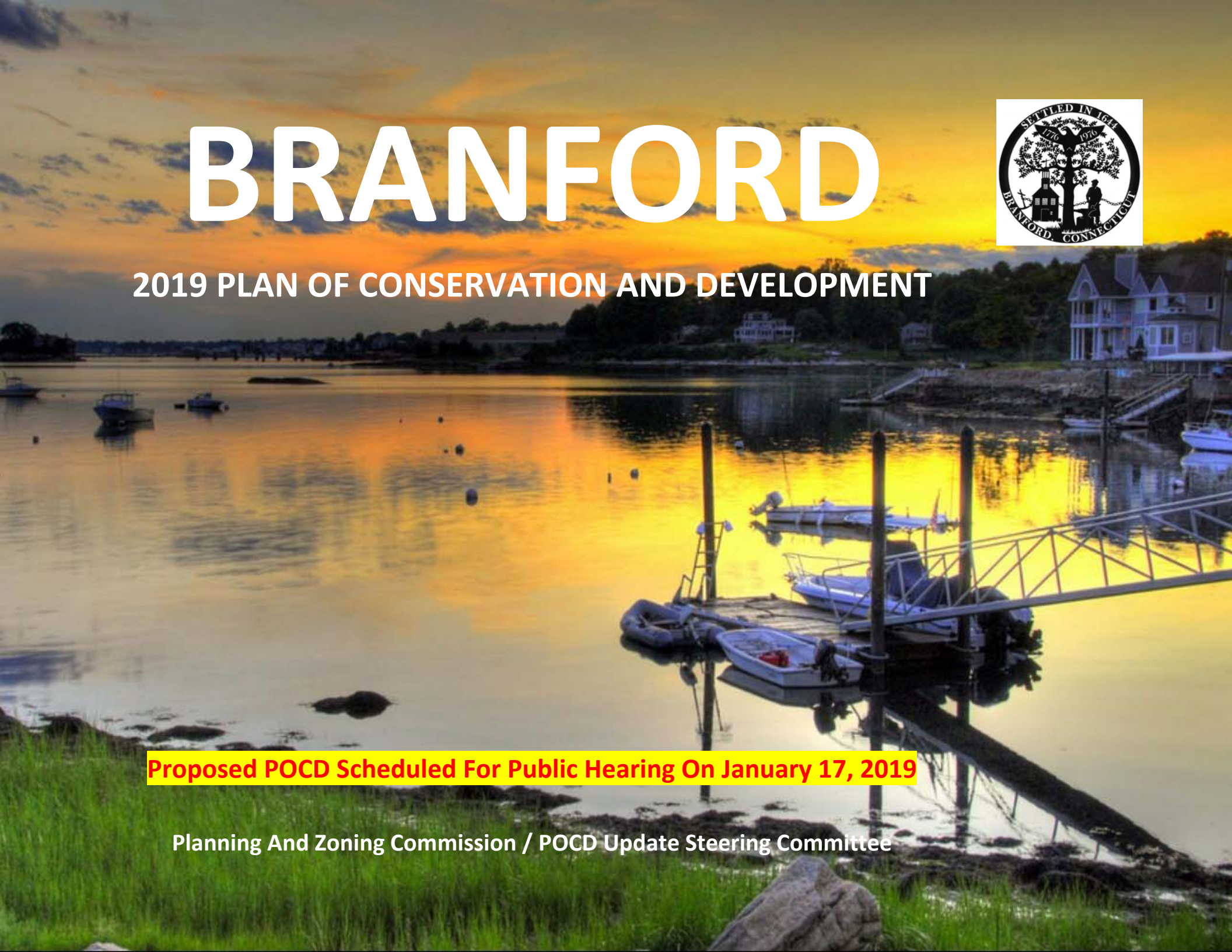


BRANFORD

2019 PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Proposed POCD Scheduled For Public Hearing On January 17, 2019

Planning And Zoning Commission / POCD Update Steering Committee

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WELCOME

November 2, 2018

To Branford Residents and Property Owners:

The Planning and Zoning Commission is pleased to present this update of the 2008 Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) which is being considered for potential adoption at a public hearing scheduled for:

January 17, 2019 at 7:00 PM
Fire Department Headquarters – 45 North Main Street

This POCD update was prepared over a twelve month period by a Plan of Conservation and Development Update Steering Committee and the process involved multiple community meetings and discussions regarding the future physical development of our community. The Planning and Zoning Commission is very appreciative of the work of the Committee and the thoughtful input from people who participated in the process

We hope you will join with us in promoting implementation of the adopted Plan.

Sincerely

Branford Planning and Zoning Commission

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INTRODUCTION 1

1.1 Overview

Welcome! This document is the 2018 Plan of Conservation and Development for Branford, Connecticut.

A Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) is a document prepared and adopted by a municipality to reflect an overall consensus (a common vision) for the future of the community and identify goals and recommendations that will help attain that vision. Although its key purpose and function is to address the physical development of a community, it will often address issues related to the economic development and social development.

While the POCD is officially adopted by the Planning and Zoning Commission under Connecticut statutes, the Commission did establish a Plan Update Steering Committee to involve a number of different organizations and people in preparation of the POCD. The Plan Update Steering Committee undertook a number of exercises to learn about what is important to Branford residents:

- Organized community-wide meetings
- Listening sessions where municipal boards, commissions, and departments were invited to provide input
- On-line surveys and a telephone survey
- Working meetings televised on Branford Community Television
- Opportunities for attendees to comment at working meetings
- An e-mail address for input on the POCD

Through these efforts, it is believed that the POCD reflects a consensus on how to address issues in the community and how to be responsible stewards of this part of the world on behalf of future generations who will have the opportunity to live in this wonderful place.

Overall Intent

While the Plan of Conservation and Development is primarily an advisory document, it is intended to guide local boards and commissions about issues important to the community.

The POCD can guide local priorities and provide a framework for consistent decision-making with regard to conservation and development activities in Branford over the next decade or so.

1.2 Statutory Provisions

The following text boxes summarize some of the key provisions from Section 8-23 of the Connecticut General Statutes (the laws governing Plans of Conservation and Development):

The Commission shall:

- prepare, adopt and amend a plan of conservation and development ...
- review the plan … at least once every ten years ...

The Plan may:

- show the commission's recommendation for:
  - a system of … streets and other public ways;
  - parks, playgrounds and other public grounds;
  - general location… and improvement of public buildings;
  - the general location and extent of public utilities … whether publicly or privately owned for water, sewerage, light, power, transit and other purposes; and
  - the extent and location of public housing projects.
- include recommended programs for the implementation of the plan ...
- (include) such other recommendations ... in the plan as will ... be beneficial to the municipality.

The Plan shall:

- be a statement of policies, goals and standards for the physical and economic development of the municipality, ...
- show the commission's recommendation for the most desirable use of land within the municipality for residential, recreational, commercial, industrial and other purposes and for the most desirable density of population in the ... parts of the municipality.
- be designed to promote with the greatest efficiency and economy the coordinated development of the municipality and the general welfare and prosperity of its people.
- be made with reasonable consideration for restoration and protection of the ecosystem and habitat of Long Island Sound ...
- make provision for the development of housing opportunities, including opportunities for multifamily dwellings consistent with soil types, terrain and infrastructure capacity, for all residents of the municipality and the planning region ...
- promote housing choice and economic diversity in housing, including housing for both low and moderate income households, and encourage the development of housing which will meet the housing needs ...
- take into account the state plan of conservation and development ... and note any inconsistencies it may have with said state plan.
- consider the use of cluster development to the extent consistent with soil types, terrain, and infrastructure capacity.
- consider … sea level change scenarios.

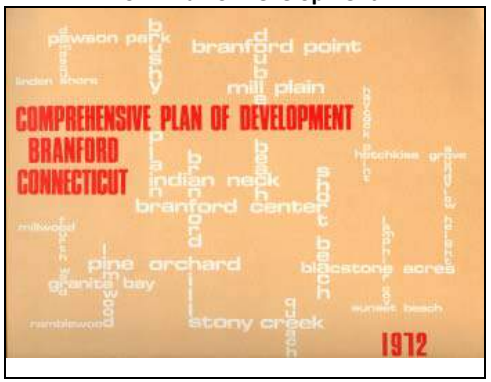
1.3 History Of Planning In Branford

Planning in Branford started in the 1950s with the adoption of zoning regulations to control how land use would impact the community. In the 1960s, the Planning and Zoning Commission expanded the planning program with a series of Community Development Action Plans dealing with issues such as community facilities, economic profiles, and education resources.

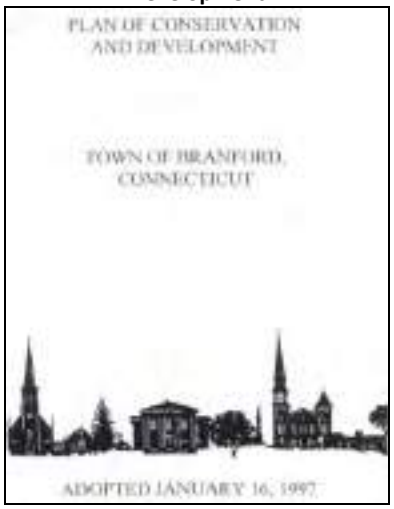
By 1972, the community had adopted the first comprehensive planning document, and four updates of this planning process have been completed since that time, including the most recent complete update, adopted on November 20, 2008.

Thus, it can be seen that Branford has a history of preparing strategic plans to guide its future conservation and development and improve the quality of life in the community.

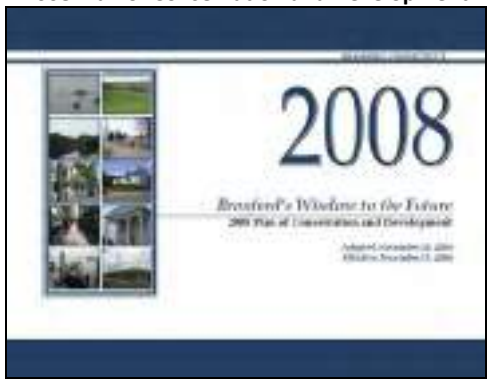
1972 Plan of Development



1997 Plan of Conservation and Development



2008 Plan of Conservation and Development



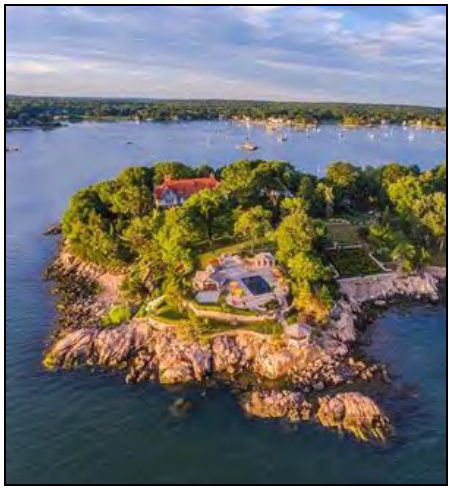
Following adoption of the 2008 POCD, the Town of Branford moved ahead with implementation of many of the recommendations in the plan. In fact, a review of implementation progress was undertaken by the Planning and Zoning Commission five years after POCD adoption and that review found that many policies were being implemented and a number of regulation changes (and other action steps) had been completed.

Thus, most importantly, it can be seen that Branford has a history of ***implementing*** strategic plans to guide its future conservation and development and improve the quality of life in the community. It is in that spirit that this Plan of Conservation and Development has been prepared.

This Plan of Conservation and Development is an advisory document, not only to the Planning and Zoning Commission, but also to all other Town boards and commissions and Branford residents as well.

It is intended to guide local residents and to provide a framework for consistent decision-making with regard to conservation and development activities in Branford over the next decade or so.

Coastal



Character



Community



1.4 Measuring Success

During the planning process, participants discussed how Branford would measure success with regard to the POCD. Success is often measured through accomplishment of an aim or purpose and this POCD is no different.

The aim or purpose of the POCD is to:

- make Branford a better place,
- maintain and enhance the quality of life for residents,
- provide a supportive place for businesses and innovation,
- support Branford as a place welcoming to visitors, and
- take advantage of opportunities and strengths and minimize threats to our common well-being.

Since these desires are common to many communities and may never be considered "finished", the POCD Update Steering Committee decided that key indicators of success will include completion of (or major progress towards) accomplishing the top recommendations as identified in Section 18.1 of the POCD, such as:

1. Establishing a framework for addressing coastal vulnerability (Chapter 4)
2. Promoting Improvements To Exit 53 (Chapter 14)
3. Improving bicycle and pedestrian facilities around Branford (Chapter 15)
4. Keeping Branford Center vibrant and attractive and promoting transit-oriented development (Chapter 9)
5. Supporting economic development / tourism (Chapter 10)
6. Protecting important natural resources (Chapter 5) and open space (Chapter 6)
7. Promoting sustainability (Chapter 12)
8. Re-Invigorating the Strategic Review Committee (Chapter 18)

Leaders and Partners

Each policy and action step identifies a "leader" and may identify one or more "partners" to assist with implementation. The legend explaining the acronyms used to identify leaders and partners is located on the inside back cover for ease of reference.

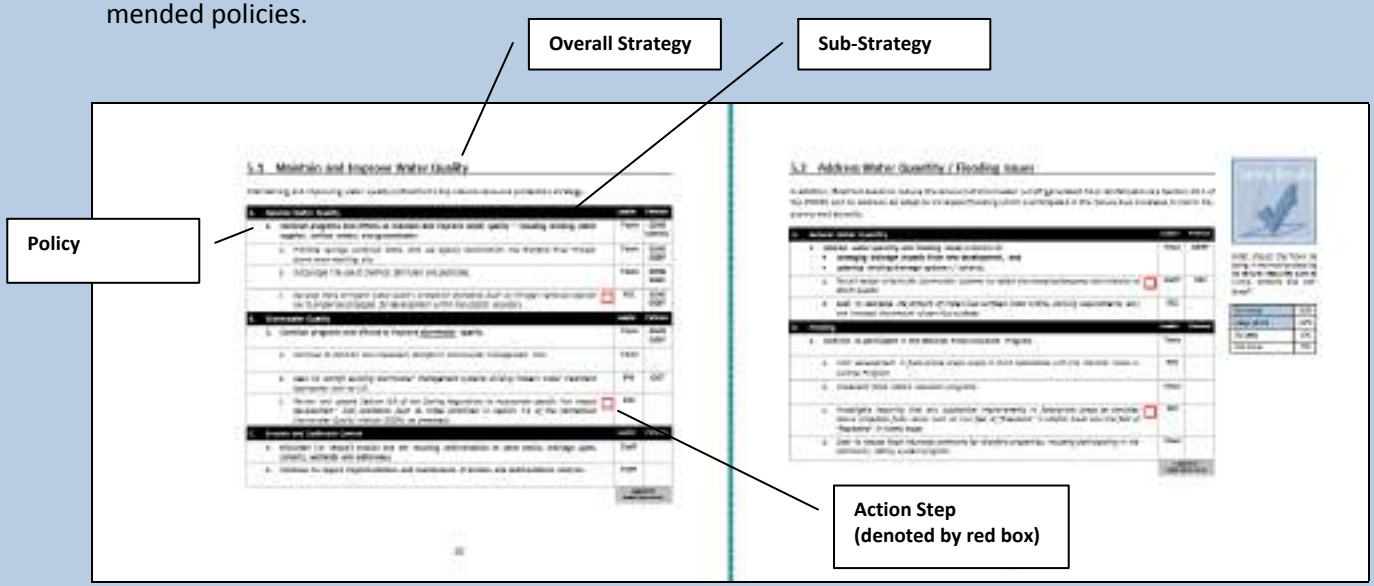
It is envisioned that the Strategic Review Committee will review and refine the list of leaders and partners during the implementation process.

Plan Format

Each of the ***policy chapters*** of the Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) contains one or more recommended ***strategies*** for the community. The strategies are "big picture" directions for Branford.

Each strategy may also have two types of sub-components:

- **Policies** – Policies are intended to be ***on-going positions*** of the Town of Branford about how to evaluate and act upon local issues. Policies do not lend themselves to measurement or recognition as being complete.
- **Action Steps** – Action steps are ***discrete tasks or activities*** which can and should be undertaken to accomplish POCD strategies and policies. Action steps can be measured and recognized as being complete. Over time, it is envisioned that additional action steps will be identified by the Town of Branford to help implement recommended policies.



CONDITIONS & TRENDS

2

2.1 History of Branford

The landscape of the area we now know as Branford evolved over millions of years as a result of massive geologic forces. While there is no written record, Native Americans are believed to have inhabited this area for about the last 10,000 years. Dutch explorers "discovered" this part of the new world in 1614 and competition ensued where the Dutch and British sought to trade with Native Americans. This competition eventually led to establishment of trading posts and settlement of inland areas along the Connecticut River after 1633. Research suggests there may have been a Dutch trading post in Branford that pre-dated the inland settlements but the history is not clear. Following the Pequot War of 1637, European settlement spread out to other areas.

After 1638, land in the area we now know as Branford was "purchased" in several transactions from Native Americans (who may not have comprehended the European concept of land ownership). While there may have been a Dutch trading post established around 1642 (Dutch Wharf – near the foot of Maple Street), the first permanent settlement occurred in 1644. Interestingly, these first settlers had lived in Wethersfield but were unhappy with the religious direction of that community and came to Branford to start anew.

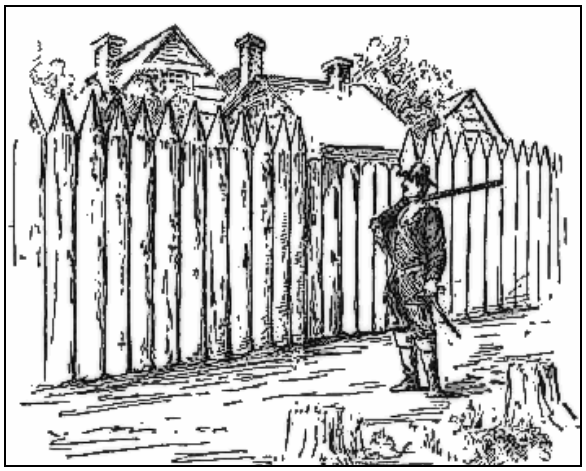
Early Map Of Dutch Exploration



"Purchase" of Lands



Settlement With A Palisade



Early Road



Safety and security was a concern since there had been conflicts with Native Americans in other areas. As a result, the early settlement located in the area north and west of the river included a "palisade" (a tall fence) which surrounded the homes. Native American camps were located in the areas south of the river ("Indian Neck"). Residents were required to participate in the construction and maintenance of this fence. Meadows and forests outside the palisade were allotted among the settlers for their use.

While this area may have first been called "Brentford" (for a village west of London), it became known as Branford after 1653.

Life for the early settlers was likely a challenge as the native soils were often rocky and shallow and not particularly fertile. Crop rotation was a necessary technique and it required the use of even more distant lands. As population grew and safety concerns subsided, settlement spread out into other areas.

Many of the roads in Branford (and their circuitous routes) can be traced back to colonial times. Bridges were not prevalent so roads had to meander to avoid coastal inlets and find natural crossings. Roads were configured to ease travel up and down slopes and around rock formations rather than a straight line.

Over time, the community grew and expanded. Water-powered mills were established as was a blacksmith's shop. Following the discovery of iron deposits, a "bloomery" (iron works) became the first industry in Branford around 1655 near what is now Lake Saltonstall.

Due to the protected harbor and the rich coastal resources, early subsistence agriculture was supplemented by shell-fishing and later by ship-building. Travel by horse and cart was challenging in those days and Branford's location supported the evolution of ship-building and maritime trade and commerce.

In the mid-1800s, Branford began to experience the "industrial revolution" taking place around the world. While most households still relied on subsistence agriculture, Branford was on its way to having a diversified economy where people worked in industry and commerce away from their place of residence. Industries were set up along the Branford River.

One prominent local industry at this time was stone quarries. Over millennia, geologic forces created a rock formation of "pink granite" in the Stony Creek area which became a renowned building material used for such structures as the pedestal for the Statue of Liberty, Grand Central Terminal in New York City, the Battle Monument at West Point, and numerous other structures.

Interest in fireproof construction and in substantial buildings created a demand for this type of material in the late-1800s,. Stony Creek granite became prized by architects because of its color and the fact that its proximity to a natural harbor made it easier to transport items of great size and weight around the world.

The advent of steam (1840s) and compressed air (1870s) facilitated the process of creating these highly-prized "building blocks" and the quarry operation flourished between about 1870 and 1920 or so when concrete became favored as a building material.

Industry Along Branford River



Stony Creek Quarry



Resort Hotel On Pot Island



Trolley Service In Branford



The arrival of steamships and rail service during this period improved Branford's connections to other places and ushered in the "resort era". At one point in time, Branford had a half-dozen or so resort hotels (and a casino) to support its reputation as a coastal resort.

Branford was served by a streetcar system between about 1910 and 1930 which extended along the entire shoreline area. The trolley systems were driven out of business by bus service and the proliferation of the automobile.

Following World War II, people's desire for suburban living coincided with the improvement of the automobile and this, coupled with improvement and expansion of the road system, resulted in explosive growth in Branford. Construction of the interstate highway system in the 1950s and 1960s encouraged the suburban development of residential areas and Branford was no different. Former farms were subdivided and developed and population roughly tripled between 1945 and 1990.

By the year 2000, Branford had grown to be a community of over 28,000 people and the overall pattern of the community was well established.

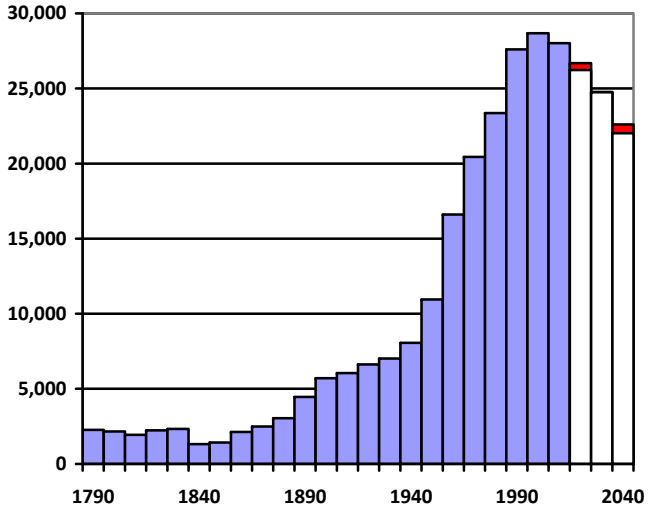
2.2 People Of Branford

According to the Census, Branford had a population of 28,026 persons in 2010. This represents a ***decrease*** of 657 people from the 28,683 persons reported in the 2000 Census. More recent population estimates from the CT Health Department and the US Census Bureau suggest this decrease is continuing.

The table in the sidebar and chart below show population growth since the 1790 Census with a range of population projections to the year 2040. The population projections extrapolate past trends (birth rates, death rates, net migration) into the future and suggest a decrease in population due to:

- Lower birth rates and fewer women of child-bearing age.
- More deaths due to an aging population.
- Net out-migration in certain age groups (ages 18-25 and ages 35-50).

1790 – 2010 Population (with projections to 2040)



Inflection Point?

***If past trends continue*, Branford's population is expected to decrease over the next few decades. This reflects lower housing construction and less housing turnover (people are living longer and want to stay in Branford).**

The population in Branford is getting older (on average) and households tend to get smaller as the residents get older. If older residents choose to "age in place" (as residents before them have done), the same housing units will house fewer people and population could decline.

On the other hand, if older residents choose to find another housing option (in Branford or elsewhere) and a younger and/or larger household moves in, population could grow.

Still, we do not really know what choices and decisions people will make in the future and that is why projections based on past trends need to be taken with "a grain of salt."

Branford's Population

1790	2,267	
1800	2,156	
1810	1,932	
1820	2,230	
1830	2,332	
1840	1,322	
1850	1,423	
1860	2,123	
1870	2,488	
1880	3,047	
1890	4,460	
1900	5,706	
1910	6,047	
1920	6,627	
1930	7,022	
1940	8,060	
1950	10,944	
1960	16,610	
1970	20,444	
1980	23,363	
1990	27,603	
2000	28,683	
2010	28,026	
2020	*26,223*	*26,689*
2030	*24,743*	*24,768*
2040	*22,025*	*22,605*

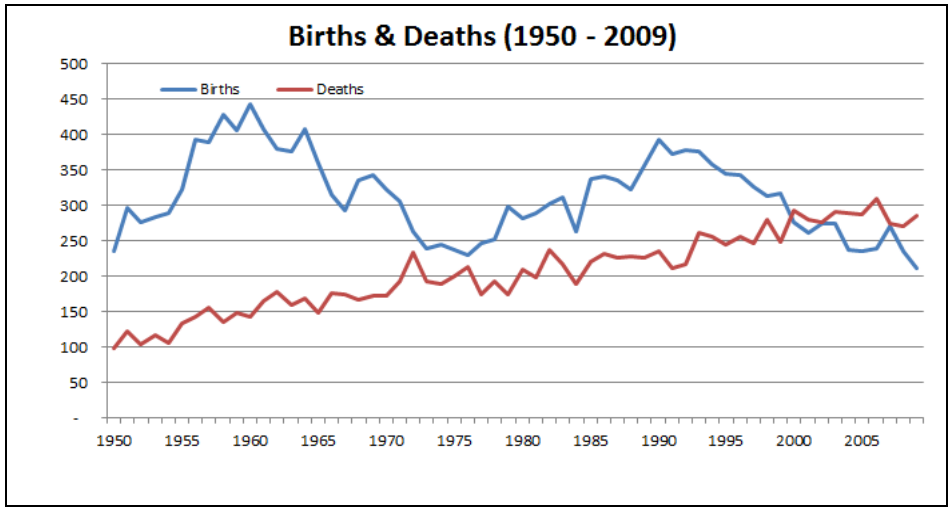
US Census data for 1790 to 2010. Projections by the Connecticut State Data Center and Planimetrics are based on a cohort survival model.

Median Age	
Guilford	48
Branford	**48**
North Branford	46
North Haven	45
East Haven	42
State	40
New Haven	30

CERC, 2017

Dynamics of Population Change

As can be seen from the adjacent chart, the number of births and deaths in Branford has fluctuated over time. Births were quite pronounced in the late 1950s during what is referred to as the "baby boom" (a nation-wide increase in births between 1945 and 1965) and in the late 1980s and early 1990s as the children of the baby boomers started their own families. Since the year 2000 or so, deaths have exceeded births so there has been a natural *decrease* of population.



Even though Branford experienced population increase between 1950 and 2000, fewer births and net out-migration after the turn of the century resulted in a population decrease. This decrease is expected to continue due to slower housing growth, slower economic growth, and an aging population.

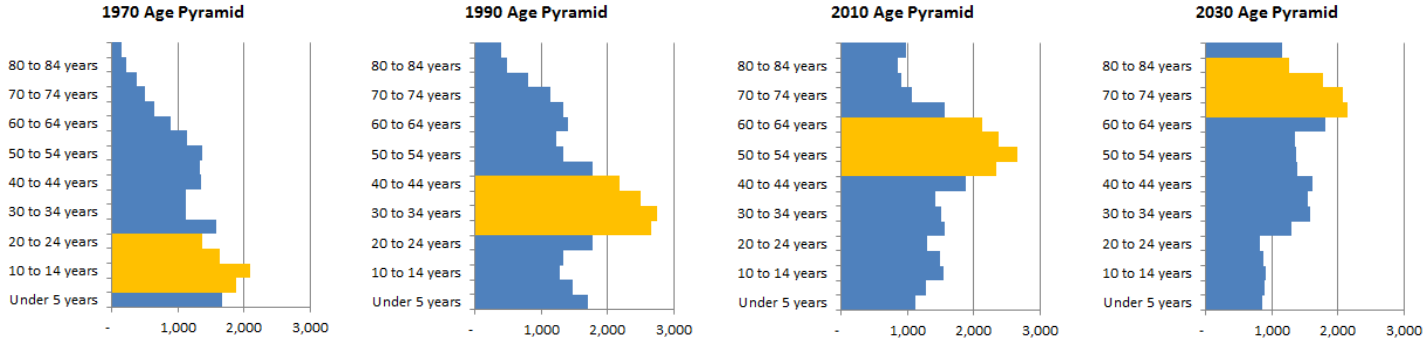
Components of Population Change

	1950s	1960s	1970s	1980s	1990s	2000s
If the Census indicates the population changed this much in this decade …	**+5,666**	**+3,834**	**+2,919**	**+4,240**	**+1,080**	**(657)**
And this much "natural change" occurred as a result of births and deaths …	**+2,059**	**+2,010**	**+705**	**+958**	**+1,069**	**(339)**
Births	3,321	3.660	2,640	3,142	3,523	2,516
Deaths	(1,262)	(1,650)	(1,935)	(2,184)	(2,454)	(2,855)
Then this many people moved in (or out) of Branford during that decade	**+3,607**	**+1,824**	**+2,214**	**+3,282**	**+11**	**(318)**

US Census, Connecticut Health Department reports,

Age Composition

Overall, the changing age composition of Branford may be the most significant demographic consideration for the POCD and the community. The following age composition charts show the number of people in each 5-year age group by the width of the bar. People considered part of the "baby boom" (people born between about 1945 and 1965) are shown in orange. Note the influence of the "baby boomers" and the younger population in 1970 as compared to the older population today (and in the future).



Approximate Median Age	
1960	31.6
1970	30.0
1980	33.4
1990	36.6
2000	41.5
2010	46.9
2020 (proj.)	51.1

US Census

If past trends continue, Branford's population is expected to have:

- Fewer total residents in the future.
- More residents (and a higher proportion of residents) in older age groups.
- Fewer residents (and a lower proportion of residents) in younger age groups.

If demographic trends play out as they have in the past, this changing age composition may result in a changing demand for municipal services and housing types. Branford may see less demand for school and recreational programs and more demand for senior-friendly housing and senior programs.

Housing Units	
1960	5,092
1970	7,427
1980	9,953
1990	13,056
2000	
2010	13,972

US Census. Data for 1970 to 2010 reflects number of units. Due to data availability, data for 1960 reflects number of households (occupied housing units).

Percent Single Family	
Guilford	85%
North Haven	83%
North Branford	81%
East Haven	63%
State	**59%**
Branford	**51%**
New Haven	20%

CERC, 2017.

Percent Owner-Occupied	
North Branford	89%
Guilford	85%
North Haven	84%
East Haven	71%
Branford	**68%**
State	**67%**
New Haven	29%

CERC, 2017.

2.3 Housing In Branford

Total Units / Pace of Growth

According to the US Census, Branford had about 13,972 housing units in 2010. From 1990 to 2010, Branford added an average of about 46 housing units per year. This is well below the growth rate in the 1960s and 1970s and 1980s when Branford was adding about 265 housing units per year.

Type of Units / Tenure of Units

Branford's housing stock is roughly evenly divided between single-family detached homes and other types of housing (two-family, townhouse, apartment, etc.). Branford's housing stock is more diversified in terms of type of units than most nearby communities.

About two-thirds of the housing units in Branford (68%) are owner-occupied. This is lower than most surrounding communities but is similar to the State average.

Housing Occupancy

In terms of housing occupancy, Branford has fewer residents per housing unit than the state average and a smaller average household size (number of people per occupied housing unit) compared to nearby communities.

Average household size has been decreasing over time in Branford and elsewhere due to a variety of socio-economic factors. What this means is that the same number of housing units contain fewer people. Overall:

- about ***70 percent*** of all Branford housing units in 2010 were occupied by one or two people.
- the increase in housing units in Branford between 1990 and 2010 mirrored the increase in one- and two-person households.

Average Household Size	
North Haven	2.81
North Branford	2.67
State	**2.66**
New Haven	2.62
East Haven	2.60
Guilford	2.57
Branford	**2.26**

CERC, 2017

Branford's Household Size	
1960	3.25
1970	3.09
1980	2.57
1990	2.34
2000	2.26
2010	2.18

US Census

Housing Values / Affordability

According to data from the Connecticut Economic Resource Center (CERC) reflecting 2013 housing sales, sale prices in Branford were higher than in nearby communities with the exception of Guilford.

About 451 housing units in Branford (3.23% of the housing stock) qualify as "affordable housing" under Section 8-30g of the Connecticut General Statutes when the State establishes its yearly Affordable Housing Appeals List:

- 243 governmentally-assisted units,
- 63 rental units occupied by households receiving tenant rental assistance,
- 145 ownership units where the households received government-subsidized mortgages (CHFA, USDA), and
- No units subject to deed restrictions limiting the rental rate or sales price to be affordable for a family earning 80% or less of the area median income.

As provided in CGS Section 8-30g, communities where less than 10 percent of the housing stock meets the above criteria are potentially vulnerable to the "affordable housing appeals procedure" where a qualifying affordable housing development may not need to comply with all of the zoning regulations.

Additional information on housing is contained in Chapter 11 of the POCD.

Median Sales Price (2013)

Guilford	$382,900
Branford	**$296,400**
North Haven	$295,700
North Branford	$284,300
State	$270,500
East Haven	$209,400
New Haven	$191,800

CERC, 2017

Affordable Housing

New Haven	29.9%
State	11.0%
East Haven	7.6%
North Haven	4.9%
Branford	**3.2%**
Guilford	2.3%
North Branford	2.2%

CT Department of Housing, 2016

Single-Family House



Shoreline Neighborhood



Multi-Family Building



2.4 Economic Conditions in Branford

A local economy is important in terms of:

- providing for jobs and income for people,
- ensuring a range of goods and services is available, and
- providing tax revenue to support local services.

Jobs / Income

According to the Connecticut Department of Labor, there were 12,976 jobs (annual average) in Branford in 2016. The number of jobs grew significantly from 1960 to 1990 and has hovered around 13,000 jobs since that time.

While New Haven is clearly the regional jobs center, Branford has a robust number of jobs in the community and is clearly a regional employment center.

With about 15,940 Branford residents in the labor force (working or seeking work) and about 13,000 jobs in the community, it can be seen that Branford still relies on the region to provide jobs for some of its residents.

Jobs In Branford

1960	3,940
1970	5,599
1980	8,450
1990	12,860
2000	13,890
2010	12,123

CT Labor Dept.

Jobs In The Community

New Haven	81,419
North Haven	17,640
Branford	**12,831**
Guilford	7,452
North Branford	4,379
East Haven	6,300

CERC, 2017

Jobs / Housing Balance

North Haven	1.96
New Haven	1.44
State (est.)	0.98
Branford	**0.92**
Guilford	0.78
North Branford	0.78
East Haven	0.51

CERC, 2017

Local Employer



Downtown Businesses



Route 1 Businesses



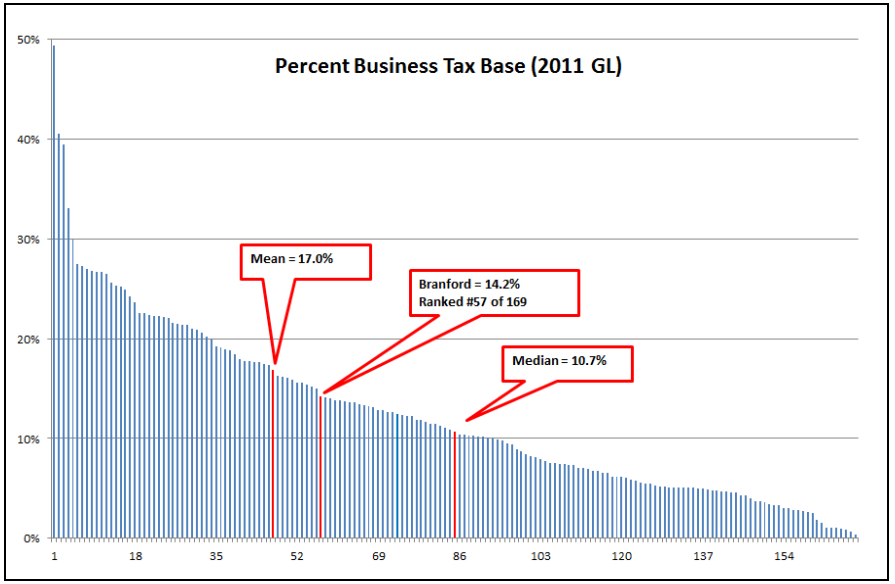
Median household income is one way to gauge the size or strength of the local economy. According to data from CERC, the median household income (half the households earn more and half the households earn less) is slightly higher than the state average.

Median HH Income	
Guilford	$99,132
North Haven	$86,340
North Branford	$84,697
Branford	**$71,938**
State	$70,331
East Haven	$63,120
New Haven	$37,192

CERC, 2017

Tax Base

The value of taxable property in a municipality is important because it supports municipal budgets and services provided within the community. While the total value of the tax base is discussed in Section 2.7 of the POCD, the percent of the real estate tax base that is comprised of businesses is an important consideration to many people since business uses typically provide revenue but do not demand as much in services. This revenue is then available to provide services that primarily benefit residents of the community.



Percent Business Tax Base	
New Haven	39.4%
North Haven	22.2%
East Haven	16.2%
State	17.0%
Branford	14.2%
North Branford	12.6%
Guilford	7.0%

OPM (2011 data)

As can be seen, Branford is in the top third of the municipalities in Connecticut in terms of percent business tax base.

Additional information on business and economic development is contained in Chapter 10 of the POCD.

Buildout Potential

In 2010, the South Central Regional Council of Governments estimated buildout potential in each of the communities in the region

In Branford, the study estimated that, based on existing zoning and environmental constraints:

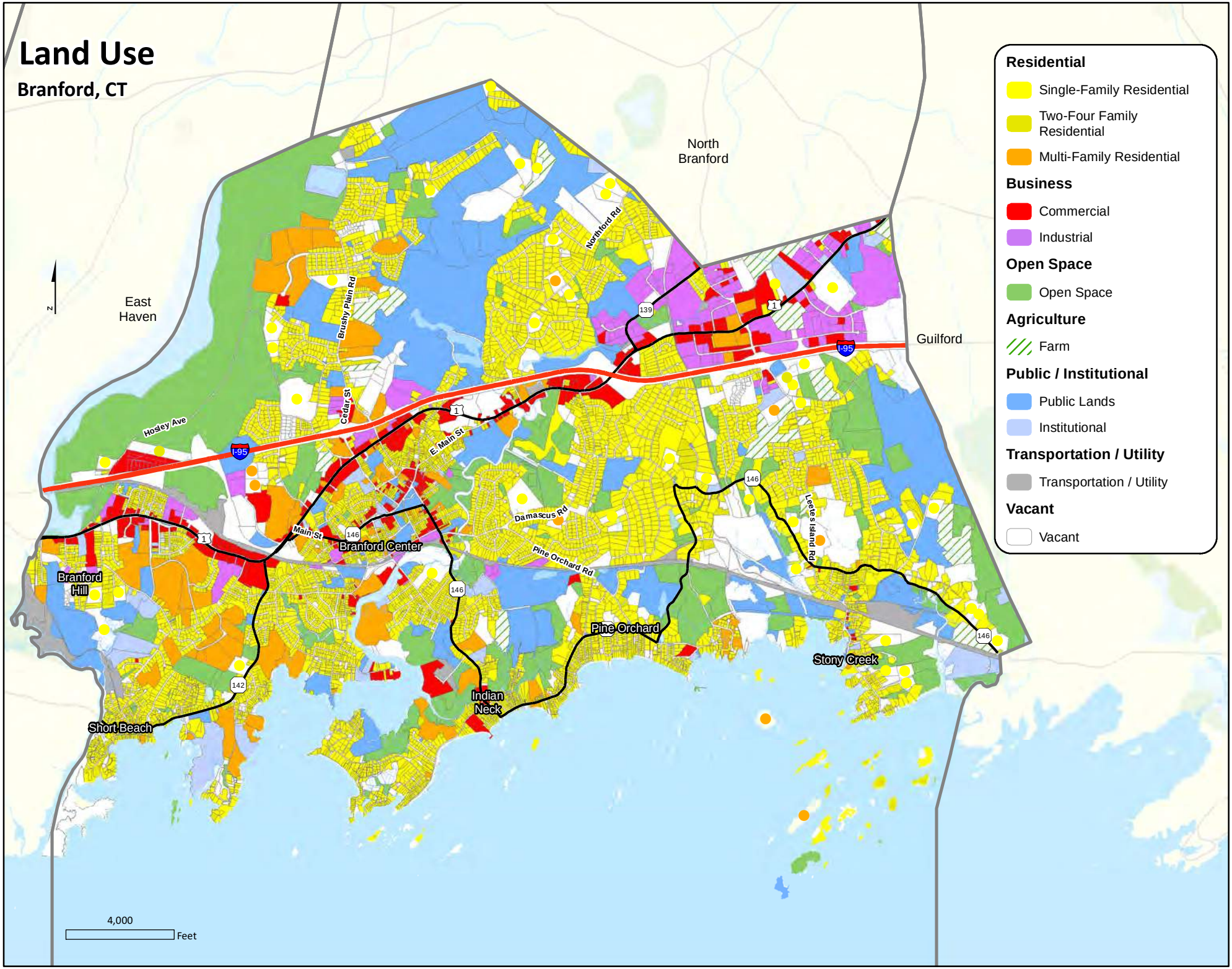
- about 1,545 additional dwelling units might be able to be built within residential zones.
- About 3.8 million SF of commercial and industrial floor area might be able to be built within business zones.

2.5 Land Use In Branford

The map on the facing page shows how land is currently being ***used*** in Branford. In other words, a parcel with a house on it would be considered a single-family residential use. A parcel with a retail store on it would be considered a business use. A parcel would be considered developed / committed if it has a particular use or purpose (such as dedicated open space). A parcel would be considered vacant (and potentially available for conservation or development) if it does not have a defined use. The map is based on information in the Assessor's database as of October 2016.

	Acres	Acres	Percent of Dev. / Committed	Percent of Total Area
Residential Uses		**4,941**	**40%**	**34%**
Single-Family Residential / Multi-House	3,956			
Multi-Family Residential	747			
2-4 Family Residential	182			
Mobile / Manufactured Home	56			
Business Uses		**1,083**	**9%**	**8%**
Business	496			
Industrial	543			
Marine	44			
Open Space		**2,169**	**18%**	**15%**
Dedicated Open Space	966			
Managed Open Space	1,203			
Community Facility / Institutional		**2,435**	**20%**	**17%**
Town Property / Facilities	1,838			
State / Federal Property / Facilities	293			
Institutional	304			
Other		**1,646**	**13%**	**12%**
Farm	279			
Utility	27			
Transportation / Parking / Roads	1,340			
Developed / Committed		**12,274**	**100%**	**86%**
Vacant	2,055			**14%**
Total		**14,329**		**100%**

Planimetrics and New England GeoSystems based on Assessor database. Totals may not add due to rounding


Land Use
Branford, CT
North Branford
East Haven
Guilford
Branford Hill
Branford Center
Pine Orchard
Stony Creek
Indian Neck
Short Beach
Northford Rd
Brushy Plain Rd
Cedar St
Hosley Ave
E. Main St
Main St
Damascus Rd
Pine Orchard Rd
Leete's Island Rd
I-95
1
139
146
142
N
4,000
Feet
Residential
Single-Family Residential
Two-Four Family Residential
Multi-Family Residential
Business
Commercial
Industrial
Open Space
Open Space
Agriculture
Farm
Public / Institutional
Public Lands
Institutional
Transportation / Utility
Transportation / Utility
Vacant
Vacant

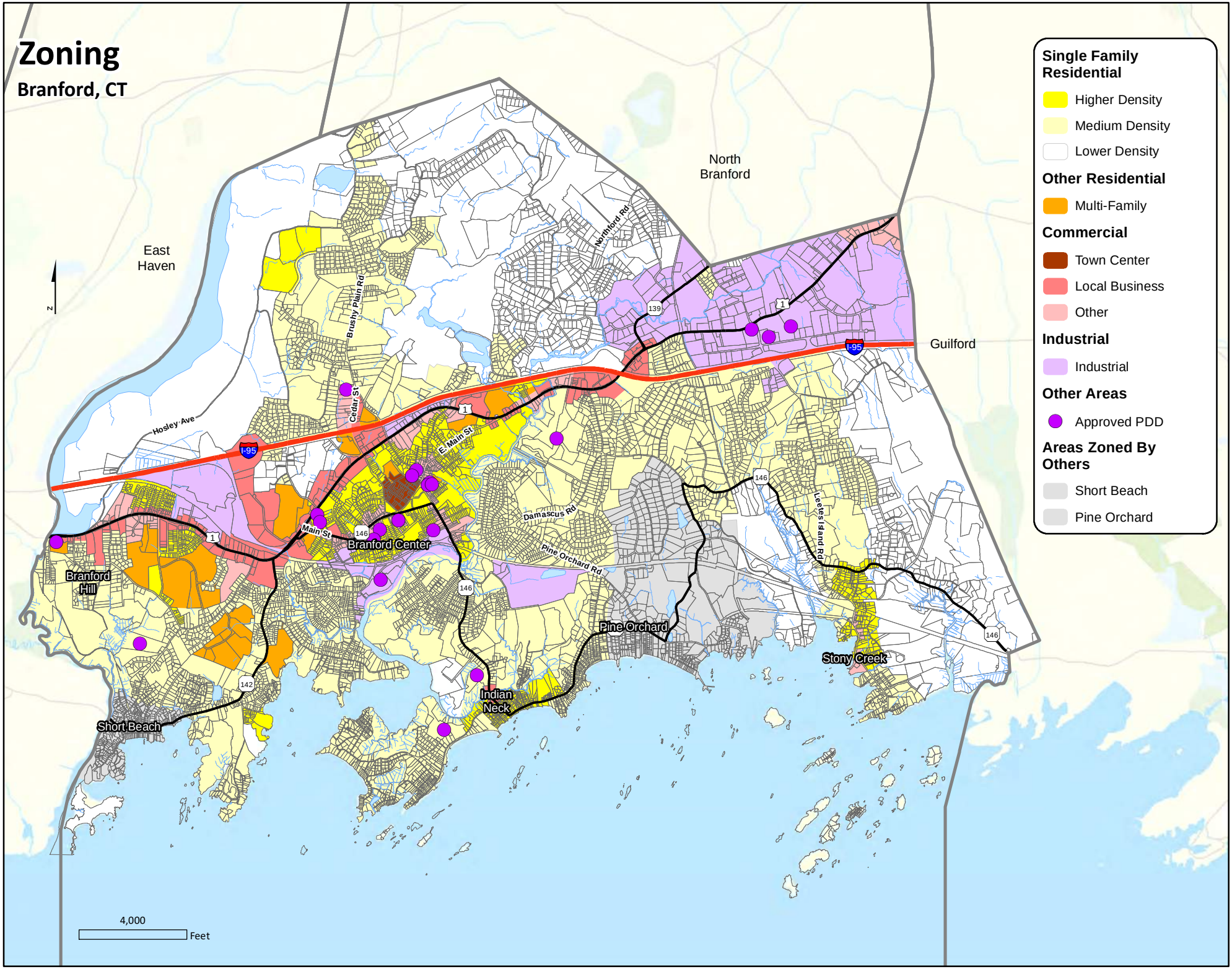
2.6 Zoning In Branford

The map on the facing page shows how land is currently ***zoned*** in Branford. In other words, it shows how the community is intended to develop under the current land use regulations.

According to digital mapping of the community, about 79 percent of the land area in Branford is zoned for residential development. Approximately five percent of the community is zoned for business development and about 10 percent is zoned for industrial development. About six percent of Branford is subject to zoning regulations administered by Pine Orchard and Short Beach.

	Acres	Acres	Percent of Total Land Area
1-2 Family Residential Zones		**11,302**	**79%**
R-1 – One-family and two-family dwellings(6,000 SF minimum lot size)	594		
R-2 – One-family and two-family dwellings (4,500 SF minimum lot size)	184		
R-3 – One-family dwellings (15,000 SF minimum lot size)	1,666		
R-4 – One-family dwellings (20,000 SF minimum lot size)	3,467		
R-5 – One-family dwellings (40,000 SF minimum lot size)	5,047		
Multi-Family / Age-Restricted	344		
Business / Industrial / Recreational Zones		**2,185**	**15%**
Branford Center (BC)	29		
Restricted Business (BR)	154		
Local Business (BL)	509		
IG-1 / IG-2 Industrial	1,353		
Other Business / Industrial (CP, PO, MU)	140		
Other		**838**	**6%**
Pine Orchard (zoned separately)	821		
Short Beach (zoned separately)	17		
Total		**14,325**	**100%**

Planimetrics and New England GeoSystems based on Assessor database. Totals may not add due to rounding


Zoning
Branford, CT
Single Family Residential
Higher Density
Medium Density
Lower Density
Other Residential
Multi-Family
Commercial
Town Center
Local Business
Other
Industrial
Industrial
Other Areas
Approved PDD
Areas Zoned By Others
Short Beach
Pine Orchard
East Haven
North Branford
Guilford
Northford Rd
Brushy Plain Rd
Cedar St
Hosley Ave
E. Main St
Main St
Damascus Rd
Pine Orchard Rd
Leetes Island Rd
Branford Center
Branford Hill
Pine Orchard
Stony Creek
Indian Neck
Short Beach
I-95
1
139
146
142
4,000
Feet

Equalized Net Grand List

Equalized net grand lists are the estimated full market value of all taxable property in a municipality and are developed by the Connecticut Office of Policy and Management from assessment / sales ratio information.

To calculate the assessment / sales ratio, actual sales prices are compared to assessed values. For example, a home that has an assessed value of $100,000 and sells for $200,000 has an assessment / sales ratio of 50%.

2.7 Fiscal Overview

Key fiscal indicators which reflect the circumstances affecting Branford and surrounding communities are presented below. Compared to nearby communities, Branford has:

- the second highest tax base on a per capita basis.
- the second lowest equalized mill rate (taxes as a percent of market value) among nearby communities.
- the third highest tax levy on a per capita basis.
- about 57 percent of the budget going to education.
- only about 8 percent of revenue coming from state aid.

Per Capita Equalized Net Grand List X **Equalized Mill Rate** = **Per Capita Tax Levy**

	Per Capita Equalized Net Grand List (2015)	Equalized Mill Rate	Per Capita Tax Levy (2015)	Education Share of Budget (2015)	Per Cent Intergovernmental
Guilford	$194,532	18.35	$3,570	67.0%	10.9%
Branford	**$176,727**	**18.60**	**$3,287**	57.0%	7.9%
North Haven	$167,269	19.86	$3,323	56.8%	11.5%
North Branford	$125,586	21.10	$2,650	63.8%	22.5%
East Haven	$86,251	25.20	$2,173	55.2%	27.8%
New Haven	$74,533	26.01	$1,938	39.1%	45.4%

CERC, 2016

2.8 Environmental Parameters (Sea Level Rise and Climate Change)

Sea level rise and climate change are also significant trends to be considered as part of the POCD.

While the 2008 POCD identified sea level rise as an "emerging issue", there is now widespread consensus among numerous scientific bodies that the planet is experiencing sea level rise and undergoing significant climate change. These trends will continue for some time to come and it is apparent that both trends will impact Branford to a greater extent and with increasing frequency. Shoreline and riverfront neighborhoods will be particularly affected by rising sea levels.

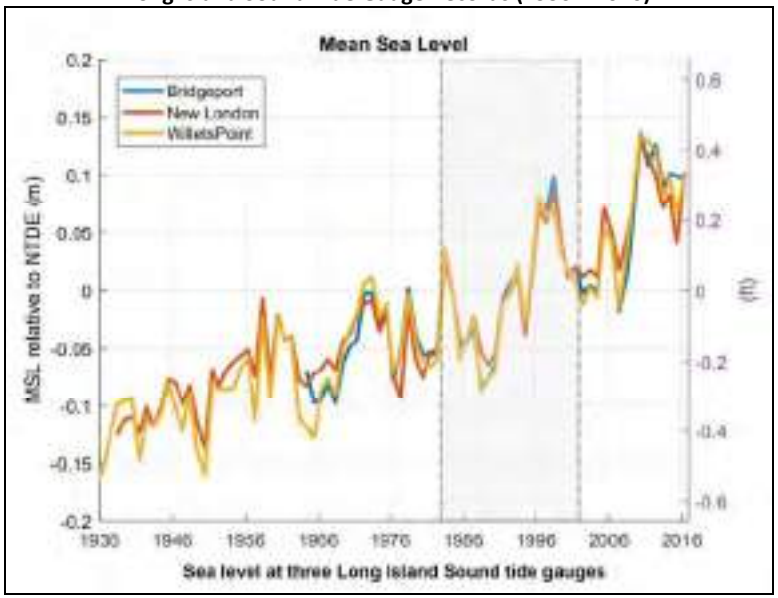
Sea Level Rise

Data from tide gauges show that sea level in Long Island Sound has been increasing for some time. This increase is largely due to greater sea volume due to warming oceans with a smaller contribution from land subsidence.

Importantly, a variety of studies have also found that the ***rate*** at which sea level is rising has been increasing. This is evident from tide gauge records as well as satellite measurements of global sea level. If this trend continues, sea level will be about two feet higher by the end of the century than it is now.

The Connecticut Institute for Resilience and Climate Adaptation (CIRCA) recommends that, for planning purposes, towns assume that sea level will increase 0.5 meter (20 inches) over 2000 levels by 2050.

Long Island Sound Tide Gauge Records (1936 – 2016)



More Information

For more information about CIRCA's recommendation for planning for sea level rise: https://tinyurl.com/CT-Sea-Level-Rise

For more information about historic tide gauge records: https://tinyurl.com/historic-sea-levels

For more information about satellite measurements of global sea level:, https://tinyurl.com/sea-levels-global-info

For more information regarding the increase in global temperatures: https://tinyurl.com/historic-global-temps

For more information about increase in atmospheric CO_2: https://tinyurl.com/increase-in-CO2

For more information about the trapping of heat in the oceans: https://tinyurl.com/ocean-heat-trapping

For more information about reduction of Arctic sea ice: https://tinyurl.com/artic-sea-ice-decrease

"Greenhouse Gases"

Since the beginning of the industrial age (1880s), the atmospheric concentration of CO_2 increased from about 280 parts-per-million (ppm) to about 405 ppm.

Like sea level and surface temperature, the rate of CO_2 increase has grown in recent years, from about 0.9 ppm per year in the 1960s to about 2.3 ppm per year in the last decade.

Climate Change

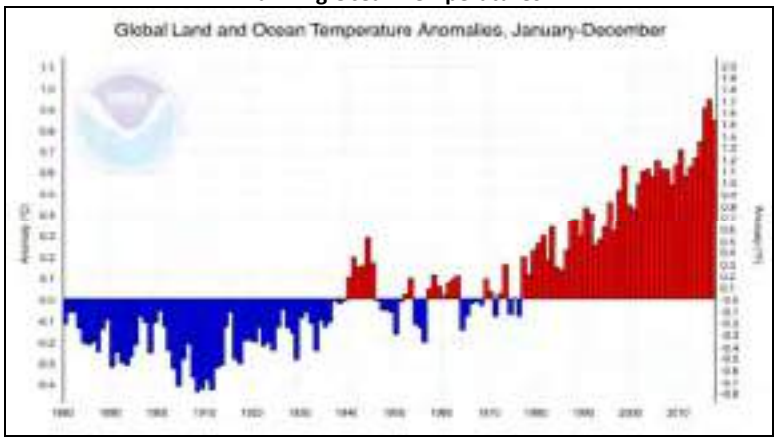
At the same time, the planet has been experiencing higher average temperatures, caused mostly by the increasing amounts of atmospheric carbon dioxide (CO_2) and other "greenhouse" gases" which reduce the amount of infrared radiation escaping into space. This results in higher average temperatures on Earth. Average global surface (land and ocean) temperatures rose 0.5° Celsius (0.9° Fahrenheit) during the entire 20th Century and have risen another 0.4° Celsius (0.75° Fahrenheit) in the first 17 years of the 21st century.

This contributes to sea level rise since the water in the ocean expands in volume as it gets warmer and warmer air and water contribute to melting of polar ice caps and glaciers.

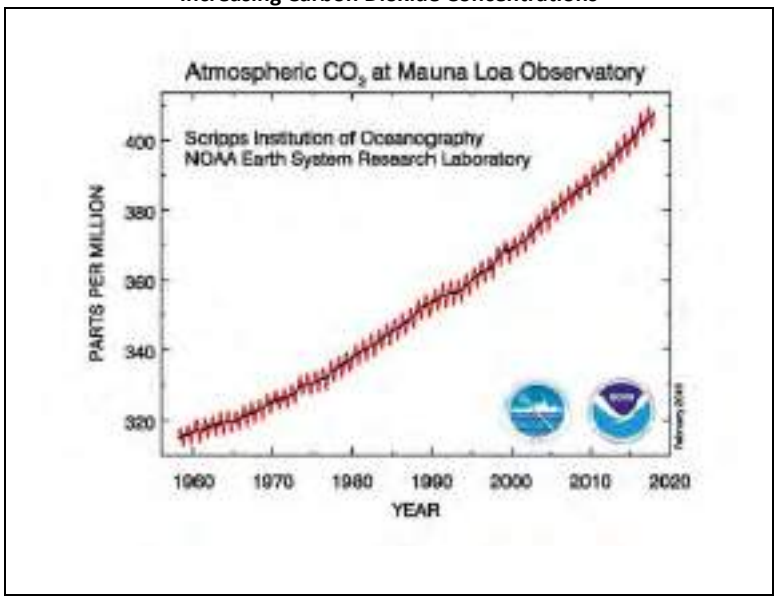
Warmer water and warmer air both increase the amount of water vapor in the air. Consequently, the amount of precipitation in individual storm events has increased in Connecticut and elsewhere, carrying with it greater risk of flooding when the amount of precipitation in a certain time period or over several days exceeds the capacity of rivers, streams and storm water infrastructure (detention basins, culverts, etc.).

(See Chapter 4 and Chapter 12 for strategies related to these issues).

Warming Ocean Temperatures



Increasing Carbon Dioxide Concentrations



COMMUNITY INPUT 3

3.1 Input From Community Meeting

A community workshop meeting was held at Walsh Intermediate School early in the planning process to get input from Branford residents.

At least 120 people attended the meeting and participated in the exercises to:

- show where they lived.
- identify things in Branford they are "proud" of.
- identify of things in Branford they are "sorry" about.
- identify topics they felt are priorities for the POCD to consider.
- discuss topics that received the most planning points

The exercise revealed that attendees came from different parts of Branford and that there did not seem to be a *geographic* bias which might have skewed the results of the meeting.

Identifying "Sorrys"



Branford Eagle Photo

Allocating Planning Points



Branford Eagle Photo

Planning Points



Branford Eagle Photo

Community Discussion



Branford Eagle Photo

Prouds

People attending the meeting were asked to identify things in Branford they were proud of. This exercise tends to reveal things that enhance the overall quality of life and that people would like to encourage in their community.

Tabulation Of "Prouds"

Open Space • Open space / Land Trust / trails / linkages	119
Branford Center • Town Center / Town Green / Harbor / TOD area	69
Community Facilities / Services • Libraries / Schools / Parks and recreation	44
Community Character • Scenic areas / Historic resources / People / organizations	37
Coastal Resources • Shoreline areas / waterfront / Coastal views / access / Thimble Islands	31
Neighborhoods • Stony Creek / Short Beach / Indian Neck	29
Walking / Biking / Transit / Rail • Train station / Center walkability	15



Sorrys

People attending the meeting were also asked to identify things in Branford they were sorry about. This exercise tends to reveal things that detract from the overall quality of life and that people would like to discourage in their community

Tabulation Of "Sorrys"



Business / Economic Development • Route 1 development appearance / Costco / not Costco / Appearance at "pretzel" area / Empty storefronts	90
Traffic and Circulation • Exit 53 configuration / Traffic congestion / speeding	40
Community Facilities and Services • Senior Center / Walsh School	26
Residential Development • High density development / Number of apartments / condos / Lack of certain housing types	24
Community Character • Blight / derelict properties / Lack of design review / Unattractive "gateways"	21
Walking / Biking / Transit / Rail • Lack of sidewalks / walkability / Lack of bike lanes	19

Planning Points

People attending the meeting were asked to allocate "planning points" among pre-selected topics to reflect what they felt was important for Branford to consider as part of the planning process. People were limited to one "top priority" item but could pick up to two "second priority" and up to two "third priority" items. At least 115 people participated in the planning points exercise.

		Top Priority	Second Priority	Third Priority	Total Mentions
Conservation-Related Issues **315 mentions**	**Open Space**	22	40	36	**98**
	Coastal Resources	20	43	29	**92**
	Natural Resources	17	28	32	**67**
	Community Character	16	24	18	**58**
Development-Related Issues **105 mentions**	**Business Development**	7	11	15	**33**
	Housing Diversity	5	10	11	**27**
	Residential Development	6	6	10	**22**
	Branford Center / Villages	3	12	8	**23**
Infrastructure-Related Issues **147 mentions**	**Walking / Biking / Bus**	9	18	35	**62**
	Community Facilities	5	22	19	**46**
	Traffic and Circulation	3	13	8	**24**
	Water/ Sewer / Utilities	2	6	7	**15**

3.2 Input From Telephone Survey

In order to gather even more information about issues important to Branford residents, a random sample telephone survey of residents was conducted in March 2018. A total of 250 surveys were completed by a professional survey firm using landlines and cellular phones.

Overview of Participants

Careful attention was paid as part of the telephone survey methodology to get an accurate response from different age groups and neighborhoods in Branford in rough proportion to the 2010 Census. This was accomplished for 5 different age groupings and five different neighborhood groupings.

About 79 percent of participants owned their place of residence and about 20 percent rented. About 23 percent of the respondents had children living in the home, and about 77 percent had no children living in the home.

About 36 percent of respondents had lived in Branford for 10 years or less, about 14 percent had lived in Branford for 10-20 years, and about 50 percent of respondents had lived in Branford 20 years or more. In terms of reasons for moving to Branford, most people were born here (26 percent) or moved here due to the location or proximity to work/family, etc. (41 percent). About 20 percent moved here due to community character and/or community services and amenities.

Participants felt the overall quality of life in Branford was good (34 percent) or very good (64 percent).

Survey Accuracy

Due to the random sampling used and number of responses, the survey results are expected to be representative of the entire community with a margin of error of about 6.2 percent.

In other words, it is projected that the methodology used in this survey would produce results within 6.2 percent of the results for the entire population about 95 percent of the time.



This icon is used throughout the Plan to direct attention to the results of the telephone survey.

Survey responses related to Plan topics are located in the relevant chapter.

A complete report regarding the telephone survey results is on file at Town Hall.

When asked what was the one thing they might change in Branford, responses included the following types of things. The responses have been grouped into categories and sorted to show level of interest.

Category	Comments	Number	Percent
Nothing	• Nothing/ no improvements needed	60	24%
Fiscal / Taxes	• Taxes too high / tax breaks / Less money spent on education / Stay within budget / Cost efficient/quality of life improvements	23	9%
Roads / Traffic	• Traffic control / management / Upgrade and maintain roads / Pretzel layout needs to improve / Address speeding issues	20	8%
Residential Development	• Reduce number of homes/condos / Decrease the population / Build less condos/apartments / Fewer trailer park communities / Concentrate on single family homes / Lower housing costs / Senior housing / More housing near downtown / Enforce housing codes/strict zoning	18	7%
Pedestrian / Bicycle	• Walkable areas / trails / bike paths-lanes / More sidewalks	17	7%
Business Development	• More “big box” stores / Want Costco • No commercial development / No more big box stores / No Costco • More shopping centers / Need bookstore / More small retail shops	15	6%
Services	• Improve school system/security / More programs for children / Entertainment / festivals / concerts / Reduce crime	15	6%
Character	• Renovate old buildings/shopping centers that are in disrepair / Improvements& building on Route 1 / Less development / Keep residential areas clean / Keep natural/green areas trimmed/neat/clean / Improve the canal/river	12	5%
Coastal	• Improvements on private beaches/facilities • Easier access to public water/beach	10	4%
Transit	• Shuttle service for seniors / Better Public transportation	5	2%
Other Response	• Other responses not classifiable above	24	10%
No Response	• Don’t Know/Refused	31	12%

3.3 Input From On-Line Survey

To get additional input on issues important to residents, an on-line survey was conducted during January and February of 2018. During that period, 373 responses were recorded. The availability of the survey was promoted by:

- Multiple press releases to local media outlets,
- Posting on the Town's Facebook page,
- Information on the front page of the Town website,
- A screensaver on Branford Community TV, and
- Email distribution of a flyer.

What is *the main thing* that attracted you to Branford as a place to live or what attracts you about the community today?	**Percent**
Overall Character / Appearance	51%
Branford's Location / Accessibility	31%
Housing Availability / Design / Affordability	6%
School System	5%
Community Amenities / Services	4%
Diversity of Community / Residents	4%

Totals may not add due to rounding.

What could Branford do to encourage more *people like you* to live here?	**Number**
1. Character	56
2. Taxes	45
3. Schools	35
4. Economic Development	31
5. Amenities	29
6. Affordability	11
7. Housing	10
8. Downtown	9
9. Walk/Bike	8
10. Transit	8
Other Responses (may be categorized)	21

This was an open-ended question and the responses were categorized by Planimetrics.

Survey Accuracy

Participation in this survey was voluntary and people self-selected to participate. Since the selection was not random, there may some bias in the results but it is not possible to determine how.

However, since 373 responses were received, they help provide information on issues important to the community.

What do you see as the greatest challenge or need facing Branford in the next 10 to 20 years?	Number
1. Taxes / Fiscal / Affordability	90
2. Character	56
3. Economic Development	22
4. Sea Level Rise	17
5. Schools	17
6. Age Mix	15
7. Traffic	13
8. Balance	10
Other Responses	47

These were open-ended questions and the responses were categorized by Planimetrics.

If you could make one thing happen in Branford to make it a better place, what would that be?	Number
1. Character	31
2. Economic Development	27
3. Costco	26
4. Walk/Bike	23
5. Fiscal / Taxes / Affordability	19
6. Amenities	17
7. Schools	14
8. Coastal	12
9. Dynamics	12
10. Transportation	12
Other Responses	18

What topics or issues do you feel should be given the most emphasis in the Plan? (limited to one response per column)

Conservation-Related Responses	First Choice	Second Choice	Third Choice	# Of Resp.
Addressing Coastal Issues	39	23	37	**99**
Protecting Natural Resources	29	33	25	**87**
Preserving Open Space	24	27	30	**81**
Enhancing Community Character	17	18	17	**52**
Promoting Sustainability / Resilience	13	19	13	**45**
Subtotal	**122**	**120**	**122**	**364**

Development-Related Responses	First Choice	Second Choice	Third Choice	# Of Resp.
Promoting Business / Economic Development	68	27	21	**116**
Guiding Town Center / Transit-Oriented Development	18	27	24	**69**
Enhancing Villages and Neighborhoods	17	22	20	**59**
Addressing Residential Development / Housing Needs	12	22	17	**51**
Subtotal	**115**	**98**	**82**	**295**

Infrastructure-Related Responses	First Choice	Second Choice	Third Choice	# Of Resp.
Promoting Pedestrian / Bicycle / Transit Options	31	23	36	**90**
Addressing Community Facilities / Services	17	23	21	**61**
Addressing Utility Services	8	17	14	**39**
Addressing Vehicular Transportation	7	12	15	**34**
Subtotal	**63**	**75**	**86**	**224**

3.4 Input From Survey Of Board/Commission Members

A survey of members of local boards and commissions in Branford elicited the following comments:

1. What do you *particularly like* about Branford and how it has developed?	• Downtown's character / ambience / unique businesses • Distinctive villages and strong neighborhoods • Coastal location and amenites • Culture and personality of the community • Open space and overall character
2. Is there anything about how Branford has developed that you *do not care for*?	• Pace of economic development has slowed • Poor commercial areas / lack of coherent vision / lack of design review • Too many condos • Excessive number of town buildings / Cost of town facility renovations • Lack of adherence to POCD recommendations

3. What types of things should Branford *encourage* in the future?	• Growing the tax base / more and better economic development • Fixing the Exit 53 interchange • Placemaking / better design of developments • Quality municiapl services and facilities (education, recreation, etc.)
4. What types of things should Branford *discourage* in the future?	• Poor commercial development • Significant amounts of "big box" development • Multi-family housing, especially if not transit-oriented • Not keeping enough "green" areas

5. What do you see as the *greatest challenge or need* facing Branford in the next 10 to 20 years?	• Addressing flooding / sea level rise • Growing tax base / economy while maintaining community character • Building the tax base / maintaining a vibrant local economy • Changing age composition • Mitigating traffic congestion

6. As you think about Town services and facilities in Branford, what do you feel should be the *major community focus* during the next 10 years?	• Addressing needs of an aging population • Coastal issues / sea level rise / climate change • Improving / maintaining educational system and infrastructure • Improving pedestrian accomodations • Link the train station area to downtown • Maintaining / enhancing community services • Addressing / solving Exit 53
7. What topics or issues do you feel should be considered for inclusion in the Plan?	• Make sure we follow through with implementation of recommendations • More opportunities for public input • Promotion of everything that makes Branford a desirable place to live • Sustainability • Resilience • Shared services with nearby communities • Upgrading the school system • Thoughtful development of riverfront areas • Enhance tourism • Make the POCD a living document subject to regular maintenance and updating • Find ways to attract and keep younger people

3.5 Planning Directions

Based on this information, the Plan Update Steering Committee began reviewing and discussing plan topics, including strategies, policies and action steps. Within the major POCD themes, the chapters were organized as follows:

Conservation-Related Issues	Address Coastal Issues Protect Natural Resources Preserve Open Space Enhance Community Character Promote Sustainability / Resilience
Development-Related Issues	Strengthen Community Structure (Enhancing Villages and Neighborhoods) Enhance Branford Center Promote Business / Economic Development Guide Residential Development / Address Housing Needs
Infrastructure-Related Issues	Maintain And Enhance Community Facilities / Services Address Vehicular Transportation Promote Pedestrian / Bicycle / Transit Options Address Utility Infrastructure

ADDRESS COASTAL ISSUES

4

Branford is a coastal community and coastal areas and issues have always been important to residents and policy-makers. Traditionally, considerations revolved around protecting important coastal resources, providing for coastal access, and enjoying the scenic views and recreational benefits provided by Long Island Sound.

But times have changed. There is a growing realization that sea levels are rising and coastal storms are becoming more frequent and more severe. In March of 2018, there were four "nor'easters" within a short period of time and each storm impacted shoreline areas in Branford especially hard. What was once an area subject to the gentle rise and fall of tidal fluctuations has become an area at risk from events that were not fully envisioned 20 years ago.

Over the last few years, however, Branford has recognized the possible risks and threats and the Town has been active in looking at issues associated with sea level rise, climate adaptation, and hazard mitigation as it related to the coastal area. These efforts must continue and accelerate.

At a public meeting early in the process of updating the POCD, participants identified coastal issues as one of the most important issues to consider as part of this planning process.

Coastal Assets



Coastal Liabilities



Key Resources

The 2016 Coastal Resilience Plan for Branford is a key resource and is hereby incorporated as part of this POCD.

Other resources to consider include:

- SCRCOG Regional Framework for Coastal Resilience (2017)
- SCRCOG Multi-Jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan (2018)
- Connecticut Institute for Resilience & Climate Adaptation (CIRCA)
- Center for Land Use Education and Research (CLEAR) which is part of the UConn Extension Service
- The Office of Long Island Sound Programs (OLISP) at the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection
- National Institute of Standards and Technology (part of the US Department of Commerce) for information on resilience

4.1 Establish A Framework For Addressing Coastal Vulnerability

Branford completed a Coastal Resilience Plan in 2016 and the South Central Regional Council of Governments (SCRCOG) completed a report outlining a regional framework for coastal resilience in 2017. Those documents provide useful information moving forward and put Branford well in front of other communities that are still coming to grips with this issue.

That 2016 Branford Plan identified potential vulnerabilities in Branford and suggested potential responses:

- **Protection** - protecting the land from the sea so that existing land uses can continue.
- **Accommodation** - people continue to use the land *at risk* but do not attempt to prevent the land from being flooded.
- **Retreat** - the coastal zone is abandoned and there is no effort to protect the land from the sea.

However, having an inventory of possible issues is only the first step. Branford needs to understand the cost (and other) implications related to different responses and decide how it will be able to address them. ***The scope of the issues associated with sea level rise are so extensive and expensive that it will be difficult, if not impossible, for the Town of Branford or any other governmental organization to address them all.***

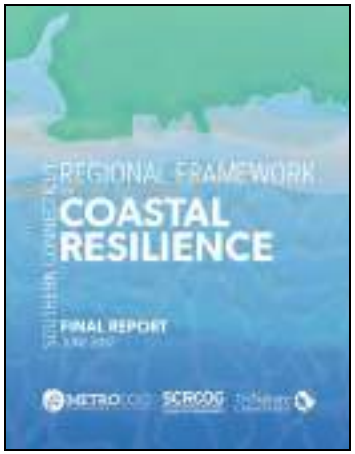
The Town needs to think about how it might be able to address sea level rise and affected property owners need to have some indication how the Town will address this issue so they can plan accordingly.

Branford's Coastal Resilience Plan



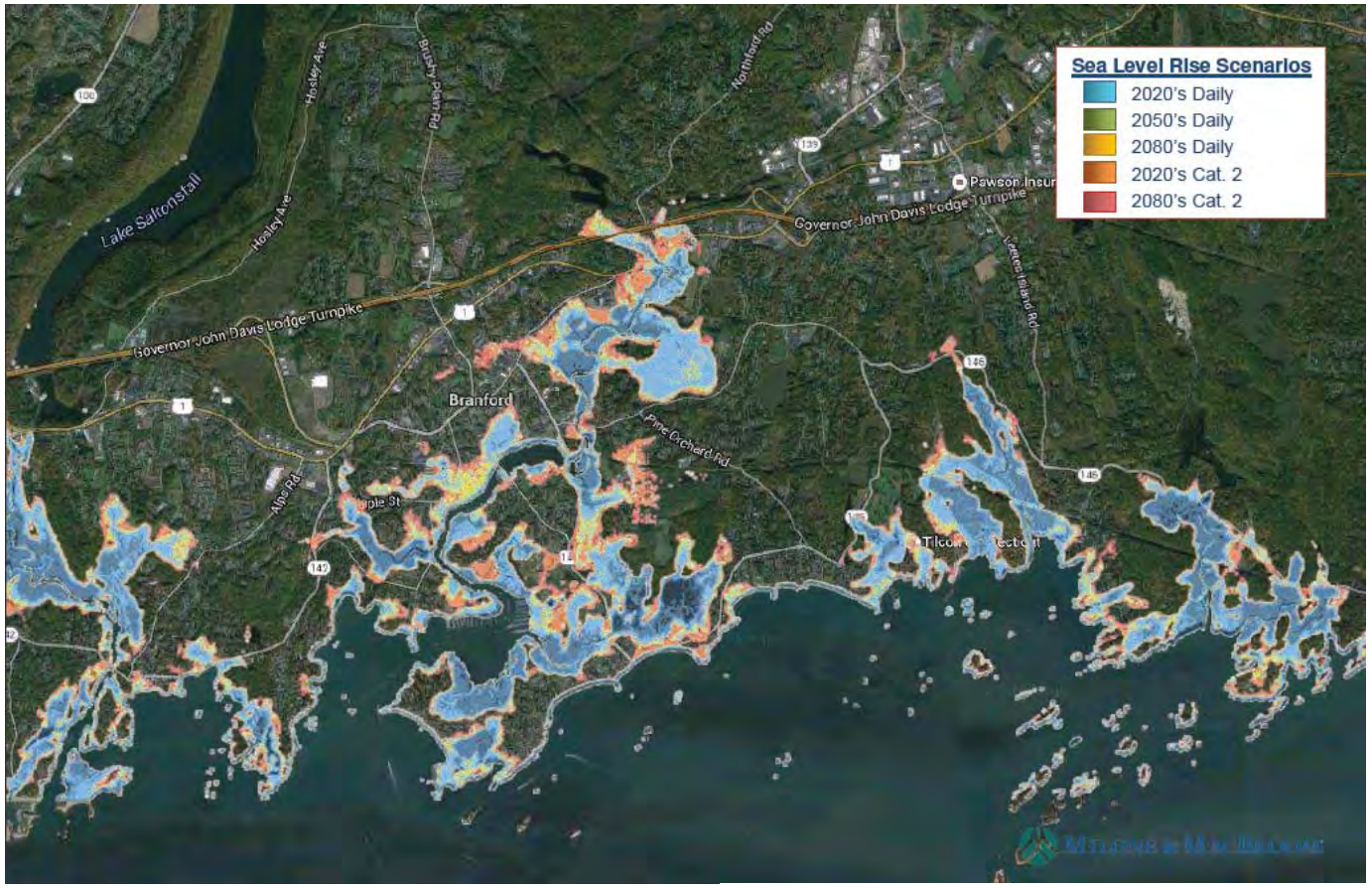
Click here to go to this document.

SCRCOG Coastal Resilience Plan



Click here to go to this document.

Sea Level Rise / Storm Flooding Scenarios



Branford Coastal Resilience Plan (2016)

Sea Level Rise

In October 2017, the Connecticut Institute for Resilience and Climate Adaptation (CIRCA) released a recommendation that Connecticut municipalities ***plan*** for sea level rise of 20 inches (0.5 meters) between 2017 and 2050. This is not a prediction but it is a scenario that Branford should prepare for.

Plan For

20”

Of Sea Level Rise By 2050

In 2017, Moody’s Investor Service advised communities that they will begin incorporating climate risk and potential exposure into their community evaluation and bond rating system.



Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

Branford should do more to prepare for sea level rise.

Strongly Agree	26%
Agree	41%
Not Sure	11%
Disagree	20%
Strongly Disagree	3%

As a result, the POCD recommends that the Town appoint a committee or working group to consider a preliminary approach, including shared responsibility, regarding how some of these issues might be addressed in the future.

While the POCD Update Steering Committee feels that a new broad-based working group with diverse expertise is likely to be the best approach, it is possible that the Flood and Erosion Control Board or another local entity might be able to perform this function.

	Leader	Partners
1. Establish a coastal vulnerability working group. ☐	**RTM**	
a. Prepare detailed maps showing areas subject to potential inundation in the future. ☐	**CVWG**	**Staff**
b. Assemble and maintain a database of "'repetitive loss" properties. ☐	**CVWG**	**Staff**
c. Assemble information in terms of "orders of magnitude" for the costs associated with different coastal vulnerability responses (based on sea level rise scenarios of 2, 4, and 6 feet). ☐	**CVWG**	**Staff**
d. Establish a framework and/or program for addressing coastal vulnerability issues (possibly including cost-benefit analysis, life-cycle costing, and other considerations). ☐	**CVWG**	**Staff CEC**
e. Prepare a conceptual capital improvement program to balance fiscal capacity with coastal issues / needs. ☐	**CVWG**	**FS BOF**
2. Evaluate whether Branford should impose stricter rules on development in coastal floodplain areas (freeboard, building height, building design/typology, setbacks from tidal wetlands, water quality buffers, etc.). ☐	**PZC**	**CVWG FECB**
3. Continue to work with regional, state, and federal agencies and other organizations to address issues related to coastal vulnerability (including ways to encourage property owners to retreat from vulnerable locations).	**Town**	**CVWG SCRCOG**
a. Continue to participate in updating and maintaining the SCRCOG Hazard Mitigation Plan in order to coordinate and guide regional efforts. ☐	**Town**	**SCRCOG**

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Possible Framework

Individual Buildings / Properties

With regard to individual buildings, the responsibility for the building will likely rest with the property owner. It is unlikely that the Town will be in a position to address issues associated with individual buildings.

The Town should continue to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program so that flood insurance will be available to private property owners. The Town should allow (or even encourage or require) homeowners to elevate their buildings within the parameters established by the National Flood Insurance Program and in ways which are consistent with state and federal policy and do not present an undue risk to public health and safety.

- **Individual Buildings / Properties**
- **Regulations**

Neighborhood Approaches

There will be "middle-ground" situations where a project:

- may be larger than one property,
- may not be prudent as a Town investment (i.e. - the cost-benefit of an improvement may not warrant Town funding), and
- may not be practical unless all property owners benefitting participate.

In such situations, options may include:

- neighborhood associations undertaking such projects,
- the Town coordinating and administering an "assessment of benefits" approach,
- the Town facilitating establishment of a "special service district" for the affected property owners,
- property owners (as a group).

- **Seawalls / Bulkheads / Groins / Breakwaters**
- **Beach Nourishment / Dune Restoration**
- **Engineered Banks / Artificial Reefs**

Road And Utility Infrastructure

Infrastructure issues will likely need to be investigated on a case-by-case basis. A framework should be developed for:

- looking at action thresholds for different infrastructure items,
- estimating when (or if) that action threshold is likely to occur, and
- prioritizing improvements based on the action threshold.

In the future, the Town may wish to undertake a ***cost/benefit analysis*** to compare the costs of infrastructure improvements with the number of properties affected, the nature/extent of the risk, and the anticipated useful life of the improvement. In some situations, it simply may not make fiscal sense for all of the Town taxpayers (or for a utility provider) to undertake some infrastructure improvements.

- **Roadway Infrastructure**
- **Drainage Infrastructure**
- **Water Supply Infrastructure**
- **Sewage Disposal Infrastructure**
- **Power Supply Infrastructure**
- **Communications Infrastructure**

Key Resources

The 2016 Coastal Resilience Plan for Branford is a key resource and is hereby incorporated as part of this POCD.

The 2017 SCRCOG Regional Framework for Coastal Resilience is another key resource to consider.

The 2018 SCRCOG Multi-Jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan also addresses issues related to coastal resilience.

The Connecticut Institute for Resilience & Climate Adaptation (CIRCA) is also a resource for municipalities addressing issues related to sea level rise and coastal resilience.

The Office of Long Island Sound Programs at the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection can also help

Coastal Habitat

Coastal resources also include the plants and animals that inhabit the shoreline area.

Businesses in Branford raise and harvest shellfish and kelp and so there is an economic component in addition to aesthetic considerations.

LIS "Blue Plan"

The Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection is preparing a "Blue Plan" for Long Island Sound and envisions this Plan will be ready in 2019. The goal is to guide current and potential new uses in a manner that will minimize conflict with natural resources and traditional uses.

The first step, an inventory of natural resources and human uses, contains useful information on coastal resources in and around Branford.

4.2 Protect Coastal Resources

The map on the facing page shows what is considered to be the "coastal area" in Branford. Section 22a-93 of the Connecticut General Statutes defines coastal resources as:

- coastal bluffs and escarpments
- rocky shorefronts
- beaches and dunes
- intertidal flats
- tidal wetlands
- freshwater wetlands and watercourses
- estuarine embayments
- coastal hazard areas
- developed shorefront
- island
- nearshore waters
- offshore waters
- shorelands
- shellfish concentration areas

The POCD recommends that efforts continue to protect these coastal resources as they exist today and as they evolve in the future (such as salt marsh advancement) in response to sea level rise and climate change.

	Leader	Partners
1. Continue to protect coastal resources.	**PZC**	**DEEP CEC**

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Thimble Islands



Rocky Shorefront

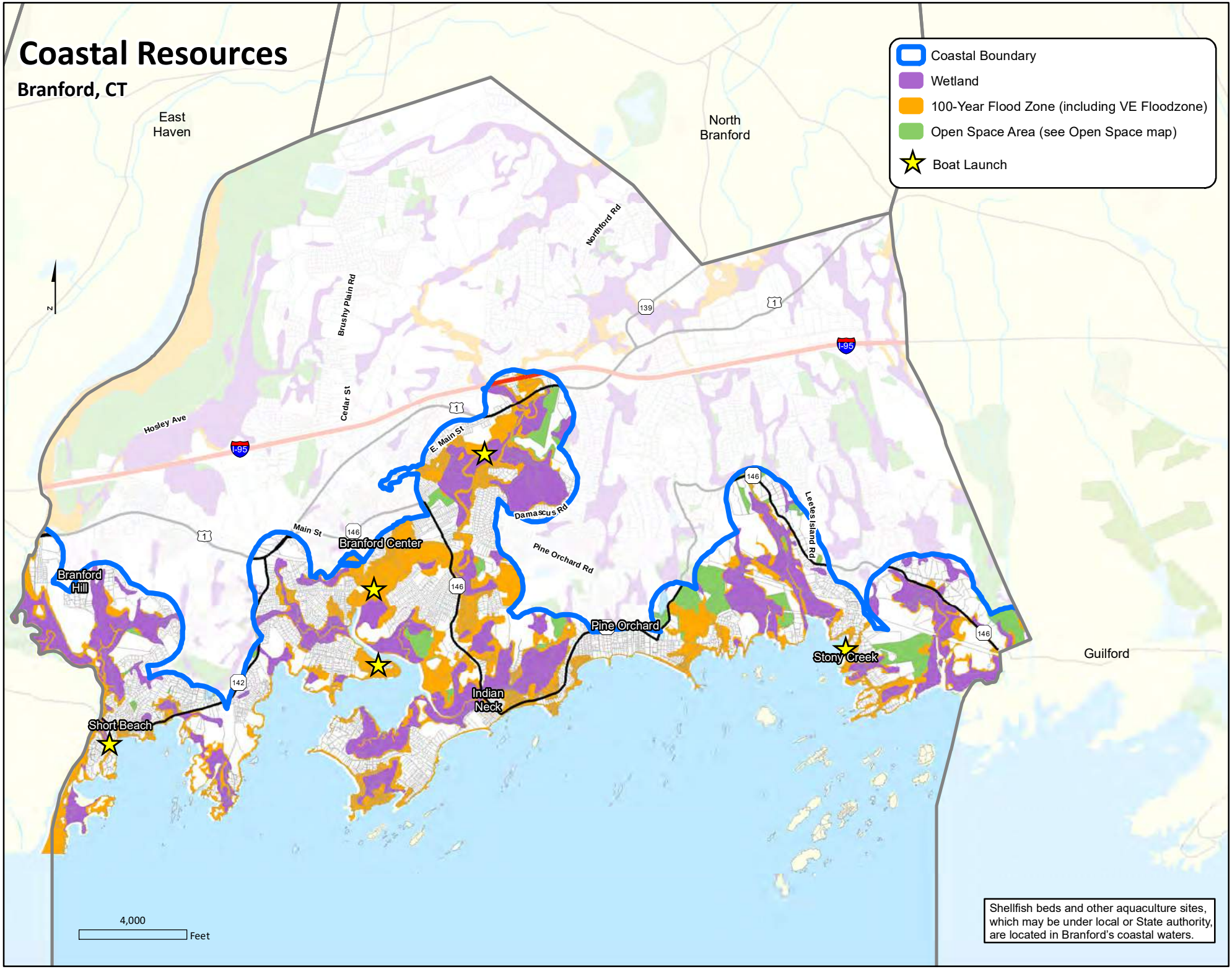


Sandy Shorefront



Coastal Resources

Branford, CT



Shellfish beds and other aquaculture sites, which may be under local or State authority, are located in Branford's coastal waters.

Coastal Access

Providing the public with the ability to access and use State waterways, such as Long Island Sound, is a goal of the Connecticut Coastal Management Act (CGS-22a-90 through 112).

The Connecticut Coastal Management Act (CCMA) requires activities along the water to be "water dependent" and this may be met by providing coastal access (although "water dependent" and public access are not synonymous terms).

When implementing the CCMA through the Coastal Site Plan Review process, Branford should continue to evaluate opportunities to provide public access.

Accessibility to the water enhances the overall quality of life in Branford.

4.3 Maintain And Enhance Coastal Access

Coastal access of all kinds (visual access, public access, boating access, etc.) is important to coastal communities like Branford and the POCD recommends that these types of access be maintained and enhanced.

		Leader	Partners
A.	**Visual Access**		
	1. Continue to seek ways to protect, preserve, and enhance ***visual access* to and from coastal areas and resources.**	**PZC**	**DEEP**
B.	**Public Access**		
	1. Continue efforts to enhance ***public access* to and from coastal areas and resources.**	**PZC**	**DEEP POS**
	a. Consider a uniform coastal access signage program.	**POS**	**BOR CEC**
	b. Continue to seek opportunities to acquire waterfront open space / recreation areas and provide boardwalks and shorefront trails to enhance public access to coastal areas and resources.	**POS**	**RTM PZC**
	c. Consider ways to facilitate recreational fishing and shell-fishing by residents.	**SC**	
C.	**Boating Access**		
	1. Continue efforts to enhance ***boating access* to coastal areas and resources.**	**HM**	
	a. Continue to maintain / improve public boat ramps and launch areas for kayaks.	**HM**	**BOR**
	b. Consider creating a specific zone for commercial marinas to accommodate their unique needs, avoid the possible redevelopment into a different commercial use, and minimize impacts to adjacent residential neighborhoods.	**PZC**	**Town**
	c. Consider the benefits of preparing a harbor management plan.	**HM**	
	d. Maintain navigation channels through dredging and other means	**HM**	

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PROTECT NATURAL RESOURCES

5

For the purposes of the POCD, the term "natural resources" is considered to include:

- Water resources (including surface water and groundwater)
- Land / soil resources
- Air resources
- Biologic resources (plants and animals)

Protecting natural resource is important since doing so helps promote overall environmental health, preserve environmental functions, enhance community character, and enhance the overall quality of life. Protection of natural resources was considered a high priority by participants in the on-line and telephone surveys and by people attending a public meeting at the beginning of the process.

Water Resources



Plants



Animals



Natural Diversity Database

The Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (CT-DEEP) maintains a Natural Diversity Database (NDDB) in order to help public agencies protect important resources such as. known locations of:

- endangered species,
- threatened species,
- species of special concern,
- significant natural communities,
- scenic areas, and/or
- unique natural assets (waterfalls, caves, etc.).

In some cases, the exact locations are masked to protect sensitive species from collection and disturbance.

The map on the facing page shows the location of some of the important natural resource areas in Branford:

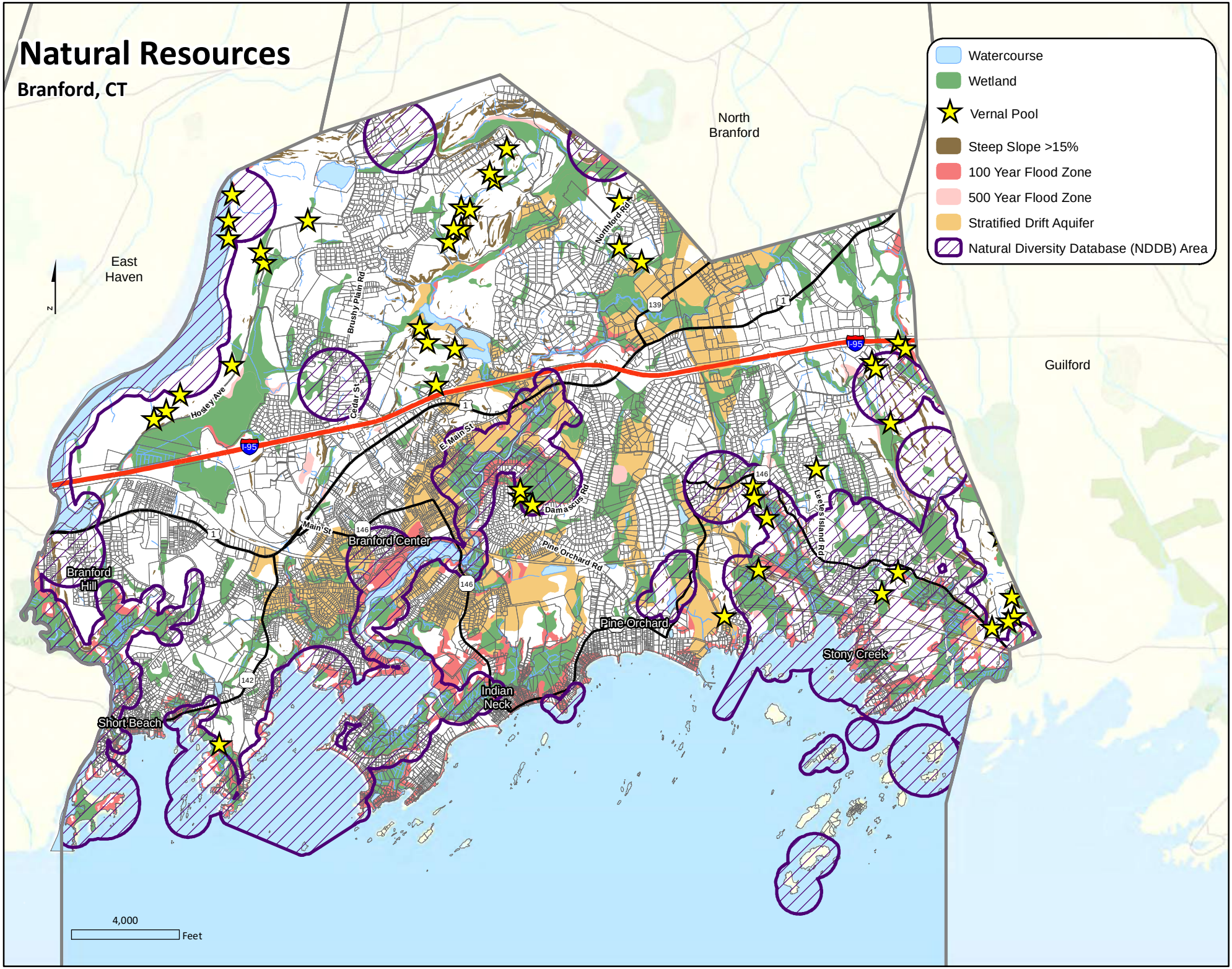
Land-Related Resources	• Steep slopes • Stratified drift aquifer areas
Water-Related Resources	• Waterbodies / watercourses • Wetlands • Inland / riverine floodplains
Biologic-Related Resources	• Plant and animal habitats • Natural Diversity Database Sites • Vernal pools
Air-Related Resources	• Everywhere

Branford prepared a Natural Resources Inventory in 2003 and the 2013 update noted that Branford continued to enjoy a relatively high quality of natural resources. The report noted that threats to natural resources might arise from:

- Stress from growth / development.
- Sea level rise / climate change.

Throughout the planning process, participants identified the following natural resource issues as being important:

- Protection of water quality.
- Protection of the overall eco-system (habitats, air quality, bio-diversity, invasive species, etc.).
- Averting threats to natural resources as a result of development.


Natural Resources
Branford, CT
Watercourse
Wetland
Vernal Pool
Steep Slope >15%
100 Year Flood Zone
500 Year Flood Zone
Stratified Drift Aquifer
Natural Diversity Database (NDDB) Area
North Branford
East Haven
Guilford
Branford Hill
Branford Center
Indian Neck
Pine Orchard
Stony Creek
Short Beach
Hosley Ave
Brushy Plain Rd
Cedar St
Northford Rd
E Main St
Damascus Rd
Pine Orchard Rd
Leetes Island Rd
Main St
I-95
1
139
146
142
4,000
Feet

Stormwater Drainage

The Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4) is a federal program managed by the US Environmental Protection Agency that seeks to reduce pollution resulting from stormwater drainage. The MS4 requirements are implemented by State-wide permits and the permit creates additional planning and management requirements for Towns with regard to local stormwater systems.

Historically, Branford maintained a number of catch basins and pipes to capture stormwater and transport it to discharge points. While this reduced flooding, it did not fully consider the reduction in groundwater recharge or the downstream impacts on water quality.

The federal MS4 regulations require that Branford address water quality in the stormwater management system. Branford will continue to devote resources (time and money) to addressing and managing MS4 compliance.

5.1 Maintain and Improve Water Quality

Maintaining and improving water quality is Branford's top natural resource protection strategy.

A. General Water Quality	Leader	Partners
1. Continue programs and efforts to maintain and improve water quality – including drinking water supplies, surface waters, and groundwater.	**Town**	**ESHD SCRWA**
a. Promote sewage pump-out boats, land use agency coordination, the Branford River Project, storm drain marking, etc.	**Town**	**ESHD DEEP**
b. Discourage the use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides.	**Town**	**ESHD DEEP**
c. Develop more stringent water quality protection standards (such as nitrogen removal) applicable to properties proposed for development within the coastal boundary ☐	**PZC**	**ESHD DEEP**
B. Stormwater Quality	**Leader**	**Partners**
1. Continue programs and efforts to improve ***stormwater* quality.**	**Town**	**ESHD DEEP**
a. Continue to maintain and implement Branford's Stormwater Management Plan.	**Town**	
b. Seek to retrofit existing stormwater management systems utilizing modern water treatment approaches such as "low impact development" (LID).	**PW**	**DOT**
c. Review and update Section 6.9 of the Zoning Regulations to incorporate specific LID standards (such as those in Section 7.4 of the Connecticut Stormwater Quality Manual, 2004). ☐	**PZC**	
d. Consider ways to provide flexibility on lot coverage limitations where (LID) is employed. ☐	**PZC**	
C. Erosion and Sediment Control	**Leader**	**Partners**
1. Eliminate (or reduce) erosion and the resulting sedimentation of catch basins, drainage pipes, culverts, wetlands and waterways.	**Staff**	
2. Continue to require implementation and maintenance of erosion and sedimentation controls.	**Staff**	

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5.2 Address Water Quantity / Flooding Issues

Branford seeks to reduce the amount of stormwater runoff generated from rainfall (also see Section 16.1 of the POCD) and to address and adapt to increased flooding which is anticipated in the future due to increases in storm frequency and severity. Also see Chapter 4 of the POCD with regard to coastal flooding issues.

A. General Water Quantity	Leader	Partners
1. Address water quantity and flooding issues in terms of: • **managing drainage impacts from new development, and** • **updating existing drainage systems / culverts.**	**Town**	**DEEP**
a. Revisit design criteria for stormwater systems to reflect the changing frequency and intensity of storm events.	**Staff**	**PZC**
b. Seek to decrease the amount of impervious surfaces (road widths, parking requirements, etc.) and increase the amount of pervious surfaces.	**PZC**	
c. Examine lessening the width requirements for new roads (and lessening the paved portions of existing roads) as may be appropriate to lessen the amount of paved surface generating stormwater runoff as well as the amount of paved surface to maintain.	**PZC**	
B. Flooding	**Leader**	**Partners**
1. Continue to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program.	**Town**	
a. Limit development in flood prone areas unless in strict accordance with the National Flood Insurance Program	**PZC**	
b. Implement flood hazard reduction programs	**Town**	
c. Investigate requiring that any substantial improvements in flood-prone areas be elevated above projected flood levels such as two feet of "freeboard" in coastal areas and one foot of "freeboard" in inland areas.	**PZC**	
d. Seek to reduce flood insurance premiums for Branford properties, including participating in the Community Rating System program.	**Town**	
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What should the Town be doing in terms of protecting its natural resources such as rivers, streams and wetlands?

Do More	50%
Keep Same	42%
Do Less	1%
Not Sure	7%

Tree Protection

The preservation of existing tree cover is important, not only for the aesthetic quality of residential neighborhoods, roadways and commercial development, but also for maintenance of water quality in the rivers and streams that drain into Long Island Sound, mitigation of flooding, reduction of carbon monoxide levels, energy conservation in the summer, and preservation of wildlife diversity.

As part of new development, Branford should seek ways to preserve existing trees and encourage or require the planting of new trees as part of an overall landscape regulation.

Branford should also encourage tree planting on public property, when appropriate.

5.3 Protect Important Natural Resources

Branford should continue to undertake programs that help protect and preserve overall environmental health and specific natural resources.

A. Natural Resources Inventory	Leader	Partners
1. Maintain the Natural Resource Inventory.	**CEC**	
B. Important Resources	**Leader**	**Partners**
1. Continue to protect watercourses / wetlands / vernal pools from development impacts or minimize any such impacts.	**IWC**	**Staff**
2. Continue to protect steep slopes from development pressures.	**PZC**	**Staff**
3. Protect important plant and animal habitats listed on the State's Natural Diversity Database.	**PZC**	**IWC Staff**
4. Continue efforts to maintain and improve air quality.	**DEEP**	
5. Continue efforts to preserve existing trees and encourage or require the planting of new trees .	**CFC**	**PZC Staff**
C. Vegetation	**Leader**	**Partners**
1. Encourage the preservation, maintenance, and planting of trees and other plants for their environmental, habitat, runoff, and visual benefits.	**CFC**	**CEC**
a. Consider establishing a comprehensive tree planting and maintenance program in Branford. (also see page 64).	**CFC**	**TW**
2. Continue to require the use of native species (and discourage invasive species) in Branford.	**Town**	

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PRESERVE OPEN SPACE

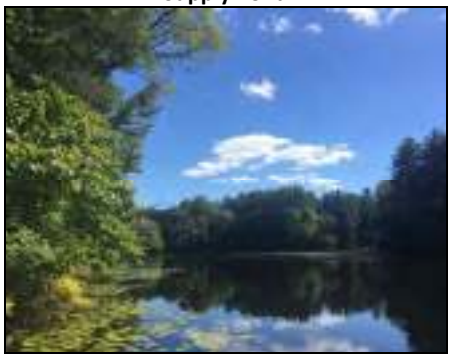
6

The term “open space” can mean different things to different people and this can complicate discussion of this issue. Depending on the context, open space can mean anything from any land that is not developed to land that is permanently preserved as a natural area.

Open space can help protect community character, enhance the quality of life for residents, conserve important natural resources, provide wildlife habitat, provide fiscal and economic benefits, shape development patterns, and preserve lands for recreational uses.

During the planning process, Branford residents expressed strong appreciation for the open spaces in the community and efforts to continue to maintain and expand the open space network. At a public meeting early in the planning process, participants identified open space as the issue that was most important to them.

Supply Pond



Coastal Marsh



Experiences



Open Space Categories

As this POCD was being prepared, the South Central Regional Council of Governments (SCRCOG) was in the process of developing an open space categorization approach that could be used throughout the region.

When this approach has been finalized, Branford should consider utilizing it to categorize and manage its open space portfolio.

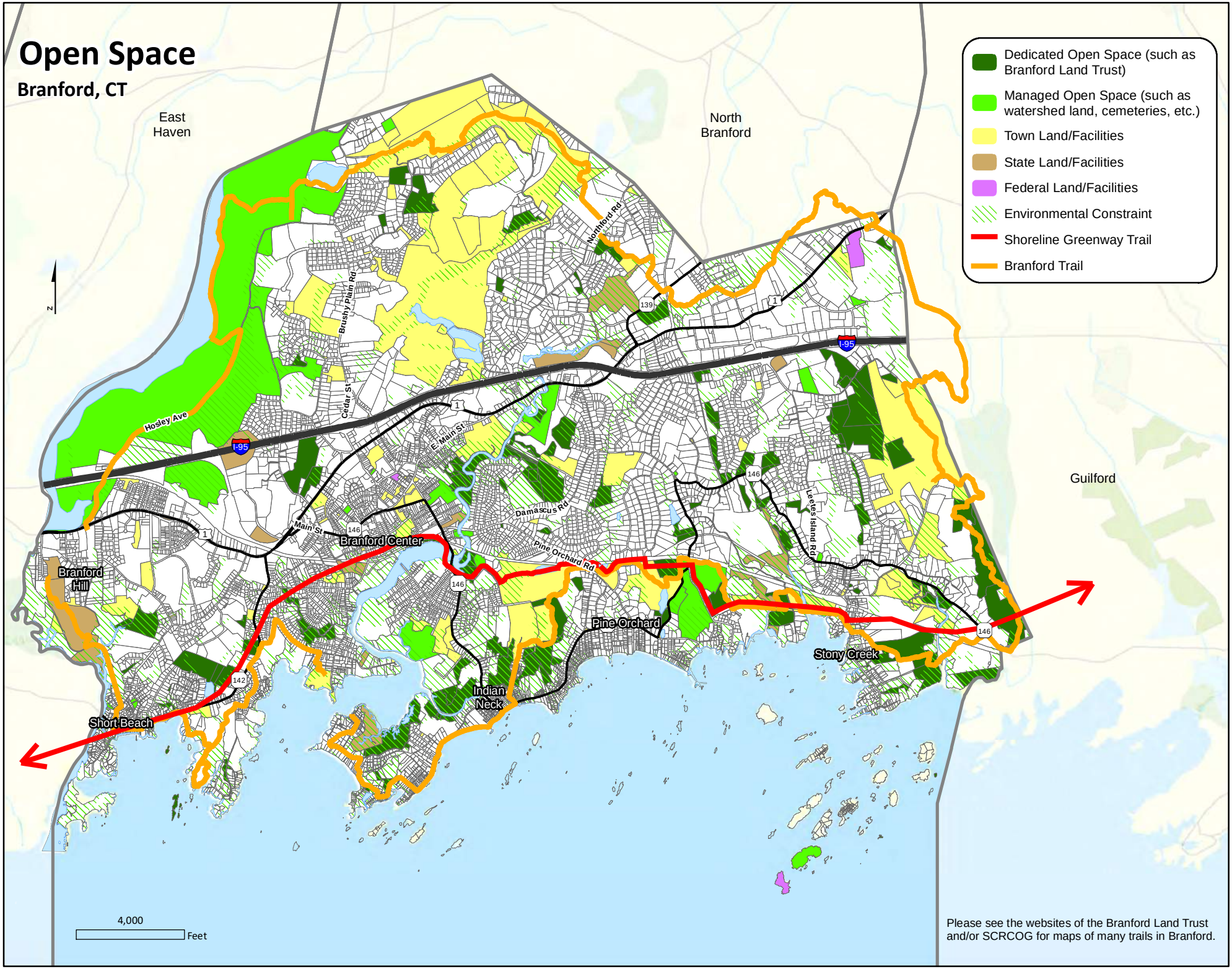
Open Space Information

The information on the Open Space Map reflects information in the Town's property database at the time the POCD was being prepared. Please check the Town website to see if more current information has become available.

For the purposes of the POCD, the term "open space" can include lands falling into the following general categories:

	Possible Description	Possible Examples
Dedicated Open Space	Land owned by a government entity or a recognized non-profit conservation organization that is expected to remain "open space" in perpetuity. *Public use of the land is generally allowed.*	• Land purchased for preservation • Land donated for preservation • Land dedicated as part of approval of a development proposal
Regulated Open Space	Land with environmental constraints (such as wetlands or floodplains) which will likely not be developed in the future. *Public use generally not allowed unless on public property.*	• Land in an undeveloped state due to natural constraints
Managed Open Space	Land used for another purpose but provides some open space benefits (scenic, public access, undeveloped, etc.). *Public use may or may not be allowed or may be restricted to members.*	• Watershed land • Golf course, cemetery, etc. • Land preserved by a conservation easement or restriction
Temporary Open Space	Land presently assessed under the PA-490 program as farm, forest, or open space category land. *Public use generally not allowed*.	• Land enrolled into the PA-490 assessment program (see page 57)
Perceived Open Space	Private land that is presently vacant or partially developed but nothing prevents this land from being sold or developed at some time in the future. *Public use generally not allowed.*	• Private undeveloped land with no preservation limitations or restrictions

The map on the facing page shows the location of some parcels in Branford that could be considered "open space" of one form or another. The map also shows the location of some open space trails. Many more trails exist in Branford and these are well presented on the Branford Land Trust website and the website of the South Central Regional Council of Governments (SCRCOG).


Open Space
Branford, CT
East Haven
North Branford
Guilford
Dedicated Open Space (such as Branford Land Trust)
Managed Open Space (such as watershed land, cemeteries, etc.)
Town Land/Facilities
State Land/Facilities
Federal Land/Facilities
Environmental Constraint
Shoreline Greenway Trail
Branford Trail
N
I-95
Hosley Ave
Cedar St
Brushy Plain Rd
Northford Rd
E. Main St
Main St
Damascus Rd
Pine Orchard Rd
Leetes Island Rd
Branford Center
Branford Hill
Short Beach
Indian Neck
Pine Orchard
Stony Creek
1
139
146
142
4,000
Feet
Please see the websites of the Branford Land Trust and/or SCRCOG for maps of many trails in Branford.



Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Branford should try to acquire more land for such things as parks, open space areas, or wildlife habitat.

Strongly Agree	30%
Agree	44%
Not Sure	4%
Disagree	18%
Strongly Disagree	4%

Branford should try to acquire more land, even if taxes are raised to pay for it.

Strongly Agree	12%
Agree	27%
Not Sure	8%
Disagree	31%
Strongly Disagree	22%

6.1 Update Branford's Open Space Vision

Branford has a good inventory of open space and is well on its way to creating a meaningful open space system where significant natural resources are protected and open space areas and neighborhoods are linked together through a system of trails and greenways. The POCD supports these efforts.

The key open space recommendation in the POCD is to review and update the Open Space Plan so as to have an accurate and up-to-date inventory of the open space resources (land and trails) we have as well as key "opportunity areas" for the future.

	Leader	Partners
1. Review and update the 2005 Open Space Plan to incorporate an up-to-date inventory of open space areas (parcels and easements) and trails and a vision to link open space areas and neighborhoods through a system of trails and greenways.	**SCOS**	**BLT CEC**
2. Consider adopting criteria for desirable open space that reflects: • **Areas affected by future sea level rise.** • **Coastal issues and opportunities (including coastal access).** • **Inland waterways.** • **Trail extension opportunities.** • **Opportunities which may arise through tax liens and/or foreclosure.**	**SCOS**	**CEC**
3. Continue efforts to acquire key parcels of open space that link, protect or buffer other open space parcels or natural resources.	**SCOS**	**BLT CEC**
a. Explore opportunities to convert "managed" open space land (such as watershed land, institutional land, etc.) into protected open space land.	**SCOS**	**BLT CEC**
b. Explore opportunities to convert private undeveloped land into protected open space land.	**SCOS**	**BLT CEC**
c. Seek opportunities to establish relationships with owners of desirable open space in order to explore opportunities for land preservation.	**SCOS**	**BLT CEC**

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In the meantime, Branford should continue to implement the 2005 Open Space Plan. This plan includes criteria and guidelines to assist the community when trying to determine if a parcel is appropriate for the community to acquire.

Criteria For Prioritizing The Acquisition Of Open Space (2005)

A property will be given high priority for acquisition according to the degree to which it:

- **Ecological Systems** - Preserves the integrity of rare, fragile, or threatened ecosystems, especially those impacting Long Island Sound, the Branford River, inland and tidal wetlands and trap rock ridges.
- **Greenway Systems** - Enhances and preserves the continuity of greenway systems including, but not limited to, such areas as the Supply Ponds - Pisgah Brook Preserves, Hoadley Creek Preserve, Beacon Hill, Water Authority - Lake Saltonstall area, Stony Creek Quarry Preserve, and "The Branford Trail."
- **Open Space Systems** - Enhances, expands or connects existing open space to minimize habitat fragmentation.
- **Wildlife Systems** - Enhances and protects wildlife travel corridors.
- **Water Resources** - Protects parcels which include or are adjacent to watercourses or wetland areas including, but not limited to, the Farm River, the Branford River, Stony Creek and their associated tributaries and Long Island Sound.
- **Water Resources** - Enhances flood and erosion control and water supply protection.
- **Scenic Resources** - Preserves and protects historically significant and outstanding scenic sites, particularly ridgelines, view lines of Long Island Sound and the Branford River.
- **Character Resources** - Preserves land that is critical to the Town's character.
- **Farmland** - Preserves existing farmland and open fields.

In addition, Branford should:

- continue to update open space planning efforts with input from local and regional organizations.
- continue to refine how parcels might be linked with trails and other open space areas and strategies to implement these plans.
- improve how open space is tracked. Historically the Branford Assessor's Office has classified some parcels of dedicated open space, owned by the town or the Branford Land Trust, as "vacant land."

Greenways

Greenways are "corridors of open space" that:

- may protect natural resources, preserve scenic landscapes and historical resources or offer opportunities for recreation or non-motorized transportation;
- may connect existing protected areas and provide access to the outdoors;
- may be located along a defining natural feature, such as a waterway, along a man-made corridor, including an unused right of way, traditional trail routes or historic barge canals; or
- may be a green space along a highway or around a village.

6.2 Maintain Effective Tools For Preserving Open Space

The POCD also recommends that Branford continue to enhance its "toolbox" so that it can be flexible and effective when opportunities arise to preserve open space.

	Leader	Partners
1. Continue to promote "conservation-type" development patterns such as the Open Space Residential Development provisions in Section 7.3 of the Zoning Regulations, especially for properties near large open space areas.	**PZC**	
2. Where appropriate, continue to obtain an "open space set aside" at the time of development.	**PZC**	**SCOS CEC**
3. For situations where land set-aside may not be beneficial, maintain the "fee-in-lieu-of-open-space" regulation to generate open space funds.	**PZC**	
4. Continue to add money to the Open Space Fund to be able to react quickly to open space opportunities (through annual appropriations, bonding to capitalize the Open Space Fund, donations, the Neighborhood Assistance Act, and other methods).	**SCOS**	**BOF RTM**
5. Continue to seek opportunities to participate in federal and state open space grant programs.	**SCOS**	**BLT CEC**
6. Continue to seek opportunities to partner with other organizations to protect open space.	**SCOS**	**BLT CEC**
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Town Park



Land Trust Property



Managed Open Space



Public Act 490

Public Act 490 (codified at CGS Section 12-107) is a program whereby certain lands are eligible for reduced assessments and, as a result, pay lower taxes:

- Farms,
- Forested parcels of 25 acres or more,
- A local option approach (called the open space component of PA-490), and
- Marine heritage property (waterfront property used for commercial lobstering).

While properties in Branford participate in the PA-490 program, it is not clear whether the "local option" component was authorized in Branford. Establishing such a program requires:

- A recommendation in the POCD, and
- Adoption by the RTM.

Should Branford wish to authorize such a program in the future, the POCD can be amended to incorporate the eligibility criteria.

Farm



Forest



"Local Option"



6.3 Promote And Manage Open Spaces

For Branford to maximize the value of its open space assets, the POCD recommends that these assets be promoted and managed effectively.

A. Promotion / Mapping	Leader	Partners
1. Continue to promote the open space assets in Branford.	**POS**	**BLT CEC**
2. Enhance mapping / signage for recreational trail systems.	**POS**	**BLT CEC**
B. Management and Maintenance	**Leader**	**Partners**
1. Create and maintain simple open space management plans for each open space asset: **a. inventory of how the property is being used,** **b. assessment of how open the property could / should be used (kept natural, passive recreation, active recreation, other, etc.),** **c. strategies for improving management / maintenance.**	**POS**	**BLT CEC**
2. Improve maintenance of open space assets and trails in accordance with management plans.	**POS**	**BLT CEC**
a. Clearly assign responsibilities for maintenance of open space to one specific entity and avoid overlapping maintenance jurisdiction, where feasible.	**POS**	**BLT CEC**

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ENHANCE COMMUNITY CHARACTER

7

For the POCD, the phrase "community character" includes those traits or qualities that contribute to a distinctive impression of a community. Communities typically want to maximize those things that enhance people's perception of community character and minimize those things that detract from character.

For the purposes of this booklet, the discussion of community character has been broken into two parts:

- Protecting and preserving character elements we already have.
- Addressing other things that could enhance Branford's character.

Positive Impact On Character



Positive Impact On Character



Negative Impact On Character





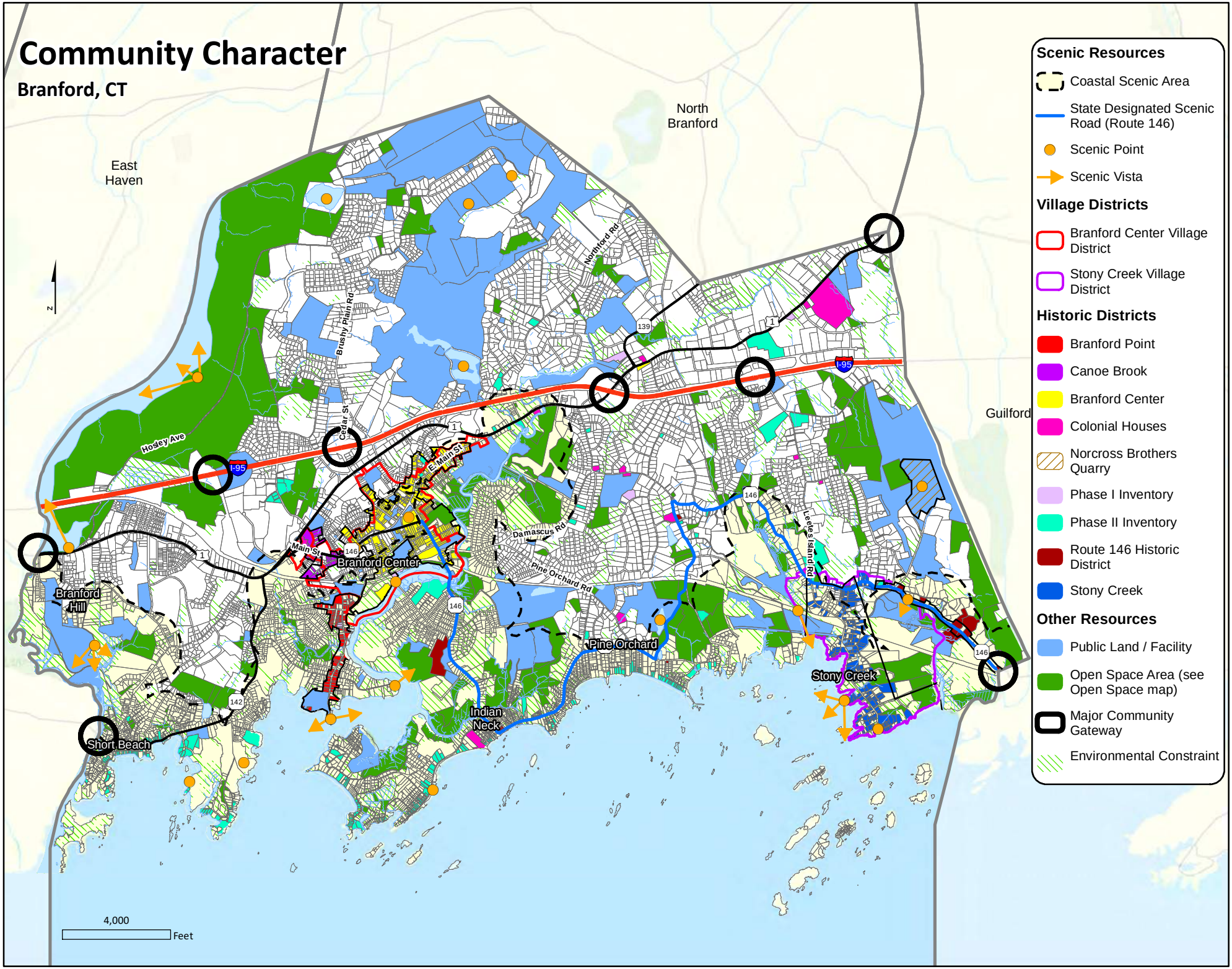
What should the Town be doing in terms of ensuring that new buildings fit into Branford´s overall character?

Do More	52%
Keep Same	38%
Do Less	5%
Not Sure	4%

Studies of community character have generally identified the following things as correlating to people's perception of community character:

	Positive Correlation	Negative Correlation
Natural Resources	• Water features / wetland areas / tidal marshes • Landform / hillsides	• Overt pollution / degradation
Open Space / Openness	• Open space areas / undeveloped land • Greenway trails / connections	
Scenic Resources	• Scenic views / areas / roads / features • Significant trees / tree canopies	
Historic Resources	• Historic buildings • Historic landscapes	
Place-making	• Identifiable areas with a "sense of place" • Strong gateways that create a sense of entry • Logical organization / intuitive way-finding • Public art	• Areas without a "sense of place" • Strip commercial development patterns • Sprawl development patterns
Building Design / Streetscape	• Building designs that enhance "sense of place" • Development scale matches expectations / capacity • Appropriate landscaping / lighting / noise / signs • Pedestrian-friendliness	• Discordant architectural styles • Development out of scale with expectations • "Franchise" / "cookie-cutter" architecture • Abandoned buildings / sites
Roadways	• Attractive roads / roadside imagery • Street trees	• Traffic speed / congestion • Excessive driveways / turning movements • Lack of sidewalks where needed
Destinations	• Unique places (Thimble Islands, Stony Creek Brewery, etc.) • Unique festivals / events • Attractive community facilities / services	•
Other	• People / organizations / traditions • Positive reputation • Cleanliness / maintenance / safety • Community image / reputation / perception	• Discordance between image and reality • Lack of property maintenance • Overhead utility wires • Inappropriate lighting / light pollution

The map on the facing page shows the location of some of these resources and features in Branford.


Community Character
Branford, CT
North Branford
East Haven
Guilford
Hosley Ave
Cedar St
Brushy Plain Rd
Northford Rd
E Main St
Main St
Branford Center
Damascus Rd
Pine Orchard Rd
Leetes Island Rd
Branford Hill
Short Beach
Indian Neck
Pine Orchard
Stony Creek
I-95
1
139
146
142
4,000
Feet
Scenic Resources
Coastal Scenic Area
State Designated Scenic Road (Route 146)
Scenic Point
Scenic Vista
Village Districts
Branford Center Village District
Stony Creek Village District
Historic Districts
Branford Point
Canoe Brook
Branford Center
Colonial Houses
Norcross Brothers Quarry
Phase I Inventory
Phase II Inventory
Route 146 Historic District
Stony Creek
Other Resources
Public Land / Facility
Open Space Area (see Open Space map)
Major Community Gateway
Environmental Constraint



Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

I wish Branford could improve the overall appearance of the Route 1 and the buildings along it.

Strongly Agree	33%
Agree	36%
Not Sure	7%
Disagree	22%
Strongly Disagree	1%

Branford should have design guidelines to make new businesses fit into the character of Branford.

Strongly Agree	33%
Agree	48%
Not Sure	6%
Disagree	10%
Strongly Disagree	3%

7.1 Maintain And Enhance Design Review

Participants in the process of preparing the POCD supported the idea of doing more to guide the design of new development (buildings and sites) to ensure it enhances the character of Branford.

Village Districts	Leader	Partners
1. Maintain "village district" design review procedures in Branford Center and Stony Creek.	**PZC**	**CRRB SCARB**
a. Regularly monitor the "village district" review process (and design guidelines) for Branford Center and Stony Creek to ensure they are meeting community goals and objectives.	**PZC**	
Overall Design Review	**Leader**	**Partners**
2. Explore and implement an advisory design review process for business, industrial, institutional, and multi-family development / redevelopment outside of the ""village district" areas.	**PZC**	
a. Expand the existing Town Center design manual to become a "design guidebook" for other areas of town as well.	**DRB**	
b. Encourage establishment of an awards program for the "project of the year" to increase public recognition of quality building and/or site design.	**Town**	

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Standard Architecture



Possible Design Approach



Possible Design Approach



7.2 Protect Historic Resources

Branford has a number of historic resources (including archeological resources) and the POCD advocates for their continued protection and preservation.

	Leader	Partners
1. Continue to identify historic and archeologic resources and continue efforts to preserve and protect them.	**BHS**	
2. Encourage and incentivize "sensitive stewardship" of privately-owned historic resources in order to preserve and maintain them.	**BHS**	**Town**
3. Support residents who wish to establish Local Historic Districts in residential areas.	**BHS**	**Town**
4. Encourage the preservation of historic structures, including adaptive re-use where appropriate.	**BHS**	**PZC**
5. Re-establish the Branford Preservation Trust in order to help preserve important resources.	**BHS**	**Town**
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Harrison House



Town Hall



Blackstone Library



Local Historic Districts

In a local historic district (LHD), a Historic District Commission can regulate the construction, demolition, and alterations of structures visible from public streets.

The establishment of an LHD requires approval by a supermajority of affected properties and adoption of a Town ordinance.

National / State Registers

A listing on the National and State Registers of Historic Places provides recognition of historic resources but provides limited protection.

Districts or properties can be nominated by the State Historic Preservation Office.

Village Districts

Village districts (as authorized by CGS Section 8-2j) are a way for a planning and zoning commission to consider aesthetic issues as part of a land use activity.

Branford established village districts in Branford Center and Stony Creek



What should the Town be doing in terms of protecting community character and scenic areas?

Do More	47%
Keep Same	50%
Do Less	1%
Not Sure	2%

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

Branford should adopt regulations to more carefully control the regrading of land associated with new development.

Strongly Agree	29%
Agree	46%
Not Sure	12%
Disagree	12%
Strongly Disagree	2%

7.3 Preserve And Enhance Branford's Scenic Features

As a coastal community, Branford is known for its many scenic coastal areas (such as Stony Creek and the Thimble Islands). Branford also has a number of other scenic resources which should also be protected.

	Leader	Partners
1. Continue to identify and protect visually distinctive landscapes, high quality views, and other scenic features.	**CEC**	**PZC**
a. As necessary, amend land use regulations to include greater protection of scenic resources and features, especially in coastal areas. ☐	**PZC**	
b. Consider whether regulations are needed to more carefully control blasting and other major sitework activities. ☐	**PZC**	
c. Consider ways to address extensive tree clearing (and save existing trees) for both community character and drainage / erosion reasons. (also see page 50). ☐	**PZC**	
2. Enhance the scenic character of roadways.	**Town**	
a. Continue to seek an appropriate balance between utility pruning for reliability and scenic tree canopies.	**TW**	
b. To enhance scenic character, consider placing utilities underground where appropriate and where financially feasible.	**Town**	
c. Evaluate any proposed Town or State road widening projects with an eye towards balancing roadway needs with the desire to maintain or enhance scenic characteristics (i.e. – "context sensitivity").	**Town**	
d. To help protect the scenic value of the community, review land use policies related to tree clearing and grade alterations and, if needed, adopt: ☐ • *regulations to limit tree clearing and grade alterations in new subdivision and other development subject to PZC approval, and* • *encourage or require new tree planting within new developments.*	**PZC**	**CFC**

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7.4 Establish A Community Identification / Wayfinding Program

While most Branford residents know their community well, there are many local workers and visitors who do not know about all the great neighborhoods and destinations in the community. Branford should establish a community and neighborhood identity / wayfinding program to promote the community overall and the great neighborhoods and destinations within it.

Gateways were identified as a key issue in the 2008 POCD because such features help people understand the context of the area where they are located. Gateways can help identify areas with a "sense of place" and create a visual connection. Gateways can also help orient people to amenities that exist within an area (such as cultural and historic attractions and parking)Branford should work to establish gateways features that are attractive and announce arrival. Branford should enhance gateways at key entrance points to the community and within the community.

	Leader	Partners
1. Establish a community identification program to promote Branford and its neighborhoods and destinations to existing and potential businesses, visitors, and residents.	**EDC**	**Town**
a. Establish and enhance coordinated "community gateway" features at major entry / arrival points to the community (including "adopt-a-spot" approaches) and promote quality development in these areas. ☐	**EDC**	**PZC Town**
b. Consider establishing similar features for neighborhoods and other key places within the community (Branford Center, Harbor, Stony Creek, Short Beach, etc.). ☐	**Town**	
2. Establish a wayfinding system so that visitors to Branford will easily find their way around. ☐	**EDC**	**Town**
	Legend on inside back cover	

Gateways

Example Of A Gateway Feature



Wayfinding Concept (from TOD Study)





What should the Town be doing in terms of encouraging public events, such as concerts, festivals and other family activities for residents and visitors?

Do More	42%
Keep Same	55%
Do Less	2%
Not Sure	1%

What should the Town be doing in terms of communicating with residents about local events or activities?

Do More	42%
Keep Same	56%
Do Less	1%
Not Sure	1%

7.5 Address Other Character Issues

Branford should also continue and expand efforts to address other things that enhance community character.

		Leader	Partners
A.	**PA-490**	**Leader**	**Partners**
	1. Work with existing farms to help them continue to operate and continue to use the PA-490 farm assessment program (see page 57) to help preserve farms.	**Town**	
	2. Continue to use the PA-490 forest assessment program (see page 57) to help preserve undeveloped land of 25 acres or more.	**Town**	
	3. Consider establishing a PA-490 "open space" assessment program (see page 57) to help preserve undeveloped land meeting Town-established criteria. ☐	**RTM**	**BOS CC**
B.	**Lighting And Signage**	**Leader**	**Partners**
	1. Minimize lighting impacts on the overall environment (light pollution) from: • **glare (light striking your eye directly from the source),** • **spillover (light that extends beyond the targeted object, including light trespass), and** • **sky glow (the overhead hue seen from artificial light scattering in the atmosphere).**	**Town**	
	2. Evaluate additional lighting regulations to: ☐ • *address continuing light pollution,* • *address new LED lighting technologies (including the BUG rating system for lighting),* • *implement standards for the warmth of LED light (see page 136 for a related recommendation on this issue).*	**PZC**	**Staff**
	3. Revisit the sign regulations to ensure Branford has appropriate standards to effectively manage signage while allowing for commercial and non-commercial speech. ☐	**PZC**	**Staff**
C.	**Community Events And Activities**	**Leader**	**Partners**
	1. Continue to schedule community events which promote community spirit and the overall quality of life in Branford.	**Town**	

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STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY STRUCTURE

8

Community structure (the overall physical organization of Branford) is an important consideration in the Plan. The physical organization of a community enhances community character and quality of life and can help guide land use regulations and decisions.

Community structure also enhances “sense of place” and studies have shown that “sense of place” improves property values and economic activity.

Protecting and enhancing elements that maintain community character and quality of life in Branford is important to the community.

Branford Center



Stony Creek



Indian Neck



Branford Center

Maintain and enhance Branford Center as the key focal point in the community.

See Chapter 9 of the POCD for more strategies related to Branford Center.

Stony Creek

Maintain and enhance Stony Creek village as a secondary focal point in Branford.

Consider sidewalk, streetscape, parking, traffic and other improvements, as appropriate.

Other Village-Type Areas

Evaluate how to enhance the "sense of place" in Short Beach village, Indian Neck village, and Pine Orchard village.

Consider sidewalk, streetscape, parking, traffic and other improvements in these areas, as appropriate.

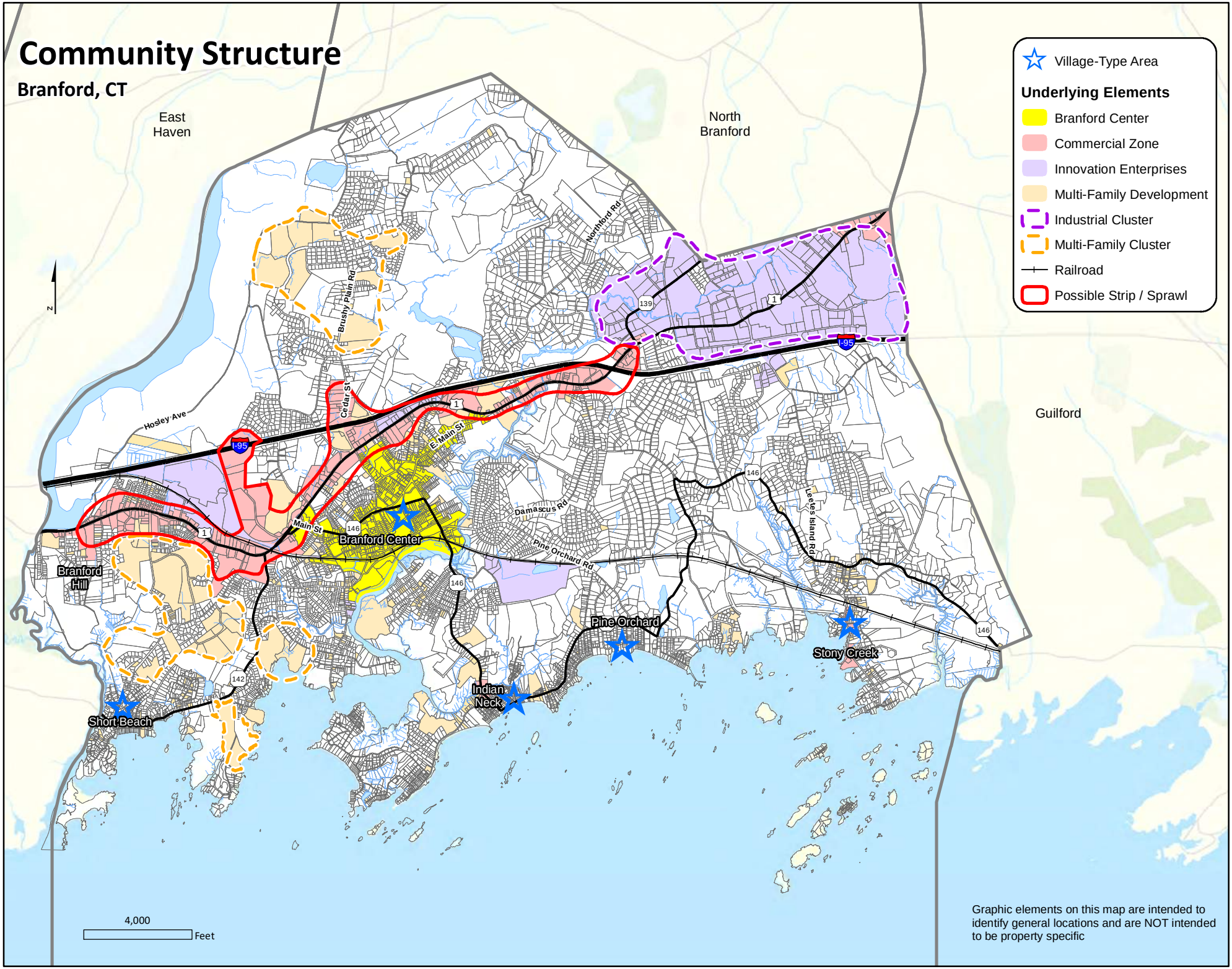
8.1 Promote And Enhance Pedestrian-Friendly, Mixed-Use Village-Type Areas

Branford is a community of villages and these villages contribute mightily to community character, a "sense of place", and quality of life. Branford will continue to seek ways to preserve, protect, promote and enhance these village areas. Supportive elements in these areas might include:

- Strong pedestrian streetscapes and connections (and transit connections, if feasible),
- Mixed uses that contribute to the overall village ambience and character,
- Social and cultural activities and events.

		Leader	Partners
A.	**Promote Branford Center**	**Leader**	**Partners**
	1. Maintain and enhance Branford Center as the key focal point in the community. (see Chapter 9 in the POCD for more information)	**Town**	**PZC CRRB**
B.	**Promote And Enhance Other Village Areas**	**Leader**	**Partners**
	1. Maintain and enhance Stony Creek village as a secondary focal point in Branford.	**Town**	**PZC SCARB**
	2. Evaluate how to enhance the "sense of place" in Short Beach village, Indian Neck village, Branford Hills, and/or Brushy Plains and consider sidewalk, streetscape, parking, traffic and other improvements, as appropriate.	**PZC**	**Staff**
	a. As appropriate, prepare conceptual plans for appropriate improvements in desired areas.	**PZC**	**Staff**
C.	**Promote Pedestrian-Friendly, Mixed-Use Development In Other Areas Also**	**Leader**	**Partners**
	1. Consider new land use regulations for West Main, North Main and East Main streets to promote development and redevelopment as pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use areas, especially since the changing retail market may create new opportunities to do so.	**PZC**	**Staff**

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Community Structure
Branford, CT
East Haven
North Branford
Guilford
Village-Type Area
Underlying Elements
Branford Center
Commercial Zone
Innovation Enterprises
Multi-Family Development
Industrial Cluster
Multi-Family Cluster
Railroad
Possible Strip / Sprawl
Hosley Ave
Brushy Plain Rd
Northford Rd
Cedar St
E. Main St
Main St
Damascus Rd
Pine Orchard Rd
Leetes Island Rd
I-95
1
139
146
142
Branford Center
Branford Hill
Short Beach
Indian Neck
Pine Orchard
Stony Creek
4,000
Feet
Graphic elements on this map are intended to identify general locations and are NOT intended to be property specific

"Strip-Type" Development

Development characterized as being "auto-centric," where land uses have been laid out in a linear fashion along roadways and prioritized to accommodate cars, with large parking lots in front of commercial uses. Often, commercial and residential uses are segregated.

8.2 Enhance Development Along Route 1

As recommended in the 2008 POCD, Branford should continue to evaluate opportunities to convert "strip-type" development areas along Route 1 into to "village like" nodes. Converting areas along Route 1 to "village-like" areas will contribute to community character and help to create a "sense of place" in these locations. This may be accomplished by encouraging property development in the following manner:

Desired Characteristics For Commercial Areas

- Mixed use buildings / 2-3 stories with mass proportionate to height
- Façade variations to camouflage larger buildings
- Traditional New England style architecture
- Buildings set close to the street / on-street parking and sidewalks
- Street trees, hedges, and other strategies to screen parking areas (or relocate them to less visible locations on the site)
- Parking and drainage areas to the rear or side of the buildings
- Sidewalks
- Bike racks

Desired Characteristics For Residential Areas

- Residential scale and architecture
- Traditional New England style architecture
- Buildings set close to the street / on-street parking and sidewalks
- Street trees

In addition, while the land use classifications may differ, there are certain attributes that all new Route 1 development should embrace, such as:

- a uniform sidewalk width along the street edge, with shade trees,
- sidewalk and safe pedestrian connections from the street to the building being served, and
- access management (see also Section 14.2).

	Leader	Partners
1. Support development / redevelopment of the Route 1 corridor to reflect current community desires: • **Design review to get better building design and better landscaping, shielded parking, etc.** • **Mixed-use sites / buildings to reflect changing demand for retail uses** • **Property consolidation to maximize development flexibility and/or access management to reduce curb cuts** • **Better stormwater management including shared parking to reduce pavement and pervious pavement to reduce runoff**	**Town**	**PZC** **EDC**
2. Undertake one or more planning studies of Route 1 to promote appropriate development / redevelopment along the Route 1 corridor (including an evaluation of sewer capacity). ☐	**PZC**	**Staff**
3. Develop land use tools to promote the conversion of "strip-type" areas to "village-like" areas.	**PZC**	**Staff**
a. Update zoning regulations to allow and/or encourage the conversion of "strip-type" areas to "village-like" areas as described in this POCD Section. ☐	**PZC**	**Staff**
b. Create new land use regulations for the various parts of the Route 1 corridor. ☐	**PZC**	**Staff**
c. Update regulations to incorporate and reflect currently desired design standards for Route 1. ☐	**PZC**	**Staff**
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8.3 Reevaluate The Use of Special Development Approaches

A "Planned Development District" is a land use approach where a specific plan is approved through a zone change process. This process can be advantageous for a community since it provides significant detail about the proposed development with the Planning and Zoning Commission having significant discretion over whether to grant the zone change request or not. Since a PDD is a legislative act on the part of the Planning and Zoning Commission (a zoning district is being changed), the Commission has considerable discretion on whether or not to approve such a change.

When Branford adopted the "Planned Development District" (PDD) regulations, this approach was intended to enable developments that did not readily fit into existing zoning categories but that would result in something special for Branford. However, this does not always appear to be the case.

The POCD recommends that the Planning and Zoning Commission revisit the PDD regulations and consider supplementing the regulation with provisions addressing:

- Consistency with the POCD,
- An assemblage of land that lends itself to a master plan approach,
- A development that provides demonstrable ***community*** benefits,
- Location in or near a "village-type area" identified in this Chapter of the POCD and ***meaningfully connected and complementary*** to the concept of a pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use area (note that the circles in the POCD are conceptual areas to give an overview of community structure and shall not be considered to be definitive maps with regard to the eligibility of a property to use the PDD approach),
- Actual construction of the PDD development within a reasonable period of time or the approval shall expire and a new approval shall be required.

Other "Special" Approvals

During the POCD process, concern was also expressed with regard to "variances" and "special exceptions" since people *feel* these are situations where "the rules get bent" for specific proposals.

Variances are part and parcel of the overall zoning system. Variances are supposed to relieve "hardship" when the strict application of the regulations treats a parcel of land unfairly due the parcels physical configuration. Provided those standards are met, a variance is a necessary part of the zoning process. Not having a variance approach might deny someone the *reasonable* use of property.

Special exceptions (known in some states as "conditional uses") are uses that are allowed provided that certain standards can be met. These standards may be general (see the Special Exception Criteria in Section 9.8.F of the Branford Zoning Regulations) or may be specific as listed in the regulation itself.

List of Approved Planned Development Districts (PDDs) As Of 2018
(listed by status and then alphabetically by common name)

Common Name	Address	Approved	Use
Status - Completed			
Best Value Inn	East Main Street	2007	Lodging
Branford Theater	South Main Street	2001	Mixed use – retail, office, residential
Brushy Plain Plaza	Brushy Plain Road	2006	Mixed use – retail, residential
Gardenside Terrace	Alps Road	2005	Assisted living
Lakeview	Lakeview Drive	1995	Residential - cluster single-family development
Leete's Island Road	Leete's Island Rd	1985	Mixed use - grocery store, restaurant
Linden Shores	Spinnaker Run	1992	Residential - cluster single-family development
Lockworks Square	Main Street	1984	Mixed use - office, retail
Mutual Housing	Kirkham Street	2005	Residential - mutual housing
Sybil Creek Landing	South Montowese Street	2002	Residential - cluster single-family development
Valley Court	Main Street	2009	Mixed use - retail and multi-family housing
Status - In Progress / Partial			
Anchor Reef	Maple Street / Indian Neck Avenue	2005 / 2016	Residential – multi-family housing
Riverwalk	East Main Street	2005	Residential - age-restricted single family detached
Tidal Basin / Stony Creek	Indian Neck Road	2016	Mixed – Brewery / Hotel (unbuilt)
Status - Not Yet Completed			
Atlantic Wharf	Church Street / Meadow Street	2016	Mixed use - office, retail, restaurant, multi family
"Costco"	East Industrial Road / East Main Street	2015	Mixed – discount club / commercial, shellfish processing
Sterling Ridge	Cherry Hill Road	2018	Residential - multi-family housing

The POCD recommends that the Planning and Zoning Commission ensure the following considerations are included when contemplating approval of a PDD:

- market demand for the proposed uses including consideration of the availability (or lack thereof) of other approved but unbuilt locations available in area for the proposed use;
- potential for access management;
- available and desired pedestrian network;
- additional design standards to promote compatibility of building form and placement/design with community character;
- characteristics of land proposed for development (ability to develop the land for the intended use without significant disruption in the existing topography and significant natural features); and
- the compatibility of existing and proposed land uses.

	Leader	Partners
1. Reevaluate the use of special development approaches (such as the PDD) to locations and situations which are in accordance with the POCD.	**PZC**	

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ENHANCE BRANFORD CENTER

9

As stated in the 2008 POCD, “Branford’s Town Center is a quintessential New England town green surrounded by commercial, residential, governmental and religious buildings. The Town Center is one of the region’s most attractive retail and community center areas." In Branford, as in many communities, the Town Center is the ***heart and soul*** of the community. This area was the location first settled by Europeans more than 300 years ago and many of the major community and institutional uses are located here.

For planning purposes, the POCD considers the boundaries of “Branford Center” to be:

- Main Street / North Main Street on the north,
- Branford River on the south and east,
- from Branford High School on the east, and
- Cherry Hill Road / North Harbor Street on the west.

Streetscape



Streetscape



Activities And Events



Transit-Oriented Development

See page 84 in the economic development section of the POCD (Chapter 10) for a discussion of promoting transit-oriented development.

9.1 Retain and Enhance The "Sense of Place" In Branford Center

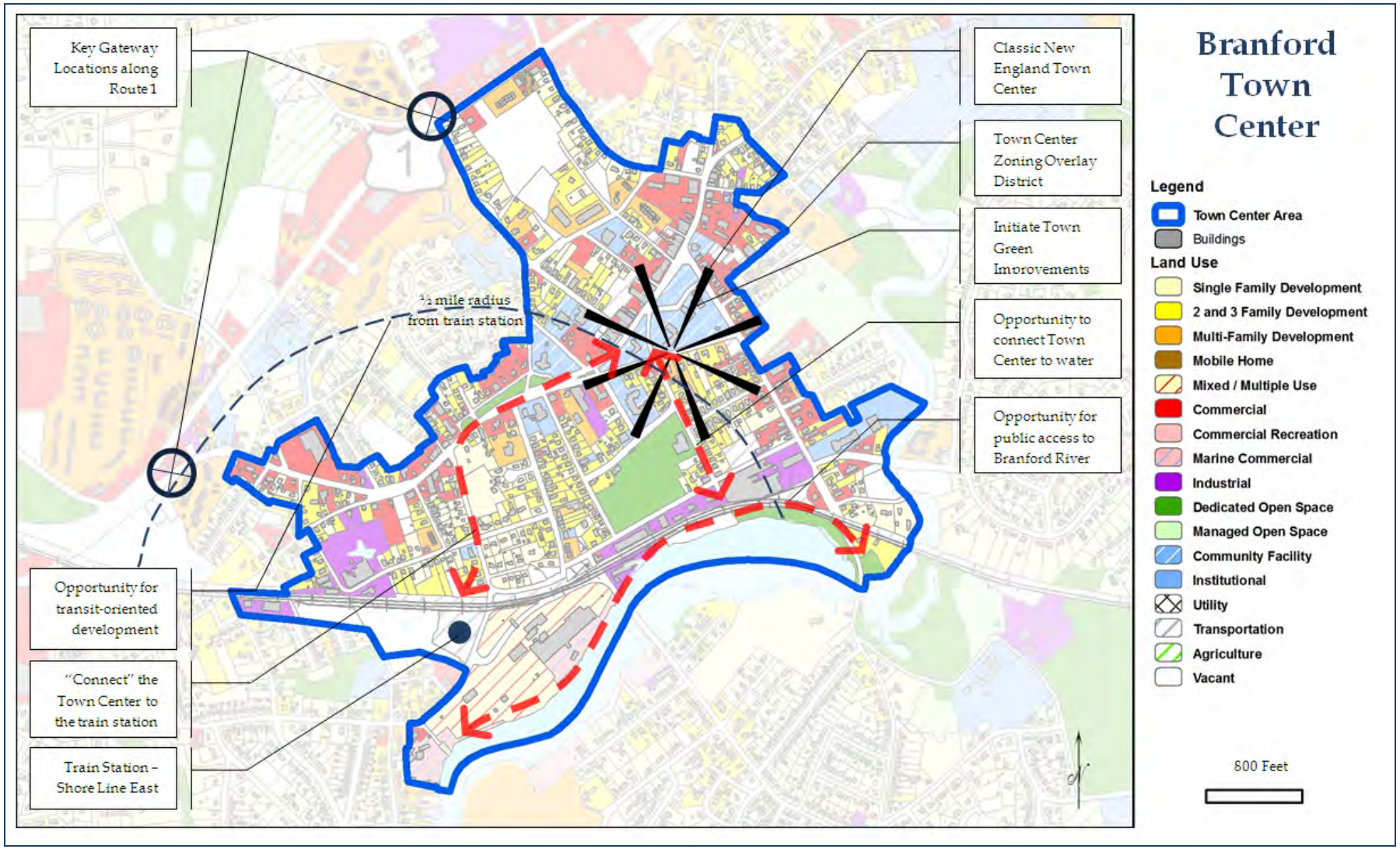
The POCD recommends protecting the qualities that create a "sense of place" in the Town Center:

- continue to promote activities in Branford Center to draw people to the center and keep it viable,
- implement programs to help make it easy to get to the Town Center,
- implement programs that make it easy to get around the Town Center including parking and pedestrian amenities (e.g. sidewalks, benches, etc.), and
- continue to require attractive design.

	Leader	Partners
1. Continue the work of the Town Center Revitalization Review Board.	**PZC**	**CRRB**
2. Maintain the "village district" designation to help ensure that new development in the Town Center enhances the overall appearance and character of the area.	**PZC**	**CRRB**
a. As necessary, review the village district boundary and/or the village district regulations (design parameters).	**PZC**	**CRRB**
3. Support building improvements.	**Town**	**CRRB**
a. Create a façade improvement program using revolving loans, grants, and other approaches.	**Town**	**CRRB**
b. Work with property owners to identify cost-effective façade improvements that could be made.	**Town**	**CRRB TCM**

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Planning concepts from the 2008 POCD for a portion of Branford Town Center are presented below:





What should the Town be doing in terms of improving and strengthening the Town Center?

Do More	41%
Keep Same	56%
Do Less	2%
Not Sure	1%

What should the Town be doing in terms of providing for more housing near Branford Center and the Train Station?

Do More	27%
Keep Same	44%
Do Less	21%
Not Sure	8%

9.2 Keep Branford Center Vibrant

A key strategy of the POCD is to maintain Branford Center as the "heart and soul" of the community since it is the place where all residents come together to be part of the community. This is a challenge in an era where more people are buying things on-line or participating in social networks but that only means it is more important.

It is time to revisit the zoning districts and regulations in and around the Town Center in order to ensure that Branford has the right provisions in place to keep the Center vibrant.

A. Zoning / Uses	Leader	Partners
1. Seek ways to maintain and expand uses that attract people and make Branford Center vibrant: ☐ **a. restaurants and small retail shops,** **b. small service and office uses,** **c. community facilities (such as Town Hall, post office, library, etc.),** **d. diverse types of housing (including apartments over businesses),** **e. institutional uses (such as churches).**	**PZC**	**EDC CoC TCM**
2. Revisit Town Center zoning and boundaries to simplify and/or clarify what is permitted where and how in the Town Center. ☐	**PZC**	**CRRB**
a. Consider modifying the zoning designations in the Town Center to identify streets where passive uses are discouraged and/or active uses are required. ☐	**PZC**	**CRRB**
3. Review regulations to: ☐ **a. encourage or require "active" street level uses that attract pedestrian traffic and create visual interest, and** **b. discourage or prohibit "passive uses" such as offices, banks, real estate, insurance, and similar uses at street level on key streets.**	**PZC**	**CRRB**
B. Activities	**Leader**	**Partners**
1. Continue to sponsor special events in the Town Center.	**Town**	**BOR TCM**
2. Develop a management plan for the Town Green in order to balance the desire for more events and activities with the natural capacity of the Green. ☐	**Town**	

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9.3 Enhance Access And Mobility

Enhancing Branford Center includes enhancing access to the Center and mobility within the Center for walkers, cyclists, vehicles, and others. The Center should be accessible to all and for all.

The wayfinding program discussed in Section 7.4 of the POCD will help people get to the Center and navigate (to destinations, parking, events, etc.) once they get there. Parking studies in the past have found that there is an adequate ***number*** of spaces in Branford Center but people perceive a lack of parking because the most visible and convenient spaces are typically occupied and people may not be aware of where additional parking is available.

A. Access		Leader	Partners
1. Establish / enhance "gateway" features at key entrance points to Branford Center.	☐	Town	EDC CRRB
2. Use "wayfinding signage" to help non-residents find their way to Branford Center.		Town	EDC CRRB
3. Create additional linkages to Branford Center from the Branford River, Shoreline Greenway, open space areas, and surrounding neighborhoods.		Town	
B. Parking		**Leader**	**Partners**
1. Consider updating the Town Center Parking and Circulation Study.	☐	PZC	EDC CRRB
2. Explore opportunities to create additional parking in the Town Center area and/or provide information on parking locations.	☐	Town	EDC CRRB
3. Explore opportunities to add electric vehicle charging facilities in the Town Center area.		Town	CETF TCM
4. Continue to promote pedestrian amenities (e.g. sidewalks, benches, etc.) from parking areas to key areas in Branford Center.		Town	
5. Work to find ways to provide bicycle lanes and racks to encourage other non-motorized trips to the Town Center.		Town	
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Shuttle Bus

See page 126 in the transit section of the POCD (Chapter 15) for a recommendation for a shuttle bus to help support access and mobility in the Town Center area.

Shuttle Bus



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9.4 Manage The Town Center Area

One of the challenges in Branford Center is that there are multiple property owners, businesses, residents, and visitors with different needs and outlooks. To help Branford Center succeed, the Town should investigate opportunities to assist with management of the Center for the benefit of all.

	Leader	Partners
1. Continue to coordinate public and private efforts to maintain and enhance Branford Center.	**Town**	
a. Investigate participating in the Connecticut Main Street Program to help efforts to maintain and enhance Branford Center.	**Town**	**EDC**
2. Seek to consolidate responsibility for use and maintenance of the Town Green.	**Town**	
3. If needed or desired in the future, consider creating a Special Services District to improve management of the Town Center area.	**Town**	

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PROMOTE APPROPRIATE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

10

For the purposes of the POCD, "economic development" is considered to include any development which provides one or more of the following:

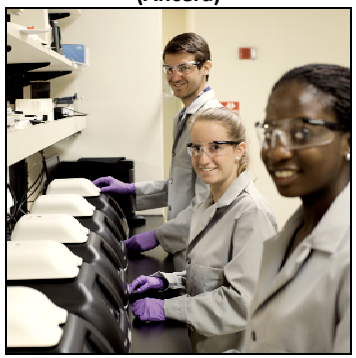
- jobs / income for people,
- goods and services for people and/or businesses, and/or
- net tax revenue to the municipality (revenues generated exceed the cost of services provided).

Many people think that "economic development" only includes business and industrial development. However, some other uses (such as some types of housing) can also be economic development since they provide these same benefits (jobs, services, and tax revenues exceed the cost of services provided).

Manufacturing (American Polyfilm)



Bio-Technology (Ancera)



Research / Development (Tangen)



Commercial / Retail (Big Y)



10.1 Promote Economic Development

Industrial / Innovation Areas

On the Economic Development map on page 88, "industrial / innovation areas" is a term used to describe areas where traditional manufacturing / warehousing / office / storage operations and innovative research, development, and other high-technology operations are encouraged.

Other Innovation

Branford is home to the Thimble Island Ocean Farm which is using "vertical ocean farming" to grow and harvest kelp, mussels, scallops, clams and oysters. It is the harvesting of kelp which may be the most innovative.

Kelp is one of the world's most sustainable crops. In addition to being a nutritious food item, it also absorbs dissolved nitrogen, phosphorous, and carbon dioxide directly from the sea.

Branford is fortunate to have strong business portfolio. Available information indicates that Branford has about 2,000 businesses providing employment for over 15,000 people. The payroll from these businesses supports residents of Branford and the region and the businesses help make goods and services available within the community and the region. The local taxes paid by these businesses support the services provided within the community.

Overall economic development goals should reflect and support the maintenance of the Town's current AAA bond rating. The July 2018 report issued by Standard & Poor's reaffirming the Town's AAA Bond Rating cited advanced manufacturing, health care, and bio-technology along with increased tourism resulting from Branford's breweries and shoreline location as part of its rationale for the Town's high bond rating.

Both business and industrial development should be encouraged to take advantage of Branford's strategic location and provide for jobs, goods/services, support evolving tourism attractions, and enhance the tax base.

According to studies of the south central Connecticut region, the business sectors that were found to be the most economically viable and are considered to be economic development priorities include:

- Healthcare, bio-technology & life sciences,
- Higher education,
- Arts, entertainment & tourism,
- Advanced materials & manufacturing.

Branford is already home to a number of innovative enterprises and has been fortunate to attract a number of bio-technology businesses as well as advanced materials and manufacturing businesses. Branford intends to continue encouraging such businesses and organizations in the future by:

- Monitoring emerging technologies and finding ways to integrate them into Branford's economic system,
- Finding ways to promote business incubators, "live-work" arrangements, and artisanal businesses,
- Providing appropriate infrastructure (See Section 16.2 of the POCD with regard to broadband capacity),
- Encouraging entrepreneurship, and
- Considering regulation changes to encourage such efforts.

	Leader	Partners
1. Maintain and expand programs and policies that support economic growth in Branford.	**EDC**	**Town**
a. Investigate ways to create incentives to support existing and new economic development. ☐	**EDC**	**Town**
b. Consider refreshing / reviewing the "Branford Targeted Industry Study" report and the "2002 Business Survey" for guidance regarding future opportunities. ☐	**EDC**	**Town**
c. Create and maintain a map of available economic development sites in Branford that will be on the EDC section of the Town website. ☐	**EDC**	**Staff**
d. Seek to attract bio-technology, technology, advanced manufacturing, and similar industries that strengthen existing economic "clusters" in Branford.	**EDC**	**Town**
2. Express appreciation to existing and new businesses and industries.	**EDC**	**Town**
3. Work with local businesses to link together existing tourism assets and attract new ones: • **Shoreline East Rail Service** • **Walkable downtown / harbor / Jazz on the Green** • **Thimble Islands / Stony Creek Quarry / Museums / Historical properties** • **Lodging establishments / Hospitality (restaurants, etc.) / Brewery Tours** • **Shoreline Greenway / Branford Open Space / Trails**	**EDC**	**Town**
4. Continue programs to assist appropriate new economic development opportunities.	**EDC**	**Town**
a. Encourage brokers to use CERC Sitefinder and other programs to share information on available sites.	**EDC**	**Town**
b. Provide information on economic incentives.	**EDC**	**Town**
c. Provide information on, and assistance with, the land use permit and approval process.	**EDC**	**Town**
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What should the Town be doing in terms of attracting new stores, offices, industries and other forms of economic development?

Do More	52%
Keep Same	37%
Do Less	6%
Not Sure	6%

What should the Town be doing in terms of encouraging tourism?

Do More	43%
Keep Same	45%
Do Less	8%
Not Sure	4%

Should Branford tighten or loosen regulations on new business development?

Tighten	31%
Not Sure	34%
Loosen	34%

Key TOD Principles

Based on public input, the TOD Study Steering Committee developed key principles to guide development and redevelopment in the Branford TOD area:

1. Encourage contextual development of key opportunity sites
2. Incorporate land uses that are complementary and do not compete with Branford's Town Center
3. Improve connections to Town Center, the waterfront and surrounding neighborhoods.
4. Encourage sustainable and resilient development especially given the projected rise in sea level and coastal flooding frequency

10.2 Promote Town Center And Transit-Oriented Development

The Town of Branford continues to seek ways to promote and enhance the Town Center area. In 2017, with funding from a grant from the State of Connecticut, the Town undertook a study of the potential for "transit-oriented development" (TOD) in areas generally located within one-half mile of the train station.

The key element of the recommended approach is to adopt "overlay zones" in the opportunity areas to allow property owners to "opt in" to the TOD opportunity (more floor area in exchange for public amenities and appropriate design) if they wish. In other words, the proposed approach is intended to entice property owners to participate.



Click here to go to this document.

The 2017 TOD Study is hereby incorporated into the POCD to support implementation of its recommendations in the future.

Implementation of the TOD Study may include:

1. Adoption of text changes to the Zoning Regulations to establish some or all of the overlay zoning approaches and/or implement other recommendations.
2. Funding of specific projects (through operating budgets, capital budgets, grants, partnerships, etc.), perhaps including
   - Dredging of the Branford River.
   - Raising the level of key evacuation routes for storm floods.
   - Local Flood Protection
   - Roadway and Streetscape Improvements.

A.	Town Center	Leader	Partners
	1. Continue to support businesses and activities in the Town Center and other village areas in order to create vibrant, pedestrian-friendly areas. ☐	EDC	PZC Staff
	2. Consider preparing a conceptual "design plan" in the Town Center area, if needed or desired, to promote appropriate economic development and redevelopment.	PZC	EDC
B.	**Transit-Oriented Development**	**Leader**	**Partners**
	1. Implement the zoning recommendations contained in the 2017 TOD Study. ☐	PZC	Staff
	2. Using the overlay zone approach, require public improvements and amenities as part of the development requirements for using the greater density and intensity envisioned by the overlay zone concept.	PZC	Staff
	3. Undertake streetscape improvement projects (parking, sidewalks, street trees, "traffic calming", etc.) on streets connecting the TOD areas to the Town Center and other areas where new development may not provide such improvements.	Town	
	4. To support implementation of streetscape improvements and other recommendations from the TOD study, seek funding for projects from: a. The Town of Branford, b. The State of Connecticut, c. Private foundations and organizations, d. An assessment of benefits, e. Tax increment financing, f. Special services district, g. Property owners and developers, and/or h. Other approaches.	Town	EDC
	5. Consider preparing a conceptual "design plan" in the transit-oriented development area, if needed or desired, to promote appropriate economic development and redevelopment.	PZC	EDC
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Do you think Branford should try to encourage more development at and around Exit 53 ("the pretzel")?

Yes	61%
Not Sure	8%
No	31%

If so, what type of development?

Retail / Comm.	46%
Mixed Uses	27%
Office	8%
Residential	7%
Industrial	5%
Other	3%
Not Sure	4%

10.3 Promote Appropriate Economic Development Near I-95 Interchanges

Branford is fortunate to have four interchanges along Interstate 95 which provide potential focal points for economic development. The economic development approaches recommended by the POCD are described below:

Exit 53 ("Pretzel Connector")	
Overall Goal(s)	• Reconfigure to a full interchange. • Open up development potential.
Other Considerations	• Challenge of fostering redevelopment while preserving opportunity to achieve full interchange.
Recommended Zoning	• Consider new zoning allowing mix of compatible uses to realize full market development potential from reconfigured interchange. • Consider additions or changes in uses allowed in business zones as necessary (or creation of "hybrid" zoning) to reflect market conditions and the results of any update to the Targeted Industry Study.

Exit 54 (Cedar Street)	
Overall Goal(s)	• Support emerging medical office/clinic use cluster.
Other Considerations	• None at this time
Recommended Zoning	• Maintain existing zoning with the recognition that PDDs may also be proposed. • Consider additions or changes in uses allowed in business zones as necessary (or creation of "hybrid" zoning considered) to reflect market conditions and the results of any update to the Targeted Industry Study.

Exit 55 (East Main Street)	
Overall Goal(s)	• Support redevelopment to most appropriate uses.
Other Considerations	• None at this time
Recommended Zoning	• Maintain existing zoning with the recognition that PDDs may also be proposed. • Consider additions or changes in uses allowed in business zones as necessary (or creation of "hybrid" zoning considered) to reflect market conditions and the results of any update to the Targeted Industry Study.

Exit 56 (Leete's Island Road)	
Development Goal(s)	• Support redevelopment to most appropriate uses.
Other Considerations	• See the list of PDDs approved as of 2018 on page 73 • Need for update of sewer capacity study of area.
Recommended Zoning	• Maintain existing zoning with the recognition that PDDs may also be proposed.



Do you think Branford should try to encourage more development at and around Exit 56?

Yes	50%
Not Sure	12%
No	38%

If so, what type of development?

Retail / Costco	53%
Mixed Uses	26%
Industrial	10%
Residential	6%
Office	5%
Other	1%
Not Sure	0%

Green Development

Refer to Chapter 12 (page 101) for recommendations related to promoting "green development" approaches.

	Leader	Partners
1. Continue to work with State and regional agencies to coordinate development opportunities at Exit 53 and improve the interchange with additional ramps (NB on ramp and SB off-ramp).	**Town**	**EDC SCRCOG DOT**
2. Discourage development activities which would impede a "global solution" to the Exit 53 situation.	**PZC**	**EDC**
3. Consider preparing a conceptual "design plan" for each of the interchange areas in order to promote appropriate economic development and redevelopment.	**PZC**	**EDC**

Aerial Photograph Of Exit 53

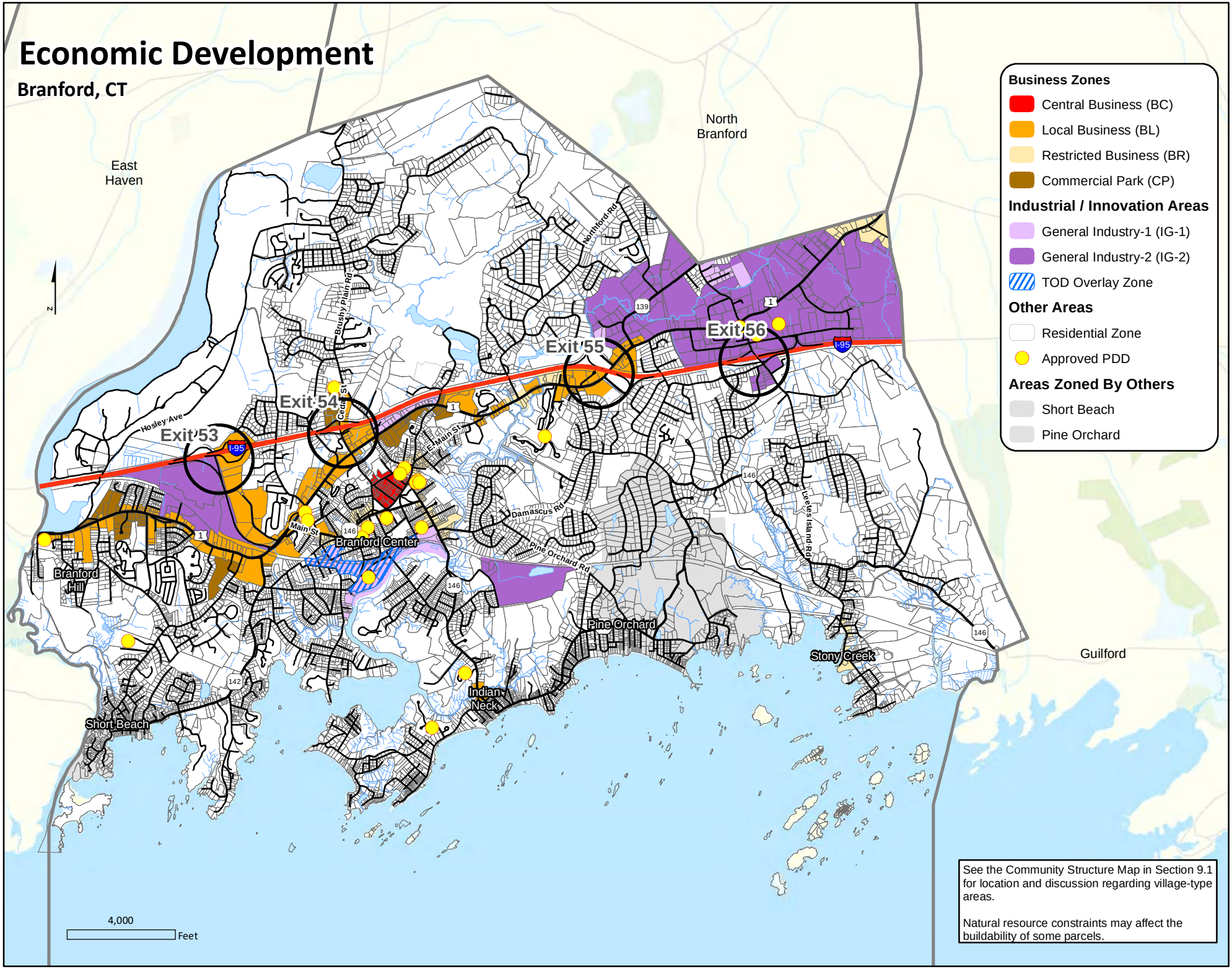


Possible Reconfiguration At Exit 53 (SCRCOG)



Economic Development

Branford, CT



See the Community Structure Map in Section 9.1 for location and discussion regarding village-type areas.

Natural resource constraints may affect the buildability of some parcels.

Route 1

See Section 8.2 (page 70) for discussion of strategies to guide development (and promote appropriate economic development) along Route 1.

10.4 Promote Appropriate Economic Development In Other Areas

Branford should also promote appropriate economic development in other areas.

A.	Industrial Areas	Leader	Partners
1.	**Reconsider the uses permitted in the Industrial zoning districts in light of changing market demand.** ☐	PZC	EDC
2.	**Consider preparing a conceptual "design plan" in each of the opportunity areas in order to promote appropriate economic development and redevelopment.**	PZC	EDC
B.	**Zoning Considerations**	**Leader**	**Partners**
1.	**Consider creating a Business – Marina Zone.** ☐	PZC	
2.	**Consider whether the Local Business (BL) zone on Double Beach Road is appropriate or whether the existing use can be accommodated as a Special Exception use in a residential zone.** ☐	PZC	
3.	**Consider whether the Restricted Business (BR) zone on Route 1 East at the Guilford / North Branford line is appropriate.** ☐	PZC	

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GUIDE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

11

For the purposes of the POCD, "residential development" includes all the different forms and types of housing in Branford ranging from detached single-family housing units to mid-rise multi-family buildings. It also includes some mobile homes and residential units in mixed use buildings.

Single-Family Housing

In terms of single-family detached housing, most such development in Branford occurs in a conventional subdivision pattern. Most of the undeveloped residentially zoned land in Branford is located in large lot zoning districts and is constrained by steep slopes, ledge, poor soils, and onsite septic and well systems.

Much of the single-family housing stock in Branford was built from 1940 through 1960 and needs rehabilitation, reconstruction and expansion to meet current needs of working families with young children.

Single-Family Housing



Multi-Family Housing

In terms of multi-family housing, most such development in Branford occurred during the 1970s and early 1980s and the majority of these units were built with no access to transit, or consideration of how these areas connect to the overall community structure.

Multi-Family Housing





Should Branford tighten or loosen regulations on new residential development?

Tighten	48%
Not Sure	32%
Loosen	19%

Cluster Development

As per CGS Section 8-23, Branford does permit cluster development and this is codified in Section 7.3 of the Branford Zoning Regulations as "Open Space Residential Development."

See page 56 for a recommendation related to open space development.

11.1 Guide / Manage Residential Areas

According to the Connecticut Economic Resource Center (CERC), Branford had 13,967 housing units in 2015. After significant housing growth in the 1970s and 1980s (averaging about 280 units per year), housing growth has slowed in Branford since 1990, averaging just over 36 units per year.

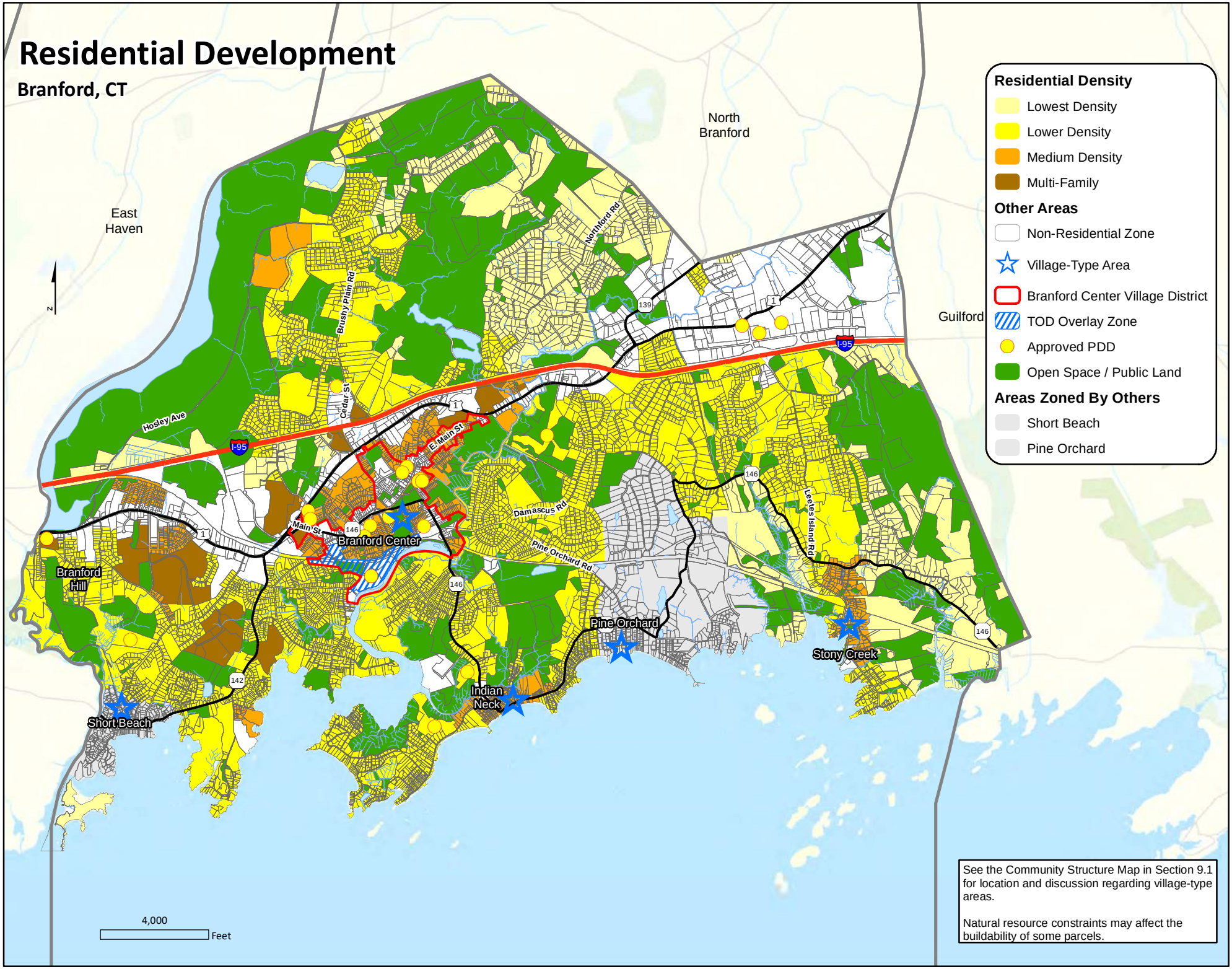
Branford has a very diverse housing stock. Census data indicates that about half of the housing units in Branford are considered single-family units (both detached and attached) and the other half are multi-family residences (condos and apartments) and mobile homes. The diversity of Branford's housing stock is an asset since it increases the opportunity that people of all ages, means, and interests will likely be able to find housing in the community that meets their needs. The availability of water and sewer services helps support the diverse housing stock.

In order to find a balance with regard to transient rentals in residential neighborhoods, the Town has a policy that any such rentals shall be for at least one week and shall not involve more than five unrelated individuals. The Town will continue to monitor transient rentals and revise this policy, if necessary.

The town will continue to encourage maintenance of existing housing units.

A.	Manage Residential Neighborhoods	Leader	Partners
1.	**Carefully manage Special Exception uses and non-residential uses in residential neighborhoods in order to provide reasonable protection to the residential integrity of these areas.**	PZC	
B.	**Encourage Housing Maintenance / Improvement**	**Leader**	**Partners**
1.	**Encourage maintenance of existing housing units.**	Town	
2.	**Encourage upgrade of housing units to avoid functional obsolescence and to meet current and future housing needs and desires.**	Town	
3.	**Continue to use the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program to provide housing rehabilitation options.**	Town	

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Residential Development
Branford, CT
North Branford
East Haven
Guilford
Residential Density
Lowest Density
Lower Density
Medium Density
Multi-Family
Other Areas
Non-Residential Zone
Village-Type Area
Branford Center Village District
TOD Overlay Zone
Approved PDD
Open Space / Public Land
Areas Zoned By Others
Short Beach
Pine Orchard
Hosley Ave
Brushy Plain Rd
Cedar St
Northford Rd
E Main St
Main St
Damascus Rd
Pine Orchard Rd
Leetes Island Rd
Branford Center
Branford Hill
Short Beach
Indian Neck
Pine Orchard
Stony Creek
I-95
1
139
142
146
N
4,000
Feet
See the Community Structure Map in Section 9.1 for location and discussion regarding village-type areas.
Natural resource constraints may affect the buildability of some parcels.

11.2 Address Housing Choice And Opportunities

Even though Branford has a diverse housing stock, it is still likely to experience two significant housing needs in the future:

- Housing that is more affordable, and
- Housing for an aging population.

Housing That Is More Affordable

When selling or renting a residence, owners always want it to be worth more. When buying or renting, people always want it to cost less. While this reflects what is going on in the housing market ***for people that can afford it***, there are other people that may never get to that point. For persons or families earning less than the median income, it can become very difficult to find adequate housing they can afford. Housing is considered affordable if a person or family spends less than 30 percent of their income on a mortgage or rent and related costs (taxes, utilities, etc.).

Branford has a number of housing units that sell or rent at affordable prices (naturally occurring affordable housing or "NOAH") and these houses, condominiums, apartments, and mobile homes fill a need. These units are ***not deed-restricted*** to certain price levels however, they are just naturally priced there due to their characteristics.

The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) reports the 2017 income limit for a four-person low-income household in the New Haven region was $68,000. At the 30% threshold for rent, a household earning that income could afford a rental payment of about $1,700 per month and the ACS data also reports that there are more than 2,700 apartments or homes in Branford where the gross rent was less than that.

In terms of buying a residence, a mortgage payment of $1,700 per month at prevailing terms in 2017 (4.5%, 30 years) would support a mortgage of about $335,000. Assuming that no downpayment was made or required, American Community Survey (ACS) data indicates that ***over 4,000 housing units in Branford were valued at affordable levels*** (i.e. - less than $335,000).

On the surface, it would appear that Branford has a diverse housing stock and that there is plenty of housing to meet diverse housing needs. In fact, ***more than 45% of the housing stock in Branford is affordable*** to a four-person household earning the income limit for a low income family in the New Haven region.

Nonetheless, in the context of CGS Section 8-30g, The Affordable Housing Appeals Act, affordable housing does not mean inexpensive housing. Instead, it refers to housing that is subsidized through certain government programs or housing that is ***dedicated or reserved*** in some way for households earning 80 percent or less of the area median income. Housing is considered to meet this standard if it:

- receives *financial assistance* under any governmental program for the construction or substantial rehabilitation of low and moderate income housing,
- is housing occupied by persons receiving *rental or mortgage assistance* under the United States Code, or
- the dwelling unit has a *deed restriction* effective for at least 40 years requiring that such dwelling unit be sold or rented such that persons and families earning eighty per cent of the median income or less will not have to pay more than thirty per cent of their annual income for such housing

According to the 2017 Affordable Housing Appeals List maintained by the Connecticut Department of Housing, Branford has 451 housing units that meet these criteria and these units account for about 3.2 percent of the housing stock:

Type	Number of Units
Governmentally Assisted Units	243
Tenant Rental Assistance	65
Single-Family CHFA/USDA Mortgages	144
Deed Restricted Units	0
Total Assisted Units	**452**
As Percent of 2010 Housing Units (13,972 units)	3.2%

In Connecticut, municipalities with *less than ten percent* of their housing stock meeting the above criteria are subject to the "Affordable Housing Appeals Procedure", also known as CGS Section 8-30g. ***Since Branford does not meet the ten percent threshold, it is subject to the "Affordable Housing Appeals Procedure" (CGS Section 8-30g).***

This is an important consideration since, if a developer proposes a housing development containing affordable housing meeting certain criteria specified in the statute, such development may not have to comply with all local land use regulations. In some situations, in Branford and elsewhere, some developments have been proposed that were criticized, due to density, height, design or other aspects, for being distinctly out of character with the environs.



What should the Town be doing in terms of encouraging more housing options for first-time home buyers?

Do More	44%
Keep Same	39%
Do Less	10%
Not Sure	7%

While the creation of affordable housing units can provide many benefits, many communities would prefer that such units be created in a way that fits into the character of the community. Branford's preferences for affordable housing developments are:

- multiple smaller developments rather than fewer large developments,
- units that are preserved or deed-restricted in perpetuity,
- properties served by public water and public sewer, and
- locations / amenities as outlined on page 99.

If Branford wishes to gain more control over the development of CGS 8-30g affordable housing in the community, there are two ways to become exempt:

- find ways to create enough affordable housing units to meet the 10 percent threshold, or
- find ways to create enough affordable housing units to get a series of four-year moratoria.

To meet the percent threshold (10 percent of the units in the last Census), Branford would need to have 1,397 affordable housing units. With 451 units today, reaching this threshold would require the creation of 946 affordable units. This is more units than Branford has built in the last 25 years and would represent about 60 percent of all the remaining buildout potential in Branford according to the 2010 buildout study conducted by SCRCOG . Note that this threshold will change once the 2020 Census is released.

The other way to get a moratorium is to accumulate enough "housing unit equivalent points" to surpass two percent of the units in the last Census. With 13,972 units in the 2010 Census, Branford would need to accumulate 280 housing unit equivalent points. Points can be obtained as shown in the adjacent table.

	Ownership Unit	Rental Unit
Family units at 40% of area median income	2.0	2.5
Family units at 60% of area median income	1.5	2.0
Family units at 80% of area median income	1.0	1.5
Elderly units at 80% of area median income	0.5	0.5
Unrestricted units in a "set-aside" development	0.25	0.25
Bonuses for 3+ bedrooms, elderly units mixed with family units, approved incentive housing development, resident-owned mobile manufactured home park	varies	varies

Note that any eligible unit created since the passage of CGS Section 8-30g in 1989 count towards the number needed for a moratorium.

Some possible strategies for Branford to pursue with regard to providing for more housing that is affordable and "affordable housing" are presented on the following pages.

Possible Strategies to Create Affordable Housing

INCLUSIONARY ZONING

1. As authorized by CGS Section 8-2i, adopt an inclusionary zoning requirement requiring that ***some or all housing development*** make provision for affordable housing:
   - Creation of affordable units within that development or elsewhere in the community, or
   - In lieu of providing such units, pay a fee into a municipal Housing Trust Fund.

OTHER ZONING APPROACHES

2. As authorized by CGS Section 8-2i, consider requiring:
   - that affordable units be deed-restricted for 99 years so that such units are not lost over time.
   - a right-of-first-refusal on existing deed-restricted units so that such affordable housing units are not lost over time.

3. Continue using the Incentive Overlay Zone contained in Section 5.7 of the Zoning Regulations and consider modifying these regulations to provide additional incentives for the creation of affordable units.

4. Ease the requirements for accessory apartments and/or, as authorized by CGS Section 8-30g, require accessory apartments to be restricted so that they will meet statutory requirements to be counted as affordable units.

5. Allow third floor development in appropriate areas when such space will be used for the provision of affordable housing units.

6. Allow the "un-merging" of lots for affordable housing, allow for affordable units on substandard lots, and/or allow conversion to multi-family housing (or intensification of multi-family housing) in appropriate areas, even if non-conforming currently.

FUNDING / PARTNERSHIPS

7. Establish and fund a Housing Trust Fund (Town / State funding, grants, payments from an inclusionary housing regulation, funds from the Neighborhood Assistance Program, and/or donations from interested parties).

8. Work with local faith-based and non-profit organizations to create affordable housing units.

(continued)

Possible Strategies

The "possible strategies to create affordable housing" listed on pages 97 and 98 are intended to be illustrative of possible approaches for Branford to consider and are not intended to be directive.

(continued from previous page)

PRESERVING EXISTING HOUSING UNITS

9. Maintain the affordability of existing affordable housing units and preserve existing housing that is "naturally affordable" (including mobile home parks).

10. Consider programs where the Town:
    - Offers to subsidize the purchase of an existing unit provided that such unit becomes deed-restricted.
    - Grants homeowners-in-residence a tax reduction (or a payment) in exchange for a deed restriction.
    - Purchases existing housing units, deed restricts them, and re-sells the units (for units already selling at affordable prices).
    - Adopts a tax incentive program to encourage existing multi-family properties to deed restrict a percentage of units.
    - Purchases deed restrictions guaranteeing the creation of affordable housing units.

MUNICIPAL ASSISTANCE

11. Use municipal resources to purchase sites where affordable housing could be developed and/or offer municipal property at little or no cost for development of affordable housing.

12. Consider creating affordability deed restrictions on foreclosed properties.

13. Allocate local funds (operating, capital, tax-increment, etc.) for improvements that enable affordable housing.

OTHER APPROACHES

14. Work with charitable and other organizations to increase the stock of affordable housing.

15. Seek private donations of property for development of affordable housing.

16. Seek to have CGS 8-30g recognize naturally-occurring affordable housing units.

17. Advocate for special legislation to establish a real estate transfer fee to promote creation of affordable housing

Housing For An Aging Population

With an aging population, Branford should also consider ways to facilitate people living in their housing as they age ("aging-in-place") and having age-friendly housing options available. While Branford has a number of multi-family developments with lower maintenance requirements, some may not be well configured for an older population (proximity of parking to unit, interior stairs, second floor bedrooms, etc.). In addition, Branford might expect a greater demand for assisted living and comprehensive care facilities.

Housing With Desirable Attributes

Many people ***of all ages and incomes*** are seeking new types of housing which might include the following:

- **Desirable Location**
  - A walkable, pedestrian-friendly area
  - Near restaurants and other amenities
  - Near jobs and employment centers
  - Near transit services (train and/or bus service)
- **Desirable Amenities**
  - Limited Maintenance (mowing grass, clearing snow, cleaning gutters, etc.)
  - Lifestyle Amenities (pool, fitness center, etc.)
  - One-floor living
  - Elevators

Locational Preferences

With regard to developments to address housing choice and opportunities, Branford's locational preferences are:

- properties served by public water and public sewer,
- locations near the train station or bus transit, and
- building design / scale consistent with a New England sea-side community.



What should the Town be doing in terms of encouraging more housing options for seniors?

Do More	50%
Keep Same	39%
Do Less	5%
Not Sure	6%

A.	Evaluate Local Housing Needs	Leader	Partners
1.	**Update the 1990 Housing Needs Assessment.**	Town	PZC
2.	**Evaluate the existing multi-family developments in Branford in terms of their functionality for meeting the housing needs of current and future residents (and an aging population).**	Town	PZC
B.	**Provide For Housing That Is Affordable**	**Leader**	**Partners**
1.	**To help meet local needs, seek to maintain and expand the supply of affordable housing units in Branford in accordance with the locational and other preferences in this section of the POCD.**	Town	PZC HA
a.	*Investigate the number of housing unit equivalent points that Branford has accumulated and might need for a CGS 8-30g moratorium.*	Town	
b.	*Help preserve the naturally occurring affordable housing in mobile home parks, rezone such areas to a new Mobile Home Park (MHP) zoning district.*	PZC	
2.	**Advocate for consideration of naturally-occurring affordable housing (NOAH) in the affordable housing tabulation (such as 0.5 points per NOAH unit).**	Town	
a.	*Create a new zone for existing mobile home parks to help preserve these sites while allowing for upgrade / replacement of the units.*	PZC	
C.	**Provide For Housing For An Aging Population**	**Leader**	**Partners**
1.	**Continue to support residents who want to "age-in-place" in their existing housing.**	Town	
2.	**Consider allowing assisted living facilities and comprehensive care communities in residential zones by Special Exception (currently allowed in business zones).**	PZC	
3.	**Maintain the "age-restricted" housing district codified in Section 5.6 of the Zoning Regulations.**	PZC	

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PROMOTE SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCE

12

For the purposes of the POCD, “sustainability” refers to the philosophy of encouraging activities that allow present generations to meet their needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

The term “resilience” refers to the community’s ability to withstand, respond to, and readily recover from sudden changes or adversity.

Sustainability



Sustainability



Resilience



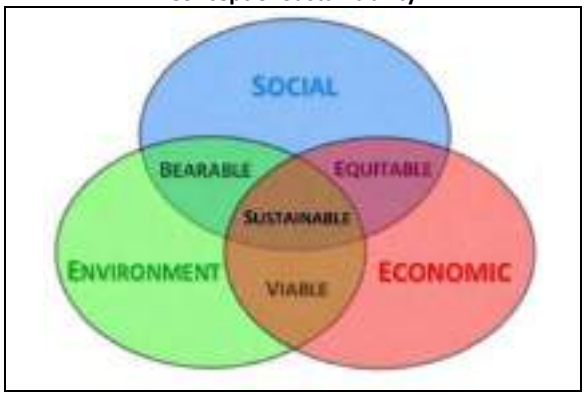
12.1 Promote Sustainability

For the POCD, sustainability relates to being efficient and economical in our use of resources using approaches that are economically viable, of social benefit, and environmentally responsible.

Sustainability is a different way of thinking about economic and environmental issues. Rather than an adversarial situation between economic and environmental interests, sustainability is meant to be a more cooperative approach.

Sustainability is about finding a balance between what we as a society want and demand from natural resources, our need to use natural resources to provide jobs and income for our families and communities, and the natural resources that are available to provide what we need.

Concept of Sustainability



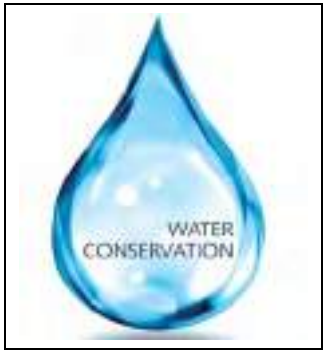
Greenhouse Gas Reduction



Energy Efficiency



Water Conservation



Waste Reduction



Some of the items to be considered as part of Branford's overall approach to sustainability are discussed below

"Greenhouse Gases" – Branford, along with other places, needs to find ways to reduce the emission of "greenhouse gases." Otherwise, the current trends of rising sea levels and climate change (as discussed in Section 2.8 of the POCD) will continue to accelerate.

The current trends of increasing surface and ocean temperatures, decreasing polar ice and rising sea level will continue or increase as long as the level of "greenhouse gases" remains as high or higher than the current level. As local sea level rises, Branford's property tax base will be at risk. The CIRCA approach of ***planning*** for 20 inches of sea level rise by 2050 (see Section 4.1) should be used as a basis for completing an evaluation of how sea level rise may impact property values and, consequently, the Town's tax base.

While adaptation to rising sea levels is one possible approach, it does not address the root cause of the problem. And adaptation will become increasingly challenging and expensive as sea level continues to rise.

If Branford is to be sustainable and address the root cause of sea level rise and climate change, it must find ways to reduce "greenhouse gas" emissions. While it is not possible at this point to know how long it will take before the emission of greenhouse gasses, especially CO_2, will begin to decline significantly, waiting longer to begin will make the eventual problems of climate change even more severe and difficult and expensive to adapt to.

Connecticut has set targets of reducing the state's CO_2 emissions to 55% of 2001 levels by 2030 and to 20% by 2050. Branford intends to work towards achieving these targets and giving as high a priority to meeting them as it gives to adapting to the sea level increase that current trends are already bringing.

Sustainability Efforts

On Earth Day 2015, the Governor's Council on Climate Change was created by executive order to:

- examine the effectiveness of existing policies and regulations designed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and
- identify strategies to meet the state's greenhouse gas emissions reduction target of 80% below 2001 levels by 2050.

In 2017, the Council recommended adopting an interim target of 45% below 2001 levels by the year 2030.

The Council is composed of 15 members from state agencies, quasi-state agencies, business, and nonprofits.



Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

Branford should do more to promote energy efficiency and water conservation.

Strongly Agree	32%
Agree	50%
Not Sure	6%
Disagree	11%
Strongly Disagree	1%

What should the Town be doing in terms of promoting energy efficiency and renewable energy?

Do More	68%
Keep Same	25%
Do Less	2%
Not Sure	5%

Energy-Related (also see Section 16.2) – Strategies related to energy include:

- Reducing energy use / becoming more energy efficient
- Reducing reliance on fossil fuels
- Encouraging increased use of renewable energy (solar, wind, etc.)
- Promoting "greener" buildings / vehicles
- Providing for alternative energy approaches (fuel cell, micro-grids, etc.)
- Providing for electric car charging stations

Water-Related (also see Section 5.1 and Section 5.2) – Strategies related to water include:

- Reducing water use
- Reducing water waste / recycling water
- Using low-impact development (LID) strategies to address stormwater quality and quantity

Waste-Related (also see Section 13.3) – Strategies related to waste include:

- Reducing waste (including food waste)
- Reducing use of plastic bags
- Increasing recycling

A. General	Leader	Partners
1. Continue to educate residents about sustainability concepts.	**Town**	**CETF CEC**
2. Find ways to incorporate all aspects of climate change/sea level rise into local decision-making processes since investments are being planned that will be at risk without such an approach.	**Town**	**CETF CEC**

(continued on next page)

B.	**Greenhouse Gas Emissions**		**Leader**	**Partners**
	1. Find ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in conjunction with adjacent communities, regional organizations, and state/federal agencies.	☐	**Town**	**CETF**
	a. Participate in the "SustainableCT" program (see sidebar) and similar programs.	☐	**Town**	**CETF**
	b. Adopt state targets for greenhouse gas emissions.	☐	**CETF**	**BOS RTM**
C.	**Energy Sustainability**		**Leader**	**Partners**
	1. Re-establish the Clean Energy Task Force.	☐	**FS**	**RTM**
	a. Promote energy conservation / sustainability / use of renewable energy sources.		**CETF**	**Town**
	b. Encourage residents and businesses to reduce energy usage, increase energy efficiency, and use renewable energy including installing renewable energy-generating technology.		**CETF**	
	c. Evaluate and implement ways to reduce energy usage, increase reliability, and save money with regard to municipal facilities and services.	☐	**CETF**	
	d. Review local regulations to remove impediments to energy conservation, allow for renewable energy installations, and seek ways to create incentives.	☐	**Town**	
D.	**Water Sustainability**		**Leader**	**Partners**
	1. Promote water conservation.		**ESHD SCRWA**	**CEC**
E.	**Waste Generation**		**Leader**	**Partners**
	1. Promote waste reduction / recycling.		**SWMC**	**CEC**
	a. Encourage the use of locally sourced materials.		**Town**	

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Sustainable CT

Sustainable CT is an independent organization which has created a voluntary certification program to recognize Connecticut municipalities that make progress towards implementing sustainability initiatives. Sustainable CT also provides opportunities for grant funding to help promote economic well-being and enhance equity.

Branford should consider participating in this program.



Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

Branford should do more to prepare for emergency events such as storms.

Strongly Agree	22%
Agree	42%
Not Sure	7%
Disagree	27%
Strongly Disagree	2%

12.2 Promote Resilience

For the POCD, resilience relates to being able to absorb and/or recover from impactful events (such as hurricanes, flooding and winter storms) in an efficient and timely way. The elements of being a resilient community can include:

Avoidance-Related	• Identification / avoidance / risk reduction
Mitigation-Related	• Evaluating probability / risk scenarios • Evaluating approaches (protection / adaptation) • Balancing of cost / benefit
Response-Related	• Pre-event education / training • Pre-event response plans

Branford has participated with adjacent communities and the South Central Regional Council of Governments (SCRCOG) on the preparation of a multi-jurisdiction hazard mitigation strategy to identify and then reduce or eliminate risk to human life and property. The 2018 SCRCOG Multi-Jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan is hereby recognized as a key resource for Branford to consider as it evaluates approaches relative to resilience. Recent hurricanes and major storm events have proven this to be worthwhile and exercises like this should continue so that Branford can be a more resilient community when events like these occur in the future.

	Leader	Partners
1. Continue efforts to identify, avoid, reduce, mitigate, and recover from impactful events.	**Town**	
a. Continue to participate in updating the regional Hazard Mitigation Plan in order to address risks and obtain funding.	**Town**	**SCRCOG**
b. Implement the Hazard Mitigation Plan, as amended.	**Town**	
2. Maintain and improve emergency shelters and other approaches for preparing for and responding to impactful events.	**Town**	

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MAINTAIN AND ENHANCE COMMUNITY FACILITIES

13

For the POCD, the term "community facilities" refers to the buildings and properties used to provide a range of municipal services including:

- General Government (Town Hall, for example),
- Education,
- Public Safety,
- Social Services,
- Recreation, and
- Public Works.

Community facilities contribute significantly to Branford's community character and quality of life. The Plan of Conservation and Development provides an opportunity to view the entire spectrum of municipal community facilities, identify common problems and opportunities, and establish priorities.

Town Hall



Fire Headquarters



Walsh Intermediate School



Town Ownership

While most facilities are Town-owned and Town-used, there are some facilities where this is not the case:

Used But Not Owned

- Blackstone Library
- Public Works Facility (leased)
- Fire Station (Short Beach)

Owned But Not Used

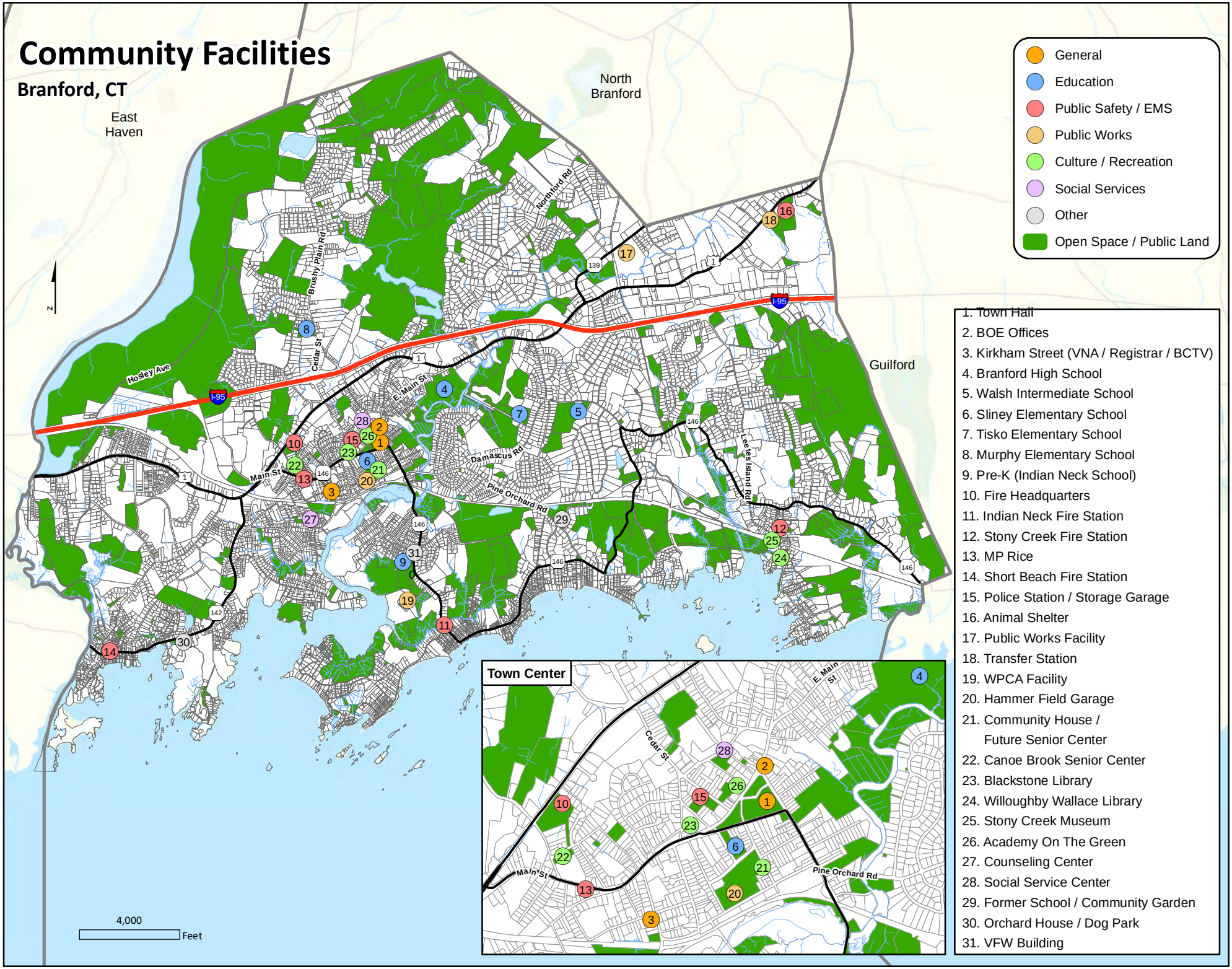
- Pine Orchard School
- VFW Building
- Orchard House
- Stony Creek Museum
- Social Service Center
- Kirkham Street

Quasi-Public

- Parkside Village (Housing Authority)

The map on the facing page shows the locations of some of the main community facilities in Branford (indexed below):

General (orange)	1. Town Hall 2. BOE Offices 3. Kirkham Street (VNA / Registrar / BCTV)
Education (light blue)	4. Branford High School 5. Walsh Intermediate School 6. Sliney Elementary School 7. Tisko Elementary School 8. Murphy Elementary School 9. Pre-K (Indian Neck School)
Public Safety / EMS (light red)	10. Fire Headquarters 11. Fire Station (Indian Neck) 12. Fire Station (Stony Creek) 13. Fire Station (MP Rice) 14. Fire Station (Short Beach) 15. Police Station / Storage Garage 16. Animal Shelter
Public Works (light brown)	17. Public Works Facility (leased from private owner) 18. Transfer Station 19. WPCA Facility 20. Hammer Field Garage
Culture / Recreation (light green) **(some parks, beaches, and docks not shown)**	21. Community House / Future Senior Center 22. Canoe Brook Senior Center 23. Blackstone Library 24. Willoughby Wallace Library 25. Stony Creek Museum 26. Academy On The Green
Social Services (light purple)	27. Counseling Center 28. Social Service Center
Other (light grey) **(some parking lots not shown)**	29. Pine Orchard School (leased for child day care) 30. Orchard House (leased for adult day care) / Dog Park 31. VFW Building


Community Facilities
Branford, CT
East Haven
North Branford
Guilford
General
Education
Public Safety / EMS
Public Works
Culture / Recreation
Social Services
Other
Open Space / Public Land
1. Town Hall
2. BOE Offices
3. Kirkham Street (VNA / Registrar / BCTV)
4. Branford High School
5. Walsh Intermediate School
6. Sliney Elementary School
7. Tisko Elementary School
8. Murphy Elementary School
9. Pre-K (Indian Neck School)
10. Fire Headquarters
11. Indian Neck Fire Station
12. Stony Creek Fire Station
13. MP Rice
14. Short Beach Fire Station
15. Police Station / Storage Garage
16. Animal Shelter
17. Public Works Facility
18. Transfer Station
19. WPCA Facility
20. Hammer Field Garage
21. Community House / Future Senior Center
22. Canoe Brook Senior Center
23. Blackstone Library
24. Willoughby Wallace Library
25. Stony Creek Museum
26. Academy On The Green
27. Counseling Center
28. Social Service Center
29. Former School / Community Garden
30. Orchard House / Dog Park
31. VFW Building
Town Center
Hosley Ave
Cedar St
Brushy Plain Rd
Northford Rd
E. Main St
Main St
Damascus Rd
Pine Orchard Rd
Leetes Island Rd
I-95
4,000
Feet



What should the Town be doing in terms of maintaining its public buildings and other community facilities?

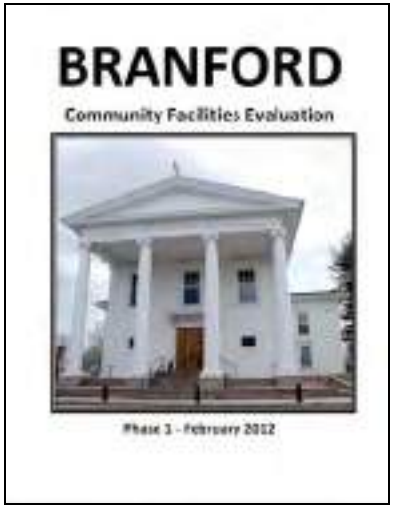
Do More	35%
Keep Same	63%
Do Less	1%
Not Sure	2%

What should the Town be doing in terms of providing recreation facilities and services for kids, families, and seniors?

Do More	52%
Keep Same	46%
Do Less	1%
Not Sure	2%

A community facilities evaluation report prepared in 2012 looked at the major municipal facilities in an attempt to identify and categorize major issues. That report estimated that the Town of Branford occupied in excess of ***1.4 million square feet*** of gross floor area just in the major facilities. Pump stations, gazebos, docks, and similar facilities were not included in that total.

The main recommendations which came out of that report were as follows:



A. Evaluate and Prioritize Major Facility Needs - Establish a long-term Capital Improvement Program to align facility needs with the sources of funding that might be available.

B. Evaluate Facilities Which Are Not Town-Owned - Review whether it makes sense to occupy, acquire, relocate, or build a facility. Review any arrangements to be sure contract terms are in writing and that the responsibility for expenses is clearly specified.

C. Evaluate Facilities Which Are Not Town-Used - Investigate whether it makes sense to continue to own the current facility or sell it. If the facility is to be kept, review lease payments and other expenses to be sure the lease reflects the costs of ownership and that terms are clearly specified.

D. Address The Most Acute Space Needs – Address most urgent needs (Public Works, meeting room space, Parkside Village, etc.).

E. Evaluate The Potential For Re-Purposing Some Facilities - Evaluate the potential for repurposing some municipal facilities which do not appear to be used cost effectively, Undertake a long-term school enrollment study to anticipate community needs but not have excess school buildings to maintain.

As stated in the 2008 POCD, community facilities should be:

- adequate to meet community needs for the foreseeable future (quality of space and quantity of space),
- maintained and managed to sustain and extend their utility, and
- adaptable to changing community needs.

The 2008 POCD and the 2012 Community Facilities Evaluation noted that management and maintenance of community facilities is an on-going challenge for the Town in terms of:

- providing adequate funding,
- conducting preventative (rather than reactionary) maintenance, and
- changing prioritization.

Consolidated building and grounds management and maintenance for all municipal facilities (Town and education) might help organize and prioritize the lifecycle costs of the various types of facilities. Some other communities have had some success with consolidated municipal and educational facility maintenance programs and Branford might anticipate a similar result.

Another challenge is that many facilities are older buildings where the difficulty (and costs) of maintenance and remodeling (for things like energy efficiency and handicapped accessibility) are increased. The operating costs of these facilities can also be higher than newer facilities.

Department Head Survey

In the fall of 2017, a survey was circulated to Town of Branford department heads. *Some of those responses* are summarized below:

1. **What do you see as the *greatest challenge* facing your department over the next five to ten years?**
   - Meeting needs with resources available (staff / funds)
   - Mainaining the facilities and infrastructure we have
   - Addressing changing needs of a growing older population
   - Coastal resilience issues will take funds from existing programs

2. **Are there any major needs for your department that should be considered for inclusion in the Plan?**
   - Staffing
   - Funding
   - Meeting growing need of an aging population
   - Maintaining / enhancing what we have

3. **What do you feel is the major community facility need during the next ten years?**
   - Public works facility
   - Sliney School
   - Emergency shelter outside a floodplain
   - Repurpose elementary schools for elderly housing and build state-of-the-art schools for the projected enrollment

4. **Now thinking about all issues facing the community, what do you see as the *greatest challenge or need* facing Branford in the next ten to twenty years?**
   - Economy
   - Infrastructure
   - Coastal resilience / sea level rise / flooding
   - Maintaining character
   - Sidewalks and parking in the Town Center area
   - Meeting growing need of an aging population



What should the Town be doing in terms of providing police and fire services?

Do More	25%
Keep Same	70%
Do Less	2%
Not Sure	2%

What should the Town be doing in terms of providing schools and educational facilities?

Do More	36%
Keep Same	56%
Do Less	2%
Not Sure	5%

13.1 Address Near-Term Community Facility Needs / Issues

Branford is being somewhat reactive at the present time in terms of addressing its community facility situations. Branford should seek to identify and categorize its facilities (and their needs) so that future needs can be forecast and sequenced as cost-effectively as possible.

A.	Overall		Leader	Partners
1.	**Revisit and clarify the role of the Public Building Commission.**	☐	BOS	RTM
2.	**Develop a facilities management approach to oversee the construction, management, maintenance of all municipal facilities.**	☐	BOS	RTM PuBC
3.	**Consider establishing a Facilities Management Committee (may be merged with the role of the Public Building Commission).**	☐	BOS	RTM

4.	**Update the Community Facilities Study to evaluate:**
	• **Possible scenarios related to sea level rise.**
	• **Whether it is possible to decrease the overall footprint (floor area and energy use) of municipal facilities and the costs thereof:**
	  • **Consolidation of functions,**
	  • **Repurposing of facilities not needed,**
	  • **Reduction of facilities which are Town-used but not Town-owned, and**
	  • **Reduction of facilities which are Town-owned but not Town-used.**
		☐	FMC	SRC
				CETF
				CVWG
				Staff

5.	**Integrate the findings from the updated Community Facilities Study into a Capital Improvements Plan to align municipal facility needs with the sources of funding available.**	☐	FMC	SRC BOS RTM
B.	**Near-Term Projects**		**Leader**	**Partners**
1.	**Address the Public Works facility (including vehicle maintenance and storage yards).**	☐	BOS	RTM PuBC

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13.2 Address Medium-Term Community Facility Needs / Issues

There are some additional community facility issues which should be addressed:

- The splintered responsibility for maintenance of buildings and sites resulting in duplication of services and staff and varying levels of repair,
- The on-going need for community meeting spaces,
- The need for a long-term recreation facilities plan to address community needs, and
- Anticipate any implications from sea level rise and/or climate change.

		Leader	Partners
A.	**Facility Maintenance**		
	1. Establish a town-wide maintenance function for all Town and School facilities. ☐	**Town**	**BOE PW BOR**
B.	**Meeting Space**		
	1. Seek opportunities to create additional meeting space for community activities.	**PBC**	**Town**
C.	**Recreation Facilities Plan**		
	1. Prepare a recreation facilities plan to ensure that there are sufficient facilities throughout Branford to meet the needs of all user groups. ☐	**BOR**	**POS**

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Public Works Facility



Recreation Facilities



WPCA Treatment Facility



13.3 Address Long-Term Community Facility Needs / Issues

Branford also needs to prepare itself for longer term issues:

- Upgrading municipal facilities for sustainability and resilience,
- Monitoring and projecting school enrollments to be sure adequate facilities are in place when needed.
- Ensuring that emergency preparations (and shelters) will be ready and adequate when needed given the anticipated increase in coastal storms and other severe weather events,
- Evaluating the functionality (and adequacy) of outlying fire stations given sea level rise scenarios, extreme weather events, the configuration of the current and future roadway network, and other challenges, and
- Monitoring how an aging population will change the need for municipal services.

	Leader	Partners
1. Adopt an approach/philosophy to upgrade municipal facilities for sustainability and resilience (renewable energy technologies, increased energy efficiency, energy storage, use of micro-grids, etc.). ☐	**SRC**	**Town BOE**
2. Continue to monitor school enrollments in order to anticipate future enrollment trends well in advance. ☐	**BOE**	**Town**
3. Continue to monitor waste disposal arrangements for long term adequacy and efficiency. ☐	**PW**	**Town**
4. Evaluate the location and adequacy of emergency shelters. ☐	**Town**	
5. Evaluate the long-term functionality (and adequacy) of outlying fire stations. ☐	**Town**	**FD**
6. Continue to monitor how the changing age composition of the community affects the demand for emergency medical services, dial-a-ride, and other municipal services.	**Town**	**PD FD**
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ADDRESS VEHICULAR CIRCULATION

14

For the purposes of the POCD, “vehicular circulation” will address the major elements of the roadway system and related issues. See Chapter 15 for strategies related to pedestrian, bicycle and transit facilities.

Since vehicles are the predominant form of transportation in Branford, the roadway system is something that many residents have familiarity (and frustration) with. In a public meeting held early in the planning process, “traffic / circulation” issues were a major category of things that participants were “sorry about” in Branford.

The roadway system will continue to be the predominant transportation mode in the foreseeable future and so this is an important consideration in the POCD.

Traffic



Traffic



Traffic





Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

Branford should seek to improve Exit 53 to a full interchange.

Strongly Agree	36%
Agree	27%
Not Sure	18%
Disagree	16%
Strongly Disagree	3%

What should the Town be doing in terms of addressing traffic congestion?

Do More	58%
Keep Same	39%
Do Less	1%
Not Sure	3%

The roadway system in Branford consists of State-maintained highways and Town-maintained local roads. The map on the facing page categorizes these roads by the type of function they provide in the overall circulation system:

- Limited access highways – intended and used for regional and interstate travel with no access to individual properties
- Arterial roads (State highways) – intended for regional and local travel but also used to provide access to abutting properties
- Collector roads – roads intended to "collect" traffic from local roads and distribute it to highways and also provide access to abutting properties
- Local roads - primarily intended and used for access to properties.

This categorization scheme is a reflection of the functions that roads in Branford currently serve. It may provide some guidance for maintenance / improvement priorities and for land use decisions.

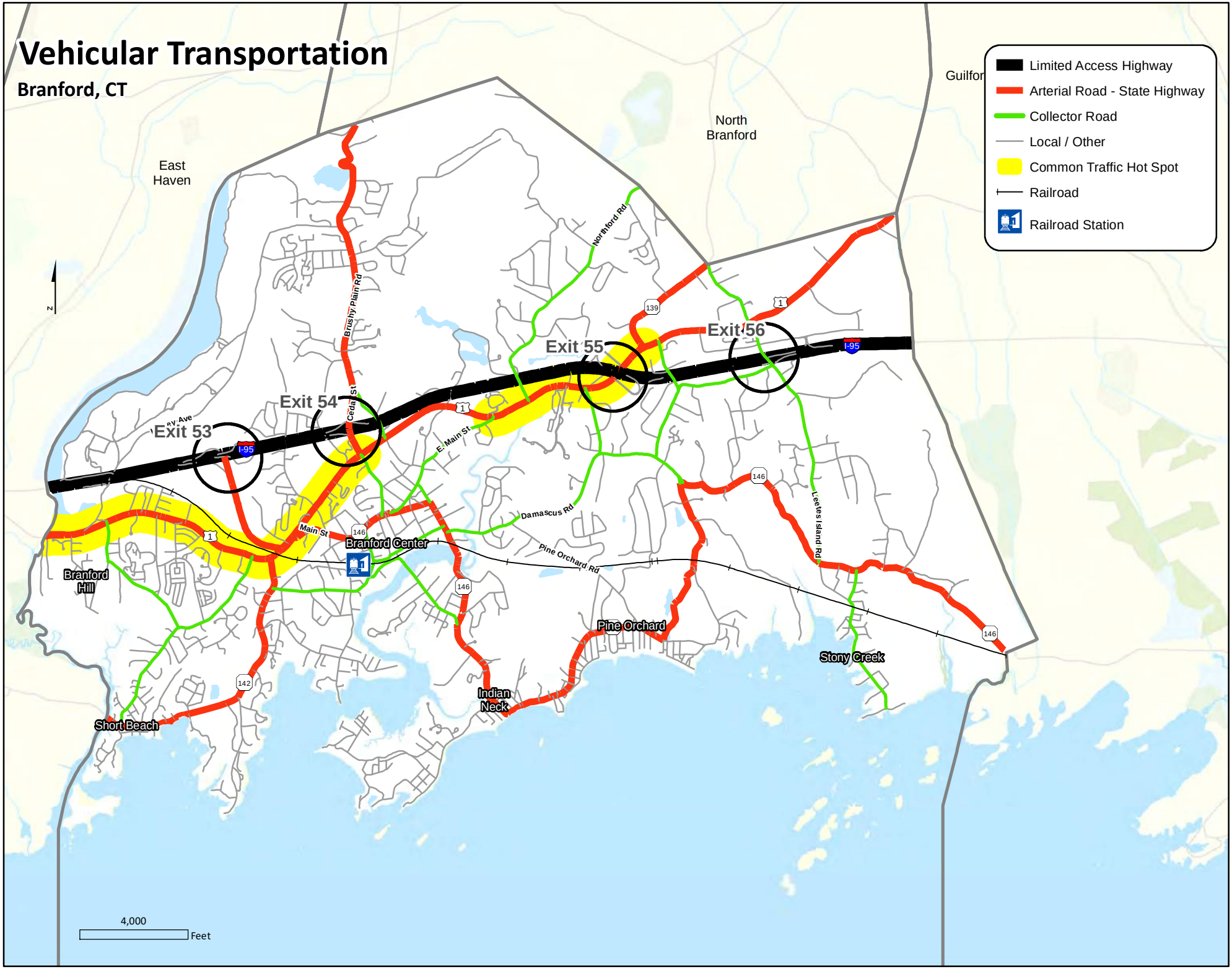
Traffic congestion is considered to be an issue by many Branford residents. Traffic routes are influenced by Branford's coastal location (bays, inlets, and marshes) and much traffic naturally flows to just a few main roads. This is exacerbated by the position of interchanges on I-95 and the location of commercial uses which result in some easily identifiable "hot spots" for congestion and crashes / collisions.

14.1 Promote Improvements To Exit 53

The main vehicular circulation recommendation in the POCD is to improve Exit 53 from a partial interchange (northbound off-ramp and southbound on-ramp) to a full interchange. With the current configuration, traffic from many areas of Branford needs to travel to other interchanges to get onto (or off) Interstate 95 and this exacerbates congestion on local roads. (also see POCD Section 11.2)

	Leader	Partners
1. Continue to work with public and private entities to improve Exit 53 to a full interchange to help distribute traffic among the I-95 interchanges in Branford.	**Town**	**SCRCOG DOT**

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Vehicular Transportation
Branford, CT
Limited Access Highway
Arterial Road - State Highway
Collector Road
Local / Other
Common Traffic Hot Spot
Railroad
Railroad Station
East Haven
North Branford
Guilfor
Exit 53
Exit 54
Exit 55
Exit 56
I-95
Brushy Plain Rd
Northford Rd
Cedar St
E. Main St
Main St
Damascus Rd
Pine Orchard Rd
Leetes Island Rd
Branford Center
Branford Hill
Pine Orchard
Stony Creek
Indian Neck
Short Beach
4,000
Feet

Smart Traffic Signals

Traffic engineers are beginning to deploy "smart traffic signals" which use artificial intelligence to monitor traffic flow and adapt signal timing to be as efficient as possible.

The artificial intelligence is based on information from:

- Other traffic signals,
- Smart vehicles,
- Video recognition,
- Cellphone signals,
- Pedestrian activity

A pilot study suggested that smart traffic signals could reduce the amount of time that motorists spent idling at lights by 40% and reduce travel times by 25%. CO_2 emissions may also be cut by about 6.5%.

In the future, such signals may also communicate with vehicles so that they shut off during red phases and turn on just before green phases.

The signals could also be used to give preference to buses and other types of transit.

14.2 Address Safety / Capacity Issues On Major Roadways

Most of the major roadways in Branford are State highways and the Town should continue to work with the Department of Transportation to address safety and capacity issues along these roadways. The Town should also address safety and capacity issues along any major Town roadways (including implementing access management on private lands).

	Leader	Partners
1. Continue to identify and address traffic safety and capacity issues along main transportation corridors (see sidebar discussion of "smart traffic signals).	DOT Town	
2. Identify roadways threatened by sea level rise and severe weather events and consider possible solutions.	DOT Town	CVWG
3. Strengthen the access management provisions in the Zoning Regulations along Route 1 and investigate expanding these provisions to other roadways and developments.	PZC	
4. Encourage DOT to investigate and address crash/collision issues at Exit 54 (especially the north-bound on ramp).	Town	DOT
5. Encourage or require development / redevelopment to address traffic congestion, improve traffic flow, improve traffic safety, and accommodate pedestrians and bicycles.	DOT	Town
6. Monitor the evolution of Uber/Lyft and other on-demand ride services, autonomous vehicles, and other modes in terms of the potential impact on the community (safety, capacity, etc.).	DOT	Town

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Collision



Proposed Roundabout



Pavement Maintenance



14.3 Address Transportation Issues On Town Roadways

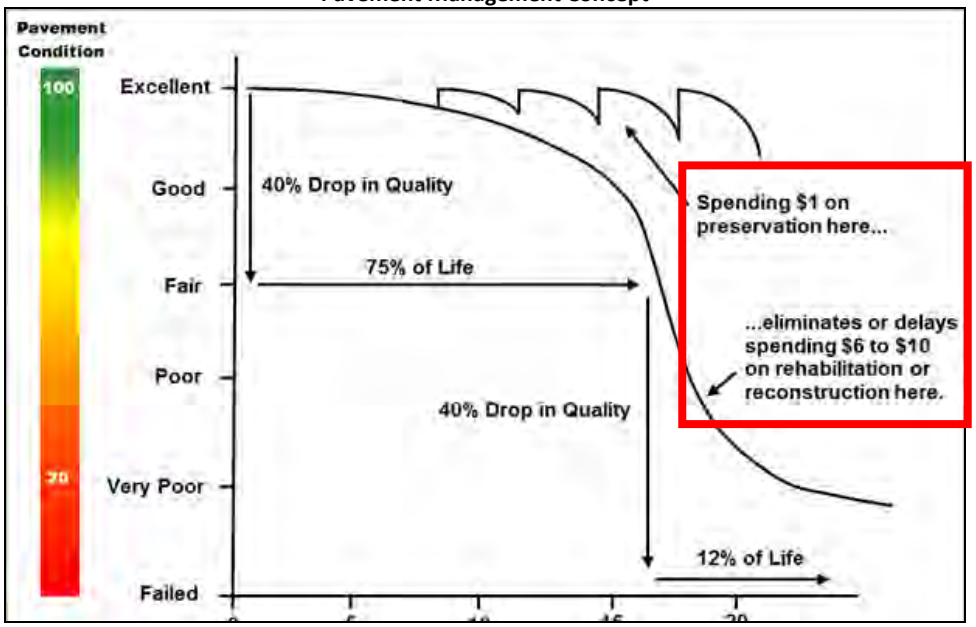
Pavement Quality / Pavement Management

Paved roadways are expensive to build and expensive to maintain.

Many communities uses a "pavement management" system to monitor the pavement condition of the overall roadway system since studies over the years have shown that minor maintenance-type expenditures up front can avoid major reconstruction expenditures later.

Branford should continue to implement ***and fund*** a long-term pavement management program in order to minimize the long term cost of road maintenance.

Pavement Management Concept



A. Implement Pavement Management	Leader	Partners
1. Continue to implement pavement management techniques on Town roads to reduce long-term maintenance costs.	**PW**	

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What should the Town be doing in terms of maintaining roads and streets?

Do More	54%
Keep Same	45%
Do Less	1%
Not Sure	1%

Pavement Management

Pavement management is an approach to maintaining a roadway system (pavement quality) as efficiently and economically as possible.

A comprehensive pavement evaluation is undertaken and then the overall quality of the roadway system can be monitored over time. Then, the most cost-effective strategies to maintain the roadway system can be implemented.

Traffic Calming

For many years, roadways were treated as an area exclusively for vehicles.

This single-purpose approach is now changing and streets are providing for a wider range of transportation modes including walking, cycling, transit, and other modes. The introduction of these other modes helps slow vehicular traffic.

SCRCOG has a traffic calming resource guide available on their website.

The 2017 TOD Study also contained recommendations related to traffic calming.

Traffic Calming

According to the Institute of Transportation Engineers, traffic calming is the "combination of mainly physical measures that reduce the negative effects of motor vehicle use, alter driver behavior and improve conditions for non-motorized street users."

This can include:

- reducing or eliminating cut-through traffic,
- reducing or eliminating speeding,
- reducing the incidence of crashes or collisions, and/or
- creating a safer environment for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Sample Of Possible Traffic Calming Techniques



Awareness / Signage – A neighborhood meeting can raise awareness and may lead to solutions. Signage informs motorists of acceptable speeds and/or behavior.



Speed Enforcement – Enforcement of speed limits and other traffic laws in neighborhoods can help slow traffic and help police learn when and where to focus their traffic calming efforts.



Narrowing Travel Lanes - Narrowing travel lane width can calm traffic. A constriction (choker, chicane, etc.) can also be effective although it hampers snow plows and emergency response.



Mini-Roundabouts - A mini-roundabout is a street intersection feature which requires vehicles to slow down and navigate around the island in an intersection and yield to vehicles already in the roundabout.



Speed Bump / Hump – Temporary or permanent raised sections of roadway which can deter speeding and cut-through traffic. However, this can also create issues for snow plowing and emergency response.

B.	Implement Traffic Calming	Leader	Partners
1.	**Investigate traffic calming as a solution to traffic problems in residential neighborhoods and other areas (such as the Town Center with high walkability) where it may be appropriate.** ☐	TA	PW
2.	**Consider implementing traffic calming provisions on local roads being used for cut-through traffic or where speeding is apparent.**	TA	PW

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PROMOTE PEDESTRIAN, BICYCLE AND TRANSIT FACILITIES

15

For the purposes of the POCD, pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facilities includes:

- facilities such as sidewalks, trails, and related improvements for getting around by foot, walker, wheelchair, or similar means,
- bicycle facilities such as on-road bicycle travel, bikeways, , and related improvements, and
- rail and bus transit and associated facilities.

See Chapter 14 for strategies related to vehicular transportation.

With regard to pedestrians and bicycles, participants in a public meeting at the beginning of the planning process indicated that walking and biking enhance the community for almost everyone and improve the overall quality of life.

Pedestrians



Bicyclists



Bus Transit



15.1 Implement a "Complete Streets" Approach

Connecticut's Complete Streets Policy

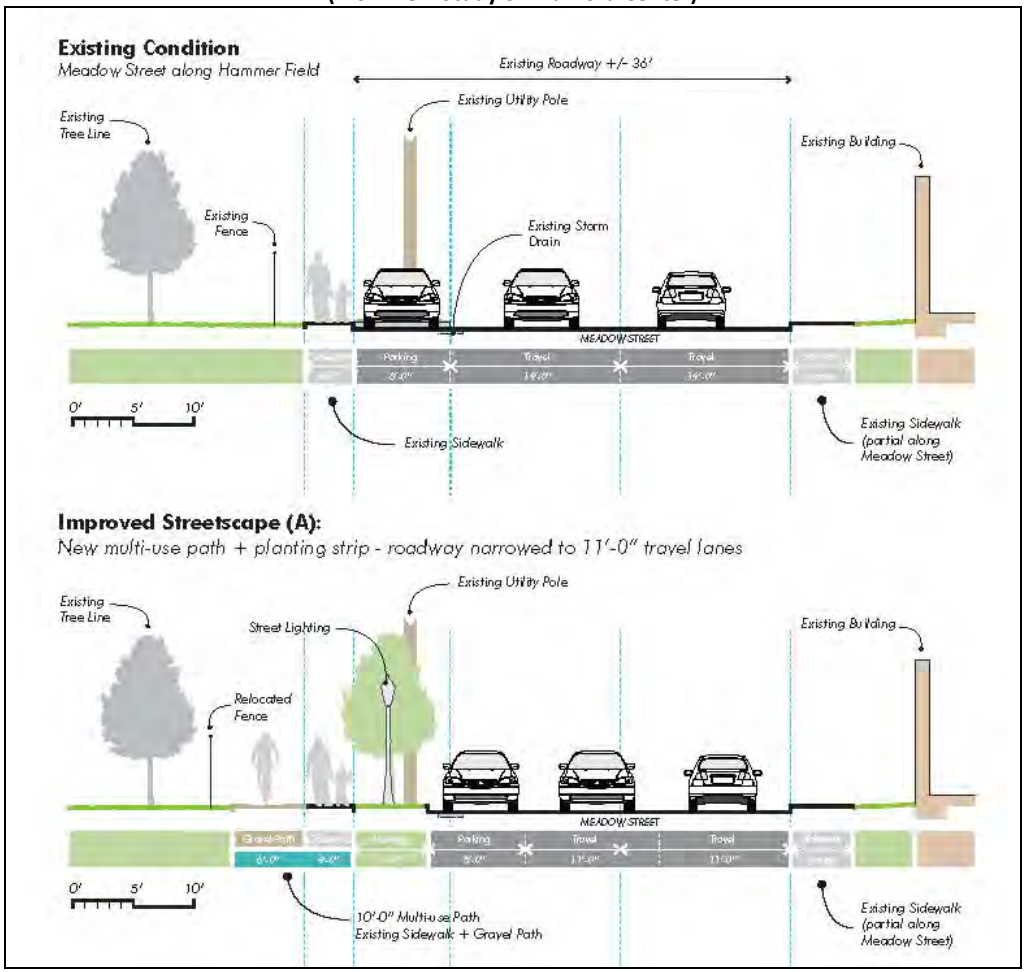
In 2014, the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CT-DOT) adopted an executive policy promoting "complete streets" and incorporating the following:

- Providing training on "complete streets" best practices.
- Using a "complete streets" checklist on applicable projects.
- Considering "complete streets" when state or federal funding is used.
- Amending design, construction and maintenance guidelines to reflect the routine accommodation of all users.
- Increasing flexibility for the funding of "complete streets" projects.
- Collecting data (to the extent possible) as part of traffic counts.
- Establish and annually report "complete streets" performance measures.

The phrase "complete streets" refers to an approach where streets are planned, designed, operated, and maintained to enable safe, convenient and comfortable travel and access ***for users of all ages and abilities*** regardless of their mode of transportation.

"Complete streets" seek to accommodate pedestrians, cyclists, transit users and other modes in addition to the traditional focus on people driving automobiles. See the Transit-Oriented Development Study completed in 2017 for additional discussion of "complete streets."

Complete Streets Concept
(From TOD Study of Branford Center)



To help create an overall pedestrian / bicycle / transit ***system***, Branford will take advantage of the transportation network already in place (existing roadways) to establish "complete streets" where feasible and appropriate.

	Leader	Partners
1. Evaluate opportunities to create "complete streets" in Branford and retrofit existing situations to create "more complete streets."	**PBC**	**PW TA**
a. Adopt a "complete streets" policy in Branford. ☐	**RTM**	
b. Evaluate a program of establishing 10-foot travel lanes on local roadways and encouraging DOT to implement 11-foot travel lanes on State highways as a way to promote traffic calming and make space available for other users. . ☐	**PBC**	**PW TA**
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Travel Lane Widths

The Connecticut Department of Transportation has adopted a policy to restripe roadways with eleven-foot travel lanes when opportunities arise (such as paving or line painting projects). This policy change will expand the space available for non-motorized transportation users on a number of State highways and will be almost imperceptible to the motorist (and may slow traffic speeds).

After Narrowing Lane Width



15.2 Expand Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

Pedestrians

There is growing interest in "pedestrianism" in Branford and elsewhere. Branford has sidewalks in a number of locations in the community and this helps enhance pedestrian safety and improve the quality of life in the community. The Shoreline Greenway and walking trails within the open space parcels in Town provide additional pedestrian opportunities.

The key issues associated with improving "pedestrianism" in Branford include:

- closing gaps in the current sidewalk system,
- adding sidewalks and connections in key areas,
- extending sidewalks to serve key destinations,
- replacing existing sidewalks that have deteriorated.

The map on the page 127 identifies some potential sidewalk priority areas:

- Priority 1 - Town Center and any area within ½ mile of the train station
- Priority 2 – village-type areas and business zones
- Priority 3 – areas within ¼ mile of transit routes.

Survey Results

What should the Town be doing in terms of promoting walkable, pedestrian-friendly areas in all parts of Branford?

Do More	62%
Keep Same	34%
Do Less	2%
Not Sure	1%

What should the Town be doing in terms of connecting area together for pedestrians and bicycles?

Do More	66%
Keep Same	27%
Do Less	2%
Not Sure	5%

Shoreline Area (Shoulder)



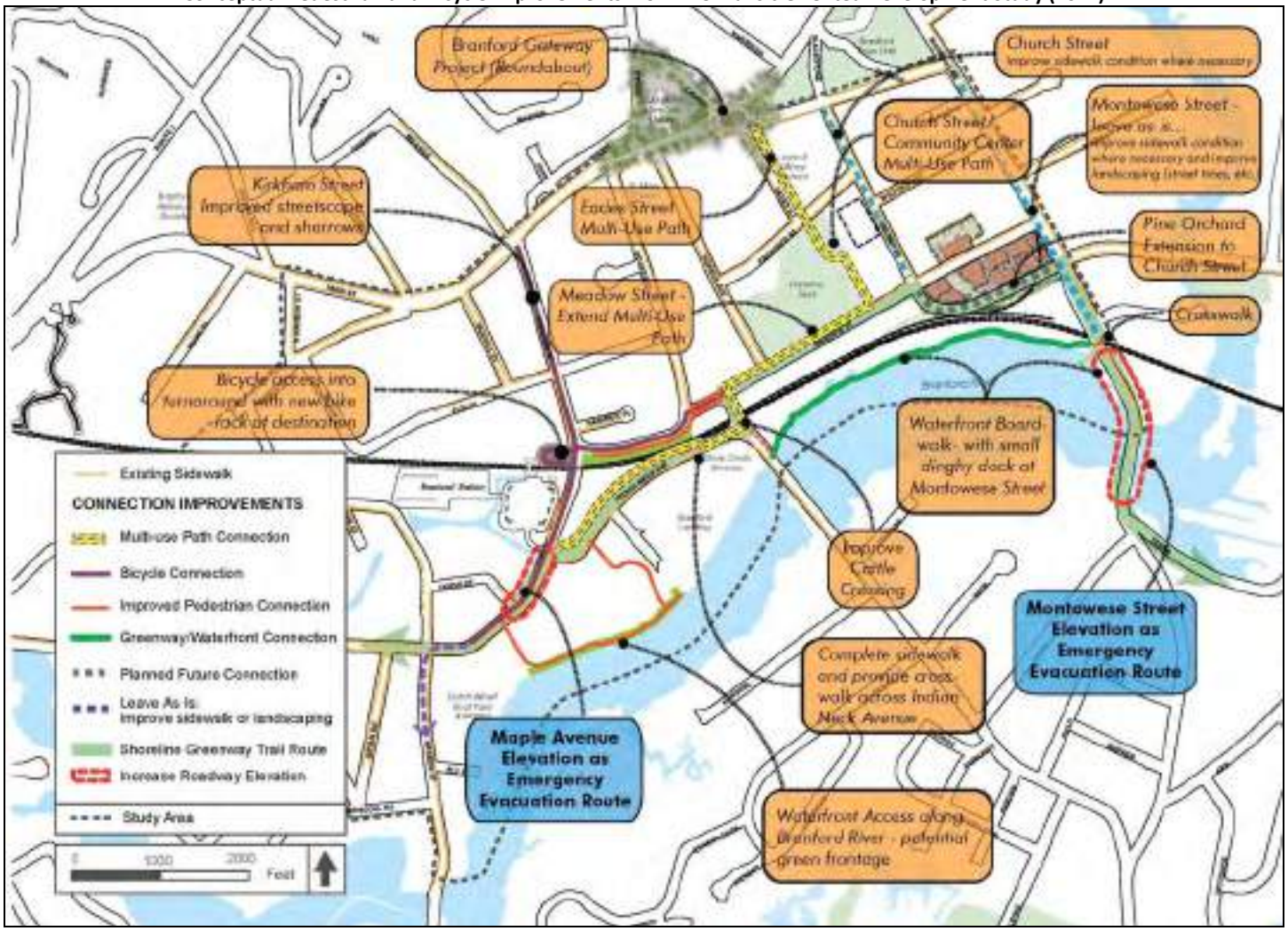
Where The Sidewalk Ends



Potential Conflicts



Conceptual Pedestrian and Bicycle Improvements From The Transit-Oriented Development Study (2017)



BFJ Planning



Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

Having a safe, walkable and bikeable community enhances the quality of life for Branford residents.

Strongly Agree	55%
Agree	37%
Not Sure	2%
Disagree	4%
Strongly Disagree	2%

Bicyclists

There is also growing interest in bicycle usage and Branford is well situated to be able to take advantage of this trend. If Branford were to make provisions for bicycles to interconnect the Town Center with shoreline villages and outlying neighborhoods (along existing roads, a harbor area esplanade / boardwalk and the Shoreline Greenway Trail), it would enhance community character and appeal and be an attraction for people from other areas to come and visit Branford.

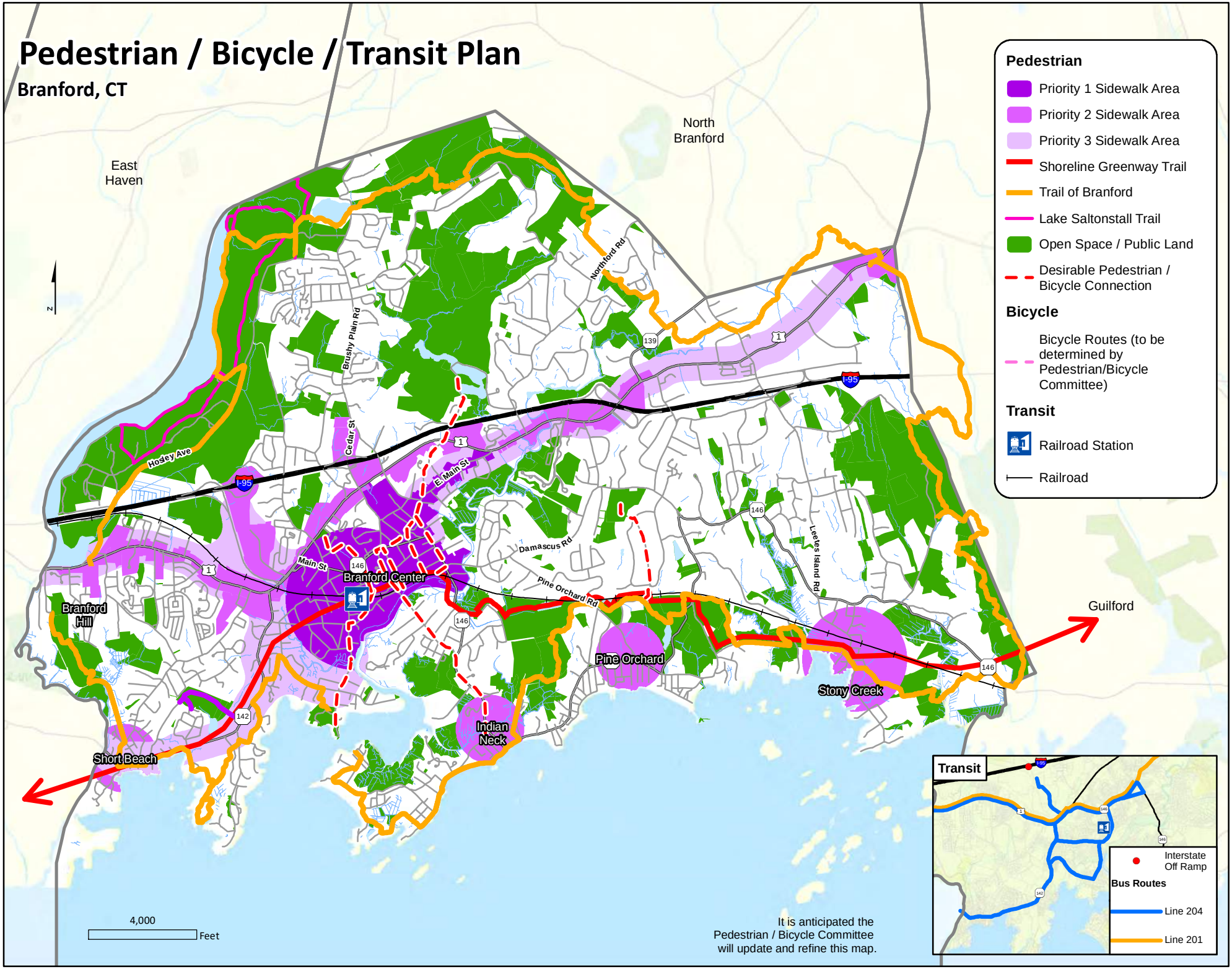
Branford does have some challenges in terms of establishing a bicycle system due to the narrow width of some roadways and the need to educate motorists that cyclists are also entitled to use the roadway pavement. Addressing and these issues could go a long way to promoting more bicycle usage in Branford.

		Leader	Partners
A.	**Pedestrian System**		
1.	**Establish a broad-based advocacy committee dedicated to promoting bicycle / pedestrian use (including sidewalk ordinance, pedestrian crosswalks, pedestrian lighting, etc.)** ☐	**RTM**	**PZC BOS**
a.	*Prepare a pedestrian / bicycle master plan.* ☐	**PBC**	**TA**
b.	*Undertake campaigns to educate walkers, cyclists, and motorists about appropriate road use and etiquette.* ☐	**PBC**	**TA**
2.	**Continue to require sidewalks as part of private development in appropriate areas of Branford (especially in business zones).**	**PZC**	
B.	**Bicycle System**	**Leader**	**Partners**
1.	**Work with local bicycle groups, bicycle shops, and others to establish and nurture a system of on-road and off-road bicycle routes in Branford.**	**PBC**	**TA PW**
a.	*Create and publish a map of appropriate bicycle routes in Branford.* ☐	**PBC**	**TA**
b.	*Investigate ways to create a system of signs and/or pavement markings to identify appropriate bicycle routes in Branford.* ☐	**PBC**	**TA PW**
2.	**Seek to be officially recognized as a "bicycle-friendly" community.** ☐	**PBC**	

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Pedestrian / Bicycle / Transit Plan

Branford, CT



Pedestrian

- Priority 1 Sidewalk Area
- Priority 2 Sidewalk Area
- Priority 3 Sidewalk Area
- Shoreline Greenway Trail
- Trail of Branford
- Lake Saltonstall Trail
- Open Space / Public Land
- Desirable Pedestrian / Bicycle Connection

Bicycle

- Bicycle Routes (to be determined by Pedestrian/Bicycle Committee)

Transit

- Railroad Station
- Railroad



What should the Town be doing in terms of having transit services for residents and businesses?

Do More	48%
Keep Same	42%
Do Less	4%
Not Sure	7%

15.3 Enhance Transit Services

Rail Transit - Passenger rail service from Branford to New Haven (and on to New York) or to New London is available on the Shoreline East railroad service operated by the Connecticut Department of Transportation. The availability of this service is a significant asset to Branford and is expected to become more valuable over time. Branford should continue to support this rail service.

Bus Transit - Branford is served by two bus routes as part of the New Haven Transit District. Branford contracts with the Greater New Haven Transit District for a "dial-a-ride" service for eligible persons and trips. In addition, the Senior Center operates medical transport vehicles and paratransit buses. Branford intends to support these transit services.

	Leader	Partners
1. Continue to support maintenance and enhancement of the Shoreline East rail service.	**Town**	**SCRCOG DOT**
2. Continue to support fixed route bus services, paratransit services, and dial-a-ride services in Branford.	**Town**	**SCRCOG DOT**
3. Support efforts to further improve scheduling between bus and rail transit at the Branford train station to promote coordinate use of both transit services.	**Staff**	**CTDOT**
4. Investigate the potential to operate a shuttle, especially in the summertime, connecting Branford Center with the Harbor area, the train station, and other destinations within Branford.	**Town**	**EDC**

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Train Station



Senior Transport



Dial-A-Ride



ADDRESS UTILITY INFRASTRUCTURE

16

In the Plan of Conservation and Development, utility infrastructure refers to:

- piped utilities (public water, public sewer, storm drainage, and natural gas),
- wired utilities (electric, telephone, and cable), and
- wireless services (communications).

The availability and/or capacity of utility infrastructure should serve the needs of the community and the desired community structure. However, utility infrastructure should not, by itself, dictate community structure or density patterns. Utility services should help us create the community we want Branford to be.

Piped Utilities



Wired Utilities



Wireless Utilities



Sewer Philosophy

In Branford, it is the philosophy of the Planning and Zoning Commission that the availability of public sewers should not dictate development intensity or patterns.

Rather, infrastructure should support the development patterns and intensities desired by the community.

Extending sewers can address public health issues and enhance economic development and overall development goals. However, extending sewers could lead to increased densities in areas where such density is not desired. Thus, coordinating sewer extensions with land use goals is critical.

If sewer extensions are considered in some areas in the future (such as Stony Creek), the Planning and Zoning Commission may consider the adoption of an overlay zone to prevent any attempt to increase density.

16.1 Address Piped Infrastructure

Public Sewer

The Town of Branford operates a sewage collection and treatment system that serves approximately 85 percent of the households and approximately 90 percent of existing commercial and industrial areas in Branford. Through an inter-local agreement, sewage treatment is also provided to North Branford. The Water Pollution Control Facility on Block Island Road has been expanded and improved over the years and treats about 3.5 million gallons per day (plant capacity is about 4.9 MGD). After treatment, effluent is discharged to the Branford River and ultimately Long Island Sound.

The treatment plant and pump stations are vulnerable to sea level rise. See Section 2.8, Section 4.1, and Chapter 12 for additional discussion of this issue.

The sewer system is expected to have adequate capacity to meet community needs during the planning period.

Sewer service is available to the areas of the community where higher intensity development is anticipated. Some areas of Branford are identified as "sewer avoidance" areas where properties will be expected to rely on on-site septic systems.

Areas identified as "sewer avoidance areas" ***may*** be eligible for sewers in the future as a result of septic failures, public health, sea level rise, or other considerations.

Generalized Sewer Service Area



Public Water

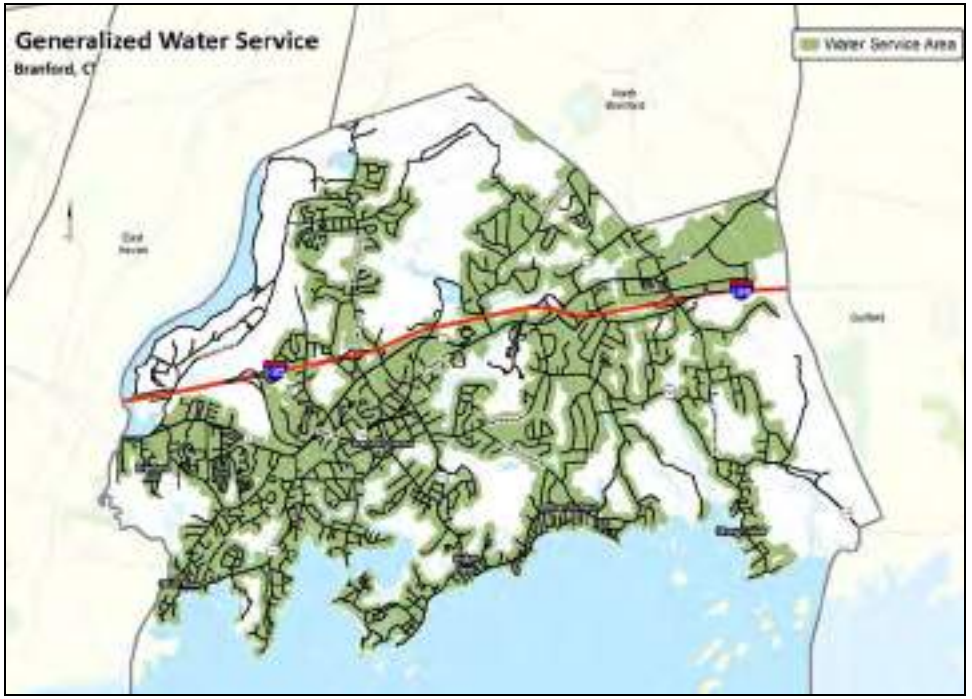
The South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority (SCCRWA) operates a water system that serves much of the New Haven metropolitan region. SCCRWA owns more than 27,000-acres of land and supplies 46 million gallons of water a day to a population of some 430,000 persons.

Within Branford, SCCRWA has a water supply reservoir (Lake Saltonstall) and owns about 1,100 acres of watershed land. In terms of distribution, SCCRWA uses over 140 miles of water mains to provide water to over 8,000 Branford customers and 726 fire hydrants.

The water system is expected to be adequate during the planning period in terms of water quantity and water quality.

Water service is available to the areas of the community where higher intensity development is anticipated and water service can be extended to areas where it is needed or wanted.

Generalized Water Service Area



Natural Gas

Southern Connecticut Gas Company provides gas service within Branford. Although a service area map is not available for publication, natural gas service is available to accommodate future growth. ***The natural gas distribution system is expected to be adequate during the planning period.*** Since some residents and businesses may desire natural gas, opportunities to expand the service area should be explored and supported.



What should the Town be doing in terms of providing for stormwater drainage?

Do More	46%
Keep Same	43%
Do Less	0%
Not Sure	11%

Drainage Issues

In recent years, Connecticut has been experiencing more intense rain storm events and these intense rainstorms are occurring more frequently. There are more times now where the amount of rainfall exceeds the capacity of storm drainage systems and flooding can occur where it never happened before. Addressing this on a Town-wide basis will be a challenge since up-sizing one culvert will exacerbate any flooding downstream.

Storm Drainage

Storm drainage is another type of piped infrastructure. Most areas of Branford rely on underground piping and culverts to collect stormwater and convey it to an outlet. This historic approach to storm drainage may not work as well in the future (see sidebar) and new thinking is desirable.

The stormwater system is expected to face a number of challenges during the planning period due to the frequency and intensity of large storm events. See Section 5.2 on page 49 for additional discussion of this issue.

For a number of reasons, a more natural approach (called "low impact development" or "LID") is desired. This approach seeks to infiltrate rainwater into the ground as near as possible to where the raindrop falls. The following map shows areas in Branford where natural soil conditions may facilitate (or frustrate) attempts to infiltrate rainwater. LID approaches can also be effective at removing pollutants from runoff and protecting overall water quality.

If Branford can implement LID approaches on a large number of properties (both residential and commercial), it is possible that this might help reduce the amount of flooding that can occur from more frequent and intense storms. This can include rain gardens, infiltration basins, and similar approaches.

Residential Rain Garden

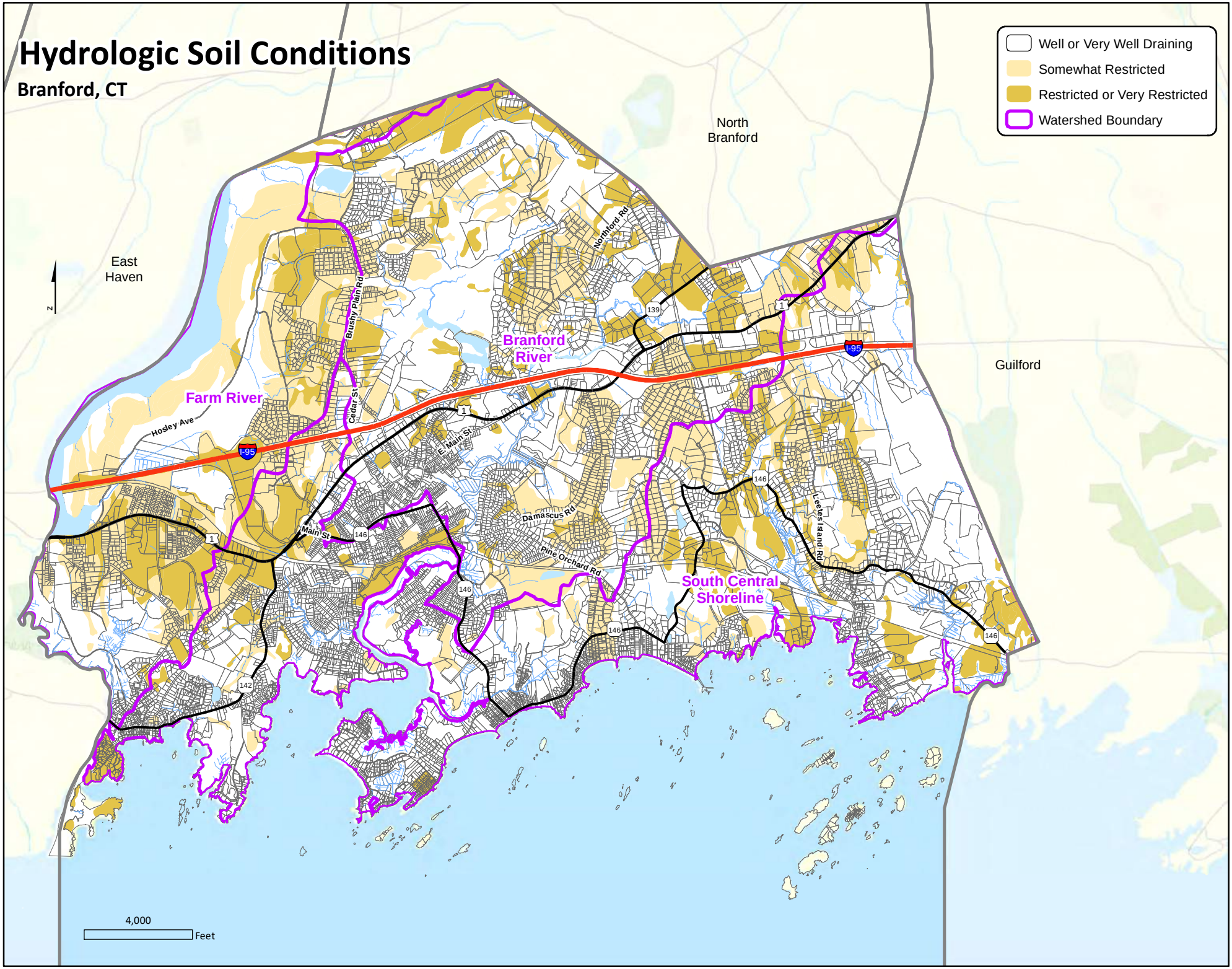


Parking Lot Infiltration Basin



Water Quality Basin




Hydrologic Soil Conditions
Branford, CT
Well or Very Well Draining
Somewhat Restricted
Restricted or Very Restricted
Watershed Boundary
North Branford
East Haven
Guilford
Branford River
Farm River
South Central Shoreline
Hosley Ave
Brushy Plain Rd
Cedar St
Northford Rd
E. Main St
Main St
Damascus Rd
Pine Orchard Rd
Leetes Island Rd
I-95
1
139
146
142
N
4,000
Feet

		Leader	Partners
A.	**Public Sewer Service**		
	1. Continue to operate the water pollution control system in compliance with State and federal standards.	**WPCA**	
	a. Update the 1996 Wastewater Treatment Facility Plan in order to anticipate future needs. ☐	**WPCA**	
	2. Evaluate the sewer system with regard to the implications of sea level rise. ☐	**CVWG**	**WPCA**
B.	**Public Water Service**	**Leader**	**Partners**
	1. Support maintenance and expansion of the public water system by SCCRWA to meet community needs.	**Town**	**SCRWA WC**
	2. Continue to use the Town's Water Commission to evaluate areas that might benefit from public water and/or address other issues.	**WC**	
C.	**Natural Gas**	**Leader**	**Partners**
	1. Support maintenance and expansion of the natural gas system by Southern CT Gas to meet community needs.	**Town**	**EDC**
D.	**Stormwater**	**Leader**	**Partners**
	1. Encourage the use of "low impact development" (LID) stormwater approaches.	**PZC**	**Town PW**
	2. Maintain and improve the stormwater drainage system.	**PW**	**Town**
	3. Allocate adequate resources (staff and money) to ensure municipal compliance with the DEEP stormwater permit (MS4 permit).	**Town**	
	4. Seek to address drainage issues that arise from more frequent and more severe storm events	**PW**	**Town**

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16.2 Address Wired Infrastructure

Electricity

For the most part, electrical generation occurs elsewhere and is transmitted to Branford. Electrical distribution in Branford is provided by Eversource (formerly Connecticut Light & Power). Most of the distribution system involves overhead wires although there are some areas (such as parts of Branford Center) and newer developments where the electrical wires are contained in underground conduits. Adequate electrical power is expected to be available to meet the needs of local users and accommodate new technologies and uses (such as electric vehicles and electric charging stations.

Locally generated electricity from photovoltaic (solar) systems and wind is increasing. In addition, there is expected to be greater use in the future of battery storage and micro-grids. See Chapter 12 for additional discussion of sustainability and resiliency issues.

Wired Communications

Wired communication services (land-line telephone and cable communication) in Branford is provided by:

- Comcast of Connecticut
- Frontier Communications (successor to AT&T Connecticut which was successor to Southern New England Telephone Co.)

Most people are now obtaining telephone, internet, and cable service through "bundled services from Comcast or Frontier. While wired communication service is adequate to meet the basic needs of residents, it is a key objective of Branford to obtain high speed / high capacity broadband service for all parts of the community.

Street Lighting

Street lights are an important aspect of a community's infrastructure. At the present time, the installation of street lights is required in all new developments at street intersections and in other locations specified by the Planning and Zoning Commission. Street lights are in the process of being converted to LED lighting due to the potential savings in electricity costs.

Electrical Reliability

Over the years, Eversource has made significant progress in improving the reliability of its service through improvements to the electrical system. Major storms and other events can cause service disruptions. Periodic tree trimming is one approach to minimizing power outages due to storm events. Guidance is also available for the type of tree planting that is appropriate for locations near overhead power lines. The cost of relocating power lines underground limits its use (whether for reliability or aesthetic purposes).

Smart Street Lights

"Smart street lights" may also be a future technology in Branford. These lights use LED lamps which use very little electricity and the bulbs last 20 years or so. The lights can contain motion sensors and only turn on when motion is detected. Solar collectors and battery storage can further reduce energy usage.

A.	Electricity	Leader	Partners
1.	Continue to work with Eversource to "balance" tree trimming for utility reliability with aesthetic and other concerns.	TW	Town
2.	Continue to require underground wired utilities in all new development.	PZC	Town
3.	Continue to explore opportunities to relocate wired utilities underground where opportunities arise.	PZC	Town
4.	Support the installation of micro-generators using renewable power sources (solar, wind, etc.)	Town	CETF
5.	Consider the installation of fuel cells and microgrids in Branford Center and other areas where redundant electrical generation is considered critical to storm resistance and recovery.	Town	CVWG CETF
B.	**Cable Communications**	**Leader**	**Partners**
1.	Promote provision of high speed internet access (enhanced broadband capacity) in Branford for the benefit of businesses and residents.	Town	EDC
C.	**Street Lighting**	**Leader**	**Partners**
1.	Continue to require "full cutoff" street lights at appropriate locations in Branford and convert street lights to LED bulbs for energy savings.		
2.	As recommended by the American Medical Association, limit LED lighting to be "warmer" in color (no higher than 3000 degrees Kelvin) to minimize potential public health impacts.		

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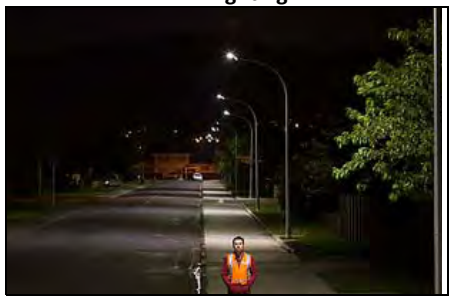
Electric Reliability / Maintenance



Cable Communications



LED Lighting



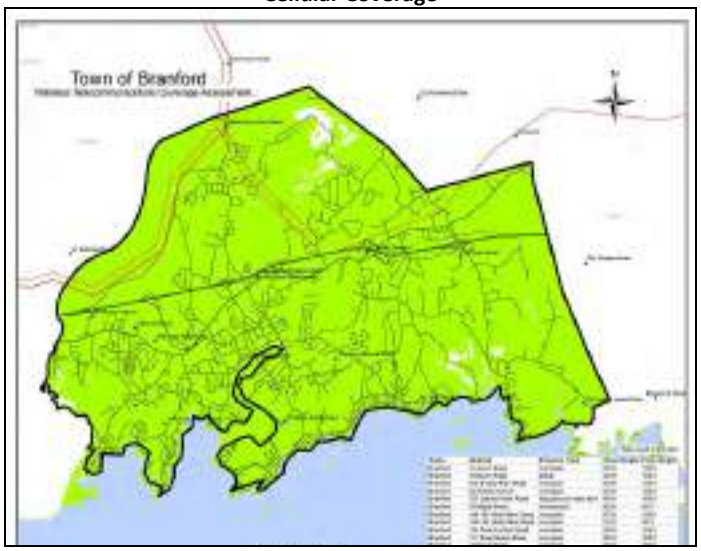
16.3 Address Wireless Infrastructure

Many people are using wireless phones and other devices (some people are relying exclusively on them) and the capacity of the wireless system is an important consideration. Branford benefits from the telecommunication towers in place to service traffic on Interstate 95 and enjoys reasonable wireless service in most parts of the community.

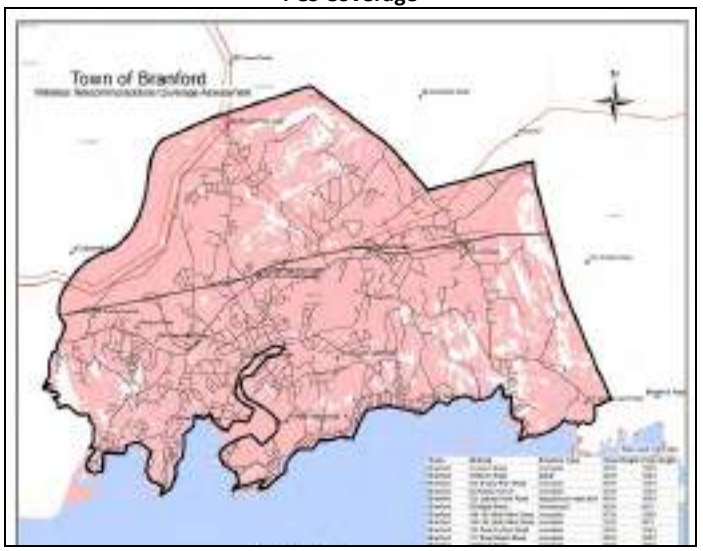
The following maps provided by the Connecticut Siting Council illustrate the general level of cell phone service within Branford and some areas where service might be improved.

Since wireless services are increasingly being used for data services (texting, phone "apps", data downloads, etc.) rather than voice communication, wireless infrastructure may move towards smaller "cells" in denser areas.

Cellular Coverage



PCS Coverage



Tower / Antennae Principles

1. Minimize any adverse visual impacts of wireless communication facilities through proper design, siting, and screening.

2. Prioritize installations in the following hierarchy:
   a. Small cell or other similar telecommunication facilities on existing utility distribution poles.
   b. Structure mounted antennae
   c. New internally-mounted antennae on monopole or flagpole.
   d. "Mono-pine" with extensive branching.
   e. New monopole with externally-mounted antennae.
   f. New lattice or guyed tower.

3. Height at 65' tree height plus 10' per carrier plus 5' to top of pole.

4. Wireless communication equipment should be concealed within buildings / equipment shelters that look like shed buildings.

Overall, adequate wireless communication service is expected to be available to meet the needs of local users and this service can be adapted in the future as data communication (GPS, internet searches, cell phone applications, etc.) over-takes voice communication.

	Leader	Partners
1. Continue to work with telecommunication providers and the state regulators (Connecticut Siting Council and/or Public Utility Regulating Authority) to provide for wireless services to meet local needs in the least visually intrusive manner.	**Town**	**PZC**

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Common Tower With No Camouflage



Stealth Monopole As Flagpole



Tree Tower With Lower Branches



Stealth Installation In Branford



FUTURE LAND USE PLAN 17

17.1 Future Land Use Plan

As the Plan is implemented, the map on page 141 illustrates the location and intensity of ***future*** land uses that are desired. Since this map illustrates the stated goals, policies, objectives, and recommendations of each of the Plan sections when combined together, it is called the Future Land Use Plan for Branford.

The Future Land Use Plan contains the following categories:

Community Structure	Areas where pedestrian-friendly, mixed use village-type areas exist or are desired
Residential Density	Areas used or intended for lowest, low, or moderate density residential uses
Business Areas	Areas used or intended for development of business or industrial uses
Open Space / Public Lands	Open space areas and publicly owned lands
Community Uses	Existing or desired community/institutional uses that will help meet community needs
Environmental Constraints	The area within the coastal boundary most susceptible to sea level rise and coastal storms and areas where natural resource protection is a priority of the Plan
Other Areas	Areas designated for Planned Development Districts (see page 72 for more information)
Areas Zoned By Others	Areas zoned by others (Short Beach, Pine Orchard

State / Regional Plans

Both the State Locational Guide Map and the Regional Plan of Conservation and Development are in the process of being updated and those maps may be completed by the time the Branford POCD is adopted.

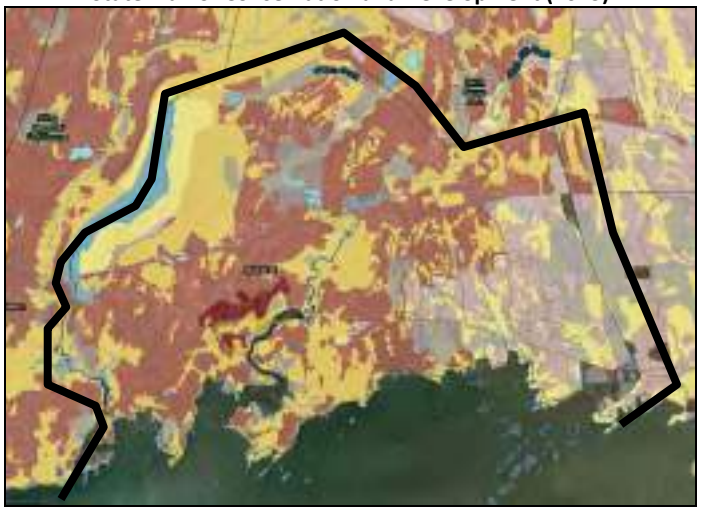
17.2 Consistency With State and Regional Plans

Section 8-23 of the Connecticut General Statutes requires comparison of Branford's Plan of Conservation and Development with:

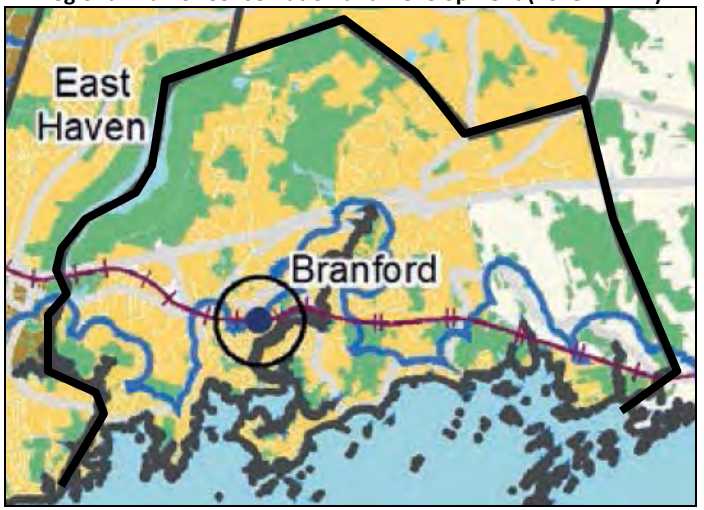
- the Locational Guide Map in the Connecticut Conservation and Development Policies Plan, and
- the Regional Plan of Conservation and Development prepared by the South Central Connecticut Regional Council of Government.

Branford's Future Land Use Plan was found to be consistent with State and regional plans in terms of identifying areas for conservation and development and relative intensities.

State Plan of Conservation and Development (2013)

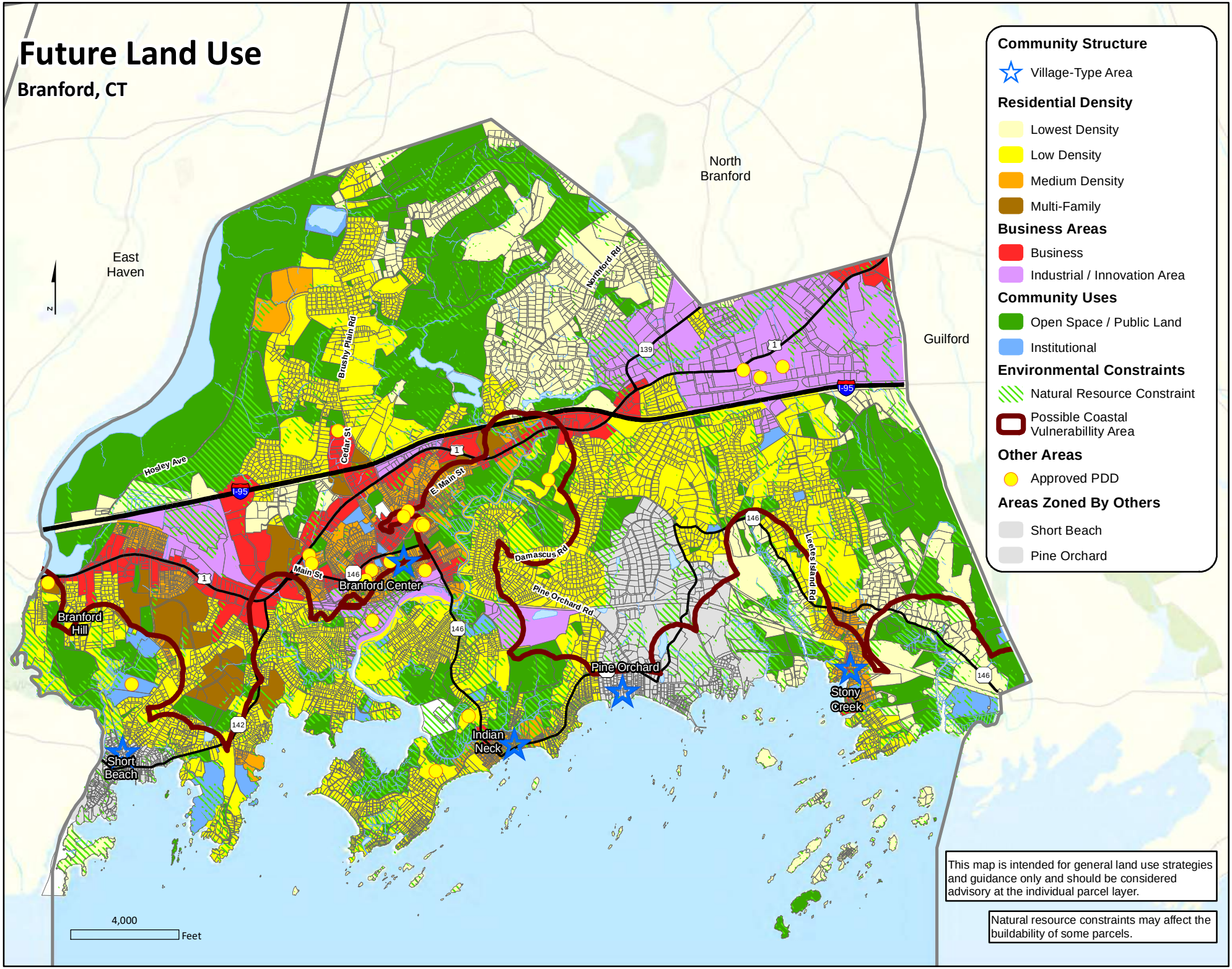


Regional Plan of Conservation and Development (2018 DRAFT)



Future Land Use

Branford, CT



Community Structure

- Village-Type Area

Residential Density

- Lowest Density
- Low Density
- Medium Density
- Multi-Family

Business Areas

- Business
- Industrial / Innovation Area

Community Uses

- Open Space / Public Land
- Institutional

Environmental Constraints

- Natural Resource Constraint
- Possible Coastal Vulnerabillity Area

Other Areas

- Approved PDD

Areas Zoned By Others

- Short Beach
- Pine Orchard

This map is intended for general land use strategies and guidance only and should be considered advisory at the individual parcel layer.

Natural resource constraints may affect the buildability of some parcels.

17.3 Consistency With Growth Principles

In accordance with CGS 8-23, the Plan of Conservation and Development was evaluated for consistency with statewide growth management principles and found to be generally consistent with those principles.

Principle 1 – Redevelop and revitalize regional centers and areas of mixed-land uses with existing or planned physical infrastructure.	**FINDING – Consistent** The Plan recommends enhancing and strengthening Branford Center and other opportunity areas with mixed-land uses due to the existing physical infrastructure.
Principle 2 – Expand housing opportunities and design choices to accommodate a variety of household types and needs.	**FINDING – Consistent** The Plan recommends addressing housing needs and expanding housing opportunities and design choices to accommodate a variety of household types and needs.
Principle 3 – Concentrate development around transportation nodes and along major transportation corridors to support the viability of transportation options and land reuse.	**FINDING – Consistent** The Plan recommends enhancing and strengthening Branford Center which is a transportation node and supporting the viability of transportation options.
Principle 4 – Conserve and restore the natural environment, cultural and historical resources, and traditional rural lands.	**FINDING – Consistent** The Plan recommends conserving the natural environment as well as protecting and preserving cultural and historical resources.
Principle 5 – Protect environmental assets critical to public health and safety.	**FINDING – Consistent** The Plan recommends protecting environmental assets critical to public health and safety such as water supply reservoirs and other natural resources.
Principle 6 – Integrate planning across all levels of government to address issues on a local, regional, and statewide basis.	**FINDING – Consistent** The Plan is part of the process of integrating planning with other levels of government and with other agencies. The Plan will be used to coordinate efforts with: • adjacent communities, • regional organizations, and • state agencies.

IMPLEMENTATION 18

Implementation is the carrying out or execution of an idea, a plan, a task, or a policy for doing something. Implementation is the action that must follow any preliminary thinking in order for something to actually happen.

18.1 Implement The POCD

Implementation of the strategies and recommendations of the Plan of Conservation and Development is essential for the planning process to have meaning and value. If strategies to make Branford a better place are identified but not acted upon, the planning process will not have produced the changes desired or realized the full potential of what Branford could and should be.

Getting Started



Achieving Results



Monitoring Outcomes



As part of the process of preparing this POCD, the members of the Plan Update Steering Committee participated in an exercise to prioritize the strategies. The following groupings might present a "starting point" for POCD implementation.

HIGHEST PRIORITY

Theme	Strategy	Section	Page
Conservation	Establish A Framework For Addressing Coastal Vulnerability	**4.1**	**38**

HIGH PRIORITIES (ordered by Theme and then by Section number)

Theme	Strategy	Section	Page
Conservation	Protect Coastal Resources	**4.2**	**42**
	Maintain and Improve Water Quality	**5.1**	**48**
	Protect Historic Resources	**7.2**	**63**
Development	Reevaluate The Use of Special Development Approaches	**8.3**	**72**
	Retain and Enhance The "Sense of Place" In Branford Center	**9.1**	**76**
	Keep Branford Center Vibrant	**9.2**	**78**
	Promote Economic Development	**10.1**	**82**
	Promote Town Center And Transit-Oriented Development	**10.2**	**84**
	Promote Appropriate Economic Development Near I-95 Interchanges	**10.3**	**86**
	Promote Appropriate Economic Development In Other Areas	**10.4**	**90**
	Address Housing Choice And Opportunities	**11.2**	**94**
	Promote Sustainability	**12.1**	**102**
	Promote Resilience	**12.2**	**106**
Infrastructure	Promote Improvements To Exit 53	**14.1**	**116**
	Address Issues On Town Roadways	**14.3**	**119**
	Implement a "Complete Streets" Approach	**15.1**	**122**
	Expand Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities	**15.2**	**124**
	Enhance Transit Services	**15.3**	**128**
Implementation	Implement The POCD Strategies	**18.1**	**143**
	Reinvigorate The Strategic Review Committee	**18.2**	**146**

MODERATE PRIORITIES (ordered by Theme and then by Section number)

Theme	Strategy	Section	Page
Conservation	Maintain And Enhance Coastal Access	**4.3**	**44**
	Address Water Quantity / Flooding Issues	**5.2**	**49**
	Protect Important Natural Resources	**5.3**	**50**
	Maintain And Enhance Design Review	**7.1**	**62**
	Preserve And Enhance Scenic Features	**7.3**	**64**
	Establish A Community Identification / Wayfinding Program	**7.4**	**65**
Development	Promote And Enhance Pedestrian-Friendly, Mixed-Use Village-Type Areas	**8.1**	**68**
	Enhance Development Along Route 1	**8.2**	**70**
	Enhance Access and Mobility	**9.3**	**79**
	Manage The Town Center Area	**9.4**	**80**
Infrastructure	Address Near-Term Community Facility Needs / Issues	**13.1**	**112**
	Address Medium-Term Community Facility Needs / Issues	**13.2**	**113**
Implementation	Use The POCD As A Guide For PZC Actions	**18.3**	**14**
	Use The POCD As a Guide For Operating And Capital Budgets	**18.4**	**148**

LOWER PRIORITIES (ordered by Theme and then by Section number)

Theme	Strategy
Conservation	6.1 Update Branford's Open Space Vision
	6.2 Maintain Effective OS Tools
	6.3 Promote And Manage Open Spaces
	7.5 Address Other Character Issues
Development	11.1 Guide/ Manage Residential Areas

Theme	Strategy
Infrastructure	13.3 Address Long-Term CF Needs
	14.2 Address Issues On Major Roadways
	16.1 Address Piped Infrastructure
	16.2 Address Wired Infrastructure
	16.3 Address Wireless Infrastructure

18.2 Implement The Strategic Review Committee

Following adoption of the 2008 POCD, Branford enabled formation of a Strategic Review Committee (Chapter 93 of the Town Code) to:

- advise and assist … in matters of long-term planning for the Town of Branford.
- serve as the Plan Implementation Committee to oversee and coordinate implementation of the POCD.
- coordinate the collection and sharing of information, suggestions and proposals concerning long planning.
- make recommendations … concerning strategic and financial planning for the Town.
- study and report on specific issues and monitor specific projects.

However, the Strategic Review Committee was never fully implemented and so it makes sense, with adoption of this POCD, to complete implementation of the Strategic Review Committee and possibly make adjustments.

	Leader	Partners
1. Complete implementation of the Strategic Review Committee. ☐	**BOS**	**PZC RTM**
a. Review the composition of the Strategic Review Committee and consider adding representation from key boards and commissions. ☐	**RTM**	**BOS PZC**
b. Consider having the membership of the Strategic Review Committee appointed by the RTM. ☐	**RTM**	**BOS PZC**
c. Consider having the Strategic Review Committee report to the PZC. ☐	**RTM**	**BOS PZC**
d. Meet regularly (quarterly or so) to: • *oversee and coordinate implementation of POCD recommendations, and* • *evaluate progress being made to implement POCD recommendations.*	**SRC**	
e. Consider organizing POCD strategies into an implementation manual to facilitate tracking.	**SRC**	

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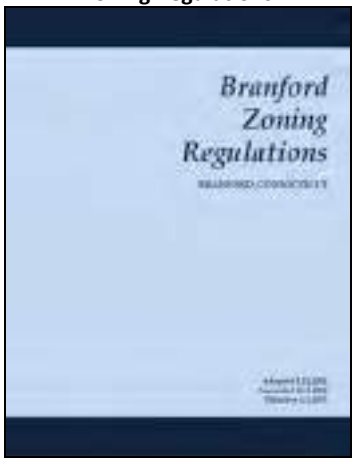
18.3 Use The POCD As a Guide For PZC Actions

Updating Regulations

Since land use regulations (such as the Zoning Regulations and the Subdivision Regulations) are critical elements in guiding new development and redevelopment, making sure these regulations are consistent with POCD goals is an important way to implement POCD recommendations.

Branford updated their Zoning Regulations and Subdivision Regulations following adoption of the 2008 POCD and may wish to consider a similar approach following adoption of this POCD.

Zoning Regulations



Subdivision Regulations



Following adoption of the POCD, the Planning and Zoning Commission should undertake a review of the Zoning Regulations and the Subdivision Regulations, making whatever revisions are necessary to:

- implement POCD recommendations, and
- promote consistency between the POCD and the Regulations.

Education

Education about the POCD and overall community objectives should also be integrated into customer service, enforcement, and other programs of the Planning and Zoning Department. As part of general permitting and enforcement procedures, it is important to inform people of why programs are important to meeting community goals.

POCD Maintenance

A Plan of Conservation and Development should be a dynamic document that is used, reevaluated, and amended as necessary. When a Plan is considered strictly a reference document rather than a working document, its effectiveness in guiding the community can diminish over time.

Branford should consider keeping this Plan current and not waiting to update it every ten years. The simplest way to maintain the Plan might be to review major sections of the Plan every year by:

1. holding a workshop session to summarize current Plan recommendations and discuss potential new Plan strategies,
2. revising Plan sections including any changes to the maps, as appropriate, and
3. re-adopting the Plan.

Land Use Decisions

Since the Plan of Conservation and Development serves as a basis for land use decisions by the Planning and Zoning Commission, all land use applications should be measured and evaluated in terms of compliance with the Plan and its various elements. Implementation of the POCD can be facilitated by using the POCD as a basis for land use decisions by the Planning and Zoning Commission, especially:

- Special Exception applications, and
- Zone changes and text changes.

Implementation of the POCD can also be facilitated by encouraging the Board of Selectmen, Board of Finance, Representative Town Meeting, and other agencies to use the POCD as a consideration in their decisions.

		Leader	Partners
A.	**Update Regulations**		
	1. Review and update the Zoning Regulations and Subdivision Regulations so they support the policies and action steps recommended in the POCD.		
B.	**Education**	**Leader**	**Partners**
	1. Integrate education about the POCD and overall community objectives into customer service, enforcement, and other programs of the Planning and Zoning Department.		
C.	**Land Use Decisions**	**Leader**	**Partners**
	1. Use the POCD policies as a guide when making decisions on land use applications. ☐	**PZC**	
	a. *Establish a form to use on land use applications where applicants will report on the consistency of their application with the POCD (see possible example on page 149 of the POCD).*	**SRC**	

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Possible POCD Consistency Checklist

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

☐ **The proposed <u>public activity</u> is proposed by or supported by the responsible agency as identified in the implementation tables.**
☐ **The proposed <u>private activity</u> is supported by other community groups and/or agencies.**
☐ **The proposed <u>public or private activity</u> has been the subject of a public hearing.**

SPECIFIC CONSISTENCY

☐ **The proposed activity addresses a specific recommendation in the Plan, either a policy or an action step.**

☐ **Does the proposed activity:**

			Please explain how (use additional space, as needed)
☐	4	Address Coastal Issues?	
☐	5	Protect Natural Resources?	
☐	6	Preserve Open Space?	
☐	7	Enhance Community Character?	
☐	8	Promote Sustainability And Resilience?	
☐	9	Strengthen Community Structure?	
☐	10	Enhance Branford Center?	
☐	11	Promote Appropriate Economic Development?	
☐	12	Guide Residential Development?	
☐	13	Maintain And Enhance Community Facilities?	
☐	14	Address Vehicular Circulation?	
☐	15	Promote Pedestrian, Bicycle And Transit Facilities?	
☐	16	Address Utility Infrastructure?	

Capital Improvements

Some communities score and prioritize their capital projects based on such considerations as:

1. **Benefit** - Strategic goals, health, safety and/or welfare, etc.
2. **Need** - Regulatory or legal mandates, operational necessity, community demand, etc.
3. **Financial** - Budget impact, grant opportunity, etc.
4. **Other** - Implementation readiness, implication of deferring the project.

18.4 Use The POCD As a Guide For Operating And Capital Budgets

Operating Budget

The annual operating budget guides municipal spending and so it is an important indicator of municipal priorities. Incorporating POCD recommendations in the operating budget and adequately funding them will certainly help to implement POCD recommendations. Branford should strive to incorporate POCD priorities into the annual operating budget and adequately fund them.

Capital Improvement Program

Capital projects tend to be long-term investments in the future of a community. When these capital projects help accomplish recommendations in the POCD, the community benefits in a number of ways. A capital improvement program is an evaluation of anticipated capital projects in the next 5 to 10 years and a program for how they might be sequenced and financed given financial capacity and other considerations (see sidebar).

Branford should strive to consider POCD recommendations in the preparation of the capital budget and prioritization of projects. Since the Planning and Zoning Commission has statutory authority (CGS Section 8-24) for review of municipal improvements and the Capital Budget, the Commission is in a position to provide feedback on whether spending on capital projects also reflects the priorities and recommendations of the POCD.

A. Annual Operating Budget	Leader	Partners
1. Encourage the annual operating budget to reflect the priorities and recommendations of the POCD.	SRC	PZC
B. Capital Improvement Program	**Leader**	**Partners**
1. Encourage the capital budget to reflect the priorities and recommendations of the POCD.	SRC	RTM
2. Use the POCD to guide statutory referrals from the Board of Selectmen regarding the overall capital budget and/or individual municipal improvements (CGS 8-24).	PZC	

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NEXT STEPS 19

The Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) has been prepared to meet the challenges that will confront the Town of Branford in the future. The POCD is intended to serve as a guide to be followed in order to enhance the Town's quality of life, the overall economy, and community character.

The POCD is also intended to be flexible enough to allow adjustments that achieve specific goals and objectives while maintaining the integrity of the long-term goals of the community. Still, the most important step of the planning process is implementation of the Plan's strategies, policies, and action steps.

During the next few years, some of the goals will be achieved, some circumstances will undoubtedly change, and some conditions may arise that will suggest that it is time to reconsider some of the POCD strategies, policies, and action steps. Such situations are to be expected. Programs that help achieve community consensus, establish community goals, and promote community welfare will all turn out to be positive steps in the history of Branford.

We welcome all Branford residents and others who will join with us in implementing the recommendations of the Plan of Conservation and Development.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Planning and Zoning Commission

Charles Andres	*Chair*
Marcia Palluzzi	*Secretary*
Joseph Chadwick	
John Lust	
Joseph Vaiuso	
David Dyer	*Alternate*
Paul C. Higgins, Jr	*Alternate*
Fred Russo	*Alternate*

POCD Update Steering Committee

Philip Carloni	*Chair*
Cathy Lezon	*Vice-Chair*
Peter Bassermann	
Joseph Chadwick	
Terence Elton	*Econ. Dev. Director*
Vincent Hanchuruck	
William Horne	
John Lust	
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Gavin Renz	
Barbara Ricozzi	
Harry Smith	*Town Planner*

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Technical Assistance

Glenn Chalder, AICP	*Planimetrics*
Michael Fazio	*New England GeoSystems, LLC*

LEGEND FOR LEADERS / PARTNERS

Code	Entity
BHS	Branford Historical Society
BLT	Branford Land Trust
BOE	Board of Education
BOF	Board of Finance
BOR	Board of Recreation
BOS	Board of Selectmen
CEC	Cons. /Environmental Commission
CETF	Clean Energy Task Force
CFC	Community Forest Commission
CoC	Chamber of Commerce
CRRB	Center Revitalization Review Board
CVWG	Coastal Vulnerability Working Grp.
DEEP	CT Dept. of Energy and Env. Prot.
DRB	Design Review Board
DOT	CT Dept. of Transportation

Code	Entity
EDC	Economic Development Comm.
ESHD	East Shore Health District
FD	Fire Department
FECB	Flood & Erosion Control Board
FMC	Facilities Management Committee
FS	First Selectman
HA	Housing Authority
HM	Harbor Master / Dockmaster
IWC	Inland Wetlands Commission
PBC	Pedestrian / Bike Committee
PD	Police Department
POS	Parks & Open Space Authority
PuBC	Public Building Commission
PW	Public Works Department
PZC	Planning & Zoning Commission

Code	Entity
RTM	Representative Town Meeting
SCARB	Stony Creek Arch. Review Board
SCOS	Select Committee On Open Space
SCRCOG	South Central Regional COG
SCRWA	SC Regional Water Authority
SC	Shellfish Commission
SRC	Strategic Review Committee
Staff	Town Staff
SWMC	Solid Waste Management Comm.
TA	Traffic Authority
TCM	Town Center Merchants
Town	Town Agencies and Officials
TW	Tree Warden
WC	Water Commission
WPCA	Water Pollution Control Authority
ZBA	Zoning Board of Appeals

Red = New Entity / Function


SETTLED IN 1644
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1976
BRANFORD, CONNECTICUT