the Downtown is home to a large number of crashes, especially pedestrian-involved crashes. This area is home to some of the Town's most walkable businesses and is increasingly the focus of housing development that is looking to take advantage of the train station and proximity of amenities within walking distance. A major issue in this area is that drivers frequently use it to bypass traffic on the interstate. The Post Road Circle Study, conducted by MetroCOG, seeks to determine improvements to address vehicular safety, bicycle/pedestrian safety, and congestion. Both near- and long-term strategies, at various funding levels, will need to be identified and funding should be sought to implement projects from Study findings. The following areas were identified by participants as particularly problematic:

- Mill Plain Road – Five-leg intersection.
- Unquowa Pl, Sanford St, Miller St, Carter Henry Dr.
- Sanford Pl / Reef Road offset intersection.
- Unquowa Place.

Bicycle Network

Figure 33 illustrates the proposed bicycle network that was developed as part of the 2013 Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan. The plan identified both North-South Bicycle Routes via:

- Route 136 (Westport Road), Sturges Highway, Hulls Farm Road, and Bronson Road.
- Hillside Road, Old Academy Road, Greenfield Hill Road, Duck Farm Road, Mill Plain Road, and South Pine Creek.
- Redding Road, Bronson Road, and Pequot Avenue.
- Black Rock Turnpike, Tahmore Drive, Burroughs Road, High Street, Holland Hill Road, and Barlow Road.

- Route 59 (Stratfield Road), Brooklawn Avenue, Briarwood Avenue, Dewey Street,
- Commerce Drive, Kings Highway East.
- Park Avenue from Jefferson Street to Seaside Park.

East-West Bicycle Routes Via:

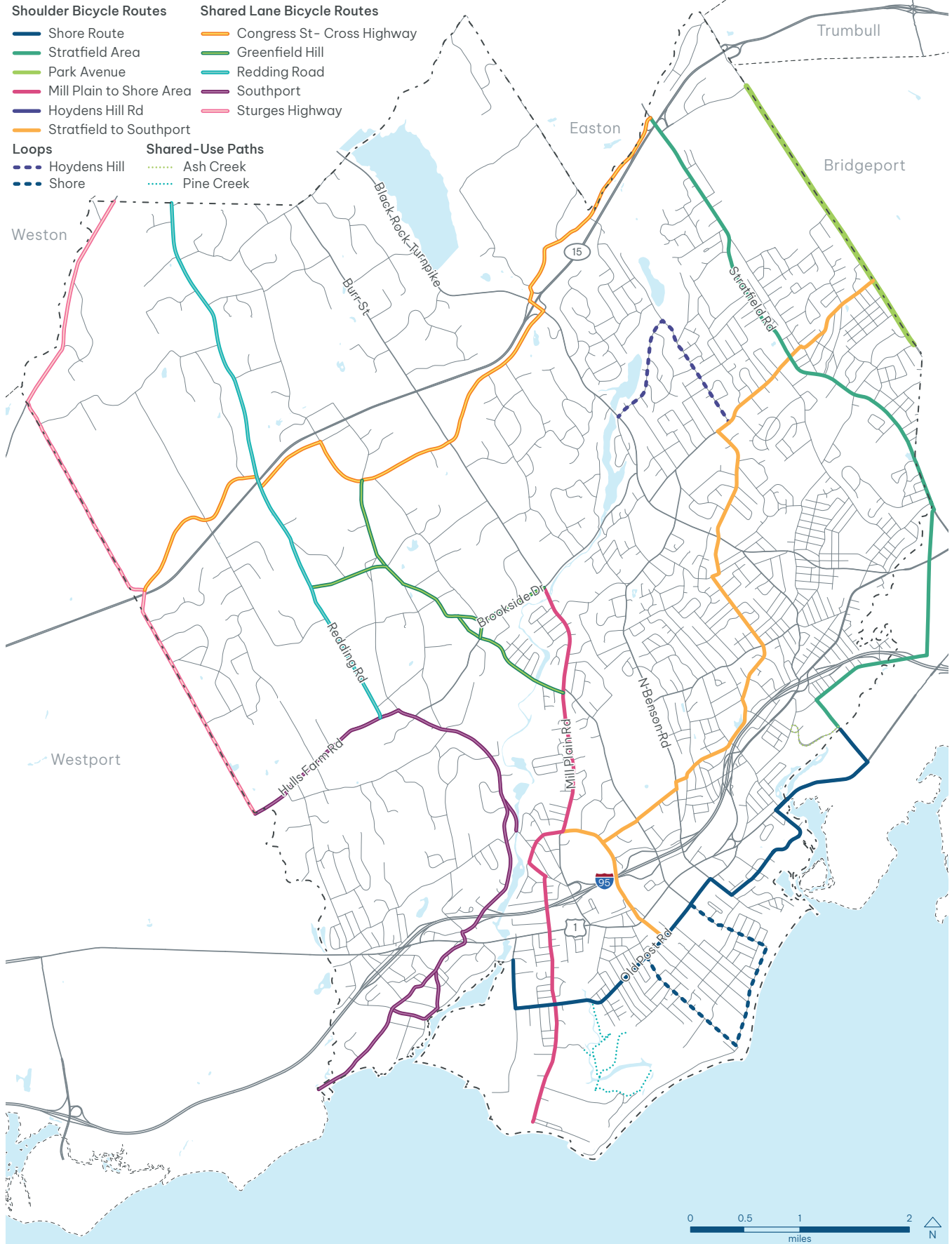
- Jefferson Street, Congress Street, and Cross Highway.
- Wilson Street, Fairfield Woods Road, Burroughs Road, High Street, Holland Hill Road, and Barlow Road.
- From the Fairfield Metro Center via the Post Road, Riverside Drive, South Benson Road,
- Old Post Road, Old Field Road, Sasco Hill Road, Harbor Road, Westway Road, and Pequot
- Avenue (also part of the East Coast Greenway).

Complete Streets Policy

In 2018, the Town adopted a complete streets policy. The policy states that the Town will provide safe and welcoming roadways to all people regardless of age, income, ability, or mode of transportation. It notes that a transportation policy for the town must provide an integrated and balanced transportation network that accommodates all modes: pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, transit riders, commercial vehicles, and freight.

Many communities across the country and state have started to advance beyond policies to the adoption of complete streets ordinances and design guides. These ordinances codify the specific roadway geometry throughout town, making clear how the network will accommodate all users. In addition, they often include specific guidance for how different street elements – such as traffic calming devices, bike infrastructure, and pedestrian enhancements – should be included in future roadway designs.

Figure 33. Bicycle Network



Community Input

Participants identified improving traffic conditions, parking, and pedestrian and bike infrastructure as some of the top issues that need to be enhanced in Fairfield. In particular, respondents rated traffic and parking as the top area that could be transformed in Fairfield. The following key issues were identified:

Congestion: Fairfielders noted that it is difficult and slow to get around Fairfield's hotspots, especially during rush hour. There was a desire to see more traffic management and continued efforts to shift users to more active modes of transportation or public transit that can reduce cars on the street and foster a safer environment for all modes.

Safe Streets: Respondents cited dangerous road conditions for all users due to insufficient or poor infrastructure. Fairfielders were particularly concerned about the condition of roadways for pedestrians and bicyclists, noting that the roadways are primarily designed to support vehicle travel.

Underpasses: Participants noted that walking under the railroad tracks and I-95 is problematic and that it was unreasonable to ask people to use those connections. They are dirty, dark, and feel like you are at risk of being hit by a car. In total, these areas create a very large barrier in town.

Connectivity through open space: There was a desire for the town to combine efforts to expand open space with efforts to build trails, greenways, and bike paths. This could not only improve connectivity and help support healthy lifestyles.

Continuous pedestrian network: Participants expressed a desire for the Town to prioritize new sidewalks to establish a continuous east-west connection along Route 1 and a continuous north-south connection up to Black Rock Turnpike. Many people felt the current sidewalk expansion is piecemeal with no sense of priority.

Residents expressed a need for a sidewalk expansion priority list.

Better access management: Participants would like the Town to encourage better access to the town's commercial areas for all users. This includes better pedestrian and bicycle access. In the Downtown, there was a desire to have better wayfinding, especially for parking. Along Black Rock Turnpike, there was a desire to see better access management.

“ participant quote

Our death-by-design roads. Outside of certain streets in my neighborhood, I feel unsafe walking and biking in Fairfield. Families who won't allow their children to walk or bike on their own streets for fear that they will be hit by speeding cars.

“ participant quote

The vast majority of streets prioritize the swift throughput of private motor vehicles above other modes such as walking, biking, rolling, & public transit. To date, we have 0 protected/separated bike lanes, 0 gradual elevated crosswalks, no speed humps.

“ participant quote

There are several neighborhoods where traffic dangerously speeds through during rush hour to avoid Post Road traffic.

“ participant quote

Narrowing of streets to reduce car speeds and accommodate space for protected bike lanes, sidewalks, and trees. The ideal road is one with two lanes able to accommodate vehicles snugly, patches of parking alternating with plantings, and beyond that a bike lane and sidewalk. Something like this would make it much easier, safer, and more desirable to get around in any mode of transport. Places with very wide streets or intersections can even have space reclaimed to miniature parks/community space.

An Interconnected Community Recommendations

Strategy A: Build a transportation network that supports the needs of all users.

1. Continue to advance the recommendations of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan Master Plan.
2. Identify new safety standards, such as corner visibility standards, that can be added to regulations that will advance complete streets.
3. Develop a complete streets ordinance and design guide.
4. Coordinate passive biking and walking opportunities with greenway identification.

Strategy B: Address critical roadways and intersections.

1. Pursue funding to undertake a placemaking, traffic, and safety study along Post Road (Route 1) from Sasco Hill and North/South Benson Road that will identify opportunities to make the Downtown a safer and more attractive corridor where traffic is able to maintain a consistent slow-moving flow. Include within this study an examination of the potential for a road diet along portions of Route 1.
2. Pursue funding for the implementation of a Black Rock Turnpike traffic safety study and access management strategy.

3. Pursue funding for Post Road safety study.
4. Pursue funding for traffic calming and urban streetscape improvements for the Metro Station area and Ash Creek Boulevard.
5. Pursue funding for sidewalk connectivity study.

Strategy C: Address student parking.

1. The Town should coordinate with Fairfield University and Sacred Heart University to develop a student mobility and parking study to identify ways to reduce the demand for off-campus parking.

A Community where People Come Together

Fairfielders are proud of their community and of the variety of opportunities that they have to come together as a community. The following summarizes some of the major community facilities in town.

Libraries: Fairfield has multiple public libraries that provide resources, programs, and services to the community. The main library is the Fairfield Public Library, located on Old Post Road, offering a vast collection of books, multimedia materials, and digital resources. In addition to the main library, there are branch libraries, such as the Fairfield Woods Branch Library, and a private library known as the Pequot Library. These facilities offer additional resources and programming options to the community.

Parks and Recreation: The Town of Fairfield maintains several parks and recreational facilities for residents to enjoy outdoor activities. Some notable parks include Jennings Beach, Penfield Beach, Lake Mohegan, and Gould Manor Park. These parks offer amenities such as picnic areas, sports fields, walking trails, playgrounds, and beach access.

Community Centers: Fairfield has community centers that provide spaces for recreational and social activities. The Fairfield Senior Center caters to the needs and interests of older adults, offering programs, classes, and social events. The Fairfield Woods Branch Library also serves as a community center, hosting various events and programs for residents of all ages.

Schools and Educational Facilities: Fairfield is home to several public and private schools, including elementary, middle, and high schools. The Fairfield Public School District operates several schools within the town, providing education to students from pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade. In total there are sixteen schools that cater to the Town's students. Comprehensive facility planning is completed by the Fairfield Public School District. In addition to schools, Fairfield is also home to Fairfield University, a private Jesuit university, and Sacred Heart University.

Cultural and Performing Arts Centers: Fairfield offers cultural and performing arts facilities that contribute to the town's vibrant arts scene. The Fairfield Museum and History Center showcases exhibits on local history and hosts educational programs and events. The Quick Center for the Arts, located at Fairfield University, presents a variety of performances, including theater, music, dance, and visual arts. The Fairfield Theatre Company offers live music, comedy, and community theater at two concert venues in Town. Sacred Heart University has both the Community Theatre and Edgerton Center for the Performing Arts, providing venues for various arts and culture events in Fairfield.

Background

In 2022, the Town completed the Fairfield Parks and Recreation Master Plan Report. That plan was developed in close coordination with community members and stakeholders and included recommendations on how to:

- Build new athletic fields and improve existing ones.
- Repair and update playgrounds.
- Enhance parking, ADA access, and pathways in parks.
- Explore green infrastructure in parks.
- Explore opportunities for indoor gym and pool space.
- Enhance bicycle facilities in parks.
- Continue to pursue the acquisition of the Turner Reserve site for recreation.

Community Input

Generally, participants love Fairfield's community facilities and would like the Town to continue to invest in their improvement. The following themes emerged during the engagement process.

Accommodation for all ages: Participants in the process expressed a desire to see that there are places for older kids and teenagers to spend time. This included a suggestion that the Town add lights to playgrounds so older kids can hang out in the evenings. It was also noted that play areas and playgrounds are designed for very young kids and that there is a need for them to be stimulating for older kids too.

Diversity of spaces: There was a sense that Fairfield already has great playgrounds, and that the Town needs to prioritize other community spaces.

Vibrant gathering spaces: Participants expressed the desire to see the Town re-imagine the streetscape and public spaces to make them places where people can come together and strengthen community bonds.

“ participant quote

Community centers with activities for all ages, access to swimming and aquatic facilities, educational opportunities for seniors.

“ participant quote

Easier/safer crossings and more gathering places for tweens and teens to go with friends.

“ participant quote

More creative outdoor parks, activities for young families. More activities for the 30-40 something.

A Community Where People Come Together

Recommendations

Strategy A: Advance the recommendations of the Parks and Open Space Master Plan.

1. Build new athletic fields and improve existing ones.
2. Repair and update playgrounds.
3. Enhance parking, ADA access, and pathways in parks.
4. Explore green infrastructure in parks.
5. Explore opportunities for indoor gym and pool space.
6. Enhance bicycle facilities in parks.
7. Continue to pursue acquisition of the Turner Reserve site for recreation.
8. Identify new safety standards, such as corner visibility standards, that can be added to regulations that will advance complete streets.

Strategy B: Integrate placemaking in roadway projects.

1. When undertaking its Complete Streets efforts, integrate design standards that would promote placemaking. This may include creating street tree standards, identifying the type and intensity of street furniture (e.g., benches, trash cans, pedestrian lighting, etc), and providing direction on how art can be integrated into public infrastructure (e.g., murals).

2. Undertake placemaking plans for downtown the Post Road downtown and in the Metro Center that would specifically focus on how private and public investments could create a more attractive and comfortable pedestrian realm.

Future Land Use

The following summarizes the purpose and intent of the area identified in Figure 34. In addition, Figure 35 on page 62 illustrates the Town’s major connectors. These connectors are relevant to the Designed Residence District Regulations as well as requirement for assisted living facilities, among other zoning regulations.

District	Intent
Residence Districts	The Town has six residence districts that are intended to provide Fairfielders a variety of housing options in communities that are largely separate from the Town’s commercial areas, although they may abut those areas. These areas may also accommodate home occupations, public facilities, parks, homes for the aged, accessory apartments, schools, and other land uses customarily associated with residential districts.
Design Residence Districts	This District overlay should provide for flexibility in site design and housing construction which will provide a variety of housing opportunities including the encouragement of elderly and affordable housing.
Beach District	The purpose of the Beach District Regulations is to promote shorefront residential land uses that does not adversely impact the coastal resources and preserves and protects the quality of life that has developed. These regulations provide a basis for administering the goals and objectives of the Connecticut Coastal Management Act. These regulations prohibit degradation and encroachment on the shorefront in order to ensure that the beneficial characteristics inherent to the shorefront remain intact.
Design Business Districts	The Town’s three Designed Business Districts provide a mix of commercial and residential development opportunities at different scales, based on their proximity to residential neighborhoods, availability of transportation infrastructure, and parcel sizes.
Industrial District	The Town’s industrial district is intended to provide opportunities for the development and continuation of low-impact industrial activities and higher impact commercial activities.
Research District	The Town’s research district is intended to provide opportunities for laboratories, engineering laboratories, and other commercial and experimental basic research and testing as well as offices for businesses and professional establishments.
Flood Plain District	In the establishment of this Flood Plain District it is recognized that there are areas of the Town that are, or are surrounded by areas which are, subject to frequent, occasional or periodic flooding. The intent is to strictly limit the use of land, buildings and other structures for human habitation on the construction of buildings and other structures and on filling and excavation of land are necessary for protection of the public health and safety and for protection of property values.

Figure 34. Existing Land Use Map

The future land use map is built upon the Town's existing zoning map with modification as proposed in other sections of this POCD.

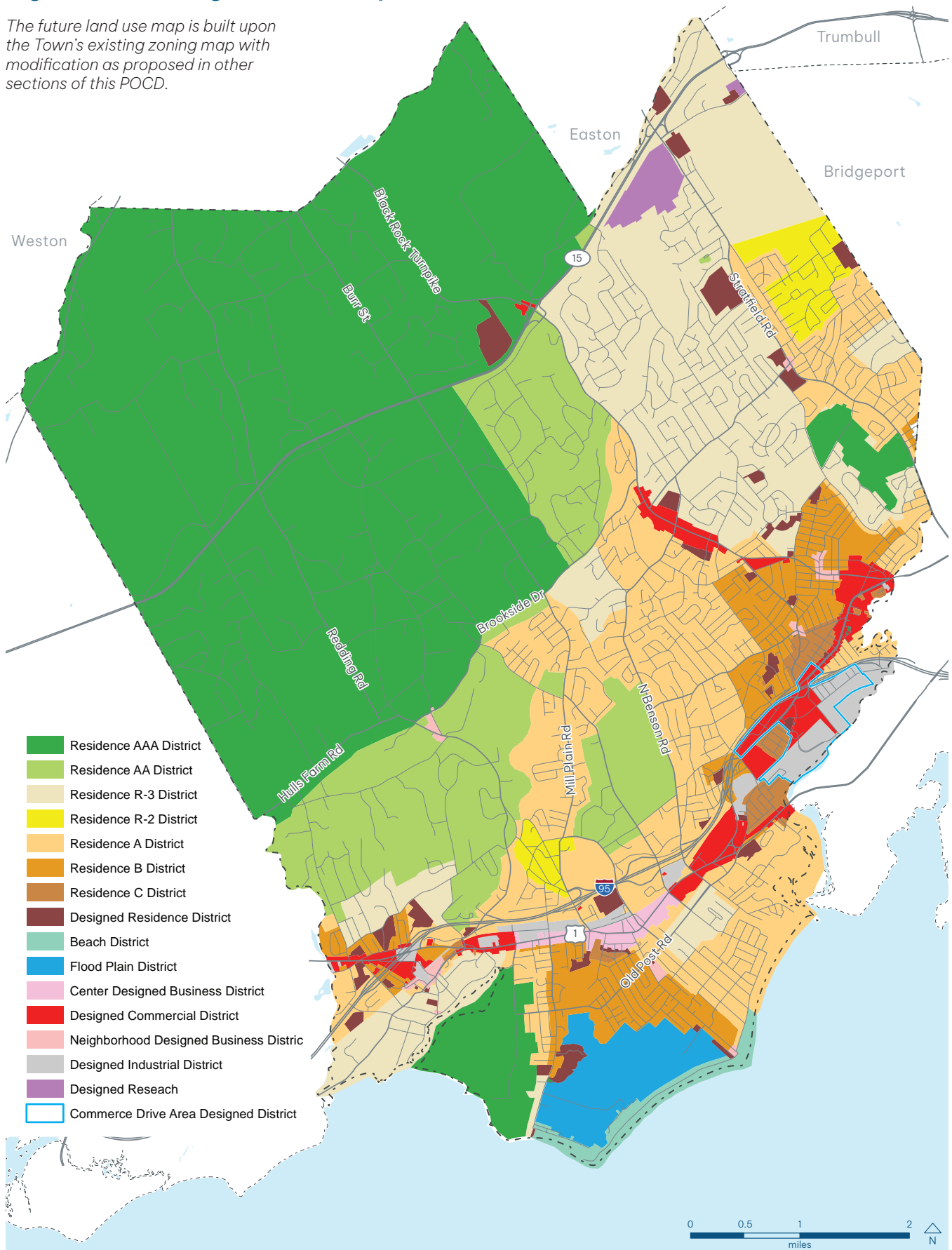
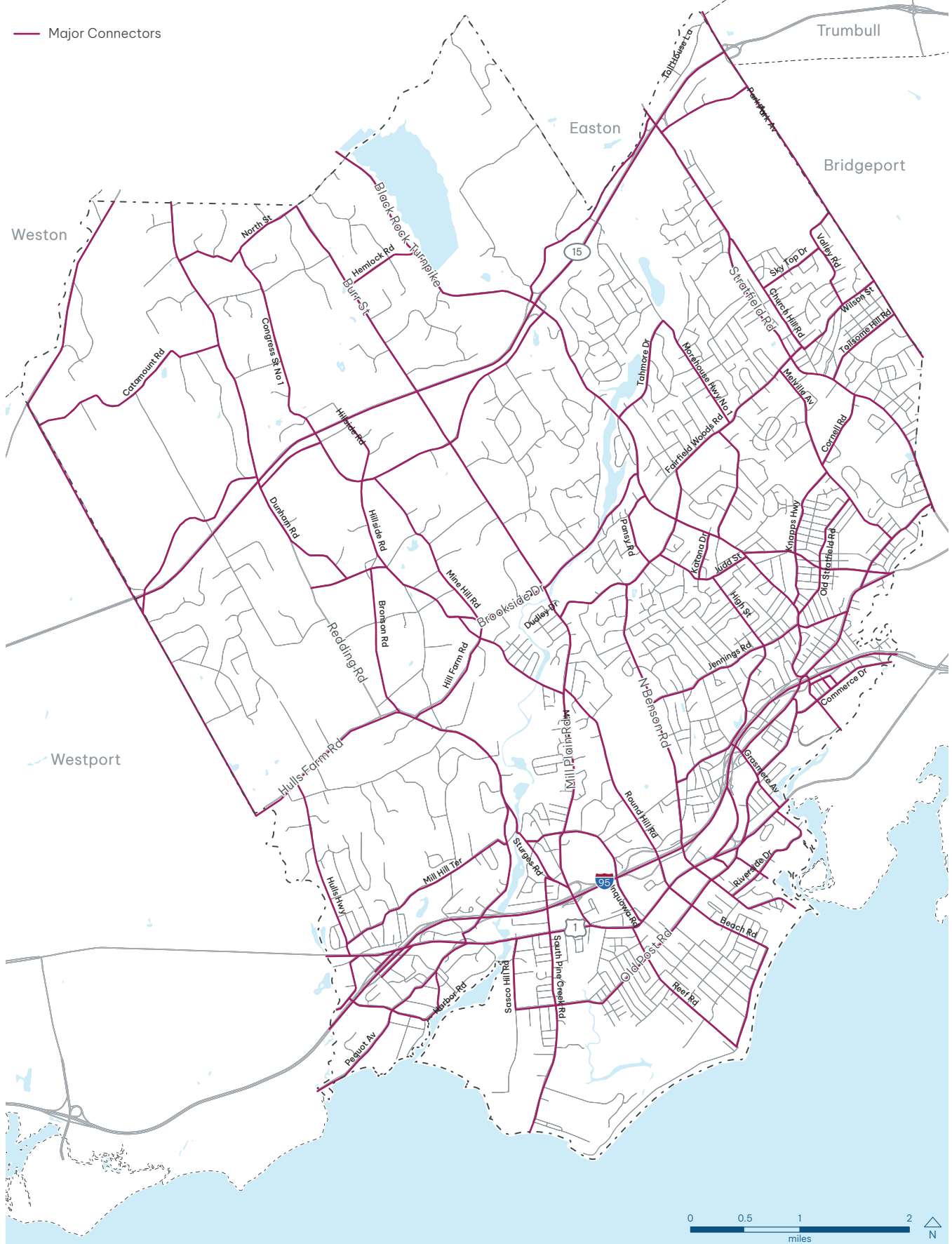


Figure 35. Major Connectors



Plan Consistency

Per Section 8-23(e)(1)F), the Town of Fairfield, proposed Plan of Conservation and Development is not inconsistent with either the State Plan of Conservation and Development Plan (2018-2023)'s growth management goals.

In regards to the State's POCD, Fairfield's POCD aligns with the Growth Management Principles in the following ways:

Growth Management Principle	Fairfield POCD Strategies
#1: Redevelop and Revitalize Regional Centers and Areas with Existing or Currently Planned Physical Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promoting mixed-use projects in the Post Road and other commercial corridors with bus access and in the downtown and Metro-North station areas. Targeted Infrastructure improvements to increase sewer capacity in the Metro and Downtown areas. Infrastructure improvements in Downtown area to increase storm-water capacity and prevent flash flooding conditions. Seek future funding for sewer upgrades in existing service areas.
#2: Expand Housing Opportunities and Design Choices to Accommodate a Variety of Household Types and Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review existing as of right C zone to lower minimum lot size per unit (4-unit as of right). Review Designed Residence District overlay to revise minimum lot size and density. Proposed rezone for two B zone (two-family) areas to C zone (4-family) near the Metro Center train station.
#3: Concentrate Development Along Transit Nodes and Along Transportation Corridors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Targeted revisions to the zoning regulations in the Commerce Drive area to facilitate mixed-use Transit-Oriented Development on former brownfields sites near Fairfield Metro. Increasing residential percentage for mixed-use projects.
#4: Conserve and Restore the Natural Environment, Cultural and Historical Resources, and Traditional Rural Lands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fairfield has a significant number of conservation lands and actively acquires new properties adjacent to them, particularly those with wetlands. Fairfield has three historic districts located primarily in single family residential district that preserve Fairfield's historic resources.
#5: Protect and Ensure the Integrity of Environmental Assets Critical to Public Health and Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Town performs ongoing Resiliency and Sea Level Rise Analysis with its Flood Erosion Control Board and State partners for Fairfield's flood-prone neighborhoods and commercial areas. Fairfield's emphasis on Complete Streets and supporting multi-modal transportation initiatives ensures greater sustainability for Fairfield's residents.

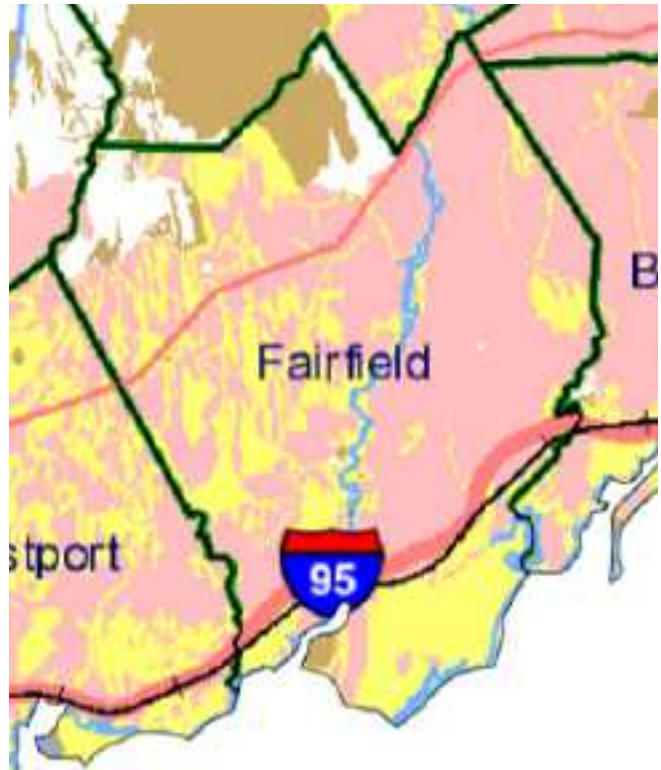
Fairfield's proposed POCD strategies and goals are also consistent with the State's Locational Guide Map. Priority Funding areas are located in the along the I-95 and Metro-North rail corridor. It should be noted that the Mill River that is shown to distinctively bifurcate the town from west to east also defines the larger lot, more significant wetlands areas to the west that does not have sewer service and the higher residential density of the east side of Fairfield that does have current sewer service. Upgrades to the existing sewer service areas are anticipated (Figure 36 on page 65), but expansion of service geography is not.

Expansion of residential density is not proposed in the Balanced Priority Funding Areas. However, the Town does prioritize future resiliency funding efforts for the BPFA area that largely delineates the shoreline area that is subject to current coastal flooding and future sea level rise.

Growth Management Principle #6 promotes integrated planning across local, regional and state-wide levels and the Town of Fairfield is consistent with coordinated planning efforts. In particular, Fairfield is part of MetroCOG's Multi-Jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan and is a partner in regional transportation, natural resource, and economic development planning efforts.

Fairfield's POCD is also consistent with the general policies of MetroCOG's Regional Plan of Conservation of Development for reconnected, revitalized, and resilient region that, similar to the State POCD:

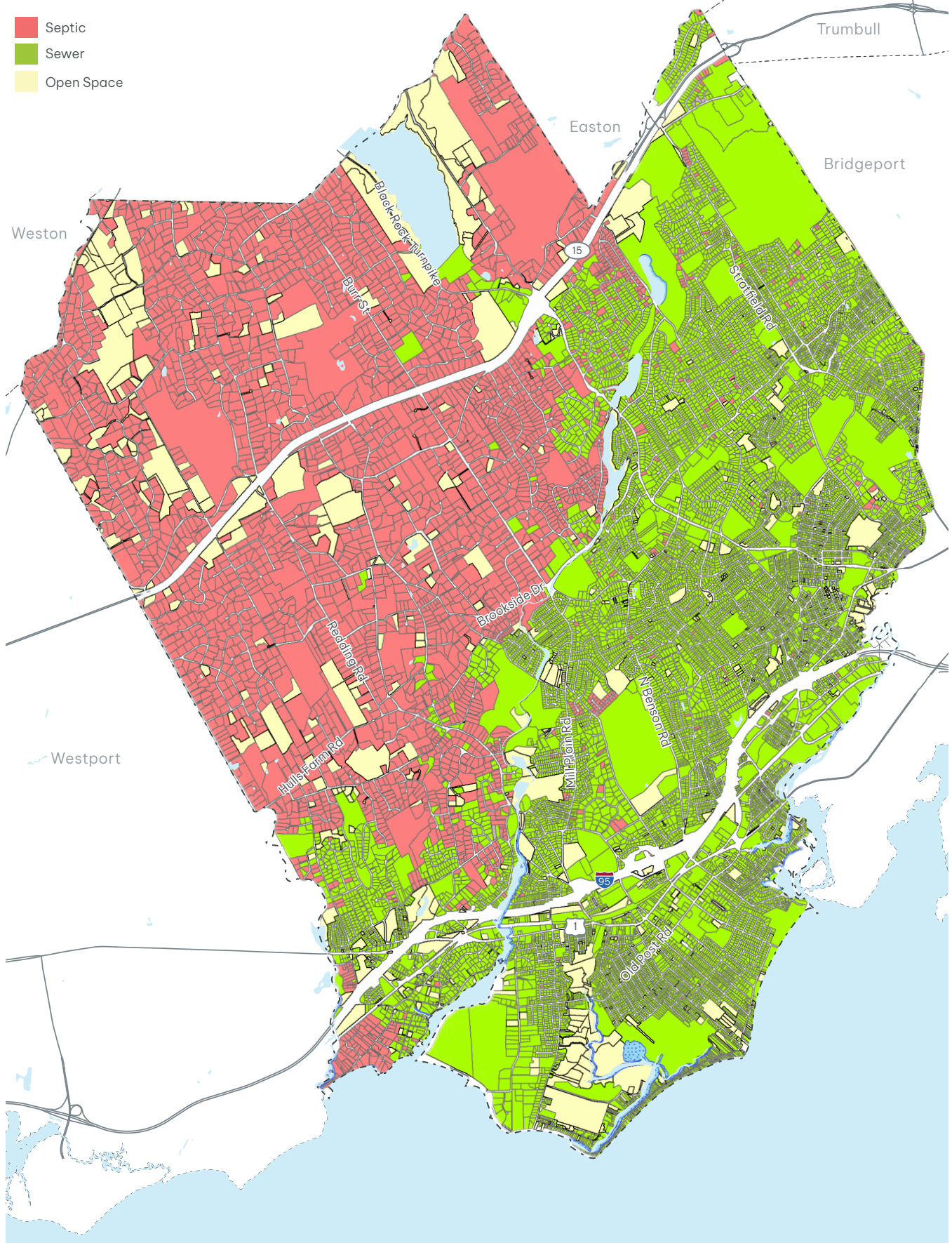
- Focuses on inter-region coordination and collaboration, particularly with its multi-modal transportation network and infrastructure.
- Mixed-use centers where public transit anchors are located.



- Village Priority Funding Area (VPFA)
- Priority Funding Area (PFA)
- Balanced Funding Area (BPFA)
- Conservation Area

- Redevelopment of brownfields sites and reinvestment in existing cultural and economic hubs.
- Quality diverse neighborhoods located where existing infrastructure can be leveraged.
- Protecting and preserving local senses of place in its member communities.
- Natural system protection and resiliency from natural hazard events.
- Sustainable industries and future construction projects.
- Constituency that is educated and engaged to support these policies moving forward.

Figure 36. Sewer Service Area



Appendix A

Five Tiers of Community Resilience to Address Natural Hazards and Climate Change

Overview

The Town of Fairfield has undertaken and participated in a number of planning efforts to understand, describe, and set policy for hazard mitigation, climate adaptation, and resiliency relative to natural hazards and climate change:

Regional

- Multi-Jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan
- Regional Framework for Coastal Resilience in Southern Connecticut
- Historic Resources Resiliency Planning
- Resilient Connecticut

Local

- The FECB's Flood Mitigation Plan
- Downtown Green Infrastructure Plan
- Rooster River Flood Mitigation Study and Plan
- Riverside Drive/Ash Creek Flood Mitigation Study and Plan
- Various Community Resilience Building (CRB) events

Other

- Army Corps of Engineers Flood Protection Master Plan

Plan Review

Multi-Jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan

The Metropolitan Council of Governments Multi-Jurisdiction Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan Update was adopted in July 2019. The plan covers Bridgeport, Easton, Fairfield, Monroe, Stratford, and Trumbull. Like most hazard mitigation plans, this plan includes a suite of actions that the Town of Fairfield can undertake to reduce losses from natural hazards. These actions fall into the categories of public education, emergency services, prevention (i.e., flood regulations and building codes), natural resources protection, property protection, and structural projects. Hazard mitigation plans are meant to include options that can be undertaken somewhat independent of broad policies set in POCDs, such as strengthening critical facilities and making housing more resilient.

Regional Framework for Coastal Resilience

The “Regional Framework for Coastal Resilience in Southern Connecticut” was funded by appropriations from SuperStorm Sandy through the DOI to the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF). The goal of the project was to identify community-supported nature-based resilience actions such as green infrastructure and living shorelines in ten shoreline municipalities. The project was broken into four phases, with some tasks completed by TNC and the two subject COGs (MetroCOG and SCRCOG) and some tasks completed by the consultant team.

The project included development of a GIS database of potential nature-based resilience actions such as green infrastructure and living shorelines; but importantly, the GIS database also included desired actions that could be re-cast as nature-based resilience actions. As such, projects like revetments and seawalls were mentioned by municipal staff participants and included in the database. A viewer tool was developed to allow for review of all 250-plus identified actions. Examples of potential actions identified in the Regional Framework for Coastal Resilience for the Town of Fairfield were green infrastructure in the downtown area and all the individual segments of flood protection in the beach and Ash Creek areas.

The concept designs developed for the Regional Framework for Coastal Resilience included one in the Town of Fairfield: a dune ridge along the beach between Reef Road and Penfield Beach. This section of shoreline was selected because of the numerous flood pathways from Long Island Sound to the homes located between Reef Road and Penfield Beach.

Historic Resources Resiliency Planning

Historic and cultural resources are increasingly at risk to natural hazards and climate change;

furthermore, historic resources are difficult to floodproof, elevate, or relocate without potential loss of their historicity. Recognizing this challenge, the Connecticut State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) embarked on a resiliency planning study for historic and cultural resources beginning in 2016. The study was funded by the National Parks Service in response to SuperStorm Sandy.

MetroCOG hosted a historic resources resiliency planning meeting in June 2016, with Fairfield attending. During winter 2016–2017, individual meetings were held with shoreline communities including Fairfield. Municipality-specific reports were issued to each of these coastal communities in 2017. These reports outline historic resources at risk, gaps in municipal planning documents with regards to addressing historic preservation in the context of natural hazards, and strategies that can be employed to make historic and cultural resources more resilient. Recommended strategies identified in the municipal reports are:

- Identify Historic Resources
- Revisit Historic District Preservation Regulations and Ordinances
- Coordinate Regionally and with the State
- Incorporate Historic Preservation into Planning Documents
- Revisit Floodplain Regulations and Ordinances
- Educate Regarding Historic Resources and Resilience
- Strengthen Recovery Planning
- Structural Adaptation Measures

A best practice guide for planning techniques to make historic resources more resilient was distributed in 2019. This guide can be used by all jurisdictions in Connecticut when undertaking development of hazard mitigation plans.

Resilient Connecticut Phase II

Resilient Connecticut is a planning process originating from the State's successful application to the National Disaster Resilience Competition. The vulnerability assessment and COG-based planning phase commenced in summer 2020 and continued until the end of 2021. The vulnerability assessment included the development of a climate change vulnerability index (CCVI) and delineation of zones of shared risk. *Resilient Connecticut* introduced the concepts of resilience hubs and resilience corridors in the overall framework of making the State more resilient to the impacts of climate change such as flooding and sea level rise. The CCVI, zones of shared risk, regional infrastructure, and regional assets were overlaid and intersected to identify 64 regional opportunity areas in Fairfield County and New Haven County. Four regional opportunity areas were identified in Fairfield: two TOD-based (downtown Fairfield and the Fairfield Metro TOD area) and two based on existing affordable housing (one along Reef Road and one near the university).

Resilient Connecticut Phase III

Fairfield is one of seven recipients of a "Phase III" project which is being executed 2022-2023. Recognizing the potential for downtown Fairfield investment as a resilience hub, the Fairfield project focuses on making the downtown area more resilient through furtherance of the green infrastructure plan and development of concepts to make four underpasses more resilient (North Pine Creek Road, Mil Plain Road, Round Hill Road, and North Benson Road).

Town of Fairfield Flood Mitigation Plan

This report and the accompanying concept plans demonstrate various configurations of flood protection that can be developed to reduce flood pathways to the broad coastal

floodplain inclusive of thousands of residential properties and several key critical facilities like the WWTP. The FECB developed the initial version of this plan and has been updating it as needed over the last ten years. The Town has undertaken individual projects to advance the goals of this plan, such as hardening of the wastewater treatment plant facility through a local flood protection system. This plan also calls for the development of a pumping station near South Benson Road to remove floodwater from storm surge after they are trapped northwest of Penfield Beach and Jennings Beach.

Ash Creek/Riverside Drive Flood Mitigation Plan and Concept Designs

Using CDBG-DR funds, the Town commissioned a study and plan for resiliency efforts on the eastern periphery of the broad coastal floodplain. This report and the accompanying concept plans demonstrate various configurations of flood protection that can be developed to reduce flood pathways from Ash Creek, which is the estuary of Rooster River. Because the flood protection system configurations in the report are geared toward reducing the number of flood pathways to the broad coastal floodplain of Fairfield, but not eliminating all of them, the concepts in the plan will likely need to be advanced along with other efforts. The report also discusses the concept of elevating Turney Road as an alternative to elevating Riverside Drive, which is an option better aligned with the resilient corridor concept of *Resilient Connecticut*.

Downtown Green Infrastructure Plan

The downtown Fairfield neighborhood has suffered frequent shallow flooding related to stormwater generated during severe precipitation events. While flooding is not typically damaging, it causes road and business

closures that disrupt the entire community. Using CDBG-DR funds, the Town commissioned a study and plan for incorporating green infrastructure in the downtown. The plan included concept designs for a variety of green infrastructure projects on public and private properties and roads.

Rooster River Flood Mitigation Study and Plan

The Rooster River floodplain has suffered flood damage numerous times, including during the severe flood on September 25, 2018, which affected only parts of the State of Connecticut. In an effort to reduce the frequency and severity of flooding (but not eliminate flood risk), the Town commissioned a hydrologic and hydraulic study of the river corridor to determine locations for retaining or detaining water during severe precipitation events. Several locations were identified in the Rooster River watershed, and design is underway to advance projects in these locations.

Community Resilience Building (CRB)

Workshops in Fairfield were conducted in 2013 and 2018. Top hazards of concern were coastal flooding, inland flooding, severe precipitation and high wind events, sea level rise, and extreme hot or cold temperature events. Priority vulnerabilities included residential neighborhoods (including dead-end roads), commercial areas, tidal wetlands, brooks and streams, beaches and dunes, major roads, rail lines, cultural and religious buildings, low-income housing, essential service facilities, critical facilities, and bridges, culverts, and tide gates. Top recommended actions included:

- Strengthen disaster planning, response, and recovery capabilities (including EOC communications, neighborhood response teams, and shelters).
- Address risks to access/egress and utility-

services (through tree and limb maintenance and identification of egress chokepoints).

- Improve resilience of infrastructure (including the wastewater treatment facility and flood control structures).
- Improve stormwater retention and infiltration through green infrastructure, pervious pavement, and building and site design.
- Facilitate retreat of development and inland migration of marshes and natural habitats.
- Improve energy efficiency town wide.

Discussion

The prior planning and ongoing efforts described above suggest that the Town of Fairfield should designate five tiers of supporting future public and private investments in infrastructure, community facilities, housing, and development. These five tiers have corresponding spatial characteristics and can be delineated on a map without using sharp boundaries.

Resilient Hubs: These are key areas that have varying degrees of risk now and in the future, but should be prioritized to maintain or improve resilience to natural hazards and climate change. Resilient hubs may include downtown Fairfield, the Fairfield Metro TOD area, Southport, and the area along Black Rock Turnpike where the Tunxis Hill, Holland Hill/Grasmere, and Samp Mortar/Black Rock Turnpike planning areas meet. Community services, critical facilities, essential facilities, important services (grocery stores, retail, gasoline service stations), and some housing for vulnerable populations should be located in resilient hubs.

Resilient Corridors: These are corridors that move people and services between resilient hubs and areas of risk. They serve important functions before, during, and after natural disasters such as floods. They all help the community function during frequent sunny-day flooding that can occur in coastal areas. Evacuation routes are often coincident with

resilient corridors. Resilient corridors from coastal areas may include South Pine Creek Road, Reef Road, Beach Road, South Benson Road, and Turney Road. Resilient corridors for the greater Fairfield community may include Mill Plain Road/Burr Street, Black Rock Turnpike, and Stratfield Road. A key consideration in the resilience corridor concept is making underpasses more resilient, as they connect the coastal and inland corridors.

Areas to Support Coordinated Risk Reduction (i.e., Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation) Efforts:

These are areas where coordinated, comprehensive efforts are needed to enhance community resilience, because individual actions by property owners (such as elevating individual homes) may not be sufficient. Two sub-categories are possible:

- **Areas where the long-term goal may be to undertake projects to reduce risk; however, increased densities of development should not be encouraged.** An example is the Rooster River corridor. The Town plans to develop detention/retention areas in the Rooster River watershed to reduce flood risks along the river. While this will allow people to live along the river in the long term, additional

development would not be encouraged along the Rooster River.

- **Areas where the long-term goal may be to eliminate risks through retreat from hazards.** An example is the small Camden Street/Rutland Avenue neighborhood. While this approach will allow people to live along the lower Rooster River, the long-term goal will be to move residents to areas with lower risk. Town efforts in this category (b) should be coordinated with goals relating to making contiguous open space.

Areas to Support Individual Risk Reduction (i.e., Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation) Efforts:

These are areas where the Town may support individual efforts to make properties more resilient by issuing building and land use approvals for options such as home elevations and non-residential floodproofing. In these areas, the Town will occasionally use public resources to make infrastructure more resilient (i.e., the wastewater treatment plant) and will plan for future resilience projects such as the South Benson Road pumping station. The Town will avoid promoting increased densities of housing in these areas.

Figure 37 cross-references the Town's prior and ongoing efforts with the five tiers of support for future public and private investments in infrastructure, community facilities, housing, and development.

Figure 37. Plans and Resilience Framework

Supporting Plan or Study	Resilient Hubs	Resilient Corridors	Support Coordinated Risk Reduction Efforts	Support Individual Risk Reduction Efforts
Multi-Jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan	X	X	X	X
Regional Framework for Coastal Resilience in Southern Connecticut			X	
Historic Resources Resiliency Planning			X	X
Resilient Connecticut Phase II	X	X		
Resilient Connecticut Phase III	X	X		
The FECB's Flood Mitigation Plan	X	X	X	X
Downtown Green Infrastructure Plan	X	X	X	
Rooster River Flood Mitigation Study and Plan		X	X	
Riverside Drive/Ash Creek Flood Mitigation Study and Plan		X	X	
Community Resilience Building (CRB) events	X	X	X	X



Enclosure No. 3
November 28, 2023
Regular Meeting

Mr. Michael J. Testani
Superintendent
Phone: 203-255-8371
FAX: 203-255-8273

MEMORANDUM

To: Board of Education Members
From: Mr. Michael J. Testani, Superintendent
Executive Team Members
Date: November 28, 2023
Re: District Improvement Plan Update

The 2022-2027 District Improvement Plan was developed based on six strategic focus areas: Academics, SEL & Equity, Professional Development, Growth, Student Support, and Community. The following is a summary of work in each of those areas that currently is in progress and planned for the remainder of the current school year:

1. Academics

Strategic Initiative	2023-2024 Activities
<i>Standards-based & Culturally Responsive Curriculum</i>	<p><u>English Language Arts:</u> Anticipated approval of PK-12 new ELA curricula is scheduled to take place at the December 12, 2023, BOE meeting. Then, professional learning is set to begin on January 9, 2024, and a professional learning calendar to support staff leading up to the fall 2024 implementation is being developed.</p> <p><u>Mathematics:</u> Curriculum continues to be reviewed to ensure access for all students to grade level content. Collaboration with special education staff to review current structures for providing support to students. Department leaders continue to review curriculum to strengthen Tier 1 instruction.</p>

	<p><u>District Implementation:</u> A UbD framework has been developed for the district and enacted. All new curricula will follow the template with standardized expectations and information. The district has begun looking at a <i>Culturally Responsive Rubric</i>. We have gathered other rubrics from districts and will make a Fairfield rubric to guide our curriculum reviews.</p>
<i>Gifted Program</i>	<p>Site visits began to collect relevant information regarding gifted and talented programming. A number of options are available. The district will determine the direction of the available options to plan a TAG program. During the 2023-2024 school year, the district is engaging with a TAG consultant to begin planning a TAG program for Fairfield.</p>
<i>Implementation Guides</i>	<p>Implementation guides to support the Pre-AP Curriculum are being developed over the next two years to support the phase in implementation of the Pre-AP Curriculum in Algebra 1, Geometry and Algebra 2. During the summer of 2023, implementation guides for Algebra 1 began being refined and the work continues during the 2023-2024 school year. Staff continue to make notes for adjustments/revisions for the upcoming school year. Additionally, Geometry and Algebra 2 curriculum guides continue to be updated for alignment with the future rollout of the Pre-AP Curriculum. Department leaders continue to work on course implementation revisions, common and performance tasks and learning plans in alignment with the approved curriculum.</p> <p>Implementation guides in ELA are scheduled to be completed during Summer 2024 to support the district approved new ELA curriculum. We continue to develop and refine implementation plans in other core areas and in other disciplines as a new curriculum is being approved.</p>

2. SEL & Equity

Strategic Initiative	2023-2024 Activities
<p><i>Social/Emotional MTSS</i></p>	<p>The DESSA-Mini continues to be utilized as the FPS SEL universal screener in grades K-8 and results are analyzed to help identify students who may require additional instruction and support in strengthening SEL competencies. Use of the DESSA-HSE (High School Edition), which is a student self-report, has begun this year to assist in identifying high school students in need of additional support in the development of their SEL competencies. The DESSA-HSE is available in nine different languages.</p> <p>Implementation of Move This World (MTW) at all levels has begun throughout the district as the primary tier 1 SEL resource, with existing supplemental resources utilized to support the development of students' SEL competencies as appropriate.</p> <p>The Program Director of Mental Health and Student Support Services has begun developing an MTSS Resource Map in collaboration with school counselors, school psychologists, and school social workers. This work will continue toward the development of a comprehensive Multi-Tiered System of Supports.</p>
<p>Explicit SEL Instruction and Professional Learning</p>	<p>All administrative and certified staff received training on the implementation of Move This World prior to the start of the 2023-2024 school year and dedicated time has been established at each level to deliver Move This World SEL lessons to all students. SEL teacher leaders continue to support implementation of the Move This World SEL resource at each school and met as an SEL district committee during summer 2023 to vet MTW SEL lessons and to establish implementation guidelines.</p> <p>All administrators attended a three-day Restorative Practices training in July or August 2023, and four additional cohorts of FPS staff will receive training in Restorative Practices by December 2023. These cohorts include school psychologists, school social workers, school counselors, school resource officers and staff from Walter Fitzgerald Campus. Additional cohorts of certified staff will also be scheduled in collaboration with colleagues from RYASAP (Regional Youth Adult Social Action Partnership) to train certified staff in Restorative Practices.</p>
<p><i>Targeted Supports for Underserved Students</i></p>	<p>The "Move This World" program has parent resources and student materials available. We continue to target increasing parent engagement through the "Move this World" parent component, so students and families have opportunities to develop and practice SEL skills in the home. We also continue to focus on ensuring that diverse students are represented in SEL materials and content to help educators understand how culture plays a role in the development and expression of SEL competencies.</p>

<i>Rigorous Course Enrollment</i>	The high school teams have engaged in a review of the course selection process in order to target students and families to expand their discussions on course possibilities. They have also conducted data reviews to identify strengths and areas of growth by department and have implemented protocols for School Counselors to use when engaging in course selection conversations with students who may not see themselves in a higher-level course. This is an ongoing process during student course selection. Grade 8 students will select courses in a similar manner as grades 9-11 in regard to choice and leveling.
<i>Attendance</i>	School-based attendance teams meet regularly to revise absenteeism trends, identify students in need of support and review the impact of strategies implemented to re-engage students and families. School and district staff also have access to “Talk Tuesdays”, a CSDE/SERC facilitated webinar on a multi-tiered approach to improving attendance in schools through engagement, partnerships, and early intervention. This year we provided parents and school staff with an attendance handbook, which summarizes Board policy and provides school teams with attendance protocols and links to resources to support students and families outside of school. Additionally, we launched a revised chronic absenteeism letter which includes softened language and student, grade level, school attendance data for the current school year.

3. Professional Development

Strategic Initiative	2023-2024 Activities
<i>Professional Learning</i>	<u>Instructional Leadership</u> - Partners for Educational Leadership will continue conducting sessions with administrators and coaches in ELA and mathematics around high quality instruction. Staff have participated in monthly workshops to kickoff the work focused on our district efforts. Work will be done to develop a common definition of high-quality instruction, as well as how the district can utilize the coaches to support this work. Administrators and coaches continue to develop and deliver professional learning sessions focused on high quality instruction to staff during district professional development time.

Mathematics and Science - Professional Learning has focused on supporting implementation of the Pre-AP Curriculum in Algebra 1. Teachers have participated in online module training to gain a deeper understanding of the curriculum resource to support instruction. Furthermore, time has been allocated for math teachers from the middle and high schools to collaborate, create and review assessments, as well as adjust pacing calendars. Additionally, the secondary mathematics department has participated in workshops to engage in activities to support high quality instruction and ways for students to make thinking visible. The math leadership team of the secondary MRTs collaborate to design workshops during district professional learning time. Members of the elementary MST team participated in two trainings provided by IXL to deepen their understanding of how to best maximize the instructional resource to support students.

Secondary Science teachers professional learning sessions for the 2023-2024 school year is focused on promoting student sense-making and discourse in science classrooms. Additionally, the secondary science teachers will have training on the model science curriculum from the state. The department continues to work on creating and reviewing common assessments, along with training on calibration of scoring and analyzing student work.

Literacy How Structured Literacy - Grades 1 and 2 classroom teachers attend monthly professional learning to build their understanding of structured literacy pedagogy and associated strategies for classroom implementation. An adolescent literacy series will begin in December for middle school and high school LASs, SRBI coordinators, and reading teams. These series aim to develop a common language of instruction and provide teachers with strategies they can use within their daily work with students.

Special Education - Elementary special education teachers and speech pathologists completed training this fall using the Sound Sensible program, which provides phonological awareness and beginning phonics instruction for beginning or struggling readers. Elementary and middle school special education teachers completed training in S.P.I.R.E. (Specialized Program Individualizing Reading Excellence), which is a multi-sensory teaching approach utilizing systematic, sequential phonics and phonological awareness in grades kindergarten through eight. Selected elementary and middle school special education staff will complete a thirty-hour Structured Literacy Training series through Literacy How from November 21, 2023 - April 20, 2024. District special education teachers, school psychologists and speech pathologists attended a half-day virtual training on November 7, 2023, on use of the TILLS (Test of Integrated Language and Literacy Skills) in order to continue to strengthen their skills assessing and responding to the literacy needs of students.

<p><i>Evaluation & Feedback Systems</i></p>	<p>Our evaluation framework was designed and was under review. District administrators participated in two rounds of feedback and alignment testing during the 2022-2023 school year. During this time, the state legislature raised a bill on Teacher Performance Evaluations (HB 6757). We initially paused our design team, planning, and implementation in order to allow the district to be in alignment with the state legislation. The district's PDEC team has met three times. During the last meeting, the team reviewed the legislation and how the district should implement it, if passed, in the near future. The FPS PDEC team will begin meeting again in December and follow the CT Guidelines on Educator and Leader Evaluation in planning the 2024 teacher and administrator evaluation documents.</p>
<p><i>Diverse & Qualified Candidate Hiring</i></p>	<p><u>Marketing & Branding Campaign</u> – In the Fall of 2022, Human Resources committed to increasing FPS's visibility using a multifaceted approach. Part of this work included the redesign of the HR page on the FPS website and increasing the district's online presence by collaborating with the Director of Communications. We have also begun targeted marketing utilizing digital and static billboards, radio, and print ads.</p> <p><u>Increasing Educator Diversity Coaching Series</u> - Twelve administrators and teachers participated in six CSDE/CES coaching sessions to begin the creation of a district plan to increase the racial, ethnic, and linguistic diversity of FPS staff. Through these sessions, the Recruitment & Retention Committee was formed. This group will also assist in drafting the Increasing Educator Diversity Plan, which is required for submission to CSDE by all school districts as a result of June 2023 legislation.</p> <p><u>Recruitment & Retention Committee</u> - Twelve administrators and teachers comprise this committee, which examines current recruitment and retention strategies and adds new strategies appropriate to district needs. The committee is in the process of establishing a district-wide applicant screening and interviewing process and has committed to ensuring FPS is visible to communities through targeted marketing.</p> <p><u>Career Pathways</u> - In Fall 2022 new partnerships were formed to facilitate grow-your-own pipelines for non-certified staff. These partnerships with Fairfield University, Relay School of Graduate Education, and the CT Teacher Residency Program (in its 3rd year) will increase the certified candidate pool in our teacher shortage areas. In Spring 2023, new partnerships with Fairfield University and St. Joseph's University were formed to motivate and encourage certified staff to continue their education through tuition discounts and FPS cohort programs. Fall 2023, in collaboration with Sacred Heart University, the Elementary/Special Education Residency program was established. This program allows elementary education candidates the opportunity to become cross-endorsed in special education. FPS provides a specialized internship/student teaching model in both areas.</p>

4. Growth

Strategic Initiative	2023-2024 Activities
<i>School Improvement Plans</i>	School teams drafted SIP goals over the summer focused on improving student achievement, attendance, and access to honors/AP courses. Our Data Assessment Coordinator has met with teams at each school to assist them in the compilation and analysis of multiple data sets related to their SIP goals. Additionally, she has worked with groups of teachers from multiple departments in identifying performance trends and gaps in order to make instructional and/or implementation guide adjustments to better serve the needs of our students. Additionally, school teams have all developed 90-day school change frameworks which focus on one high-leverage strategy they will implement in support of high-quality instruction, with the inclusion of building-specific, targeted actions. Administrators will engage in a review of goals and strategies, including a discussion of progress and necessary adjustments. Schools will wrap up the school year with an end-of-year SIP review, highlighting their accomplishments and successful strategies.
<i>Strategic Alignment</i>	All SIPs were drafted so that they are aligned with the District Improvement Plan and aligned across the level (elementary, middle, and high schools). Additionally, there is alignment between the SIPs and administrator and teacher goals, so that there is shared ownership of the work. Professional learning at the building level for the 2023-2024 school year was aligned to the school improvement goals.

5. Student Support

Strategic Initiative	2023-2024 Activities
<i>Multi-Tiered Support System & Responsive/Research Based Instruction</i>	<p><u>Literacy</u> - A new comprehension intervention program for grades 3-5 called Making Connections was added to the toolkit for our elementary interventionists to match to student needs. The program provides direct and systematic comprehension strategy support with a scaffolded instructional plan that breaks down the task of comprehension into parts that can be taught. Middle school LASs, SRBI coordinators and reading teachers will learn how to administer Acadience reading measures for some students who require a progress monitoring plan using those probes to determine a targeted view of a student's response to instruction.</p> <p><u>Numeracy</u> - At the elementary level, the MSTs provide direct instruction to students participating in the fourth grade accelerated math program. Students receive a compacted curriculum of standards covering grades 4 and 5 topics throughout the school year. Also, Bridges intervention materials are utilized at the elementary school to provide targeted support, instruction, and progress monitoring to tier two and tier three intervention students. Additionally, identified students in second through ninth grade receive access to IXL to both extend and remediate identified mathematical skills and concepts.</p>

	<p><u>Social-Emotional Learning</u> - The DESSA-Mini continues to be utilized as the FPS SEL universal screener in grades K-8 and results are analyzed to help identify students who may require additional instruction and support in strengthening SEL competencies. Use of the DESSA-HSE (High School Edition), which is a student self-report, has begun this year to assist in identifying high school students in need of additional support in the development of their SEL competencies as well. The DESSA-HSE is available in nine different languages.</p>
<i>Data-driven decision making</i>	<p>Based on feedback from building administrators, we launched Decision Ed at the start of the 2023-2024 school year to increase immediate access for buildings to various data points in support of SIPs goals and improving student outcomes, specifically analysis of programming and progress monitoring intervention data. This data warehouse allows staff to view student performance on district (e.g., NWEA, Acadience, PSAT, etc.) and state assessments (e.g., SBA, SAT, etc.), as well as student attendance, disciplinary infractions, and course performance. Our Data Assessment Coordinator has met with school and department teams multiple times to review various data sets, which allow them to examine grade level and cohort performance and unpack the data to determine intervention and extension needs, as well as instructional adjustments.</p>
<i>Comprehensive assessment</i>	<p>Two universal screeners have been selected and administered in the Fall of 2023. These include Acadience Reading (K-3) which is in alignment with the CT State Dyslexia Legislation. In addition, NWEA MAP Growth was implemented K-9 in math and 4-9 in reading and language usage. The district's assessment calendar was re-established for the 23-24 school year. It removed assessments that were duplicating assessment of particular skills or content or were misaligned to curriculum.</p>

6. Community

Strategic Initiative	2023-2024 Activities
<i>Communications Process Integration</i>	<p>We have developed a strategic communications plan to provide a framework for providing information and successes to FPS families, staff and communities. The district newsletters for staff and families are shared monthly as a mechanism for highlighting a variety of news (academic achievements, community events, BOE updates, health reminders, etc.). We also launched Parent Square district-wide, which provides a user-friendly means of supporting two-way communication with parents and families and the school. Communications and IT are working collaboratively with school principals to reformat staff directories on websites to provide community members with updated information and encourage outreach between parents and staff via ParentSquare. Additionally, we have increased our social media presence by highlighting and celebrating our students and staff on Facebook and sharing workshops and webinars to support parents and</p>

	<p>families. Best practices were shared with principals surrounding emergency communications to ensure that relevant and important information is shared in a timely manner, maintain consistency, privacy and not cause unnecessary anxiety.</p>
<p><i>Stakeholder Engagement</i></p>	<p>We provide regular updates via ParentSquare, the FPS social media accounts and revamped website, which was launched at the start of the 2023-2024 school year. The redesigned site provides easier access for parents, staff, and members of the community. The school websites will be transitioned to the redesigned pages in early 2024. "Bright Spots" are shared by the Superintendent at BOE meetings and groups or individuals and families are invited to attend. We have conducted several surveys to collect student and parent feedback on various aspects of education in FPS, including the school nutrition survey which solicited input from students, staff, and families in order to improve our dining services. A survey was also sent to ECC families to determine plans for the 2024-2025 school year based on the new state law regarding kindergarten entry and birthdates. Expansion of meaningful "Awareness Months" (e.g., Diwali, Anti-Bullying Awareness Month, Black History Month, etc.) are shared by the superintendent during BOE meetings, on social media and in newsletters. We engage families on a regular basis by promoting relevant events and happenings offered in collaboration with community partners such as the Fairfield Youth Collaborative and Fairfield CARES.</p>

Students

ADMISSION / PLACEMENT

5111(a)

Admission

Effective July 1, 2024, district schools shall be open to all children five years of age and over who reach age five on or before the first day of September of any school year. For children who will not reach the age of five on or before the first day of September of the school year, the child's parent or guardian may submit a written request to the District seeking early admission. Upon receipt of such written request, the District and an appropriate certified staff member(s) shall assess such child to determine whether admitting the child is developmentally appropriate. For decisions relating to early admission to the District, the decision of the District and appropriate certified staff shall be final.

The Superintendent or designee shall be responsible for developing administrative regulations in furtherance of this policy. Such regulations shall identify procedures for the receipt and processing of requests for early admission to the District and for assessing whether early admission of a child is developmentally appropriate.

Each such child shall have, and shall be so advised by the appropriate school authorities, an equal opportunity to participate in the program and activities of the school system without discrimination on account of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression. Students who are classified as homeless under federal law, and therefore do not have a fixed residence, will be admitted pursuant to federal law and policy 5118.1. Exceptions from routine admission may be made by the school Principal on the basis of supporting evidence from physical and psychological examinations.

The parent or person having control of a child five years of age shall have the option of not sending the child to school until the child is six years of age. The parent or person having control of a child six years of age shall have the option of not sending the child to school until the child is seven years of age.

The parent or person shall exercise such option by personally appearing at the school district office and signing an option form. The district shall provide the parent or person with information on the educational opportunities available in the school system.

According to Connecticut General Statute 10-76d (b2), special education will be provided for children who have attained the age of three and who have been identified as being in need of special education.

Each child entering the district schools for the first time must present a birth certificate or offer legal evidence of birth date, as well as proof of a recent physical examination and required immunizations. If the parents or guardians of any children are unable to pay for such immunizations, the expense of such immunizations shall, on the recommendation of the Superintendent or designee, be paid by the town. Proof of domicile shall also be requested by the school district.

Students

ADMISSION / PLACEMENT (continued)

5111(b)

Any child entering or returning to the district from placement in a juvenile detention school, the Connecticut Juvenile Training School, or any other residential placement, shall have the educational records of such child provided to the Superintendent of Schools by the Department of Children and Families (DCF) and the Judicial Department. Such information will be shared with the Principal of the school to which the student is assigned. The Principal can disclose them to the staff who teach or care for the child.

The District will immediately enroll any student who transfers from Unified District No. 1 or Unified District No 2. A student transferring from the Unified School Districts who had previously attended school in the local District shall be enrolled in a school with an appropriate program that, in consultation with the parent/guardian is in the best interest of the student.

The parent or person having control of a child seventeen years of age may consent to such child's withdrawal from school by personally appearing at the school district office to sign a withdrawal form and enroll such child in an adult education program pursuant to Connecticut General Statute Section 10-69. Such parent or person shall personally appear at the school district office and sign an adult education withdrawal and enrollment form. Such adult education withdrawal and enrollment form shall include an attestation (1) from a school counselor or school administrator of the school that such school district has provided such parent or person with information on the educational options available in the school system and in the community, and (2) from such parent or person that such child will be enrolled in an adult education program upon such child's withdrawal from school.

For the school year commencing July 1, 2023, and each school year thereafter, a student who is eighteen years of age or older may withdraw from school. Such student shall personally appear at the school district office and sign a withdrawal form. Such withdrawal form shall include an attestation from a guidance counselor or school administrator of the school that the district has provided the parent or person with information on the educational options available in the school system and in the community.

Children who have attained the age of seventeen and who have terminated enrollment in the district's schools with parental permission as described previously and subsequently seeks readmission may be denied readmission for up to ninety school days from the date of such termination, unless such child seeks readmission to a district school not later than ten days after such termination. In such case the child will be provided school accommodations not later than three days after the requested readmission.

Children who apply for initial admission to the district's schools by transfer from nonpublic schools or from schools outside the district will be placed at the grade they would have reached elsewhere pending observation and evaluation by classroom teachers, guidance personnel, and the school Principal. After such observations and evaluations have been completed, the Principal will determine the final grade placement of the children.

Students

ADMISSION / PLACEMENT (continued)

5111(c)

Children who have attained the age of nineteen or older may be placed in an alternative school program or other suitable educational program if they cannot acquire a sufficient number of credits for graduation by age twenty-one.

- (cf. 0521 - Nondiscrimination)
- (cf. 5112 - Ages of Attendance)
- (cf. 5118.1 - Homeless Students)
- (cf. 5141 - Student Health Services)
- (cf. 6171 - Special Education)
- (cf. 6146 - Graduation Requirements)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes
10-15 Towns to maintain schools
10-15c Discrimination in public schools prohibited. School attendance by five-year olds, as amended by PA 97-247
10-76a - 10-76g re special education
10-184 Duties of parents (re mandatory schooling for children ages five to sixteen, inclusive) - as amended by PA 98-243, PA 00-157 and PA 09-6 (September Special Session), PA 18-15, and PA 21-199
10-186 Duties of local and regional boards of education re school attendance. Hearings. Appeals to state board. Establishment of hearing board. Readmission, as amended by PA 19-179.
10-220h Transfer of student records, as amended.
P.A. 11-115 An Act Concerning Juvenile Reentry and Education
10-233a - 10-233f Inclusive; re: suspend, expel, removal of pupils
10-233c Suspension of pupils
10-233d Expulsion of pupils
10-233k Notification of school officials of potentially dangerous students. (as amended by PA 01-176)
10-261 Definitions
State Board of Education Regulations
10-76a-1 General definitions (c) (d) (q) (t)
10-76d-7 Admission of student requiring special education (referral)
10-204a Required immunizations (as amended by PA 98-243)
McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. §11431 et seq.
Plyler vs. Doe, 457 U.S. 202 (1982)
Public Act 23-208, Section 1(a) “An Act Making Certain Revisions to the Education Statutes.”

Adopted 8/27/2004

Revised and Adopted 10/18/2016

Revised and Adopted X/X/2023

Students

ADMISSION / PLACEMENT

5111(a)

Admission

Effective July 1, 2024, District schools shall be open to all children five years of age and over who reach age five on or before the first day of September ~~December 31st~~ of any school year. For children who will not reach the age of five on or before the first day of September of the school year, the child's parent or guardian may submit a written request to the District seeking early admission. Upon receipt of such written request, the District and an appropriate certified staff member(s) shall assess such child to determine whether admitting the child is developmentally appropriate. For decisions relating to early admission to the District, the decision of the District and appropriate certified staff shall be final.

The Superintendent or designee shall be responsible for developing administrative regulations in furtherance of this policy. Such regulations shall identify procedures for the receipt and processing of requests for early admission to the District and for assessing whether early admission of a child is developmentally appropriate.

Each such child shall have, and shall be so advised by the appropriate school authorities, an equal opportunity to participate in the program and activities of the school system without discrimination on account of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression. Students who are classified as homeless under federal law, and therefore do not have a fixed residence, will be admitted pursuant to federal law and policy 5118.1. Exceptions from routine admission may be made by the school Principal on the basis of supporting evidence from physical and psychological examinations.

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According to Connecticut General Statute 10-76d (b2), special education will be provided for children who have attained the age of three and who have been identified as being in need of special education.

Each child entering the district schools for the first time must present a birth certificate or offer legal evidence of birth date, as well as proof of a recent physical examination and required immunizations. If the parents or guardians of any children are unable to pay for such immunizations, the expense of such immunizations shall, on the recommendation of the Superintendent or designee, be paid by the town. Proof of domicile shall also be requested by the school district.

Any child entering or returning to the district from placement in a juvenile detention school, the

Students

ADMISSION / PLACEMENT (continued)

5111(b)

Connecticut Juvenile Training School, or any other residential placement, shall have the educational records of such child provided to the Superintendent of Schools by the Department of Children and Families (DCF) and the Judicial Department. Such information will be shared with the Principal of the school to which the student is assigned. The Principal can disclose them to the staff who teach or care for the child.

The District will immediately enroll any student who transfers from Unified District No. 1 or Unified District No 2. A student transferring from the Unified School Districts who had previously attended school in the local District shall be enrolled in a school with an appropriate program that, in consultation with the parent/guardian is in the best interest of the student.

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For the school year commencing July 1, 2023, and each school year thereafter, a student who is eighteen years of age or older may withdraw from school. Such student shall personally appear at the school district office and sign a withdrawal form. Such withdrawal form shall include an attestation from a guidance counselor or school administrator of the school that the district has provided the parent or person with information on the educational options available in the school system and in the community.

Children who have attained the age of seventeen and who have terminated enrollment in the district's schools with parental permission as described previously and subsequently seeks readmission may be denied readmission for up to ninety school days from the date of such termination, unless such child seeks readmission to a district school not later than ten days after such termination. In such case the child will be provided school accommodations not later than three days after the requested readmission.

Children who apply for initial admission to the district's schools by transfer from nonpublic schools or from schools outside the district will be placed at the grade they would have reached elsewhere pending observation and evaluation by classroom teachers, guidance personnel, and the school Principal. After such observations and evaluations have been completed, the Principal will determine the final grade placement of the children.

Children who have attained the age of nineteen or older may be placed in an alternative school program or other suitable educational program if they cannot acquire a sufficient number of credits for graduation by age twenty-one.

Students

ADMISSION / PLACEMENT (continued)

5111(c)

(cf. 0521 - Nondiscrimination)
(cf. 5112 - Ages of Attendance)
(cf. 5118.1 - Homeless Students)
(cf. 5141 - Student Health Services)
(cf. 6171 - Special Education)
(cf. 6146 - Graduation Requirements)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes
10-15 Towns to maintain schools
10-15c Discrimination in public schools prohibited. School attendance by five-year olds, as amended by PA 97-247
10-76a - 10-76g re special education
10-184 Duties of parents (re mandatory schooling for children ages five to sixteen, inclusive) - as amended by PA 98-243, PA 00-157 and PA 09-6 (September Special Session), [PA 18-15](#), and [PA 21-199](#)
10-186 Duties of local and regional boards of education re school attendance. Hearings. Appeals to state board. Establishment of hearing board. Readmission, as amended [by PA 19-179](#).
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P.A. 11-115 An Act Concerning Juvenile Reentry and Education
10-233a - 10-233f Inclusive; re: suspend, expel, removal of pupils
10-233c Suspension of pupils
10-233d Expulsion of pupils
10-233k Notification of school officials of potentially dangerous students. (as amended by PA 01-176)
10-261 Definitions
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10-76a-1 General definitions (c) (d) (q) (t)
10-76d-7 Admission of student requiring special education (referral)
10-204a Required immunizations (as amended by PA 98-243)
McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. §11431 et seq.
Plyler vs. Doe, 457 U.S. 202 (1982)
[Public Act 23-208, Section 1\(a\) "An Act Making Certain Revisions to the Education Statutes."](#)

Adopted 8/27/2004

Revised and Adopted 10/18/2016

[Revised and Adopted X/X/2023](#)

Students

ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS ON ADMISSION / PLACEMENT

5111 AR

Kindergarten Entry

Effective July 1, 2024, district schools shall be open to all children five years of age or over or who reach five on or before the first day of September 2024.

For the 2024-2025 school year, children who will not reach age five on or before September 1, 2024 but will reach five before January 1, 2025, may submit a written request to the District seeking early admissions. The written request shall serve as the assessment of the child's developmental appropriateness. The District will provide guidance and domain specific kindergarten readiness skills to assist the parent in the decision-making process.

October 31, 2023

Students

SUICIDE PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION

5141.5

The Fairfield Board of Education (the “Board”) recognizes that suicide is a complex issue and that schools are not mental health treatment centers. The Fairfield Public Schools (the “District”) cannot be expected to thoroughly evaluate and eliminate suicidal risk. Nevertheless, school personnel may become aware of specific factual circumstances in which a student has communicated a suicidal intent or other specific circumstances in which a student is at risk for suicide. In such cases, the District is committed to respond in a supportive manner, both aggressively and immediately, to a student who has attempted, has threatened, or who communicates that they are considering attempting suicide.

Any District employee who has knowledge that a student has made a suicidal threat, or attempt or exhibited suicidal ideation, must immediately report this information to the building principal, or designee, who will, in turn, notify the appropriate Pupil Personnel Services staff. The Pupil Personnel Services staff, with administrative assistance, if necessary, will contact the student's family and appropriate resources within and outside the school system as permitted by law. The Board further directs the school staff to refer students who come to their attention as being at risk of attempting suicide for professional assessment and treatment services outside of the school.

Information concerning a student's suicide attempt, threat, or risk will be shared with others only as permitted by state and federal law.

In recognition of the need for youth suicide prevention procedures, the Board directs the Superintendent or designee to adopt and maintain administrative regulations addressing youth suicide prevention.

Training will be provided for teachers and other school staff regarding the prevention of and response to youth suicide.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes 10-220a
Connecticut General Statutes 10-221(f)
Public Act 23-167, “An Act Concerning Transparency in Education”

Adopted 5/24/2011
Revised and Adopted 10/27/2020
Revised and Adopted X/X/2023

Students

SUICIDE PREVENTION AND ~~POSTVENTION~~ INTERVENTION 5141.5(a)

The Fairfield Board of Education (the “Board”) recognizes that suicide is a complex issue and that schools are not mental health treatment centers. The Fairfield Public Schools (the “District”) cannot be expected to thoroughly evaluate and eliminate suicidal risk. Nevertheless, school personnel may become aware of specific factual circumstances in which a student has communicated a suicidal intent or other specific circumstances in which a student is at risk for suicide. In such cases, the District is committed to respond in a supportive manner, both aggressively and immediately, to a student who has attempted, has threatened, or who communicates that they are considering attempting suicide. ~~the need for a comprehensive suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention policy given that suicide is the third leading cause of death among young people and that school, a structure in which students have frequent contact with caring adults, has a unique role to play in suicide prevention and postvention. The purpose of this policy is to protect the health and well-being of all students by having established processes in place to prevent, assess risk of, intervene in, and respond to suicide. The district:~~

- ~~• Recognizes that physical and mental health are integral components of student outcomes, both educationally and beyond graduation;~~
- ~~• Further recognizes that suicide is a leading cause of death among young people;~~
- ~~• Has an ethical responsibility to take a proactive approach in preventing deaths by suicide;~~
- ~~• Acknowledges the school’s role in providing an environment that is sensitive to individual and societal factors that place youth at greater risk for suicide;~~
- ~~• Aims to foster positive social-emotional development and resilience; and~~
- ~~• Acknowledges that comprehensive suicide prevention policies include prevention, intervention, and postvention components.~~

~~It is the policy of the Fairfield Public Schools to respond actively and responsibly to any situation where a student verbally or behaviorally indicates intent to attempt suicide or to inflict self-injury or harm. The Board recognizes the need for established suicide prevention practices that assist staff in identifying risk factors, vulnerable populations, intervention procedures, and postvention activities. The Board acknowledges that suicide is a complex issue, and that while school staff members may collect information to preliminarily determine level of risk, they cannot unilaterally make clinical assessments of risk.~~

Any ~~Board~~ District employee who has knowledge ~~of suicidal ideation~~ that a student has made a suicidal threat, or attempt or exhibited suicidal ideation, must immediately report this information to the building principal, or his/her designee, who will, in turn, notify ~~a school-based mental health professional (e.g., school psychologist, school counselor, school social worker, school nurse) and if appropriate, members of the School Crisis Response Team~~ the appropriate Pupil Personnel Services staff. ~~the School-based mental health professionals may recognize a potentially suicidal youth and, in such cases, will make a preliminary determination of level of risk. The student will not be left alone at any time during the assessment process. A designated member of the School Crisis Response Team.~~ The Pupil Personnel Services staff, with administrative support assistance, if necessary, will contact the student's family and appropriate resources within and outside the school system as permitted by law. ~~as soon as possible. The student will remain under close supervision until released to the care of a parent/guardian or emergency medical personnel. School staff will collaborate with parents/guardians to connect them to resources, including further assessment and/or treatment (e.g.,~~

Students

SUICIDE PREVENTION AND ~~POSTVENTION INTERVENTION~~ 5141.5(b)

~~community, medically based, school based).~~ The Board further directs the school staff to refer students who come to their attention as being at ~~high~~ risk of attempting suicide for professional assessment and treatment services outside of the school.

Information concerning a student's suicide attempt, threat, or risk will be shared with others only ~~to the degree necessary to protect that student and others~~ as permitted by state and federal law.

~~This suicide prevention and postvention policy will help to protect all students through the following steps:—~~

~~In recognition of the need for youth suicide prevention procedures, the Board directs the Superintendent or designee to adopt and maintain administrative regulations addressing youth suicide prevention.~~

~~Annual~~ Training will be provided for teachers and other school staff regarding the prevention of and response to youth suicide.

- ~~• All staff shall receive professional development on risk factors, warning signs, protective factors, response procedures, referrals, and resources regarding youth suicide prevention on an annual basis.~~
- ~~• As part of the Fairfield Public Schools Health Curriculum, students will be educated regarding suicide risk factors, and how to respond if confronted with suicidal behavior, verbalizations, or thoughts.~~
- ~~• School-based mental health professionals (e.g., school psychologists, school counselors, school social workers) are shall be equipped to preliminarily assess risk, identify appropriate resources, and facilitate building level response and follow up when a student is identified as at risk.~~
- ~~• In the event of a completed suicide, postvention activities that a) promote healing, and b) aim to reduce contagion and decrease risk, will be facilitated at the building, district, and/or community level.~~
- ~~• Students and parents can access local and national resources for additional information and support, including:—~~
 - ~~○ In Connecticut, dial: 211~~
 - ~~○ www.preventsuicidect.org~~
 - ~~○ National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-TALK (8255)~~
 - ~~○ Suicidepreventionlifeline.org~~
 - ~~○ The Trevor Lifeline: 1-866-488-7386 thetrevorproject.org/get-help-now~~
 - ~~○ Trevor Lifeline Text/Chat Services, available 24/7 Text “TREVOR” to 678-678~~
 - ~~○ Crisis Text Line: Text TALK to 741-741 (crisistextline.org)~~

Students

SUICIDE PREVENTION AND ~~POSTVENTION~~ INTERVENTION 5141.5(c)

~~In alignment with the efforts of the School Climate Committee, all school personnel and students will be expected to help create a school culture of respect and support, in which students feel comfortable seeking help for themselves or friends. Students are encouraged to tell any staff member if they, or a friend, are feeling suicidal, or in need of help. While confidentiality and privacy are important, students should know that when there is risk of suicide, safety comes first~~

~~This policy covers actions that take place in school, on school property, at school-sponsored functions and activities, on school buses or vehicles, at bus stops, and at school-sponsored out-of-school events where school staff are present. This policy applies to the entire school community, including educators, school and district staff, students, parents/guardians, and volunteers. This policy also addresses the need for a school response to suicidal or high-risk behaviors that take place outside of the school environment.~~

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes 10-220a
~~Connecticut General Statutes
10-221 Boards of education to prescribe rules, policies, and procedures. (e) Re-
"policy and procedures for dealing with youth suicide prevention and youth
suicide attempts."
Connecticut General Statutes 10-221(f)
Public Act 23-167, "An Act Concerning Transparency in Education"~~

Adopted 5/24/2011

Revised and Adopted 10/27/2020

Revised and Adopted X/X/2023

**Regular Meeting Minutes
Fairfield BoE, November 14, 2023, 7:30 PM**

NOTICE: A full meeting recording can be obtained from Fairfield Public Schools. Please call 203-255-8371 for more information and/or see the FPS website (under Board Meeting Minutes) for a link to FAIRTV and FPS YouTube.

Voting Summary

Call to order of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education and Roll Call

Chairman Jennifer Jacobsen called the Regular Meeting to order at 7:32PM. Present were members Nick Aysseh, Carol Guernsey, Jennifer Jacobsen, Crissy Kelly (arrived at 7:58pm), Jennifer Maxon Kennelly, Jeff Peterson, Bonnie Rotelli, and Christine Vitale. Others present were Superintendent Mike Testani, members of the central office leadership team, and approximately 23 members of the public.

Old Business

Adoption of Policy 5144.4: Recess, Play-Based Learning, and Discipline

Mrs. Maxon Kennelly/Mr. Aysseh seconded a motion “that the Board of Education adopt Policy 5144.4: Recess, PlayBased Learning, and Discipline”

Mr. Aysseh, Ms. Guernsey, Mrs. Jacobsen, Mrs. Kelly, Mrs. Maxon Kennelly, Mr. Peterson, Bonnie Rotelli, and Mrs. Vitale voted in favor.

Motion passed 8-0.

Adoption of Curriculum: American Sign Language III

Mrs. Rotelli moved/Mr. Peterson seconded a motion “that the Board of Education adopt the Curriculum: American Sign Language III”

Mr. Aysseh, Ms. Guernsey, Mrs. Jacobsen, Mrs. Kelly, Mrs. Maxon Kennelly, Mr. Peterson, Bonnie Rotelli, and Mrs. Vitale voted in favor.

Motion passed 8-0.

Mr. Aysseh moved/Mrs. Maxon Kennelly seconded a motion “that the Board of Education extend the meeting to 12:00AM”

Mr. Aysseh, Ms. Guernsey, Mrs. Jacobsen, and Mrs. Maxon Kennelly, voted in favor.

Mrs. Kelly, Mr. Peterson, Bonnie Rotelli, and Mrs. Vitale were opposed.

Motion failed 4-4.

Mr. Aysseh moved/Mrs. Maxon Kennelly seconded a motion “that the Board of Education extend the meeting to 11:30PM”

Draft

Mr. Aysseh, Ms. Guernsey, Mrs. Jacobsen, Mrs. Kelly, Mrs. Maxon Kennelly, and Mrs. Vitale voted in favor.

Mr. Peterson and Bonnie Rotelli were opposed.

Motion passed 6-2.

Adoption of Policy 6146: Requirements for Graduation

Mrs. Maxon Kennelly moved/Mr. Peterson seconded a motion “that the Board of Education adopt Policy 6146: Requirements for Graduation”

Mr. Aysseh, Ms. Guernsey, Mrs. Jacobsen, Mrs. Kelly, Mrs. Maxon Kennelly, Mr. Peterson, Bonnie Rotelli, and Mrs. Vitale voted in favor.

Motion passed 8-0.

[Approval of Minutes](#)

Mr. Aysseh moved/Mrs. Kelly seconded the recommended motion “that the Board of Education approve the 10-24-2023 BoE Regular Meeting Minutes”

Mr. Aysseh, Ms. Guernsey, Mrs. Jacobsen, Mrs. Kelly, Mrs. Maxon Kennelly, Mr. Peterson, Bonnie Rotelli, and Mrs. Vitale voted in favor.

Motion passed 8-0.

[Adjournment](#)

Mr. Aysseh moved/Mrs. Kelly seconded the recommended motion “that this Special Meeting of the Board of Education adjourn”

Nick Aysseh, Carol Guernsey, Jennifer Jacobsen, Crissy Kelly, Jennifer Maxon Kennelly, Jeff Peterson, Bonnie Rotelli, and Christine Vitale voted in favor.

Motion passed 8-0.

Meeting adjourned at 11:18PM.

[Detailed Minutes](#)

[Student Reports](#)

Mr. Cazeneuve and Ms. Freitas reported for FLHS: The Drama Club wrapped up the modern production of Romeo and Juliet; alumni are welcomed back the day before Thanksgiving to share their post-graduation experiences; the Homecoming dance takes place on November 17; many participated in the Halloween parade; the Veterans Day concert was a great success; students will soon take a SEL survey; and tickets are on sale for the Fairfield County Charity Balls for juniors and seniors.

Ms. Geremia-Kafadar and Mr. Engram reported for FWHS: Band, chorus and orchestra held a fall concert; student athletes signed letters of intent; the powder puff football game is scheduled; the counseling department is sponsoring alumni return day; the DECA group visited the Chamber of Commerce and spoke to local business owners; drama club performances of 'Old Town' will take place this weekend; gratitude was expressed to Mr. Testani and Mr. Papageorge for the new mosaic and LED signs; Mustang bracelets with the new logo will be on sale during lunchwaves; and the entrepreneurship club is selling sweatshirts with proceeds supporting suicide awareness.

Ms. Marroquin and Ms. Beggs reported for WFC: winterizing beehives is underway; the forensic class podcast, available on Spotify, will feature a retired FBI agent; science students are using an app to make stop-motion movies; students are working on a grant for a number of project-based learning opportunities; flower bed construction begins this week; planning for a mentorship program with Luis Marin School in Bridgeport is underway; students are working with the Nutty Company to provide holiday food bags and turkeys for families; a potluck Thanksgiving meal will be celebrated; early college scholarship and acceptance letters and are starting to arrive for several students; the Workplace is scheduled to visit WFC to provide information on post-secondary training programs; and WFC enrollment continues to grow.

Presentations

First Quarter Financial Report

Ms. LeBoriosis reported an overall projected balanced budget. Personnel Services is projected to be relatively flat; a slight surplus is expected in Fixed Charges due to insurance enrollment; contracted needs will continue to be monitored carefully in Pupil Personnel Services; School Expenses and Support Expenses will be reported on after the second quarter report; Maintenance/Operation/Transportation accounts are expected to spend the fully budgeted amount; and Capital Expenses are expected to be fully expended, with a large portion for technology equipment.

Ms. LeBoriosis and Mr. Testani responded to Board questions:

- Positions are not frozen. If there is a need for additional paraeducators, the Special Education office will work to ensure they are appropriately assigned.
- Transportation is working with existing drivers to ensure all runs are completed. Having sufficient drivers is a challenge. More information will be provided on the time length of tiered bus runs.

Student Achievement Data Review

Mr. Testani thanked staff for their time and effort in preparing the presentation. The high-level data shows that the district is rebounding well from COVID and there are opportunities for growth. Dr. Zavodjancik acknowledged Ms. Wood for all her work in sifting through much of the data and working with schools. Presenters included Dr. Zavodjancik, Dr. Parrish, Dr. Danishevsky, Ms. Heller, Ms. Goss, Ms. LaSala and Ms. Olivere. Results from the Smarter Balanced English Language Arts and Math, Next Generation Science Standards and PSAT and SAT assessments were reviewed. Next steps include advancing the development of common assessments and rubrics; conducting data analysis with the district data and assessment coordinator; integrating IABs into curriculum blocks; professional learning, and addressing chronic absenteeism.

The Instructional Team responded to Board questions:

- The cohort analysis includes grade levels as they existed when tested.
- The family outreach position has been filled, which should help with chronic absenteeism.

- Chronic absenteeism is showing a downward trend at most schools. Chronic absence letters are sent to families in hard copy form, and translations are available for the most common languages. Chronic absenteeism can be attributed in part to an increase in vacations during the school calendar, school avoidance and illness.
- Data points are not broken out by gender.
- More information will be provided on the number of total AP exams, the number of AP exams with a score of at least 3, the correlation between AP test scores and AP course grades, and AP Honors by subgroup data.
- School-level data meetings will address the impact to SIPs.
- Dr. Danishevsky said she continues to review math target data and strengths. Ms. Maxon-Kenelly said she would like to get a better handle on math weaknesses.
- 2019 ELA data point comparisons will be provided.
- The drop in SBA scores in both Math and ELA during the transition years is being reviewed. This issue is not isolated to Fairfield. ELA skill areas needed to enter Grade 6 will be part of the new curriculum. Dr. Danishevsky said flex time in the new middle school schedule is used to close some of the gaps.
- The Physics Department will review courses that are performing below the state level and teacher training may be needed.
- AP/Honors courses in social studies course cover a wide range of topics, some of which may include discussing controversial topics. Mrs. Jacobsen suggested using focus groups to discover why kids are more comfortable taking AP/Honors social studies courses when compared to other AP/Honors subjects. Ms. LaSala said one reason may be that she does not recommend AP science courses to students who will not be pursuing science in higher education.

2024 Budget Initiatives and Drivers

Mr. Testani said the biggest drivers this year will be staff salaries and getting everyone the support they need; there are no new big initiatives. Last year was aggressive with new assessments, ParentSquare, and the new ELA curriculum. The high schools have requested maintaining a safe environment, which may include more supervision by introducing climate specialists and restorative practice staff.

Old Business

Adoption of Policy 5144.4: Recess, Play-Based Learning, and Discipline

Mrs. Maxon Kennelly moved, Mr. Aysseh seconded that the Board of Education adopt Policy 5144.4: Recess, PlayBased Learning, and Discipline.

Motion Passed: 8-0

Adoption of Curriculum: American Sign Language III

Mrs. Rotelli moved, Mr. Peterson seconded that the Board of Education adopt the Curriculum: American Sign Language III.

Motion Passed: 8-0

New Business

First Reading of the 2024-2025 Student Calendar

Mr. Testani said the 2024-2025 calendar has teachers reporting on August 21st and provides them with a full day to prepare classrooms. Tuesday meeting times will make up for the May PD in previous calendars. The number of early dismissals is reduced to 5. Dr. Parrish also noted a difference in February break from previous calendars.

Mr. Aysseh commented on the following:

- Questioned the need for the early dismissal on December 20, given the long break that follows;
- Questioned the January 7 PD coming so soon after a long break, he may request it be pushed back;
- there is a benefit to having February 14 as part of the winter break;
- requested Board member thoughts on having Veterans Day dedicated to curriculum rather than a day off.

Mr. Peterson and Mrs. Vitale said they were hesitant to remove Veterans Day as a school holiday.

Mrs. Maxon Kennelly said she agrees with Mr. Aysseh's comments on the December 20 and January 7 early dismissals; and would like to hear more from staff on the rationale for moving a February break day to February 14. Mrs. Maxon Kennelly said she is torn on Veteran's Day; it has rich potential for curricula focus but it is controversial to remove as a school holiday.

Mr. Aysseh appreciated Board comments and said the time is not right to change Veterans Day and the public does not need to mobilize.

Mr. Testani said the January 7 PD can be pushed to January 14.

First Reading of ELA Curriculum PK-12

Ms. Goss, Ms. Bruno, Ms. Sherwood, Ms. Durrell, Ms. Mockler, Ms. Ingram, Mr. Novick and Ms. Heller presented the curricula. The total budget for materials, teacher hours and PD equals \$1.8M. The PK-12 curricula is vertically aligned. The PK curricula is aligned with CTEDS and *World of Wonders'* resources; maintains the Heggerty PK phonemic awareness program as a supplemental resource; and includes 8 units plus additional teacher-choice units. The K-5 curricula contains new integrated reading and writing modules/units; cross-curricular disciplinary connections; cursive handwriting; Heggerty Phonemic Awareness in Grades K-1; and *Literacy How* resource texts as supplemental resources in grades K-3. The 6-12 Curricula includes a pathway for students in public service/journalism, health/wellness, and criminal justice; and new elective courses in advanced journalism, and true crimes and sports literature. The distinction between college prep and honors is clearer, and revisions include more diverse fiction and nonfiction texts. Survey data showed student interest in new courses. If the Board approves the curricula in November 2023, ongoing professional learning and implementation guide development will begin in January 2024.

Mr. Testani thanked the presenters and acknowledged the 100+ committed educators that worked to bring the curricula forward.

The group responded to Board questions:

- Parents were invited to review PK curricula. PKs and daycares in town are varied in their instructional approaches.
- The K-5 resources support content areas, such as the American Revolution, by building general background knowledge as part of the Science of Reading. Text sets around a particular topic have been arranged to build student perspective and knowledge through various authors.
- The content and skills in the curricula units come from the standards and must be consistent. The most important content and skills were extracted from HMH and must be taught as a minimum. There will be some flexibility in implementation.
- Building teacher background knowledge with *Literacy How*, toolkits and other resources of tiered interventions, will help in reaching all students.

Draft

- The PK-12 T-chart information was provided as a link in a previous Friday packet and will be resent.
- The advanced journalism course provides an opportunity for students to work at a higher level.
- The idea for middle school levels will be revisited.
- Some prerequisite courses were excluded in the curricula due to an oversight and will be updated appropriately throughout the curricula.
- The prerequisites in Acting will be corrected to the appropriate levels.

Ms. Guernsey said she was pleased to hear about the work on cultural responsiveness.

Mrs. Jacobsen expressed her concern that 9th graders are not required to read from the challenging level list. Ms. Goss said this will be reviewed and the goal is to have high expectations for all students regardless of the course they are taking.

Mrs. Jacobsen questioned the preparedness of 9th grade honor students and suggested an 8th grade level with a more difficult skill level, or curricula aligned to the harder. Mrs. Guernsey agreed and said she was interested in aligning 8th grade to 9th grade honors. Ms. Goss said the issue will be revisited; there are needed skills that will be embedded in the implementation guide and those will be provided to the Board.

Mr. Testani said creating middle school levels will create a gap earlier by disallowing access to higher level courses and asked for some clarification on the requested changes.

Mrs. Jacobsen expressed her concern that some classes may end up reading a more challenging book, and others will not have that benefit. Ms. Ingram said grade-level books can also be very challenging and prepare students for honors-level course work.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly respects all of the work that has been done but is not yet prepared to vote on the 20th; she has a multitude of questions, felt the curricula had a few missed opportunities, and plans to meet with Dr. Zavodjancik to address all of her concerns.

Mr. Aysseh moved, Mrs. Maxon Kennelly seconded that the Board of Education extend the meeting to 12:00AM.

Motion Failed: 4-4

Favor: Mr. Aysseh, Ms. Guernsey, Mrs. Jacobsen, Mrs. Maxon Kennelly

Oppose: Mrs. Kelly, Mr. Peterson, Bonnie Rotelli, Mrs. Vitale

Mr. Aysseh moved, Mrs. Maxon Kennelly that the Board of Education extend the meeting to 11:30PM.

Motion Passed: 6-2

Favor: Mr. Aysseh, Ms. Guernsey, Mrs. Jacobsen, Mrs. Kelly, Mrs. Maxon Kennelly, Mrs. Vitale

Oppose: Mr. Peterson, Mrs. Rotelli

Ms. Heller said she has placed the Sports Literature course in several schools and has always received NCAA approval. The first step for any course is to receive Board approval, followed by NCAA or other approvals where necessary.

Ms. Goss thanked the Board and said she appreciates all the feedback.

Draft

Tech Ed Presentation

Dr. Zavodjancik, Mr. McAleese, and Mr. Kearney presented the technology education curriculum review. STEM occupations are expected to grow faster than overall occupations through 2030, with the annual projected annual wage projected to be \$132K in 2030. The 7th grade tech ed requirement will remain unchanged; the 8th grade electives will include Manufacturing and Construction, Engineering Technology, Graphic Communication Technology and Robotics Programming. The high school updated curriculum will include reorganized labs, updated equipment, and new technologies. The high school course names will be revised to provide clear and more efficient information. The courses are grouped by the following subjects: Computer Engineering; Computer Aided Drafting; Graphic Design Technology; Transportation Technology; Wood Manufacturing Technology; Engineering; and Home and Auto. The recommended textbooks are *Small Gas Engines* and *Modern Automotive Technology*.

The group responded to Board questions:

- Course names will be abbreviated on the transcript.
- K-5 coding occurs during elementary STEAM, similar to other specials.

Ms. Kelly advocated for more access to technology course content at the middle school level and said there was a disproportionate amount of time dedicated to the arts in middle school.

Mr. Aysseh thanked the group for the presentation and said he was happy to see the robust offerings and program growth. He appreciated the offer for a tour.

First Reading of Textbooks

Dr. Zavodjancik said the 2 proposed texts are *Small Gas Engines* and *Modern Automotive Technology*. Textbooks are currently in use and costs have been covered by the Perkins Grant through 2025. Some PD time will be built-in to the budget.

Mr. Testani said Warde featured an impressive woodworking showcase last June. Mr. Kearney added that he is working to build the skill level at Ludlowe and hopes to have a showcase in the near future.

Adoption of Policy 6146: Requirements for Graduation

Mrs. Maxon Kennelly moved, Mr. Peterson seconded that the Board of Education adopt Policy 6146: Requirements for Graduation.

Mrs. Maxon Kennelly said the change in the policy was due to a correction.

Motion Passed: 8-0

First Reading of Policy 6163.33: Instruction, Therapy Dogs

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly requested that questions be sent to her directly.

[Approval of Minutes](#)

Mr. Aysseh moved, Mrs. Kelly seconded that the Board of Education approve the 10-24-2023 BoE Regular Meeting Minutes.

Motion Passed: 8-0

Superintendent Report

Mr. Testani reported:

- Happy Diwali to all who celebrate;
- The culture and heritage of Native Americans is celebrated in November;
- FLHS celebrated Veterans with a Salute to Veterans concert and many schools celebrated Veterans in various ways;
- Congratulations to Dwight and Holland Hill for earning "School of Distinction" Blue Ribbon awards;
- FPS EL/ML teachers attended a TESOL conference at SHU;
- The school meal advisory committee met to share valuable insight on menus, food waste, health and nutrition;
- The FLHS Drama Club performed Romeo and Juliet;
- Congratulations to student athletes Charles Jones, Donnell Young for all FCIAC boys soccer; Parker Broderick for boys all FCIAC cross country; Sophie Spelman and Claire Fuchs for girls all FCIAC cross country; and John Casella for all FCIAC boys golf.

Committee/Liaison Reports

Mrs. Rotelli reported for SEPTA: Dan Van Horne, Chair of the Fairfield Commission on Disabilities will discuss the special needs survey at the next meeting.

Mr. Peterson reported for the Board of Finance: The quarterly meeting takes place next week; the purchasing policy will be discussed on Thursday's special meeting.

Adjournment

Mr. Aysseh moved, Mrs. Kelly seconded that this Special Meeting of the Board of Education adjourn.

Motion Passed: 8-0

Meeting adjourned at 11:18PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Guernsey

Fairfield Board of Education, Secretary