

# Plan of Conservation and Development Stafford, Connecticut

November 3, 2022



## **Town of Stafford Planning & Zoning Commission**

### **Elected Members:**

David Palmberg, Chairman  
Cynthia Rummel, Secretary  
Ronald C. Houle II  
David Mordasky  
Richard Shuck

### **Alternate Members:**

Danielle Chenard  
Leonard Clark  
Christopher Joseph

### **Staff:**

David Perkins, Certified Zoning Enforcement Officer

### **Town of Stafford**

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### **Cover images:**

*Left: Small businesses are revitalizing the Main Street of Stafford.  
Right: Agricultural land in the Hydeville section of Stafford.*

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**Note: The Stafford Affordability Plan is a supplement.**

## INTRODUCTION, HISTORY AND PURPOSE

### Introduction

Stafford is a rural community of approximately 12,000 residents, covering approximately 58 square miles in the Willimantic River Valley between almost parallel ranges of hills.

The Town of Stafford is comprised of Stafford Springs, the village of Staffordville, the hamlet of Orcuttville, the village and historic district of Stafford Hollow, the village of Hydeville and West Stafford. These areas are described in greater detail on page 48.

Stafford's main industries are manufacturing of woolen products, printed circuits, filters, metal bushings and bearings, precision medical devices, fly rod components, and nameplates and labels. Other important industries are nursery and horticultural products, health care services, seasonal camping, motor sports, and recreation.

There are approximately 5,000 housing units in Stafford. Most are single-family homes, which are typically of wood-frame construction.

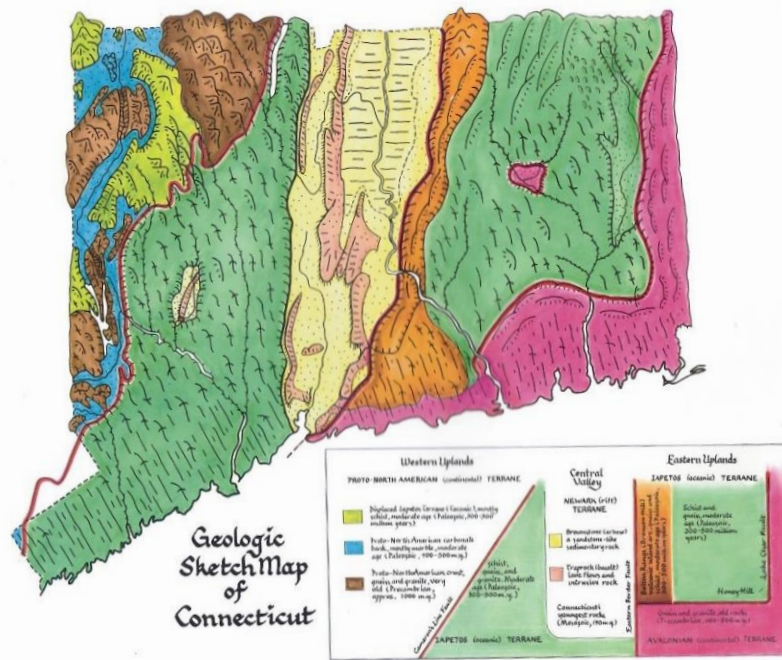
Three campgrounds are located in Stafford, which attract a seasonal population of approximately 2,000. Sun Valley on Old Springfield Road has a seasonal population of approximately 900, Mineral Springs Family Campground on Leonard Road houses approximately 100, and Roaring Brook Campground on South Road serves approximately 1,000.

Stafford has over 10,000 acres of protected space and is home to the Connecticut Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) Museum.

Stafford is also home to Johnson Memorial Hospital and Evergreen Health Care Center. Stafford Sand & Gravel and Skyline Quarry provide mined earth materials to the surrounding community. Today's Stafford Motor Speedway had been the site of an agricultural park that opened in 1870 and attracted thousands to the town's annual agricultural fair. Motor racing started there after World War II and continues today. The Palace Theatre, which opened in 1900 as a vaudeville theatre, still operates today as a 400-seat venue for performing artists.

### History

Stafford today, as part of Connecticut, was formed over the eons by the power of heat, cold and plate tectonics. About 250 million years ago during the formation of the supercontinent Pangea, an island called Avalonia crashed into the continent, closing the Iapetus Ocean and forming towering mile-high mountains. Then 50 million years later the tropical island broke apart. As the new continents formed, eastern Connecticut remained connected to the central valley as it opened up, and Connecticut was divided into the eastern and western highlands and the central valley. Stafford is at the western side of the highlands and is dominated by long-running north-to-south mountains and valleys. Over the next millennia, erosion of the mountains took place and the continent relaxed its earth-shaking movements. Then 3-5 million years ago the climate cooled and glaciers formed, moving to and fro causing the landscape to change again as it eroded soft rock and left the hills of today exposed. About



18,000 years ago the glaciers started melting, causing sea level to rise and the Connecticut valley to be covered by Lake Hitchcock. The land today is still recovering from the glacier as the weather continues to warm and storms get more violent.

This was the land the first settlers found in Stafford. The land created the industries that followed. The iron bogs were mined to create cannon balls and armament until the mines ran out. The fast-moving rivers created energy to manufacture woolens and buttons. The earth was farmed. The spring waters were “taken” and bottled. Stafford continued to expand.

Stafford was initially settled in the early 1700s when Captain James Fitch claimed the land through a title agreement with the Nipmucks. He proceeded to sell land without the authority of the Hartford colony which then authorized the formation of the town in 1719. Stafford Street (originally named Broad Street) was then laid out on a hill at the east side of town, with the expectation that it was to be the main street and center of the town. It was laid out 20 rods wide (332 feet) in order to provide a green along with the roadway. Twenty-two home lots of 50 acres each were laid out along both sides of the street. At a town meeting on December 11, 1721, it was “voted to go on to build a meetinghouse as fast as may be with conuenency...” It was completed in 1723 and for many years was the only meetinghouse in Stafford. The meetinghouse stood in what is now the middle of Stafford Street, toward the south end. A second meetinghouse was built in the 1770s and a third in 1840. This area is now known as Heritage Park.

The mineral springs in Stafford were first discovered and used by the natives for their healing powers. The first settlers also found the waters to be convalescent. In the late 18th century, Stafford was known far and wide for these healing waters. In 1767, a direct stage route was established from Boston to Stafford Springs to capitalize on this budding resort’s popularity and to make it more easily accessible. Future U.S. President John Adams visited the springs in 1771. Through the early 1800s, visitors to the springs would stay at small hotels such as Child’s, Colburn’s, and the Green. In 1802, Dr. Samuel Willard bought the property and built the Stafford Springs House to accommodate patrons of the miracle water. His clientele grew as the springs’ reputation continued to spread, Stafford Springs

continued as America's first resort town for a century, when it was eclipsed by other towns such as Saratoga Springs that also offered horse racing and gambling. The original mineral spring is located next to the Stafford Historical Society Museum on Spring Street.

Stafford was primarily an agricultural town, working the flat lands along Stafford Street until the 1780s, when iron ore was discovered in Furnace Hollow. A blast furnace was built which utilized ore from nearby beds of "bog iron." Revolutionary cannons and cannonballs were produced; cast kettles and stoves and forged items such as agricultural implements were also made. The ore for the blast furnaces gave out in the 1830s, but the production of metal products continued. The smaller villages sprung up around the foundries with housing and shops for the workers.

The development of textile manufacturing in the later 19th century replaced the iron industry. However, the expertise of the local residents with metal-products manufacturing enabled them to create novel machinery for the textile industry. Eli Horton in the 1830s supplied spinning mules and other machines to mills as far away as East Killingly. Moses B. Harvey invented and manufactured a flock cutter and other cloth-dressing machines; Elijah Fairman patented a satinnet loom. The blacksmiths and molders were joined by machinists and "mechanics" who made the shafting, gears, and machines needed for industrial production. One significant result of Stafford's machine-shop activity was the invention of the universal scroll chuck, a lathe fixture which would become part of every machine shop. The second aspect of textile manufacture was more direct: in the



*The mineral spring is located adjacent to the Stafford Historical Society Museum on Spring Street.*

1830s the waterpower of the brooks and rivers was harnessed to enable the development of textile factories and related industries, such as the Hydeville mill on Hydeville Road, the Stafford Worsted mill (now the site of American Sleeve Bearing), the Rhode Island Mill on West Street, the Schwanda button factory in Staffordville (now a TTM Technologies site), and many others. These mills continued to operate through the 1950s when the industry moved south. As noted, these mills have been repurposed into the factories of today.

## Purpose

The Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) is a comprehensive plan for Stafford's future, as required by the State of Connecticut. This task is assigned to the Planning and Zoning Commission in each of the state's towns once every 10 years.

Developing an updated POCD provides the Town of Stafford with an opportunity to reflect on our own collective vision, taking into consideration the current economic, natural and social environments. Based on this, the Town of Stafford Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC) is able to create goals and tasks to accomplish that vision.

### **The State Statute compelling us to create the POCD states that we shall consider the following:**

- the community development action plan of the municipality, if any;
- the need for affordable housing;
- the need for protection of existing and potential public surface and ground drinking water supplies;
- the use of cluster development and other development patterns to the extent consistent with soil types, terrain, and infrastructure capacity within the municipality;
- the State Plan of Conservation and Development, adopted pursuant to CGS Chapter 297;

- the regional council of governments' Plan of Conservation and Development, adopted pursuant to section 8-35a;
- the physical, social, economic, and governmental conditions and trends;
- the needs of the municipality including, but not limited to, human resources, education, health, housing, recreation, social services, public utilities, public protection, transportation and circulation, and cultural and interpersonal communications;
- the objectives of energy-efficient patterns of development, the use of solar and other renewable forms of energy and energy conservation;
- the protection and preservation of agriculture;
- the most recent sea-level change scenario, updated pursuant to subsection (b) of section 25-680; and
- the need for technology infrastructure in the municipality.

### **The POCD shall also:**

- be a statement of policies, goals, and standards for the physical and economic development of the municipality;
- provide for a system of principal thoroughfares, parkways, bridges, streets, sidewalks, multipurpose trails and other public ways as appropriate;
- be designed to promote, with the greatest efficiency and economy, the coordinated development of the municipality and the general welfare and prosperity of its people and identify

areas where it is feasible and prudent (1) to have compact, transit-accessible, pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use development patterns and land reuse, and (2) to promote such development patterns and land reuse;

- recommend the most desirable use of land within the municipality for residential, recreational, commercial, industrial, conservation, agricultural and other purposes and include a map showing such proposed land uses;

- recommend the most desirable density of population in the several parts of the municipality;

- make note of any inconsistencies with the following **growth management principles**:

- a. redevelopment and revitalization of commercial centers and areas of mixed land uses with existing or planned physical infrastructure;
- b. expansion of housing opportunities and design choices to accommodate a variety of household types and needs;
- c. concentration of development around transportation nodes and along major transportation corridors to support the viability of transportation options and land reuse;
- d. conservation and restoration of the natural environment, cultural and historical resources and existing farmlands;
- e. protection of environmental assets critical to public health and safety; and

- f. integration of planning across all levels of government to address issues on a local, regional and statewide basis;

- make provision for the development of housing opportunities, including opportunities for multifamily dwellings, consistent with soil types, terrain and infra-structure capacity, for all residents of the municipality and the planning region in which the municipality is located, as designated by the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management under section 16a-4a;

- promote housing choice and economic diversity in housing, including housing for both low- and moderate- income households, and encourage the development of housing that will meet the housing needs identified in the state’s consolidated plan for housing and community development, prepared pursuant to section 8-37t and in the housing component and the other components of the State Plan of Conservation and Development, prepared pursuant to chapter 297; and

- consider allowing older adults and persons with a disability the ability to live in their homes and communities whenever possible. **Such a plan for older adults and for persons with a disability** may:

- a. permit home sharing in single-family zones between up to four adult persons of any age with a disability or who are 60 years of age or older, whether or not related, who receive supportive services in the home;
- b. allow accessory apartments for persons with a disability or persons 60 years of age or older, or their caregivers, in all residential zones, subject to municipal zoning regulations concerning design and long-term use of the principal property after it is no longer in use by such persons; and



- c. expand the definition of “family” in single-family zones to allow for accessory apartments for persons 60 years of age or older, persons with a disability or their caregivers. In preparing such plan the commission shall consider focusing development and revitalization in areas with existing or planned physical infrastructure.

**The POCD shall also:**

- show the commission’s and any special committee's recommendation for:
  - a. conservation and preservation of traprock and other ridgelines;
  - b. airports, parks, playgrounds and other public grounds;
  - c. the general location, relocation and improvement of schools and other public buildings;
  - d. the general location and extent of public utilities and terminals, whether publicly or privately owned, for water, light, power, transit and other purposes;
  - e. the extent and location of public housing projects;
  - f. programs for the implementation of the POCD, including (1) a schedule, (2) a budget for public capital projects, (3) a

program for enactment and enforcement of zoning and subdivision controls, building and housing codes, and safety regulations, (4) plans for implementation of affordable housing, (5) plans for open-space acquisition and greenways protection and development, and (6) plans for corridor management areas along limited access highways or rail lines, designated under section 16a-27;

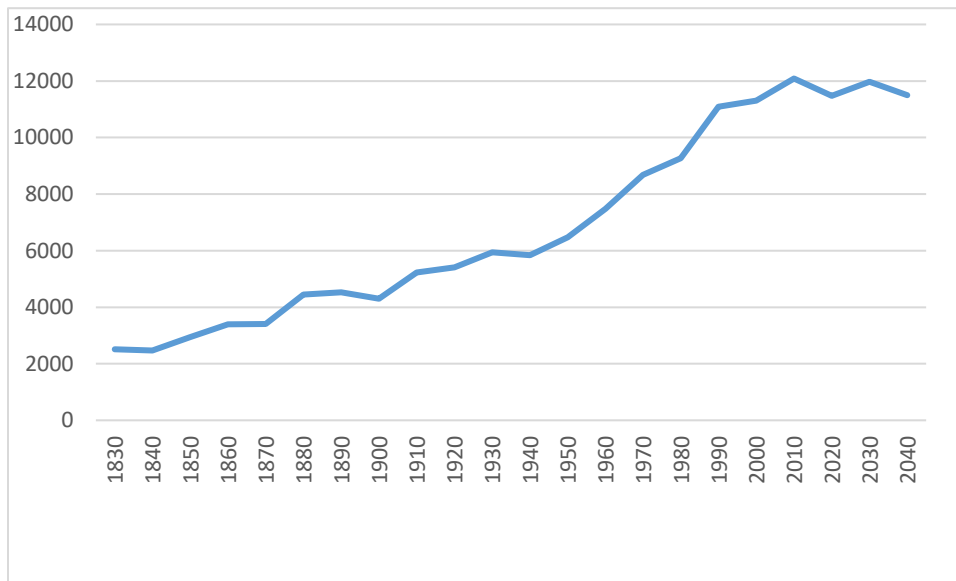
- g. proposed priority funding areas; and
- h. any other recommendations as will, in the commission’s or any special committee’s judgment, be beneficial to the municipality.

The plan may include any necessary and related maps, explanatory material, photographs, charts or other pertinent data and information relative to the past, present and future trends of the municipality.

Any municipal plan of conservation and development shall identify the general location and extent of any (1) areas served by existing sewerage systems, (2) areas where sewerage systems are planned, and (3) areas where sewers are to be avoided. In identifying such areas, the commission shall consider the provisions of this section and the priority funding area provisions of chapter 297.

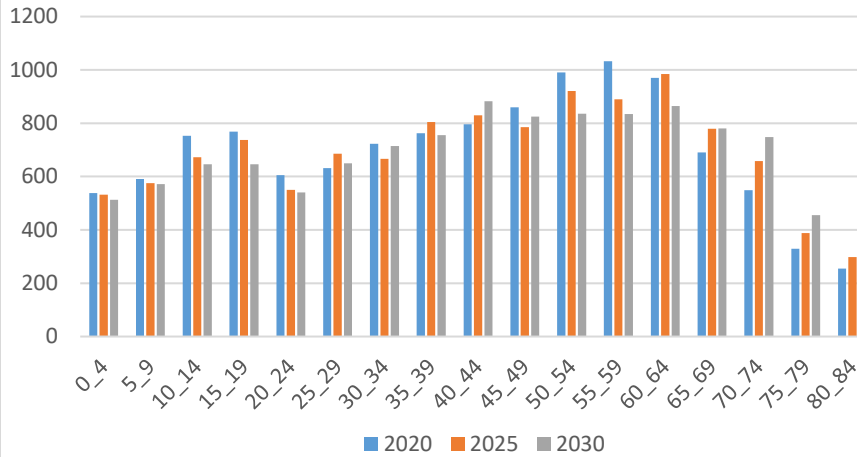
## POPULATION

The population of Stafford, after decades of growth, declined by 5% to 11,472 as of the 2020 Census, but is predicted to increase to 11,968 in 2030.



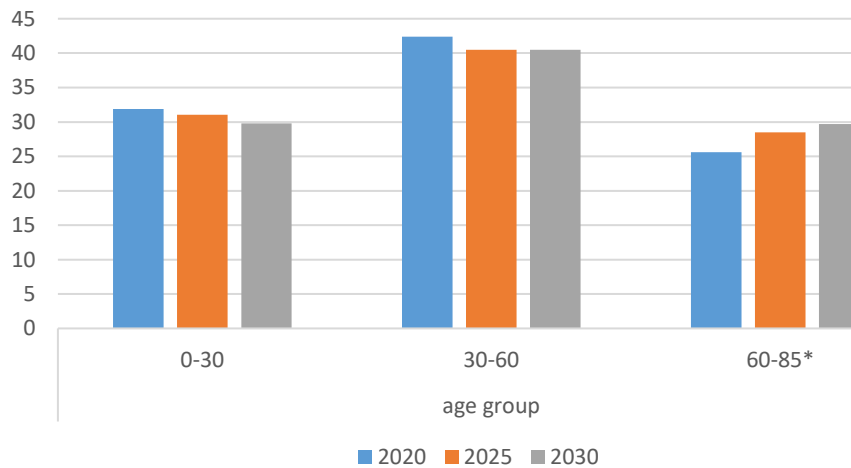
year	population
1830	2515
1840	2469
1850	2940
1860	3397
1870	3405
1880	4451
1890	4531
1900	4297
1910	5233
1920	5407
1930	5945
1940	5835
1950	6471
1960	7476
1970	8680
1980	9268
1990	11091
2000	11307
2010	12087
2020	11472
2030	11968
2040	11496

Age Group Changes (Actual Number)



	age group #		
year	0-29	30-59	60-85
2020	3,887	5,163	3,121
2025	3,753	4,897	3,440
2030	3,567	4,848	3,554

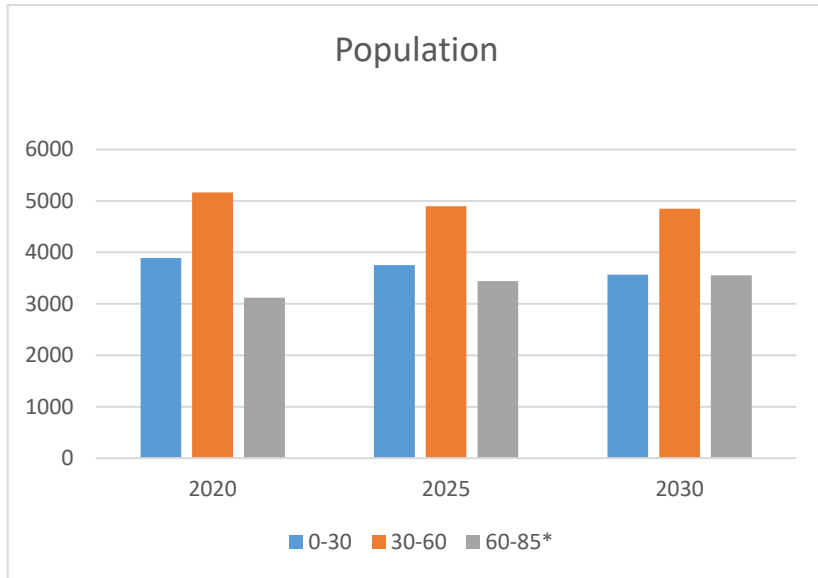
Stafford's Shifting Age Groups (Percentage)



There will be a remarkable shift in the age group character of Stafford over the next ten years

Almost 3,000 or 30% of the population is now aged between 50 and 64. This population in 2030 will shrink to 25% or about 2500 people while the 65+ group will increase from 18% to 22% of the population, an increase of about 500 people.

families to enhance the vibrancy of the town. The town population is expected to increase over the next ten years, and there will be a significant change in age demographics. The town should provide amenities that will attract a younger age group while providing for the needs of the seniors. The Staffordville School may be a linchpin in this process.



year	age group %		
	0-29	30-59	60-85
2020	31.9%	42.4%	25.6%
2025	31.1%	40.5%	28.5%
2030	29.8%	40.5%	29.7%

The town should strive to integrate public buildings for the use of the ageing seniors as well as make them attractive to the younger cohort in order to maintain the older generation and attract younger

year	age group #		
	0-29	30-59	60-85
2020	3,887	5,163	3,121
2025	3,753	4,897	3,440
2030	3,567	4,848	3,554

## HOME VALUES

Home Value	Connecticut		Tolland County		Stafford	
Owner-occupied units	905,681	905,681	39,960	39,960	3,448	3,448
Less than \$50,000	17,522	1.9%	778	1.9%	49	1.4%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	28,440	3.1%	1,048	2.6%	135	3.9%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	78,467	8.7%	3,050	7.6%	714	20.7%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	137,944	15.2%	6,721	16.8%	992	28.8%
\$200,000 to \$299,999	248,431	27.4%	14,850	37.2%	1,070	31.0%
\$300,000 to \$499,999	244,855	27.0%	11,334	28.4%	462	13.4%
\$500,000 to \$999,999	107,504	11.9%	1,795	4.5%	12	0.3%
\$1,000,000 or more	42,518	4.7%	384	1.0%	14	0.4%
Median (dollars)	275,400	(X)	253,100	(X)	191,600	(X)
Housing units with a mortgage	614,351	614,351	27,216	27,216	2,313	2,313
Less than \$500	958	0.2%	15	0.1%	0	0.0%
\$500 to \$999	21,034	3.4%	1,096	4.0%	115	5.0%
\$1,000 to \$1,499	97,919	15.9%	4,848	17.8%	678	29.3%
\$1,500 to \$1,999	157,564	25.6%	8,389	30.8%	803	34.7%
\$2,000 to \$2,499	124,562	20.3%	6,306	23.2%	456	19.7%
\$2,500 to \$2,999	78,757	12.8%	3,301	12.1%	182	7.9%
\$3,000 or more	133,557	21.7%	3,261	12.0%	79	3.4%
Median (dollars)	2,119	(X)	1,955	(X)	1,737	(X)

Almost 50% of the homes occupied in Stafford are valued between \$100,000 and \$199,999, compared to 25% for the state and county.

Only 13% of the homes occupied in Stafford are valued between \$300,000 and \$399,999, compared to more than 25% for the state and county.

Note median value is low as well.

More than 60% of the homes occupied in Stafford have a monthly mortgage payment between \$1,000 and \$1,999, compared to 40% for the state and 47% for the county.

Only 11% of the homes occupied in Stafford have a monthly mortgage payment higher than \$2,500, compared to 31% for the state and 24% for the county.

## RENTALS

GROSS RENT	State		County		Town	
Occupied units paying rent	446,564	446,564	15,215	15,215	1,224	1,224
Less than \$500	43,948	9.8%	973	6.4%	63	5.1%
\$500 to \$999	107,314	24.0%	4,350	28.6%	539	44.0%
\$1,000 to \$1,499	172,238	38.6%	5,973	39.3%	533	43.5%
\$1,500 to \$1,999	77,046	17.3%	2,618	17.2%	83	6.8%
\$2,000 to \$2,499	26,477	5.9%	837	5.5%	0	0.0%
\$2,500 to \$2,999	9,972	2.2%	309	2.0%	0	0.0%
\$3,000 or more	9,569	2.1%	155	1.0%	6	0.5%
Median (dollars)	1,180	(X)	1,155	(X)	1,007	(X)
No rent paid	18,501	(X)	508	(X)	35	(X)

Almost 85% of the homes rented in Stafford rent monthly between \$500 and \$1,499 compared, to 62% for the state and 67% for the county.

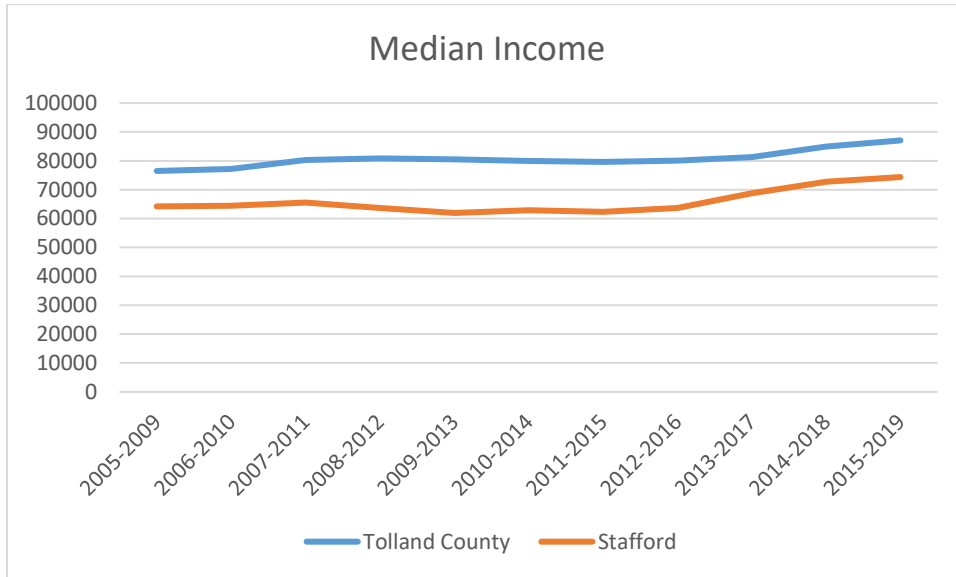
Only 7% of the homes rented in Stafford rent monthly higher than \$1,500, compared to 27% for the state and the county.

GROSS RENT PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME	State		County		Town	
Occupied units paying rent	437,384	437,384	14,949	14,949	1,184	1,184
Less than 15.0 percent	52,712	12.1%	1,591	10.6%	150	12.7%
15.0 to 19.9 percent	52,270	12.0%	2,026	13.6%	190	16.0%
20.0 to 24.9 percent	54,264	12.4%	2,134	14.3%	146	12.3%
25.0 to 29.9 percent	52,657	12.0%	1,810	12.1%	259	21.9%
30.0 to 34.9 percent	39,555	9.0%	1,206	8.1%	102	8.6%
35.0 percent or more	185,926	42.5%	6,182	41.4%	337	28.5%
Not computed	27,681	(X)	774	(X)	75	(X)

Cost burdened households (those paying more than 35% of their monthly income in rent) represent 28.5% of the renters, as compared to over 40% for the state and county.

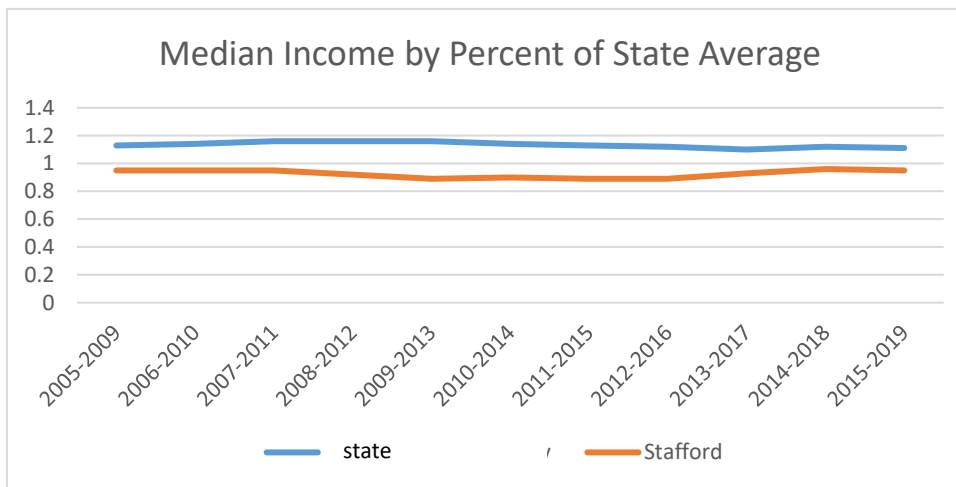
22% of renters pay only 25% to 29.9% of their income on rent, compared to 12% for the state and county.

## HOUSEHOLD INCOME



**Stafford’s income is close to the county average.**

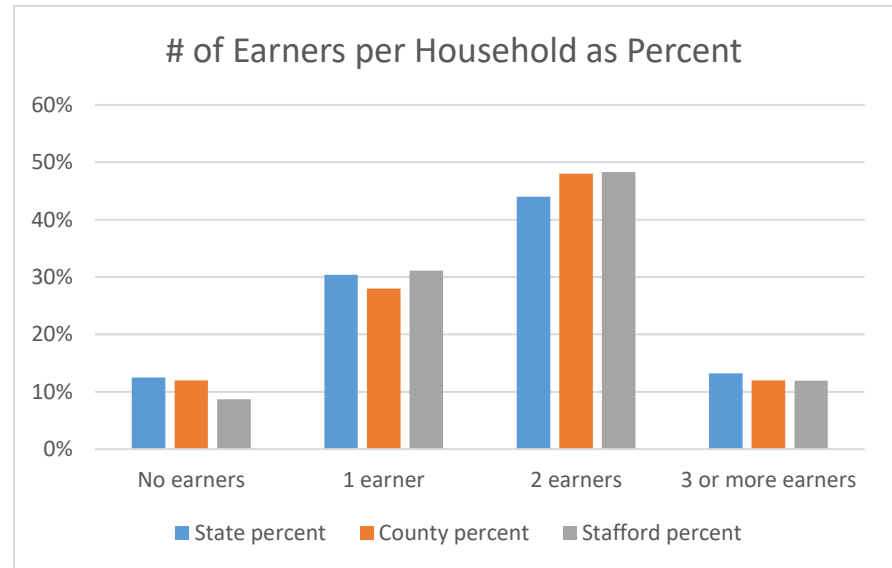
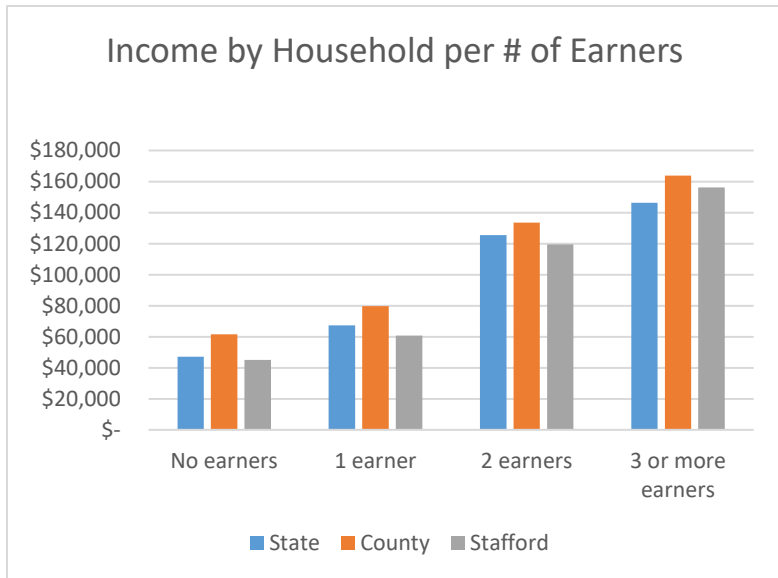
Median income for the town of Stafford in 2020 is \$68,000 annually, compared to \$76,000 for the county. It has increased by over 16% since 2010, compared to 14% for the County



The gap between Stafford’s median income and the State average has shrunk since 2010.

It takes a household of two earners to afford housing in Stafford and Connecticut generally. The town should strive to meet the needs of working families by promoting day care for infants, before and after school activities for children, and activities for seniors.. The average wage in Stafford has increased since 2004.

More than 50% of households in Stafford have at least 2 Earners.





## OPEN SPACE

About 29 % of Stafford's land area is dedicated open space. These areas are actively used by hikers, hunters, and nature lovers. Stafford does not need to expand open space but should preserve and enhance it through deed restrictions and by connecting fragmented pieces. The town should be aware that there are several large lots that could be developed but should be preserved. Dedicated open space has increased by 4% over the past 10 years primarily due to land purchases by the Northern CT Land Trust and citizens placing land into the Forest Legacy Program.

The Stafford Conservation Commission's mission is to work to promote sound land-use practices, in conjunction with town, county and state agencies and commissions, to increase public awareness of the ecology, to promote community responsibility and awareness of conservation needs, and to encourage outdoor activity. The Commission maintains activities and trails at Dennis Pond, West Stafford and the Woodlawn trail.

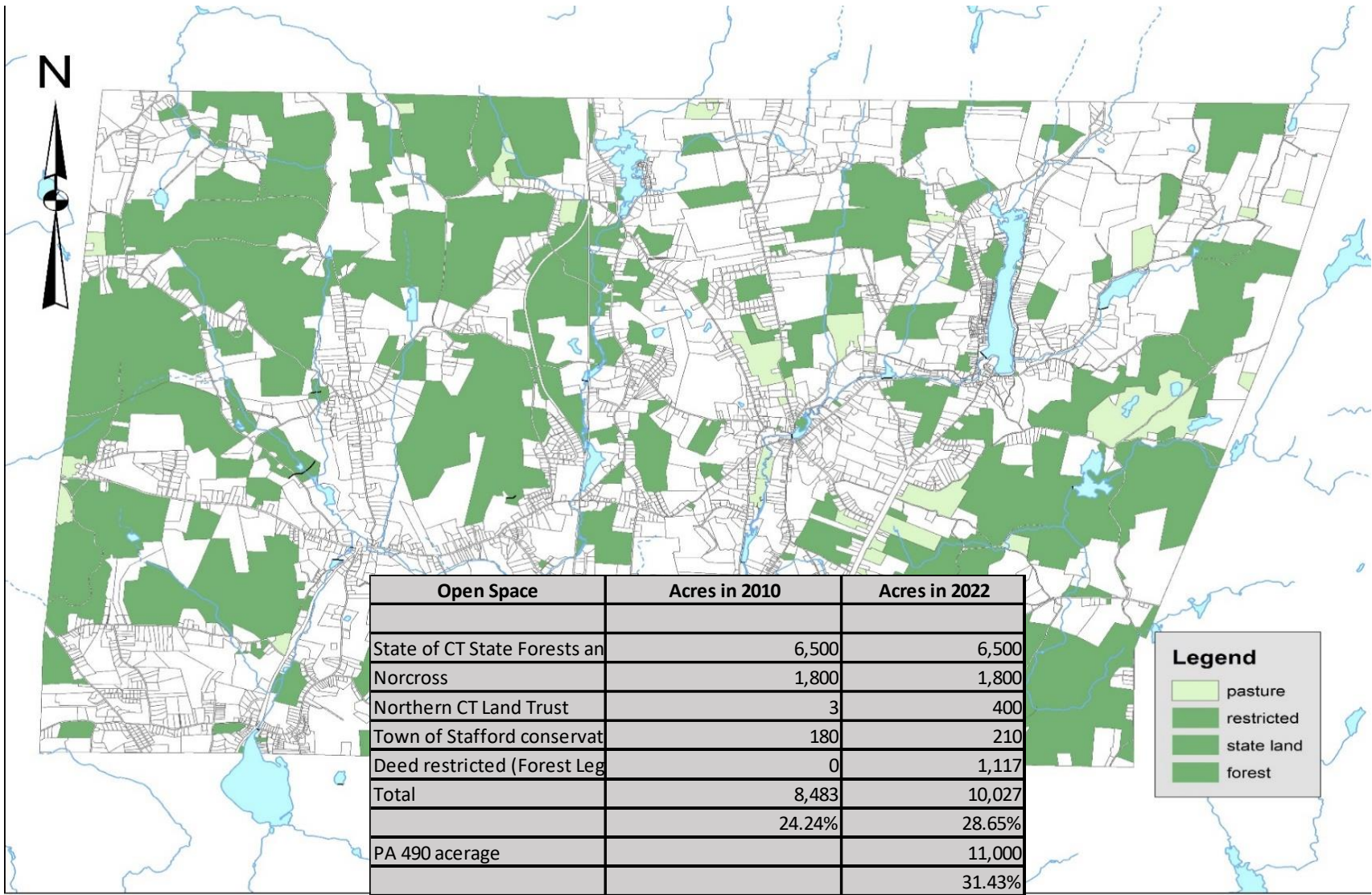
With climate change and global warming, Stafford is experiencing more erratic and severe weather events. In May 2022, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) reported that the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere has reached its highest level in human history at 421 parts per million, 50% higher than pre-industrial levels. "CO2 pollution is generated by burning fossil fuels for transportation and electricity generation, by cement manufacturing, deforestation, agriculture and many other practices. Along with other greenhouse gases, CO2 traps heat radiating from the planet's surface that would otherwise escape into space, causing

the planet's atmosphere to warm steadily, which unleashes a cascade of weather impacts, including episodes of extreme heat, drought and wildfire activity, as well as heavier precipitation, flooding and tropical storm activity according to NOAA."

Trees and forests are Stafford's greatest assets and a major defense in countering the ravages of climate change. Forests, especially those that are allowed to grow to maximum maturity and biodiversity, sequester a significant amount of carbon and thus remove it from the atmosphere. In this way, mature forests as well as individual trees help cool our climate - locally as well as globally - and protect the land from erosion and the loss of precious topsoil.

Given the low population density and the predicted decline of population growth over the next two decades, there is less need to develop housing, especially in open space areas. The town and surrounding areas would benefit from a coordinated effort by land use commissions and community partners to conserve, protect, and expand our natural forest ecosystems and to adopt and promote best practices for Natural Area Stewardship.

The Wildlands, Woodlands, Farmlands and Communities Coalition of New England states that "Clean air, safe drinking water, a healthy, local food supply, diverse wildlife, and the natural systems that protect us from natural disasters are at risk. We must protect land today to ensure a safer, healthier tomorrow." Their long-reaching goal is to protect 80% of New England as forests and farmlands to support vibrant, healthy communities now and for future generations. Stafford, with its large land area and large percentage of open space, must become more proactive in this endeavor.



## WATER AND NATURE

Stafford is a land of lakes and water and is made up of two watersheds. The very western watershed is the headwaters for the Sciantic River, which flows north into Massachusetts and then west into the Connecticut River at Enfield. The balance of the watercourses in town flow to Long Island Sound and form the Willimantic River in Stafford Springs at the confluence of Furnace Brook and the Middle River.

Major waterbodies include New City Pond, Crystal Lake, and Staffordville Reservoir. Each lake has public access, although the reservoir access is only through the town beach with restricted hours. The town should investigate creating a canoe/kayak launch area at the Staffordville Reservoir. The town should partner with the local lake associations to ensure that the lakes remain healthy. This may include wash stations for boats and pesticide applications to control invasive species. The zoning regulations in the watersheds around the lakes should be changed to promote low-impact and sustainable stormwater management solutions. Development and construction on steep slopes more than 15% and areas of high probability of erosion should be discouraged. Nonpoint water pollution sources should be monitored and eliminated by educating the public about alternative strategies to eliminate the use of polluting products. The services of the North Central Conservation District should be used to identify and monitor areas of special environmental concern.

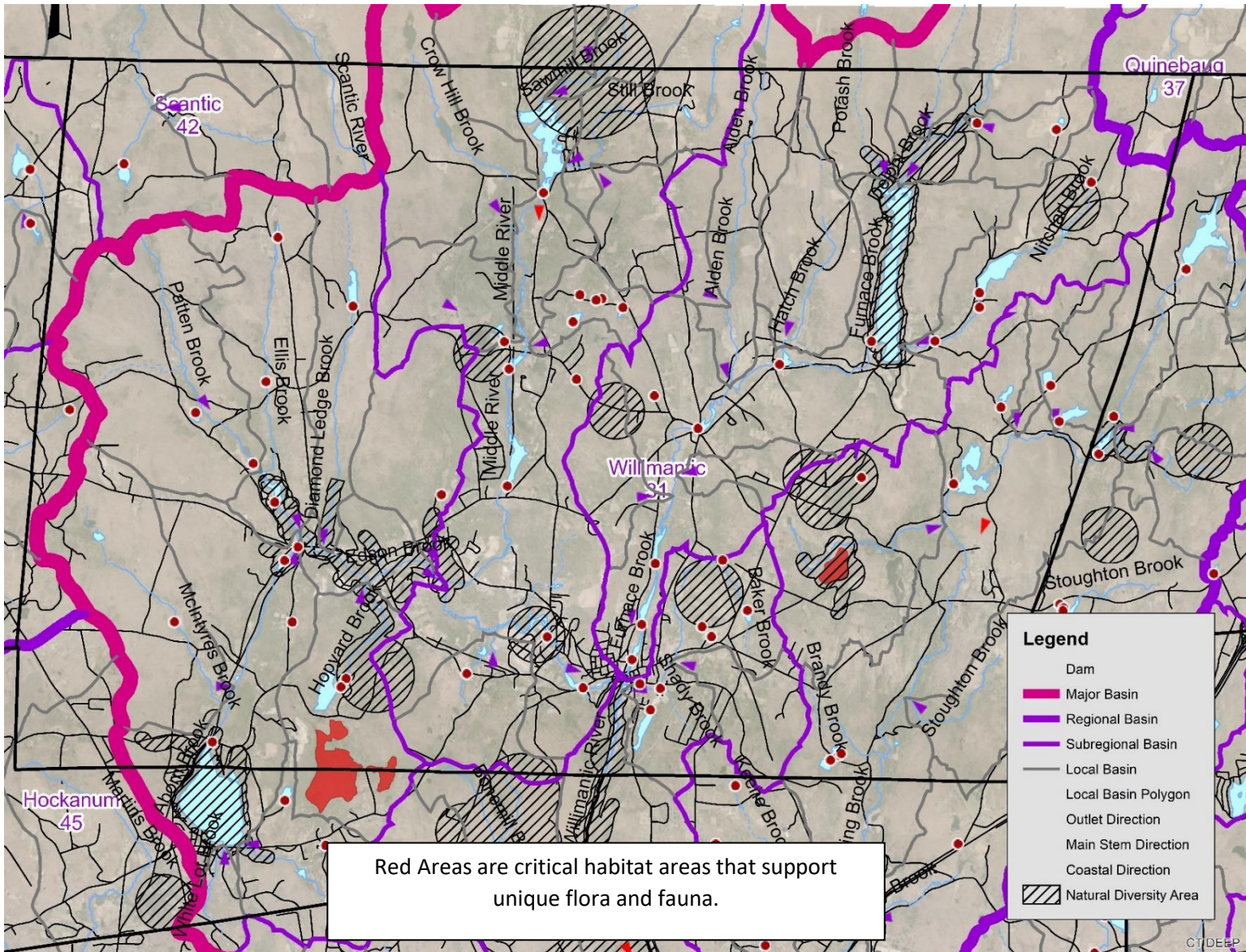
The Natural Diversity Data Base maps represent approximate locations of endangered, threatened, and special concern species along with significant natural communities in Connecticut. The

locations of species and natural communities depicted on the maps are based on data collected over the years by DEEP staff, scientists, conservation groups, and landowners. The town of Stafford should promote and contribute to this data base. The town must consult this data base as a first step when considering any area for development

Currently there are two areas in town recognized as critical habitat supporting unique flora and fauna as shown in red on the opposite map. These are both Acidic Atlantic White Cedar Swamps, which are evergreen-forested and/or shrub swamps of stagnant or slow-moving water on decomposed peats and mucks, with a predominance of Atlantic White Cedar. They are rare natural communities found in low-lying isolated patches along a stretch of the Eastern Seaboard and Gulf Coast.

Pursuant to Connecticut Public Act 95-335, the town should develop a Greenway Plan. Such a plan would help connect existing protected areas and include natural features such as waterways like the Middle River and the Willimantic River. Connecting natural areas with a greenway corridor increases the natural habitat for wildlife to thrive in and thereby increases and sustains biodiversity. The quality of life of Stafford residents is enhanced when such areas are designated and protected.

There are 56 Dams in Stafford, six of which are flood-control structures built in the 1960s. The town should continue to monitor and maintain the dams it owns, while assisting private dam owners with their needs.



## AGRICULTURE

Though hilly and rocky, Stafford has remained true to its agricultural roots.

About 200 acres are in the tillable land 490 category.

Over 30 farms creating maple syrup, beef, honey, vegetables, flowers, mums, goats, hay, blueberries, and equine exist in town. A map is available of farms in town and a list is kept on the Explore Stafford website. Down to Earth farm is a Community Supported Agriculture farm located on Michelec Road.

The Agricultural Commission advises the town on agricultural issues and hosts Farm Day annually.

New England Meat Company on Furnace Hollow Road processes and packages meat related products. There may be possible synergies between New England Meat Company and local farmers as well as innovative businesses that may be able to use the meat company's by-products to create additional products. The town should support these synergies.

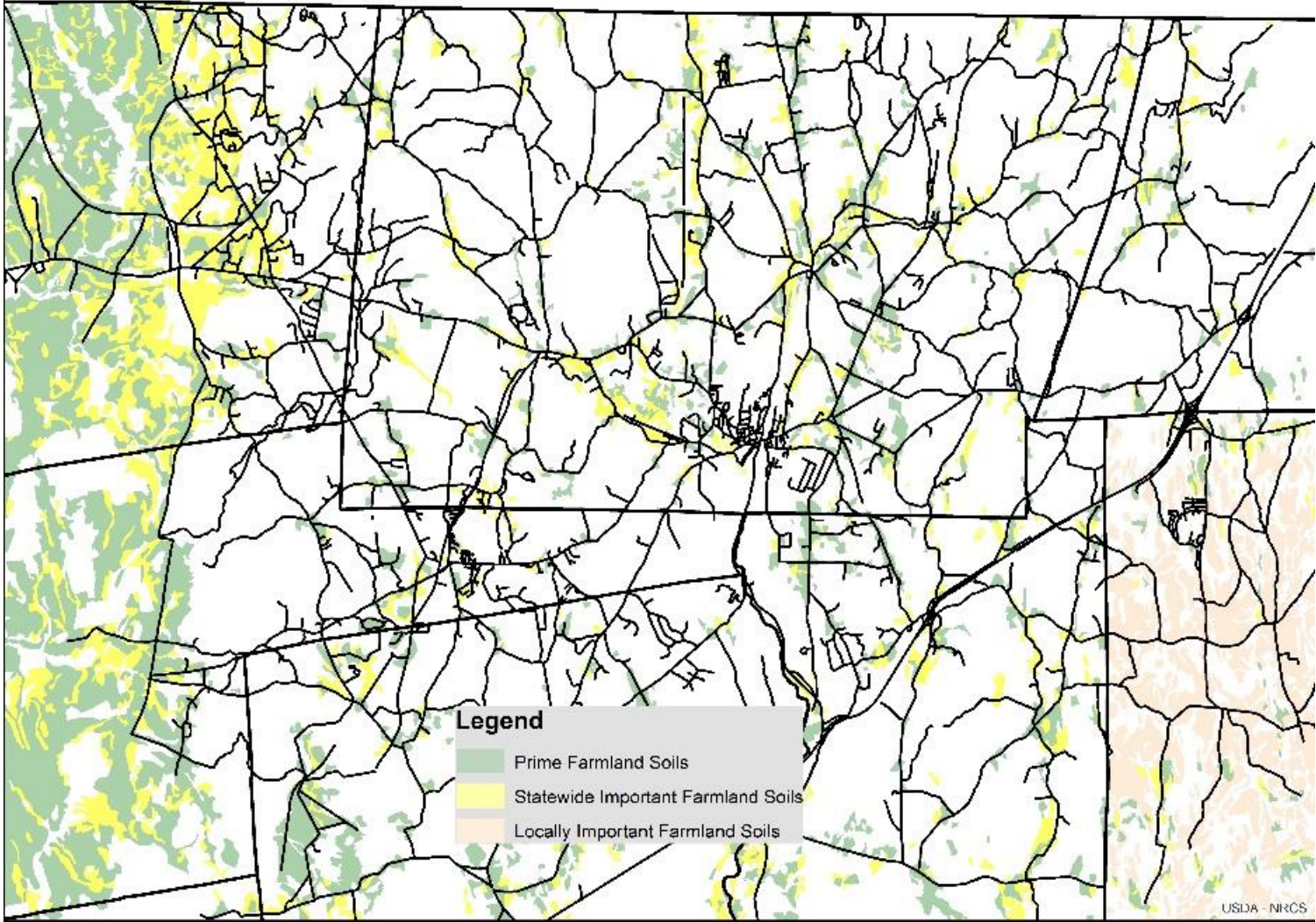
Stafford hosts two farmers markets in West Stafford during the growing season. A farmers market in downtown Stafford would help alleviate the current food desert situation. Small, medium and large roadside stands for selling agriculture are allowed through the zoning regulations. The use and reuse of farms for

“agritainment” to help support the income of farmers is permitted and encouraged.

Poultry may be kept in any zone, according to the zoning regulation of that zone. Farms over 10 acres are not regulated. Stafford is a Right to Farm Town by ordinance. Stafford has a concentration of horse farms. It may be possible to capitalize upon this sector by establishing Stafford as an equestrian center.



Note the paucity of farmland in Stafford compared to the Connecticut Valley



<b>TASKS RELATED TO OPEN SPACE, AGRICULTURE AND WATER MANGEMENT</b>	<b>Leader</b>	<b>Partners</b>
Promote agriculture by allowing smaller farms .	P & Z	assessor
Address the town PA 490 requirement for farms.		
Address uses for open space in conjunction with State statutes .	P & Z	DPW/parks
Spend open space funds on “recreation or agricultural purposes” .		
Address quality of open space given for subdivisions. No more than 15% of land contributed may be wetlands or steep slopes and the land must have road access.	P & Z	Conservation
Recommend a town-wide review of PA 490 land to ensure the land is compliant and being used for the purpose of agriculture.	assessor	
Identify overgrown agricultural land, encouraging reclamation and creating incentives for doing so.	ag	P & Z
Promote the future of agriculture through education of students and the community.	ag	Conservation
Eliminate the Water Management and Open Space zones and discuss if such lands should revert to abutting zones.	P & Z	
Consider an Agriculture Overlay Zone outlining benefits to both the town and local farmers; include open space development within the overlay.	P & Z	
Promote “agritainment” .	ag	
Promote the use of state, and town, owned public lands for recreational use.	conservation	Rec dept.
Create signage on town roads promoting farm stands.	ag	DPW
Encourage Community Supported Agriculture.	ag	grants
Create Community Gardens, Expand gardens at Community Center.	ag	
Low-impact and sustainable stormwater management solutions should be promoted.	P & Z	Conservation
Reduce nonpoint and direct source water pollution	Conservation	DPW

## PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE

### TRANSPORTATION

Stafford is located along the Interstate 84 corridor. The New England Central Railway carries freight through Stafford primarily from Canada to Long Island Sound. Although there are no commercial sidings or depots in Stafford, there are six train crossings: Orcuttville Road, Cemetery Road, Tolland Avenue, Spring Street, Crow Hill Road and River Road/Main Street.

The State of Connecticut Department of Transportation maintains approximately 30 miles of roads in Stafford including State Routes 32, 190, 19, 319, and 30. There are four signaled intersections in town. The state recently built a modern roundabout at the intersection of routes 319 and 190. The classic rotary around the Holt Fountain is due for an upgrade into a modern roundabout in 2023. The railroad crossing at Spring Street is also due for an upgrade.

Stafford has no public transportation or taxi service. There are no dedicated bike lanes/trails in Stafford.

The town operates free medical transportation to Stafford seniors and disabled persons for appointments Monday through Friday.

The driver picks up clients at their homes and transports them to their doctors and hospitals in Somers, Enfield, Stafford, Willington, Tolland, Vernon, Willimantic, Rockville, Manchester, and South Windsor. The town also offers rides on a first come, first serve basis to appointments at hospitals in Hartford or the UCONN Medical Center in Farmington on Wednesday.

The town operates a small bus that provides free rides to Stafford seniors and disabled persons. Destinations include the Senior Center, in-town post offices, banks, pharmacies, and grocery shopping. Out-of-town trips to larger shopping areas and social events are also scheduled.



## PUBLIC UTILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

**Water:** Served by The Connecticut Water Company. A new water tower being built on Chestnut Hill will bring water to Stafford from the Somers town line though to Main Street and all the existing areas to the east. Water resources on the east side of town will be maintained, allowing for a redundant water source.

**Sewer:** The Water Pollution Control Authority handles about one million gallons of sewage a day. It has capacity for 300,000 gallons more. There are over 27 miles of sewer line. Maintenance needs should be continued as outlined in their infrastructure plans. The facility is staffed by 6 workers and a superintendent. The Crystal Lake area is also sewered. There is an agreement with the Town of Ellington WPCA to service their homes in this area.

**Dams:** The town owns five dams: the New City dam, the Staffordville dam, the Dennis Pond dam, the Renn dam and the Glenville dam. The town has committed money to maintenance plans for these dams. The town should investigate and apply for grants for financial resources for private dam owners.

**Bridges:** Budgets should be prepared to maintain Stafford's bridges. (See following page). Repairs costing over 20 Million dollars will be needed during the coming years.

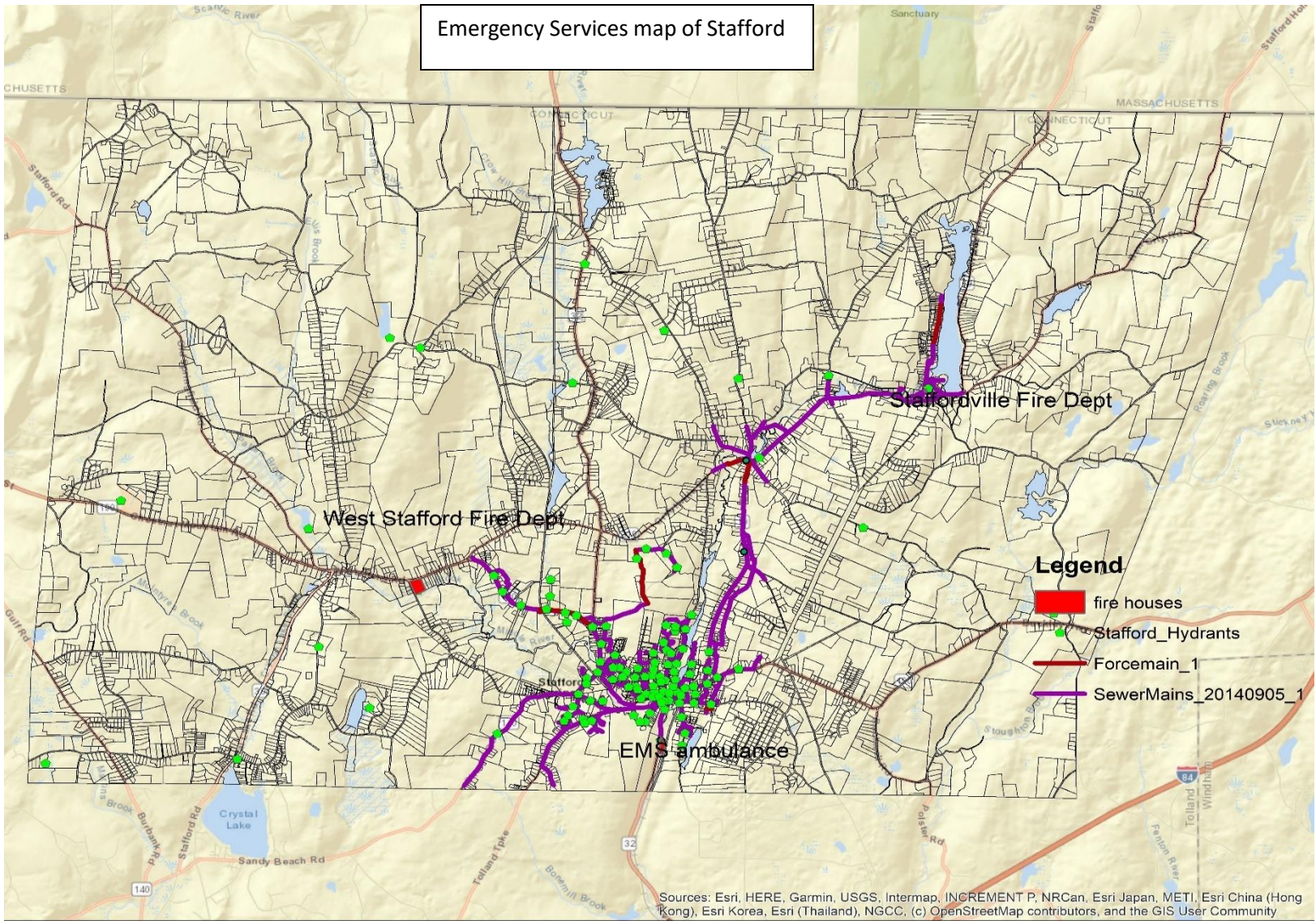
**Storm Drains:** The town maintains many miles of storm drains and over 1,200 catch basins and drainage structures. The town is not currently required to have a MS4 General Permit. The storm drain system should be mapped and a database created with maintenance needs in preparation for a MS4 mandate. An educational plan should be prepared to educate the public about where storm drains outlet and why they should not pollute these drains. Interconnections between storm drains and sewers should be eliminated. Low impact and sustainable stormwater management solutions should be promoted.

**Electricity:** The town should continue to work with Eversource to prevent storm damage to the electric grid. The town should review its emergency plans regarding power outages. Solar and wind power and other environmentally friendly sources of power should be promoted in residential, municipal, and commercial uses.

The town should strive to create a clean and appealing landscape for its citizens. An ongoing campaign to reduce, reuse and **recycle** should be undertaken.

The recent surcharge on “nip” containers yields to the town an income of about \$20,000 per year. These funds should be used to educate the public about littering and be used to clean up litter around town. A recycling coordinator should be appointed to oversee these tasks. A voucher system could also be implemented through this fund to offset fees charged at the transfer station for bulky waste.

Emergency Services map of Stafford



## TOWN OWNED PROPERTY

### ***Historically Significant Properties***

*(List prepared in collaboration with the Stafford Historic Advisory Commission)*

The Town of Stafford should make every effort to protect the historically significant buildings under its stewardship, as listed here.

### **Historically significant buildings serving as current sites of town activities**

- **Warren Memorial Town Hall.** 1 Main Street. Built in 1923 using funds gifted by the estate of Civil War veteran Col. Charles Warren. The building is “critical to the scale and enclosure of the square it faces,” says the *Town of Stafford Historic and Architectural Resources Survey Report* (1993). Efforts must be made to preserve the exterior and entryway of this building, which is located in the proposed Downtown/Hyde Park Historic District. ***Future considerations:*** *Transfer the Land Use, Grants & Marketing, and Department of Public Works offices to the Stafford Community and Senior Center and abandon the third-floor offices. Move the First Selectman's office to the first-floor Land Use area.*

- **Old Railroad Station (now Emergency Services/Police Headquarters).** 2 Main Street. Built in 1893, “the old depot

forms an integral part of Haymarket Square, the historic civic center of Stafford Springs.” The *1993 Historic and Architectural Resources Survey* goes on to say, “The building is also significant as an example of the small-town depots erected during the 19th century industrialization of New England’s interior villages.” This is located in the proposed Downtown/Hyde Park Historic District. ***Future considerations:*** *The building is centrally located but lacks enough parking spaces. It needs to be maintained and protected from further architectural changes or demolition. The town should plan for a new police headquarters.*

- **Stafford Community and Senior Center.** 3 Buckley Highway (Route 190). Built in 1927 in a vernacular style popular at the time that used fieldstone façades and foundations, it served as the Troop C State Police barracks for 68 years (1927–1995). This architectural style can be found throughout the region. In 2019, the fieldstone façade of the one-story eastern entranceway was restored; in 2022, roof repairs were done. Efforts should be made to maintain the exterior and not further alter or remove any architectural features. This structure is used for senior and community activities. ***Future considerations:*** *It has room to house the offices of the Land Use, Fire Marshal, Northeast Central Health District, and Department of Public Works. The larger space can continue to be used for the senior center, meetings and public activities. Recreational programming should also take place here and be expanded in coordination with the Staffordville School. (See “Recommendations to the Board of Selectmen Regarding the Stafford Community Center’s Historic Fieldstone Façade,”*

Stafford Historic Advisory Commission Report 3, 2018. Appendix to SHAC meeting minutes, 9/10/2018.)

• **Staffordville School.** 21 Lyons Road. Located on Staffordville Lake (Staffordville Reservoir). Built in 1929 in the neoclassical style, the original part of this decommissioned school faces south toward Lyons Road. ***Future considerations:** This may be a good location for an expansion of senior activities or a community center along with some town offices. Budget dollars should be allocated to replace the boiler and upgrade the air conditioning using renewable energy sources whenever possible. Summer programming at the town beach should be coordinated with the parks department. More recreational programming should be created to use the gym/open space in this building. The building can also be used for evening meetings.*

• **Family Services.** 21 Hyde Park Road. Built in 1874 by local businessman Julius Converse as a home for one of the employees on his farm “Woodlawn.” This historic building has a large modern addition, but the original facade needs to be retained. It is in the proposed Downtown/Hyde Park Historic District. ***Future considerations:** This building should continue to be used for town purposes as it is.*

• **Memorial Hall.** 275 Orcuttville Road. Built in 1867 as the Harmonial Progressive Union Hall by the local Spiritualist congregation, the building was given to the town in 1900 and, at that time, was renovated for use as a community building and theater. It is a contributing structure in the Stafford Hollow National Register Historic District. Presently leased to a local chapter of the VFW. Maintained by the Annette Hyde Colton Trust Fund and overseen by a Board of Trustees. The building

is intended for “general meetings, social gatherings, entertainments and other public purposes.” Its availability should be promoted. It provides the town with another facility for creative expression. ***Future considerations:** This building needs to be maintained and any repairs and/or renovation plans should be reviewed by the Stafford Historic Advisory Commission to ensure that the architectural and historic integrity of the building is not being damaged. A detailed building conservation assessment was completed in 2019 by John Canning & Co. Delivered to the trustees, the final report provides an overview of how to stabilize the building.*

#### **Key to the proposed Downtown/Hyde Park Historic District (envisioned as a boost to economic development)**

• **Hyde Park.** Established in 1871 as Julius Converse’s “Woodlawn” estate, the 158-acre property was purchased by the town in 1911 with a bequest from Stafford-born Isaac Perkins Hyde. His bequest specified that after the purchase of land suitable for a public park, “...the balance be invested as a perpetual fund, the income thereof to be used for the purpose of maintaining and keeping said park in a careful and proper manner for all time.” The decommissioned **Witt School** (the second Stafford High School) still sits on the hilltop in the park where Converse’s ornate mansion once stood. This public park is at the heart of the proposed Downtown Historic District. It is overseen by the Hyde Park Commission and funded by the Hyde Park Trust Fund. The Stafford Conservation Commission maintains the park’s Woodlawn Trail. ***Future considerations:** The town should encourage recreational activities to bring more*

people into this park. (See “Recommendations to the Board of Selectmen Regarding the Decommissioned Witt School,” Stafford Historic Advisory Commission Report 1, 2018. Appendix to SHAC meeting minutes, 9/24/2018.)

- **Christopher Allen Bridge.** Located on Spring Street. Listed on the *1991 Connecticut Historic Bridge Inventory*, it is a key feature of the proposed Downtown/Hyde Park Historic District.

Built in 1912 out of granite quarried in Monson, Mass., this historic bridge was gifted to the town by businessman Christopher Allen to enhance the entrance of Hyde Park. ***Future considerations:*** *Still carrying modern traffic, the bridge shows rapid deterioration that must be addressed as soon as possible to ensure that it can be restored to its original grandeur, as envisioned by Christopher Allen and his architects.* (See “Review of the Deteriorating Condition of the Historic Christopher Allen Bridge on Spring Street,” Stafford Historic Advisory Commission Report 4, 2018. Appendix to SHAC meeting minutes, 10/22/2018.)

- **Witt School (second Stafford High School).** 20 Hyde Park Road. This Art Deco/Public Works Administration–style school was built in 1939 to replace the town’s first high school. This building is located on Hyde Park land that needs to be protected in keeping with the tenets of benefactor Isaac Perkins Hyde’s will. The building is in the proposed Downtown/Hyde Park Historic District. ***Future considerations:*** *The property should be maintained so it does not fall into worse disrepair. The town aims to transform the school into a vibrant community center. A major step in this effort is the awarding of a \$650,000 U.S. EPA Brownfields Cleanup grant to carry out cleanup of hazardous*

*building materials and associated pollutants. Brainstorming is ongoing to develop adaptive reuse ideas for the remediated building.* (See “Recommendations to the Board of Selectmen Regarding the Decommissioned Witt School,” Stafford Historic Advisory Commission Report 1, 2018. Appendix to SHAC meeting minutes, 9/24/2018.)

- **Stafford Historical Society Museum.** 5 Spring Street. Built in 1888 by local businessman Julius Converse for his office and later used as the town library for over 100 years. An important example of Romanesque architecture, this is a key building in the proposed Downtown/Hyde Park Historic District. This building needs to be maintained and any renovation should be reviewed by the Stafford Historic Advisory Commission to ensure that the architectural and historic integrity of the building is not being damaged. The Stafford Historical Society is a 501(c)3 entity run by volunteers who maintain the building as a museum and repository of Stafford-related objects, photographs and archival items. ***Future considerations:*** *Wayfinding signs to the museum should be added to the walking tour maps of Stafford, as such plans are being developed. Efforts to attract more volunteers and increase membership should be encouraged to enable extended museum hours.*

- **The Mineral Spring.** Located between the Episcopal Church and the Stafford Historical Society Museum. Listed on the Connecticut Register of Historic Places and located in the proposed Downtown/Hyde Park Historic District. Medicinal benefits were long ascribed to the spring waters by indigenous peoples who visited here seasonally. In the early 1600s, European settlers passing nearby learned of the springs. In 1771, on the advice of his physician, future U.S. President John Adams

partook of the curative iron waters, recording the experience in his famed diary. *Future considerations: Being a noted attraction, safe footing around the springs requires ongoing maintenance by the town. As done in the past, repairs to the wooden well house can be proposed as youth public service projects.*

### **Other historically significant properties used by townspeople**

• **Olympic Field.** In 1940, Stafford’s Rhode Island Worsted Co., noted for its successful “Olympic” line of menswear fabrics, deeded to the Town of Stafford a parcel of land on Keefe Plains to be named Olympic Field. In 1958, a field house was completed there as a memorial to Stafford’s World War II veterans. Today, at nearby Olympic Circle, the American Legion’s honoring of military veterans continues. *Future considerations: A grant will enable refurbishment of the field house in 2023. Maintenance of the Olympic Circle trees and lawn is done by town employees, whereas volunteers from the Stafford Garden Club tend the other plantings. Plumbing of water to this location would ease the burden of gardening volunteers who haul water.*

• **Dennis Pond.** Ice House Road. Originally called Dennis' Reservoir, the pond was created to provide quality ice for refrigeration purposes before electrification. The Ice House near the dam/spillway once held blocks of ice stored under sawdust.

Long a popular site for ice skating and swimming, in 1968 the pond with 43 acres of pristine woodland was purchased by the town from the Schofield family. In the early 1980s, a picnic and swimming area was renovated for town residents’ use. Given stewardship of the property in 1996, the Stafford Conservation Commission has created two hiking trails on the east side of Dennis Pond. The newest is the Schofield Trail, completed in 2018. *Future considerations: Dennis Pond is appreciated by townspeople as a tranquil setting to enjoy fishing, hiking and wildlife observation, and it should be preserved and protected as such. It is a significant habitat for a variety of migrating and nesting birds. Bald eagles and osprey are often seen here.*

• **Patten One-Room Schoolhouse.** Located in Heritage Park, Buckley Highway (Route 190). Built about 1799, the one-room schoolhouse was moved to this location from Old Springfield Road by the Stafford Historical Society and restored in Heritage Park. The town owns the building and land, but the Historical Society maintains and oversees the building. In 2022, the Historical Society paid \$20,000 for the cedar shingle roof to be replaced and for the building to be painted. *Future considerations: This wooden structure should be monitored regularly and repaired promptly. Efforts to attract more volunteers should be encouraged to enable extended visiting hours.*

• **Old Town Hall.** 221 East Street. Built in 1845 as the first “town house” other than the church meetinghouse in the Stafford Street area. This is the oldest building that the town owns and maintains and is a contributing structure in the Stafford Hollow

National Register Historic District. **Future considerations:** *This stone building needs to be maintained and any renovation should be reviewed by the Stafford Historic Advisory Commission to ensure that the architectural and historic integrity of the building is not being damaged. This building should be assigned a new use or moved. It is now used for storage.*

### **Historically significant monuments**

• **Soldiers' Monument.** Located in Hyde Park. Stafford-born Col. Charles Warren left money in his will to build a monument to honor Civil War veterans. Dedicated in 1924, the cast sculptures are the work of Frederic Wellington Ruckstull, a renowned New York City sculptor. The monument features a bronze statue of Columbia, who from colonial times till the early 20th century was the chief symbol of the United States, personifying freedom, and the pursuit of liberty. **Future considerations:** *Ongoing monitoring for structural defects and vandalism is needed, because the monument greets visitors near the entrance of Hyde Park and honors the nation's veterans.*

• **Holt Memorial Fountain.** Built in 1894 from stone quarried in Monson, Mass., the fountain in Haymarket Square once gave both man and beast a place to stop for a drink of water. In memory of manufacturer Charles Holt, the fountain was gifted to the town by Holt's wife Joanna and daughter Celia. **Future considerations:** *The fountain will become the centerpiece of a modern roundabout to be constructed by the State of Connecticut Department of Transportation in 2022–2023.*

*During rotary construction, the town should explore the possibility of restoring running water to the fountain, as was originally intended*

### **Currently unoccupied due to deteriorated condition and not in use**

• **Borough School.** 36 Prospect Street. Built in 1922 in the neoclassical style, it is in a residential neighborhood of single-family and multifamily housing. **Future considerations:** *This building has recently been returned to the town after efforts failed to develop it into housing for the hearing-impaired. The Planning and Zoning Commission and the Stafford Historic Advisory Commission should review potential uses for this building.*

### **Other Town-owned Property**

• **Transfer Station.** 80 Upper Road. The town should emphasize its residents to recycle and reduce garbage. The price of transferring refuse from the residents is getting more and more expensive. Plans should be created to find new sources for the disposal of waste.

• **Stafford Ambulance Association.** 27 Willington Avenue. Three ambulances. The town should support advancing the association to an ALS level.

- **West Stafford Fire.** 144 West Stafford Road. In 2020, the West Stafford Fire Department responded to 1019 calls for service. The calls were divided into approximately 65% EMS and 35% Fire/Rescue incidents. This equates to an average of 2.8 calls a day.

- **Stafford Fire Department #1.** 19 Colburn Road,

- **Public Works.** The salt domes on Sawmill Road, the Highway Garage, and the Transfer Station should continue to be maintained.

- **Old Transfer Station.** Sellers Lane. This parcel should be developed for passive recreation, walking trails and possibly a dog park.

- **Parks.** Hyde Park, Heritage Park, Olympic Field, Dennis Pond, Kealy Field. Parks should continue to be maintained. Townspeople should be encouraged to use the parks and “adopt” them so that they are well used and maintained. Use open space funds to upgrade park equipment.

- **Animal Control.** 80 Upper Road. Maintain the building

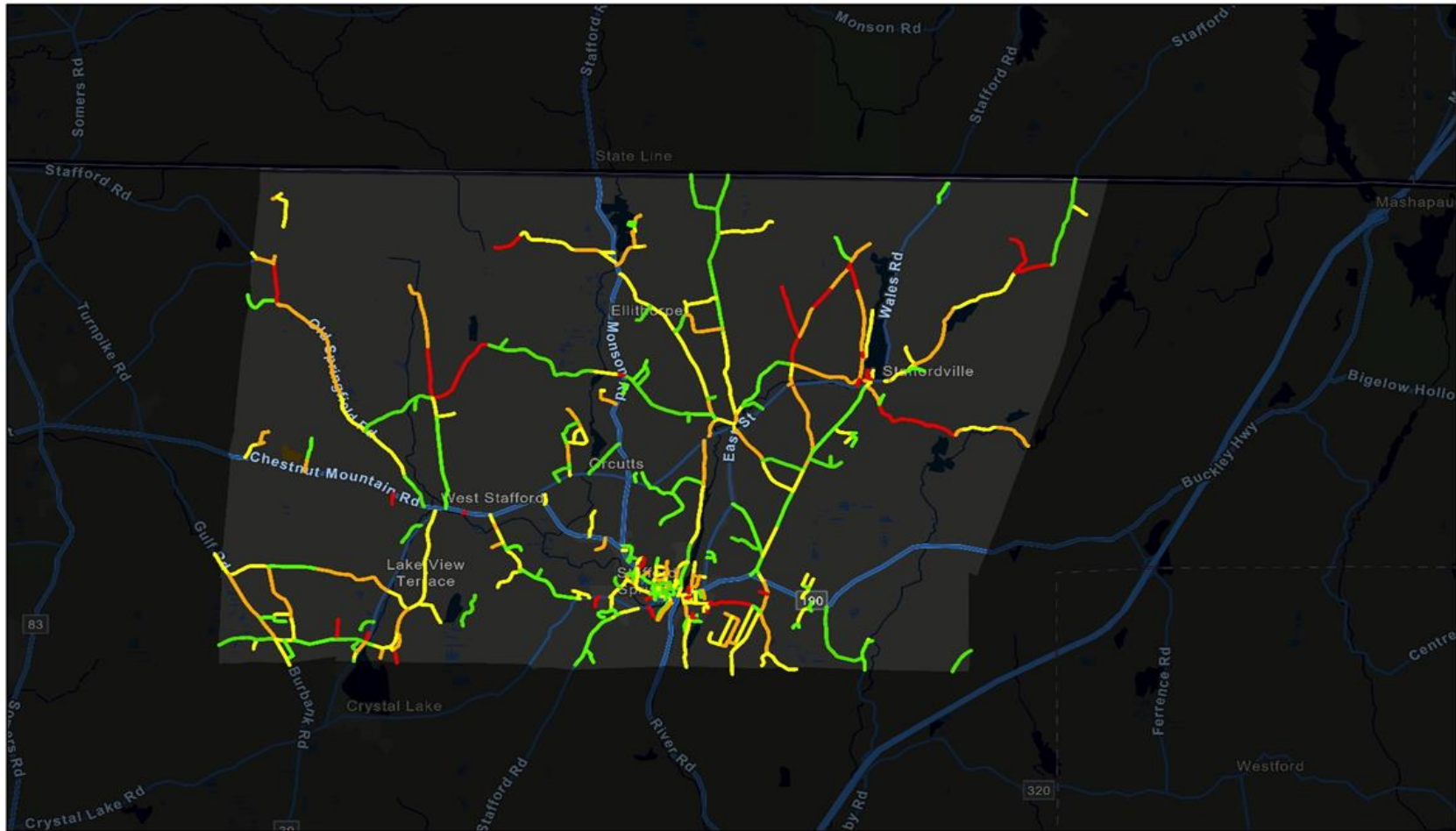
- **Town Library.** 10 Levinthal Run. Continue to maintain and support the goals of the library to educate the public.

- **Ambulance building.** 11 Monson Road. This leased facility used by the police needs to be upgraded or abandoned.



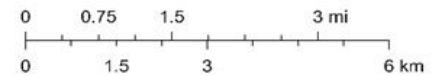
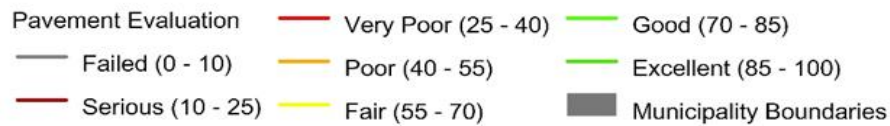
Facilities Fully Maintained by the Town								
Building	Address	Building Valuation	Land Valuation	Total Valuation	Depreciation	Year Built	Square Footage	Condition Rating
Resident Troopers Office	2 Main St.	\$128,750.00	\$21,560.00	\$112,770.00	\$189,610.00	2013/1900	2,154	5
Transfer Station	80 Upper Rd.	\$154,210.00	\$236,600.00	\$308,100.00	\$604,750.00	2014/1995	2,480	5
Stafford Public Library	10 Levinthal Run	\$2,116,660.00	\$144,830.00	\$2,304,120.00	\$3,023,800.00	2001	17,452	4
Hyde Park	Hyde Park Rd.	\$43,750.00	of Witt School	\$43,750.00	\$50,000.00	2006	750	4
Animal Control Building	80 Upper Rd.	\$97,300.00	Transfer Station	\$97,300.00	\$111,300.00	1995	1,020	4
Salt and Sand Domes-Upper Rd.	80 Upper Rd.	\$124,400.00	N/A	N/A	\$175,000.00	1995	8,199	4
Salt and Sand Domes-Sawmill Rd.	Sawmill Rd.	\$66,000.00	N/A	N/A	\$100,000.00	1995	5,278	4
Old Town Hall	221 East St.	\$78,820.00	\$22,190.00	\$101,010.00	\$112,600.00	1845	2,880	3
Kealy Field Batting Cage/Food Booth	305 East St.	\$77,000.00	\$37,240.00	\$132,370.00	\$110,000.00	2001/1980	3,600	3
Family Services	21 Hyde Park Rd.	\$118,230.00	\$281,960.00	\$404,390.00	\$168,900.00	1900	4,698	3
Memorial Hall	275 Orcuttville Rd.	\$208,040.00	\$32,060.00	\$246,960.00	\$297,200.00	1867	5,076	3
Stafford Historical Society	5 Spring St.	\$208,320.00	\$29,330.00	\$238,910.00	\$297,600.00	1900	4,385	3
Heritage Park Gazebo	1 Stafford St.	\$1,750.00	\$38,710.00	\$40,460.00	\$3,000.00	1990	150	3
Olympic Circle Gazebo	1 Olympic Circle	\$1,750.00	\$22,400.00	\$24,150.00	\$3,000.00	1990	150	3
Community Center	3 Buckley Highway	\$514,500.00	\$40,880.00	\$589,260.00	\$735,000.00	1930	14,692	2
Highway Garage	210 East St.	\$243,880.00	\$36,960.00	\$311,360.00	\$348,400.00	1955	18,668	2
Dennis Pond Building	5 Ice House Lane	\$15,470.00	\$42,700.00	\$58,940.00	\$22,100.00	1940	1,100	2
Town Hall	1 Main St.	\$549,430.00	\$22,470.00	\$579,250.00	\$784,900.00	1923	14,170	2
Olympic Field House	30 Olympic Ave.	\$28,140.00	\$7,490.00	\$35,980.00	\$40,200.00	1958	2,100	2
Witt School	20 Hyde Park Rd.	\$2,262,610.00	\$50,190.00	\$2,382,170.00	\$3,232,300.00	1939	44,498	1
<b>Totals</b>		<b>\$7,039,010.00</b>	<b>\$1,138,690.00</b>	<b>\$9,470,470.00</b>	<b>\$10,409,660.00</b>		<b>153,500</b>	<b>Avg. 3</b>
Facilities Partially Maintained by the Town								
WPCF	50 River Rd.	\$254,800.00	\$71,400.00	\$352,800.00	\$364,000.00	1971/2011	9,696	5
WPCF Pumping Station-Lakeshore	100 Lake Shore Blvd.	\$94,500.00	\$15,610.00	\$16,450.00	\$135,000.00	2014	250	5
WPCF Pumping Station-Orcuttville	256 Orcuttville Rd.	\$173,600.00	\$11,830.00	\$25,270.00	\$248,000.00	2014	250	5
West Stafford Fire Dept.	144 West Stafford Rd.	\$513,940.00	\$63,210.00	\$583,730.00	\$707,200.00	1995	12,974	4
Torrent Engine Co. #1	27 Willington Ave.	\$259,700.00	\$59,430.00	\$352,590.00	\$371,000.00	1992	6,000	4
Staffordville Fire Dept.		\$366,940.00			\$524,200.00	1976	7,950	3
WPCF Pumping Station-Rt. 190	50 West Stafford Rd.	\$173,600.00	\$31,780.00	\$35,630.00	\$248,000.00	1990	250	3
WPCF Pumping Station-Meadow	Meadow Lane	\$94,500.00	N/A	N/A	\$135,000.00	1977	250	3
Stafford Ambulance Building	11 Monson Rd.	\$56,560.00	\$35,140.00	\$98,560.00	\$80,800.00	1990	2,160	1
<b>Totals</b>		<b>\$1,988,140.00</b>			<b>\$2,813,200.00</b>		<b>39,780</b>	<b>Avg. 3.6</b>
Buildings 0 to 5 years old		1						2
Buildings 6 to 10 years old		1						1
Buildings 11 to 20 years old		7						6
Buildings 21 to 50 years old		14						2
Buildings 51 to 100 years old		7						7
Buildings over 100 years old		5						3

# Stafford Town Roads



12/22/2021

1:144,448



Esri Canada, Esri, HERE, Garmin, SafeGraph, METI/NASA, USGS, EPA,

## STREETS AND PUBLIC WORKS

The town maintains over 90 miles of improved roads and 21 miles of unimproved Roads. In 2019 the town signed a contract with StreetLogix for software that allows us to analyze the quality of our paved roads and prepare budgets. The average “pavement condition index” level in towns should be 80 to be acceptable. Stafford’s current rating is 65 with a backlog of over work estimated at over \$26 million to achieve the target PCI of 80. The town should continue to use the software for budgeting and strive to spend at least \$2 million per year on street infrastructure.

The Ct Department of Transportation allocates funding for road maintenance to towns on the basis of the miles of improved and unimproved roads the town maintains. Our funding in 2021 was almost \$400,000.

Local Capital Improvement Program (LoCIP). Projects are allocated to the town annually and may be carried over from year to year. The 2021 allocation for Stafford was \$106,297.

Federal dollars are also given to municipalities through the LOTCIP Program administered by the Capitol Region Council of Governments. From this fund \$1.7 million dollars was awarded to the town to replace the Leonard Road Bridge. The Furnace Road rebuilding project is also funded and shovel-ready.

DOT prepares a Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) annually that lists all highway and public transit projects proposed to be undertaken utilizing Federal Highway

and Federal Transit Administration funding during a four-year period. The proposed modern roundabout at the Holt fountain and replacement of the Culvert under East Street are part of this program.

The town should leverage any local money budgeted for street maintenance with state and federal allotments. The town should continue to invest in new equipment and technology to keep the Public Works Department running as efficiently as possible.



## COMMERCIAL RELATED ISSUES

Over the last 10 years, Stafford's retail base has grown tremendously. On the main corridor from the beginning of West Main Street to the Big Y on West Stafford Road, we have seen development. CVS opened at the start of West Main Street and added extra retail space. O'Reilly's Auto Parts and Aubuchon Hardware replaced an ageing bus depot and single-family home. Cumberland Farms moved from River Road and replaced the blighted car dealership at 116 West Main Street. Dollar General and Dollar Tree both moved into Stafford. The Dollar General store replaced another blighted site at 54 West Stafford Road. Two new business have built at the Big Y pad sites. Simon Says moved from 44 West Stafford Road to 112 West Stafford Road, building a new larger space and allowing the old, rented structure to be demolished making way for a potential reuse at 44 West Stafford Road.

The new developments along Route 190 have spurred owners on adjacent properties to make improvements to their properties enhancing the appearance of the town. The town should offer incentives for updating the look of buildings through façade improvement grants and other economic incentives.

A Local Business Zone extends along the west side of West Street from the intersection of Park Street to the railroad tracks. This zone contains a small grocery store, the entrance to the Stafford Speedway, and a row of older residences. There have been no conversions from residential to commercial use since the adoption of the 1972 regulations and none appear likely in the future. The residential section of this area should be rezoned

to allow for mixed use.

The town should continue to gather data about the retail marketplace in Stafford and market these opportunities to fill voids in the marketplace.

## INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

The industrial sector is currently undergoing expansion. Aqua Pump has bought land at 94 West Stafford Road and plans to develop the property for its use as well as for a potential tenant. At 10 and 14 Middle River Drive, Griffin Greenhouse Supplies has added 39,000 sq ft to its facilities. TTM Technologies has also added on to their building at 36 Industrial Park Road. 3M on River Road is currently upgrading its water treatment system to support continual operations three shifts a day, seven days a week

The previous two POCDs recommended that the corridor along the westerly side of Monson Road between West Stafford Road and Diamond Ledge Road should be the primary location for new industrial growth within the community. Twenty years later, this land is still for sale and has attracted no buyers. Sewer and water extension are unlikely. A better use of this land would be for residential purposes where wells and septic systems could be installed. Suggestion would be to rezone this area as AAA zone.

The 2012 POCD recommended that the area on West Stafford Road between Orcuttville Road and Route 30 be rezoned as residential, allowing the existing businesses to continue as non-conforming uses. The CT Water Company is currently

expanding the public water system from the Somers town line through the new rotary to the current end of the line. The sewer line in this area has been expanded so that it passes through the rotary to the west. This land should be rezoned as a mixed use of commercial and residential structures. The town should support extending the sewer line to the intersection of routes 190 and 30. The commercial subdivision to the north of the Boles car dealership could then be built out, supplying the town with more industrial growth.

The current industrial park sits in a flood plain and is surrounded by wetlands. There is no public water or sewer in this area and the park is mostly built out. The town should investigate appropriate areas for new industrial development and rezone those areas.

The mill buildings located at Hydeville Road, and New City Road should be analyzed for possible reuse scenarios that will add to the tax base of the town.

## PROBLEMS

The former Milikowski greenhouses and garden center and the accompanying historic home at 75 Chestnut Hill Road are deteriorating rapidly. This 21-acre site would be a prime site for a commercial agricultural operation incorporating the historic structure. The commission should rezone this property to a mixed-use zone.

The Key Bank on Middle River Drive has closed. The Town should support efforts to find a new tenant for this property. On Route 190, the strip mall, formerly known as The Country

Village Shoppe's, is vacant and blighted. This property should be revitalized.

## DOWNTOWN

The Central Business Zone represents the historic commercial center of the Town of Stafford. It is surrounded by several mill buildings that are still in industrial use and high-density residential areas. The town should be active in promoting the reuse of vacant historic buildings in this zone.

The town has established a Village Overlay District encompassing this zone that allows participants extra leeway for zoning bulk and setback requirements if they meet certain requirements. The town recently rezoned the area to allow for apartments on upper stories of buildings, creating a vibrant mixed-use community. The Palace Theatre is an important part of downtown, and the town should tailor zoning regulations to ensure the viability of the theatre. The town should establish a downtown business organization to promote commercial growth in the area and offer events to entice people to the area. The town should establish a special fund that property owners can borrow from to restore the facades of their buildings.

The town should be actively involved with the State as it modernizes the train crossing on Spring Street and recreates the iconic rotary. The town should supplement Hay Market Square with additional park amenities at 31 Main Street. The small vacant areas along Main Street should be landscaped into pocket parks. 103 Main Street should be developed into a park and act as a gateway to downtown. The town should utilize and support the efforts of the garden club to beautify the area.

Every attempt should be made to encourage pedestrian use of the area and promote access to Hyde Park and the Middle River.

A comprehensive parking plan should be developed that takes into account the needs of the businesses in the area and provides parking that is consistent with the environment and the historical nature of the district. Parking area signs need to be prominently displayed so that there is not the appearance of a lack of parking. A walking trail should be created that allows users to enjoy the water views and historic sites in the district and create a pleasant way to walk from parking areas to destinations.

The town should facilitate the reuse of the bankrupt vacant Stafford Cleaners building at 27 East Main Street using brownfields grants and financial incentives.

The town should extend the Central Business Zone up Furnace Avenue to include 21 Furnace Avenue.

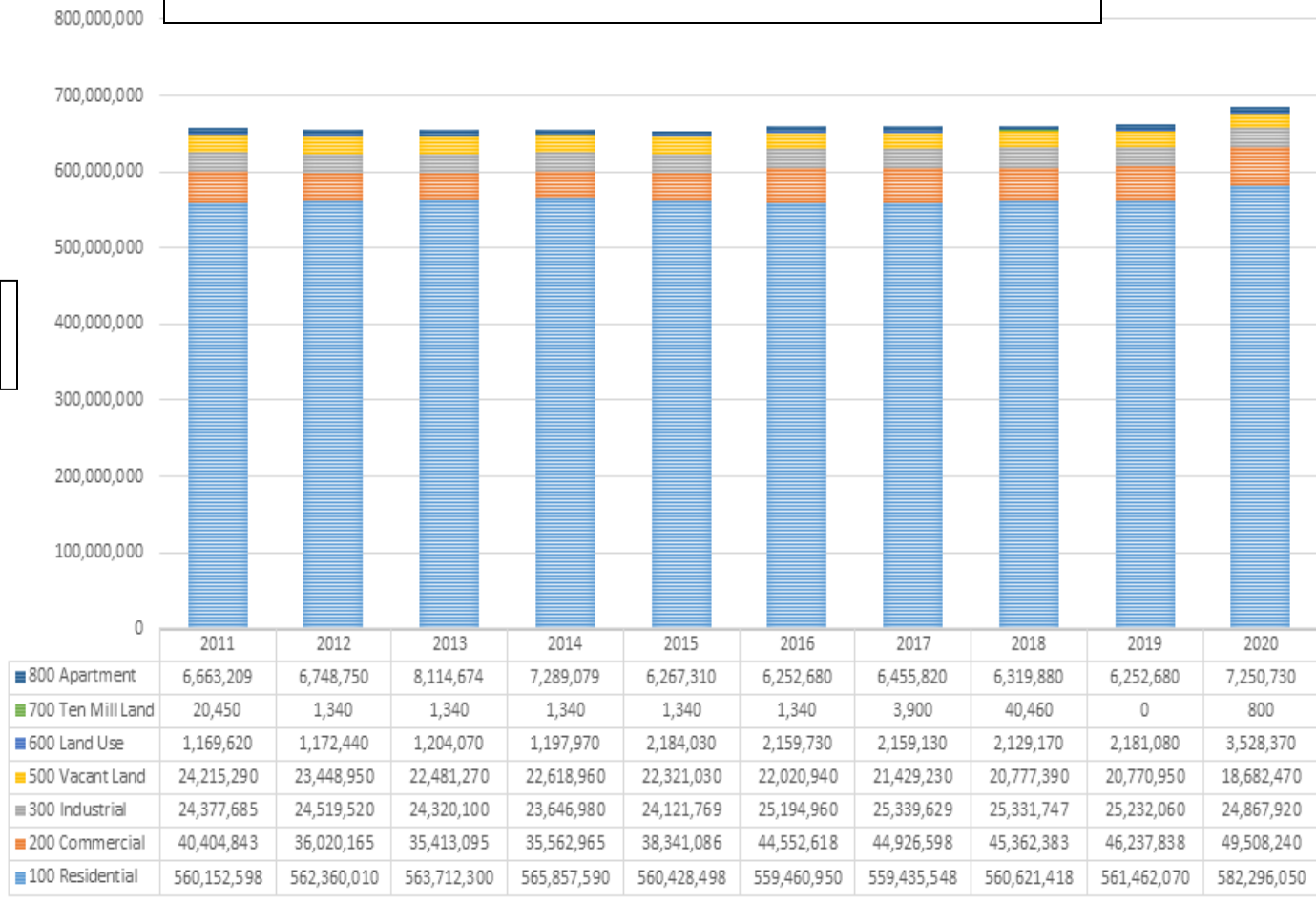
Zones created by the Planning and Zoning Commission were created along the roads of the town and followed the original development of the town's industrial, commercial, and residential make up. Thus, we see old mills located in small industrial zones with local business and residential zones radiating out. Distances from streets and nearby zones were used to determine the boundaries of zones. Today, we see many commercial lots in town falling into two zones, and the

following applies; "any use allowed in either district shall be permitted on the lot; but in no case shall the uses allowed in one district but prohibited in the other be extended more than thirty (30) feet into the district prohibiting such uses." The Planning and Zoning commission should change this regulation so that zones follow lot lines.

The town community is always asking for a second grocery store. The 2019 report from Dr. Donald Poland concluded that "the findings, while not in support of attracting an additional grocery store, are more positive than negative. Stafford's Zoning Regulations are not a barrier to retail (or other commercial) uses and development. In addition, Stafford (the town) as a marketplace (trade area) has positive demographic and socio-economic indicators that provide the community with the potential to retain and attract retailers and modest retail development. This is evidenced by recent retail development and approvals for additional retail and commercial development.

The work-live zoning that permitted the conversion of the former B.P. Cooley building at 2 River Road into a mixture of arts-related businesses with small living spaces for residents is an example of the type of flexible redevelopment that should be encouraged.

Town of Stafford Grand List Make Up, 2011-202



A mill use overlay zone should be created to enhance the marketability of these ageing buildings.

The town and community should continue to work with private and state groups such as the Economic Development Commission, Capitol Region Council of Governments and the Main Street Program to formulate plans and seek funding to improve the infrastructure of the town to further enhance the attractiveness and competitiveness of the town.

The 60,000 square-foot cap on retail should be eliminated and replaced with a coverage ratio.

**The town should:**

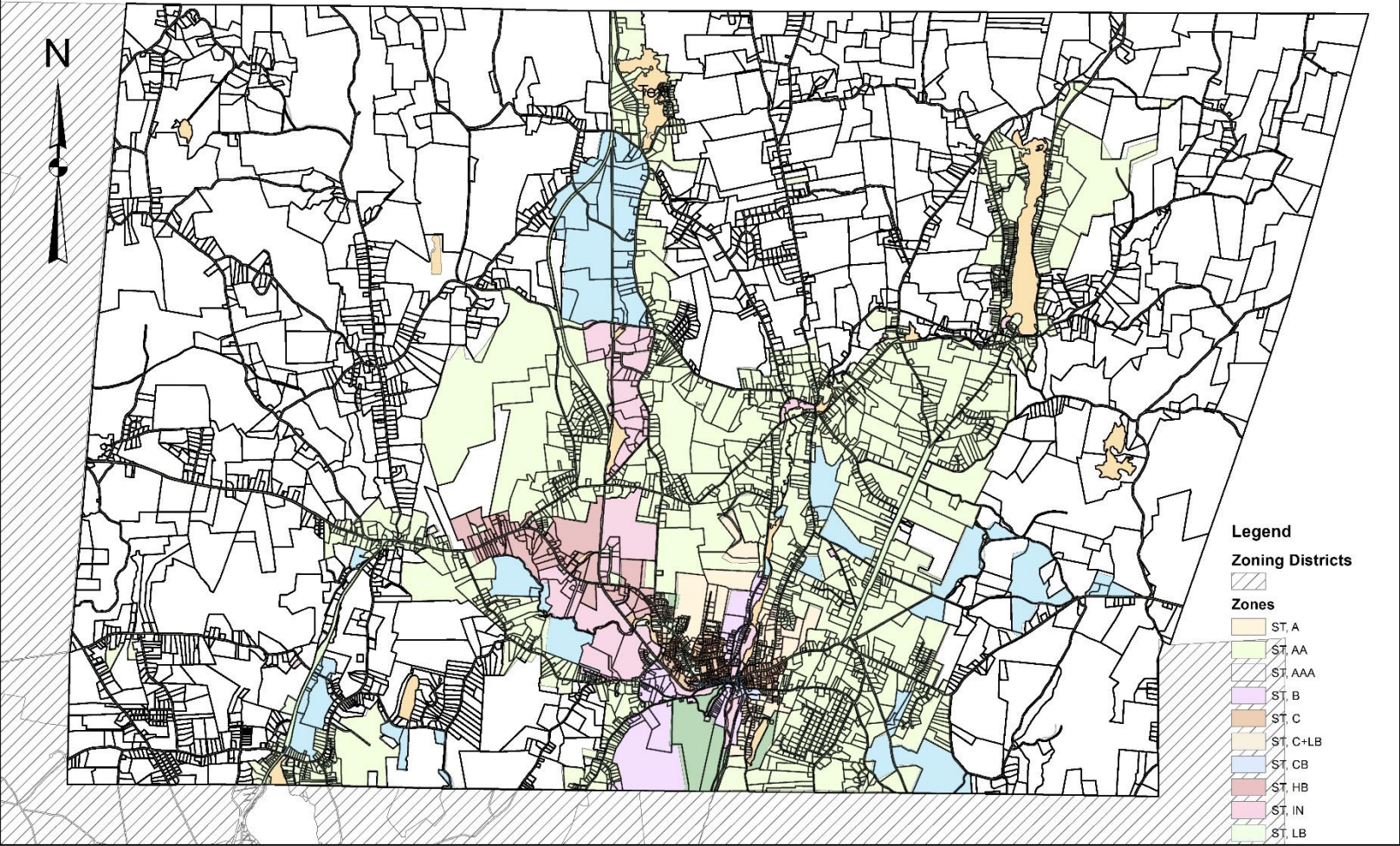
- Concentrate economic development plans on retaining and growing existing businesses.
- Investigate and promote areas where a rail siding would be appropriate.
- Support and promote businesses that complement existing, businesses such as the racetrack, the Palace Theatre, agriculture, and the campgrounds that make Stafford a destination town. This may include car racing businesses, agricultural businesses, entertainment, and the addition of a hotel.
- Support, encourage and manage the continued growth of home- based business, but not to the detriment of the quality of life.
- Investigate various tax incentive programs for local business development.

The Town of Stafford should consider implementing a **Business Revolving Loan Program** to provide financial assistance to existing and new businesses for the purpose of stimulating the local economy. The Town of Stafford should also encourage local businesses and industries to take advantage of the Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy Program (C-PACE). The C-PACE program is administered by the Connecticut Green Bank and can provide financing for a wide range of energy upgrades to help businesses and industries save on energy expenditures, which enables them to become more competitive by allowing them to invest money in other areas.

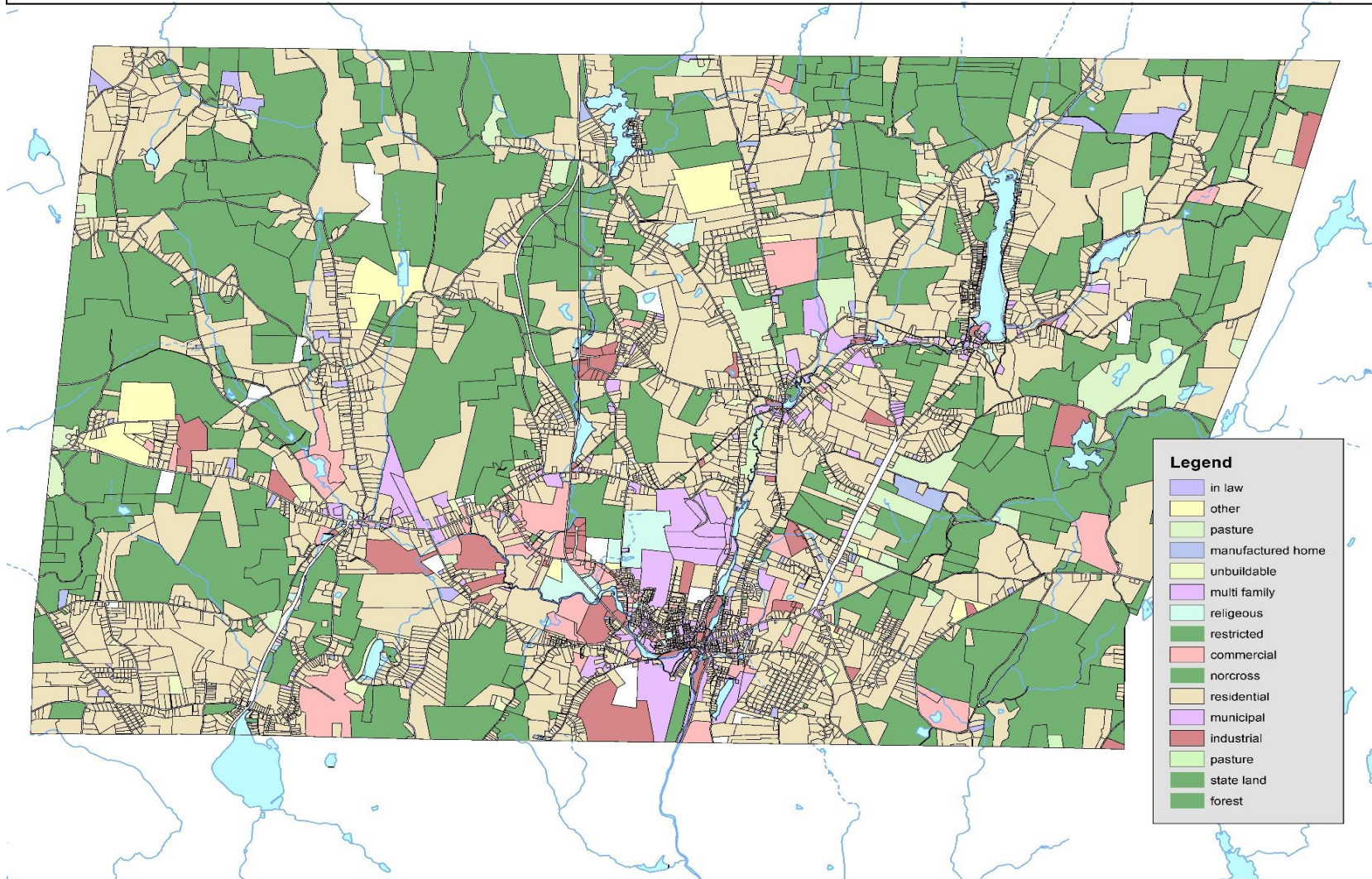
<b>Factors Affecting Economic Development</b>	
<b>Negatives</b>	<b>Positives</b>
Low population density	Sewer system
Lack of vacant commercial property	Proximity to interstate highway interchange
Low average income	Proximity to major Urban centers
Low traffic counts on major roads	Relatively inexpensive real estate
Low workforce education (21% BA or higher)	Quick approval times from Land Use Office
Lack of tax incentives	Favorable tax rate
No public transportation	Proximity to UCONN
No town marketing plan	Rail Line
	Hospital



# Town of Stafford Zoning Districts



## Town of Stafford Land Use Categories



The **Central Business Zone** represents the historic commercial center of the Town of Stafford. It is surrounded by several mill buildings that are still in industrial use and high-density residential areas. At one time, this center contained businesses that met all the commercial needs of Stafford residents. Any new development or redevelopment in this area should be required to conform to the historic character of this area. In most cases, the buildings in the Central Business Zone contain commercial spaces that can best be used for light retail, restaurants, historic uses, tourism-related uses, professional offices, and services. The upper stories of these buildings contain apartments.

TASKS related to the Central Business Zone	Leader	Partners
Promote renovating, rehabilitating, and reusing underutilized and blighted commercial structures.	EDC	P & Z
Establish a downtown business organization to promote commercial growth in the area.	EDC	
Continue and expand hosting events in the downtown area to attract business and create a vibrant community.	G & M	EDC
Investigate grants and opportunities to revitalize the architectural uniqueness of downtown and to improve building facades, paint color and signage.	G & M	
Create walking and bicycling paths that encourage the pedestrian use of the area and promote access to Hyde Park and the Middle River.	EDC	G & M
Create a comprehensive signage plan indicating parking areas and sites of interest.	EDC	G & M, DPW
Promote “pop up” uses and events in the small parks along Main Street.	G & M	EDC
Improve the town-owned lot at the corner of Main and Church Street into a park as per the 2010 design.	DPW	G & M
Create more downtown parking areas.	DPW	BOS
Create a downtown Wi-Fi hot spot.	BOS	
Extend the Central Business Zone up Furnace Avenue to include 72 Furnace Avenue.	P & Z	DPW
Restrict commercial uses in this zone to light retail, to restaurants, art/antiques, historic uses, tourism, commercial recreation, offices, and services or repurposing for hospitality and mixed uses.	P & Z	EDC

Scattered throughout town are areas of development that are currently zoned Local Business. The purpose of the **Local Business Zone** is to encourage developing small retail stores, restaurants, professional offices, and similar businesses that would provide services to local residents without generating a lot of traffic.

TASKS related to the Local Business Zone	Leader	Partners
Promote renovating, rehabilitating, and reusing underutilized and blighted commercial structures.	EDC	P & Z
Support interconnections between the industrial, residential, and commercial uses in this zone.	P & Z	
Support these neighborhoods as locally attractive areas with plantings and public amenities.	EDC	P & Z
Continue the zone further down West Street to promote interactions and opportunities with the Stafford Motor Speedway.	P & Z	
Entice the CT DOT and abutters to landscape the islands in the State right of way.	P & Z	

The **Highway Business Zone** is located on both sides of Route 190 or West Stafford Road from the former Borough line to Cooper Lane with varying depths from the highway. In the area between the Central New England railroad tracks and Orcuttville Road, the Highway Business Zone extends northerly a considerable distance, to the rear of properties on Orcuttville Road. West of Orcuttville Road, the Zone extends two hundred feet deep from the highway.

TASKS related to the Highway Business Zone	Leader	Partners
Promote renovating, rehabilitating, and reusing underutilized and blighted commercial structures.	EDC	P & Z
Require Sidewalks for all new development.	P & Z	
Expand the zone down Cooper Lane to its' intersection with Hopyard Road	P & Z	EDC
Entice the State and abutters to landscape the islands in the State right of way.	G & M	

In 2015 the **Highway Industrial Zone** was created by carving out of the Highway Business Zone the first two lots on Middle River Drive and the three lots bordered by the Middle River and the train tracks to the south

TASKS related to the Highway Industrial Zone	Leader	Partners
Promote renovating, rehabilitating, and reusing underutilized and blighted commercial structures.	EDC	P & Z
Revisit the need for this zone and it's uses	P & Z	
Entice the CT DOT and abutters to landscape the islands in the State right of way.	EDC	P & Z

The **Industrial Zone** is concentrated in the village centers of Orcutts, Stafford, Staffordville, and Hydeville where industry has taken place for many years. There is also a new area of development from Orcutville Road north to Diamond Ledge Road between route 32 and the Middle River. A third large tract of land extends northeast from West Street almost to Cooper lane along the railroad tracks and the Middle River. There are also industrial zones along the watercourses in the old borough of Stafford Springs.

TASKS related to the Industrial Zone	Leader	Partners
Prepare and maintain a list of vacant and underutilized industrial properties.	EDC	
Market industrial sites as explained in the Commercial-related Issues section	EDC	

The **Open Space Zone** is another restrictive zone that may be used as a land bank, or for recreational or educational purposes. Most of these properties are owned by the municipality. This zone should be reviewed to see if it is necessary.

TASKS related to Open Space Zone	Leader	Partners
The need and criteria for inclusion in this zone should be studied.	P & Z	
The name of this zone is confusing and should be changed.	P & Z	

The **Water Management Zone** is a restrictive zone in wet, primarily undeveloped areas along watercourses and flood ways.

TASKS	Leader	Partners
Inland Wetland Regulations and Flood Plain regulations make the need for this zone obsolete.	P & Z	
Some of these zones should become Industrial Zones.	P & Z	

## VILLAGES IN STAFFORD

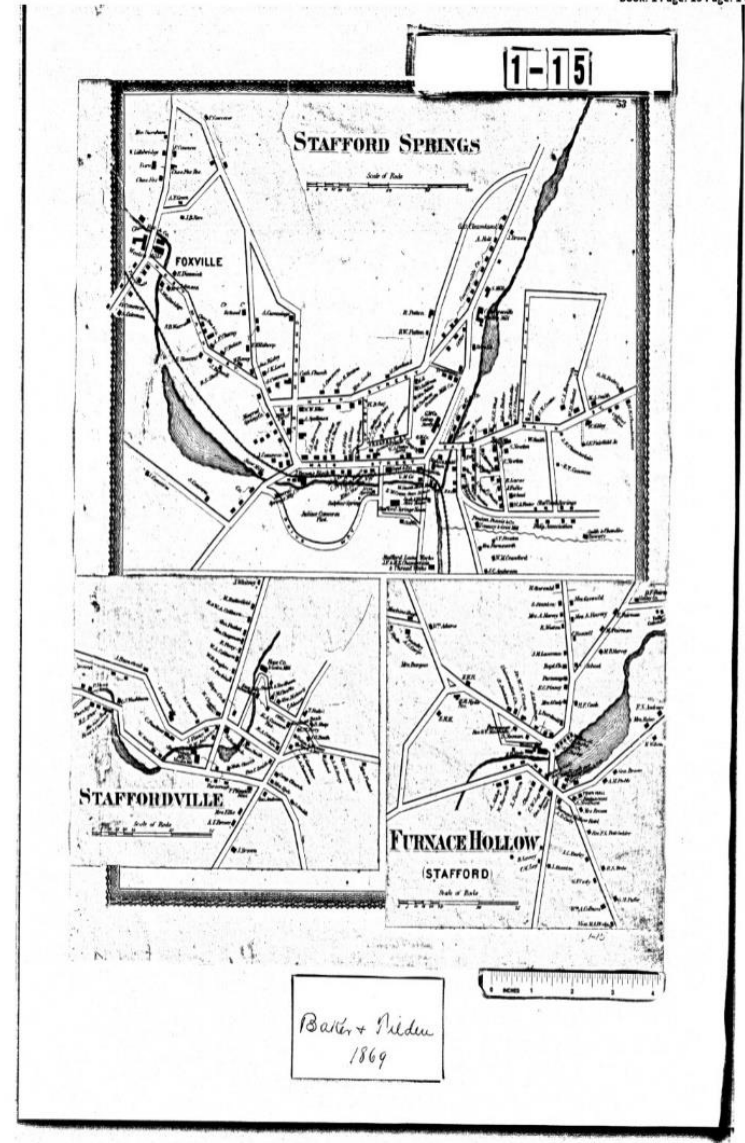
**Stafford Hollow**, located at the intersection of State Routes 19 and 319, is a manufacturing location for TTM, home to the Mill Pond general store and a post office. This is the site of the town’s first town hall and Memorial Hall as well as the town’s public works garage. An auto repair business is also here. It is a National Register Historic District.

**West Stafford**, near the intersection of State routes 190 and 30, has a daily traffic count that averages 10,000 vehicles per day. It is home to Leonard’s Auto Parts store, and two small office complexes and Alpine Tree Service.

**Hydeville**, on State Route 19 is home to the dilapidated Hydeville mill. The mill will need to be demolished. The owner of the property is deceased, and back taxes are owed. The town should consider selling the property at a tax sale for it to be redeveloped into housing, manufacturing, or retail. The lot is 2.99 acres in size. There is also an auto repair business and liquor store in the area.

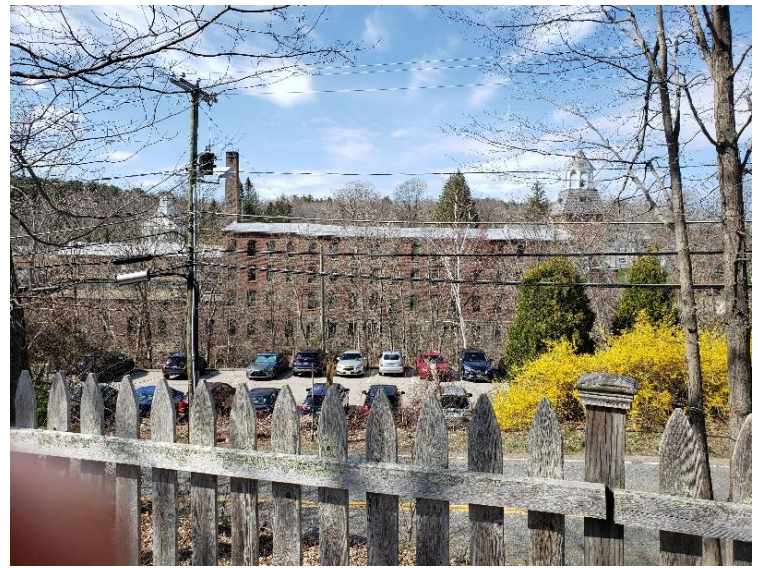
**Staffordville** is home to a TTM plant, a post office and the decommissioned Staffordville School. The area also contains the town beach at the Staffordville Reservoir.

**Stafford Springs:** “Downtown” Stafford is the home of many shops and factories as well as much of the population. About 30,000 vehicles per day circle the rotary around the iconic fountain in front of the Warren Memorial Town Hall.





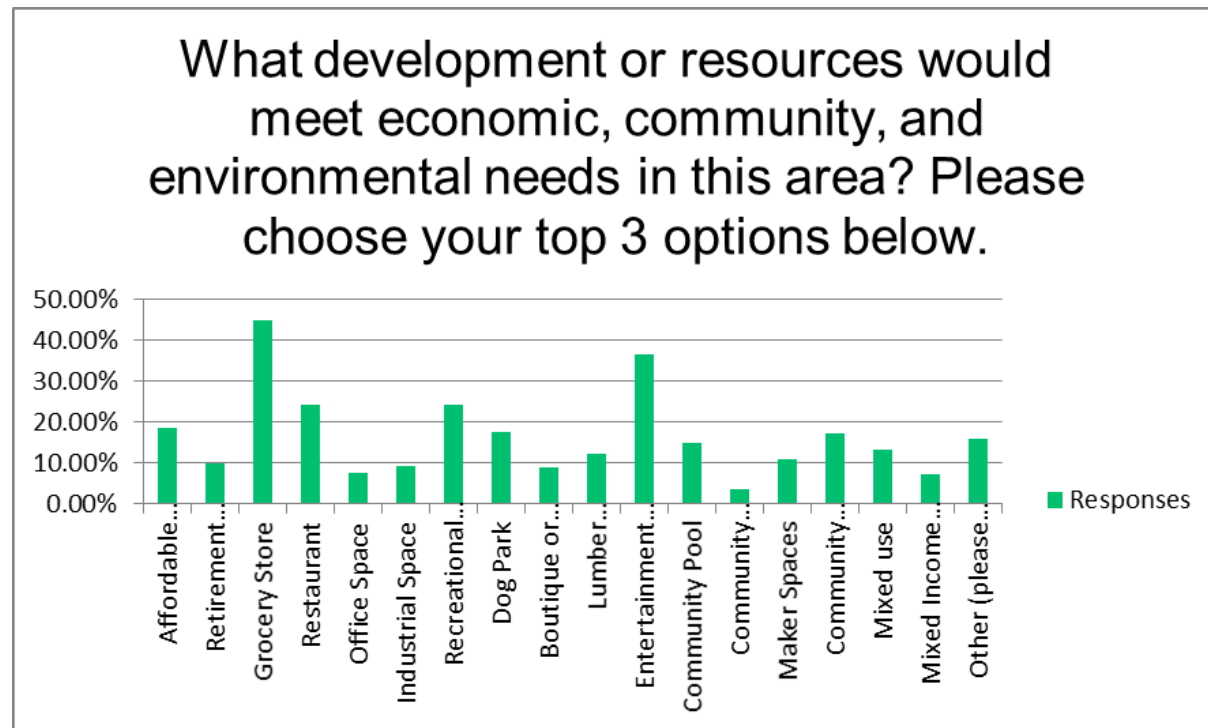
*Clockwise from upper left: the Baptist Church and Memorial Hall (both in Stafford Hollow); The Second Congregational Church of Stafford in West Stafford; The TTM plant in Stafford Hollow and a small chapel in*





## RETAIL DEVELOPMENT

In 1999, the Planning and Zoning Commission hired Dr. Donald Poland to undertake a market study of Stafford to determine the feasibility of attracting another grocery store to town. As shown below, a townwide poll conducted in 2020 confirmed that among the 330 respondents, a second grocery store remains a perceived need for this community.



The analysis revealed that Stafford as a trade area for retail trade has a positive leakage factor of 17.9. This indicates opportunity for retail sales within Stafford that are now leaking out of the community. For example, the gap for food and drink in Stafford is even more positive, with a leakage factor of 45.3 and the potential for \$10,429,356 in food and drink sales in Stafford. Overall, these are positive findings and indicate that Stafford can support a greater number of retail stores and food and drink establishments. However, the greatest challenges for retail development that confront Stafford are low population density and low traffic counts within the town's commercial corridor (Route 190/32 west of the Center). Low population can only be overcome through new housing development and growth that may occur slowly over time. The same is true of traffic counts. As population growth occurs, as more businesses develop and create more jobs and trips to those businesses, traffic counts will increase over time. The town should expend its economic development time on expanding and retaining the current retail base.



*Stafford Springs Main Street 2022 featuring the Palace Theatre and the "Arizona"*

## TOWN IDENTITY

The identity of the town as determined by using Tapestry Segmentation, an ESRI product, is explained below. It found that the top three population segments in Stafford are Green Acres (55.2% of households), Front Porches (26.4%), and Parks and Rec (18.3%).

The townwide poll agrees with the Tapestry analysis and other market-related reviews by the study that Stafford is ripe for an expansion of dining, entertainment and retail catering to the groups profiled below.

The **Green Acres** lifestyle features country living and self-reliance. They are avid do-it-yourselfers, maintaining and remodeling their homes with all the necessary power tools to accomplish the jobs. Gardening, especially growing vegetables, is also a priority, again with the right tools, tillers, tractors, and riding mowers. Outdoor living also features a variety of sports: hunting and fishing, motorcycling, hiking and camping, and even golf. Self-described conservatives, residents of Green Acres remain pessimistic about the near future yet are heavily invested in it.

Purchasing choices reflect Green Acres residents' country life, including a variety of vehicles from trucks and SUVs to ATVs and motorcycles, preferably late model. • Homeowners favor DIY home improvement projects and gardening. • Media of choice are provided by satellite service, radio, and television, also with an emphasis on country and home and garden. • Green Acres residents pursue physical fitness vigorously, from working out on home exercise equipment to playing a variety of sports. • Residents are active in their communities and a variety of social organizations, from charitable to veterans' clubs.

**Front Porches** blends household types, with more young families with children or single households than average. This group is also more diverse than the US. More than half of householders are renters, and many of the homes are older town homes or duplexes. Friends and family are central to Front Porches residents and help to influence household buying decisions. Households tend to own just one vehicle but used only when needed. Income and net worth of these residents are well below the US average.

Members of the group go online for gaming, watching movies, employment searches, and posting pics on social media. • Prefer cellphones over landlines and use their mobile devices for entertainment such as streaming movies and music. • Drink energy and sports drinks. • Participate in leisure activities including sports, playing board games and video games. • Watch Comedy Central, Nickelodeon, and PBS Kids Sprout.

**Parks and Rec** - These practical suburbanites have achieved the dream of home ownership. They have purchased homes that are within their means. Their homes are older, and town homes and duplexes are not uncommon. Many of these families are two-income married couples approaching retirement age; they are comfortable in their jobs and their homes, budget wisely, but do not plan on retiring anytime soon or moving. Neighborhoods are well established, as are the amenities and programs that supported their now independent children through school and college. The appeal of these kid-friendly neighborhoods is now attracting a new generation of young couples.

Cost and practicality come first when purchasing a vehicle; Parks and Rec residents are more likely to buy SUVs or trucks over compact or subcompact vehicles. • Budget-conscious consumers stock up on staples at warehouse clubs. • Pass time at home watching documentaries on Animal Planet, Discovery, or History channels. For an outing, they choose to dine out at family-style restaurants and attend movies. Between trips to the casinos, they gamble on lottery tickets and practice their blackjack and poker skills online. • Convenience is important in the kitchen; they regularly use frozen or packaged main course meals. Ground coffee is preferred over coffee beans. • Residents here take advantage of local parks and recreational activities. Their exercise routine is a balance of home-based exercise; a session at their local community gym; or a quick jog, swim, or run.

The profiles support the residents’ own feelings when asked in a Survey Monkey poll in 2020 to rank their favor things about Stafford:

**Your Favorite Thing About Stafford?**

Possible Answers	Responses	
Small town feel	44.24%	146
Rural landscape/Natural resources	26.36%	87
Close proximity to work	1.82%	6
Family	5.45%	18
Open space	3.64%	12
Low crime	3.33%	11
Strong sense of community	10.61%	35
Other	4.55%	15
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>330</b>
	<b>Skipped</b>	<b>3</b>

These profiles also confirm why new merchants such as Tractor Supply, O’Reilly’s Auto Parts, Dollar Tree, and Dollar General chose to open in Stafford and why Cumberland Farms and Aubuchon Hardware have expanded. Marketing the town to retail trade that services our Tapestry segments will benefit both the merchants and the population.

## RESIDENTIAL ZONES

There are five Residential zones in Stafford. Three of these zones; A, B, and C, are in the densest part of Town and located in the former borough of Stafford Springs. Radiating out from these districts are the more rural zones, AA and AAA. The Bulk area requirements of the zones and the zoning maps are shown on the following pages. Multifamily housing is only allowed in the B and C zones. Single-family homes may be built in the WM zone by special permit.

Single family homes in the AA and AAA may have in-law apartments. There is no minimum house size.

The zoning regulations allow for 55+ housing developments in buildings containing up to four living units clustered on lots of at least 5 acres. At least 35% of the developed land must remain “open space”.

Primary uses and accessory uses are regulated.

<b>Single Family Dwelling Lot Occupancy rates</b>				
lots greater than:	occupied	vacant	total	% vacant
1 acre	2005	275	2280	12.06%
2 acres	1209	212	1421	14.92%
3 acres	732	145	877	16.53%
5 acres	423	107	530	20.19%
10 acres	212	68	280	24.29%
less than 1	1492	131	1623	8.07%
total	6073	938	7011	13.38%

Housing Stock	Town	County	State
Total Units	5308	59099	1507711
% single family	73.60%	69.20%	59.20%
Median Price	\$189,600	\$247,500	\$270,100
built pr 1950	38.20%	17.90%	29.30%
owner occupied	3399	39710	906798
as % Total Dwellings	72.50%	72.40%	66.60%
	From CERC Town Profile 2019		

## DIMENSIONAL STANDARDS FOR RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS

Minimum Dimensions	AAA	AA	AA*	A	B****	C****	WM
Lot area – square feet	88,000	44,000***	30,000	15,000	40,000	44,000	88,000
Lot frontage – feet	200	175	150	100	250	100	200
Lot depth – feet	250	200	175	120	150	150	250
Front yard – feet	50	40	50	25	50	15	50
Side yard - feet							
Main building	30	20	20	20	30	10	30
Accessory building** (Effective November 15, 2003)	30	20	20	12	30	10	30
Parking area	10	5	5	2	5	5	10
Rear yard – feet							
Main building	50	35	35	35	50	25	50
Accessory building** (Effective November 15, 2003)	50	35	35	35	50	25	50
Parking area	10	5	5	2	5	5	10
Maximum height							
Main building – stories	2½	2½	2½	2½	2½	3	2½
Main building – feet	30	30	30	30	35	35	30
Accessory building – stories** (Effective November 15, 2003)	30	30	30	30	35	35	30
Lot area/dwelling unit							
Square feet	88,000	30,000	30,000	15,000	11,000	7,330	88,000
Lot coverage – all buildings							
Percentage	10	15	20	20	20	20	10

\* Denotes AA District within the former Borough of Stafford Springs.

\*\* Accessory buildings that are not more than two hundred (200) square feet in size and not more than twelve (12) feet in height shall comply with Section 3.17.

\*\*\* Minimum of 30,000 square feet needed per unit for two-family (2) dwelling.

\*\*\*\* Multi-family dwellings shall not exceed four (4) units/acre in Zone B and six (6) units/acre in Zone C.

## ZONING

One of the clear purposes of the current Zoning Regulations is encouraging development in a residential corridor running northerly from and surrounding the downtown area by designating it as the AA Zone. This zone allows development on one-acre lots and has the least restrictive development requirements. The AA zone extends roughly from the Ellington town line bordered by Willington Avenue to the west and Stafford Street Extension to the east, north between Monson Road and Stafford Street north to Diamond Ledge and Sunset Ridge. It also incorporates the Staffordville Reservoir, Crystal Lake and Stateline Pond neighborhoods. There are also pockets along Cooper Lane, State Route 190 and Tolland Avenue.

AA zoning is not appropriate for the lake districts where lot sizes tend to be only 50 feet wide. The town should rezone these areas so that citizens do not need variances to use their properties as they were historically laid out.

The AA Zone should be extended into adjacent areas to further continue development. The area between Sunset Ridge and Old Monson Road, and between Old Monson Road and Leonard Road, as far as the Hillcrest Drive subdivision should be changed to AA Zone. This zoning is consistent with existing housing in the area and encourages additional development in an area that is close to several roads and sewers.

There are pockets of AA zoning in areas that are not particularly appropriate for concentrated residential growth. For example, there is an area of AA Zone that is northerly of the West Stafford School that is surrounded by state forest and adjacent to the

Diamond Ledge Brook. This area should be rezoned as an AAA Zone.

The area along East Main Street and north of Westford Avenue and also lower Grant Avenue and East Street consists mainly of large single-family residences and older wooden multifamily residences. The area is zoned C allowing multifamily residences on a minimum parcel size of 2 acres. The town should relax the minimum parcel size since few lots can meet this threshold. These large structures may then be converted into multifamily dwellings expanding affordable housing in the downtown area and allowing seniors to age in their homes with the help of rental income. However, the zoning regulations should require that facades of homes not be altered, and that any renovations are in accordance with the existing architectural style of the structure.

The area between Highland Terrace and State Route 32 is zoned as Zone B which allows multifamily uses only on large lots. The zoning of this area should be changed to allow for conversions of these large structures for two family use as long as the historic character of the neighborhood is not altered.

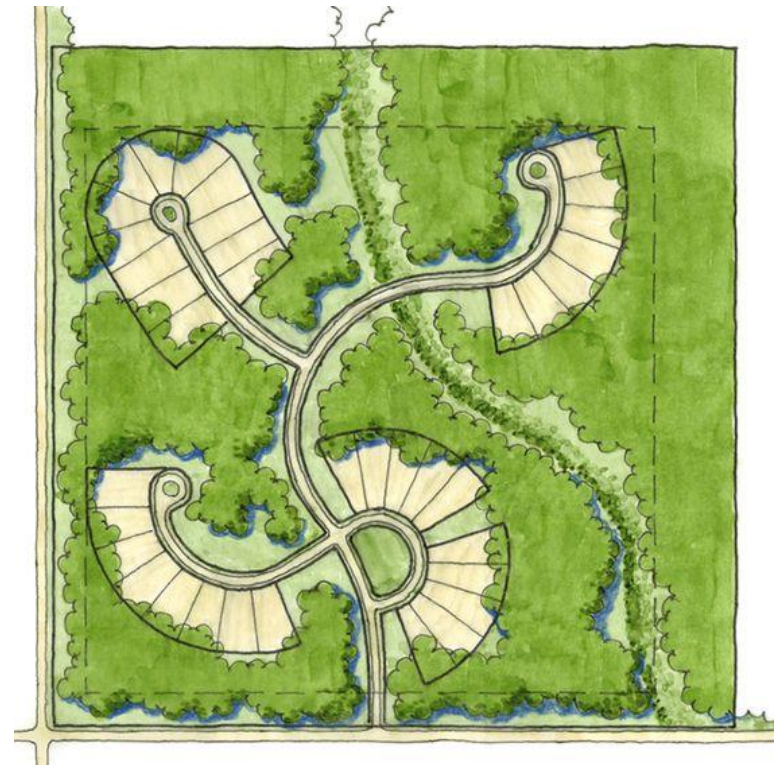
Zone C should be extended to the area between the Middle River and Park Street and south of Park Street. This will allow development of newer multifamily housing in an area that is adjacent to older properties and that has access to public sewers and public water.

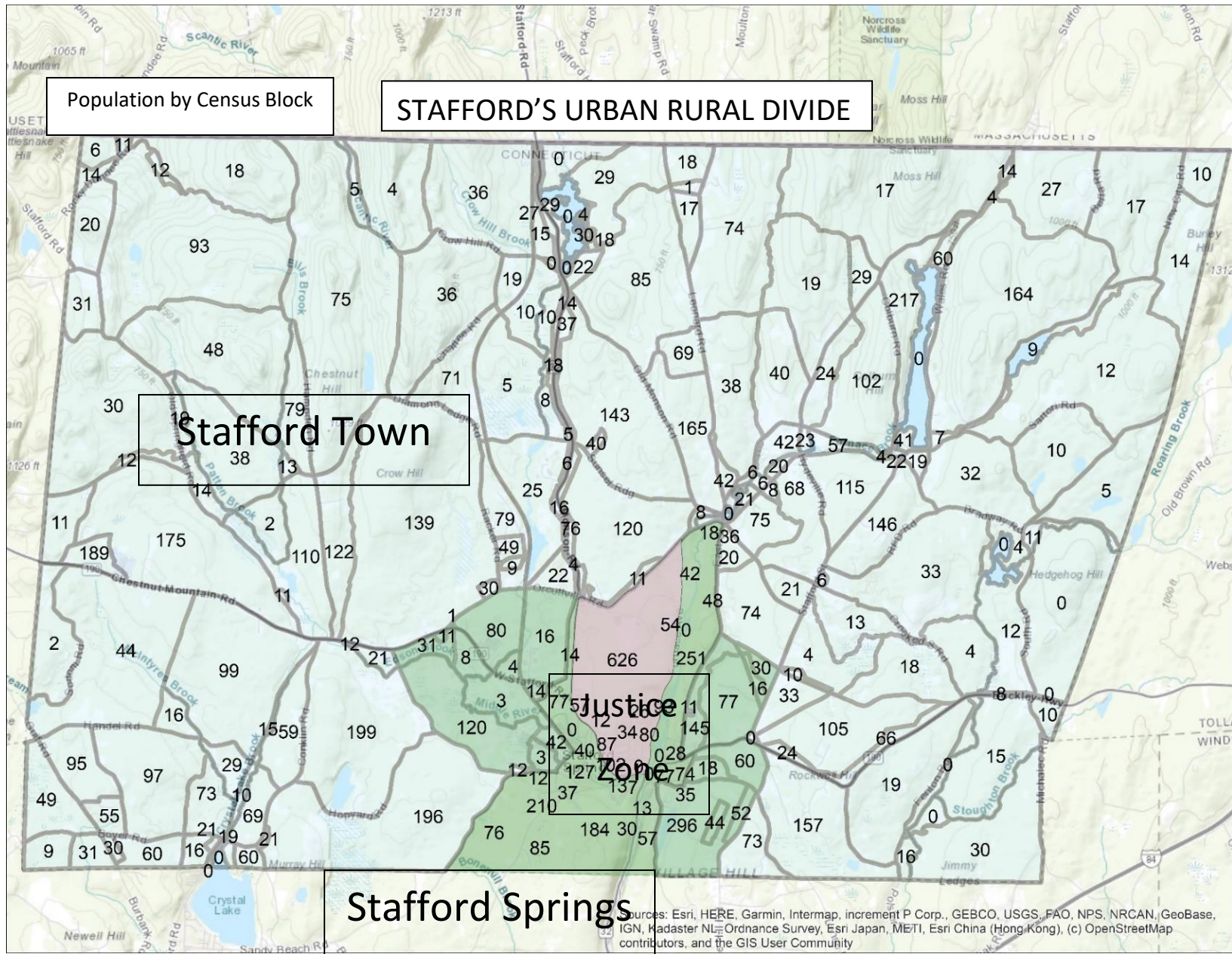
Cluster housing, pocket neighborhoods, and/or an agricultural overlay zone should be allowed in the AA and AAA zones to save farmland from being over developed based on the underlying zone. Thirty five percent of the land should be required to be open space. The town should investigate allowing



accessory dwelling units either in an existing structure or in an accessory building on appropriately sized lots to increase affordable housing and to allow seniors added income and support to be

able to “age” in their primary dwelling. Sustainable building practices should be rewarded.



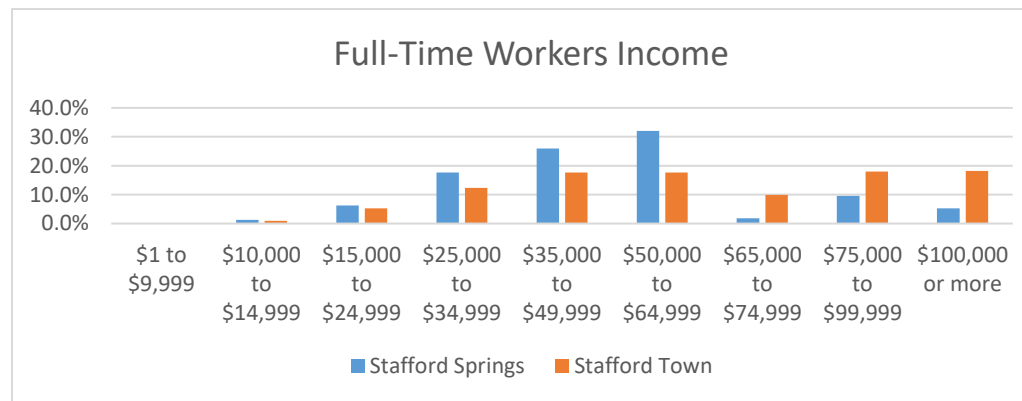


## STAFFORD'S URBAN-RURAL DIVIDE

Stafford is both a rural town and an urban community. Stafford can be broken down into three regions as show on the map on page 60. The light blue area (Stafford Town) represents the rural portions of town where 64% of the population lives on almost 90% of the land. 16% of the population lives in an area comprising 8.9% of the land area around the central core of town which is colored darker green. The balance of the population (20%) lives in the pink area comprising 2.1% of Stafford. This

area is broken out because it is where 30% or more of the population lives below 200% of the federal poverty level (FPL). This area is an Environmental Justice (EJ) Zone and is eligible for grants through the US Environmental Protection Agency. The environmental justice area is part of the Stafford Springs Urban Cluster (one of eight in Connecticut) but will not be segregated out as part of the following analysis of Stafford's rural-urban divide. Stafford Springs and the Justice Zone are food deserts.

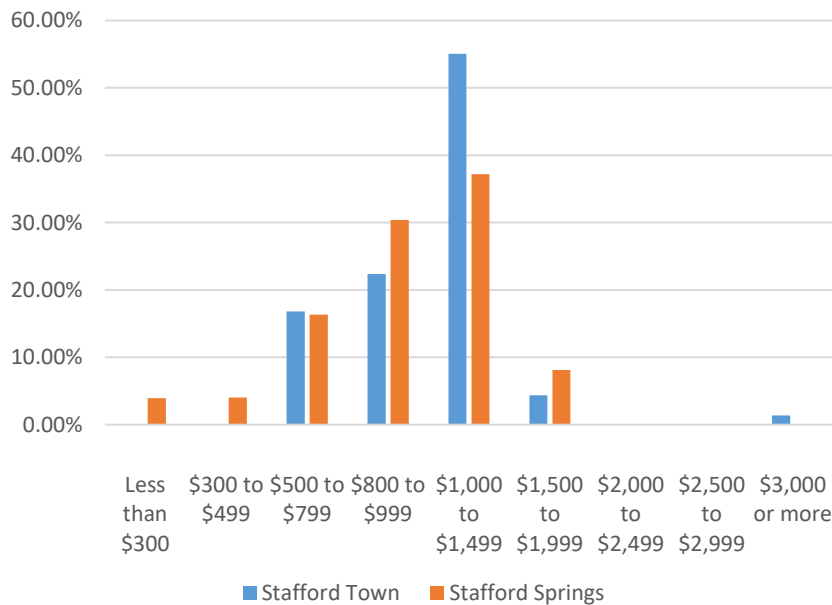
Two thirds of the workers in Stafford Town earn more than \$50,000 per year, compared to 50% in Stafford Springs.



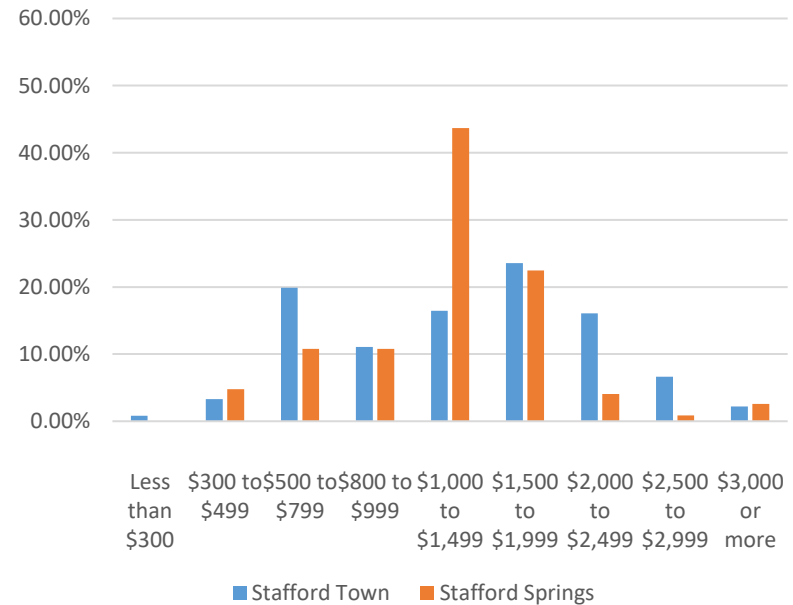
Area	population	sq miles	density/sq mile	% of population	% of sq. miles	% Below 200% FPL
Stafford Town	6833	50.7	135	64%	88.9%	11%
Stafford Springs	1712	5.1	335	16%	8.9%	13%
Justice Zone	2095	1.2	1745	20%	2.1%	34%

About 50% of those who rent in the more rural areas of Stafford Town pay between \$1,000 and \$1,499 per month, whereas about 35% of renters in Stafford Springs pay that amount. Most Stafford Springs renters pay less than \$1,000 per month.

Renter Occupied Monthly Housing Cost

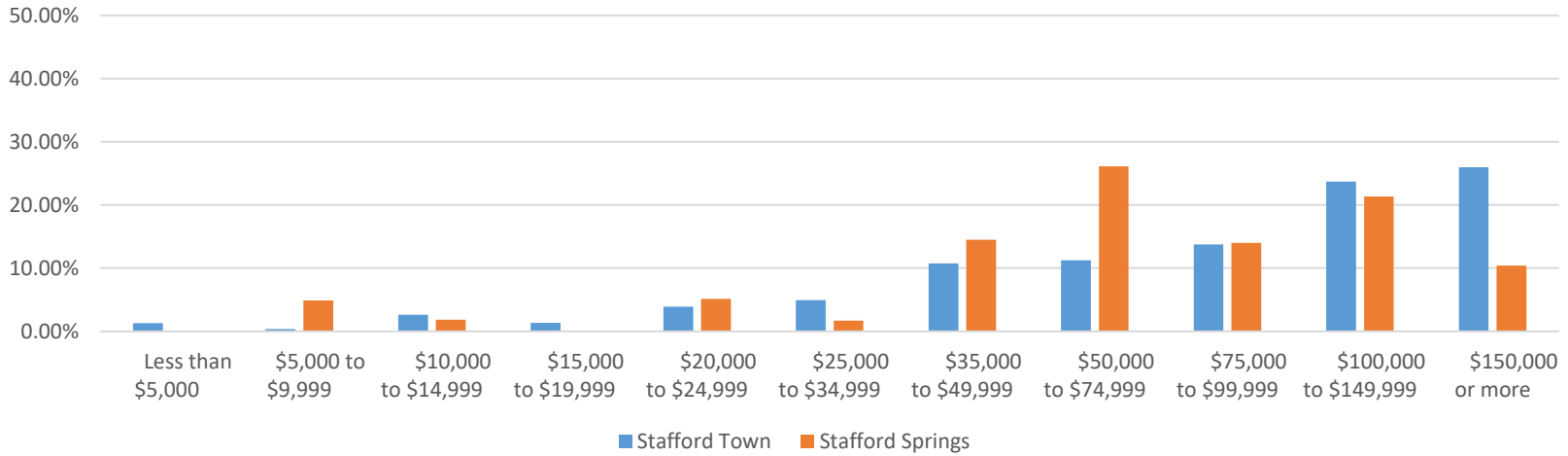


Owner Occupied Monthly Housing Cost

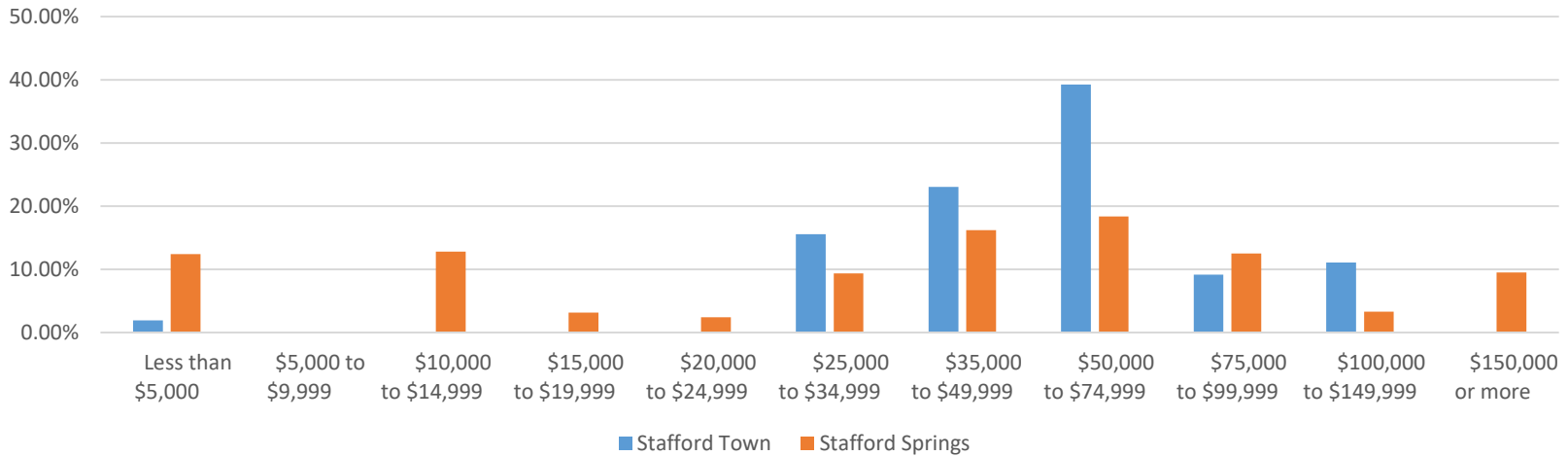


Among the owner-occupied group in the more rural areas of Stafford Town, about 17% pay between \$1,000 and \$1,499 per month, whereas over 49% pay more that \$1,499 per month. Close to 45% of owners who occupy their dwellings in Stafford Springs between \$1,000 and \$ 1,499 per month

### Owner Occupied Annual Income



### Renter Occupied Annual Income



TASKS	Leader	Partners
Adopt a Demolition Delay Ordinance to create a waiting period for demolition so other options can be thoroughly explored.	SHAC	P & Z
Establish historic districts in key historic areas	SHAC	
Researching grants/programs for signage that give the year a house was built and by whom	G & M	SHAC
Provide education to residents in historic districts about the Connecticut Historic Homes Rehabilitation State Tax Credit program	G & M	SHAC/P & Z
Establish overlay zones to protect ridgelines and preserve stone walls and historic buildings. Require archaeological review of larger subdivisions.	P & Z	
Provide recreation opportunities that meet the needs of citizens of all ages in a cost-effective manner	REC	BOS
Hire a self-funding full time Recreation Director to create more recreation activities.	REC	BOS
Install Fitness trail apparatus in parks and along walking paths.	REC	G & M/DPW
Upgrade and maintain athletic facilities including fields, gyms and skating areas as needed	DPW	BOS
Create a vision for the use of the Staffordville School for recreational and municipal uses	BOS	REC/P & Z
Find creative ways for citizens to volunteer to support recreational programs	REC	BOS
Find creative ways for citizens to volunteer to join and support Commissions	P & Z	EDC
Create a food distribution hub near the EJ area	G & M	P & Z
Investigate possible canoe/kayak launching area at Staffordville Reservoir Beach	REC	BOS
Apply for EPA funded training to assist the EJ community to increase employability	G & M	
Promote recreational and educational activities outside of school hours in the EJ area	REC	G & M
Obtain Technical Assistance to Brownfields support to determine issues in the EJ area	G & M	
Expand housing Opportunities in the EJ area	G & M	
Apply for grants to determine and abate lead paint issues	G & M	
Create incubator business space to promote job creation	G & M	EDC
Create Community Kitchen space to promote health and nutrition	G & M	EDC

## STAFFORD FISCAL INDICATORS

<b>Municipal Revenue</b>	
Total Revenue	\$43,257,962
Property Tax Revenue	\$26,553,111
<i>per capita</i>	\$2,227
<i>per capita, as % of state av</i>	74%
Intergovernmental Revenue	\$15,135,353
Revenue to Expenditure Ratio	100%
<b>Municipal Expenditure</b>	
Total Expenditure	\$43,368,479
Educational	\$31,619,806
Other	\$11,748,673
<b>Grand List</b>	
Equalized Net Grand List	\$1,189,185,893
<i>per capita</i>	\$100,066
<i>per capita, as % of state av.</i>	65%
Comm./Indust. Share of Net Grand List	9%
Actual Mill Rate	33.93
Equalized Mill Rate	22.25
<b>Municipal Debt</b>	
Moody's Rating	A1
Total Indebtness	\$33,178,442
<i>per capita</i>	\$2,792
<i>per capita, as % of state av</i>	108%
<i>as percent of expenditures</i>	76%
Annual Debt Service	\$1,866,867
<i>as % of expenditures</i>	4%

Stafford operates under a three Selectman form of government and does not have a charter. The legislative body is the Town Meeting.

<b>Key Employers</b>
Johnson Memorial Hospital
TTM Technologies, Inc.
3M Company
Althena Health
American Sleeve Bearings
AMERICAN WOOLEN COMPANY INC

<b>COMBINED TOP 10 TAXPAYERS 2022</b>	
EVERSOURCE	\$16,622,720
CONN WATER CO	\$7,516,080
TTM PRINTED CIRCUIT GROUP LLC	\$6,869,400
BIG Y FOODS INC	\$5,957,960
ATHENA STAFFORD SPRINGS LANDLORD LLC	\$5,851,440
PISCIOTTA WAYNE & JEAN LLC	\$4,682,440
AMERICAN WOOLEN COMPANY INC	\$3,455,830
ASPLUNDH TREE EXPERT LLC	\$2,556,840
3M WATER PURIFICATION INC	\$2,166,040
STAFFORD SPRINGS RETAIL LLC	\$2,000,180
TOTAL	\$57,678,930

## EMERGENCY SERVICES

The Stafford Fire Stations offer full-service emergency services, including Fire Suppression, Rescue and EMS services to the town of Stafford. We also provide Mutual-Aid services to the surrounding communities.

**The West Stafford Fire Dept.** operates from a 14,200 square foot facility that includes the Town of Stafford Emergency Operations Center (EOC) at 144 West Stafford Road. The Department is funded by the town and supported by over 40 volunteer fire fighters.

Steady growth in our area has taken the department from about 300 runs in 1995 to 935 runs in 2021. The department maintains nine apparatus.



*Apparatus displayed at the West Stafford Fire House*

**Station 145**, located at 19 Colburn Road. operate seven pieces of apparatus.

**Station 245** at 27 Willington Avenue. operates eight pieces of apparatus including two ambulances.

The town uses the services of the Somers Ambulance Department for Medical EMT services.

### Police

The police department is staffed by six officers and two Sergeants. The town is a Resident Trooper Town. The Town has one School Resource Officer. The Animal Control Officer reports to the police. One of the Sergeants is also the Town Emergency Coordinator.

### Hospitals

Bay State Medical Center in Springfield is 25 miles away.

Johnson Memorial Hospital is in Stafford.

St. Francis Hospital in Hartford is 30 miles away.



## STAFFORD'S COMPATABILITY WITH THE REGIONAL AND STATE POCDS

The Town of Stafford's plan has considered and addressed the following Goals for a Sustainable Capital Region matrix:

**Natural Resources Conservation** – The plan promotes the protection of natural resources through promoting ecologically sound land use principals that protect air water and soil quality while also allowing for growth in harmony with natural resources.

**Watersheds & Water Quality** – The plan protects water quality by promoting low-impact stormwater management, active management of the sewer system, and the reduction of water pollution.

**Open Space & Farmland Protection** – The plan promotes agriculture and the protection of open space.

**Climate Change** – Storm water maintenance and enhancements are recommended to reduce flooding hazards from increased levels of precipitation. The plan reduces the need for carbon-based fuel.

**Food Systems** – The plan addresses food needs in food desert areas and promotes agriculture.

**Land Use & Zoning** – The plan proposes changes to address land-use patterns that will promote the economic and residential needs of the community.

**Public Water and Sewer Service** – Public water and sewer issues are discussed in the plan to ensure a healthy supply of water and to reduce the environmental impacts of sewage disposal.

**Transportation** – The plan recommends continued maintenance and upgrades of the town's road system. The creation of a rail interconnection could entice new commercial development. Non-motorized transportation is promoted.

**Housing** – The plan encourages housing and neighborhoods that are affordable and sustainable for all socioeconomic groups.

**Economic Development** – The plan strives to support and improve the economic vitality of the town through promoting creative land-use practices.

The plan considered the State Plan of Conservation and Development. We note that the plan considered and found no inconsistencies with the following growth principals:

GROWTH MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLE #1. Redevelop and Revitalize Regional Centers and Areas with Existing or Currently Planned Physical Infrastructure.

GROWTH MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLE #2. Expand Housing Opportunities and Design Choices to Accommodate a Variety of Household Types and Needs.

GROWTH MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLE #3. Concentrate Development Around Transportation Nodes and Along Major Transportation Corridors to Support the Viability of Transportation Options

GROWTH MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLE #4. Conserve and Restore the Natural Environment, Cultural and Historical Resources, and Traditional Rural Lands

GROWTH MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLE #5. Protect and Ensure the Integrity of Environmental Assets Critical to Public Health and Safety

GROWTH MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLE #6. Promote Integrated Planning across all Levels of Government to Address Issues on a Statewide, Regional, and Local Basis

## PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

The Plan of Conservation and Development is a living document that guides the community's development and desires through policy statements and specific recommendations. It is normal that these policies and recommendation will change over the next ten years. As such, the POCD should be reviewed and edited as events dictate.

Implementation of the POCD is crucial for the document to have any meaning. The goal of the plan is to put in to effect the stated policies and recommendations. To achieve the goals a Plan Implementation Committee (PIC) should be created consisting of members of key town boards, commissions, and stakeholders. The PIC should be an ad hoc committee appointed by and answerable to the Planning and Zoning Commission who may make plan implementation recommendations to the commission. The members of the committee will be appointed by the P and Z commission, and should include representatives from the Historic Advisory Committee, Conservation Commission, Agriculture Commission, Recreation Commission, Economic Development Commission, and other stakeholders. The PIC members should interact with the Planning and Zoning Commission and other tasked parties to implement the plan. They should meet at least quarterly.

**The town should use the Plan of Conservation and Development:**

To Implement the Plan

To guide decisions on zoning map and text changes

To guide decisions on Special Permit applications

To guide decision on 8-24 Referrals

To guide decision on capital and operating budgets

The Town should use social media and virtual meeting apps while implementing the plan and during public meetings to keep the public informed and engaged.



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