



Windham, CT

PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT

2017

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Planning and Zoning Commission

Paula Stahl, Chair
Jean Chaine, Vice Chair
Michael Graf, Member
Claire Lary, Member
Dan Lein, Member
Scott Lambeck, Alternate Member
Ed Pelletier, Member (through January 2017)
Rose Reyes, Alternate Member

Town of Windham Staff

James Rivers, Town Manager
James Finger, Town Planner
Matt Vertefeuille, Director of Development
James Bellano, Director of Economic Development

Technical and Administrative Assistance from Milone and MacBroom

Michael Zuba, AICP, Planning Director
Rebecca Augur, AICP, Principal Planner
Carly Myers, AICP, Planner
Jason Williams, PLA, ASLA
Lynn Lai, AICP, Planner
Nicholas Armata, Planner





*3rd Thursday Street Fest participants were asked
"What do you love about Windham?"*

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS A POCD

Chapter 126, Section 8-23, of the Connecticut General Statutes requires that a planning commission, “prepare, adopt, and amend a plan of conservation and development for the municipality.” Plans of Conservation and Development (POCD) are guidance documents that set policy priorities for the physical, economic, and social future of a community. POCDs contain goals and visions along with recommended action steps to help work toward achieving those goals. The planning process involves assessing current conditions and trends in order to develop reasonable goals and strategies and engaging the community in a dialogue on its future. The POCD also supports the town’s pursuit of grants and other funding opportunities as a current POCD is a requirement for many state programs.

While being future oriented, a POCD reflects the goals and objectives of a community at a point in time. In recognition of this, Windham undertook a process to update its 2007 POCD so that long-term planning objectives are based on a current inventory of existing conditions and economic cycles.

HISTORY OF PREVIOUS PLANS

1994 POCD: The 1994 POCD outlined the possibilities and goals for the community. The plan emphasized the importance of preservation of Windham’s villages and the historic gems of town. It valued diversity and expressed the desire to create a vibrant Downtown Center.

In the following 12 years, Windham saw a number of changes: two of the largest casinos in the world were built in the region; the Windham Mills was transformed into a manufacturing complex; new festivals, an arts magnet school, and a performance theater on Main Street activated downtown; and Windham added to its parks and trails with projects such as the Garden on the Bridge and the Veterans’ Memorial Trail.

Those 12 years also had a spirit of change. Windham became very proactive in the pursuit of a vibrant, diverse community. It grew to have festivals, theater, recreation, education, and more. Many of these have been accomplished by the grassroots support and efforts of citizens who care about and want to improve the place where they live. The list is impressive:

- Thread City Crossing also known as Frog Bridge
- 3rd Thursday Street Festival and Willimantic Renaissance, Inc.
- Willimantic Whitewater Partnership
- New middle school
- Expansion of Eastern Connecticut State University
- Retail development in North Windham
- Connecticut Eastern Railroad Museum



- Restoration of our footbridge
- Restoration and reuse of Windham Mills
- Shetucket Plains Park
- Acquired Noznick property for future recreation use
- Artspace rehabilitation and reuse of abandoned mill building
- Windham Garden on the Bridge
- Willimantic Victorian Neighborhood Association
- Victorian Days Festival and home tour held annually
- Windham Area Arts Collaborative
- Thread City Development, Inc.
- Windham Hospital expansion
- Romantic Willimantic Chocolate Festival
- Burton Leavitt Theater
- Arts Magnet School
- Boom Box Parade
- Design standards for our Downtown Center
- Historic Main Street signs
- Gateway signs
- Frogfest
- Riverfest
- Three Kings Day celebrations
- Covenant Soup Kitchen frog race
- Willimantic and Natchaug Rivers Greenway designation
- Santa Fire Truck Parade
- Trick or Treat on Main

2007 POCD: The 2007 POCD focused on economic development that would bring job opportunities at fair wages and that would have a long-term positive fiscal impact on Windham and balance development with maintaining and enhancing the natural and cultural resources that Windham residents value.

Many initiatives from the 2007 POCD have been accomplished, and others are still being actively implemented. The Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC) first focused on implementing business-friendly zoning regulations so the welcome mat would be out when the recession of the late 2000s eased in eastern Connecticut. The changes included streamlining the approval process for new projects and eliminating parking and signage hurdles. Those efforts resulted in an increase of business development that Windham had not seen for decades, with developers expressing a positive view of doing business in Windham. The Vision Statement of the 2007 POCD was “to promote economic development through smart growth and forward thinking while meeting the needs of multiple stakeholders and interested parties.”



The Community Goals of the 2007 POCD were defined as follows:

- Improve Community Image
- Maintain Rural Character in the Windhams and Urban Character in Willimantic
- Expand, Diversify, and Improve the Town of Windham's Economic and Employment Base
- Maintain, Improve, and Develop Aspects of the Community which Enhance Quality of Life
- Protect the General Health, Safety, Welfare, and Prosperity of Windham Residents
- Provide Balance in Growth
- Protect Windham's Natural and Cultural Resources
- Plan For and Celebrate Diversity
- Promote Energy Efficiency

PLANNING THE NEXT 10 YEARS

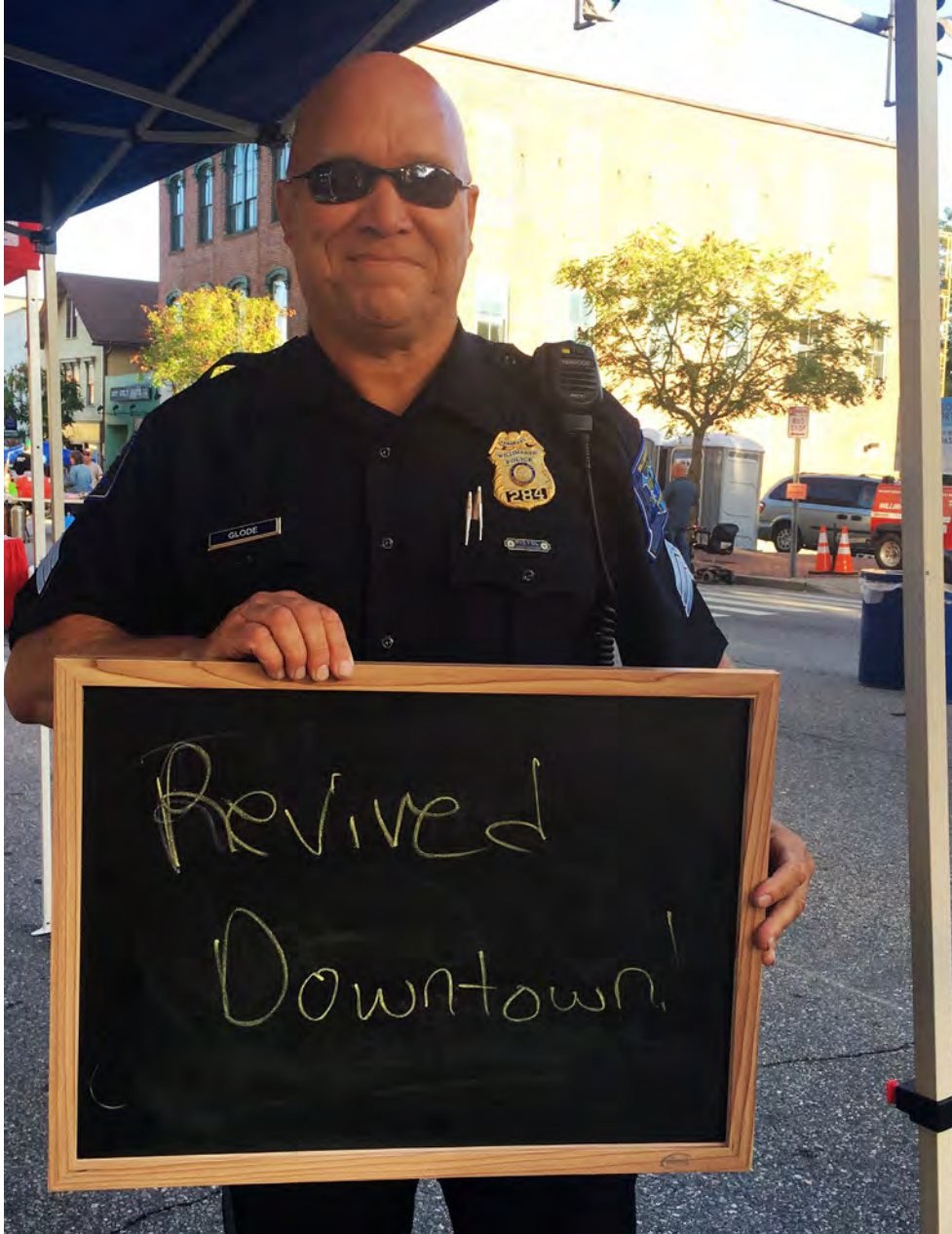
In 2016, the PZC began the process of reviewing and updating the 2007 POCD. It has been guided by the commission, staff, and the community with professional assistance from Milone & MacBroom, Inc.

To hear from the community, public outreach was conducted including focus groups, an online survey, a booth at a 3rd Thursday Street Fest, and a public workshop. A focus group attended by local leadership (including various town departments, local employers, and community organizations) discussed targeted issues facing Windham today and talked about current and future projects. The public survey asked residents and business owners to share their thoughts on Windham's assets and challenges and offer suggestions for the future.

The PZC reviewed U.S. Census and other data to gain an understanding of past and current trends in the town's demographics, housing, economy, land use, community facilities, and other topics.

After discussing this information and the public input received, the PZC concluded that the 2007 Vision Statement and Community Goals are as strong and relevant today as 10 years ago and would be the framework to guide the direction of the 2017 POCD

The format of the 2017 POCD discusses different topics, many with individual components. For each component, the POCD first looks at Where We Are, then describes the Next Steps for a Better Windham.



*3rd Thursday Street Fest participants were asked
"What do you love about Windham?"*

CHAPTER 2

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Economic development's goal is to foster the retention and expansion of existing businesses and participate in the recruitment of new businesses by encouraging appropriate, responsible development. The focus should be on businesses that provide the following:

- Job opportunities at fair wages
- Goods and services for resident and regional patrons
- A positive fiscal effect on Windham
- Encouragement of a strong city center
- Development in keeping with Windham's rural character
- Opportunity for local ownership
- Locally produced goods and services
- Environmental sustainability

The Value of Local Business

For every \$1 we spend at a local business, 48 cents is reinvested locally for wages and local purchases.

For every \$1 we spend at a corporate chain store, only 14 cents is reinvested locally.

-American Independent Business Alliance



Survey Comment:

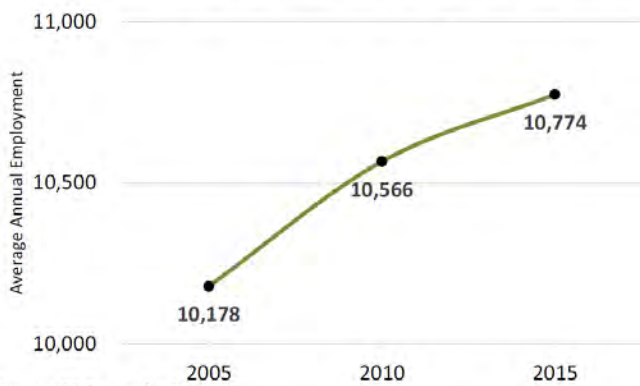
"With all our surrounding small suburban towns and colleges, Willimantic should and can be the central city to provide residents with their wants in needs. Instead of traveling to further cities or towns, residents should find that Willimantic is booming with restaurants, shops, nightlife, and other businesses that will satisfy their demands. I think that this is the greatest opportunity we as a town have overlooked."

WHERE WE ARE: BUSINESS

Windham is growing both in the number of businesses and industries in town as well as total annual average employment.

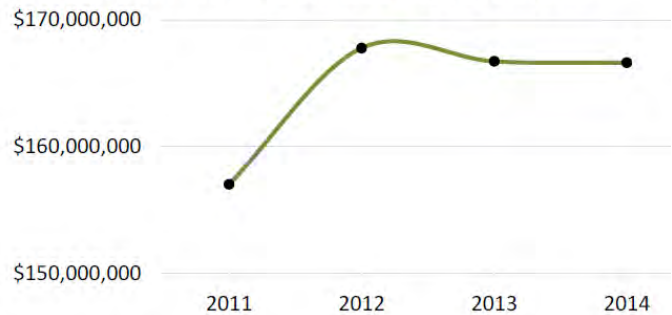
- Downtown storefronts are filling up, and there are limited vacancies in commercial corridors (see map in Economic Centers: Commercial Corridors, pg. 14).
- Windham exceeds the state average in commercial grand list; 24% of Windham’s Net Grand List is in commercial, industrial, or public utility lands (CIP) compared to 17% for the state. CIP lands have also increased \$4.8 million in the grand list from 2008 to 2014, a 3% increase. Total real property declined roughly 7% in the same period.
- Number of businesses has increased 4% from 2010 to 2015, and annual average employment had a net increase of 2%.

Average Annual Employment



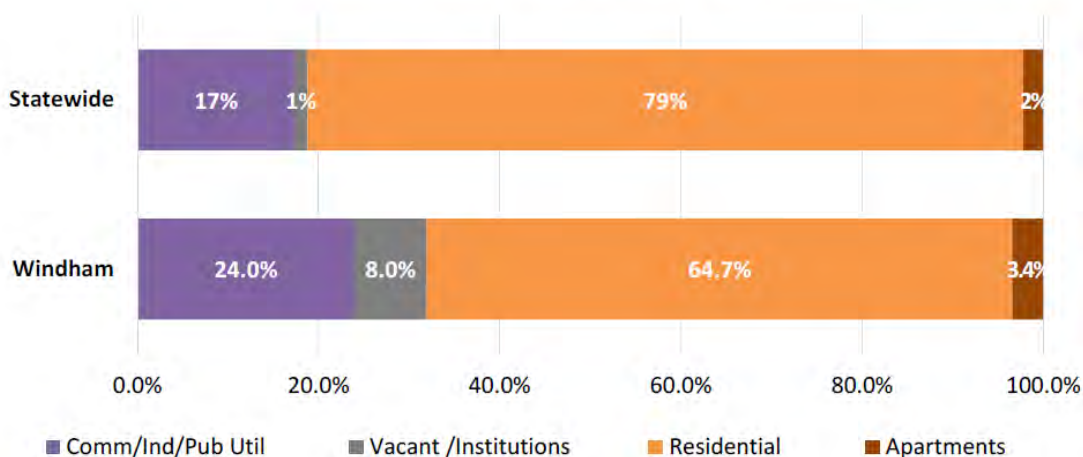
Source: CT Dept. of Labor

Growth in Net Commercial, Industrial, and Public Utilities Assessment



Source: CT OPM. Note: 2010 data were not available

2014 Net Grand List Components



Source: CT OPM, 2010-2014.



NEXT STEPS FOR A BETTER WINDHAM: BUSINESS

Support the growth of existing businesses.

- Work to retain existing businesses and encourage their growth and expansion.
- Facilitate coordinated leadership among existing local business groups.
- Provide a greater online presence for Windham Economic Development in order to make current support services and information more accessible.
- Partner with existing businesses to become more environmentally sustainable through programs offered through utilities (i.e., energy audits, renewable energy credits, etc.) and state programs.

Strategically attract new businesses.

- Proactively seek businesses that have a long-term positive fiscal impact on Windham.
- Market Windham as a “business friendly town” on an easily updateable website devoted to economic development that lists vacant property available and links to state and regional economic development websites such as Connecticut Economic Development Association (CEDAS) and Connecticut Economic Resource Center (CERC).
- Ensure that economic development activities are adequately funded.
- Develop a program of tax incentives that are applied equitably to new and expanding businesses.

Increase support for small and minority-owned businesses.

- Identify specific resource needs among minority businesses and entrepreneurs and develop programming efforts consistent with addressing those needs. Financially support bringing back the Spanish American Merchants Association (SAMA).
- Capitalize on ongoing Working Cities Challenge grant efforts to develop partnerships with appropriate local cultural organizations, business owners, and other groups. Conduct appropriate outreach with bilingual staff, where possible.
- Encourage home-based businesses as an accessible way for residents to start businesses in Windham.

Engage with local large employers on issues affecting local jobs.

- Engage in discussions with Windham Hospital, ECSU, General Cable, and other large employers about employment trends, workforce development, housing for hospital workers, and other strategic plans to provide adequate services to meet local needs.

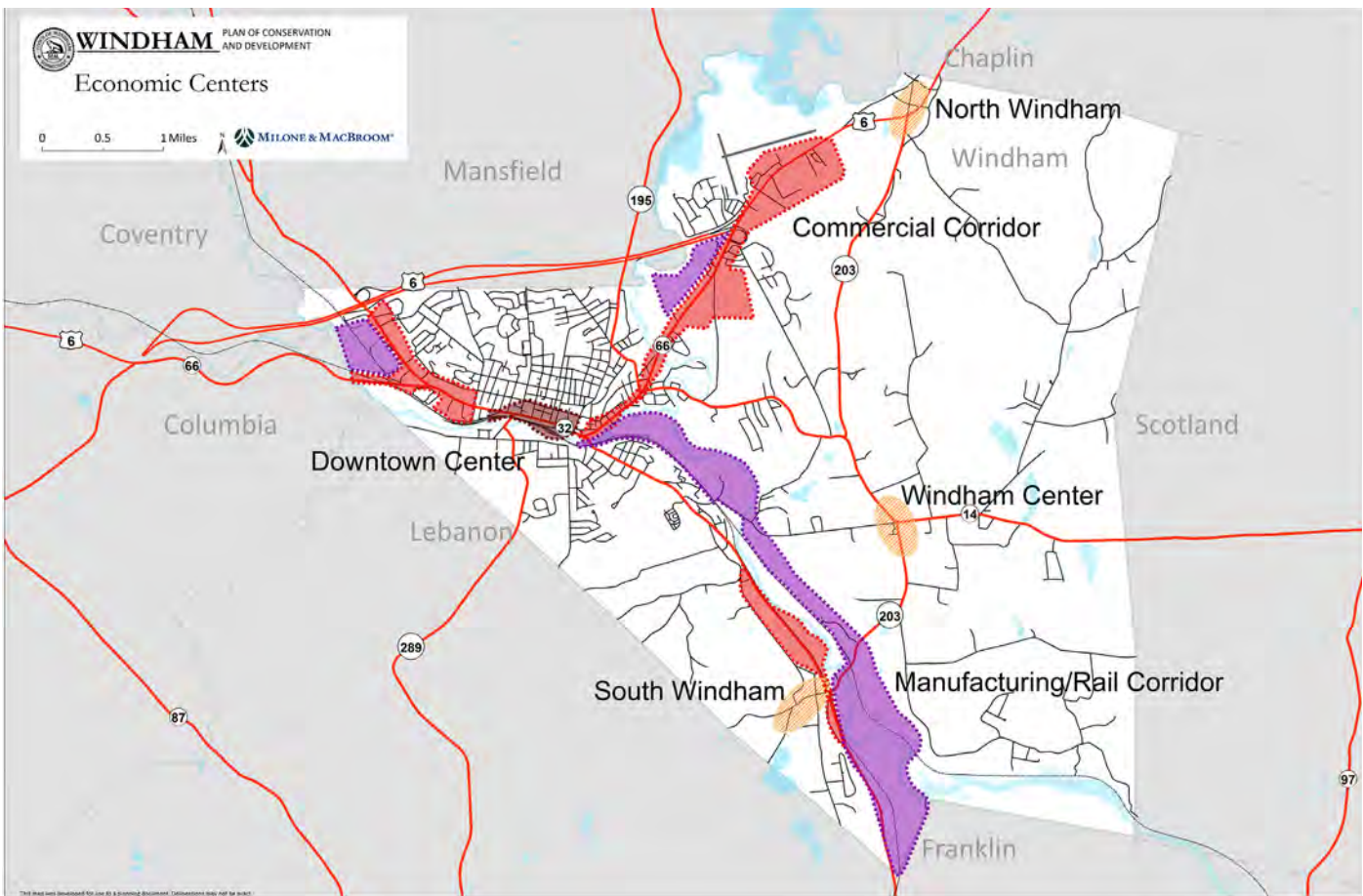
Survey comment:

“This town is full of small business which is beautiful in its own right, however they don’t provide that many jobs...”



ECONOMIC CENTERS

The current and potential economic centers in Windham are the downtown center, the main commercial corridors, the concentration of manufacturing along the rail line, and the villages (North Windham, Windham Center, and South Windham). Each center is identified below, and will be discussed separately on the following pages



WHERE WE ARE: DOWNTOWN CENTER

The Willimantic Downtown Center is becoming a destination again, with the opportunity to continue to grow.

- Many festivals are focused in the center, with some attracting up to 8,000 attendees to downtown.
- The East Coast Greenway and Air Line Trails attract regional hikers; Willimantic Whitewater Park will attract even more recreation enthusiasts.
- Developers and investors have confidence in downtown, demonstrated by recent purchases of vacant and occupied buildings.
- The Food Co-op, Cafemantic, and Pan del Sinai have purchased downtown buildings for expansion.
- The five large vacant buildings on Main Street have long been the downtown's main economic development challenge. Recently, however, two of the buildings (Hurley and Nasiff) have been purchased and are in the process of undergoing rehabilitation.
- The population of Windham was 25,271 in 2014, with surrounding communities making up another 62,000 people.
- The streetscape is visually appealing with banners, street trees and hanging flower pots. The street lighting fixtures are attractive, but there has been concern that the fixtures are too far apart and do not provide sufficient illumination.
- The town recently received a grant for façade improvements.
- This portion of Main Street is a state highway, with significant truck traffic and unfriendly pedestrian crosswalks with no traffic-calming techniques.
- A band shell for concerts is being added to the lawn area of Jillson Square.
- The paved area of Jillson Square is soon to be the home of the Windham Senior Center, with the potential for additional development with a through-street between Main and Valley Streets in the location of the former Center Street.
- Although parking studies find that there are a sufficient number of parking spaces for downtown as a whole, there is a perception by some shop owners that there is not sufficient space in front of their stores. Additional development may put added pressure on parking concerns. A parking garage off Walnut Street has been planned with the construction drawings complete; the project is awaiting state bond funds.



“.....a downtown is the most visible indicator of community pride it is what will separate successful communities from declining ones.”

- National Main Street Center

NEXT STEPS FOR A BETTER WINDHAM: DOWNTOWN CENTER

Focus social and economic activity in the downtown center.

- Windham can make strategic actions to continue to grow the role of downtown, such as with a dedicated Downtown Coordinator position and becoming a CT Main Street Center Designated Community.
 - Advocate for and budget for a new bilingual Downtown Coordinator position.
 - Explore becoming a CT Main Street Center Designated Community, which requires a professionally managed downtown including a board of directors and chief executive officer (and often additional staff), as well as adhering to national standards.
 - Targeted improvements in the amenities for pedestrians and bicyclists, especially to build a stronger connection to the nearby ECSU, can continue to build on existing strengths.



- Use findings from 2011 Parking Study Update to elevate the priority of the planned parking garage. Encourage bond appropriations for the construction.
- Improve on-street parking.
 - Continually reassess individual on-street parking time limits based on then current demand.
 - Eliminate outdated no-parking signs.
 - Assess opportunity for additional on-street parking on some side streets.
 - Delineate on-street parking spots with lines.
- Improve parking lots.
 - Cease offering designated parking in municipal lots.
 - Improve wayfinding from Main Street to parking lots by requiring the Department of Transportation (DOT) to place its large, arrowed “P” signs next to the signals for side streets that lead to off-street parking.
- Encourage small, specialty stores and restaurants that will contribute to foot traffic and vibrancy in the downtown.
- Provide appropriate outreach, including bilingual support services.
- Provide public restrooms.
- Increase residential activity in the downtown. The 2013 Incentive Housing Zone (IHZ) Study identified four appropriate sites for the development of up to 112 units in downtown. Continue to promote and encourage redevelopment under the adopted IHZ regulations.



- Encourage nonretail street-level businesses to include gallery or window display space visible from the sidewalk.
- Continue to assist building owners with façade and major building maintenance through grant programs, no-interest revolving loans, and tax credits.
- Encourage the development of incubator retail spaces (300 to 500 square feet) and cooperatives.
- Recruit and assist start-up of restaurants and unique shops that fit within the arts and entertainment market niche.
- Improve Riverside Drive area to encourage development of additional commercial space.
- Coordinate the activities of Main Street businesses with the arts community.
- Encourage the U.S. Postal Service relocation of the sorting portion of its operation to another part of town while maintaining a customer counter and box service at the current location.



Increase safety and convenience for bicyclists and pedestrians in the downtown area.

- Work with CT DOT to ensure that all crosswalk signals along Main Street are in working order and are activated promptly by pedestrian demand.
- Increase crossing times at signalized intersections to allow pedestrians (including parents with young children, the elderly, the disabled, etc.) to cross safely in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- Where space constraints make full bike lanes infeasible, consider painting “sharrows” to remind drivers to share the road with bicyclists.
- Install additional street lighting along Main Street in the downtown center to connect pools of light at night.
- Encourage business owners to leave their storefronts lit to reduce the feeling that downtown is “empty” at night.

- Use sidewalk bump-outs to reduce the length of crosswalks, add midblock crosswalks between the two long blocks between Church and Walnut Streets, and place “Traffic Must Stop for Pedestrians” signs in center of all crosswalks between High and Church Streets.
- Increase pedestrian safety at other midblock crosswalks, such as across Route 66 at the Garden on the Bridge, and install pedestrian-activated stoplights at those crosswalks along with “Traffic Must Stop for Pedestrians” signs.

Improve existing physical connections between the ECSU campus and downtown to encourage students to spend time and money downtown.

- Rezone along High Street to allow more commercial activity in residential buildings.
- Improve pedestrian and bike connections from ECSU campus to downtown, such as improvements to crosswalks, bike lanes, and bike racks.
- Pursue opportunities for streetscape improvements along High Street and Windham Street to more closely resemble downtown and visually connect to ECSU.

Survey Comment:

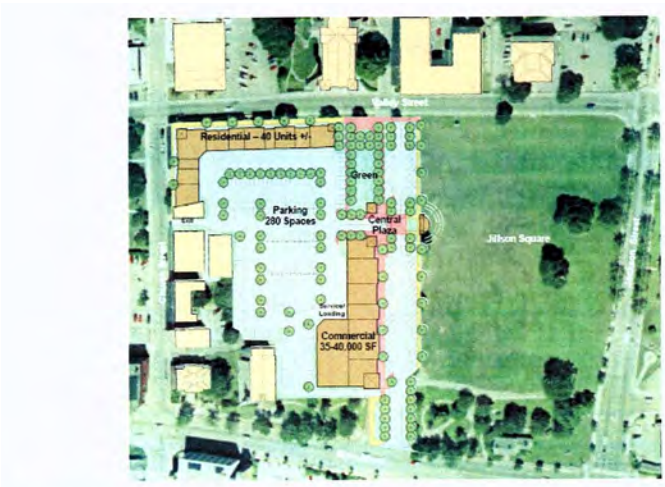
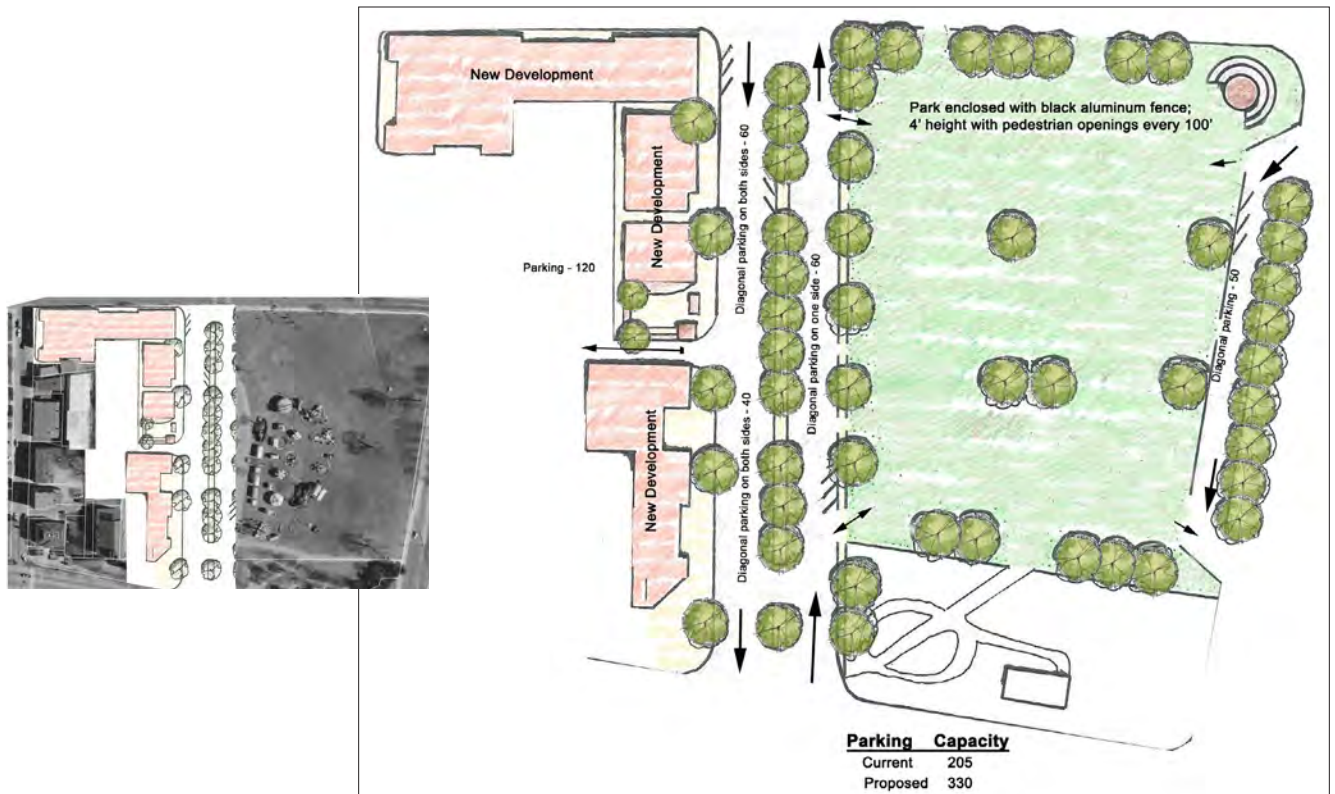
With all our surrounding small suburban towns and colleges, Willimantic should and can be the central city to provide residents with their wants and needs. Instead of traveling to further cities or towns, residents should find that Willimantic is booming with restaurants, shops, nightlife, and other businesses that will satisfy their demands. I think that this is the greatest opportunity we as a town have overlooked.

Incorporate Jillson Square into the downtown center.

- Build upon the recent acquisitions for the Windham Senior Center, the adjacent building acquired by the Food Co-op, and the planned band shell.
- Plan for additional economic development on the paved portion of Jillson Square.
- Create a two-way street between Main and Valley Streets with diagonal parking; continue Main Street streetscape sidewalk along western side. Ideally this new street would continue across Main Street to a new ‘T’ intersection with Riverside Drive.

Below is a Concept Plan by a University of Connecticut Landscape Architecture student who was given Jillson Square as a final project with the challenge of incorporating new development with sufficient parking without losing the 'green.' His plan was to use a new street, lined with diagonal parking, to define the two spaces. On the east is the green with a band shell and a large area for concert attendees or carnivals, or soccer fields, or parking for 3rd Thursday. On the west is an area for new development that would extend the downtown center. The development area, superimposed on the black and white aerial, shows that the existing green space is maintained.

This plan predates the recent purchase of the theatre for the Senior Center and the Food-Coop's purchase of property on the corner of Church and Valley Streets.



The town contracted with AKRF and WINCOG for the Incentive Housing Grant. During that process, AKRF developed a similar concept for development on the western portion of Jillson Square (left).

WHERE WE ARE: COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS

Several arterials in Windham serve a dual role of connecting residents to areas within and beyond the town and providing goods and services to residents and regional consumers. In many cases, these commercial corridors also serve as gateways to Windham. Development within these corridors is important to the economic and social base of the community.

- West Main, Route 6 and 66, and Route 32 are significant commercial corridors with a variety of commercial, retail, restaurant, and other uses.
- In 2011, the PZC revised the Performance Standards within the Zoning Regulations (Section 74). The Performance Standards for new development in all zones include detailed site planning requirements such as minimizing curb cuts for vehicular circulation for safety, enhancing pedestrian circulation, encouraging attractive façades, and enhancing landscaping to draw customers.



Aerial view of the airport and North Windham area



NEXT STEPS FOR A BETTER WINDHAM: COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS

Welcome new businesses and consumers with visually appealing main gateways and thoroughfares.

- Explore using zoning, design guidelines, other land use tools, and incentives to beautify main thoroughfares and corridors.
- Consider incentives to promote and support efforts of volunteer organizations to beautify Windham, such as the Garden Club of Windham, the Trash Mob (volunteers who pick up litter), and others.

Strengthen and enhance commercial areas near airport improvements.

- In conjunction with recent and future improvements to the airport, encourage appropriate commercial development or redevelopment in the North Windham area.

Continue to implement Performance Standards to make commercial corridors more attractive.

- Provide incentives or otherwise encourage more attractive landscaping and aesthetic improvements along commercial corridors and gateways to town on existing developments.

Continue Windham thoroughfare improvements.

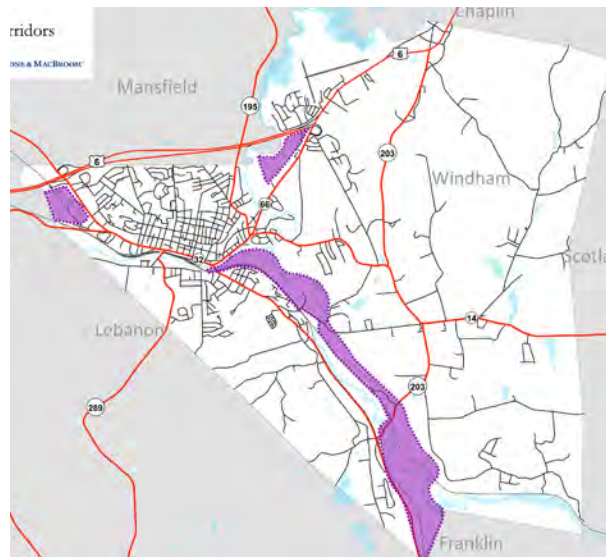
- West Main Street at Route 6 Interchange:
 - Create a gateway that defines entry into town.
 - Feature the welcome sign.
- From Route 6 to Bridge Street:
 - Plant trees along roadside. If no power lines are nearby, trees at maturity should be 50'; if power lines nearby, trees at maturity should be 30'.
 - Reduce curb cuts through an access management plan.
 - Limit increased vehicular activity through permitted uses (i.e., limit gas stations or quick stop stores).
- Route 32 (South) within Willimantic District:
 - Enhance entry into city and to the Garden on the Bridge.
 - Maintain residential zoning.
- Route 32 (South) in South Windham:
 - Create gateway at Route 203; include welcome sign.
 - Enhance the view of the river.
 - Limit curb cuts.
 - Maintain existing trees; add trees to create tree-lined roadway.
- Route 6/North Windham, north of Commercial Area:
 - Enhance Route 203 intersection.
 - Begin tree-lined median.
- Route 6/North Windham, at commercial area:
 - Create visual gateway to town at Home Depot driveway.
 - Work with DOT to reduce lanes and pavement width.
 - Continue tree-lined median; add trees at road edge.
 - Reduce curb cuts.
 - Create visual gateway at Route 6 highway.
- At Route 6 Bypass:
 - Signage viewed by southbound traffic should indicate straight for scenic downtown Willimantic and right turn (onto highway) to Hartford. Additional signs are needed to direct travelers to Historic Districts, Frog Bridge, and the Garden on the Bridge.
- Boston Post Road to Main Street:
 - Plant trees along road sides.
 - Reduce width of existing driveways and curb cuts; limit additional cuts.
 - Limit additional gas stations.
 - Enhance intersection with Route 14.



WHERE WE ARE: MANUFACTURING AND RAILWAY AREAS

A substantial amount of land near the rail line in Windham is zoned for manufacturing use; much of this land is currently being used for resource extraction (such as gravel operations).

- Existing manufacturing in this area includes Microprecision/ Nathan Airchime, a leader in the defense industry production supply chain and world leader in the production of train horns, which recently completed an expansion of its South Windham facility from 9,600 square feet to 18,000 square feet.
- General Cable closed two factories in neighboring states and brought the manufacturing work from those plants into its Willimantic facility.
- Increased freight rail activity could encourage further manufacturing development of land with access to rail.
- Limited opportunity for manufacturing development exists in other manufacturing areas of the community – along West Main and along Route 66.



NEXT STEPS FOR A BETTER WINDHAM: MANUFACTURING AND RAILWAY AREAS

Strengthen and enhance manufacturing areas near railroad improvements.

- Encourage opportunities to develop manufacturing pad sites with access to improved freight rail lines that parallel Route 32 in South Windham. Consider appropriate public investments to facilitate this development such as providing direct infrastructure improvements (to include sewer and water), tax abatements, Tax Increment Financing, etc.
- Partner with the State Office of Policy and Management to ensure that updates to the State POCD include rail access as a growth area consideration.
- Seek grant funding for municipal improvements to create a road with railroad sidings.
- Seek funding to replace bridge to Mill #4 area and a connecting road to Plains Road.

WHERE WE ARE: VILLAGES

It is important to protect and preserve the existing rural character of the town outside of the Willimantic business district and the commercial corridors, keeping intact and reinforcing the historic villages in Windham Center and North and South Windham.

- North Windham is a village that was once home to paper and textile mills. It also includes the state-owned Windham Airport, commercial and manufacturing areas along Routes 6 and 66, The Windham Club and Golf Course, and low-density residential and agricultural uses on its few but aptly named roads, Beaver Hill Road, Back Road, and Bass Roads.
- Windham Center is a nationally registered historic district and was the town's most densely settled area for 125 years. The village is centered around the historic Windham village green, the site of Windham's earliest Colonial settlement at what are now the intersections of Routes 14 (North Road) and 203 (Scotland Road) and Plains Road. The larger "neighborhood" area is the town's largest, extending to the Scotland and Franklin town lines and the Shetucket and Natchaug Rivers. The dividing line separating North Windham from Windham Center is not particularly clear from either physical features or social characteristics. This area is primarily developed in low density residential and agricultural uses, with a great deal of undeveloped land remaining.
- South Windham is named after the small manufacturing village settlement that developed off Norwich Road along Machine Shop and Babcock Hill Roads. A mix of residential, commercial, and manufacturing uses exists along Route 32. Adjacent to Willimantic, there is some high-density residential development, including the primarily seasonal Willimantic Camp Meeting Association neighborhood area. Low-density residential and agricultural uses exist elsewhere. Public water supply was extended along Route 32 into South Windham in the early 1980s.



NEXT STEPS FOR A BETTER WINDHAM: VILLAGES

Preserve and enhance the villages of North Windham, Windham Center, and South Windham.

- Promote, where possible, walkability in historic villages with bikeways and walking paths that are physically separated from roadways.
- Publicize Windham’s historic resources as a step to help protect, preserve, retain, and enhance existing historic structures and sites as well as to promote tourism.
- New commercial or office development in villages should be limited to uses and structures compatible with the character, scale, and architecture of each.
- Encourage Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection (CT DEEP) septic policy change to support smart growth in villages.

Consider thoroughfare improvements to Route 14.

- Create gateway and welcome sign near Frog Pond.
- Maintain rural view entering Windham Center Village.
- Reduce the paved area at the intersection of Route 203 at Windham Center Post Office; create safe pedestrian access and crossing.
- Use Rec Park as a gateway to city by enhancing the visual impact of the park from the street.



Photo credit: G.L. Sweetnam

WHERE WE ARE: FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

Local food processing and distribution resources are unique in the region and position Windham as a hub for local agriculture.

- Roughly 14% of Windham’s land is in agricultural uses, including crop and forest production.
- The Willimantic Food Co-op began as a buyers’ club in the early 1970s, becoming the first food co-op in Connecticut. Survey respondents wrote in that they moved to Windham to be closer to the Food Co-op.
- The Willimantic Farmers Market officially opened in 1976, giving it the distinction of being the first in the state and the oldest continually running Farmers Market in Connecticut. Today it is held on Saturdays, May through October, on Jillson Square.
- CliCK (Commercially Licensed Co-operative Kitchen, Inc.) is one of the few commercial kitchens in the region that is available to farmers and culinary entrepreneurs seeking to create food-based businesses.



A produce display at the Willimantic Food Co-op features local farms

What were your reasons for choosing Windham/Willimantic as a place to live and/or work?

Survey Comment:

“Access to the Airline Trail and all the blue trails is a big plus. So are the trees in all the neighborhoods, and spaces like the Food Co-op and the Third Thursday events. Keep Willimantic green!”



NEXT STEPS FOR A BETTER WINDHAM: FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

Strengthen the supportive network of local agriculture production and distribution already present in Windham.

- Support and promote the Willimantic Farmers Market.
- Support and market CLICK (Commercially Licensed Co-operative Kitchen, Inc.) for its ability to act as an incubator for home-based, food-related businesses and as a support service to local farms.
- Promote Windham as a regional hub for local food, with commercial kitchens (CLICK), the Willimantic Food Co-op, and seasonal farmers markets.
- Review zoning and other regulations for compatibility with farming and other agricultural support services (such as agritourism, events and festivals hosted at farms, etc.).
- Partner with the North Central District Health Department to review regulations concerning food service facilities and encourage and support the formation of new restaurants and cafés.



Photo Credit : Winter Caplanson

WHERE WE ARE: UNIQUE ASSETS

Windham has become a creative and festive place, with natural amenities and cultural resources that attract people to support economic development.

- Windham’s cultural resources draw visitors:
 - Arts — from the Burton Levitt Theater, Bread Box Music, Vulture Town Arts and Jazz at Eastern Connecticut State University (ECSU) to art galleries and museums
 - History — from Main Street Historic District, Windham Center Historic District and Prospect Hill Historic District to the restored mills, Windham Textile and History Museum, Jillson House Museum, and the Connecticut Eastern Railroad Museum
 - Festivals — including 3rd Thursday Street Fest, Boom Box Parade, Cinco de Mayo, Three Kings Day, Hop Fest, Victorian Days, Chocolate Festival, Downtown Country Fair and Music at Jillson Square
- Windham’s recreational opportunities have become a destination:
 - East Coast Greenway and Airline Trail — both are multiuse long-distance trails connecting Windham to other towns.
 - Willimantic Whitewater Park — host of RiverFest and home of the future in-river kayak venue

Windham’s proximity to universities and colleges provides economic development opportunity.

- Coffee and tea houses, cupcake store, brew pubs, and other shops benefit students and other residents as well as draw visitors.
- Students and faculty represent a valuable resource for potential innovation and entrepreneurialism.
- College atmosphere provides a unique energy that can engage the town.
- Provides educational opportunity for residents wanting to learn a skill.

Windham’s strengths lie in its diversity and collaboration.

- The town recently collaborated with neighboring towns and local institutions on grant opportunities to support entrepreneurs and leaders to develop place-based interventions to attract talent for high-growth enterprises.





Clockwise from top left: Boom Box Parade; aerial view of Thread City Hopfest; Trick or Treat on Main; FARE at Jillson; 3rd Thursday Street Fest; and Kerri Gallery.

Photo credits: Winter Caplanson

NEXT STEP FOR A BETTER WINDHAM: UNIQUE ASSETS

Encourage and celebrate Windham's unique assets for both tourism and economic development potential.

- Provide a web-based calendar that lists cultural community events, promote events through image-filled emails, and utilize social media (see Easton, Pennsylvania, as an example).
- Continue to support the development of the Whitewater Park as an attractor of future recreational tourism.
- Promote the East Coast Greenway, the Air Line Trail, and the entire recreation and trails system in Windham as a major attraction for businesses and entertainment.
- Seek funding to design and construct additional trail connections for the Air Line Trail and connections to the trails at Mansfield Hollow.
- Encourage programs that make space available and affordable for Windham's arts and culture community.
- Encourage and promote businesses that provide amenities for students, such as coffee houses, restaurants, and shops.
- Promote and celebrate Windham's three historic districts as tourism destinations with appropriate signage and promotion of events such as Victorian Days.
- Support community organizing efforts to make downtown Willimantic a city of festivals.
- Ensure that tourists feel welcome and enjoy a quality experience when visiting Windham.
- Focus on attracting new businesses that are compatible with or supportive of Windham's unique economic development potential, such as active or outdoor recreational stores, art supplies stores, and other specialty stores.
- Improve signage to points of interest, especially on state highway signs.
- Support collaborative efforts that promote Windham as a place for innovative, talented professionals to live and work.
- Seek grant funding to continue the My Windham Project, which creates a walkable, interactive art gallery on Main Street in town-owned spaces and local businesses.
- Build upon railroad heritage and existing freight railroad infrastructure, including planned upgrades.
- Encourage and pursue grant funding to redevelop historic buildings into appropriate adaptive reuses.

Harness the potential of local students to encourage innovation and entrepreneurialism.

- Support the establishment of businesses that act as resources for other small businesses and entrepreneurs, such as co-working spaces, print shops, and small-scale marketing firms, to create a healthy economic ecosystem.
- Through zoning, continue to support and regulate the development of modern small-scale manufacturing operations.
- Pilot a program to have local artists or students host pop-up galleries, studios, or businesses in vacant storefronts.
- Seek public/private partnerships, state programs, grants, and other sources to help with startup funding, and subsidize rent or provide other incentives to fill vacant or underutilized storefronts.



Harness the potential of the creative community in Windham to be a major economic development driver and support ongoing programming.

- Support ongoing arts and cultural programming, such as the Burton Leavitt Theater, the Windham Regional Arts Council, Capitol Theater, Vulture Town Arts, and local galleries and artists.
- Promote Windham as a place for artists and entrepreneurs to live; encourage the development of live/work housing.



Photo credit: Winter Capalanson

Survey comments:

“I think we have an opportunity to be more attractive to grad and post grad (PhD) students from UConn. We should actively market ourselves as a community with affordable housing and transportation.”

“Make a concerted effort to develop the riverfront as a “greenbelt.” Cities that have done so in recent decades have realized both economic and cultural/community benefits from doing so.”



Photo courtesy of Matt Vertefeuille

DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT

Both workforce development programs and land use and zoning policies act as support services to spur economic development. Workforce development programs ensure that there are trained workers available, and land use and zoning policies ensure that there are appropriate parcels to be developed in a responsible manner.

WHERE WE ARE: WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Existing workforce programs and partnerships with Windham Public Schools and the Windham Technical School are preparing students for the future workforce.

- Windham High School (WHS) offers 20 college credit-bearing courses with ECSU and UCONN.
- WHS also offers the Windham Early College Opportunity (ECO) program, which allows students to graduate in 4 to 6 years with a no-cost associate degree in manufacturing.
 - This program is in partnership with Electric Boat (EB), the Eastern Advanced Manufacturing Alliance (EAMA), Eastern Workforce Investment Board (EWIB), and Quinebaug Valley Community College (QVCC).
- Windham Technical High School has a number of specific career and technical clusters that prepare students for jobs in fields including: information technology; health science; manufacturing; transportation, distribution, and logistics; hospitality and tourism; and architecture and construction. Windham Tech enrolls 500 students from 23 towns.
- The Eastern CT Manufacturing Pipeline provides no-cost training to address the hiring needs of Electric Boat, members of the Eastern Advanced Manufacturing Alliance, and other manufacturers.

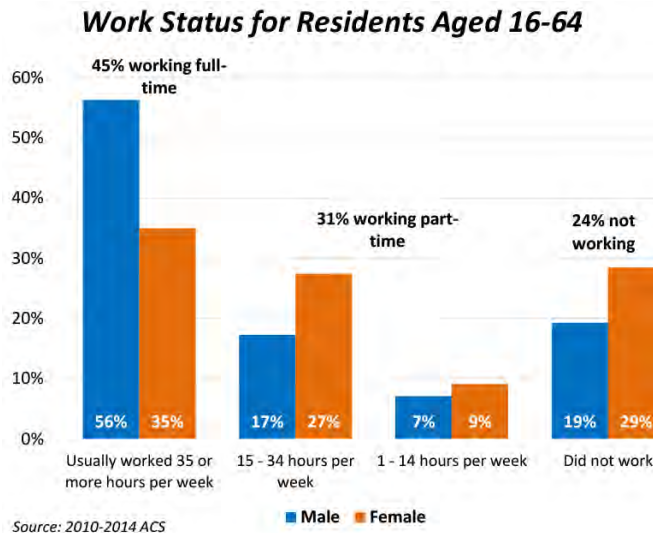


Photo credit: Windham Technical High School

Students at Windham Tech. Photo credit: Windham Technical High School

Educational attainment and median income in Windham have been low for the region, but collaborative efforts are building upon recent improvements.

- The unemployment rate (of those actively seeking work) in Windham was 7% in 2015 compared to 6.2% for Windham County. 30.6% of residents aged 16 to 64 are only working part-time and may be experiencing underemployment. Women are also more likely than men to be working part-time or not at all, possibly due to childcare needs.
- Educational attainment (the population age 25 and over with a bachelor’s degree or higher) is 18.5% in Windham. It is 22.9% in Windham County, and 50.2% in Mansfield. In Windham, lower levels of education are correlated with lower income.
- Median household income in Windham was \$41,019 compared to \$59,218 for Windham County in 2014.
- When adjusted for inflation, total annual wages in Windham have declined since 2006, with a drop of \$1,770 between 2012 and 2015.



Survey comment:

“We have a great location in Eastern CT; close to two universities, at the cross roads of six major cities (New London, Worcester MA, Providence, Hartford, Boston and New York), there are jobs in the area. If people want to work, they have the ability to learn the skills and the jobs are close.”

NEXT STEPS FOR A BETTER WINDHAM: WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Connect Windham residents to local and regional workforce development and employment opportunities.

- Partner with, and support local institutions such as Windham Tech and the EWIB to bolster enrollment of Windham residents in the Eastern CT Pipeline to Success and similar workforce programs aimed at advanced manufacturing jobs.
- Encourage social service agencies to assist in basic workforce training.
- Explore partnerships to develop programs similar to the Eastern CT Pipeline to Success for other fields such as healthcare and skilled trades.
- Work with the regional Councils of Governments to lobby for expanded funding for the Windham Region Transit District to increase reliability and service to regional employers, as well as enhancing business connections and interconnections with other transit agencies.
- Provide incentives or otherwise encourage the formation of more daycare facilities to aid working families.

Improve partnerships and relationships to prepare Windham's youth for success in the local economy.

- Provide high-quality education for all Windham residents.
- Cultivate an active partnership with the Windham Public School (WPS) system to achieve the goals in the Vision 2020 R.A.I.S.E. Windham Strategic Plan, especially the strategies germane to wider community building.
- Lobby for full state funding of special education services.
- Facilitate and strengthen partnerships with WPS and local institutions to establish internships and mentoring programs.
- Promote recent gains in graduation rates, test scores, and other metrics in the WPS system.
- Work together with the WPS system on planning and budgeting for facilities improvements.



WHERE WE ARE: LAND USE AND ZONING

After the adoption of the 2007 POCD, the members of the PZC added a monthly meeting to their schedule specifically to revise the land use regulations to meet the goals of the POCD. This all-volunteer effort has resulted in the adoption of business-friendly zoning regulations with a streamlined approval process that welcomes businesses to Windham. A summary of the revisions follows:

Townwide:

- Revised parking regulations to reflect actual needs and to encourage new development
- Revised signage regulations with clear standards and flexibility in allocating signage to meet business needs
- Removed the hurdles for a business to expand
- Streamlined the approval process by increasing the uses that only need staff approval
- Revised alcohol regulations including eliminating restaurant separation distances
- Revised subdivision regulations for commercial uses

Downtown:

- Redistricted to consolidate multiple zones
- Removed the hurdles for residential uses
- Increased the permitted uses that only need staff approval
- Permitted restaurants to serve alcohol with no separation distances from one another
- Permitted signage that enhanced the storefronts

North Windham Commercial District:

- Redistricted to create a retail zone
- Eliminated the hurdle for a retail business to be approved

West Main Street and other Commercial Corridors:

- Redistricted to consolidate zones based on uses
- Eliminated the hurdles for business approvals
- Focused on techniques to improve the corridor's appearance for customers and to attract future businesses

Manufacturing:

- Redistricted to consolidate zones
- Delineated each district to be compatible with current uses and encourage expansion
- Created a district for former mill buildings in urban areas that encouraged adaptive reuse including light manufacturing and live-work units

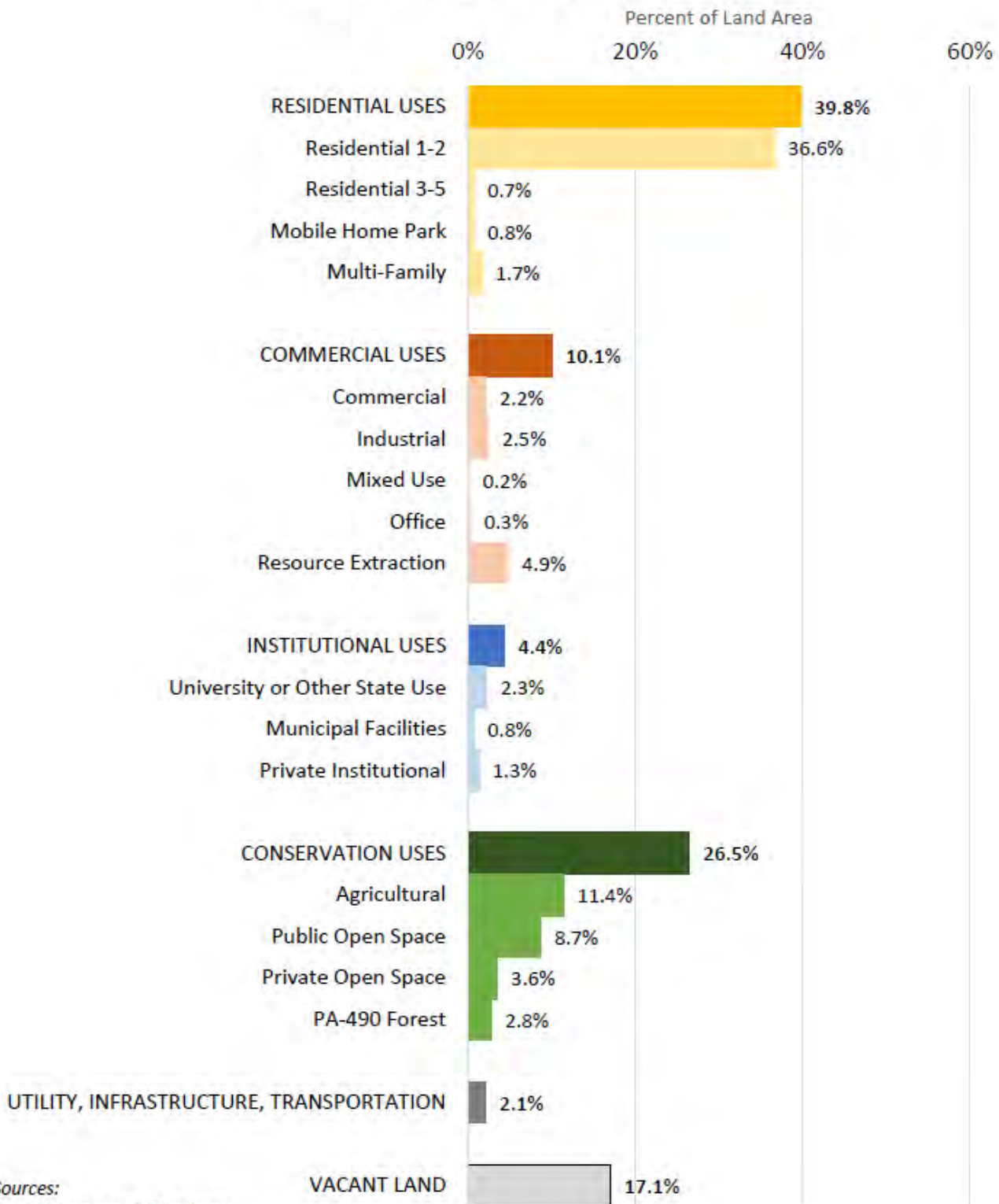
Hospital:

- Created a district specifically for the hospital from the multiple zones formerly underlying the property
- Incorporated surrounding area of medical professional offices into a health district

After revisions are implemented, the PZC monitors the results and makes modifications as needed so the regulations continue to be business friendly. Those efforts resulted in an increase of business development that Windham has not seen for decades, with developers now expressing a positive view of doing business in Windham.

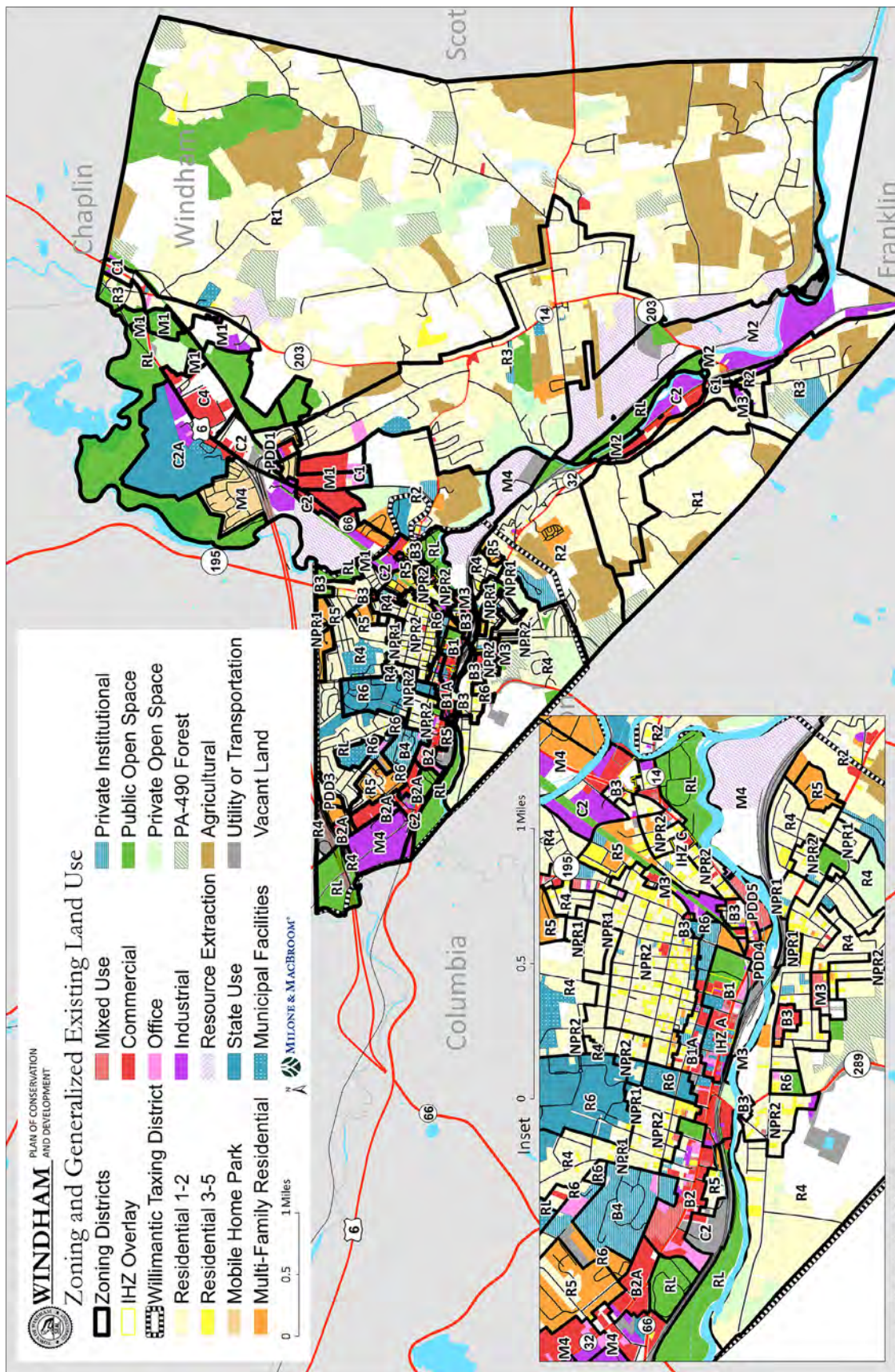


Generalized Land Uses in Windham, CT



Sources:
 Land Use: Town of Windham
 Net Grand List (2014 GLY): CT OPM





NEXT STEPS FOR A BETTER WINDHAM: LAND USE AND ZONING

Continue ongoing progress in streamlining and simplifying zoning regulations.

- Continue to review the outcomes of the regulations as an ongoing process of streamlining and simplifying zoning regulations.
- Create simple fact sheets for each zone to facilitate a clear understanding for applicants.



WHERE WE ARE: LAND USE DEPARTMENT

Until 2015, the offices for land use staff were spread out in different areas of Town Hall, but now all offices are consolidated in one location. Although not an ideal layout, this change does facilitate working with applicants. The town's land use professional staff are each in a separate department, and the Town Manager is their direct supervisor. In other towns of similar size, one of the land use staff is also the department head and coordinates the focus of the activities.

NEXT STEPS FOR A BETTER WINDHAM: LAND USE DEPARTMENT

Improve departmental structure.

- Continue to improve the physical space of the land use department.
- Consider changing the organizational structure of the department to have a land use staff member as the department head. This change would enable better coordination of the departments of Economic Development, Planning, Building, Code Enforcement and Zoning, Engineering, and Public Works with a unified vision.
- Advocate for and budget for a new Grants Writer position to write grant applications and coordinate and project manage grant funds.
- Continue to enhance the one-stop-shop approach to permit applications.



*3rd Thursday Street Fest participants were asked
"What do you love about Windham?"*

CHAPTER 3

RESIDENTS, NEIGHBORHOODS, AND NEW HOUSING

Survey comment:

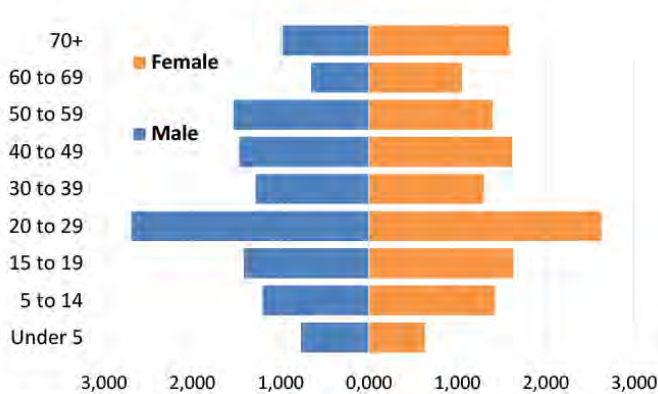
“.....the greatest opportunity this town has is the diversity of people.”

WHERE WE ARE: RESIDENTS

The population as a whole in Windham is becoming more diverse, especially among younger children; white young adults and baby boomers are the dominant demographics.

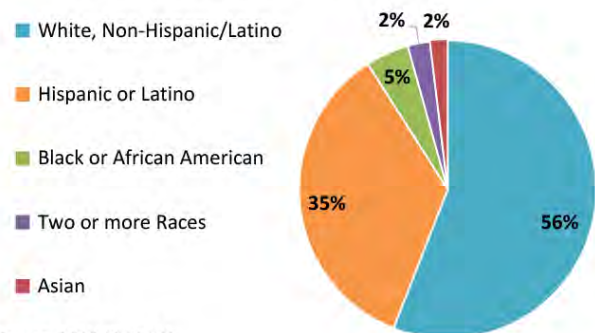
- The Hispanic population is continuing to grow, especially among children and young families.
- The presence of ECSU creates a large population of young adults looking for work when they graduate.
- The large baby boom population will continue to impact housing and service needs, especially if they age in place in Windham.

Population Distribution, 2014



Source: ACS Estimates 2014.

Race and Ethnicity, 2014

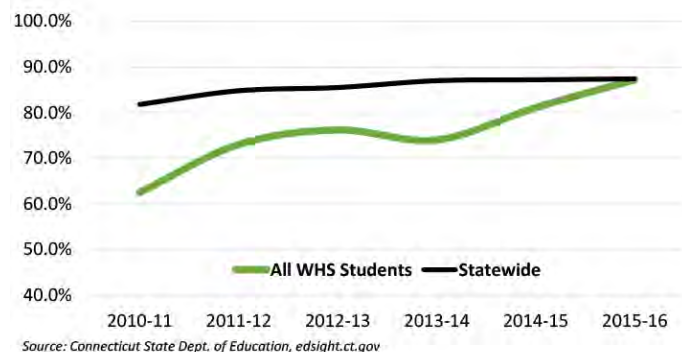


Source: 2010-2014 ACS

Windham has a lot of appeal for prospective residents.

- The culture, arts, recreation, businesses, and walkable areas appeal to young people and middle-income families.
- The proximity to two major universities increases job opportunities as well as cultural and sports activities.
- Windham Public Schools have made significant changes over the past few years, and the impact is already being felt:
 - The Board of Education adopted R.A.I.S.E. Windham as the 2015-2020 strategic plan. The plan includes high expectations, quality education, providing meaningful opportunities, and fostering habits of lifelong learning, so every Windham student will be prepared to become a productive global citizen.
 - Academic achievement has increased substantially in recent years, with total graduation rates now equal to the state average in 2015-16.
 - The number of students taking algebra in 8th grade, a gateway to college-preparatory courses, has doubled.
 - The highly successful Compañeros Program has been expanded to include additional grades.
 - Sweeney School was named a School of Distinction performing in the top 10% statewide in growth on test scores.
 - Systemwide there are marked increases in proficiency in reading and math.
 - Two Barrows STEM Academy students have been selected to represent Connecticut at the Inventions Convention National Competition 2017.
 - The Family Liaison and Community University programs emphasize bridging the gaps between cultures and accentuate, among other things, parent empowerment and community service.
 - The Office of Family and Community Partnerships manages each school’s before- and after-school program, school governance councils, parental involvement, family liaisons, homeless services, and the dental program, Smiles Across Windham.
- Crime in Windham is significantly below state averages both for violent crime (1.33 per 1,000 residents; 2.18 in CT) and property crime (17.82 per 1,000 residents; 18.12 in CT) in 2015.

Windham High School Four-Year Graduation Rates, 2010-15



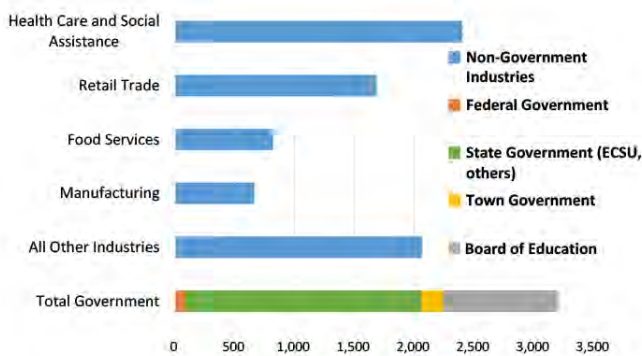
After inflation, total annual wages in Windham have been stagnant, and household income is lower than the median for the region.

- Average annual wages have fallen since 2005 when adjusted for inflation.
- A median household income of \$41,019 is low for the region.
 - Income varies by race and ethnicity in Windham, with Hispanic/Latino households earning significantly less than non-Hispanic whites.

Half of Windham employment is in government, health care, and social service industries.

- Over the past 10 years, the top five industries in Windham have been responsible for 80% or more of the employment in town.
- More Windham residents commute out of Windham for employment than nonresidents commute in while about 25% of Windham jobs are held by Windham residents.

Average Annual Employment by Industry



Sources: CT Dept. of Labor QCEW (2015), Windham Town Hall (2017), Windham Board of Education (2017)

Inflow and Outflow of Workers in Windham, 2014



Source: Census On The Map

NEXT STEPS FOR A BETTER WINDHAM: RESIDENTS

Work to change public misconceptions about Windham.

- Publicize the success of the Windham Public Schools and their plans for the future.
- Increase the awareness that Windham is a safe community in which to live.

Build on momentum from Working Cities Challenge Grant to engage the Hispanic/Latino community.

- Establish a permanent Latino Resource Center.
- Continue outreach through appropriate channels, such as radio shows, schools, and houses of worship.
- Work to reduce language barriers by continuing to employ bilingual staff and put Spanish text on the town website saying that Town Hall staff can help with translation of documents.
- Partner with schools to enlist volunteer translators for town meetings and public events.
- Partner with Windham Public Schools to expand or replicate the Family and Community Partnership program to bridge cultural gaps.

WHERE WE ARE: NEIGHBORHOODS AND HOUSING

The character of Windham is defined by the neighborhoods that make up our community.

- The three Windham villages:
 - The North Windham Village neighborhood is centered near the intersection of Route 6/66 and Route 203. Away from the commercial corridors along Route 6/66, the village has low-density residential and agricultural uses.
 - The Windham Center Village is centered on the historic Windham village green, the site of Windham's earliest Colonial settlement. This area is primarily developed in low density residential and agricultural uses, with a great deal of undeveloped land remaining.
 - South Windham includes Route 32 (Norwich Road), which runs the length of this area. A mix of residential, commercial, and manufacturing uses exists along Route 32. Adjacent to Willimantic, there is some high density residential development. Low-density residential and agricultural uses exist elsewhere.
 - For more discussion of Windham villages, see *Where We Are: Villages*, pg. 27.
- Willimantic neighborhoods:
 - The East End neighborhood, a mixture of residential, commercial, and small manufacturing uses, contains the Windham Mills and associated former millworker housing, a variety of commercial development, the Windham Mills State Heritage Park, Windham Garden on the Bridge, and Recreation Park.



- The Central Business District is a pedestrian-oriented historic downtown area at the center of Willimantic containing high-density urban retail, office, government, and arts and entertainment uses. This classic turn-of-the-century downtown, which extends from the Windham Mills to Bridge Street between the Willimantic River and Valley Street, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.
- The North Willimantic Hill Section neighborhood is predominantly residential containing single and multifamily residences along with educational uses at ECSU, Windham Technical School, Windham High School, and Windham Middle School. It rises steeply up from Valley Street and is served by water and sewer. It contains the Prospect Hill National Register of Historic Places District consisting mostly of Victorian-era residences built mainly between 1870 and 1910. At 40 city blocks, it is one of the largest historic districts in the state with 88% of the existing buildings listed as “contributing” to its overall historic architectural character.
- The West End area to the west of the Central Business District and the Hill Section along Routes 66 and 32 contains automobile-oriented commercial development, manufacturing, Windham Hospital and medical offices, along with some scattered residential uses, apartment complexes, and small neighborhoods.
- The Over-the River/South Side area is made up of a mixture of mostly residential neighborhoods along with small commercial and office uses and still includes some undeveloped land. It is only partially served by water and sewer. It contains the historic residential neighborhoods of Jillson Hill, The Oaks, Quercus Avenue, Crescent Street and Fairview Avenue developed as model worker housing by the American Thread Company at the turn of the 19th century.

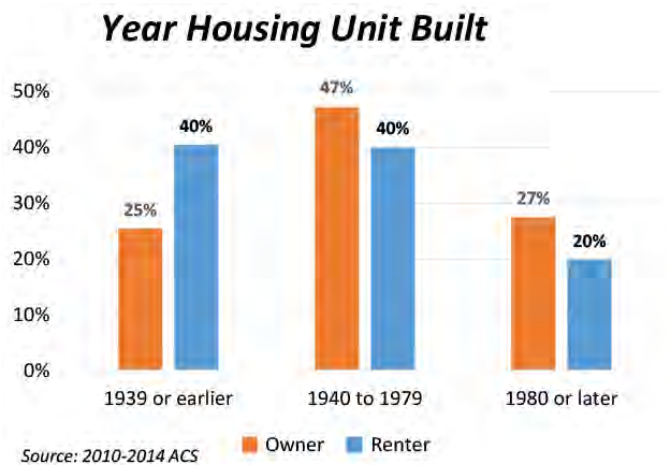
Windham’s existing housing is diverse, but aging structures can become expensive to maintain.

- About 49% of housing units are renter occupied, 43% are owner occupied, and 8% are vacant in Windham (US Census Bureau’s American Community Survey (ACS) 2010-2014 estimates).
- About 48% of housing structures in Windham are single family (detached or attached), with 52% of structures containing two or more units.

• An aging housing stock can create a cost burden on homeowners and landlords as maintenance, renovations, and remediation concerns become more expensive.

- 23% of the housing stock was built in 1980 or later, 42% was built from 1940 to 1979 (moderate risk of lead paint hazards), and 35% of the housing stock was built in 1939 or earlier (high risk of lead paint hazards).

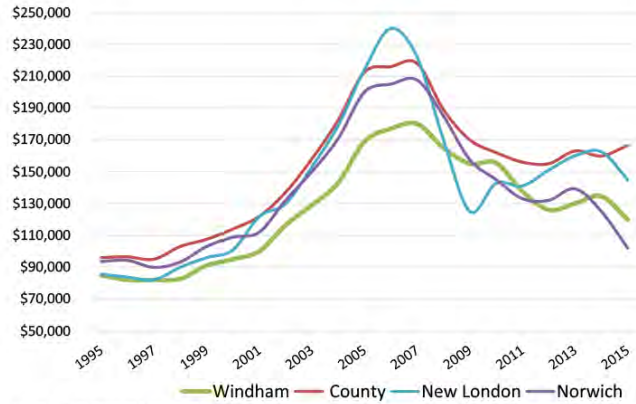
- Windham is not a Community Development Block Grant entitlement community despite low incomes and housing concerns; the Human Services Department depends on competitive grants for housing rehabilitation loans, lead abatement, and other programs.
- There are roughly 1,000 students that live in off-campus rental housing.
- Recent and continued difficult housing markets encourage the conversion of owner-occupied units to rental units.



Median home values are affordable, but lower home values also impact property taxes.

- Median single-family sales prices in Windham were about \$119,000 in 2015 compared to \$166,500 in Windham County as a whole and \$246,000 in Connecticut as a whole.
- Following the 2008 financial crisis, total real property values in Windham fell 10% from 2008 to 2013 (a revaluation year). This decline in property values results in a decline in property taxes collected, forcing an increase in the mill rate.

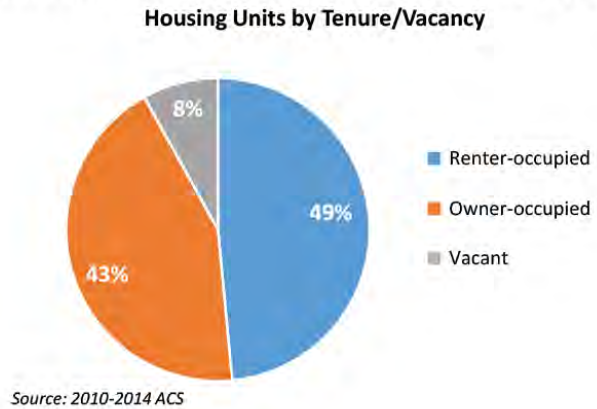
Median Single-Family Sales Prices, 1995-2015



A large number of housing units in Windham qualify as being affordable, which is an important draw for attracting new residents.

- According to the 2015 Affordable Housing Appeals list, 31.26% (2,992 units) of the housing qualifies as “affordable” [defined as being governmentally assisted, receiving tenant rental assistance, having a Connecticut Housing Finance Authority (CHFA) or U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) mortgage, or having deed-restricted units].
 - By total number of affordable units, Windham is 15th in the State behind many larger cities. However, Windham is ranked second in the state for percent of units being considered affordable (after Hartford at 40.23%).

Housing Units by Tenure/ Vacancy, 2014



- Roughly 59% of renters and 34% of homeowners (47% of all households) are cost burdened, or spending more than 30% of their income on housing. Being cost burdened is a risk factor that can contribute to homelessness as these households may be just a few missed paychecks from eviction or foreclosure.
- Some landlords frequently rent to students and encourage high occupancy, which can drive up rents for the area as a whole.

The Willimantic Housing Authority promotes affordable housing, economic opportunity, and a suitable living environment free from discrimination.

- The Housing Authority manages 576 units in Windham as well as managing the Housing Choice Voucher Program to subsidize approximately 500 families in Windham.

NEXT STEPS FOR A BETTER WINDHAM: NEIGHBORHOODS AND HOUSING

Encourage homeownership in Windham.

- Foster cooperation between Economic Development and Human Services to develop housing promotion programs, such as down payment assistance programs, housing rehabilitation loans, and funds for lead abatement.
- Consider incentives for town employees to purchase housing in Windham.

Support and publicize improvements in the Windham Public School System to support property values and encourage homeownership within Windham.

- Promote school system improvements with the real estate and development community.
- Support continued school system improvements.

Continue to support and grow existing housing support services.

- Provide a greater online presence for Windham Human Services in order to make current support services and information more accessible.
- Advocate for a Grants Writer position to win competitive grants geared toward housing and human services programs.
- As grant funding is won, create lead abatement and housing rehabilitation funds for property owners in need.
- Support funding to maintain or replace existing Public Housing Authority units as needed.
- Explore creative grant programs that fully fund restoration with payment only at time of sale or remortgage.

Build and maintain a variety of housing options to support economic vitality and meet the needs of residents.

- Create options for older residents to remain in Windham, such as zoning revisions that allow denser, single-story ADA-compliant rental units.
- Incentivize new market-rate housing, especially if the housing is targeted to young professionals, or the aging 55+ population, or incorporates mixed-use retail on the ground floor in appropriate zones.
- Partner with the Willimantic Victorian Neighborhood Association to continue to promote and preserve historic buildings, both as housing and as tourism.

Preserve existing neighborhoods.

- Continue to incentivize Flexible Design Subdivisions to preserve natural, scenic, historic, and other resources. An increase in housing densities within existing residential neighborhoods should be avoided.
- Multifamily homes in existing areas that are predominately single family should be discouraged.
- Designs for development on vacant land in existing neighborhoods should reflect the scale and density that are compatible with the surroundings.
- New multifamily housing densities should be limited to areas where on-site parking can be accommodated, or parking is available in a nearby facility.
- Support local initiatives such as the Willimantic Victorian Neighborhood Association and the Spring Street neighborhood group that work toward improving our neighborhoods.
- Create pocket parks in densely developed areas.
- Actively enforce housing and zoning codes and other town ordinances to ensure that all apartments/homes meet regulatory standards.
- Limit signage in residential districts to “for sale,” “for rent or lease,” or contractor information during permitted work. Require all multifamily properties to affix to the building a 1’ square sign with property manager’s name and phone number for emergency contact.



Continue current sustainable housing development policies and practices.

- Partner with utilities to promote energy efficiency, weatherization, and other steps to reduce overall housing costs.
- Continue to incentivize energy efficiency, solar and other alternative energy sources, and passive solar design in new subdivisions.
- Continue to require stormwater best management practices in new subdivisions, such as rain gardens and permeable pavement.
- Continue to promote and encourage development under the adopted Incentive Housing Zone regulations.
- Continue to employ best practices in the preservation of open space in new subdivisions, such as by implementing conservation subdivisions.

New residential development should create neighborhoods.

- Integrate new residential development into the context of the existing neighborhood.
- Create additional village centers in, or adjacent to, the subdivision with some compatible commercial uses (small eatery, small grocery) in the design and scale appropriate to the neighborhood.
- Incorporate transit-oriented development when feasible.
- Seek ways to encourage developments that include a representative cross section of the Windham population, i.e., a mix of income levels, ages, and ethnicity.

Consider thoroughfare improvements to Route 195 and Jackson Street.

- Redesign the Lauter Park entrance and visually connect to Alex Caisse Park to become a gateway to town.
- On-street parking on Jackson Street should be limited to one side.
- Trees should line the street.
- When feasible, Jackson Street should be reconfigured between Moulton Court and Maple Avenue.



*3rd Thursday Street Fest participants were asked
"What do you love about Windham?"*

CHAPTER 4

NATURAL RESOURCES AND OPEN SPACE

Over the years, many surveys of Windham residents have clearly shown that we take pride in our rural character. We have a rich history along our rivers and in our farm fields, and enjoy our roadways lined with stone walls and mature trees. However, once these areas are indiscriminately developed, we will forever lose this visible connection to our rural character. There are tools and techniques that will enable the town to continue developing while maintaining its rural character. It is important that we address the regulation changes now before there is little rural character to protect.

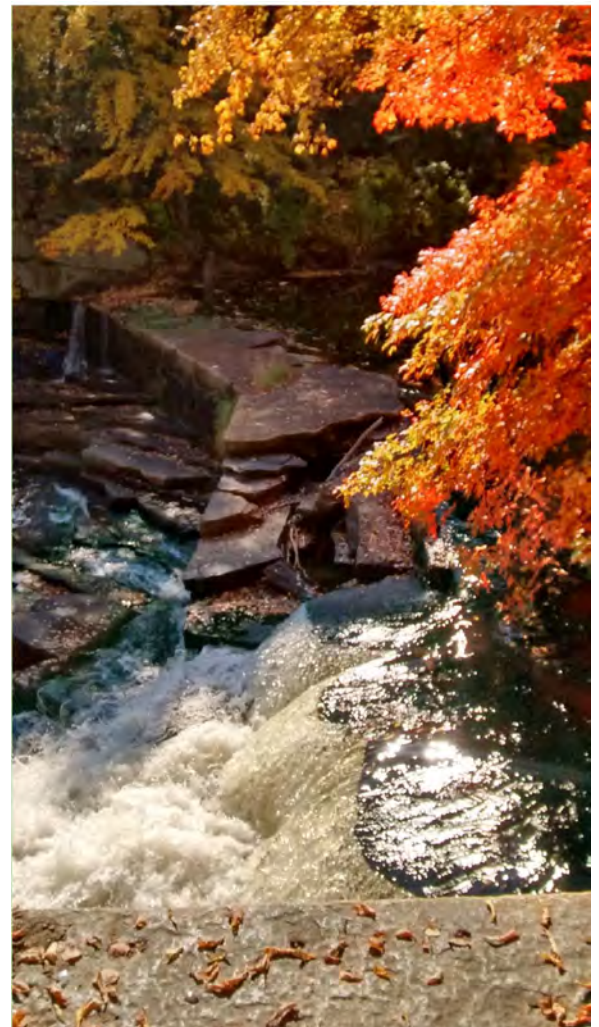
Protection of natural resources and the environment continues to be an important issue. The quality of groundwater and surface water supplies, wetlands, prime agricultural soils, wildlife habitats, and unfragmented forest land are necessary for the health of our entire ecosystem. It is in our best long-term interest to work toward preserving and protecting our natural resources.

Studies across the country have shown that the best strategy for maintaining a stable mill rate is to acquire open space. Less developed towns have far lower taxes than their more developed counterparts.

Windham should strive for the good planning practice that balances development and conservation and encourages “green living.”



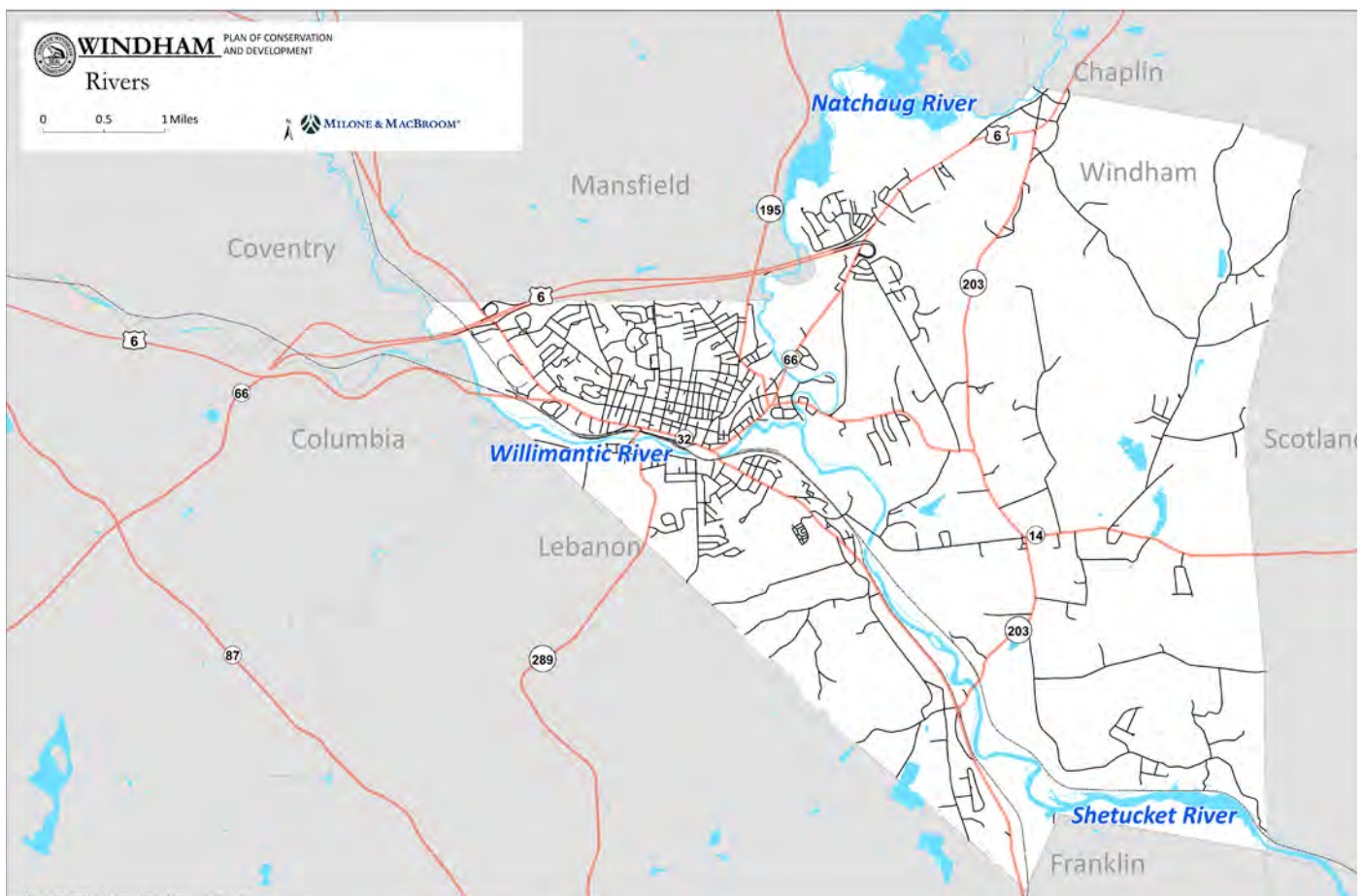
Photo credit: Jean deSmet



WHERE WE ARE: RIVERS, STREAMS, AND WATERBODIES

The Willimantic, Natchaug, and Shetucket Rivers are important natural, recreational, and historical resources.

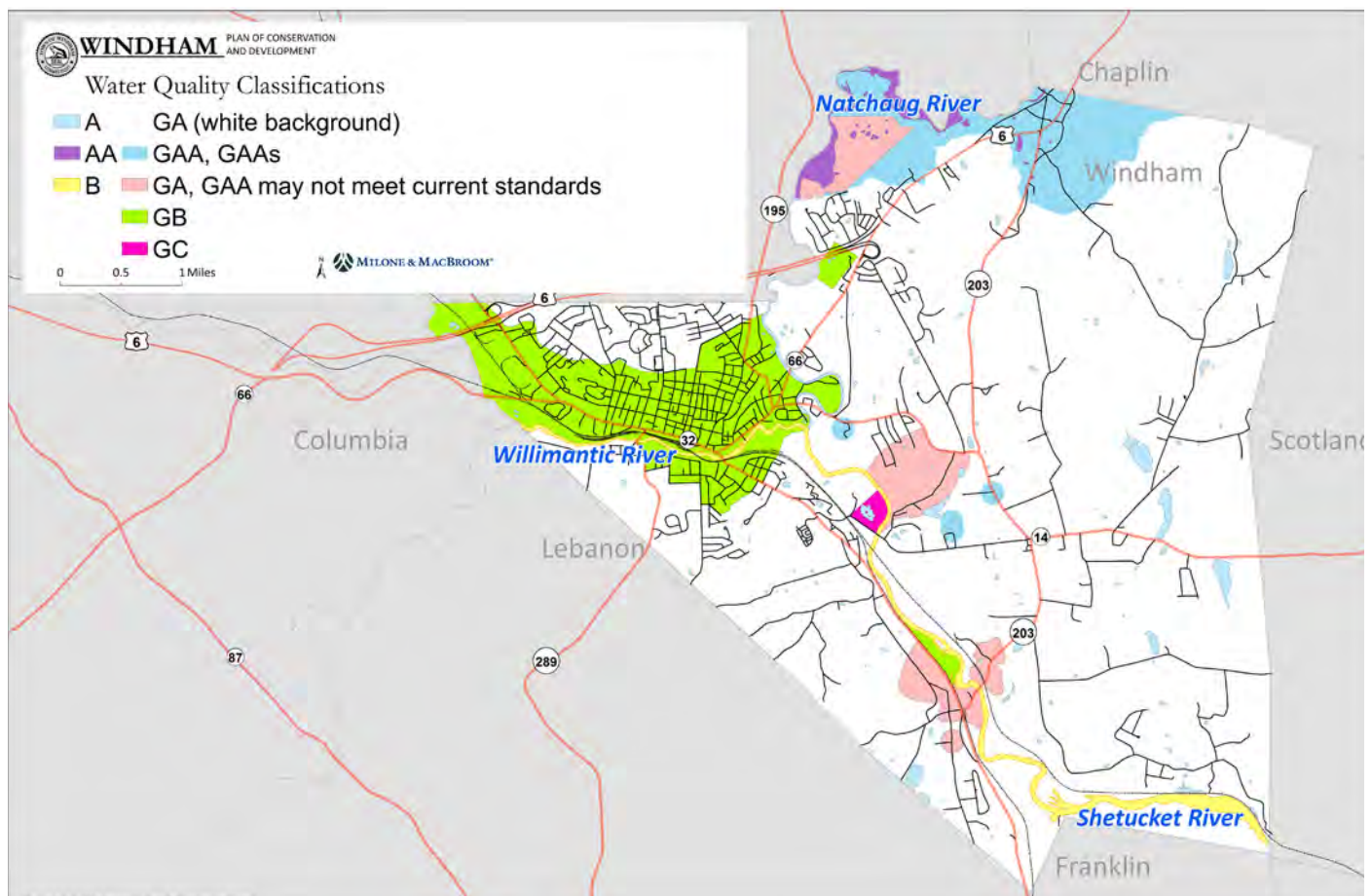
- The rivers provide valuable habitat for a variety of animals, as well as contributing to water quality.
- The Willimantic River Water Trail is a 21-mile National Recreation Water Trail for canoes and kayaks, providing a healthy way for residents and visitors to enjoy the outdoors.
- Willimantic was originally founded by European settlers in the 1600s to use the energy of the rivers to power mills; previously, it was an important site for the area's tribal nations such as the Mohegan.
- Rivers serve as an important habitat, food source, and migration route for a variety of fish, mammals, and birds.



WHERE WE ARE: WATER QUALITY

Surface water and groundwater resources in North Windham are generally of high quality; water quality in the Willimantic River and Shetucket River is not suitable for drinking water but is suitable for habitat for fish and wildlife and recreation uses.

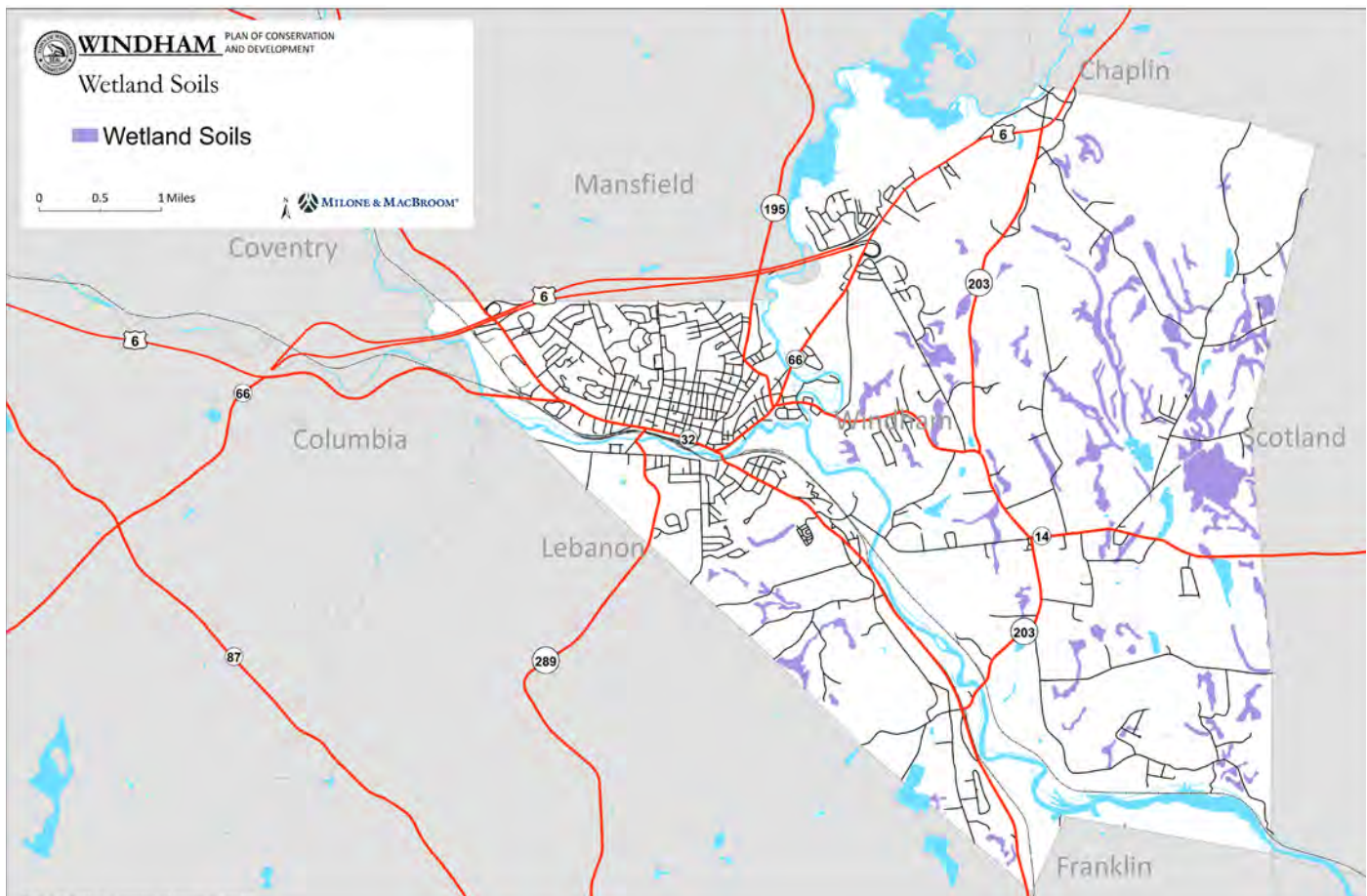
- Class A and AA (and GA and GAA for groundwater) water is suitable for drinking water, fish and wildlife habitat, recreation, navigation, and water supply for industry and agriculture.
- Class B (and GB for groundwater) water is suitable for habitat for fish and wildlife, recreation, navigation, and water supply for industry and agriculture.
- Class GC groundwater is designated for assimilation of discharges.



WHERE WE ARE: WETLAND SOILS

Wetland soils comprise about 1,260 acres (about 7.5%) of land in Windham.

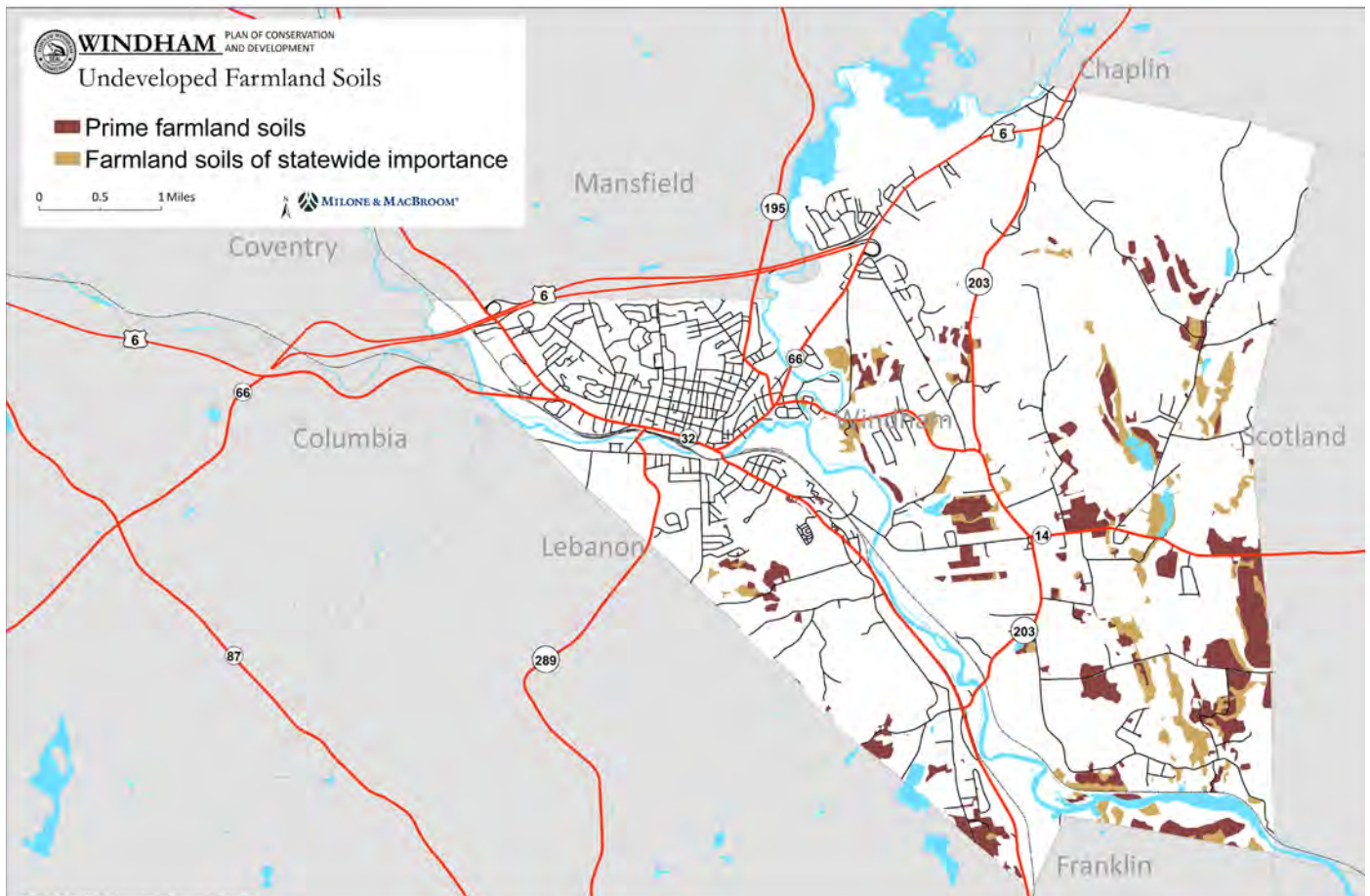
- Wetland soils provide habitat for a wide array of plants and animals.
- Wetland soils are a prime source for recharging drinking water sources and act as an important flood control resource.



WHERE WE ARE: FARMLAND SOILS

Windham has a wealth of undeveloped prime farmland soils.

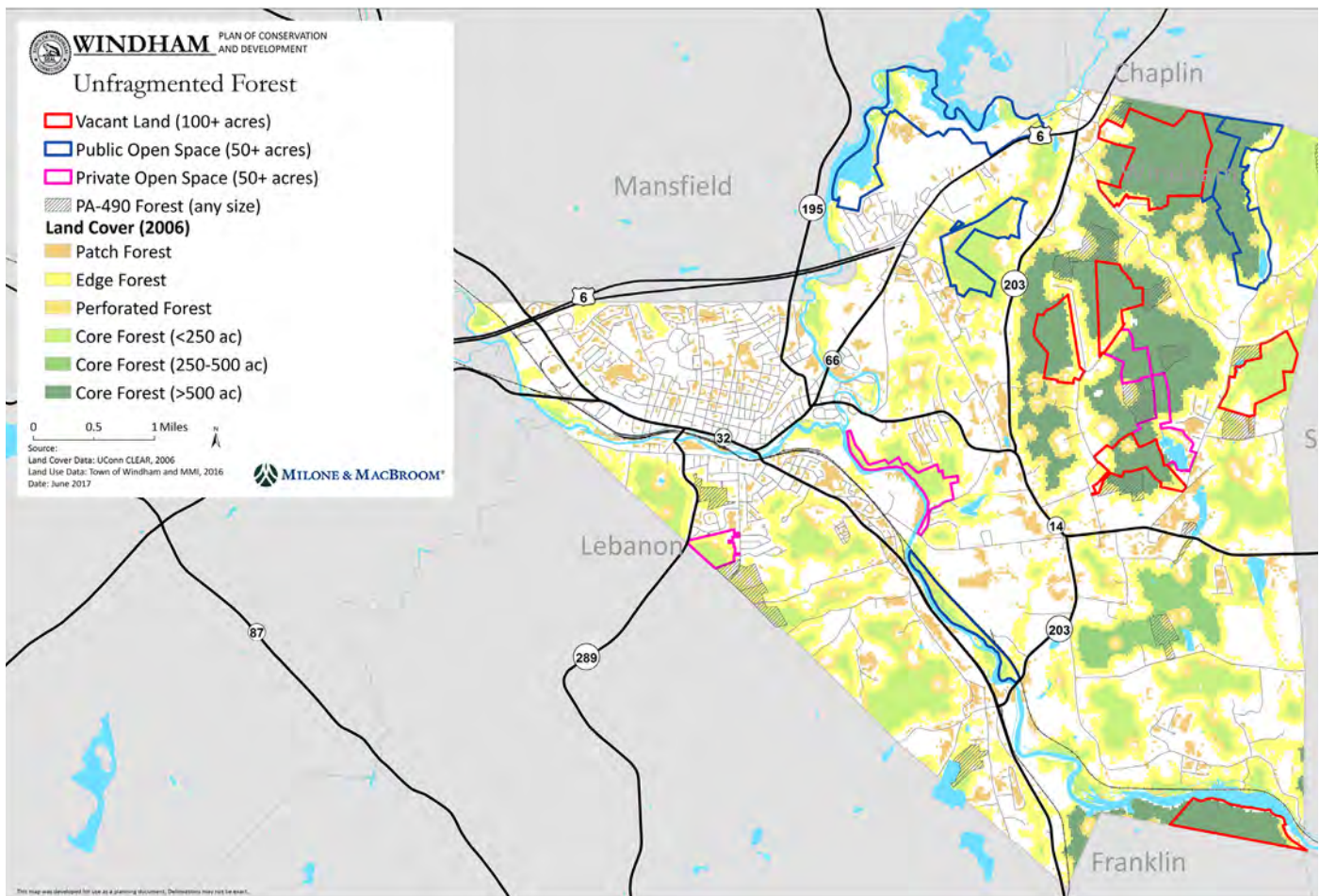
- Prime farm soils could become an important source for local food products while also providing a livelihood for farmers in the area.



WHERE WE ARE: UNFRAGMENTED FORESTS

Windham still has large tracts of unfragmented forest land, which serve as important habitat for wildlife. These forests also have large areas of privately owned vacant land that may be developed in the future.

- Unfragmented forest and wildlife corridors are vital in maintaining habitats for the plants and animals that keep the ecosystem in balance.
- Development should be planned to keep these corridors open and to maintain as much unfragmented forest land as possible.



WHERE WE ARE: PRESERVATION EFFORTS

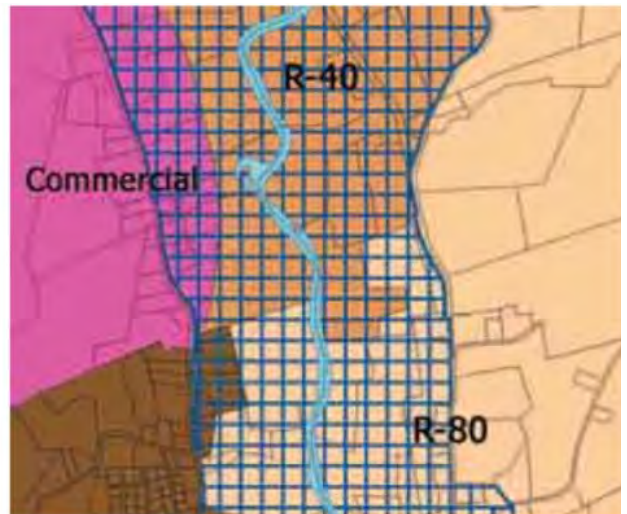
The Conservation, Open Space, and Agriculture Commission (COSA) is responsible for overseeing new acquisitions to public open space.

- The COSA will continue its policy (first developed in 2001) of using the following criteria in assessing property in terms of its importance to open space:
 - Protects and improves water quality (groundwater and surface water) and water habitats and/or increases recreational access to water.
 - Creates connections between existing open space, recreational space, trails, or greenways.
 - Preserves and protects habitats that support special plant or animal life, especially those identified as endangered, threatened, or of special concern.
 - Protects cultural resources of the town, including educational, archaeological, historical, and other sites that distinguish our town's character.
 - Preserves farmland, forest land, other agricultural lands, and the rural character of the Windham villages.
 - Develops neighborhood parks, and active recreational or educational opportunities.

NEXT STEPS FOR A BETTER WINDHAM: NATURAL RESOURCES AND OPEN SPACE

Reconnect residents with Windham's streams, rivers, and ponds.

- The 2007 Windham Plan of Conservation and Development suggested the use of an overlay zoning district over Windham's rivers. Overlay Districts are a way to simplify zoning regulations for unique situations that cross multiple zoning districts. The base zoning district regulations still apply, but areas that fall within the overlay zone could have additional development or use restrictions. Consider incorporating an overlay zone to protect the major rivers from development.
- Create a riparian buffer along the Shetucket River that connects South Windham to Plains Road Park and Willimantic.
- Strive to preserve the undeveloped areas around and along our streams, rivers and ponds in their natural state.
- Continue to require appropriate buffer zones for important water resources; extend upland review area to 200' from the water.



In this example, the river corridor Overlay District is shown as a blue grid over the underlying zones (Commercial, R-15, R-40, and R-80).

- Support groups working on regional river conservation issues through educational programming, recreation, and stewardship activities.
- Celebrate and publicize recreational activities on the rivers in Windham in order to get people involved and invested in conservation efforts.
- Market river recreation (such as the forthcoming Willimantic Whitewater Park) as an economic development asset.
- Partner with the Mill Museum to highlight educational programming around Windham's working rivers.

Protect water quality in Windham.

- Protect major aquifers and public water supply areas (i.e., Mansfield Hollow) from impacts from inappropriate development.
- Continue efforts to improve water quality, such as reviewing aquifer protection zone regulations on a regular basis.

Protect wetland soils.

- Continue to protect our wetland areas as they are a key component of our ecosystem, provide habitat for a wide array of plants and animals, and are a prime source for recharging our drinking water sources.

Protect prime and important farmland soils.

- Strive to preserve agricultural uses and large areas of prime farm soils. Information on state and federal incentive programs established so landowners can voluntarily participate in natural resource conservation programs should be made available to landowners.
- Partner with the Connecticut Department of Agriculture to assist farmland owners who want to protect their land.
- Partner with the National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to determine locations of locally important farmland soils and include in future mapping of farmland soils.

Protect unfragmented forest land and wildlife corridors.

- Plan developments to keep unfragmented forest and wildlife corridors open and to maintain as much unfragmented forest land as possible.

Support appropriate open space acquisition and protection.

- Support the goals of the Open Space Plan, especially as it relates to possible acquisition of properties for open space (see Open Space Plan beginning on next page).
- Discourage the use of chemical herbicides and other pesticides for aesthetic purposes on lawns, playing fields, and public areas to reduce possible negative environmental and public health effects.



2001 OPEN SPACE PLAN

As adopted by the Board of Selectmen on 10/15/2002.

In the Fall of 2001, the Town of Windham created an Open Space Advisory Committee to conduct a natural resource and land use inventory, to develop a draft open space plan, and to make recommendations for implementation of the plan. The Open Space Advisory Committee had representatives from a range of boards and commissions in town, as well as interested residents with tremendous expertise and enthusiasm.

The Open Space Advisory Committee, in developing this proposed plan, has collected a huge amount of information and opinions about what is important to the Town. From all of that collected knowledge, the Committee extracted the six highest priorities. The priorities then evolved into criteria by which any piece of property might be assessed in terms of its importance to open space. Those priority criteria are as follows:

1. Protects and improves water quality (ground and surface water), water habitats and/or increases recreational access to water;
2. Creates connections between existing open space, recreational space, trails or greenways;
3. Preserves and protects habitats that support special plant or animal life, especially those identified as endangered, threatened or of special concern;
4. Protects cultural resources of the Town, including educational, archeological, historical and other sites that distinguish our Town's character;
5. Preserves farmland, forest land, other agricultural lands and the rural character of the Windham villages; and
6. Develops neighborhood parks, active recreational or educational opportunities.

After completing its work, the Open Space Advisory Committee has developed the following recommendations, which it presented to the Board of Selectmen at its October 15, 2002 meeting. First, the Open Space Advisory Committee unanimously voted to recommend that the Town of Windham establish a permanent Open Space Committee. An Open Space Committee can take the steps outlined here to implement the Policy Statement and the components of this proposed Plan. It can also serve as the group to review any potential available property and make a recommendation whether the Town should take steps to preserve it as open space, and how to do so. The Open Space Committee can also serve an educational role, providing technical support to residents and town boards and commissions.

Second, the Open Space Advisory Committee unanimously voted to recommend that the Town adopt this document as its Open Space Plan. Citizens across the town have expressed to the Committee their interest in preserving the unique character of Windham, and balancing that conservation goal with an equally important goal of growth that improves the Town's tax base and quality of life for all residents. The Open Space Advisory Committee believes that this Plan achieves that balance and will result in many benefits for the Town and its citizens.

The Open Space Advisory Committee sees the role of the Town in protecting open space as having multiple components. As is noted in the Plan, there are numerous ways to protect open space, including smart development through zoning changes, sale of development rights to the state, donation to land trusts, conservation easements, state acquisition or town acquisition.

The Committee emphasizes that only one of these possible protection methods is having the Town purchase the land, while the other examples involve maintaining private ownership while preserving the qualities of open space important to the Town. Windham can educate residents, and perhaps create incentives, to encourage private open space protection without outright acquisition. The Committee recommends that the Town only purchase land that is available for sale, where the sales price is reasonable and does not exceed the appraised value and if the property meets one or more of the priority criteria.

Windham, by adopting this Open Space Plan and implementing its recommendations, will choose to be a community that balances economic development with protecting our environment and enhancing our quality of life. Recognizing that “the number one deciding factor in business relocation is quality of life and open space,” Windham can take advantage of its existing strengths and build wisely upon them for a better future. We can create a community that has a vibrant economy, vital urban center, is affordable to live in, has clean rivers and streams, and preserves the rural character that is inherent in small New England towns. We hope this Open Space Plan accomplishes these goals, and that the other boards and commissions in Town will consider and adopt the necessary regulatory changes, ordinances and other steps to make these recommendations a reality.

POLICY STATEMENT

A. POLICY STATEMENT WITH CRITERIA:

Based on all of the work described above, the Open Space Advisory Committee has developed and recommended the following Policy Statement for adoption by the Town:

“It shall be the policy of the Town of Windham to adopt the necessary ordinances and regulations to assure proactive development of the Town while recognizing the importance of protecting our cultural, agricultural, architectural and natural resources.

Through planned conservation and economic development, the Town can encourage and create opportunities for all Windham citizens to enjoy passive and active outdoor activities. To pursue this policy, the Town shall encourage the commitment of open space through various means, including considering the acquisition and holding of any open space parcel of land within the town, if the parcel is of value to the Town and its residents and meets one or more of the priority criteria set forth below:

1. Protects and improves water quality (ground and surface water), water habitats and/or increases recreational access to water;
2. Creates connections between existing open space, recreational space, trails or greenways;
3. Preserves and protects habitats that support special plant or animal life, especially those identified as endangered, threatened or of special concern;
4. Protects cultural resources of the Town, including educational, archeological, historical and other sites that distinguish our Town’s character;
5. Preserves farmland, forest land, other agricultural lands and the rural character of the Windham villages;
6. Develops neighborhood parks, active recreational or educational opportunities.”

B. PRIORITY GOALS AND CRITERIA DETAIL AND RATIONALE:

1. **WATER:** Protects and improves water quality (ground and surface water), water habitats and/or improves recreational access to surface water.

The number one priority voiced in several venues has been to protect the quality of Windham/Willimantic’s drinking water, to protect the watershed areas, and to increase access by residents to our area waterways.



Windham is blessed with three rivers, multiple streams and ponds, all of which contribute to the quality of life in this area. Residents' interest in recreational access to water for swimming, boating and fishing is strong; Windham has one of the few endangered cedar bogs left in the state; and the flood plains provide extremely attractive soil and drainage for agricultural use. Therefore, a priority in reviewing any potential property for acquisition as part of the Town's permanent Open Space would be its proximity to water and/or its use as a buffer to protect and enhance adjacent waterways, marshes, wetlands or watersheds.

2. CONNECTIONS: Creates connections between existing open space, recreational space, trails or greenways.

Open spaces within a town are more likely to achieve their potential range of objectives if they can build upon existing open spaces and preserved areas. Larger unbroken tracts of undeveloped land are more likely to support a larger number and diversity of plants and animals, provide more accessible and satisfying recreational experiences, and increase the value of nearby development. For example, Windham is a link on the Air Line Trail, the Quinebaug and Shetucket National Heritage Corridor, Rochambeau Route and the Willimantic River Alliance initiatives to create and extend connections.

3. SPECIAL HABITATS: Preserves and protects habitats that support special plant or animal life, especially those identified as endangered, threatened or of special concern.

Windham possesses numerous state and federally-listed special habitats and plant/animal species. These areas/species present the opportunity to make a lasting contribution to wildlife protection, and may also offer Windham unique educational and recreational enhancement opportunities.

4. CULTURAL RESOURCES: Protects cultural resources of the Town, including educational, archaeological, historic, and other sites that distinguish our Town's character.

Windham's natural and cultural diversity and history offer us a unique opportunity to promote tourism and economic development, accentuate our Town's aesthetic qualities, and promote pride and a sense of community. By identifying, protecting and accessing these resources we secure our identity and create a more meaningful place to live.

5. FARMLAND: Preserve farmland, forest land, other agricultural lands and the rural character of the Windham villages.

Windham's active and historic farmland, although part of our cultural resources, was called out as a separate category due to the large quantity of farmland areas and the significant contribution these areas have on our rural character, both economically and visually (the unique viewsheds agricultural fields offer).

6. ACTIVE RECREATION AND EDUCATION: Develop neighborhood parks, active recreational and/or educational opportunities.

The Town will develop and adopt a recreation plan to address the growing need for active recreational areas for residents, and it is likely that the Town will then need to consider acquiring properties to implement the growth aspects of such a plan. In addition, the richness of Windham's culture and natural resources may provide a wonderful opportunity for education for residents of all ages, a priority that may overlap other priorities but may enhance the importance of a specific property under consideration. And while urban areas are not likely to have large new open spaces available, small neighborhood parks can provide welcome areas for neighbors to gather and safe places for children to play while improving the look of densely built urban settings.



3rd Thursday Street Fest participants were asked "What do you love about Windham?"

CHAPTER 5

HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

WHERE WE ARE: HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Windham's long history continues to leave its mark on the town today.

- Windham was incorporated in 1692, with the first church erected on the Windham Green in 1700. Residents made their livelihoods through farming and operating sawmills and gristmills on the rivers.
- Windham Center was the historical population center until increasing industrialization made the mills in Willimantic more profitable and populated in the 1800s.
- During the Victorian era, Willimantic was the center for the production of silk and cotton thread, and many of the mansions in the Victorian Hill section of Willimantic were built.
- In the 1920s, immigrants from Europe came to Willimantic. Irish, Italians, Polish, Germans, and French Canadians came to work in the mills. Later, Estonian, Ukrainian, Latvian, Lithuanian, and Puerto Rican immigrants also came looking for jobs in the mills.
- The American Thread Company, Windham's largest employer, left the area in 1985, delivering a devastating blow to the area's economy.

Windham is rich in historic resources, including three museums.

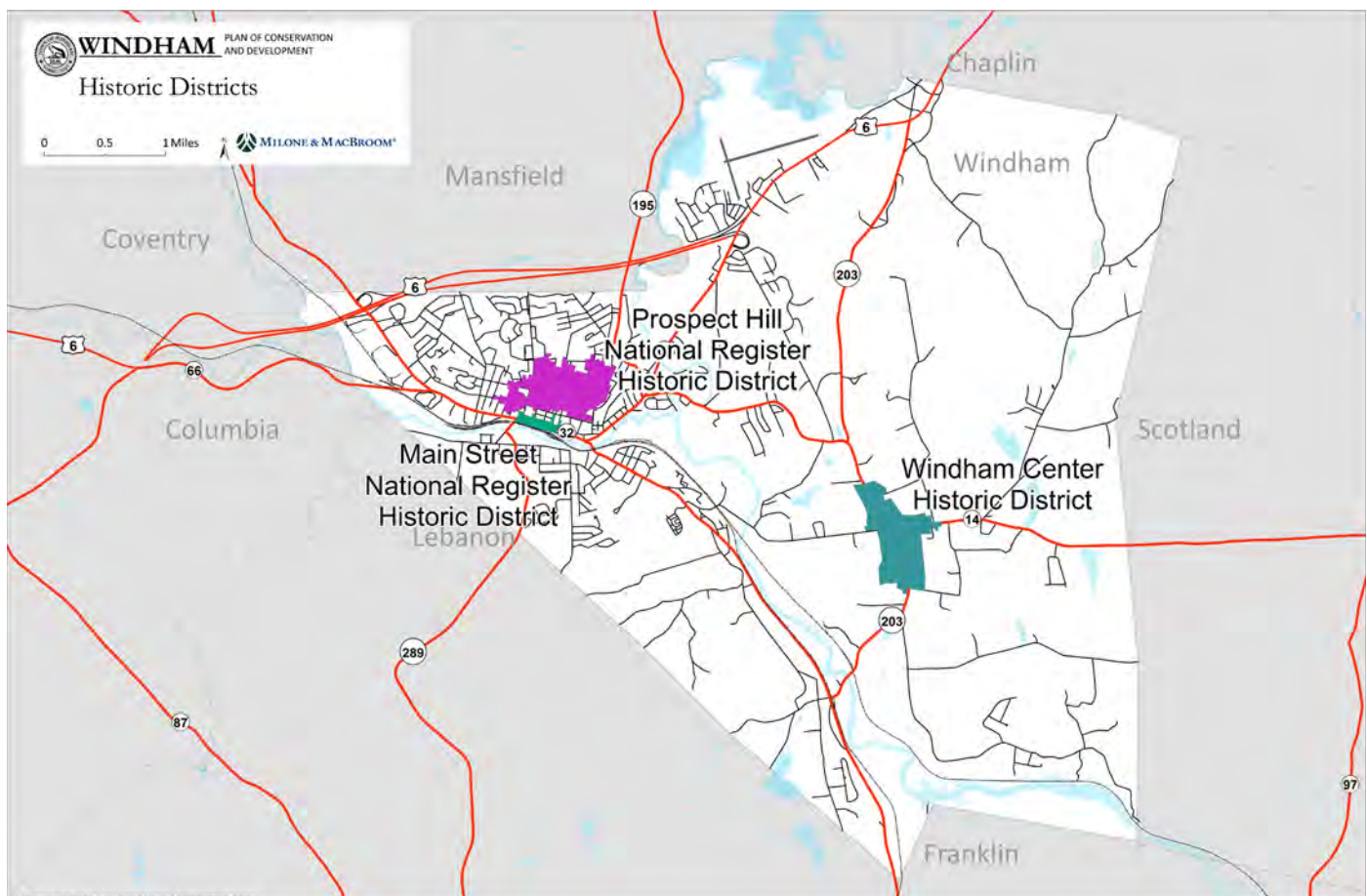
- The Windham Textile and History Museum/Mill Museum is located in the former historic headquarters of the American Thread Company and is dedicated to preserving and interpreting the history of textiles, the textile industry, and the lives of the people the industry touched.
- The Connecticut Eastern Railroad Museum is located off Bridge Street on the original site of the Columbia Junction Freight Yard, and showcases a collection of vintage locomotives.
- The Windham Historical Society is housed in the Jillson House on Jillson Square, built in 1825, and is dedicated to preserving the town's local history. Windham has three Nationally registered historic districts: the Windham Center Historic District, the Prospect Hill Historic District (a 40-block area that is one of the largest National Register Historic Districts in the state), and the Main Street Historic District.



NEXT STEPS FOR A BETTER WINDHAM: HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Protect historic and cultural resources.

- Promote the protection, preservation, and enhancement of historic structures, cemeteries, and sites; encourage efforts for other listings on the National Register.
- Publicize Windham’s historic resources to enhance public awareness of the value of preservation.
- Encourage rehabilitation programs and grants to assist home/business owners with historic buildings to upgrade and maintain their properties with the best standards of historic restoration and rehabilitation.
- Encourage adaptive reuse of existing historic structures.
- Encourage economic development projects that highlight historic resources.
- Encourage expansion of existing or adding more historic districts.
- Conduct full inventory documenting Windham’s historic assets. Add data to the Windham Natural and Cultural Resource mapset.
- Promote the protection, preservation and enhancement of historic structures and sites; encourage efforts for other listings on the National Register of Historic Places, such as the South Side.
- Publicize Windham’s historic resources to enhance public awareness of the value of preservation.
- Promote our three districts listed on the National Register of Historic Places (Main Street, Windham Center, and Prospect Hill Historic Districts) by listing on the town’s website and promoting walking tours.



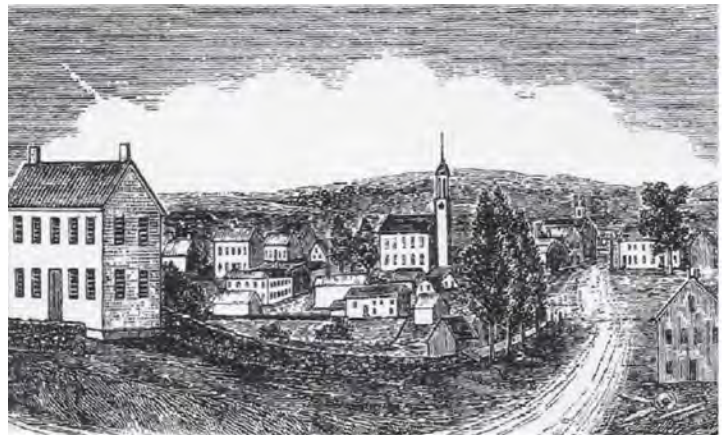
- Public improvements in historic districts should complement and be compatible with the historic period of the buildings.
- Lighting, landscaping, sidewalks, bus shelters, benches, and other improvements should be carefully selected.
- Encourage adaptive reuse of existing historic structures.
- Encourage economic development projects that take advantage of historic resources.

Protect rural character.

- Identify important views, viewsheds, and vistas; incorporate their protection into regulations.
- Adopt a scenic road ordinance and designate scenic roadways.
- Create a program for maintaining roadside mature trees with planned maintenance and replenishment. Become a Connecticut ReLeaf Community.
- Encourage preserving, rebuilding, or relocating roadside stone walls.



Photo Credit : Winter Caplanson



1835 view of Windham, courtesy Images of America: Windham and Willimantic

Survey comment:

“Two things: Every great community has a good museum; we have three! And we have an abundant supply of energetic volunteers, ready and willing to take on a variety of tasks.”

A BRIEF HISTORY

From Windham CT 2007 POCD. Provided by Bev York, Director Windham History & Textile Museum

The town of Windham was incorporated on May 12, 1692. Mohican Sachem Chief Joshua willed the land to 16 men, most of whom resided in Norwich. The land called Windham consisted of what is now the towns of Windham (which includes Willimantic), Mansfield, Scotland, Chaplin, and Hampton. The town was named after Wyndham, England.

On December 4, 1700 Windham's first Minister, Reverend Samuel Whiting, was ordained. The church was a Congregational Church, stemming from the Puritans. The first church building was erected shortly after on the Windham Green. Early settlers were farmers that grew crops such as wheat, rye, corn, barley, flax, and hemp, as well as raising livestock. Early industry in Windham consisted of sawmills, gristmills, and blacksmith's shops taking advantage of the water power from streams and rivers.

In 1823 Windham, along with Lebanon, Columbia, Chaplin, and Mansfield petitioned the General Assembly to become their own county. Tolland County, the last county formed in Connecticut, had just been formed a few years earlier, taking towns away from Hartford and Windham counties. The town of Windham was no longer the center of Windham County. The courts and other government offices had been moved to Brooklyn, which was more centralized and easier to travel to. All transportation was difficult due to the poor quality of the roads. The General Assembly denied the petition.

One year later, Lebanon petitioned the General Assembly to be returned to New London County, which they had originally been part of before the creation of Windham County. The General Assembly granted their petition. That same year, Mansfield and Columbia petitioned the General Assembly to join Tolland County. The General Assembly denied both petitions. Mansfield tried again in 1826, and Columbia tried again in 1827. This time the General Assembly granted both towns their petitions.

The town of Windham is made up of four parts; North Windham, Windham Center, South Windham, and Willimantic. As with many towns with abundant river water-power, mills are a very large part of the history of the town. The mills sprang up around the Willimantic River in the borough of Willimantic, while Windham remained a farming community. North and South Windham had limited industry. The populated area of town in the colonial period was Windham Center. When the industrial revolution came to the United States, the mills grew and Willimantic became the more populated area. In 1877 The Willimantic Enterprise newspaper started serving the citizens of Windham and surrounding towns. The newspaper grew, and became the Willimantic Chronicle, and later The Chronicle. The newspaper has been published by the same family for 5 generations.

In 1889 the Willimantic State Normal School opened its doors. (A "normal school" was a school of higher education which women went to after High School to become teachers.) The course of study was two years long. Women signed a contract stating they would only teach in Connecticut and received free tuition and books. Room and



board was \$3.50 a week. The school became Willimantic State College in 1959, and in 1967 Eastern Connecticut State College. Then in 1983 the college received university status and afterwards became part of the state university system as Eastern Connecticut State University.

In 1907 the Sisters of Charity of Our Lady Mother Mercy established a small hospital across from Saint Joseph's Church. This was Windham's first hospital building. The hospital vowed to treat all patients no matter how little money they had, their race, or their background. Many of the patients were mill workers who were victims of machinery accidents. By 1929 the hospital was having a problem with too little space and had to start turning people away. In 1930, during the height of the depression, \$500,000.00 was raised, the Vanderman family donated 12 acres of land, and Windham Memorial Community Hospital (now known as Windham Hospital) was established.



Jillson House, now owned by the Windham Historical Society

WILLIMANTIC

The word Willimantic is the Algonquin Indian term for “land of the swift running water”. Prior to 1821, the village was known as Willimantic Falls and was a single school district where about 20 families resided. In 1822, Charles Lee erected a factory on Main Street made of stone quarried from the Willimantic River. Small shops and manufacturers had been built on the banks of the Willimantic before, but this was the beginning of Willimantic as we know it. In 1825, the three Jillson brothers built a factory along the Willimantic, and in 1827, they built a second building. By 1828, there were six cotton factories in Willimantic, all of them were built within a seven-year span.

By 1849, railroads were adding to the growth of Willimantic. The first three railroads to go through Willimantic were the New London Northern Railroad, the Willimantic Railroad, and the Palmer Railroad.

It was not long before others followed. Railroads were not the only form of transportation. Trolleys were common from 1902 to 1932. Trolleys regularly ran from Willimantic to Coventry, where they continued into Hartford.



From the end of the Civil War to the outbreak of World War II Willimantic was the center for the production of silk and cotton thread. This was the Victorian era and the height of Willimantic’s grandeur. Many of the interesting buildings in Willimantic, as well as many of the mansions in the Victorian Hill section, were built during this time. Many hotels were built to accommodate the travelers coming into the area, including the Hooker House Hotel, and the Windham Hotel. Traveling salesmen would visit the area regularly to sell their goods. The grand Capital Theater opened downtown in 1926. It was during this time that immigrants from Europe came to Willimantic. Irish, Italians, Polish, Germans, and French Canadians came to work in the mills. The young ladies who did not wish to work in the

mills could be domestic help to the wealthier families in town. Later, Estonian, Ukraine, Latvian, Lithuanian, and Puerto Rican immigrants came looking for jobs in the mills. Willimantic grew to be a very culturally rich town.

In 1833 Willimantic was a borough of Windham. In 1893 it became a city. In 1983, the City and the Town consolidated and became one town again. A Board of Selectmen was set up to run the town. Selectmen were voted into office from each of the districts of town. Before the consolidation Windham was governed by a town council, and Willimantic by a City Hall.

By the 1970s, New England was not the prosperous industrial area it had once been. Factories were closing their doors or relocating to the South. The American Thread Company, the largest employer in town, left the area in 1985. It was a devastating blow to the area financially. Today, Willimantic is being revitalized and being recognized as an area with much history to offer.

FROGS & THREADS

It all started in June of 1754. The villagers of Windham were awakened in the middle of the night by terrible sounds coming from up the road. The settlers prepared for battle fearing it was an Indian attack. When morning came the villagers grabbed their guns and marched towards the direction of the noise. When they arrived at the nearby pond the villagers were shocked to find the bodies of hundreds of dead bullfrogs. Those frogs that were still alive were heading towards the Willimantic River. The reason for the Bullfrog Battle was unclear. Some say there had been a drought, and the Bullfrogs were fighting for territory. Others say it was not a particularly dry summer, and there had been no drought. Another version is that the Miller had opened the dam's gate leaving the water level quite low. The pond was named Frog Pond from then on. The villagers took the frogs on as their mascot. To this day, you can see frogs all over Windham.

Now about thread. Many towns in Connecticut have nicknames according to what their factories produced, or what the town was or is famous for. Norwich is the self-proclaimed "Rose of New England" because the town was once a very wealthy community, and is nicknamed the "Rose City". New Britain is the "Hardware City" because of its large hardware industry. Meriden is the "Silver City". Manchester is "Silk City". Willimantic is the "Thread City" because of the American Thread Company, which was the largest employer in town.

And that is why we have a bridge with giant frogs sitting on spools of thread.





*3rd Thursday Street Fest participants were asked
"What do you love about Windham?"*

CHAPTER 6

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

WHERE WE ARE: SCHOOL BUILDINGS

The Windham Public School (WPS) will be completing a renovation or building project at the high school in the next 10 years.

- The WPS is in the process of studying the high school for improvements, which may result in renovation or reuse as a different community facility.
- Historically, it has been difficult for the school system to pass referendums for budgets and capital improvements.
- The WPS Strategic Plan, “R.A.I.S.E. Windham,” lists “Structure staff, resources, and time to ensure that school buildings and learning environments are bright, clean, safe, well maintained and fully support 21st century learning activities” as a key strategy.
- The success of the Compañeros Program, providing bilingual instruction in Spanish and English, has created the potential for a new school.

WHERE WE ARE: TOWN HALL AND OTHER CIVIC BUILDINGS

- The Windham Town Hall, built in 1896, has continuing renovation needs.
- The Windham Public Library received a state grant and recently finished a \$1 million renovation project. Renovations updated HVAC, plumbing, and internet wiring as well as upgrading a public meeting room, teen room, and staff work space.
- The town is in the process of developing plans for a new Senior Center to replace outdated facilities.

WHERE WE ARE: RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

- The Kramer Building, which currently houses the Parks and Recreation Department and the Board of Education, is an old facility with potential renovation needs. There is a possibility that this building may be sold, in which case the Parks and Recreation Department and the Board of Education would need to move into new facilities.
- Residents have expressed a need for a small community center as a central social and program space.
- Noznick Park, a town-owned property, has been awaiting funding for improvements for more than 5 years.
- The Air Line Trail is a linear state park connecting Thompson to East Hampton. It is also part of the much larger East Coast Greenway, which stretches 3,000 miles from Key West, Florida to Calais, Maine.
- The Air Line Trail is owned by the state DEEP, which currently provides only infrequent trail maintenance.
- Accessibility to the Air Line Trail from residential areas in North Windham is limited, and there is no connection from the Air Line Trail to the Mansfield Hollow dike walk.



WHERE WE ARE: PUBLIC SAFETY COMPLEXES

- The Public Safety Complex is outdated and no longer provides sufficient space for the operations of the police and fire departments.
- The three fire departments serving the Windhams have dedicated members but in the future may have staffing issues if the number of volunteer fire fighters dwindles.

WHERE WE ARE: PUBLIC WORKS FACILITY

- There may be reason due to development interest in North Windham to relocate the Town Garage and Animal Pound in order to open an additional development site.
- Recent investments in the Public Works facility include radiant heaters in the mechanics garage and a new auxiliary generator in 2015 (\$105,000) and a 2,100 square foot addition to the cold storage garage in 2014 (\$170,000).



Town Hall



Photo credit: Winter Caplanson

Alex Caisse Park

NEXT STEPS FOR A BETTER WINDHAM: COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Address community facility needs.

- Ensure that the Capital Improvements Program adequately provides for ongoing maintenance and appropriately schedules future renovations or new construction projects.
- Collaborate with WPS on future plans for the high school building, including the possibility of the building being reused as, or the co-location of, a community facility.
- Explore cost-effective options for co-locating a community center, senior center, and Parks and Recreation Department in an accessible and appropriate location.
- Plan for the expansion of the Public Safety Complex; consider relocating to a larger property with sufficient area for even further future expansion. Continue to provide incentives to encourage residents to volunteer to the three Windham Fire Departments; consider consolidation if low staffing leads to coverage concerns.
- Consider the use of the fire school property and determine if the school should be relocated.

Reduce carbon emissions through increasing energy efficiency and a commitment to renewable energy and alternative fuels.

- Seek opportunities to incorporate energy efficiency upgrades into renovation and maintenance projects as appropriate.
- Seek grant opportunities and other funding to expand the current infrastructure for electric vehicle charging stations.
- Build upon momentum from the solar panel and energy cogeneration microgrid project at the middle school and Sweeney Elementary to install more renewable energy systems in municipal facilities as appropriate.

Address gaps in Parks and Recreation resources.

- Study potential development of an official Airline Trail connection through the downtown along Riverside Drive. Include signage along the trail to direct walkers to downtown businesses and maps and kiosks to show people how to continue along the trail.
- Coordinate with Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection and Department of Transportation to provide adequate maintenance to the Air Line Trail with regular cleaning of litter.
- Seek funding for trail connections to Mansfield Hollow Recreational Area.



*3rd Thursday Street Fest participants were asked
"What do you love about Windham?"*

CHAPTER 7

INFRASTRUCTURE

WHERE WE ARE: TRANSPORTATION

Downtown Willimantic is compact and walkable, with good sidewalk infrastructure between numerous destinations. However, some infrastructure improvements could improve safety for pedestrians and bicyclists.

- Main Street is also State Route 66, which experiences high traffic volumes, causing congestion and accidents.
- Community members have complained that crosswalk signals frequently do not work or take too long.
- High Street and Windham Street are the main connections between ECSU, commercial uses, and downtown but have a very different streetscape than the downtown.
- Windham received a \$650,000 grant in 2016 for the Willimantic Downtown Revitalization Project to improve streetscapes, plant trees, undertake façade improvements, and convert the Jillson Parcel into a traditional Town Green.
- The town is installing a bike lane on Riverside Drive.

Commuter lots are currently underutilized, and public transportation options do not meet the needs of all residents.

- An occupancy count done by the Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments (SCCOG) staff in April 2016 found that the two Windham Park and Ride commuter lots only had 15% occupancy. These commuter lots are not connected to other types of transit.
- The current bus routes operated by the Windham Region Transit District are the following:
 - Storrs to Willimantic (roughly 6 AM to 9 PM Monday to Friday, 8 AM to 9 PM on Saturday)
 - A loop serving the Willimantic downtown area and North Windham to Walmart (roughly 6 AM to 8 PM, Monday to Saturday)
 - A Willimantic-Norwich commuter route along Route 32 and Foxwoods Casino (roughly 5:30 AM to midnight daily; six trips total)
 - Willimantic to Danielson (one trip at 8 AM, one trip at 3 PM on weekdays)
- Comments from the POCD community survey show that residents have a negative opinion of the Windham Region Transit District, finding the schedule to be unreliable or service hours to be inconvenient.
- The Working Cities Challenge Grant team began identifying creative strategies to create alternate modes of transportation that overcome existing barriers with proper funding and coordination. The team engaged with churches to use their vans on weekdays when not in use.

Survey comment:

“My schedule requires more flexibility to travel during the day. [than provided by current transit service]”

Street lighting for safe pedestrian use, and sidewalk maintenance.

- The street lighting for sidewalks is not consistent. Some areas have too many fixtures or too bright illumination while other areas have too few street lights, resulting in insufficient lighting. Still other areas have no street lighting resulting in unsafe conditions.
- Sidewalks are not maintained; however, when a few areas on a block need repair, the entire block is replaced at great expense.

Scheduled improvements to freight rail service and the Windham Airport may spur more multimodal use and development.

- Increased freight rail activity could encourage the further manufacturing development of land with access to rail.
- Increased activity at the airport could promote more commercial development in North Windham. Recently, a new fixed-base operator (FBO) took over Windham Airport. The Connecticut Airport Authority (CAA) has also installed fueling capability for both planes (not previously on site) and small jets.



NEXT STEPS FOR A BETTER WINDHAM: TRANSPORTATION

Improve public transit to serve the needs of the community.

- Build on Working Cities Challenge grant efforts to seek alternate modes of transportation to connect workers to places of employment, such as engaging with churches to use their vans on weekdays.
- Coordinate with surrounding towns in the Windham Region Transit District (WRTD) and the SSCOOG to lobby for more funding for public transit serving the Windham region.
- As funding allows, partner with WRTD to improve service levels – hours of operation and number of bus shelters with a clear route map and schedule.

Encourage transportation improvements that foster economic development.

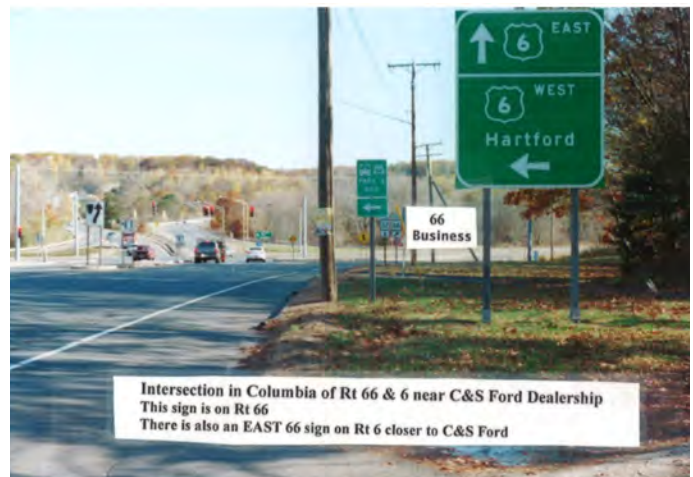
- Promote Windham to the outside business community as having access with an airport and rail connections.

Improve street lighting for safe pedestrian use and maintain versus replace sidewalks.

- Conduct a town-wide lighting study for all sidewalks to determine the appropriate level and type of illumination for each location. Implement the results of that study.
- Consider the latest health studies on the overuse of LED bulbs.
- Include sidewalk maintenance in the public works operating budget; replace the entire block of sidewalk only when the replacement cost is less than maintenance, or the sidewalk needs to be widened.

Engage with DOT on quality of life issues concerning state routes.

- Work with DOT to improve east-west public transportation for working commuters. Specifically, the current planned CTfastrak bus service expands east from Manchester by using Route 44 to go directly to Hartford, bypassing Windham. Work with DOT to develop future routes to connect Windham's workforce to employment in Hartford by CTfastrak.
- Lobby DOT to determine if there is a reasonable alternative route for Route 66 in order to reduce congestion and accidents on Main Street.
- Partner with DOT to address wayfinding and directed routes from Route 6 to Willimantic – currently directed down Jackson Street from the east.
- Engage with the DOT to have more signs on highways that promote Windham attractions.



*Photo credit and annotation: Jean Chaine
Suggested placement for a sign at the intersection of Route 66 and 6 to promote Windham businesses*

WHERE WE ARE: GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Low Impact Development (LID) uses rain gardens, swales, pervious pavements, and other stormwater treatment practices to reduce the negative impact of traditional development on our water resources.

- The University of Connecticut’s NEMO (Nonpoint Education for Municipal Officials) program provides information to local land use boards and commissions on how to accommodate growth while protecting natural resources and community character.
- NEMO provides many resources for implementing LID practices, including an Atlas of LID projects throughout the state. Two bioretention rain gardens are located in Windham (one on the grounds of Windham Hospital and one at a private residence in Windham Center).
- The Town of Windham Subdivision Regulations currently require LID techniques for managing stormwater whenever possible.

NEXT STEPS FOR A BETTER WINDHAM: GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Include green infrastructure initiatives in Public Works projects.

- As appropriate, plan for and incorporate LID best practices into infrastructure projects.
- Continue to require developers to incorporate LID techniques in private developments whenever possible.



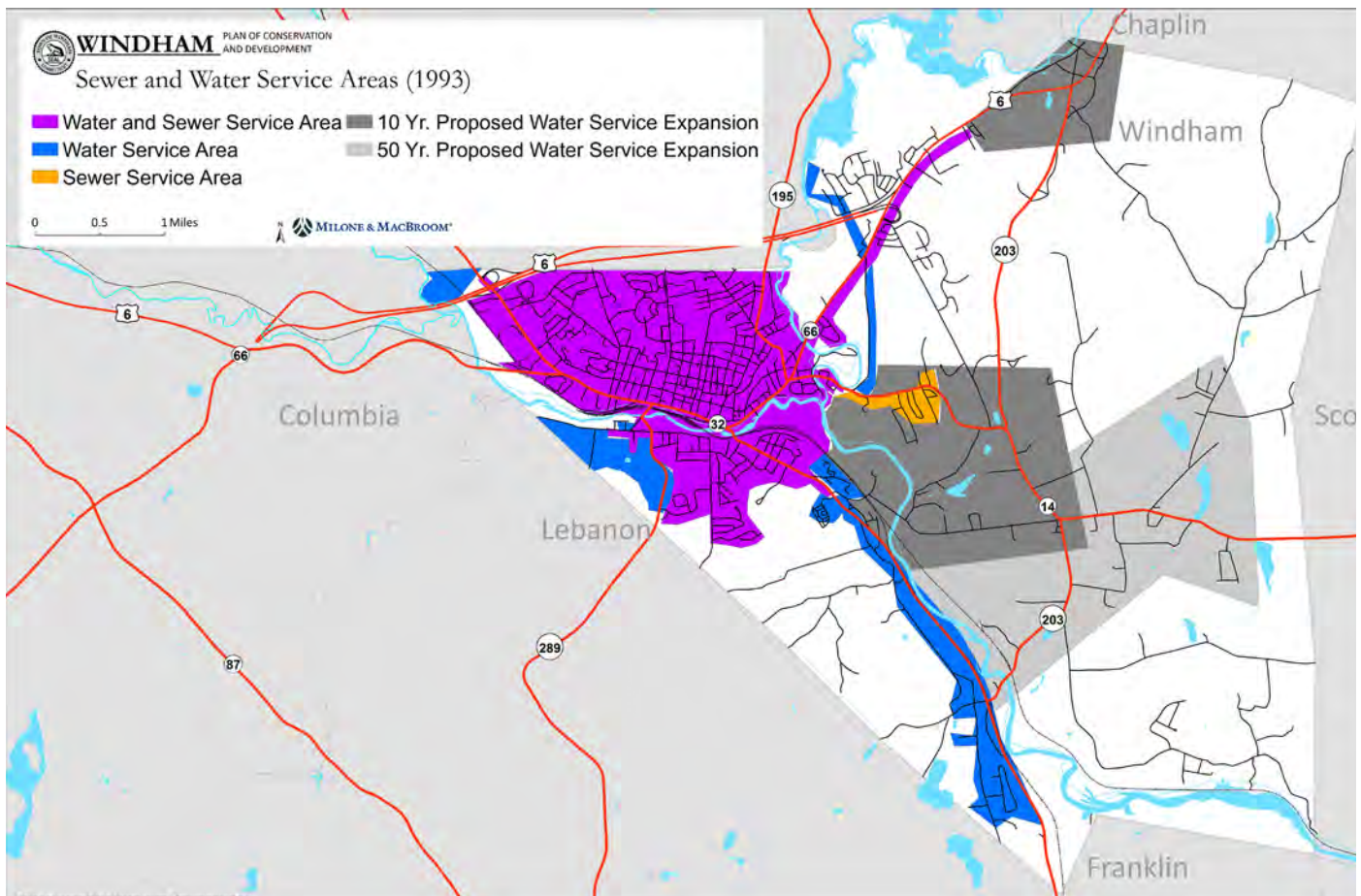
Left: Parking lot rain garden to absorb runoff at ESPN Headquarters in Bristol

Above: Streetside bioswale in Denver

WHERE WE ARE: MUNICIPAL UTILITIES

Windham Water Works treats an average of 2.5 million gallons per day and maintains 84 miles of water mains.

- Windham Water Works draws surface water from the Willimantic Reservoir. The reservoir is part of a 164 square mile watershed. The Fenton, Mount Hope, and Natchaug Rivers are the largest rivers that contribute to our reservoir.
- The Windham Water Works treatment facility, located at 174 Storrs Road, Mansfield Center, consists of a pump house and a water treatment facility. The Windham Reservoir Dam and pump house was constructed in 1885 and houses all of the pump equipment.
- The water treatment facility was built in 1936 and has seen many upgrades, the latest in 1997. This building contains all the chemical applications needed to make potable drinking water.
- The Windham Water Works building uses hydroelectric and solar power to save an average of \$10,000 per month, passing savings on to Windham customers.



NEXT STEPS FOR A BETTER WINDHAM: MUNICIPAL UTILITIES

Ensure that utilities continue to serve the needs of the community.

- Maintain and upgrade the town’s sewer lines and sewage treatment facilities.
- Support infrastructure plans developed by Windham Water Commission.
- Protect surface and groundwater within the Willimantic Reservoir watershed area.
- Maintain and clean out stormwater catch basins to limit the amount of road pollutants entering the Willimantic River.
- Consider extension of water and sewer utilities to the Franklin border to support development of manufacturing pads near the rail line.
- Continue to require that new developments must consider and reduce stormwater runoff volume, reduce peak discharges, increase runoff travel time, increase groundwater recharge, and avoid impacts to natural stream flows by utilizing techniques outlined in the Connecticut DEEP’s *Stormwater Quality Manual*.
- Explore plans for future utilities expansion.
- Upon completion of DOT’s Natchaug Bridge project, work with Eversource to extend natural gas service to Windham Heights and into the North Windham commercial corridor.

WHERE WE ARE: TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURE

Telecommunications and high-speed internet access will be increasingly important for commerce, business development, education, employment, and connecting with social services.

- High-speed internet connections are available in most of Windham, per the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) (www.broadbandmap.gov, 2014 data).
- Approximately 90% of Windham households have a computer, and 77% of households have a broadband internet subscription (American Community Survey data, 2015 estimates).
- The Willimantic Public Library also provides patrons with free access to wireless internet service, as well as nine computers with internet and word processing. The library provides a valuable service for the households without a computer or internet access in town.

NEXT STEPS FOR A BETTER WINDHAM: TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURE

Ensure that technology infrastructure continues to meet the needs of the community.

- Engage with local businesses, the library, and residents to ensure that technology infrastructure is adequate for the town’s needs.



WHERE WE ARE: ENERGY, SUSTAINABILITY, AND RESILIENCY

Windham is a leader in energy sustainability.

- Windham was the first Connecticut community to build a microgrid as a safe haven in the event of a power failure. The microgrid at Windham Middle School and Sweeney School is powered by a cogenerator (power and heat) with solar panels.
- The Windham Public School system was one of the first in the state to adopt Performance-based Contracting to analyze energy efficiency opportunities and commit to a long-term, multi-million dollar investment in energy savings.
- Over the past 10 years, Windham has invested almost \$1 million in energy conservation measures for municipal buildings. Windham Town Hall and the Kramer School building nearly meet the requirements to be certified as Energy Star buildings.
- The Town of Windham signed the Clean Energy Communities Municipal Pledge.

Windham is preparing for community resilience.

- Windham is focused on community resiliency in food, energy, water, sanitation, and shelter through actions, policies and investments in the Sustainable CT Certification, microgrids, local energy assurance planning and exploration of creating a municipal utility for the distribution of electricity.

NEXT STEPS FOR A BETTER WINDHAM: ENERGY, SUSTAINABILITY, AND RESILIENCY

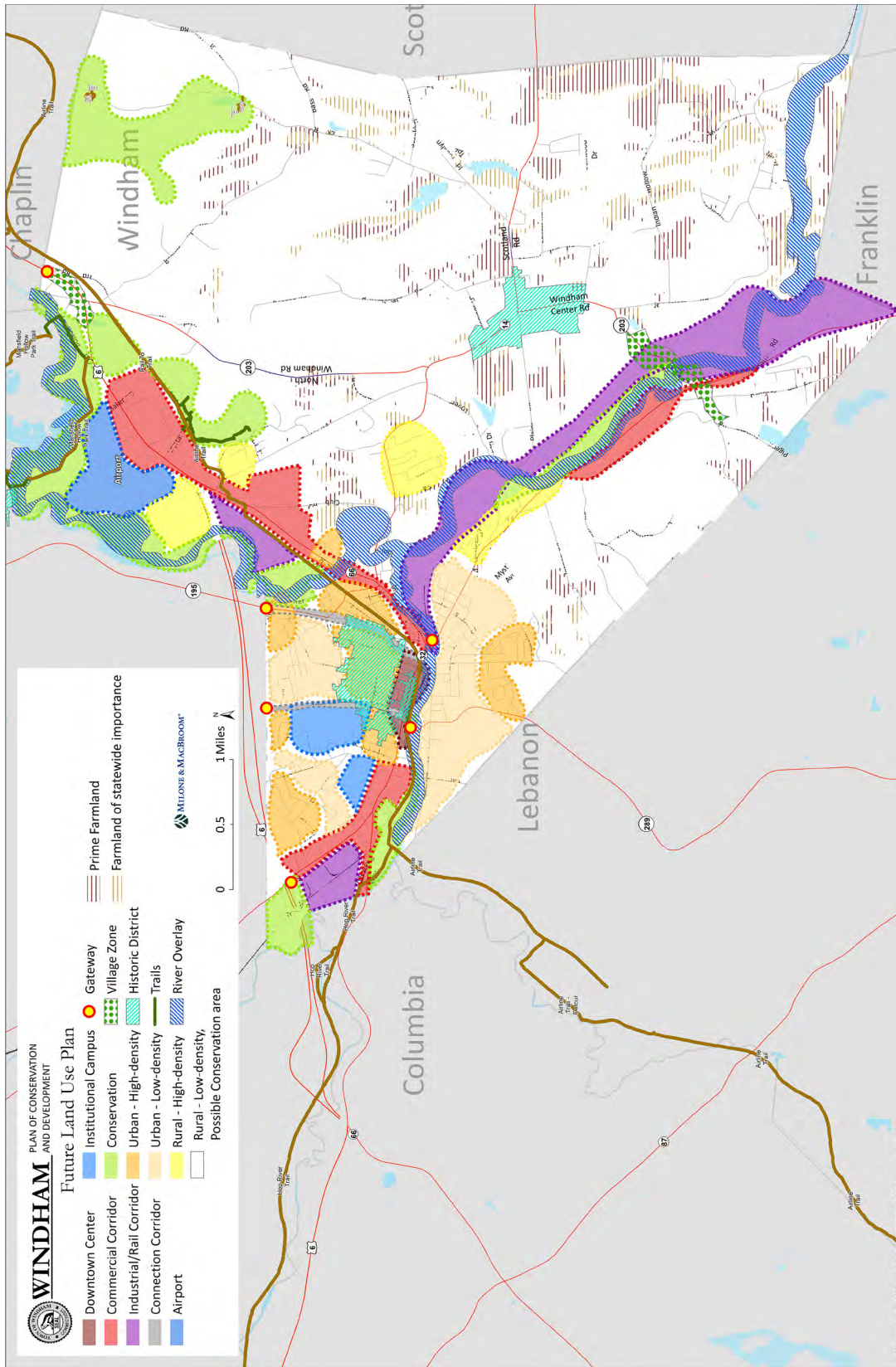
- Continue to develop local energy security and resilience for emergency preparedness and local self-reliance through the expansion of renewable energy and storage capabilities in the public sector while assisting residents and businesses in pursuing options for energy security.
- Continue to assist Windham, both residents and businesses, with the information and tools needed to become more energy efficient with a goal of reducing energy consumption by 50% town wide.
- Work toward the goal of 100% of municipal electricity consumption from renewable sources, including a municipal vehicle fleet that does not use fossil fuels.

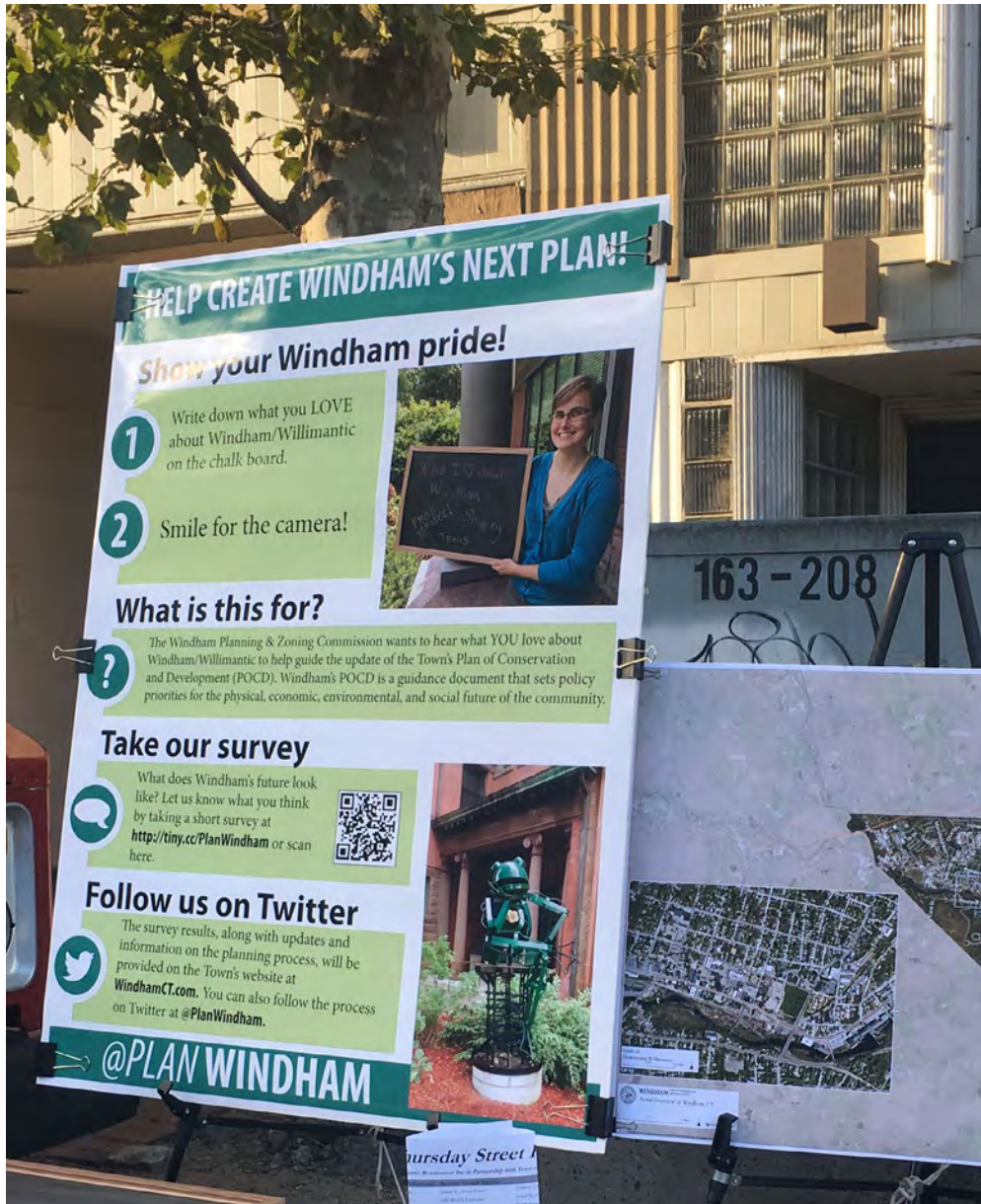


3rd Thursday Street Fest participants were asked "What do you love about Windham?"

CHAPTER 8

FUTURE LAND USE MAP





3rd Thursday Street Fest participants were asked "What do you love about Windham?"



CHAPTER 9

CONSISTENCY

Windham’s Future Land Use Plan is consistent with both the state and regional plans.

The Windham Region Council of Governments (WinCOG) was dissolved in 2013. Windham is now part of the Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments (SCCOG), and is included in its Regional Plan of Conservation and Development as of April 2017 (see page 86).

The 2013-2018 Connecticut Conservation and Development Policies Plan is being updated for 2018-2023; the proposed Plan for Windham varies only slightly from the current plan (see page 87).

The State plan uses computer algorithms to determine priority conservation and development areas. Many factors are included in determining development areas, with a large focus on existing infrastructure; however, commercial rail lines are not included in the algorithm. Windham has two active rail lines with impending rail upgrades and a significant adjacent area with the potential to become a manufacturing corridor. The Windham 2017 Plan of Conservation and Development includes this rail corridor as an important opportunity for growth in the manufacturing industries in Windham.

Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments
Regional Plan of Conservation
and Development

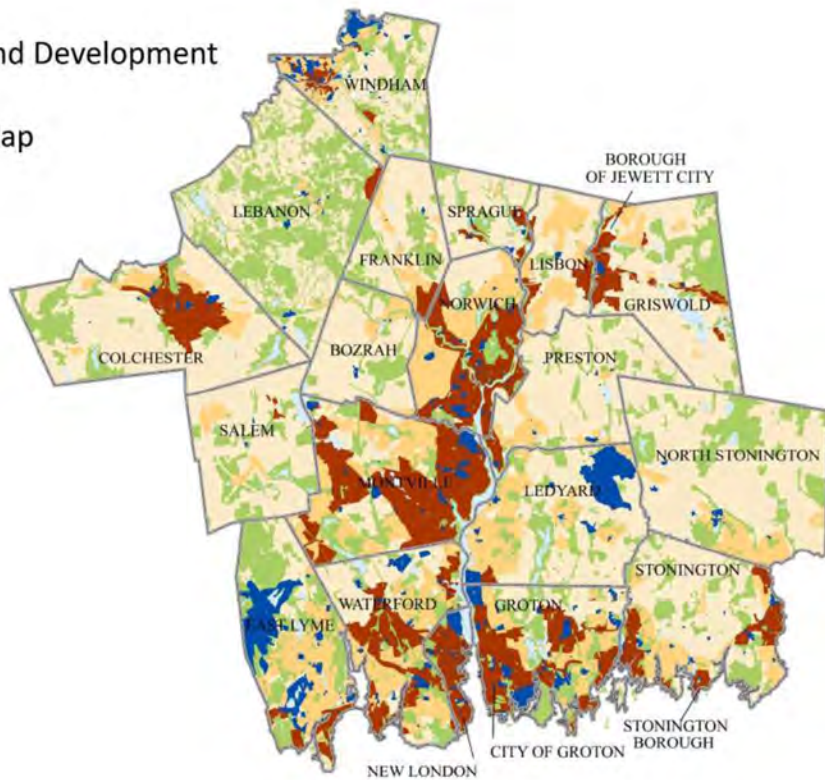
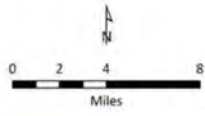
2017



Regional Plan of Conservation and Development
2017
Future Land Use Map

Land Use

- Recreation/Open Space/Conservation
- Rural/Low-Intensity
- Suburban/Medium-Intensity
- Urban/High-Intensity
- Institutional/Tribal

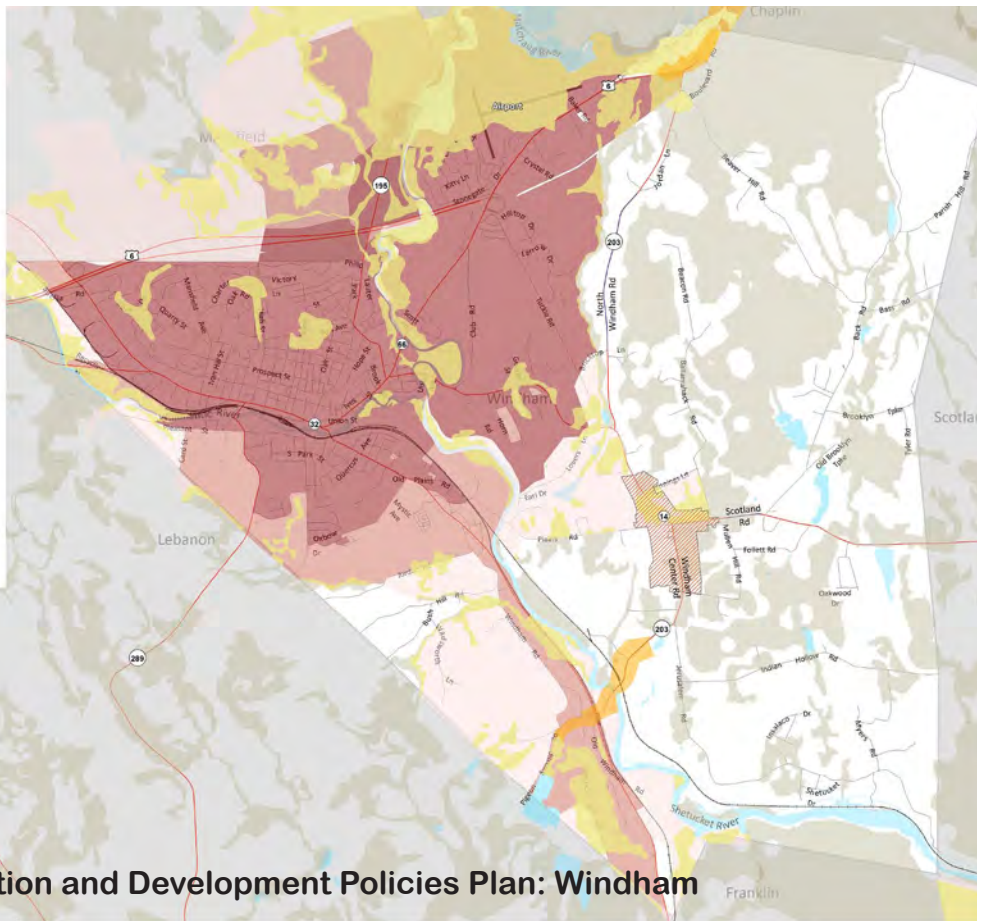
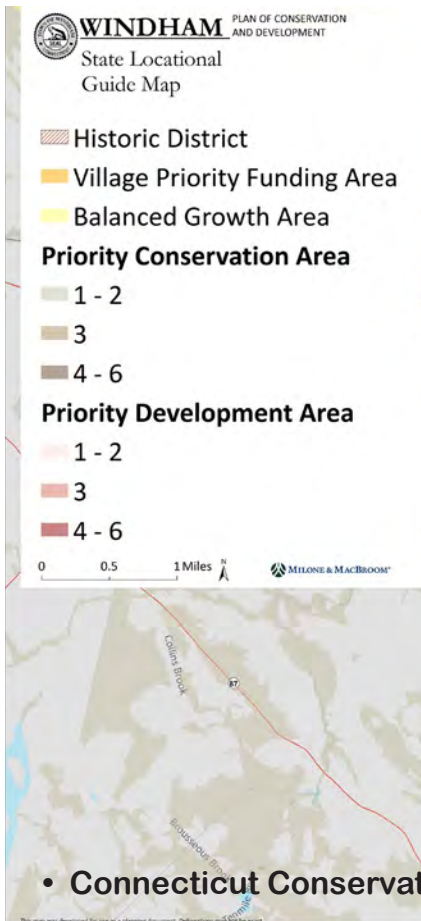


CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT
POLICIES: THE PLAN FOR
CONNECTICUT



2013-2018

Prepared by the Office of Policy and Management
In accordance with Connecticut General Statutes Section 16a-29
Adopted June 5, 2013



• **Connecticut Conservation and Development Policies Plan: Windham**



*3rd Thursday Street Fest participants were asked
"What do you love about Windham?"*

CHAPTER 10

PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

IMPLEMENTING WINDHAM'S GOALS

A plan is just a plan until it is implemented. Just accepting this plan as a blueprint for the next 10 years isn't enough, Windham needs to implement it!

Many of the Plan's recommendations will require our boards and commissions to work cooperatively toward these common goals. The implementation process is both a gradual and a continual process. While some recommendations can be carried out in a relatively short period of time, others may take several years, and still others may be long-term in nature.

The charts on the following pages identify strategies to accomplish the plan and identifies the primary and secondary board, commission or department that should take the lead in addressing the recommendations.



LEAD IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES

BOE - Board of Education

BOF - Board of Finance

COSA - Conservation, Open Space and Agriculture Commission

DPW - Department of Public Works

EC - Energy Commission

EDC - Economic Development Commission

IWWC - Inland Wetlands and

Watercourses Commission

PZC - Planning and Zoning Commission

RD - Recreation Department

TC - Town Council

WHDC - Windham Historic District Commission

WRD - Windham Region Transit District

WTA - Willimantic Traffic Authority

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - TOWN WIDE

Page(s) | Lead | When

Support the Growth of Existing Businesses

• Work to retain existing businesses and encourage their expansion.	12-13	EDC	Ongoing
• Facilitate coordinated leadership among existing local business groups.	12-13	TC, EDC	3-5 yrs.
• Provide a greater online presence for Windham's Economic Development Opportunities.	12-13	EDC, TC	1-3 yrs.
• Partner with existing businesses to become more environmentally sustainable through programs offered through utilities (i.e. energy audits, renewable energy credits, etc.) and State programs.	12-13	EDC, EC	1-3 yrs.

Strategically Attract New Businesses

• Proactively seek businesses that would have a long term positive fiscal impact on Windham	12-13	EDC	Ongoing
• Market Windham as a 'business friendly town' on an easy-to-update website devoted to economic development that lists available vacant property; links to state and regional economic development websites such as Connecticut Economic Development Association (CEDAS) and Connecticut Economic Resource Center (CERC).	12-13	EDC	1-3 yrs.
• Consider rezoning along High Street to allow small retail and food services in residential buildings.	12-13	PZC	1-3 yrs.
• Develop a program of tax incentives that are applied equitably to new and expanding businesses.	12-13	TC, EDC	1-3 yrs.

Increase Support for Small and Minority-owned Businesses

• Identify specific resource needs among minority businesses and entrepreneurs, and develop programming efforts consistent with addressing those needs.	12-13	EDC	1-3 yrs.
• Capitalize on ongoing Workforce Cities Challenge grant efforts to develop partnerships with appropriate local cultural organizations, business owners, and other groups. Conduct appropriate outreach with bilingual staff.	12-13	EDC, TC	1-3 yrs.

Use Windham's Unique Assets to Attract Businesses, Visitors and new Residents

• Focus on attracting new businesses that are compatible with or supportive of Windham's unique economic development niche.	28-31	EDC	1-3 yrs.
• Support collaborative efforts that promote Windham as a place for innovative, talented professionals to live and work.	28-31	EDC, TC	Ongoing



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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - DOWNTOWN CENTER

Page(s)

Lead

When

Focus Social and Economic Activity in the Downtown Center

• Assist building owners with façade and major building maintenance through grant programs, no-interest revolving loans and tax credits.	15	EDC	5-7 yrs.
• Improve on-street parking and parking lots .	16	TC , DPW	1-3 yrs.
• Continue to advocate for funding for parking garage.	16	TC	Ongoing
• Encourage restaurants and small specialty retail that will contribute to foot traffic and vibrancy in the downtown.	16-17	EDC	Ongoing
• Encourage the development of incubator retail spaces (300-500 sq.ft.) and cooperatives.	16-17	EDC	Ongoing
• Increase residential activity in the Downtown. Continue to promote and encourage redevelopment under the adopted IHZ regulations.	16-17	EDC, PZC	Ongoing
• Improve Riverside Drive area to encourage development of additional commercial space.	17	TC	3-5 yrs.
• Facilitate the coordination of Downtown businesses, the arts and public events with a Downtown Coordinator.	16-17	EDC, TC , BOF	3-5 yrs.
• Provide public restrooms.	17	TC	1-3 yrs.
• Encourage non-retail street level businesses to include gallery space or display space visible from sidewalk.	16-17	EDC	Ongoing

Increase Safety and Convenience for Pedestrians and Bicyclists in the Downtown

• Work with CT COT to ensure that crosswalk signals meet pedestrian needs with prompt response to activations and for an appropriate crossing time. Alternatively, advocate the routing of Route 66 off Main Street in Downtown Center.	17-18	TC, WTA	1-3 yrs.
• Between High and Jackson Streets, use bump-outs to shorten crosswalks, add mid-block crosswalks on long blocks.	17-18	TC, DPW	3-5 yrs.
• Through streetscape improvements visually link ECSU and residential neighborhoods to encourage more pedestrian activity.	18	TC, DPW	3-5 yrs.
• Consider painting “sharrows” to remind drivers to share the road with bicyclists.	17	TC, WTA	1-3 yrs.
• Install additional streetlights along Main Street in the Downtown Center to connect pools of light at night.	17,76	DPW	1-3 yrs.
• Encourage business owners to leave their storefronts lit during the evening to reduce the feeling that Downtown is “empty” at night.	17	EDC	1-3 yrs.
• Improve pedestrian and bike connections from ECSU campus to Downtown.	18	DPW, TC	3-5 yrs.
• Determine midblock crosswalks with safety concerns, install pedestrian activated stop lights and “Traffic Must Stop for Pedestrians” signs.	17-18	DPW, TC	3-5 yrs.
• Improve lighting on footbridge.	17-18	DPW, TC	3-5 yrs.



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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS	Page(s)	Lead	When
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Continue to Improve the Visual Impact to Attract Economic Activity

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue improvements along major thoroughfares such as West Main Street, Main Street, Route 6, Route 32, and Boston Post Road. 	20-22	TC, DPW	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider incentives to promote and support efforts of volunteer organizations to beautify Windham, such as the Garden Club of Windham, Trash Mob (volunteers who pick up litter), and others. 	20-22	TC	1-3 yrs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide incentives or otherwise encourage more attractive landscaping and aesthetic improvements along commercial corridors and gateways to town on existing developments. 	20-22	EDC, TC	3-5 yrs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore using zoning, design guidelines, other land use tools, and incentives to beautify main thoroughfares and corridors. 	20-22	PZC	1-3 yrs.

Seek New Businesses Compatible with Existing Businesses

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek appropriate businesses as in-fill along corridors. 	20-22	EDC	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In conjunction with recent and future improvements to the airport, encourage appropriate commercial development or redevelopment in the North Windham area. 	20-22	EDC, PZC	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote Windham to the business community as having multi-modal access, with an airport and rail connections. 	23,77	EDC	Ongoing

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - MANUFACTURING	Page(s)	Lead	When
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Build on Momentum from Challenge Grant of Engaging Hispanic/Latino Community

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proactively seek businesses that complement existing businesses either by providing raw material or using their scrap for their own production. 	23	EDC	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen and enhance manufacturing areas near major infrastructure improvements. 	23	EDC	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage opportunities to develop manufacturing pad sites with access to improved freight rail in South Windham. Consider infrastructure improvements, tax abatements, Tax Increment Financing, etc. 	23	EDC	1-3 yrs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner with the State Office of Policy and Management to ensure that updates to the State POCD include rail access as a growth area consideration. 	23	TC	1-3 yrs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek grant funding for municipal improvements to create a road with railroad sidings to facilitate manufacturing development. 	23	TC	3-5 yrs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek grant funding for municipal improvements to replace bridge to Mill #4 area, and a connecting road to Plains Road. 	23	TC	3-5 yrs.



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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - VILLAGES

Page(s)

Lead

When

Preserve and Enhance the Three Villages

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase, where possible, walkability in historic villages with bikeways and walking paths that are physically separated from roadways. 	24-25	COSA, DPW	3-5 yrs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publicize Windham’s historic resources as a step to help protect, preserve, retain, and enhance existing historic sites to promote tourism. 	24-25	COSA, EDC	1-3 yrs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek appropriate small retail and service businesses compatible with the character, scale and architecture of each village. 	24-25	EDC	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage CT DEEP to change septic policy to support smart growth in villages. 	24-25	EDC	1-3 yrs.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - FOOD and AGRICULTURE

Page(s)

Lead

When

Strengthen the Support Network of Local Agriculture Related Businesses

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and promote the Willimantic Farmers Market. 	26-27	COSA	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and market CLiCK (Commercially-Licensed Co-operative Kitchen, Inc.) for its ability to act as an incubator for home-based, food-related businesses or as a support service to local farms. 	26-27	EDC, COSA	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote Windham as a regional hub for local food, with commercial kitchens (CLiCK), the Willimantic Food Co-op, and seasonal farmers markets. 	26-27	EDC, COSA	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review zoning and other regulations for compatibility with farming and other agricultural support services (such as agritourism, events and festivals hosted at farms, etc.) as part of a comprehensive zoning re-write. 	26-27	PZC	3-5 yrs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner with the North Central District Health Department to review regulations concerning food service facilities, and encourage and support the formation of new restaurants and cafes. 	26-27	NCHD, EDC	3-5 yrs.



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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - TOURISM

Page(s)

Lead

When

Build on Windham's Unique Assets to Attract Visitors

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a web-based calendar that lists cultural community events, promote events through image filled emails, and social media similar to Easton, PA. Build a contact list for emailing event news. 	28-30	TC	1-3 yrs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that tourists feel welcome and enjoy a quality experience when visiting Windham. 	28-30	TC	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to support the development of the Whitewater Park as an attractor of future recreational tourism. 	28-30	TC, COSA,	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the East Coast Greenway, the Air Line Trail, and the entire recreation and trails system in Windham as a major attraction for businesses and entertainment. 	28-30	EDC, COSA	1-3 yrs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage programs that make space available and affordable for Windham's arts and culture community. 	28-30	TC, EDC	3-5 yrs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage and promote businesses that provide amenities for students, such as coffee houses, restaurants, and shops. 	28-30	EDC, PZC	5-7 yrs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote and celebrate Windham's historic districts as tourism destinations with appropriate signage, and promotion of events such as Victorian Days and Windham Town Green events. 	28-30	EDC, TC	1-3 yrs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support community organizing efforts to make downtown Willimantic a city of festivals. 	28-30	EDC, TC	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve signage to points of interest, especially on State Highways. 	28-30	DPW, TC	1-3 yrs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek grant funding to continue the My Windham Project, which creates a walkable, interactive art gallery on Main Street in Town-owned spaces and local businesses. 	28-30	TC, EDC	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage and pursue grant funding to redevelop historic buildings into appropriate adaptive re-uses. 	28-30	EDC	1-3 yrs.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - UNIQUE ASSETS

Page(s)

Lead

When

Harness the Potential of College Students to Encourage Entrepreneurialism

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the establishment of businesses that act as resources for other small businesses and entrepreneurs, such as co-working spaces, print shops, and small-scale marketing firms, to create a healthy economic ecosystem. 	28-30	EDC	3-5 yrs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through zoning, continue to support and regulate the development of modern small-scale manufacturing operations. 	28-30	PZC	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pilot a program to have local artists or students host pop-up galleries, studios, or businesses in vacant storefronts. 	28-30	EDC	1-3 yrs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek public/private partnerships, state programs, grants, and other sources to help with startup funding, subsidized rent, or other incentives to fill vacant or underutilized storefronts. 	28-30	EDC, TC, BOF	1-3 yrs.



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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - UNIQUE ASSETS, cont.	Page(s)	Lead	When
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Harness the Potential of the Creative Community

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support ongoing arts and cultural programming, such as the Burton Leavitt Theater, the Windham Regional Arts Council, Capitol Theater, Vulture Town Arts, and local galleries and artists. 	31	TC	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote Windham as a place for artists and entrepreneurs to live, encouraging live/work developments. 	31	TC, EDC, PZC	Ongoing

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT-WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT	Page(s)	Lead	When
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Connect Windham Residents to Training, Education and Employment Opportunities

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner with and support local institutions such as Windham Technical School and the Eastern Connecticut Workforce Investment Board to bolster enrollment of Windham residents in the Eastern CT Pipeline to Success and similar workforce programs aimed at advanced manufacturing jobs and skilled trades. 	32-34	TC, EDC, BOE	1-3 yrs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore partnerships to develop programs similar to the Eastern CT Pipeline to Success for other fields such as healthcare. 	32-34	TC, EDC, BOE	5-7 yrs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with the regional Councils of Governments to lobby for expanded funding for the Windham Region Transit District to increase reliability and service to regional employers, as well as enhancing business connections and interconnections with other transit agencies. 	32-34	EDC, TC, BOF, WRTD	5-7 yrs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide incentives or otherwise encourage the formation of more daycare facilities to aid working families. 	32-34	TC	3-5 yrs.

Seek Opportunities to Prepare Windham's Youth for Success in Local Economy

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide high-quality education for all Windham residents. 	32-34	BOE, BOF	1-3 yrs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultivate an active partnership with the Windham Public School (WPS) system to achieve the goals in the Vision 2020 R.A.I.S.E. Windham Strategic Plan. 	32-34	BOE, TC	1-3 yrs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lobby for full State funding for Special Education services. 	32-34	BOE, TC, BOF	3-5 yrs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate and strengthen partnerships with WPS and local institutions to establish internships and mentoring programs. 	32-34	BOE, TC	5-7 yrs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote recent gains in graduation rates, test scores, and other metrics in the WPS system. 	32-34	BOE, TC, EDC	1-3 yrs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work together with the WPS system on planning and budgeting for facilities improvements. 	32-34	BOE, TC, BOF	1-3 yrs.



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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - INTERNAL SUPPORT

Page(s)	Lead	When
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Continue to Improve Business Applicant's Experience

• Continue to improve the physical space of the land use department.	39	TC	3-5 yrs.
• Change the organizational structure of the department to have a land use staff member as the department head.	39	TC, EDC	1-3 yrs.
• Advocate for and budget for a new Grants Writer position to write grant applications, and coordinate and project manage grant funds.	39	TC, EDC	3-5 yrs.
• Continue to enhance the one-stop-shop approach to permit applications.	39	EDC, PZC	1-3 yrs.

Continue Process to Streamline and Simplify Zoning Regulations

• Continue to review the outcomes of the regulations as an ongoing process of streamlining and simplifying zoning regulations.	35-38	PZC, staff	Ongoing
• Create simple fact sheets for each zone to provide transparency for those seeking a building permit.	35-38	PZC, staff	1-3 yrs.
• Ensure that economic development activities are adequately funded.	35-38	TC	Ongoing

RESIDENTS

Page(s)	Lead	When
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Build on Momentum from Challenge Grant of Engaging Hispanic/Latino Community

• Establish a permanent Latino Resource Center.	41-44	EDC, TC BOE	5-7 yrs.
• Continue outreach through appropriate channels, such as radio shows, schools, and houses of worship.	41-44	EDC, TC	Ongoing
• Work to reduce language barriers by continuing to employ bilingual staff, and put Spanish text on the Town website saying that Town Hall staff can help with translation of documents.	41-44	TC	1-3 yrs.
• Partner with schools to enlist volunteer translators for Town meetings and public events.	41-44	BOE, TC	1-3 yrs.
• Partner with Windham Public Schools to expand or replicate the Family and Community Partnership program to bridge cultural gaps.	41-44	EDC, TC, BOE	1-3 yrs.



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NEIGHBORHOODS AND HOUSING

Page(s) | Lead | When

Encourage Homeownership in Windham

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foster cooperation between Economic Development and Human Services to develop housing promotion programs, such as down payment assistance programs, housing rehab loans, funds for lead abatement, etc. 	44-48	EDC, TC	1-3 yrs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider incentives for Town employees to purchase housing in Windham. 	44-48	TC	3-5 yrs.

Publicize Windham as a Good Place to Live

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote school system improvement and the plans for the future with the real estate and development community. 	42-44	EDC, BOE	1-3 yrs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fund continued school system improvements. 	42-44	BOF, BOE	1-3 yrs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase awareness that Windham is a safe community. 	42-44	EDC, TC	1-3 yrs.

Continue to Support and Grow Existing Housing Support Services

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a greater online presence for Windham Human Services to make current support services and information more accessible. 	44-47	TC	1-3 yrs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocate for a Grants Writer position to win competitive grants geared toward housing and human services programs. 	44-47	TC, BOF	1-3 yrs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As grant funding is won, create lead abatement and housing rehabilitation funds for property owners in need. 	44-47	TC	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support funding to maintain or replace existing Public Housing Authority units as needed. 	44-47	TC	3-5 yrs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore creative grant programs that fully fund restoration with payment only at time of sale or remortgage. 	44-47	TC	5-7 yrs.

Provide a Variety of Housing Options to Meet the Needs of Windham Residents

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create options for older residents to remain in Windham, such as zoning revisions that allow denser, single-story ADA-compliant rental units. 	47-49	PZC	3-5 yrs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incentivize new market-rate housing, especially if the housing: is targeted to young professionals, or the aging 55+ population; or incorporates mixed-use retail on the ground floor in appropriate zones. 	47-49	PZC	3-5 yrs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote and preserve historic buildings, both as housing and for tourism. 	47-49	TC	Ongoing



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NEIGHBORHOODS AND HOUSING, cont.

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Preserve Existing Neighborhoods

• In-fill development on vacant land in existing neighborhoods should reflect the scale and density that is compatible with its surroundings.	41-49	PZC	1-3 yrs.
• Limit new multi-family homes in existing neighborhoods that are predominately single family.	41-49	PZC	1-3 yrs.
• Limit new multi-family housing densities to areas with on-site or nearby parking.	41-49	PZC	1-3 yrs.
• Support local initiatives such as the Willimantic Victorian Neighborhood Association and the Spring Street neighborhood group working toward improving our neighborhoods and encourage new initiatives.	41-49	TC	Ongoing
• Create pocket parks in densely developed areas.	41-49	TC	Ongoing
• Actively enforce housing and zoning codes to ensure that all apartments/homes meet regulatory standards.	41-49	TC	Ongoing

Continue Sustainable Housing Development Policies and Practices

• Continue to incentivize Flexible Design Subdivisions to preserve natural, scenic, historic, and other resources.	41-49	PZC	Ongoing
• Partner with utilities to promote energy efficiency, weatherization, and other steps to reduce overall housing costs.	41-49	EC	1-3 yrs.
• Continue to incentivize energy efficiency, solar and other alternative energy sources, and passive solar design in new subdivisions.	41-49	PZC, EC	Ongoing
• Continue to require stormwater best management practices in new subdivisions, such as rain gardens and permeable pavement.	41-49	PZC	Ongoing
• Continue to promote and encourage development under the adopted IHZ regulations.	41-49	PZC	Ongoing
• Continue to employ best practices in the preservation of open space in new subdivisions, such as by implementing conservation subdivisions.	41-49	PZC, COSA	Ongoing

New Residential Development Should Create Neighborhoods

• Integrate new residential development into the context of the existing neighborhood.	41-49	PZC	Ongoing
• Create additional village centers in, or adjacent to, subdivision with some compatible commercial uses (small eatery, small grocery) in the design and scale appropriate to neighborhood.	41-49	PZC	3-5 yrs.
• Incorporate transit-oriented development when feasible.	41-49	PZC	5-7 yrs.
• Seek ways to encourage developments that include a representative cross section of the Windham population, i.e. a mix of income levels, ages and ethnicity.	41-49	PZC	1-3 yrs.



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NATURAL RESOURCES AND OPEN SPACE	Page(s)	Lead	When
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Identify and Protect Windham's Valuable Natural Resources

• Maintain up-to-date prioritize database of valuable natural resources and priority areas; include priority areas on GIS mapping.	51-58	COSA	Ongoing
• Support the goals of the Open Space Plan, especially as it relates to possible acquisition of properties for open space.	51-58	PZC, COSA	Ongoing
• Review subdivision plans and large developments with goal to keep unfragmented forest and wildlife corridors open, and to maintain as much unfragmented forest land as possible.	51-58	PZC, COSA	Ongoing
• Work with land owners within priority areas who are interested in protecting their land.	51-58	PZC, COSA	Ongoing
• Continue efforts to improve water quality, such as reviewing aquifer protection zone regulations on a regular basis.	51-58	PZC	Ongoing
• Strive to preserve the undeveloped areas around and along our streams, rivers and ponds in their natural state.	51-58	IWWC, COSA	1-3 yrs.
• Continue to require appropriate buffer zones for important water resources; extend upland review area to 200' from the water.	51-58	IWWC	Ongoing
• Implement River Overlay Zone to protect major waterways.	51-58	PZC	3-5 yrs.
• Discourage the use of chemical herbicides and other pesticides for aesthetic purposes on lawns, playing fields, and public areas to reduce possible negative environmental and public health effects.	51-58	DPW, COSA, IWWC	Ongoing
• Strive to preserve agricultural uses and large areas of prime farm soils. Share information on State and Federal incentive programs on natural resource conservation programs with landowners.	51-58	COSA, PZC	Ongoing
• Create a riparian buffer along the Shetucket River that connects South Windham to Plains Road Park and Willimantic.	51-58	COSA	3-5 yrs.
• Partner with the CT Department of Agriculture to assist farmland owners who want to protect their land.	51-58	COSA	Ongoing
• Partner with NCRS to determine locations of Locally Important farmland soils and include in future mapping of farmland soils.	51-58	COSA	1-3 yrs.

Expose Windham Residents and Visitors to the Value of our Natural Resources

• Partner with Windham schools and environmental non-profits to increase appreciation of open spaces, trails and waterways.	57	COSA, RD	Ongoing
• Support groups working on conservation issues through educational programming, recreation, and stewardship activities.	57	COSA, RD	Ongoing
• Celebrate and publicize recreational activities on the trails and rivers in Windham.	57	COSA, RD	Ongoing



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HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

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Promote the Preservation and Enhancement of Historic Structures and Sites

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage rehabilitation programs and grants to assist home/business owners with historic buildings upgrade and maintain their properties with the best standards of historic restoration and rehabilitation. 	63-65	TC	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage adaptive reuse of existing historic structures. 	63-65	PZC, TC	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the protection, preservation and enhancement of historic structures, cemeteries and sites; encourage efforts for other listings on the National Register. 	63-65	COSA, TC	5-7 yrs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage efforts for other listings on the National Register of Historic Places, such as South Side. 	63-65	COSA, TC	5-7 yrs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct full inventory documenting Windham’s historic assets. Add data to the Windham Natural and Cultural Resource mapset. 	63-65	COSA, staff	5-7 yrs.

Increase Appreciation of Historic Resources and Encourage Enhancements

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publicize Windham’s historic resources to enhance public awareness of the value of preservation. 	63-65	TC, COSA, EDC	1-3 yrs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote our districts listed on the National Register of Historic Places by listing on the town’s web site and promoting walking tours. 	63-65	EDC	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage economic development projects that highlight historic resources. 	63-65	EDC	1-3 yrs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner with the Mill Museum to highlight educational programming around Windham’s working rivers. 	63-65	IWWC, WHDC	3-5 yrs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public improvements in historic districts should complement and be compatible with the historic period of the buildings. 	63-65	TC	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lighting, landscaping, sidewalks, bus shelters, benches and other improvements should be carefully selected. 	63-65	TC	Ongoing

Protect Our Rural Character

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify important views, viewsheds and vistas; incorporate their protection into regulations. 	65	COSA, PZC	3-5 yrs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adopt a scenic road ordinance and designate scenic roadways. 	65	COSA, PZC	3-5 yrs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a program for maintaining roadside mature trees with planned maintenance and replenishment. 	65	TC, DPW	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage preserving, rebuilding or relocating roadside stonewalls. 	6571-73	TC, DPW	Ongoing



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COMMUNITY FACILITIES

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Meet Windham's Facility Needs

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that Capital Improvements Program adequately provides for ongoing maintenance and appropriately schedules future renovations or new construction projects. 	71-73	TC	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborate with Windham Public Schools on future plans for the High School building, including the possibility of the building being reused as, or co-location of, a community facility. 	71-73	BOE, TC	1-3 yrs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore cost-effective options for co-locating a community center, senior center, and Parks and Recreation Department in an accessible and appropriate location. 	71-73 18-19	TC	1-3 yrs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan for the expansion of Public Safety Complex, consider relocating to a larger property with sufficient area for future growth. 	71-73	TC	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to provide incentives to encourage residents to volunteer for the Fire Departments, consider consolidation if staffing is an issue. 	71-73	TC	Ongoing

Increase Energy Efficiency and Commitment to Renewable Energy

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek opportunities to incorporate energy efficiency upgrades into renovation and maintenance projects as appropriate. 	71-73	DPW, EC	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek grant opportunities and other funding to expand the current infrastructure for electric vehicle charging stations. 	71-73	TC, EC, BOF	1-3 yrs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build upon momentum from the solar panel and energy cogeneration project at the Middle School and Sweeney Elementary to install more renewable energy systems in municipal facilities as appropriate. 	71-73	DPW, EC	1-3 yrs.

Meet Windham's Needs for Parks and Recreation

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete Airline Trail / East Coast Greenway connection between Bridge and Jackson Streets along Riverside Drive up Railroad Avenue to the North side of Main Street. Include signage along trail to direct users to restaurants and businesses. 	71-73	TC, DPW	1-3 yrs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate with CT DEEP and others to provide maintenance on the Airline Trail and East Coast Greenway including litter removal. 	71-73	TC, DPW	1-3 yrs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek funding for a trail connection in North Windham from Airline Trail to Mansfield Hollow Recreational Areas. 	71-73	TC, BOF	5-7 yrs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete plans for Jillson Square as a green space for outdoor events, Willimantic Farmers' Market and recreational activities. 	18-19	TC, DPW	1-5 yrs.



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INFRASTRUCTURE: TRANSPORTATION	Page(s)	Lead	When
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Engage with DOT to Reduce Negative Impact State Roads Have on Quality of Life

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lobby DOT to find an alternative route for Route 66 on Main Street to reduce truck traffic, congestion and accidents downtown. 	20	SCRCOG, TC, DPW	5-7 yrs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request DOT direct downtown Route 6 traffic toward downtown instead of to High Street. 	20	TC, DPW	3-5 yrs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with the DOT to increase highway signage to promote Windham attractions. 	75-77	TC, DPW, EDC	1-3 yrs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with CT COT to ensure that all crosswalk signals along Main Street are in working order, and are activated promptly by pedestrian demand. Alternatively, advocate the routing of Route 66 off Main Street in Downtown Center. 	20	TC, WTA	1-3 yrs.

Improve Public Transit to Serve the Needs of the Community

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build on Working Cities Challenge grant efforts to seek alternate transportation to connect workers to places of employment. 	75-77	EDC	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate with surrounding towns to lobby for more funding for public transit serving the Windham region. 	75-77	TC, WRTD	3-5 yrs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As funding allows, partner with WRTD to improve service levels, hours of operation, bus shelters and a clear route map and schedule. 	75-77	TC, WRTD, BOF	5-7 yrs.

Improve Street Lighting for Pedestrian Safety, and Maintain Sidewalks

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct a town-wide lighting study for all sidewalks to determine the appropriate level of and type of illumination for each location. Implement the results of that study. 	75-77	TC	1-3 yrs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include sidewalk maintenance in the public works operating budget; replace the entire block of sidewalk only when the replacement cost is less than maintenance, or the sidewalk needs to be widened. 	75-77	TC	Ongoing

INFRASTRUCTURE: GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE	Page(s)	Lead	When
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Use Green Infrastructure Techniques

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan for and incorporate Low Impact Design (LID) best practices into all municipal infrastructure projects whenever appropriate. 	78	TC, DPW	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to require, whenever possible, developers to incorporate LID techniques in private developments. 	78	PZC	Ongoing



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INFRASTRUCTURE: MUNICIPAL UTILITIES

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Ensure that Utilities Continue to Serve the Needs of the Community

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain and upgrade the town's sewer lines and sewage treatment facilities. 	79-80	TC	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support infrastructure plans developed by Windham Water Commission. 	79-80	TC	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain and clean-out storm water catch basins to limit the amount of road pollutants entering Willimantic River. 	79-80	DPW	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider extension of water and sewer utilities to the Franklin border to support development of industrial pads near the rail line. 	79-80	TC	3-5 yrs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to require that new developments must consider and reduce stormwater run-off volume, reduce peak discharges, increase run-off travel time, increase groundwater recharge and avoid impacts to natural stream flows by utilizing techniques outlined in the CT DEEP's Connecticut Stormwater Quality Manual. 	79-80	PZC	Ongoing

INFRASTRUCTURE: ENERGY AND SUSTAINABILITY

Page(s) | Lead | When

Continue to Lead Windham to Energy Sustainability, and Community Resilience

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to develop local energy security and resilience for emergency preparedness and local self-reliance through the expansion of renewable energy and storage capabilities in the public sector, while assisting residents and businesses in pursuing options for energy security. 	81	EC, TC	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to assist Windham, its residents and businesses with the information and tools needed to become more energy efficient, with a goal of reducing energy consumption by 50% town wide. 	81	EC, TC	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work toward the goal of 100% of municipal electricity consumption is from renewable sources, including a municipal vehicle fleet that does not use fossil fuels. 	81	TC, DPW	Ongoing

INFRASTRUCTURE: TECHNOLOGY

Page(s) | Lead | When

Ensure that Technology Infrastructure Serves the Needs of the Community

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with local businesses, the library, and residents to ensure that technology infrastructure is meets the needs of Windham. 	80	TC	Ongoing
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Windham, CT Plan of Conservation and Development 2017