

Newtown, Connecticut

PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT

2004 Update

**Prepared for the:
Newtown Planning and Zoning Commission**

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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PLAN APPENDICES (Not Attached)

The goals and recommended implementation strategies for the 2004 POCD are defined in the above text. The following appendices are incorporated into the POCD as reference material to provide an understanding of the considerations made in preparing Newtown's 2004 POCD. In the case of inconsistency or conflict between 2004 POCD goals and recommendations and the information contained in the following appendices, the above 2004 POCD goals and recommendations shall prevail.

1. Demographic Overview
2. Development Patterns and Trends
3. Community Character
4. Conservation and Natural Resources
5. Open Space
6. Parks and Recreation
7. Community Facilities
8. Housing
9. Economic Development
10. Transportation
11. Community Planning Survey
12. Open Space Conservation Subdivision Study

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This update of Newtown's Plan of Conservation and Development is the result of the dedicated efforts of many Newtown residents and town staff who have worked to craft a document that can be used to guide future municipal actions and policies. Newtown's updated Plan of Conservation and Development proposes a vision of Newtown in 10 years and a series of goals and action recommendations to manage change toward the achievement of this vision.

The Plan evolved from the development of 10 technical planning memoranda that focused on a variety of topics including Newtown's expanding population, past land development patterns, the importance of preserving Newtown's community character, natural resources and open space, parks and recreational facilities, community facility needs, the need to grow Newtown's non-residential tax base and transportation issues. Each planning memoranda identifies key community concerns which became the focus of specific goals and implementation recommendations.

The Plan of Conservation and Development contains a Generalized Future Land Use Plan, to be used as an advisory and policy-guidance tool to direct the Town's future efforts to manage change. Key to the successful implementation of this Plan is the use of Zoning and Subdivision Regulations, design guidelines and/or implementation techniques that explicitly enable the achievement of the overall Vision through the implementation of the Plan's many recommendations.

The following is a sampling of Plan goals. Each goal is backed-up with an Action Agenda that specifies recommended actions and assigns responsibility for implementation.

Community Character:

- Maintain the scenic characteristics of Newtown's "Pastoral and Rural Areas,"
- Preserve the mixed-use functions and enhance the visual appearance of Newtown's commercial corridors and Villages.
- Preserve Newtown's historic sites and archeological resources.

Conservation and Natural Resources.

- Continue to preserve and protect Inland Wetlands and Watercourses from potential sources of contamination or development.
- Achieve and protect high water quality classifications throughout Newtown.
- Regulate development and storm water management activities within flood hazard areas to protect life and property and to preserve the natural storm retention functions of the watershed.
- Protect prime agricultural land resources and promote agricultural uses.
- Conserve and protect natural systems and their functions in order to maintain indigenous wildlife and plant life.

Open Space

- Achieve the preservation and protection of Newtown's key natural resource features.
- Newtown will achieve or exceed the State's goal for 21% open space.
- Enhance opportunities for passive recreation.

Housing

- Strive for a more balanced supply of housing types that will accommodate the housing needs of Newtown residents and those working in Newtown.
- Manage residential development to enhance Newtown's present community character.

Economic Development

- Grow Newtown's commercial property tax base at a rate at least equal to the Town's growth in its residential tax base.
- Increase the inventory of viable economic development sites.
- Prioritize the clean-up and re-use of Newtown's brownfield sites.
- Facilitate the maintenance and development of agricultural businesses in scale with Newtown.

Community Facilities

- Strive for a more organized and efficient approach for municipal office buildings.
- Define long range school facility requirements.
- Maintain and support recreational facilities for townspeople of all ages.
- Provide sufficient space for the operations of the Newtown Senior Center.
- Maintain the capacity of Newtown's public sewer system.
- Continue to provide for a high level of police, fire and emergency services.

Transportation

- Achieve the appropriate functional classification of State roads in Newtown.
- Alleviate areas of congestion and address safety issues.
- Improve opportunities for pedestrian circulation.
- Initiate "fixed route" bus service in Newtown on a trial basis.
- Maximize rail mobility opportunities.

This Plan is not a static document. The Action Agenda section of the Plan was created to enable the annual evaluation of progress made in accomplishing specific plan recommendations. This will enable an annual report to the community on the status of the Plan.

II. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

A. WHAT IS A PLAN OF CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT?

The purpose of a Plan of Conservation and Development is to record the best thinking of the Town as to how Newtown should continue to evolve in the future and to give direction to both public and private elements of change. Chapter 126, Section 8-23, of the Connecticut General Statutes requires that a planning and zoning commission “*prepare, adopt and amend a plan of conservation and development for the municipality*” at least every ten years.

Newtown’s Plan of Conservation and Development is an advisory document that offers a Vision of the community and provides guidance for municipal decision making. The process of updating the POCD enables public participation in shaping the future of the Town and provides an opportunity to prioritize goals and implementation strategies and to set the course to achieve the Vision of Newtown.

While future oriented, Newtown’s Plan of Conservation and Development reflects the goals and objectives of a community at a certain point in time and provides guidance for municipal decisions affecting the Town’s conservation and development.

Newtown’s updated POCD responds to the 1995 amendments to the State’s General Statutes that increased the emphasis on conservation in municipal plans and to incorporate reference for greenway protection. In 2001, the Statute was further amended to include referral of updated and amended POCD’s to the local legislative body for review and comment prior to adoption by a Planning and Zoning Commission.

The Planning and Zoning Commission fulfilled one of the requirements of Section 8-23 in the fall of 2003 by referring the draft plan to the Newtown Legislative Council for their review and comment. The Legislative Council reported back to the Commission with recommendations that were incorporated into this final plan.

Updating Newtown’s POCD What is Legally Required?

As defined by Connecticut General Statutes, the POCD shall:

- Be a statement of policies, goals and standards for the physical and economic development of the municipality;
- Show the (Planning and Zoning) Commission’s recommendations for the most desirable use of land for residential, recreational, commercial, industrial, conservation and other purposes and for the most desirable density of population in the municipality;
- Promote...the coordinated development... and the general welfare and prosperity of its people;
- Make provision for the development of housing opportunities, including multifamily dwellings...for all residents of the municipality and the planning region...;
- Promote housing choice and economic diversity in housing...and encourage the development of housing which will meet the housing needs identified in the regional housing plan and the State’s Plan of Conservation and Development;
- Consider...the use of cluster development;
- Take into account the State’s Plan of Conservation and Development and note any inconsistencies...with said State Plan.

The requirement that the plan note any inconsistencies with the State Plan of Conservation was also accomplished. The Newtown Plan of Conservation and Development is generally consistent with the State plan and the “Locational Guide Map” except for in the following areas: the area along the southern portion of the Route 25 corridor, where the state plan does not accurately reflect Newtown’s long standing land use patterns of commercial, industrial and residential uses (Sand Hill Plaza, Riverview, Batchelder, etc.); the entire length of the Pootatuck River should be recognized as a greenway; the Hattertown Historic District should appear on the state plan; the Curtis Corporate Park should appear as a growth area and the two private game clubs in southeastern Newtown should also be recognized in the State Plan.

B. THE PROCESS OF UPDATING NEWTOWN’S PLAN OF CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT

In early 2002, the Newtown Planning and Zoning Commission began the process of reviewing and updating the Town’s 1993 Plan of Development. During the past year and one half, the Newtown Planning and Zoning Commission caused the preparation of 10 planning memoranda, that included the following topics: Demographic Overview, Development Patterns and Trends, Community Character, Open Space, Conservation and Natural Resources, Parks and Recreation, Community Facilities, Housing, Economic Development, and Transportation. Each of these plan elements provided background information, existing conditions, maps and photographs, an analysis of changes since the completion of the 1993 Plan, and a discussion of issues, goals and recommended implementation strategies. These individual plan elements serve as technical background for the contents of this Plan and are included in the appendix of this document.

In addition, the Commission prepared and executed a Community Planning Survey to gain input from Town residents on their attitudes and desires toward growth and change in Town and prepared a special planning study to investigate the feasibility of implementing Open Space Conservation Subdivisions as a means of conserving more of Newtown’s open landscape and preserving elements of the Town’s community character. The planning memoranda, the Community Planning Survey and the analysis of Open Space Conservation Subdivisions were posted on the Town website for citizen review and comment. Because of the extent of the information provided, these individual plan elements serve as technical background for the contents of this Plan.

Updating Newtown’s POCD What is Legally Required?

The Connecticut General Statutes require that the preparation of the POCD shall consider the following:

- 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 of the municipality;
- The State and Regional Plans of Conservation and Development;
- Physical, social, economic and governmental conditions and trends;
- Energy efficient patterns of development, renewable energy and energy conservation;
- The needs of the municipality including: human resources, education, health, housing, recreation, social services, public utilities, public protection, transportation and circulation, and cultural and interpersonal communications.

As part of the process of updating the POCD, the Planning and Zoning Commission received input from Town departments and commissions. Each of the planning memoranda, the Community Planning Survey and the analysis of Open Space Conservation Subdivisions were discussed by the Commission during regularly scheduled meetings of the Commission. In addition, the Commission conducted a Public Planning Workshop on Updating Newtown's Plan of Conservation and Development to generate and benefit from public input and to encourage full participation on a variety of planning issues.

The key components of the updated Plan of Conservation and Development include a description of past growth and change within Newtown as it relates to future trends, a Vision Statement of what is desired for Newtown in 10 years and a description of the actions required to achieve this Vision, with an assignment of responsibilities for implementation. Important community issues are discussed, goals are described and strategies to achieve the goals are recommended. An assessment is made of the resources required to achieve implementation and responsibilities for implementation activities are assigned.

Community goals and objectives are established as a means to present clear and concise direction to guide future conservation and development actions. These goals take into consideration the recommendations of previous Town plans, the information compiled from planning and existing condition analyses; reports and study elements presented during the Plan of Conservation and Development Update process; existing land use patterns; future projections and community input. The identified goals will serve to guide Newtown's conservation and development activities over the next ten years and beyond.

III. NEWTOWN IN PERSPECTIVE: *GROWTH, CHANGE AND TRENDS*

A. INTRODUCTION

To plan for the future of Newtown, it is important to understand how the Town evolved to its current state and to recognize and comprehend the magnitude and character of the forces of growth and change that are likely to act upon the Town in the foreseeable future. This information provides the basis for developing plans that will enable the achievement of the Vision for the Town's future.

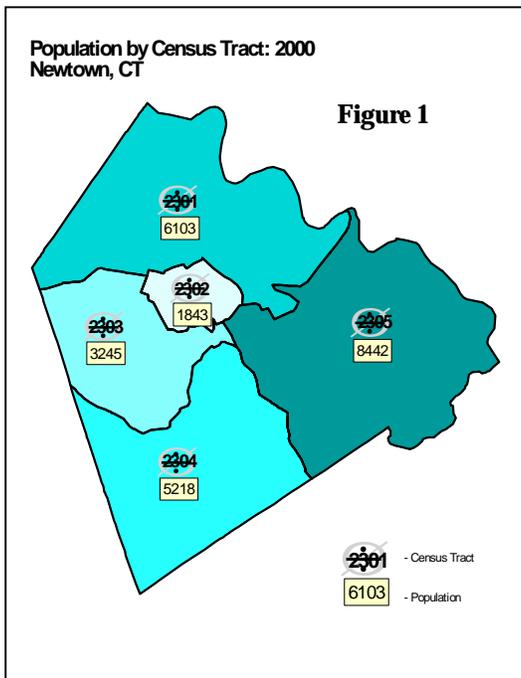
The following provides a summary description of the demographic and physical changes that have taken place in Newtown, followed by a description of likely trends given current market forces and municipal regulatory and investment practices. Plan Memorandum #2, Demographic Overview, provides a full examination of this subject.

B. POPULATION GROWTH

The understanding of demographic and socio-economic trends, characteristics and forecasts is important to the process of updating Newtown's Plan of Conservation and Development. This information provides indications of trends and changes that have an affect on a variety of Town planning issues.

As shown in Table 1, Newtown has experienced population growth in every decade since 1940. The Town's population has now exceeded 25,000 people, with population growth between 1990 and 2000 recorded by the Census at 4,250 persons or nearly 20.5%, making Newtown one of the fastest growing Town's in Connecticut. Putting this growth in perspective, numerical growth in the Town's population over any one decade was most dramatic between 1960 and 1970, when Newtown grew by 5,568 persons. Still, Newtown's population growth between 1990 and 2000 was greater than the total growth experienced between 1970 and 1990.

Census	Population	% Change
1880	4,013	-
1890	3,539	-11.8
1900	3,276	-7.4
1910	3,021	-7.8
1920	2,751	-8.9
1930	2,635	-4.2
1940	4,023	52.7
1950	7,448	85.1
1960	11,373	52.7
1970	16,942	49.0
1980	19,107	12.8
1990	20,779	8.8
2000	25,031	20.5



From a regional perspective, Newtown is located in one of the fastest growing areas of Connecticut and between 1990 and 2000 the rate of population growth in Newtown exceeded that of the eight adjacent communities.

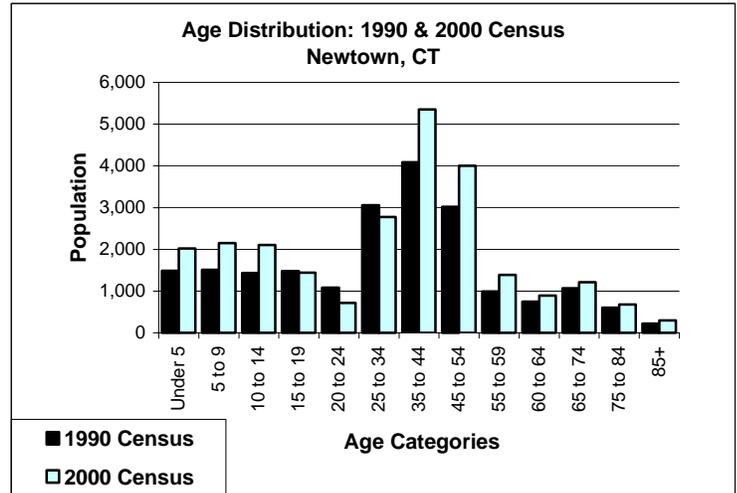
Between 1990 and 2000, 75% of the population growth in Newtown occurred in the northern and eastern areas of Town, in Census Tracts 2301 and 2305, impacting the Town's educational, recreational and transportation systems, among others.

C. POPULATION CHANGES

Similar to most communities in the Connecticut, Newtown’s population aged over the decade between the 1990 and the 2000 Census. Pre-School aged population increased by 36% or 538 children between the two censuses. The elementary and middle school aged population (ages 5 to 14) increased by more than 1,300 children. From a planning perspective, these changes in school-aged population impact school enrollment, park and recreation facility planning and youth services planning.

The Town’s greatest loss in population occurred in the 20 to 34 years of age cohorts while population in the 35 to 54 years of age cohorts grew significantly and population over 60 years of age also increased between 1990 and 2000. Changes in the Town’s elderly population will impact planning for senior facilities, senior housing and senior support services. Newtown’s Median Age in 2000 (37.5) was similar to the State average but lower than all of the adjacent communities, with the exception of Bethel.

Chart 1



D. HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS

As shown in the accompanying table, the number of households in Newtown almost doubled from 4,209 to 8,235 between 1970 and 2000. The decade between the 1970 and 1980 Census recorded the greatest percentage and numerical increase when 1,541 new households were formed in the Town. Between 1980 and 1990 the Town added another 1,048 households to reach the 1990 count of 6,798. Between the 1990 and the 2000 Census the Town of Newtown gained another 1,527 households (22.5%). All of Newtown’s neighboring communities recorded household increases during the 1990’s, but at a lower rate of growth. Bethel gained 330 households (5.3%), Bridgewater gained 49 households (7.5%), Brookfield gained 633 households (12.8%), Easton gained 337 households (15.8%), Monroe gained 1,055 households (19.4%), Oxford gained 529 households (18.8%), Redding gained 148 households (5.3%) and Southbury gained 1,016 households (16.4%). Such gains are reflective of area residential development trends and an indication of the attraction these communities hold for residential growth.

Census	Households	% Change
1970	4,209	-
1980	5,750	36.6%
1990	6,798	18.2%
2000	8,325	22.5%

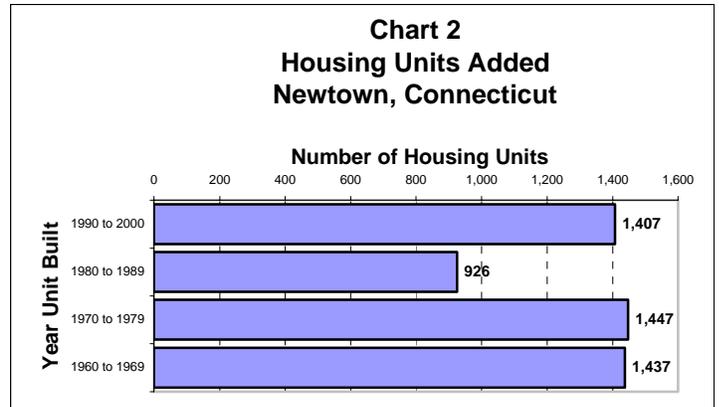
The following information is offered to put changes in the average size of Newtown households over time into context. In 1960, Newtown’s average household size was 4.51 persons per household. By 1970 the average had dropped to 3.47 persons, in 1980 it was 3.32 persons, in 1990 it was 2.94 persons and in 2000 it was 2.90 persons per household. While average household sizes have decreased, Newtown and many of its adjacent communities, continue to have a relatively high average household size when compared to the State-wide average of 2.53. Larger household sizes are reflective of Newtown as a young family-oriented community. According to the 2000 Census,

46.1% of Newtown’s households contain individuals with children under the age of 18.

Drops in average household size have occurred throughout the country over the past several decades as the dynamics of our nation’s households have changed. Household sizes have tended to decrease as a result of an increase in single person households, an increase in divorce and separations, the tendency for young professionals to delay marriage and families, and an increase in the number of elderly who remain in their own homes as opposed to residing with family or moving into group quarters.

E. HOUSING GROWTH

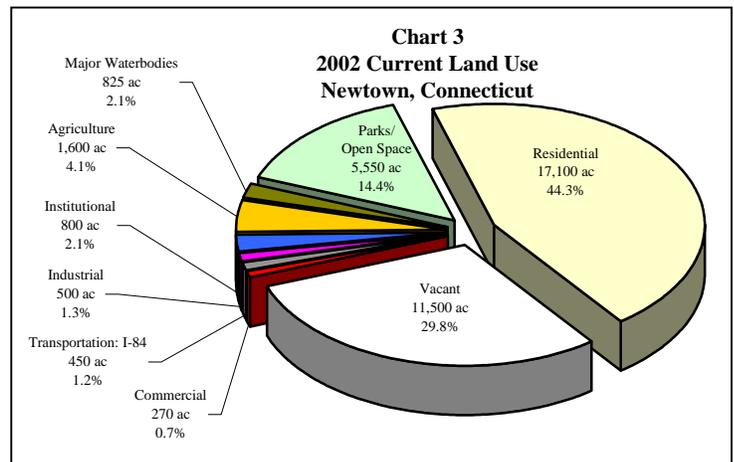
Sixty-one per cent of Newtown’s housing stock was constructed between 1960 and 2000. As shown in the accompanying chart, with the exception of the 1980’s decade, Newtown has experienced a very constant rate of housing growth of between 1,407 and 1,447 dwelling units per decade. Housing developed between 1980 and 2000 accounts for 27.1 % of Newtown’s housing stock, while 33.5 % of the Town’s housing was developed between 1960 and 1980.



Even though the number of housing units developed during the past 20 years is 550 units less than the previous 20 years, the public perception that the rate of housing development within the community has increased during the past two decades is probably due to the “large lot” nature of housing development, which has resulted in an acceleration in the amount of land consumed by residential development on a per house basis. Historically, residential development in Newtown has taken the form of single family detached, owner occupied housing. Newtown’s housing stock, as described by the 2000 Census, consists of 92.8% single family detached housing and 91.9% of Newtown’s occupied housing stock is owner occupied.

F. DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS AND TRENDS

Current Land Use- The Town of Newtown has total land area of approximately 60.4 square miles (38,644 acres). The Town includes a diversity of land use types including residential, industrial, commercial, institutional, agricultural and open space, as indicated on the accompanying chart. This chart also indicates that a significant portion of Newtown remains vacant.



The predominant land use in Newtown is single family detached housing on relatively large lots. Between 1980 and 2001, 14,068 acres, representing 38% of the Town, was subdivided into 2,608 lots for single family detached housing.

Land Use Trends: Newtown is located within a rapidly growing region, by Connecticut standards, and is recognized in the residential marketplace as an attractive place to live. It can be reasonably anticipated that Newtown will continue to face cyclical development pressures to meet the market demands for additional single family detached housing in northern Fairfield County.

Newtown has a large inventory of privately owned vacant land estimated at 11,500 acres (which does not include 1,350 acres of privately held agricultural land) and the 40 year trend of developing single family detached housing in Newtown is likely to continue during the next ten years. The pace of residential development in Newtown will be determined by a combination of market forces for single family detached housing and municipal regulatory practices as they affect the price of a finished building lot.

The residential market has traditionally been cyclical, responding to the ups and down of the supporting regional economy and mortgage interest rates. Newtown's current municipal regulations controlling residential development result in the creation of large lots supporting single family detached housing. While the cost of new housing in Newtown has risen steadily, housing costs in Newtown remain significantly below the cost for comparable housing in lower Fairfield County, where an important portion of the housing market demand originates. As long as the demand for single family detached housing persists in this area of Connecticut, Newtown, with an ample supply of privately owned vacant land and good locational attributes, can anticipate being the focus of residential development activity and the demand for population supporting highway commercial uses will follow the expansion of the residential base.

IV. NEWTOWN VISION STATEMENT

NEWTOWN IN 10 YEARS

The purpose of the Vision Statement is to provide a commonly agreed to understanding of what life should be like in Newtown in 10 years. This statement leads to an understanding of the types of actions Newtown will need to undertake during the coming decade to achieve these goals.

Vision of Newtown in 2013

The goal of the Town of Newtown is to protect and enhance its picturesque, rural, historic New England setting and attributes. The architecture and landscaping of all types of properties will be designed to protect the image of a rural and historic town. Over the next ten years various town agencies will work in concert to maintain a suitable variety of homes for it's citizens taking into account varying lifestyles and economic capabilities while providing and developing equal recreational activities and facilities for everyone. We will work together as a town to promote and protect open space, farmland and trails throughout the town always maintaining an environmentally active position protecting our aquifers, wetlands and other ecologically sensitive areas. Education for Newtown's children will continue to excel in quality and efficiency. Newtown will succeed in attracting commercial businesses at a rate equal to its growth and the design of the town's roads and traffic patterns will enhance business development while minimizing traffic congestion for the residents.

V. ACHIEVING THE VISION

COMMUNITY CHARACTER

A. INTRODUCTION

The community has expressed a desire to utilize the Plan of Conservation and Development as an instrument of municipal government to preserve and enhance desired aspects of Newtown's community character. This section of the Plan focuses on defining Newtown's community character, followed by an examination of opportunities to preserve and enhance desired community character elements, even as Newtown continues to grow. A full discussion of the need to incorporate Community Character consideration in updating Newtown's POCD is provided in Plan Memorandum #1, Community Character.

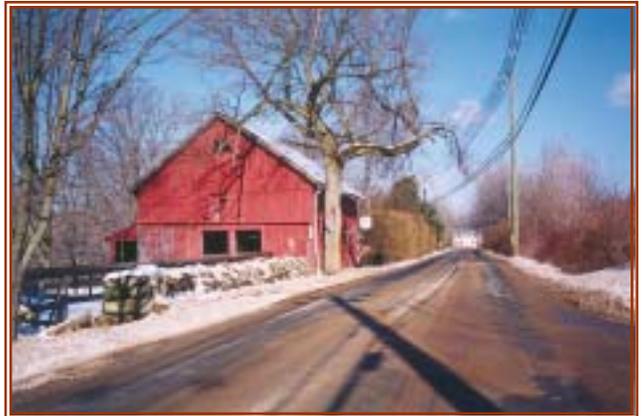
WHAT IS COMMUNITY CHARACTER?

IT'S A LITTLE HARD TO DEFINE, BUT I KNOW IT
WHEN I SEE IT."

B. DEFINING NEWTOWN'S COMMUNITY CHARACTER

Community character is the essence of a town. The character of Newtown is shaped by its physical attributes and by the sense of community arising from the many activities which take place within its boundaries.

- **Pastoral and Rural Landscape:** The visual character of Newtown is derived from the perception of both its natural landscape and the built environment. Newtown's visual character is shaped in part by its "green" and pastoral landscapes. The remaining vestiges of Newtown's past agricultural character, combined with its rolling terrain, and large forested areas, generates a sense of openness that still dominates the visual character of significant areas of the Town. Areas of Newtown possessing strong pastoral and rural characteristics are indicated on the Map of Pastoral and Rural Landscapes.



Great Ring Road

- **Natural Features:** Newtown's terrain is largely rolling, punctuated by steep hills and deep valleys, rock outcroppings, flood plains and wetlands. Newtown contains several significant natural and manmade water features including: Lakes Zoar and Lillinonah on the Housatonic River; the Pootatuck River, which flows northward across Newtown, emptying into the Housatonic River; Taunton Pond, a beautiful upland water body; Pond Brook; Deep Brook; Limekiln Brook; the Upper Aspetuck River; and the Halfway River, on Newtown's southeastern boundary with Monroe.
- **Newtown's Image Corridors:** Some of Newtown's well traveled roadways possess particularly picturesque views of the Town's "countryside." These areas have been identified as Image Corridors, where the views from the roadways establish lasting images of the town's natural beauty and contribute to the formation of Newtown's community character. Identified Image Corridors are highlighted on the Map of Image Corridors.

Figure 2 – Pastoral & Rural Landscapes

- **Open Space:** Publicly owned open space and land protected by non-profit land trust organizations directly contribute to the visual perception of Newtown's rural and pastoral qualities. The Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection controls approximately 3,075 acres of State forests and parklands in Newtown and private conservation organizations in Newtown collectively control over 1,800 acres of open space. Many of these private open space holdings have very prominent locations and make powerful contributions to the collective perception of the visual character of Newtown. Together, these several thousand acres of open space continually define Newtown's "green" image.

The perception of Newtown's community character is very significantly influenced by the visual qualities of the manmade elements of Newtown's landscape. These elements include:

- **The Borough of Newtown:** The Borough contains shopping areas, numerous local businesses, municipal facilities, churches and the Flag Pole. Portions of the Borough, especially Main Street, and the views of the Flag Pole from many different vantage points within town, form very powerful visual images which strongly influence the collective perception of Newtown's community character. These manmade features of Newtown's built environment combine to provide a key focal point of "community" within the Town. Newtown has long placed a high priority on maintaining the historic character of the Borough.
- **Newtown's Hamlets:** In addition to the Borough, Newtown has four historic hamlets, Sandy Hook, Hawleyville, Dodgingtown and Botsford. Each historical hamlet is characterized as a mixed-use center serving the surrounding neighborhoods and serve as community focal points within the context of the larger Town. Each hamlet has a distinct history and character and each contributes to the overall perception of Newtown.
- **Public Buildings and Community Character:** The elements of the built environment created through public investment play an important role in defining Newtown's community character. The environment created through public investment, which includes public buildings, parks, streets, and monuments are visible elements of the manmade environment which influence the perception of community image, as well as the perception of the collective value which Newtown residents place on their community.
- **Public Streets:** Newtown has 226 miles of local roads covering approximately 1,100 acres of Newtown's landscape. What happens on, within and along this public realm significantly affects the perception of Newtown's community character.
- **Public Parks:** Newtown has seven Town parks and playing fields totaling 180.67 acres. In addition to their physical presence, these facilities have an impact on the perception of the quality of services offered by the Town, which in turn contributes to the development of community character.
- **Residential Neighborhoods:** The largest category of Newtown's built environment, in terms of land area affected, is the Town's housing stock. The predominate type of housing in Newtown is single family detached houses surrounded by landscaped yards. Newtown's newer residential

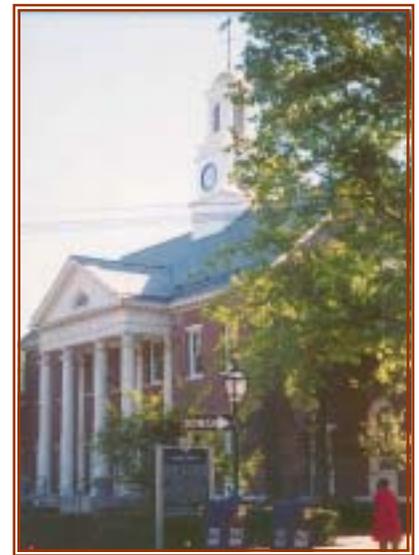


Figure 3 – Image Corridors

neighborhoods elicit a suburban quality to the visual environment, making it an increasingly significant element of the Town's community character. The overall character of Newtown's housing stock is one of very good quality, a very positive element of the Town's community character.

- **Newtown's Commercial Corridors:** Most of the commercial uses serving the needs of Newtown's residents are located along Route 25 and Route 6 and within the Borough. The common visual characteristic of many of Newtown's commercial uses, often located side by side, is a parking lot fronting the highway, which elicits a character of strip suburban development. Because commercial uses front on the most heavily traveled roadways in Newtown, their appearances contributes significantly to the daily perception of Newtown's community character, for residents and visitors alike.



- **Newtown's Business Centers:** The appearance of businesses visible from Newtown's heavily traveled roadways contributes to the daily perception of the Town's community character.

The quality of life experienced by those living and working in Newtown helps to form a perception of the Town's community character. In addition to considerations of the quality of the Town's natural and manmade environments, the quality of services provided by the public, private and institutional sectors contributes to an assessment of the quality of life afforded to town residents and those working within Newtown. The quality of services, including education, transportation, health, recreational, police, fire, emergency and retail can vary substantially from town to town and are the aspects of community often discussed by residents when describing the quality of life within their town.

- **Community Gathering Places and Focal Points:** Public gathering places and community focal points contribute positively to a Town's self image and function to provide a sense of community. Places of this nature in Newtown include churches, schools, playgrounds, parks, municipal buildings and public monuments. Community gathering places and focal points afford opportunities for residents to interact and provide important visual reference points.



- **Sense of Place:** The quality of Newtown's natural and built environments, the level of community activities and the availability and quality of services helps residents and visitors to formulate an impression of the Town's community character. These are the special and unique characteristics which set Newtown apart and make it a memorable place.

C. COMMUNITY CHARACTER: ISSUES, GOALS AND ACTION AGENDA

The formation of community character is a process characterized by incremental change. Change is a constant in every community and the character of Newtown will continue to evolve as the community matures.

The elements of Newtown's community character held in high esteem by Town residents have been developed into community planning goals to be used as guidance for future activities that will affect

the quality of life in Newtown. These planning goals are an important foundation of the updated POCD, addressing the key issues of growth, conservation and the management of change. The following section identifies the issues affecting the key elements of Newtown’s community character, defines community planning goals and recommends an action agenda to achieving those goals.

ISSUE #1: NEWTOWN’S PASTORAL AND RURAL LANDSCAPE

1. The visual character of Newtown’s pastoral and rural landscape, including open fields, stonewalls, ponds and streams, country lanes, forested areas, etc., makes a valued contribution to Newtown’s Community Character.
2. Newtown’s pastoral and rural landscape is altered one lot at a time, as undeveloped land is subdivided and built upon.
3. Some views of Newtown from State highways form lasting images of the Town’s natural beauty and contribute to the Town’s perceived community character.
4. Reference Issue #4, Newtown’s Farmland, in the Conservation of Natural Resources section of this 2003 POCD.

Goal: Maintain the scenic characteristics of Newtown’s “Pastoral and Rural Areas,” and “Image Corridors” and enhance the “Gateways” to Newtown.

Strategies:

Section/ Issue	No.	Strategy	Leader	Required Support	Required Support	Required Support
COCH1	1.	Define and map specific areas and roads critical to Newtown’s preservation of its rural and pastoral landscapes.	PZC	BS		
COCH1	2.	Develop regulations and other means to protect these areas.	PZC	LC		
COCH1	3.	Pursue the use of context sensitive design standards for the maintenance, upgrading and construction of town roads that contribute to the preservation of these critical roads.	BS	LC		
COCH1	4.	Develop a means of preserving Newtown’s country roads to protect the pastoral, rural and scenic characteristics of Newtown’s landscape.	BS	PZC	LC	
COCH1	5.	Utilize the State’s Scenic Road Program to help protect the scenic vistas of State highways within identified “Image Corridors.”	BS	LC	PZC	
COCH1	6.	Create and adopt design guidelines for business and industrial areas.	PZC	EDC	BZC	
COCH1	7.	Encourage the elimination of overhead utility lines.	BS	BB	PZC	BZC

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Section/ Issue	No.	Strategy	Leader	Required Support	Required Support	Required Support
COCH1	8.	Establish and implement an “Adopt-A-Spot” plan for points of entry and key locations within the Town.	EDC	PZC	BZC	
COCH1	9.	Critique and update the Special Exceptions section of Newtown’s Planning and Zoning Regulations as an aid in maintaining the character of Newtown.	PZC			

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ISSUE #2: APPEARANCE OF NEWTOWN’S CORRIDORS AND VILLAGE AREAS

1. The Borough is the historic center of Newtown and contributes significantly to the Town’s community character.
2. Each of Newtown’s four mixed-use hamlets (Botsford, Dodgingtown, Hawleyville and Sandy Hook) contributes in different ways to the character of the surrounding neighborhoods.
3. Most commercial uses serving the needs of Newtown’s residents have been regulated to front on arterial highways, including Route 25 south of the Borough, Church Hill Road and Route 6 west of Saw Mill Road.
4. Many commercial uses are located in freestanding buildings with shallow setbacks from the highway and parking lots in front. Other commercial uses are located in small shopping centers with similar design characteristics.
5. The common visual characteristic of many commercial uses, often located side-by-side, is a parking lot fronting the highway, which elicits an impression of strip-suburban development.
6. Because these commercial uses front on the most heavily traveled roadways in Newtown, their appearance contributes to the daily perception of Newtown’s community character, for residents and visitors alike.
7. Route 25 has several large undeveloped and unprotected tracts of land. These undeveloped tracts contribute to Newtown’s character.
8. Currently, some portions of these corridors have an unsightly appearance while others are quite attractive.

Goal: Preserve the mixed-use functions and enhance the visual appearance of Newtown’s Corridors and Villages.

Strategies:

Section/ Issue	No.	Strategy	Leader	Required Support	Required Support	Required Support
COCH2	1.	Implement the Newtown EDC’s recommendation that the Newtown Planning and Zoning Commission prepare design criteria for use by developers proposing new and expanded commercial, industrial, multi-family and mixed-use development projects.	PZC	EDC		

Section/ Issue	No.	Strategy	Leader	Required Support	Required Support	Required Support
COCH2	2.	Support the Borough's proposal to develop and implement Village District regulations that will govern the design of future development activities within the Borough and improve pedestrian mobility.	BB	PZC	BZC	
COCH2	3.	Develop and define design criteria for the Sandy Hook Design District and support streetscape-enhancement proposals.	PZC	BS	EDC	
COCH2	4.	Develop and define design criteria for the Hawleyville Design District.	PZC	BS	EDC	
COCH2	5.	Determine the need in other Hamlets for streetscape specifications regarding sidewalks, curbing, street lighting, landscaping, and storm water management.	BS	PZC	LC	EDC
COCH2	6.	Pursue efforts to protect vacant lands surrounding the Borough and Newtown's four hamlets to preserve the historic settlement pattern of mixed-use villages and hamlets surrounded by open land.	PZC	CC	OS	BS
COCH2	7.	Formulate regulations for mixed-use development that incorporates landscaped public places and design features that create pedestrian-friendly environments.	PZC	BZC	EDC	
COCH2	8.	Require that visually attractive buffers be installed between commercial and residential uses where mixed-use development is impossible and linkage is unwarranted.	PZC	BZC		

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ISSUE #3: THE PUBLIC REALM

The quality of the public realm created by Town buildings, parks and monuments strongly influences the perception of Newtown's community character and the sense of community pride.

Goal: Enhance the public realm's contributions to Newtown's Community Character.

Strategies:

Section/ Issue	No.	Strategy	Leader	Required Support	Required Support	Required Support
COCH3	1.	Develop a sighting and design strategy for construction and upgrade of Town-owned buildings and facilities that will enhance the public's perception of Newtown's community character.	BS	PZC	PBSC	

Section/ Issue	No.	Strategy	Leader	Required Support	Required Support	Required Support
COCH3	2.	Integrate new municipal facilities into the fabric of the surrounding neighborhood.	PBSC	PZC	BZC	
COCH3	3.	Consider co-location of municipal facilities, such as parks associated with schools or other public buildings, to create community activity centers and provide opportunities for community interaction.	BS	PRC	PBSC	BE

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ISSUE #4: HISTORIC SITES AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

1. Newtown’s Community Character is defined in part by the presence of historic structures and archaeological sites that provide links to the Town’s past.
2. Some historical and archaeological resources in Newtown have been preserved for continued public enjoyment and education through local and municipal actions, including the establishment of historic districts in the Borough and Hattertown and the creation of the Orchard Hill Nature Center.

Goal: Preserve Newtown’s historic sites and archeological resources.

Strategies:

Section/ Issue	No.	Strategy	Leader	Required Support	Required Support	Required Support
COCH4	1.	Develop a Town-wide archeological resource inventory.	OS	PZC	Town Historian	
COCH4	2.	Incorporate archeological inventory information as part of Newtown’s land-development regulatory process to protect valued historic sites and archaeological resources as protected open space	PZC	CC	OS	
COCH4	3.	Explore the use of “village district” regulations and “delay of demolition” ordinances to further protect Newtown’s historic resources.	BS LC	PZC	BZC	
COCH4	4.	Implement building permit options that will encourage adaptive reuse of historic structures in commercial districts	BS	EDC	PZC	

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Section/ Issue	No.	Strategy	Leader	Required Support	Required Support	Required Support
COCH4	5.	Promote the utilization of historic tax credits for income-producing properties.	EDC	BS	LC	
COCH4	6.	Support initiatives that encourage historic preservation such as historic register/historic place designations.	BS	LC	BB	Town Historian

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IV. ACHIEVING THE VISION

CONSERVATION AND NATURAL RESOURCES

A. INTRODUCTION

The quality of life in Newtown is influenced by the quality, quantity and distribution of its natural resources. The Plan of Conservation and Development is a municipal tool to preserve and protect those elements of Newtown's natural environment that contribute to the Town's character and quality of life. The POCD defines those elements through a natural resource inventory process and by establishing goals, strategies and implementation recommendations for protecting Newtown's natural environment. Plan Memorandum #3, Conservation and Natural Resources provides a full discussion of this topic.

B. DEFINING NEWTOWN'S NATURAL RESOURCES

NATURAL RESOURCE INVENTORY: The process of protecting Newtown's natural environment included a documentation of the town's natural resources, including the geologic (soils, bedrock & surficial geology), hydrologic (rivers, streams, lakes and ponds) and biologic (plant and animal habitat) characteristics of the natural landscape. This inventory also documented Newtown's existing open space resources.

This natural resource inventory used Geographic Information System (GIS) technology to map and analyze natural resource information to provide a foundation of information used in formulating policy recommendations that are designed to ensure proper protection of the Town's natural features identified. The mapping of these natural resources also provides an opportunity to observe, on a town-wide scale, the distribution of the elements that help define Newtown's natural landscape. The ability to visualize the distribution of the town's natural resources through maps ensures that the context in which policies affecting natural resources and open space is not lost.

C. CONSERVATION AND NATURAL RESOURCES: ISSUES, GOALS AND ACTION AGENDA

The protection of Newtown's natural resources is a difficult task due to the many competing interests for the use of land. Proper allocation of Newtown's finite natural resources is a balancing act that involves consideration for private property rights, the economic development needs of the community and public health and safety requirements.

In recent years, an approach to natural resource protection and open space planning has gained a focus that involves the linkage or expansion of existing open space resources with other protected open space in the town and the surrounding region. This approach transcends town borders and looks more broadly at regional open space networks to find opportunities for linkage. Greenway planning, as it is often referred to, has been embraced by the State in the formation of the Connecticut Greenways Council, a part of the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection. This approach not only provides a regional open space network, but also improves the communities' natural infrastructure by providing close-to-home recreational opportunities.

Basic to the protection of Newtown natural resources are the following precepts:

- Growth will continue to take place;
- Land is a basic and finite resource and control of its use is essential to the public welfare;
- The town has the power and the responsibility to preserve critical natural resources through

Figure 4 – Natural Resource Areas for Open Space Consideration

- planning and the regulation of land use;
- The Town has the legal authority to acquire open space and to administer and maintain acquired property in the public interest.

The process of updating Newtown’s POCD, identified the key issues concerning the Town’s important natural resources and the need for their protection. The following section describes those issues, establishes community planning goals to be used to guide future activities affecting those resources and recommends an action agenda for achieving those goals.

ISSUE #1: NEWTOWN’S WETLANDS AND WATER COURSES

1. Wetlands function as water storage areas, natural water purification systems, ground water recharge areas and natural habitat areas.
2. Vernal pools are intermittent watercourses with wildlife and plant life indigenous to this habitat.

Goal: Continue to preserve and protect Inland Wetlands and Watercourses from potential sources of contamination or development.



Boggs Hill Road

Strategies:

Section/ Issue	No.	Strategy	Leader	Required Support	Required Support	Required Support
CANR1	1.	Maintain a regulatory policy of no net loss of wetlands.	CC			
CANR1	2.	Provide increased protection of wetlands and watercourses by evaluating actions such as:	CC			
CANR1	2a.	Increasing the current requirement for regulatory review of development activities at the current 100-foot distance from wetlands to 500 feet;	CC			
CANR1	2b.	Requiring that all regulated wetlands be incorporated into protected open space.	CC			
CANR1	3.	Require development applications to identify and protect vernal pools as regulated wetlands.	CC			

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Section/ Issue	No.	Strategy	Leader	Required Support	Required Support	Required Support
CANR1	4.	Improve the enforcement of wetland, soil erosion and sedimentation control regulations by encouraging the adoption of penalties for violation.	CC	PZC	BS	LC
CANR1	5.	Where feasible, create a network of buffers and greenways along watercourses to permit resource protection and public access.	PZC			

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ISSUE #2: SURFACE WATER AND GROUND WATER RESOURCES

1. The protection of the quality of Newtown’s water resources has been identified by Newtown residents as paramount to the goal of protecting Newtown’s natural resources.
2. Stratified drift aquifers within Newtown represent important existing and potential sources of drinking water.
3. Portions of Newtown’s surface water resources do not meet DEP’s targeted water quality classification.
4. Stream corridors filter pollutants, while providing habitat and travel corridors for wildlife.



Pootatuck River at Wasserman Way

Goal: Achieve and protect high water quality classifications throughout Newtown.

Strategies:

Section/ Issue	No.	Strategy	Leader	Required Support	Required Support	Required Support
CANR2	1.	Adopt the CT DEP’s suggested Water Quality Classifications for Newtown’s water resources.	BS	LC	BB	
CANR2	2.	Actively pursue updating the research and mapping of the Pootatuck Aquifer that was originally done in the late 1970’s and early 1980’s.	BS	BF	LC	

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Section/ Issue	No.	Strategy	Leader	Required Support	Required Support	Required Support
CANR2	3.	Consider expanding the protection of the Pootatuck Aquifer recharge area.	CC	PZC	BS	
CANR2	4.	Support improved pollution-discharge standards.	BS	LC	PZC	
CANR2	5.	Create additional aquifer-protection areas in Newtown to protect drinking water quality for future use.	CC	PZC		
CANR2	6.	Expand Newtown's aquifer protection regulations. Consider aquifer zoning overlay protection to include the Deep Brook, Limekiln Brook, North Branch of the Pootatuck, Pond Brook, and Upper Aspetuck stratified drift aquifers.	CC	PZC		
CANR2	7.	Continue to protect existing and potential water supply aquifers and water supply watershed lands from land uses that pose a risk to the maintenance of high water quality.	CC	PZC		
CANR2	8.	Promote the utilization of storm water management regulations that minimize the use of impervious surfaces and require on-site infiltration to control water run-off, maintain water quality, recharge ground-water systems, and reduce non-point water pollution.	CC	PZC	BZC	BS
CANR2	9.	Implement the best available techniques and technologies for storm water management.	CC	PZC	BZC	
CANR2	10.	Require that all development preserve the pre-development hydrology of the site.	CC	PZC	BZC	
CANR2	11.	Evaluate river protection overlay districts to:				
CANR2	11a.	Protect life, public safety and property;	CC	PZC		
CANR2	11b.	Protect and improve water quality by filtering pollutants and sediments;	CC	PZC		
CANR2	11c.	Stabilize stream banks and river beds;	CC	PZC		
CANR2	11d.	Improve aquatic habitat; and	CC	PZC		
CANR2	11e.	Provide travel corridors for wildlife.	CC	PZC		
CANR2	12.	Support measures that will protect the Deep Brook/Pootatuck Wild Trout Management Area from pollution and elevated water temperatures.	CC	PZC		
CANR2	13.	Identify existing threats and develop mitigation plans for key surface and groundwater resources in Newtown.	CC			

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ISSUE #3: FLOOD HAZARD AREAS

1. Flood hazard areas and floodways are vital elements of the natural storm water management systems in Newtown.
2. Development within flood hazard areas could result in the loss of life and property.

- Municipal land use policies and regulations can affect the ability of flood plains to effectively and safely accommodate and discharge storm water.

Goal: Regulate development and storm water management activities within flood hazard areas to protect life and property and to preserve the natural storm retention functions of the watershed.

Strategies:

Section/ Issue	No.	Strategy	Leader	Required Support	Required Support	Required Support
CANR3	1.	Continue to strengthen municipal regulation of the flood hazard areas identified by the Federal Emergency Management Administration to protect life and property and to maintain effective natural storm water management systems.	LC	CC	PZC	
CANR3	2.	Maintain flood hazard controls that will assure continued participation in the National Flood Insurance Program and Community Rating System.	BS	LC	CC	PZC

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ISSUE#4: NEWTOWN’S FARMLAND

- Prime agricultural land is an important natural resource for the local production of food.
- Lands in agricultural use contribute to the scenic character of Newtown’s landscape and provide a link to the Town’s agricultural past.
- Un-protected prime agricultural land will remain under economic pressures for conversion to residential and other non-agricultural uses.



Sugar Hill

Goal: Protect prime agricultural land resources and promote agricultural uses.

Strategies:

Section/ Issue	No.	Strategy	Leader	Required Support	Required Support	Required Support
CANR4	1.	Develop a Town policy and adopt incentives that encourages the preservation of farmland.	BS	LC	EDC	BF

Section/ Issue	No.	Strategy	Leader	Required Support	Required Support	Required Support
CANR4	2.	Strengthen and expand land-use policies and regulations that conserve prime agricultural businesses and equestrian activities by utilizing tools such as the Conservation and Agricultural zone that are specifically designed for such purposes.	PZC			
CANR4	3.	Evaluate off-site impacts of new development on adjacent farmland.	PZC	CC		
CANR4	4.	Implement an "Agricultural Buffer Zone."	PZC			
CANR4	5.	Work with agricultural businesses and land owners to conserve land used for agricultural purposes through the use of:				
CANR4	5a.	Conservation easements;	BS	LC	PZC	LC
CANR4	5b.	The purchase of development rights, open-space acquisitions;	BS	LC	OS	BF
CANR4	5c.	Purchase-lease back agreements designed to sustain agricultural uses; and	BS	LC	BF	
CANR4	5d.	The utilization of the "490" reduced tax assessment program.	BS	LC	BF	
CANR4	6.	Encourage the development of farmers' markets and other types of agricultural businesses.	EDC	PZC	BS	
CANR4	7.	Assist agricultural businesses to create practical means of protecting farmland from wildlife.	EDC	PZC	OS	
CANR4	8.	Ensure that agricultural uses are compatible with environmental concerns and where necessary, develop protective buffers for watercourses and other sensitive resources	PZC	CC		

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ISSUE #5: NEWTOWN’S INDIGENOUS WILDLIFE AND PLANT LIFE NATURAL RESOURCES.

1. Newtown’s varied topography, forested tracts, abundant watercourses, ponds, lakes and wetlands provide habitat that supports a variety of plants and animals.
2. The Connecticut Department of Protection has identified sites in Newtown that contain unique habitats supporting endangered, threatened or special concern species.

Goal: Conserve and protect natural systems and their functions in order to maintain indigenous wildlife and plant life.

Strategies:

Section/ Issue	No.	Strategy	Leader	Required Support	Required Support	Required Support
CANR5	1.	Develop methods and support actions that protect wildlife and plant life habitat areas identified as “endangered, threatened, and special concern” by the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection’s, Natural Diversity Database.	PZC	CC	BZC	OS
CANR5	2.	Preserve large undisturbed and contiguous blocks of land to sustain diverse wildlife habitat.	OS	PZC	BZC	CC
CANR5	3.	Identify existing wildlife corridors and support actions that preserve habitat needed for the survival of indigenous wildlife species.	CC	OS	PZC	
CANR5	4.	Develop a working relationship with Newtown’s several fish and game conservation organizations to support actions that preserve habitat needed for the survival of indigenous wildlife species.	CC	OS	BS	

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ISSUE#6: STEEP SLOPES, RIDGELINES, HILLTOPS AND SCENIC VIEWS IN NEWTOWN.

1. The character of Newtown’s natural landscape is defined in part by the presence of areas of steep slopes, prominent ridgelines and hilltops.
2. A number of vantage points in Newtown afford beautiful views of Newtown’s countryside.

Goal: Preserve and protect Newtown’s steep slopes, ridgelines and scenic views.

Strategies:

Section/ Issue	No.	Strategy	Leader	Required Support	Required Support	Required Support
CANR6	1.	Support actions that will lead to the protection of slopes of 25 percent or greater. Restrict land clearance for development on hilltops and ridgelines.	PZC	BZC		
CANR6	2.	Develop methods that will protect the scenic vistas identified in the 1998 Town report titled “The Views of Newtown.”	PZC	BZC		

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Section/ Issue	No.	Strategy	Leader	Required Support	Required Support	Required Support
CANR6	3.	Incorporate “view shed” analysis as a requirement of future development applications.	PZC	BZC		
CANR6	4.	Implement the requirements that plans for future residential-land subdivisions containing 6 lots or more shall be submitted both in the form of open-space conservation developments that preserve fifty percent (50%) or more of the land for open space and conventional arrangements for the Planning and Zoning Commissioners to decide which represents the best utilization of the tract of land.	PZC			

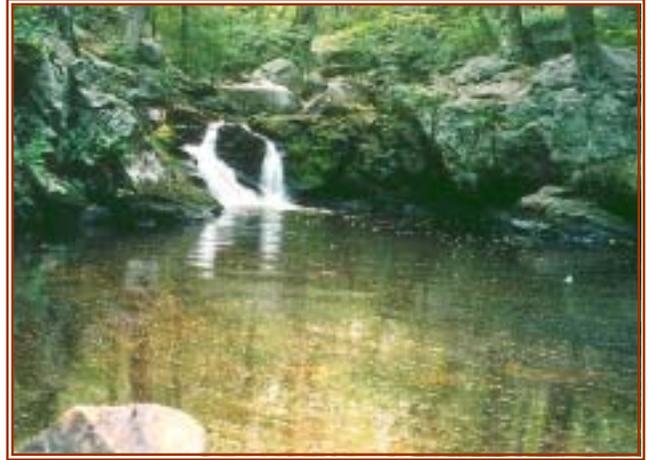
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IV. ACHIEVING THE VISION

OPEN SPACE

A. INTRODUCTION

The views of open land and forested landscapes within Newtown lead to a public perception that large areas of the Town are “open space,” without distinction as to the ownership characteristics of the viewed landscape. During the past twenty years, 13,000 acres of open land (33% of Newtown’s total land area) were developed for residential subdivisions. Newtown is one of the faster growing towns in Connecticut. The residential land development pressures which consumed 1/3 of the Town’s landscape during the past twenty years show no signs of abatement. As a consequence, future development will continue to consume open land, affecting the Town’s visual character.



Orchard Hill Nature Center



State Protected Agricultural Land- Fairfield Hills

The concept of open space preservation has broad based community support in Newtown, as evidenced by the results of the POCD Community Planning Survey and the comments of residents at the POCD planning workshop. The financial resources available to the Town to preserve open space are limited and it is therefore important to develop an element of the POCD that describes current open space conditions, defines policies related to the preservation, use and maintenance of open space and proposes implementation actions to achieve policy recommendations. It is not the intent of this document to recommend specific parcels for open space protection. Plan Memorandum #6, Open Space, provides a full examination of this subject.

B. EXISTING CONDITIONS

The open space planning process began with an investigation of Newtown’s current open space inventory. The inventory process was initiated with a broad definition of open space, to include: State parks, forests and agricultural lands; town parks; town open space; Newtown Forest Association lands; land trust properties; major utility land holdings; and privately owned open space lands, including Newtown’s two golf courses and fish and game conservation organizations. While the latter categories are not open to the public and are not “protected” open space, their presence affects the visual open space appearance of the community and their loss would represent an erosion of Newtown’s community character. Figure 5 Parks and Open Space Resources provides a visual description of the location of open space lands within the Newtown and Table 3, Inventory of Protected Open Space, summarizes protected open space lands within Newtown, by ownership category. Newtown’s current inventory of protected open space is estimated at 5,788 acres, which represents approximately 14.8% of Newtown’s land area.

Figure 5 – Parks and Open Space Resources

C. OPEN SPACE INITIATIVES

The Town of Newtown has approximately 1,100 acres of open space lands and 177 acres of parkland. Most Town owned open space was obtained as a result of lands donated to the Town through the subdivision of residential land. The Town has also successfully pursued the protection of open space by working with non-profit organizations and the State of Connecticut. The Town is not alone in its quest to preserve open space for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations of Newtown residents. The Newtown Forest Association (NFA), the oldest land trust organization in Connecticut, has developed a very



Old Purdy Road Trail



successful program to preserve open space. The NFA is an all volunteer organization with protected open space holdings in Newtown totaling 1,000 acres. Several other land trust organizations also preserve lesser amounts of open space. The State of Connecticut is Newtown's largest benefactor in preserving open space, with State owned forest, park and agricultural land holdings totaling nearly 2,800 acres.

In 1999, the First Selectman created the Ad Hoc Open Space Task Force to make recommendations regarding the

acquisition or preservation of open space. Since that time this volunteer organization has spent many hours identifying existing open space resources and prepared a report titled Open Space in Newtown 2002. This report identified strategies for the preservation of open space and the linking of open space resources by a town-wide system of trails. The Board of Selectmen, Legislative Council and Open Space Task Force have held discussions on the future funding of open space acquisitions, including the concept for the development of a capital fund to support future open space acquisitions.



State Open Space – Kazan Property

**TABLE 3
TOWN OF NEWTOWN
Open Space Inventory**

<u>Open Space Category</u>	<u>Assessment Acreage</u>
Town Parks	
Dickinson Park	29.91
Lake Lillinonah Park	3.10
Oakview Field	3.60
Orchard Hill Park	24.30
Treadwell Park	60.00
Liberty Field	13.00
Walnut Tree Field	<u>46.76</u>
Subtotal	180.67
Town Owned Open Space	1,108.86
Private Organizations	
Newtown Forest Association	1,000.00
Brookfield OS Legacy	3.69
BSA - Cullens Youth Ass.	17.53
Fairfield Fish and Game	301.03
Nature Conservancy	49.44
Pequot Fish and Game	81.08
Pootatuck Club	80.90
Pootatuck Land Company	282.20
Sandy Hook Athletic Club	7.85
Weantinoge Heritage	<u>35.57</u>
Subtotal	1,859.29
State of Connecticut	
Collis P. Huntington State Park	38.09
Department of Agriculture	341.00
Kazan Property	162.02
Paugussett State Forest North	752.50
Paugussett State Forest South	1,099.88
Rocky Glen Park	44.17
Former Bridgeport Hydraulic Properties	<u>637.55</u>
Subtotal	3,075.21
Public Utilities	
Bridgeport Hydraulic	45.50
Northeast Utilities Generation	233.00
Rocky River Realty	55.00
United Water of Connecticut	<u>8.12</u>
Subtotal	341.62
Golf Courses	
Newtown Country Club	40.00
Rock Ridge Country Club	<u>60.00</u>
Subtotal	100.00
Open Space Inventory - Totals	6,665.65

Source: Harrall-Michalowski Assoc., with assistance provided by the Newtown Ad HOC Open Space Task Force, Newtown Conservation Official and Newtown Tax Assessor

ISSUE #1: PROTECTION OF NEWTOWN’S OPEN SPACE

1. “The protection of the Town’s natural resources is the foundation for preserving the quality and the character of Newtown’s future.”

Goals:

1. Achieve the preservation and protection of Newtown’s key natural resource features.
2. Newtown will achieve or exceed the State’s goal for 21% open space.

Strategies:

Section/ Issue	No.	Strategy	Leader	Required Support	Required Support	Required Support
OPSP1	1.	Develop comprehensive guidelines to identify specific natural resource areas, features, and trails for protection as open space.	OS	CC		
OPSP1	2.	Define areas of Newtown that are important for natural resource protection and passive trails.	OS	CC		
OPSP1	3.	Increase the amount of open space required to be set-aside during the subdivision of residential land from 10% to 15%.	PZC			
OPSP2 1	4.	Require existing and planned trails in planned subdivisions to be included in the open space deeded to the town	PZC	CC		
OPSP1	5.	Emphasize the subdivision set-aside process to further the creation of a town-wide system of interconnected open space, trails and greenways.	OS	CC	PZC	
OPSP1	6.	Create and adopt a Master Plan for Open Space Acquisition and create a Land Trust.	OS	CC	BS	LC
OPSP1	7.	Develop a means for funding major acquisitions of open space.	BS	LC	CC	
OPSP1	8.	Implement the prioritized purchase of open space.	OS	BS	CC	
OPSP1	9.	Transfer the stewardship responsibilities of Town owned protected open space lands from Parks and Recreation to the Land Use Department.	BS	CC	PRC	OS
OPSP1	10.	Clearly define the responsibility for the maintenance and management of open space.	BS	CC	OS	
OPSP1	11.	Encourage State legislation that would increase the funds available for open space acquisition.	BS			
OPSP1	12.	Support a “490” reduced tax assessment program to sustain open space for all unimproved contiguous parcels of land that meet the following criteria:	BS	LC	OS	BF
OPSP1	12a.	The land is zoned Farming or Residential.	BS			
OPSP1	12b.	The land has two (2) times the minimum lot area for the zone in which it is located.	BS			

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Section/ Issue	No.	Strategy	Leader	Required Support	Required Support	Required Support
OPSP1	12c.	The land is undeveloped and free from any improvements including, but not limited to, swimming pools, tennis courts, structures, and septic systems.	BS			
OPSP1	12d.	The land has not been legally subdivided into residential lots, and	BS			
OPSP1	12e.	The land is not used for or associated with industrial, business or utility purposes.	BS			
OPSP1	13.	Develop a more formalized working relationship with the Conservation Commission and the Newtown Forest Association to coordinate efforts and maximize available resources toward the goal of protecting open space in a manner that promotes orderly development.	OS			

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ISSUE #2: GREENWAYS AND PASSIVE RECREATION

1. Passive recreation is defined to include walking, running, hiking, bicycling, horseback riding, cross-country skiing, snow shoeing, bird watching, wildlife viewing, fishing and picnicking.
2. The results of the Community Planning Survey conducted for this POCD update indicate that Newtown residents desire future open space acquisitions be utilized for passive recreation.

Goal: Enhance opportunities for passive recreation.

Strategies:

Section/ Issue	No.	Strategy	Leader	Required Support	Required Support	Required Support
OPSP2	1.	Create and implement a Master Plan of Linked Greenways, connecting to Newtown's open space resources to enhance the variety of passive recreational opportunities.	OS	CC	PZC	PRC
OPSP2	2.	Continue the use of the subdivision open-space set-aside process to support the Master Plan.	PZC	OS	CC	

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Section/ Issue	No.	Strategy	Leader	Required Support	Required Support	Required Support
OPSP2	3.	Pursue the development of a major greenway (“Al’s Trail”) extending from the upper Paugussett State Forest to Fairfield Hills, as recommended by Newtown’s Ad Hoc Open Space Task Force in 2002.	OS	CC	PZC	
OPSP2	4.	Pursue the development of the Pootatuck Greenway, as recommended in Newtown’s 1993 Plan of Development as part of a future network of interconnected greenways.	OS	CC	PZC	
OPSP2	5.	Prioritize the network of linked trails, especially to Huntington State Park.	OS	CC	PZC	
OPSP2	6.	Create a railroad bed trail system in Newtown for walking and biking which could also accommodate horseback riding.	OS	CC	PRC	
OPSP2	7.	Evaluate the possibility of extending the Monroe railroad bed trail into Newtown.	OS	CC	PRC	BS
OPSP2	8.	Prohibit the use of motorized trail bikes, all terrain vehicles and snowmobiles on public lands.	CC PZC	BS	LC	
OPSP2	9.	Prohibit hunting on town owned open space property	BS	LC	CC	

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IV. ACHIEVING THE VISION

HOUSING

A. INTRODUCTION

Section 8-23 of the Connecticut General Statutes establishes the requirements for the housing section of a municipal plan of conservation and development as follows: “Such plan shall make provision for the development of housing opportunities, including opportunities for multi-family dwellings, consistent with soil types, terrain, and infrastructure capacity, for all residents and the planning region in which the municipality is located.... Such plan shall also promote housing choice and economic diversity in housing, including housing for both low and moderate-income households....” The type, condition, layout, cost of housing and future housing needs are factors that play an important role in determining the quality of life for Newtown residents. These considerations were examined in updating Newtown’s Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) and a summary of the finding of this analysis follows. A full discussion of this topic is contained in Plan Memorandum #8, Housing.

B. EXISTING HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

The 2000 Census recorded 8,601 housing units in Newtown. Of these, 96.8% were occupied. The resulting vacancy rate of 3.2% is very low. Owner occupied housing units comprised 91.9% of Newtown’s total housing units and renter occupied units comprised the 8.1% balance in 2000. The 2000 Census counted 276 vacant housing units in Newtown, of which 37% were classified as seasonal, recreational or for occasional use.

- **Occupancy and Vacancy Characteristics:**

Table 4 describes the occupancy characteristics of Newtown’s housing stock compared to its neighboring communities, the Housatonic Valley Region and the State of Connecticut in 2000. Newtown’s vacancy rate of 3.2% was lower than that of the Housatonic Valley Region, at 5.1% and the State, at 6.1%. In comparison to surrounding communities, Newtown’s vacancy rate of 3.2% is lower than Bridgewater’s 9.8%, Brookfield’s 3.6%, Redding’s 5.4% and Southbury’s 7.4%. Newtown’s vacancy rate is higher than Bethel’s 2.2%, Easton’s 1.8%, Monroe’s 1.8% and Oxford’s 2.3%. As described in Table 4, all of the communities surrounding Newtown, with the exception of Bethel, have little in the way of rental housing, as recorded by the 2000 Census.

Table 4
Housing Inventory Characteristics in 2000
Newtown, Adjacent Communities, the Region and the State

	Total Housing Units	% Occupied	% Vacant		Total Occupied Units	% Owner Occupied	% Renter Occupied
NEWTOWN	8,601	96.8%	3.2%		8,325	91.9%	8.1%
Bethel	6,653	97.8%	2.2%		6,505	76.6%	23.4%
Bridgewater	779	90.2%	9.8%		703	90.0%	10.0%
Brookfield	5,781	96.4%	3.6%		5,572	89.0%	11.0%
Easton	2,511	98.2%	1.8%		2,465	94.3%	5.7%
Monroe	6,601	98.2%	1.8%		6,481	93.4%	6.6%

Oxford	3,420	97.7%	2.3%	3,343	91.0%	9.0%
Redding	8,287	94.6%	5.4%	2,918	90.1%	9.9%
Southbury	7,799	92.6%	7.4%	7,225	89.5%	10.5%
Housatonic Valley Region	79,760	94.9%	5.1%	75,729	75.7%	24.3%
Connecticut	1,385,975	93.9%	6.1%	1,301,670	66.8%	33.2%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Housatonic Valley Council of Elected Officials

• **Housing Inventory Characteristics**

According to the Census, 1,513 new housing units were added to Newtown's housing stock between 1990 and 2000. Of these, 89.3% (1,351) were single family detached homes, 7.9% (120) were single family attached homes and 2.8% (42) were located in buildings containing 5 to 9 units of housing. In addition to the new housing units added, Newtown lost 99 housing units for a net gain of 1,407 housing units between 1990 and 2000.

As described in Table 5, the characteristics of housing types found in Newtown are similar in composition to several adjacent communities, including Bridgewater, Easton, Oxford and Redding. The housing stock characteristics of the adjacent towns of Bethel and Southbury are quite dissimilar from Newtown's, with high proportions of housing categorized as single family attached, indicating the presence of condominium type housing.

Table 5
Housing Units by Structure Type in 2000
Newtown, Adjacent Communities and Connecticut

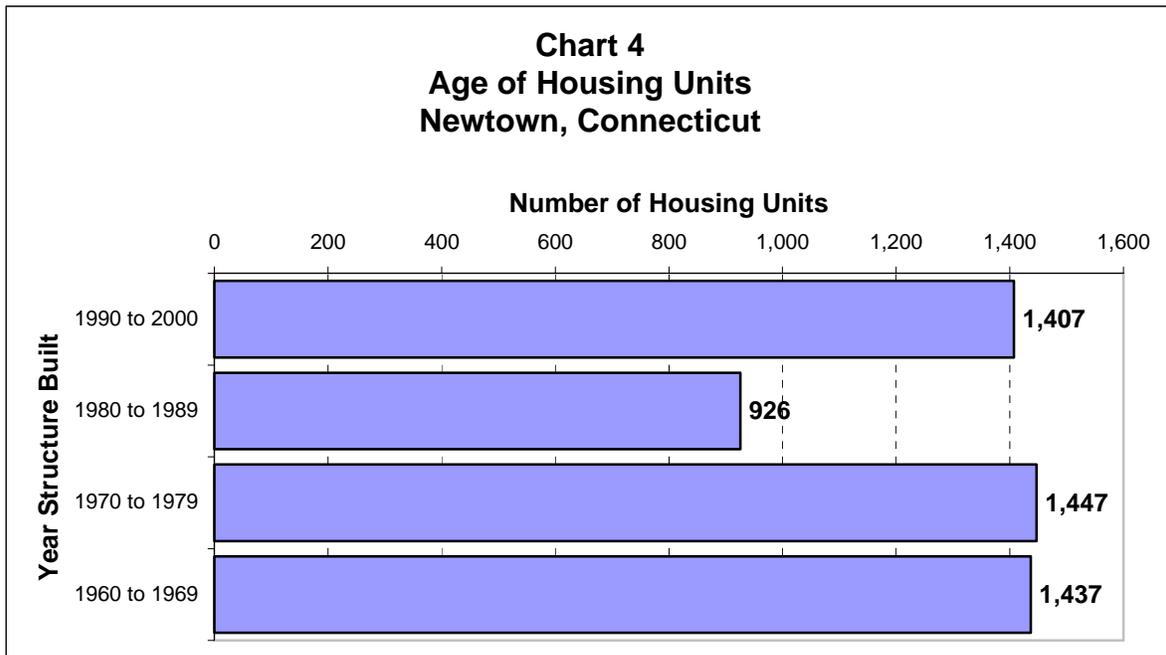
	Single Family Detached	% Single Family Detached	Single Family Attached & 2 to 4 Units	% Single Family Attached & 2 to 4 Units	Multi-Family (5 or More Units)	% Multi-Family (5 or More Units & Other)	Total Housing Units
NEWTOWN	7,979	92.8	459	5.3	163	1.9	8,601
Bethel	4435	66.7	1,635	24.6	583	8.8	6,653
Bridgewater	731	93.8	37	4.7	11	1.4	779
Brookfield	4,718	81.6	654	11.3	409	7.1	5,781
Easton	2,483	98.9	21	.08	7	0.3	2,511
Monroe	5,736	86.9	625	9.5	240	3.6	6,601
Oxford	3,169	92.7	199	5.8	52	1.5	3,420
Redding	2,945	95.4	115	3.7	26	0.8	3,086
Southbury	4,343	55.7	3,005	38.5	451	5.8	7,799
Danbury	12,653	44.4%	9,008	31.6%	6,858	24.0	28,519
Connecticut	816,706	58.9	317,802	22.9	251,467	18.2	1,385,975

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census; % may not add due to rounding

- **Housing Growth and Age**

To quantify the housing unit growth that occurred in the Town from 1990 through 2000, statistics from the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development were used to determine housing construction authorizations by structure type, by year. During that time frame, Newtown consistently ranked as a top producer of housing. In fact, from 1992 through 1997, Newtown ranked between 2nd and 7th of Connecticut’s 169 cities and towns in housing unit development.

A potential indicator of housing condition in a community is the age of the housing stock. Sixty-one per cent of Newtown’s housing stock was constructed between 1960 and 2000. As shown in the chart below, with the exception of the 1980’s decade, Newtown has experienced a very constant rate of housing productivity of between 1,407 and 1,447 dwelling units per decade. Housing developed between 1980 and 2000 accounts for 27.1 % of Newtown’s housing stock, while 33.5 % of the Town’s housing was developed between 1960 and 1980. Even though the number of housing units developed during the past 20 years is less than the previous 20 years, the public perception that the rate of housing development within the community has increased during the past two decades is probably due to the “large lot” nature of development, which has resulted in an acceleration in the amount of land consumed by development.



- **Affordability of Housing**

Section 8-23 of the Connecticut General Statutes requires that a municipality “shall consider” the need for affordable housing in the preparation of a plan of conservation and development. Housing affordability is a many faceted issue. Some aspects of housing affordability are beyond the control of a local municipality, while others are directly affected by a municipalities land use policies and regulatory practices.

Housing costs are largely the result of the following factors: the demand for housing relative to the available supply; the location (time/distance) of housing relative to the sources of demand; the availability and cost of buildable land for the spectrum of market desired housing choices; labor and material costs; the age, quality and supply of existing housing inventory within the

competitive housing market area; the development of new housing product as it affects available inventory; and housing carrying costs, including mortgage interest rates, utilities and real estate taxes.

In their efforts to increase the production of housing that is affordable to the broad spectrum of society, local, state and federal government and non-profit organizations have created a variety of housing programs to reduce housing costs. One common characteristic among most of these programs is that they employ a form of financial subsidy to defray the cost of the units being produced, renovated, or occupied. While these programs serve to provide immediate solutions to the need for affordable housing, they do not address underlying economic factors that affect housing costs and therefore have a very limited effect on overall housing market conditions and affordability.



The Riverview

Multi-Family and Affordable Housing in Newtown: Multi-family affordable housing development (AHD) is permitted in Newtown, subject to the granting of a special exception, in Farming, R-1/2, R-1, R-2 and R-3 zones. The Riverview, located on Bryan Lane behind Sand Hill Plaza, is a 49 unit condominium project developed under the AHD provisions, containing 13 units of “set-aside,” owner occupied affordable housing. Multi-family housing is also permitted by special exception in the Fairfield Hills Adaptive Reuse zone, provided that 25% of the units are affordable housing units.

Age restricted multi-family housing (62 years of age or older, or 55 if the project meets defined requirements of the U.S. Code and Code of Federal Regulations) is permitted in the EH-10 zone, subject to the granting of a special exception. A maximum of 24 units of multi-family housing, associated with commercial uses, is permitted in the Hawleyville Center Design District-East (HCDD-E), subject to the granting of a special exception permit. The Sandy Hook Design District (SHDD) permits the development of up to three dwellings per lot when associated with commercial uses, subject to obtaining site development plan approval or a special exception permit. The special exception process plays an important role in that it allows the Town to maintain control over the siting of multi-family housing, which helps ensure that a proposed project will work well within the context of surrounding land uses. Accessory apartments are also permitted in owner occupied dwellings located in R-1 and larger residential zoning districts throughout the Town.



Walnut Tree Village- “EH-10”

• **Elderly Housing and Assisted Living Facilities**

As the median age of the population of Connecticut and Newtown continues to increase, housing for the elderly is a critical concern for most communities. As the population of a town ages, it is important that a community provide alternative living arrangements, from single-family detached homes to multi-unit communities, as options for seniors. This gives the elderly population opportunities to continue to reside within the community where they have spent the majority of their years and not be forced-out by escalating housing costs and limited housing choices. Housing product for the elderly spans a broad range of types and supporting services. From housing designed to promote mobility e.g., one-level, grab bars, ramps, etc., to provision of medical and support of daily living functions, there are many variations of elderly housing product. The main distinguishing characteristics of the housing types are the level of medical assistance and the extent of communal facilities provided. Newtown’s housing inventory provided the following types of housing for Newtown’s senior residents: Assisted Living Facilities, Congregate Living Facilities, Continuing Care Retirement Community, Government Assisted Independent Living Facility, Nursing Homes, Residential Care Homes, and Age Restricted Housing.



Nunnawauk Meadows – Senior Housing

The past decade saw the development of assisted living facilities and age restricted condominium housing in Newtown, as well as the expansion of skilled nursing home resources for the frail elderly. These housing resources are described in the following table.

Table 6
Age Restricted, Assisted Living, Elderly,
Affordable and Frail Elderly Housing Resources*
Newtown, Connecticut

Complex Name/Location	Number of Units	Type of Housing
Nunnawauk Meadows Newtown Housing for the Elderly	120 Units 14 Units	Age Restricted Independent Rentals Congregate housing
Ashlar of Newtown 139 Toddy Hill Road	156 Beds	Skilled Nursing Home
Lockwood Lodge at Ashlar 139 Toddy Hill Road	56 Units	Assisted Living
The Homesteads at Newtown 166 Mount Pleasant Road (Rt 6)	100 Units 46 Units 134 Units	Assisted Living Age Restricted Condominiums Age Restricted Congregate
Walnut Tree Village Walnut Tree Hill Road	190 Units	Age Restricted Condominiums
Liberty at Newtown* Mount Pleasant Road (Rte 6)	96 Units	Age Restricted Condominiums

Source: Newtown Land Use Office;

* Note: Numbers in the above table are for approved housing. The 14 units for congregating living at

Nunnawauk Village have not been constructed; only 11 condominium units at The Homesteads have been constructed and they remain vacant pending resolution of tax issues; none of the 134 approved congregate living units at The Homesteads have been constructed; approximately 100 condominium units at Walnut Tree Village have been constructed and occupied, with the balance currently under construction; and the 96 condominium units at the Liberty are scheduled for occupancy beginning in 2004.



Ashlar of Newtown- Frail Elderly Nursing Home



Ashlar Lockwood Lodge- Assisted Living

C. HOUSING: ISSUES, GOALS AND ACTION AGENDA

The following section identifies Newtown's key housing issues, community planning goals related to housing and makes recommendations for actions to achieve those goals.

ISSUE #1: HOUSING CHOICES

1. Newtown lacks a meaningful supply of housing for a broad spectrum of ages and incomes.
2. Many who work in Newtown do not have the opportunity to live in the community in which they work.
3. Due to the lack of affordable housing, some Newtown residents will not continue to reside in Town, as their personal circumstances, incomes and housing needs change over time.

Goal: Strive for a more balanced supply of housing types that will accommodate the housing needs of Newtown residents and those working in Newtown.

Strategies:

Section/ Issue	No.	Strategy	Leader	Required Support	Required Support	Required Support
HOUS1	1.	Encourage the Borough to permit the development of residential dwellings over ground floor retail businesses in the Village District, as recommended in the 1993 POCD.	BZC	BB		
HOUS1	2.	Continue to encourage the development of accessory apartments as a means to create affordable housing.	PZC	BZC		

Entity Abbreviations - BB- Borough Burgess; BE- Board of Education; BF – Board of Finance; BFC- Board of Fire Commissioners; BM- Board of Managers (Edmond Town Hall); BS- Board of Selectmen; BZC- Borough Zoning Commission; CC- Conservation Commission; CA- Commission on Aging; EDC- Economic Development Commission; LC- Legislative Council; OS- Open Space Committee; PBSC- Public Buildings and Site Commission; PC- Police Commission; PRC- Parks and Recreation Commission; PZC- Planning and Zoning Commission; TSB- Transportation Strategy Board; WPCA- Water Pollution Control Authority; YSB- Youth Service Board. **Section Abbreviations** - COCH- Community Character; CANR- Conservation and Natural Resources; OPSP- Open Space; TRAN- Transportation; HOUS- Housing; ECDE- Economic Development; COFA- Community Facilities. **Definition of Responsibilities** - Leader: Responsible to lead and coordinate the evaluation and, if justified, implementation of the strategy; Required Support: To accomplish the evaluation and/or implementation, this entity needs to provide support to the Leader.

Section/ Issue	No.	Strategy	Leader	Required Support	Required Support	Required Support
HOUS1	3.	Identify incentives available to owners who impose affordable housing deed restrictions on their accessory apartments.	BS	BB		
HOUS1	4.	Identify appropriate areas for affordable housing.	PZC	BZC		
HOUS1	5.	Evaluate an integrated planned community design strategy that reinforces existing built-up, mixed-use areas of Town and creates new nodes of mixed-use development along Routes 6 and 25, and incorporate the historical pedestrian friendly development patterns traditional to New England communities.	PZC	BZC		

Entity Abbreviations - BB- Borough Burgess; BE- Board of Education; BF – Board of Finance; BFC- Board of Fire Commissioners; BM- Board of Managers (Edmond Town Hall); BS- Board of Selectmen; BZC- Borough Zoning Commission; CC- Conservation Commission; CA- Commission on Aging; EDC- Economic Development Commission; LC- Legislative Council; OS- Open Space Committee; PBSC- Public Buildings and Site Commission; PC- Police Commission; PRC- Parks and Recreation Commission; PZC- Planning and Zoning Commission; TSB- Transportation Strategy Board; WPCA- Water Pollution Control Authority; YSB- Youth Service Board. **Section Abbreviations** - COCH- Community Character; CANR- Conservation and Natural Resources; OPSP- Open Space; TRAN- Transportation; HOUS- Housing; ECDE- Economic Development; COFA- Community Facilities. **Definition of Responsibilities** - Leader: Responsible to lead and coordinate the evaluation and, if justified, implementation of the strategy; Required Support: To accomplish the evaluation and/or implementation, this entity needs to provide support to the Leader

ISSUE #2: HOUSING DEVELOPMENT, OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION, COMMUNITY CHARACTER

1. The development of housing within Newtown directly affects open space and community character issues.
2. The development of single-family detached housing in Newtown consumes open land at the rate of 4.5 acres per dwelling unit.

Goal: Manage residential development to enhance Newtown’s present community character.

Strategies:

Section/ Issue	No.	Strategy	Leader	Required Support	Required Support	Required Support
HOUS2	1.	Create land-use regulations that encourage “open space conservation” subdivision design standards without affecting the existing permitted density of development.	PZC	CC	OS	
HOUS2	2.	Implement the requirements that plans for residential-land subdivisions containing 6 lots or more be submitted both in the form of open-space conservation developments that preserve fifty percent or more of the land for open space and as conventional arrangements for the Planning and Zoning Commissioners to decide which represents the best utilization of the tract of land.	PZC	CC		

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Section/ Issue	No.	Strategy	Leader	Required Support	Required Support	Required Support
HOUS2	3.	Promote open-space conservation subdivisions as an alternative to conventional “large-lot” developments.	PZC			
HOUS2	4.	Establish a visual buffer from the public realm along the road and right of way for residential development fronting on rural roads.	PZC			
HOUS2	5.	Place stricter limits on the “buildable area” of new lots to exclude environmentally sensitive conditions.	PZC	CC		
HOUS2	6.	Support the efforts within the state to enact legislation for an Impact Fee for new development.	BS	LC		

Entity Abbreviations - BB- Borough Burgess; BE- Board of Education; BF – Board of Finance; BFC- Board of Fire Commissioners; BM- Board of Managers (Edmond Town Hall); BS- Board of Selectmen; BZC- Borough Zoning Commission; CC- Conservation Commission; CA- Commission on Aging; EDC- Economic Development Commission; LC- Legislative Council; OS- Open Space Committee; PBSC- Public Buildings and Site Commission; PC- Police Commission; PRC- Parks and Recreation Commission; PZC- Planning and Zoning Commission; TSB- Transportation Strategy Board; WPCA- Water Pollution Control Authority; YSB- Youth Service Board. **Section Abbreviations** - COCH- Community Character; CANR- Conservation and Natural Resources; OPSP- Open Space; TRAN- Transportation; HOUS- Housing; ECDE- Economic Development; COFA- Community Facilities. **Definition of Responsibilities** - Leader: Responsible to lead and coordinate the evaluation and, if justified, implementation of the strategy; Required Support: To accomplish the evaluation and/or implementation, this entity needs to provide support to the Leader

IV. ACHIEVING THE VISION

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

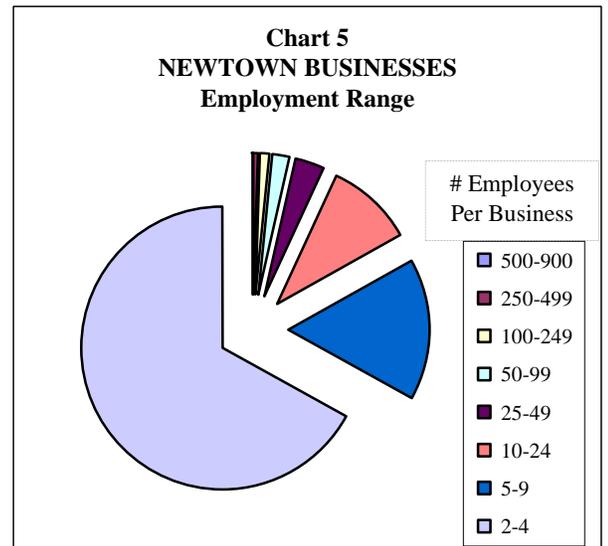
A. INTRODUCTION

The quality of life in Newtown is influenced by the condition of the Town's economic base. The Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) is a municipal tool to protect and enhance the economy of Newtown in a manner that supports a high quality of life. This element of the POCD defines key economic development issues and establishes goals and implementation recommendations to enhance Newtown's economic base. Plan Memorandum #9, Economic Development provides a full discussion of this topic.

B. EXISTING CONDITIONS

Newtown's economy contains over 800 businesses that provide a broad variety of goods and services, employing approximately 7,400 people. The accompanying chart describes the composition of Newtown's businesses, by size of employment. While Newtown has several "marquis" businesses that employ several hundred persons each, over 80% of Newtown's businesses employ fewer than 10 people.

Economic activity within Newtown is influenced by the demands for goods and services generated by residents, businesses and government activities within and beyond town borders. Newtown's economy is influenced by the economic health of several surrounding economic regions, including all of Fairfield County, the New York metropolitan area, the Waterbury region and the New Haven region.



Changes to the size, composition and characteristics of Newtown's employment base over time are indicators of the Town's economic health. Between 1993 and 2001, the economy of Newtown experienced significant fluctuations in employment levels. From 1993 to 1996, employment levels in Newtown declined by 1,210 jobs (16.4%). Most of this decline in employment was concentrated in the government sector and is largely attributable to the closing of the State of Connecticut's Fairfield Hills Hospital. However, employment in the other sectors of Newtown's economy grew by a combined 1,150 jobs between 1993 and 2001, representing a 15.6% increase. By comparison, employment in Connecticut during the same period grew by 10%. The top 20 employers in Newtown are listed in Table 7.

The composition of Newtown's employment base also experienced fluctuations between 1993 and 2001. While the percent of jobs in the goods producing sector in 1993 and 2001 are the same (25%), this sector expanded from 26.9% to 30.3% between July of 1997 through June of 1999, adding 460 jobs, including 390 in the manufacturing sector. In 2001, the labor force generated by Newtown residents numbered 12,585 people, exceeding the number of jobs located in Town by 41%.

TABLE 7

NEWTOWN'S TOP TWENTY EMPLOYERS
May, 2002

Employer	Number of Employees
1. Town of Newtown- Board of Education	714
2. State of Connecticut- Department of Corrections	375
3. Kendro Laboratory Products	350
4. Pitney Bowes	308
5. Taunton Press	270
6. Ashlar of Newtown	250
7. Big Y Supermarket	240
8. Hubbell Wiring Devices	220
9. Charter Communications	215
10. Stop and Shop	180
11. Town of Newtown- Municipal Government	166
12. Curtis Packaging	150
13. Connecticut Light and Power	120
14. Rand Whitney Container Corp.	77
15. T. R. Paul	76
16. Sonics and Materials	63
17. DeVivo Industries	55
18. TUV Rhineland	54
19. Forecast International	46
20. Neumade Products	32

Source: Newtown Community Development Office

C. RECENT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TRENDS IN NEWTOWN

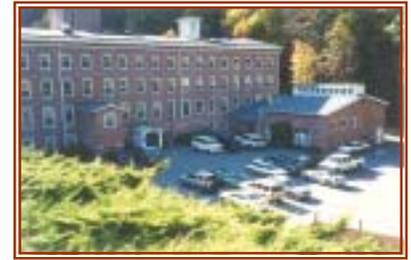
Newtown's commercial, service and industrial land uses experienced moderate increases during the past decade. Examples of several economic development projects (new construction) in Newtown during the past 10 years include the 41,000 square foot warehouse facility constructed by the Curtis Packaging Corporation located at the intersection of Route 34 and Toddy Hill Road, the 60,000 square foot manufacturing facility built by Neumade Products Incorporated located on Pecks Lane, the 60,000 square foot expansion of the Newtown Shopping Center located on Queen Street and a 20,000 square foot distribution and warehouse facility located on Barnabas Road.



Equestrian Facility – Barnabas Road

In addition to these examples of new construction, Newtown saw the renovation of several existing buildings to accommodate a variety of economic development activities. Examples of this include the renovation of the 53,000 square foot Rocky Mill in Sandy Hook and the 85,500 square foot Simm Lane Business Building, renovated as a “flex space” facility to house a variety of business uses.

Total business space constructed during the past ten years was 439,219 square feet, translating into an average annual rate of growth of 48,802 square feet.



Mill Building Renovation

D. MARKET SUPPORT FOR FUTURE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Making projections of the market potential to support future economic development depends on several factors, some of which are beyond the control of the Town of Newtown. In 1997, an analysis was made of the market potentials for economic development in Newtown for use in master planning the Hawleyville area. This analysis examined the surrounding market region to understand probable market support for future office, industrial and retail uses within Newtown. This market assessment was recently updated as a part of the Fairfield Hills Master Plan process and is summarized in Table 8.

TABLE 8
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
Market Demand Assessment

<u>Market Use</u>	<u>Current (1) Demand Level</u>	<u>Current (2) Supply Level</u>	<u>Current (3) Market Position</u>
<i>Office</i>			
Corporate	Weak*	Oversupply*	Contender
Professional	Slow	Balance	Contender
Medical	Active	Shortage	Contender
<i>Industrial/Service</i>			
Manufacturing	Slow	Oversupply	Contender
Small "Flex" Space	Active	Shortage	Contender
Warehouse/Dist.	Active	Balance	Contender
Service/Utility	Active	Balance	Contender
<i>Retail</i>			
Grocery/Conv.	Strong	Shortage	Contender
Big Box	Active	Shortage	Trailer
Highway Service	Active	Balance	Contender
Dining	Strong	Shortage	Contender

(1) Represents the market demand for various market segments in the market area.
 (2) Represents the supply of available space as compared to demand in the market area
 (3) Represents Newtown's market position as a location for various market segments.

* Market segment which relies primarily on single or major user interest.

One of the several factors affecting market support for future economic development activity in Newtown is the growth in the Town's population and that of surrounding communities. Newtown's population is projected to experience continued growth during the next 10 years.

Economic development activity generated by the demands for goods and services from the local population are the most likely to grow during the next ten years. Portions of this demand will manifest itself in the form of population serving businesses located in office and retail space:

Office Space: The demand for local population serving office space uses will continue, especially office space associated with the health care industry. These types of uses can be satisfied in multiple tenant buildings hosting a variety of office space users or in multiple tenant office buildings with a single focus, such as a medical office building.

Retail Space: The demand for retail services serving the local population is expected to grow to meet the needs of Newtown's expanding population base. Some of this demand will be accommodated in the expansion of existing free-standing retail stores and shopping centers and some of the demand will be met in the development of new retail complexes.

One segment of the demand for retail services generated by Newtown's population which will not be met in Newtown are stores requiring more than 40,000 square feet of building space. Newtown's zoning ordinance prohibits the development of retail uses containing more than 40,000 square feet of building space. This prohibition will most likely exclude the development of large retail stores and it will also preclude the development of another retail complex such as Sand Hill Plaza, which is Newtown's 2nd largest taxpayer. The 40,000 square foot prohibition should support the policy of focusing retail development within existing commercial areas and should reinforce the position of the Borough as the "center" of the Town.

Manufacturing Space: Industrial and service businesses generate 54% of the total jobs located in Newtown. The manufacturing sector of Newtown's economy provides approximately 20% of the total jobs in Town and will remain an important element of Newtown's economy. For certain manufacturers, Newtown continues to have the locational advantages of access to major markets. In addition to directly contributing to Newtown's employment base, the manufacturing sector also generates the need for goods and services essential to the manufacturing process, representing the potential for further contributions to the Town's overall economic base. Municipal policies and actions should support the retention and expansion of the manufacturing sector of Newtown's economy.

Service Business Space: The service sector was the fastest growing sector of Newtown's economy between 1993 and 2001, adding 1,260 jobs, which represents a 107% increase. A portion of this sector provides services to Newtown's local population. Newtown has experienced a demand for building space to house service sector businesses. In recent years, satisfying the demand for this type of space has been realized through a combination of the rehabilitation of existing buildings and the construction of new building space. This type of business activity provides services to other businesses and provides mostly non-retail services to the general population. Typically, this type of use does not require highway visibility, but does require ready access to the highway system.

Corporate Office Space Development: Private sector inquires of the Town indicate the existence of a selective demand for major, single user, corporate office space facilities. While this is a limited demand, the development of just one project of this nature would be a major economic development event for Newtown that would likely spur additional spin-off demands for business serving economic development uses.

There are a few locations in Newtown that possess the infrastructure required to support the development of a major corporate office space user. To date the demand for corporate office space has not been realized in Newtown due mainly to problems associated with land assembly.

E. CHANGES AFFECTING FUTURE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY

Since the preparation of the 1993 POD, the Town has actively promoted economic development with zone changes, the prospect of economic incentives, the installation of sewer service designed to support economic development, the preparation of plans to facilitate economic development activities, marketing efforts and the Town’s encouragement and support of conforming economic development initiatives.

Planning and/or zoning changes made during the past ten years affect the Hawleyville area, the Curtis Corporate Park and the re-use of the former Fairfield Hills Hospital campus. These changes include:

The Hawleyville Area: The Hawleyville area around the I-84 Exit 9 interchange and the intersection of Routes 6 and 25 has been designated for future economic development activity in Newtown’s PODs’ for several decades. During the 1990’s the Town undertook a detailed planning study of this area. This effort resulted in an amendment to the POD and several zoning changes that would allow for the development of up to 1,280,000 square feet of non-residential building space. The 1993 POD had projected approximately 735,000 square feet of future non-residential building potential for this area. This change represents a potential net gain of approximately 545,000 square feet of building space supporting economic development activities.

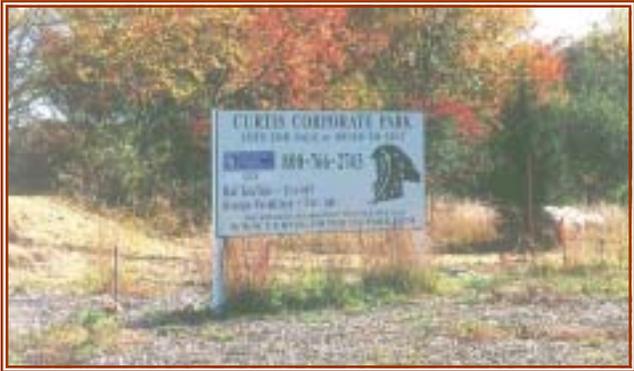
Curtis Corporate Park: In 2000, the Town rezoned an area along Toddy Hill Road, near the intersection with Route 34, for development as an industrial park. This action led to the subdivision of land for the Curtis Corporate Park, which was recently constructed. This vacant industrial subdivision contains 12 lots, totaling 22.4 acres. While existing zoning regulations allow for a Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of greater than 25%, observations of comparable developments in competing areas indicate a 25% FAR coverage is a likely assumption. Assuming the development of single story buildings with an FAR of 25%, and assuming that 100% of the land is free of development constraints

TABLE 9

NEWTOWN'S TOP TEN TAXPAYERS
2001 Grand List

<u>Business</u>	<u>Net Assessment</u>
1. Connecticut Light and Power	\$18,007,210
2. Sand Hill Plaza LLC	\$13,938,710
3. Homesteads of Newtown LLC	\$10,708,630
4. Kendro/Sorvall Products	\$10,051,150
5. Harvey Hubbell, Inc.	\$8,565,990
6. Taunton Press	\$7,866,030
7. Curtis Packaging Corporation	\$7,382,200
8. Rand Whitney Container	\$6,050,290
9. Barnabas Realty Group	\$6,027,500
10. Newtown Shopping Center	\$5,852,980

Source: Newtown Community Development Office



Curtis Corporate Park

and buildable, this 12 lot industrial subdivision could support 244,000 square feet of new building space.

It is important to note that this area is not served by public sewer or water and falls within the Pootatuck Aquifer Protection Overlay District, as defined under the current zoning regulations. The aquifer overlay district, which prohibits certain uses, combined with the lack of public utility connections, could affect the rate of development in this area.

Fairfield Hills Hospital Campus: In 1993, the State of Connecticut had not announced plans to close the hospital facility and therefore the future re-use of the Fairfield Hills hospital campus was not factored into the 1993 POD's development potential analysis. The State has since closed the hospital and the Town is in the final stages of negotiating the purchase of the property. Newtown is currently developing a master plan for its re-use.

The existing hospital campus includes a mixture of institutional buildings, a small portion of which are currently used for town offices, open space and recreational facilities, the Governor's horse guard and the Town's new 5/6 Reed Intermediate School. The former hospital campus complex contains approximately 1,100,000 square feet of building space.

The Fairfield Hills re-use planning process considers a range of actions for this 185-acre resource, including building rehabilitation and demolition and new building construction and preservation. At one time the Fairfield Hills Hospital complex was Newtown's largest employer, with over 3,000 employees. While the Fairfield Hills master planning process has yet to determine the exact types and amounts of uses for the 185 acre site, it is reasonable to anticipate that portions of the campus will contribute some limited support to future economic development activities.

Commerce Park Expansion: The Town is in the process of acquiring 37.5 acres of land adjacent to Commerce Road from the State of Connecticut. Current plans for this land call for an expansion of Commerce Park to support economic development activities. The number of buildable lots that this parcel may support is unknown at this time. However, it is known that some wetlands exist on this site, which will affect the parcel's development potential. If it is assumed that 25% of the site will be removed from development due to road infrastructure, wetlands and other environmental or physical constraints, and that single story structures with 25% building coverage will be constructed, then approximately 306,000 square feet of non-residential building space could be supported.

Future Potential to Support Economic Development: In estimating the Town's physical capacity to support future economic development activities, the amount of economic development that occurred since 1992 was deducted from the estimates calculated in the 1993 POD. The additional development potential resulting from the Hawleyville, Curtis Corporate Park and Commerce Park expansion areas were added to derive the estimate of additional building space potential to support economic development activities. No estimate has been included for economic development proposals which may be forthcoming from the Fairfield Hills master planning process. This information will be included for consideration as it becomes available. As described in Table 10 on the following page, a total economic development potential of between 1,595,000 – 1,795,000 square feet of new building space results.

TABLE 10	
Estimate of Future Economic Development Potential Newtown, Connecticut	
Source of Estimates	Building Area (Sq.Ft.)
Economic Development Potential Estimated in 1993 POD ¹	936,547 – 1,137,335
Less New Economic Development Building Construction Since the 1993 POD ²	(439,219)
Subtotal (rounded)	500,000 – 700,000
<i>Additional Development Potential Created Since 1993 POD</i>	
Hawleyville Area	540,000
Curtis Corporate Park	244,000
Commerce Park Expansion	<u>306,000</u>
Subtotal	1,090,000
Total Future Economic Development Building Potential Estimated in 2002	<u>1,590,000 – 1,790,000</u>

¹ Newtown Plan of Development, 1993, p. 32

² Newtown Community Development Office, Newtown Land Use Department, 2002

F. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: ISSUES, GOALS AND ACTION AGENDA

The municipal management of incremental change over time has an impact on Newtown's economy and the quality of life in Newtown. During the process of updating Newtown's POCD, the key issues concerning the future of Newtown's economy were identified and discussed. The following section describes these issues, defines community planning goals and recommends an action agenda to achieving those goals.

ISSUE #1: STRATEGICALLY GROW NEWTOWN'S COMMERCIAL PROPERTY TAX BASE

1. Tax revenues from non-residential sources are insufficient to meet the municipal service costs of a growing community.
2. The economic-development success of the past ten years cannot be assumed to continue.

3. A prime tenant of sustainable economic development is the continuous use of land, buildings and infrastructure that has been dedicated to support economic development activities.
4. The adequacy of a building to support a business use is often tested as the business expands and outgrows available space or the building becomes unsuited to the changing needs of the business activity.
5. As buildings age and business operations change, buildings are either vacated or they are updated, expanded or replaced by suitable structures.
6. The location attributes of easy access and supporting infrastructure remain important to the continued viability of the existing business zones in Newtown.
7. The Town's interest is best served by flexible regulations to accommodate the ever-changing building forms required by business while respecting the environment, community character, and affected neighborhoods.
8. Vacant or abandoned commercial and industrial buildings detract from the community character and do not contribute to the tax base.

Goal: Grow the commercial property tax base at a rate at least equal to the Town's growth in its residential tax base.

Strategies:

Section/ Issue	No.	Strategy	Leader	Required Support	Required Support	Required Support
ECDE1	1.	Develop programs that foster the entrepreneurial nature of Newtown residents so they start and expand businesses within the local economy.	EDC			
ECDE1	2.	Attract capital-intensive businesses to locate in Newtown.	EDC	PZC	BS	
ECDE1	3.	Attract many mid-sized businesses, as this will reduce the risk of Newtown depending on a few large businesses for the majority of its tax income.	EDC	BS	Chamber of Commerce	
ECDE1	4.	Expand the Town's business-retention program to nurture smaller companies to grow and remain in Newtown.	EDC	BS	LC	Chamber of Commerce
ECDE1	5.	Leverage Newtown's large horse farm acreage and encourage the growth of equestrian related businesses.	EDC	PZC		
ECDE1	6.	Eliminate impediments to economic growth.	EDC	PZC	BS	
ECDE1	7.	Create an environment of responsiveness among the Town's administration departments, boards and commissions to encourage and foster economic development.	BS	LC		
ECDE1	8.	Apply for incentives available to restore and preserve historic properties for economic-development opportunities.	EDC	BS		
ECDE1	9.	Encourage industrial and multi-modal developments that provide convenience services to the employees within the complex.	EDC	PZC		

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Section/ Issue	No.	Strategy	Leader	Required Support	Required Support	Required Support
ECDE1	10.	Promote the adaptive reuse of existing and industrial buildings and/or the redevelopment of underutilized commercial and industrial properties as an economic development priority.	EDC	BS	P&Z	
ECDE1	11.	Continue to maintain contact with the business community and initiate actions, which are designed to retain and grow existing businesses.	EDC	BS	Chamber of Commerce	
ECDE1	12.	Market existing vacant commercial buildings as a high priority for economic growth.	EDC	BS		
ECDE1	13.	Provide customer-oriented economic-development and land-use assistance to applicants so forms are submitted correctly and processed in a timely fashion.	BS	EDC		
ECDE1	14.	Promote a policy that encourages the “redevelopment” of commercial and industrial properties before “greenfield” development.	BS			

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ISSUE #2: SHORTAGE OF VIABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SITES

There is a lack of land suitable to support new economic development activity. While a sizeable inventory of vacant land zoned for commercial and industrial uses exists, significant areas of this inventory are incapable of supporting meaningful economic development due to physical limitations, including the presence of wetlands, poor accessibility to major arterials, or utility infrastructure.

Goal: Increase the Inventory of Viable Economic Development Sites.

Strategies:

Section/ Issue	No.	Strategy	Leader	Required Support	Required Support	Required Support
ECDE2	1.	Review the existing Newtown Industrial and Business zones and their permitted uses and make appropriate changes.	PZC			
ECDE2	1a.	For each lot consider the size of the useful portion of the lot, utilities availability, proximity to residential areas, road access and the impact on traffic.	PZC	BZC	EDC	
ECDE2	1b.	Consider consolidating into fewer zones with broader permitted uses.	PZC	EDC		

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Section/ Issue	No.	Strategy	Leader	Required Support	Required Support	Required Support
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ECDE2	2.	Protect land parcels zoned for economic development for tax generating commercial and industrial uses.	PZC	BZC	EDC	
ECDE2	3.	Support the adoption and funding of a municipal development project plan for the 37.5-acre parcel of land adjacent to Commerce Road that the Town will be receiving from the State of Connecticut.	BS	EDC	PZC	BF / LC
ECDE2	4.	Consider the following ideas for increasing Newtown's business activity:				
ECDE2	4a.	Expanding the Sandy Hook Design District so that it extends up Church Hill Road toward Exit 10 and southward along Washington Avenue toward I-84.	PZC	EDC		
ECDE2	4b.	Adopting regulations that permit Dodgingtown to become a small mixed-use hamlet at a scale to serve nearby neighborhoods, with convenience retail and housing uses permitted to be developed when combined into a single development.	PZC	EDC		
ECDE2	4c.	Adopting regulations that permit Botsford to become a small mixed-use hamlet at a scale to serve nearby neighborhoods, with convenience retail and housing uses permitted to be developed when combined into a single development.	PZC	EDC	LC	
ECDE2	4d.	Rezoning where warranted the R-1 areas on the west side of Route 25 south of the Borough to a mixed-use zone that enables the development of projects that include both commercial and residential uses on the same parcel.	PZC	EDC		
ECDE2	4e.	Expand upon the 1993 POCD recommendation to develop residential uses within the Route 25 corridor south of the Borough to incorporate the development of mixed-use projects that include both commercial and residential uses on the same parcel.	PZC	EDC		
ECDE2	4f.	Rezoning the south side of Route 6 west of Pocono Road to enable the development of mixed-use projects that include both commercial and residential uses on the same parcel.	PZC	EDC		
ECDE2	4g.	Consider regulations that will support applications for development of bed-and-breakfast establishments meeting regulations within the Borough, Sandy Hook, commercial areas and as part of mixed-use projects.	BZC	PZC	EDC	

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ISSUE #3: REDEVELOPMENT OF BROWNFIELD SITES

Newtown has two brownfield sites. One is the Batchelder property located on Swamp Road in the southern part of Town and the other is the Noranda Metal Industries property located on Prospect Drive, off of South Main Street. The Batchelder property has not paid taxes since 1984. The Noranda

property is vacant but continues to pay taxes to the Town. (Source: Newtown Community Development Office)

Goal: Prioritize the Cleanup and Reuse of Newtown’s Brownfield Sites

Strategies:

Section/ Issue	No.	Strategy	Leader	Required Support	Required Support	Required Support
ECDE3	1.	Actively market the Batchelder Property for redevelopment.	EDC	BS	LC	CC
ECDE3	2.	Work with the owners of the Noranda property to facilitate clean-up and reuse of the facility without obligating the Town financially.	BS	EDC		
ECDE3	3.	Create incentives that will add to the marketability of the Town’s brownfield sites including the fast tracking of local permitting for appropriate reuses and support for grants from other non-municipal funding resources.	EDC	BS	LC	

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ISSUE #4.: DEVELOPMENT OF AGRICULTURAL BUSINESS

Newtown has a substantial inventory of open land that was once used to support various forms of agricultural uses. Much of this land may eventually be subdivided for residential development.

Goal: Facilitate the maintenance and development of agricultural business in scale with Newtown.

Strategies:

Section/ Issue	No.	Strategy	Leader	Required Support	Required Support	Required Support
ECDE4	1.	Investigate agricultural business needs and develop municipal policies that will facilitate the maintenance and expansion of existing operations and encourage the development of new agricultural businesses that are compatible with Newtown’s rural character.	EDC	BS	CC	PZC
ECDE4	2.	Specifically encourage horse-related businesses.	EDC	BS	CC	PZC

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IV. ACHIEVING THE VISION

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

A. INTRODUCTION

Newtown has a wide array of public, non-profit and private community facilities and services including; General Government services housed in a variety of public buildings, Police, Fire and Emergency Medical services, Schools, Parks and Recreation facilities, Sewer and Water services, library services, etc. The status and needs for improvements to these services are discussed in depth in Plan Memorandum #10, Community Facilities and Plan Memorandum #5 Parks and Recreation.

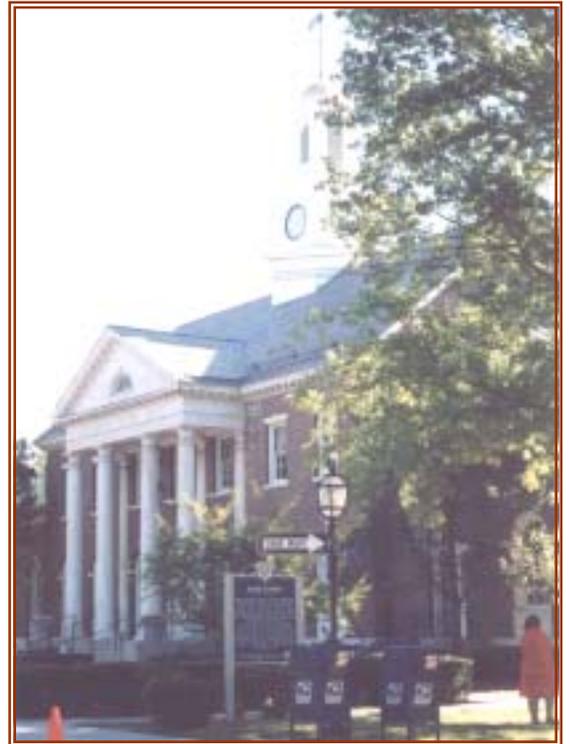
The purpose of this portion of the Plan is to provide a summary of Newtown's community facilities and to recommend ways in which the POCD can address maintaining and making improvements to those resources in light of expected future changes to the Town.

B. EXISTING CONDITIONS

General Government Facilities

The provision of municipal infrastructure and community facilities is one of the primary functions of town government. The availability, condition, capacity, and cost of municipal infrastructure and community facilities affect Newtown's land use, the density of development and in general, the quality of life of the community. General government functions in Newtown are administered from a variety of locations, including Edmond Town Hall, Town Hall South, Canaan House at Fairfield Hills, the Multi-Purpose Building in Sandy Hook and the Public Works Building on Turkey Hill Road.

Responding to the need to develop a more organized approach to housing municipal government functions, the Town undertook an analysis to identify present and future municipal space needs and develop a strategy to meet those needs. In June of 2001, voters authorized bonding to develop a Town Hall on the Fairfield Hills Campus. This facility would replace Edmond Town Hall and consolidate many municipal government services under one roof. The uses currently being considered to be housed within the Fairfield Hills Town Hall include: Assessor, Community Development Office, Finance, First Selectman's Office, Human Resources, Probate Judge, Registrars of Voters, Tax Collector, Town Clerk, Building Department, Town Engineer, Director of Public Works, Conservation, Fire Marshal, Health District, Land Use Agency and Board of Education. It is possible that other municipal services, such as the Senior Center currently located in the Sandy Hook Multi-Purpose Building may also be relocated to Fairfield Hills.



Newtown's Public Schools

With the opening of the Reed Intermediate School in 2003, the Newtown Public School system consists of four elementary schools serving grades pre-kindergarten through 4, an intermediate school serving grades 5 and 6, a middle school serving grades 7 and 8 and a high school serving

grades 9 through 12. Newtown Board of Education administrative offices and the Alternative High School are currently housed in Canaan House, on the Fairfield Hills Campus.



Hawley Elementary School

Student Enrollment: School enrollment has risen steadily from 3,711 students in the 1993/1994 school year to 5,201 students in the 2002/2003 school year, an increase of 1,490 students. The increase in student enrollment necessitated several school improvement and expansion projects, culminating with the construction of the Reed Intermediate School on the Fairfield Hills Campus, which opened in January of 2003. The Reed Intermediate School houses fifth grade students, who were previously taught in the Town's four elementary schools and sixth grade students, who were previously taught in the Middle School. As a result of the opening of the new Intermediate School and moving grade 6 from the Middle School to the Intermediate School, enrollment in the Middle School has decreased by approximately 1/3. Moving grade 5 from the Town's four elementary schools to the new Intermediate School had the affect of freeing-up additional classrooms at each of the elementary schools. Enrollment projections have been prepared for the Newtown Board of Education indicating continued growth in student enrollment.

Table 11

**NEWTOWN SCHOOL FACILITIES
*STUDENT ENROLLMENT BY FACILITY***

School Facility	School Year									Change 1993-2001	% Change 1993-2001
	1993/1994	1994/1995	1995/1996	1996/1997	1997/1998	1998/1999	1999/2000	2000/2001	2001/2002		
Hawley Elementary	322	339	349	389	488	525	547	557	546	224	69.6%
Sandy Hook Elementary	563	564	611	636	638	668	700	723	760	197	35.0%
Head O'Meadow Elem.	506	547	553	551	550	552	570	576	578	72	14.2%
Middle-Gate Elementary	475	471	489	495	507	530	539	567	550	75	15.8%
Middle School	853	888	897	930	953	1,044	1,116	1,186	1,220	367	43.0%
High School	992	1,012	1,085	1,074	1,125	1,194	1,244	1,332	1,364	372	37.5%
Totals	3,711	3,821	3,984	4,075	4,261	4,513	4,716	4,941	5,018	1,307	35.2%

Source: Connecticut Department of Education, Strategic School Profiles; HMA

School Facilities Needs: The Newtown Board of Education has the responsibility for planning for future school facilities. Following the construction of the Reed Intermediate School, it appears that the elementary schools and middle school will have sufficient classroom capacity to accommodate student enrollments for the next ten years. However, based upon the enrollment projections, the High School facility will reach its enrollment capacity beginning in the Fall of 2003 and exceed rated capacity by 440 students by the 2012-2013 school year. To meet the need for additional high school space, the Board of Education has expressed a preference for building a new High School Academy building on the Fairfield Hills Campus, with an enrollment capacity of 500 students. This facility would function as a satellite facility of the existing High School.

Parks and Recreational Facilities

Recreational facilities and activities in Newtown have evolved significantly during the past 20 years in an effort to keep pace with rapid population growth and ever changing community recreational desires. Today, organized sports and formal recreational program offerings are the focus of active youth and adolescent recreation. High participation rates in an increasing variety of recreational activities and programs, combined with extended sports seasons, requires dedicated facilities capable of meeting community expectations for publicly offered recreational services.



Treadwell Park



Lake Lillinonah Town

Rather than disperse its recreational assets into small neighborhood sized facilities scattered throughout town, Newtown has developed a recreational service approach of concentrating its recreational resources in large centralized locations. In addition, the town has developed a policy of maximizing available recreational resources by utilizing school playing fields and gymnasiums for activities sponsored by the Newtown Parks and Recreation Department and other community organizations. Newtown's school system has also utilized Parks and Recreation Department playing fields to support school sports programs. Table 12. provides a summary matrix of municipal facilities supporting active recreation.

Additional Recreation Playing Fields:

Newtown's active Parks and Recreation facilities are in good condition. Several of the elementary school playing fields utilized by the Parks and Recreation Department are reported to be in need of improvements to make them more usable. The Newtown Parks and Recreation Commission has identified the additional recreation facilities required to support the level of recreational activities desired by Newtown residents over the next ten years. These include 7 additional recreation/playing fields. Funding for the development of these seven new playing fields was included in the bond package adopted by town residents to facilitate the purchase of the Fairfield Hills property. In adopting this bond issue, the Town has in effect signaled its intent to continue the policy of concentrating its recreational resources in centralized locations.



Hawley School Playscape

Additional Recreational Building Facilities: The Parks and Recreation Department has also identified the need for a recreation center to support the variety of non-playing field recreational

TABLE 12
TOWN OF NEWTOWN
Plan of Conservation and Development- 2004

MATRIX OF TOWN MAINTAINED RECREATION FACILITIES AND SCHOOL FIELDS

Facility Name	Play Equipment	Picnic Area	Tennis Courts	Basketball Court	Baseball Field	Babe Ruth	Softball Field	Soccer Field	Field Hockey	Lacrosse Field	Football Field	Swimming Pool	Walking Trails	Additional Facilities, Features and Comments
Dickinson Park	1	2	5	1			1					1		volleyball, pavilion
Treadwell Park	2	1	4	1	1		1	2				1		2 soccer/lacrosse fields, 2 pavilions, baseball field by S.H. School, 1 multi-purpse baseball/softball field
Orchard Hill Park/Nature Center													X	Newtown Nature Center, walking trails
Walnut Tree Fields					1			1						baseball field- 90' baselines, soccer field in Fall
Liberty Fields						1	1							baseball field- 60' baselines
Oakview Fields								1		1				1 combination soccer/lacrosse field-nonregulation
Fairfield Hills					3	2	1	2		1				3 youth baseball fields, 2 batting cages
Lake Linnonah		1												boat launch
Sandy Hook Athletic Club					1									1 youth baseball field, batting cage
Hawley School	1			1		2		1		1	1			1 combination field- football / lacrosse / soccer
Sandy Hook School	1				1			1		1				1 small practice soccer/lacrosse field in poor condition
Head O'Meadow School	1						1	2						small soccer field in poor condition
Middle Gate School	1						1							1 small softball field
Middle School					1		1	1						baseball field- 90' baselines, soccer field drains poorly
High School			4		1		1	2	1	2	2	1		Blue and Gold Stadium for high school sports only, combination soccer/lacrosse fields, field hockey field in outfield of baseball field, 1 practice football field, batting cage, all weather track in stadium
TOTALS	7	4	13	3	9	5	8	13	1	6	3	3		

Source: Newtown Parks and Recreation Department
HMA Field Inventory

programs provided to residents on a year round basis. The desired recreation center would include: 2 oversized gyms to allow for two full court games, with lockers, showers and equipment storage; a smaller gym for karate, dancing and aerobic exercise programs; an auditorium; all purpose rooms for music, crafts and toddler programs; an indoor swimming pool; a new teen center; an outdoor skateboard facility; an outdoor basketball court and an outdoor playground. Parks and Recreation has also identified the need for a 10,000 square foot maintenance facility. This facility would provide office space, vehicle maintenance, bathrooms, lockers and showers, outside storage for maintenance materials (clay, soil, etc.) and equipment storage and parking for cars and trucks.

Senior Center

The role of municipal senior citizen centers have changed over the years to keep pace with the changing needs of our aging population. At one time senior centers were predominately social and recreational facilities. While continuing to serve those functions, senior centers have evolved to become a base for the provision of a variety of informational and social services to senior citizens.

The Town's 60 and older population increased by 439 persons between 1990 - 2000, representing a 16.6% increase in this age group and the 55 to 59 age category increased by 40.3% during the same period, indicating a continuation of the growth in Newtown's senior population.



Multi-Purpose Building – Sandy Hook

Newtown's Senior Center is located in the Town's Multi-Purpose Building on Riverside Road in Sandy Hook. The center currently occupies approximately 800 square feet of space. During the Fairfield Hills Master Planning process, the Senior Center identified a need for approximately 2,500 square feet of space. While the need for an expanded Senior Center is generally recognized by the community, no monies have been programmed in the Town's Capital Improvements Program for this use.

Sanitary Sewer System

Public sewer service plans and policies are the responsibility of the Town's Water Pollution Control Authority, which amended the Water Pollution Control Plan in 1999. Public sanitary sewer service is new to Newtown, having been completed since the preparation of the 1993 POD. Newtown's public sewer system was developed in conjunction with a municipal sewer avoidance program. The municipal sewer system was designed to address sewage disposal problems and the Town's sewer avoidance program is designed to eliminate the need to extend the municipal sewer system to serve additional residential areas in the future.

Newtown's municipal sewer system serves the central area of the Town, including most of the Borough and Sandy Hook Center, as described on the attached map. The system's treatment plant was developed jointly with the State of Connecticut and was designed to serve Town needs, the State's Garner Correctional facility and the future use of the abandoned Fairfield Hills hospital complex. The Town will most likely receive additional access to the plant's treatment capacity once the acquisition of Fairfield Hills has been completed. The sewer system contains approximately twenty miles of piping, four pump stations and a treatment facility located at the end of Commerce Road with the capacity to treat 932,000 gallons of sewage daily. Current sewage treatment at the plant averages 500,000 – 600,000 gallons per day. The system was completed in 1997.

The intent of the Town's sewer avoidance policies are to foster the maintenance of existing onsite septic systems outside of the sewer service areas and avoid the need to extend sewer service beyond the current limits of service to serve failed systems.

Public sanitary sewer service is also provided within the Route 6 corridor in the Hawleyville area of Town, extending toward the Bethel town line. Sewer service within this area is pumped into the City of Danbury's municipal sewer system and treated at the City's Plumtrees Road treatment facility, as per an inter-municipal agreement that provides Newtown with the treatment capacity of up to 150,000 gallons of sewage per day. The sewer service provided within the Hawleyville area pursuant to this agreement is intended to primarily serve economic development activities. To date, approximately 30,000 gallons of this capacity has been allocated for two area uses.

Water Service

United Water Connecticut: Most of Newtown's 8,500+ households and 800+ businesses obtain their drinking water from private on-site wells. United Water Connecticut (UWC) is the largest provider of water service in Newtown with 1,153 residential customers and 185 commercial and industrial customers in 2002. In addition, UWC provides fire hydrant services for the Town and the Borough, as well as to private parties. UWC is a private water company regulated by the State of Connecticut.

UWC obtains water supplied to its Newtown customers exclusively from two wells located in the Pootatuck Aquifer. These wells are located in the southern area of Town on the east side of Route 25, just north of the Sand Hill Plaza Shopping Center. Currently, UWC pumps an average of 437,000 gallons per day, with peak pumping demand of around 700,000 gallons per day. UWC's wells have a sustained yield of 1,500,000 gallons per day. Since the preparation of the 1993 POD, the UWC has upgraded its Reservoir Road storage tank capacity from 200,000 gallons to 560,000 gallons. UWC is currently planning on developing a new well in the Pootatuck Aquifer, in the Sandy Hook area of Town and UWC is also considering the possibility of developing additional water resources outside of the Pootatuck Aquifer.

Some of UWC's service expansions since the 1993 POD include the Sandy Hook School, Fire House and Multi-Purpose Building and other Sandy Hook areas. UWC will continue to expand to meet emerging needs. Recent service expansions include providing water service to the Newtown High School and providing service along Route 6 in the Hawleyville area, extending nearly to the Bethel town boundary. Expansion of the UWC system is done at the expense of those desiring service.



United Water Wellhead
Adjacent to the Pootatuck River

Pootatuck River Aquifer: The 26.1 square mile Pootatuck River watershed, which supplies the 7.9 square mile Pootatuck Aquifer, lies mainly within Newtown, with small portions located in the towns of Easton and Monroe. In 1990, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency designated the Pootatuck Aquifer as a "sole source aquifer," indicating that there are no viable alternative sources of sufficient water supply. In making this determination the U.S. EPA concluded "...the aquifer is capable of yielding approximately 4.0 million gallons per day (mgd). At least half of the amount will be required to maintain stream quality and to support waste assimilation and the cold water fishery. The State of Connecticut's diversion control law would, in all likelihood, prohibit withdrawals in excess of 2 mgd. Current water use is 1,009,406 gallons per day and if projected water supply demand does not increase and drought conditions do not prevail, Newtown should have sufficient water supplies for the next 40 years."

The Newtown Planning and Zoning Commission first adopted aquifer protection regulations in 1981. To safeguard the water resources located in the Pootatuck Aquifer, the Planning and Zoning Commission adopted Aquifer Protection regulations in 1994, that were subsequently updated in 1999. The Conservation Commission has been designated to act as the Town's Aquifer Protection Agency. In 2000, the PZC rezoned land in support of aquifer protection and sewer avoidance. The Town is currently considering making a request to the US Geological Survey (USGS) to update the 1978 USGS study of the Pootatuck Aquifer and further evaluate the affects of ground water withdrawal on aquatic habitat within the sole source Pootatuck Aquifer.

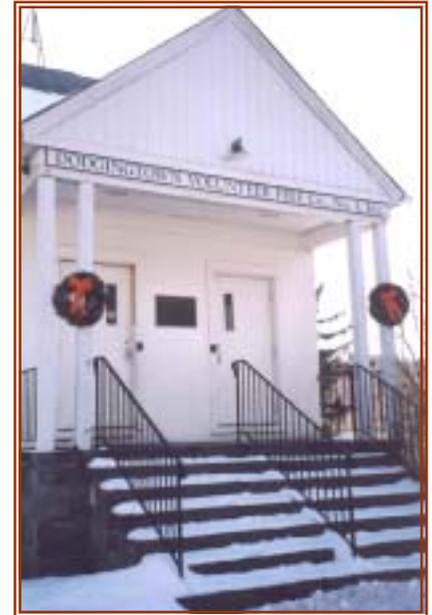
Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Services

Fire protection and emergency medical services in Newtown are provided on a volunteer basis. Newtown has five volunteer fire departments and one volunteer ambulance organization. These organizations are staffed by approximately 150 area residents who volunteer their time to serve the

Town. Volunteers serve in a number of capacities, from fighting fires and rendering emergency medical services to providing training, maintaining equipment, record keeping, etc.

The location of Newtown's volunteer fire departments reflects the fact that Newtown is one of the largest towns in Connecticut and fire protection has evolved over the years to provide coverage to Newtown's central Borough and historic hamlets and neighborhoods, extending coverage to the entire Town. Each volunteer fire department has a defined service area and the Newtown Board of Fire Commissioners functions to coordinate services between the five departments and helps to allocate municipal financial support.

The Newtown Volunteer Ambulance Corp provides emergency medical services for the Town. Operating from a station located on Mt. Pleasant Road (Routes 6 and 25) this organization has nearly 50 volunteers with EMT certification who respond to approximately 1,400 calls a year.



Dodgingtown Volunteer Fire Company

Police Protection

The requirements for municipal police services in Newtown have continually evolved to meet the changing needs of a growing and changing Town during the Newtown Police Departments 31 years of existence. These changes result from the growth of the Town as well as societal changes. At the present time the Newtown Police Department has a staff of approximately 42 sworn officers and thirteen civilian employees. The Department handled 11,349 calls for service during 2001.

The police department is housed in Town Hall South, at the intersection of Routes 25 and 302 and Glover Avenue. In the Department's Five Year Plan released in July of 2001, this facility was termed "generally inadequate and lack(s) the design specifications to meet the operational needs of the force." While the building's location provides good accessibility to the general public and is structurally sound, it lacks adequate space for parking and will continue to require periodic interior and exterior repairs to address problems created by the presence of building materials that are not durable. The Five Year Plan calls for a "comprehensive environmental space needs study for the police department. Architectural drawings of a modified, rehabilitated police department or a new police department which adequately addresses the needs of the department for the next 20 years." Newtown's draft Capital Improvements Plan through the year 2007 has allocated \$200,000 for this space needs analysis.

Library

The Cyrenius H. Booth Library was a gift to the Town of Newtown by Mary Hawley and was opened in 1932. A major expansion of the library nearly doubled floor space and was completed in 1998. In addition to an extensive collection of traditional library resources, the Booth Library also offers connectivity to a variety of "on-line" digital resources and ten computers with internet access available for use by library patrons.

Town Roads

There are 34 miles of state roads in Newtown and 226 miles of local roads whose maintenance is the responsibility of the Town. See the Transportation and Circulation element for a description of transportation issues in Newtown. The Town's extensive road system includes a network of older roads that function as collector roads for Newtown numerous newer subdivisions. This extensive

road system will require constant attention to maintain the affected Town roads, bridges and 4,600 catch basins. Twenty-one bridges are programmed for improvement during the next seven to ten years.

Newtown has an ongoing road maintenance program to address Town roads exhibiting structural base and drainage problems, as well as a program of annual street sealing to postpone future costly repairs, all done within the limits of available funding. Newtown's draft Capital Improvements Plan through the fiscal year 2007 allocates \$2,000,000 annually for a variety of improvements to Newtown's road infrastructure.



Public Works Facility

Solid Waste Disposal

Following the preparation of the 1993 POCD, the Town closed its landfill. As a member of the Housatonic Resource Recovery Authority (HRRA), Newtown hosts a regional transfer station serving Newtown and Brookfield from its Ethan Allen Road facility. The Town owns the land under the transfer station and the transfer station facilities are owned by Wheelabrator Technologies Inc, a wholly owned subsidiary of Waste Management Inc. Town residents can use the transfer station during its normal operating hours by showing proper proof of residency or purchase trash collection services directly from private refuse collection companies.

Solid waste from HRRA member towns is disposed of by Wheelabrator pursuant to a long term agreement between HRRA and Wheelabrator. The Town is obligated to deliver a minimum tonnage of solid waste annually. The current cost to the Town to dispose of solid waste (tipping fee) is \$73 per ton. This system has the capacity to handle solid waste disposal for the next 10 years.

Newtown participates in the HRRA recycling program. The Town operates a recycling center at its Ethan Allen Road facility. The Town includes the cost of recycling collection in its tax base. Residents can also "drop-off" their recyclables at the Town's recycling center.

C. COMMUNITY FACILITIES: ISSUES, GOALS AND ACTION AGENDA

The following is an identification of the key issues and goals related to parks and recreation and a supporting action agenda for the attainment of those goals.

ISSUE #1: GENERAL GOVERNMENT FACILITIES

Newtown's general government functions are located in several facilities throughout the Town.

Goal: Strive for a more organized and efficient approach for municipal government buildings.

Strategies:

Section/ Issue	No.	Strategy	Leader	Required Support	Required Support	Required Support
COFA1	1.	Continue to pursue the concept of consolidating many of Newtown's municipal offices on the Fairfield Hills campus.	BS	PZC		
COFA1	2.	Define the future planned use for Edmond Town Hall before a significant number of town municipal offices are relocated.	BM	BS		

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ISSUE #2: PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

Continued growth in Newtown's population during the next ten years is likely to necessitate expansion of the Town's school facilities.

Goal: The Board of Education needs to define long-range school requirements.

Strategies:

Section/ Issue	No.	Strategy	Leader	Required Support	Required Support	Required Support
COFA2	1.	As the school population grows the Board of Education should:				
COFA2	1a.	First try to satisfy the need by increasing the utilization of the existing school buildings.	BE	BF	LC	BS
COFA2	1b.	If the long-range plan necessitates a new building the Board of Education needs to define possible sites well in advance of the need.	BE	PBSC		
COFA2	1c.	If a future High School facility cannot be satisfied by the current facility or other school buildings, consider the Fairfield Hills campus as a possible site.	BE	BS	LC	
COFA2	2.	Consider "land banking" a 25 acre site in southeastern Newtown for the location of an elementary school that may be required beyond the 10 year planning horizon of this POCD.	BS	BE	BS	PZC

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ISSUE #3 YOUTH SERVICES

Youth Services Bureau is dependent on private and town support to be able to provide its services for the youth of Newtown

Goal: Maintain these services.

Strategies:

Section/ Issue	No.	Strategy	Leader	Required Support	Required Support	Required Support
COFA3	1.	Provide facilities for the continuation of youth services.	YSB	BS	LC	

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ISSUE #4: NEWTOWN’S PARKS AND RECREATIONAL RESOURCES

1. Newtown’s parks and recreational facilities are important components of the Town’s community character.
2. Newtown’s parks and recreational facilities provide residents with opportunities to engage in healthful and educational activities.
3. Parks and recreational facilities function as community gathering places that foster social interaction in an attractive environment.
4. Quality parks and recreational facilities benefit property values and the marketability of the community.
5. Most of Newtown’s park and recreation resources are concentrated in the Town’s central core and have been developed to primarily support active recreational activities and organized sports.

Goal: Maintain and support recreational facilities for townspeople of all ages.

Strategies:

Section/ Issue	No.	Strategy	Leader	Required Support	Required Support	Required Support
COFA4	1.	Prepare a long-range park and recreation plan.	PRC	BS	LC	OS
COFA4	2.	Include any future capital requirements in the Town’s capital plan.	PRC	BS	LC	

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Section/ Issue	No.	Strategy	Leader	Required Support	Required Support	Required Support
COFA4	3.	Increase the current efficient utilization of existing Parks and Recreation facilities by extending hours and creative scheduling.	PRC	BE		
COFA4	4.	Strengthen the existing cooperative relationship between the Parks and Recreation Commission and the Board of Education to maximize the use of all existing and planned municipal recreational facilities.	PRC	BE	BS	
COFA4	5.	Improve playing fields at Newtown's elementary schools and middle school to facilitate their utilization for organized team sports.	BE	PRC		
COFA4	6.	Utilize the Fairfield Hills campus as a resource to meet the needs for additional recreational facilities during the next ten years.	PRC			
COFA4	7.	Consider the development of recreation fields closer to the neighborhoods for younger children.	PRC			
COFA4	8.	Develop recreational access to Lake Zoar for Newtown residents.	PRC			
COFA4	9.	Evaluate the addition of a Community Center / Recreation Center	PRC	BS	LC	

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ISSUE #5: SENIOR CENTER

1. Newtown's Senior Center does not have enough space for its current operations.
2. In addition, the Town's senior population will continue to grow during the next ten years.

Goal: Provide sufficient space for the operations of the Town's Senior Center.

Strategies:

Section/ Issue	No.	Strategy	Leader	Required Support	Required Support	Required Support
COFA5	1.	Pursue programming, budgeting and developing a new, expanded Senior Center facility.	CA	BS		
COFA5	2.	Explore the use of a portion of a Fairfield Hills' campus building.	CA	BS	PZC	

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ISSUE #6: PUBLIC SEWER SYSTEM

The capacity of the Town’s sewage treatment plant is limited to those properties currently within the sewer service areas.

Goal: Maintain the capacity of the existing system to meet future needs.

Strategies:

Section/ Issue		Strategy	Leader	Required Support	Required Support	Required Support
COFA6	1.	Maintain a strong sewer avoidance program.	WPCA	PZC	CC	
COFA6	2.	Expand the sewer service area to the 38-acres land parcel the Town receives from the State adjacent to Commerce Road.	WPCA	BS	PZC	

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ISSUE #7: WATER SERVICE

Newtown’s public water system is solely dependant on water from the Pootatuck Aquifer.

Goal: Manage the capacity of the Newtown’s public water system.

Strategies:

Section/ Issue	No.	Strategy	Leader	Required Support	Required Support	Required Support
COFA7	1.	Ensure water-system service expansions are accommodated by the water source providing the service.	CT Dept of Health	CC	PZC	

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ISSUE #8: POLICE PROTECTION, FIRE PROTECTION AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

Newtown’s growing population will place additional demands for police, fire and emergency services.

Goal: Continue to provide for a high level of these services.

Strategies:

Section/ Issue	No.	Strategy	Leader	Required Support	Required Support	Required Support
COFA8	1.	Either upgrade the existing Police Station or develop a new facility.	BS	PC	LC	
COFA8	2.	Continue financial support for and coordination of the operation of fire and emergency services within Newtown.	BFC	BS	LC	
COFA8	3.	Develop programs that encourage more Newtown residents to volunteer for fire and emergency service activities.	BFC	BS	LC	

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ISSUE # 9 NEWTOWN’S SERVICES

1. Newtown’s population and overall activity has been growing at one of the fastest rates in Connecticut.
2. To keep costs down Newtown must find means to service this rapidly growing community more efficiently.

Goal: Increase the efficiency of Town paper work and information.

Strategies:

Section/ Issue		Strategy	Leader	Required Support	Required Support	Required Support
COFA9	1.	Develop an integrated e-government portal for the Town of Newtown that is a single access point to information and services such as Town Agencies’ application forms and their respective instructions.	BS			
COFA9	2.	Publish on the Town’s P&Z Commission’s web site the zoning regulations and design criteria for developers and applicants of economic-development projects.	PZC	BS		
COFA9	3.	Publish on the Borough’s web site the Village District regulations that govern the design of development activities within the Borough.	BZC	BB		
COFA9	4.	Support common functions to enhance technology replication and sharing across Town Departments.	BS			

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IV. ACHIEVING THE VISION

TRANSPORTATION

A. INTRODUCTION

An essential ingredient to maintaining a high quality of life in Newtown is a safe and efficient transportation system, consistent with the Town's desired community character. Newtown's transportation system is primarily comprised of a network of town roads, state highways, a limited sidewalk system, recreational trails, limited mass transit service and rail freight service, all of which combine to provide for intra-town and inter-town travel needs.

This portion of the POCD describes the current conditions of Newtown's transportation system, highlight areas for action and identify future needs. An in-depth discussion of Newtown's transportation system is provided in Plan Memorandum #7, Transportation and Circulation.

B. FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION OF NEWTOWN'S ROADWAYS

There are five levels of roadway classification which are used to define the use characteristics of roads within Newtown. These classifications include; Principal Arterial- Interstate, Principal Arterial, Minor Arterials, Collectors Roads- Major and Minor, and Local Roads. The classification of a road may change along different segments of its length and in some instances may operate differently than its assigned functional classification. Roadway classifications are tied to various Federal, State/Regional and local funding programs for planning, engineering, construction and maintenance activities. The Federal/State functional classification process also incorporates urban and rural area designations, which affect the distribution of Federal transportation monies.

Classification Inconsistencies: There are numerous inconsistencies between the functional classification of roads by the Town of Newtown and by the Connecticut Department of Transportation (ConnDOT). This issue was raised in the 1993 POD and has not been resolved. This issue is important to the Town because the functional classification used by ConnDOT can affect transportation planning policies and programming and as well as eligibility for ConnDOT and Federal transportation improvement monies.

Newtown has been one of Connecticut's faster growing municipalities for the past 20 years. The Town is encouraged to enlist the assistance of the Housatonic Valley Council of Elected Officials (HVCEO) to pursue adjustments to ConnDOT's functional classification of roads in Newtown to more accurately reflect current highway conditions. The Town will continue to use the functional classification map contained in the 1993 POD until these adjustments have been completed to the Town's satisfaction.

C. EXISTING CONDITIONS

Route 25

Route 25 is an arterial highway that begins at Route 7 in Brookfield and extends southeastward to I-95 in Bridgeport. Average daily traffic (ADT) volumes on Route 25 in Newtown in 2001 ranged from 8,400 ADT at the Brookfield town line, 17,500 ADT just north of the Flagpole, 20,200 ADT just south of Mile Hill Road and 18,500 ADT at the Monroe town line.

While it is classified as a minor arterial from the Brookfield town line to the Flagpole and a major arterial from the Flagpole to the Monroe town line, Route 25 also functions as the Town's Main Street and as a local service road with numerous curb cuts that provide access to the many businesses, institutions and residences located along its length in Newtown.

Figure 6 – Current Functional Road Classification

Figure 7 – Current ConnDOT Functional Road Classification

Route 25 Expressway: For many years, ConnDOT planned for the construction of a Route 25 expressway which would have provided expressway linkage between I-84 in Newtown and I-95 in Bridgeport. Portions of this expressway were constructed, extending from the Route 8 Expressway in Bridgeport to the vicinity of Route 111 in northern Trumbull. Over the years, many route alignment alternatives were considered to complete the balance of the expressway to I-84 in Newtown. Extensive environmental analyses were conducted and there were numerous public meetings to discuss the needs for and consequences of extending the expressway northward through Monroe and Newtown. In 1993, ConnDOT announced that it would no longer pursue the completion of the expressway, due to a lack of sufficient financial resources. Newtown's updated POCD concurs with ConnDOT's current position on the Route 25 Expressway.

Route 25 Widening: In 1998, ConnDOT proposed the widening of Route 25, within its current ROW, to a four lane cross section from Route 111 in Trumbull to Wasserman Way in Newtown. Neither the Town nor the Housatonic Valley Council of Elected Officials (HVCEO) have supported this proposal. This widening project can not proceed, using Federal monies, without HVCEO's endorsement. In the 2002 Inventory of Newtown Traffic Issues, HVCEO suggests that Newtown "advocate for intersection oriented safety improvements along the (Route 25) corridor one by one, as can be justified by traffic engineering studies." Newtown's updated POCD concurs with this HVCEO suggestion.

Route 25 South Safety Issues: Previous analysis of Route 25 from the Flagpole to the Monroe town line resulted in recommendations for intersection improvements and a curb cut management plan to address safety issues. The Newtown Planning and Zoning Commission has adopted the curb cut management plan. The Route 25 intersections recommended for improvements to address safety issues and, in some instances, address intersection capacity issues include: Swamp Road; Botsford Hill Road; Elm Drive, north and south; Pecks Lane, north and south; Borough Lane; and Route 302/Glover Avenue. Several of the recommended intersection improvements are minor in nature, such as re-striping of lanes to improve turning movements and might be accomplished by ConnDOT District 4 working directly with the Town of Newtown.

Route 25- Hawleyville: In 1997 the Town of Newtown, working with HVCEO, completed the Hawleyville Transportation and Development Study. This report addressed the land use and transportation issues associated with the Town's longstanding desire to encourage economic development on the lands near the I-84 Exit 9 interchange. The land use and transportation recommendations of this analysis, including intersection improvements and a curb cut management plan, were subsequently incorporated into Newtown's Plan of Development. ConnDOT's I-84 Corridor Study, completed in 2000, updated recommendations for the configuration of Exit 9 ramps and associated Route 25 intersection improvements.

In 2000, Newtown applied to ConnDOT for assistance in planning for improvements to the intersection of Route 25 with Currituck and Obtuse Roads. That analysis was recently completed, with ConnDOT concluding that signalization of this intersection was not currently needed. Any future improvements to the design of this intersection will be affected by the presence of a former schoolhouse, listed on the National Register of Historic Sites and two natural gas transmission lines, all located on the north side of the intersection.

Route 6

Route 6 is a two lane arterial roadway that enters Newtown at the Bethel town line as Mount Pleasant Road and proceeds eastward, joining Route 25 in Hawleyville and becoming Main Street near its intersection with School House Hill Road. At the Flagpole, Route 6 proceeds down Church Hill Road to join I-84 at Exit 10.

Average daily traffic (ADT) volumes on Route 6 in 2001 ranged from 8,800 ADT at the Bethel town line, 10,800 at the northern intersection with Route 25, 17,500 ADT just north of the Flagpole, 7,700 between the Flagpole and Queen Street on Church Hill Road and 16,300 ADT just east of Commerce Road before the I-84 ramps.

ConnDOT has given Route 6 the functional classification of Minor Arterial from the Bethel town line to the Flagpole and the classification of Major Arterial from the Flagpole to I-84. While Route 6 has the classification of an arterial road, a portion also functions as the Town's Main Street and as a busy local service road along Church Hill Road, with numerous curb cuts that provide access to the businesses, institutions, schools and residences fronting on this highway.

Route 6- Hawleyville: The 1997 Hawleyville Transportation and Development Study that addressed land use and transportation issues in this area of Newtown made recommendations for intersection improvements and included a curb cut management plan. This report concluded that the Hawleyville intersection of Routes 6 and 25 will need to be upgraded to accommodate the implementation of the economic development activities planned for this area.

Route 6- Main Street: ConnDOT's Traffic Accident Surveillance Report (TASR) does not indicate any major problem intersections or road segment issues on Route 6 from the Bethel town line until reaching the Flagpole. The Flagpole intersection also involves Route 25 and is discussed below as a separate road issue. Pedestrian activity is an important Main Street consideration. Main Street has attractive sidewalks setback from Route 6. However, pedestrian crossing of Route 6 is a challenge, due to the width of the road and the volume and speed of traffic. The Town, working with ConnDOT has achieved good pavement markings and signage, alerting motorists of pedestrian activity and encouraging pedestrians to cross in marketed crosswalks. The Newtown Police Department has also implemented education and enforcement activities to improve pedestrian safety. Any proposals for the improvement of the Flagpole intersection should include recommendations which address pedestrian mobility and safety along Main Street and Church Hill Road, linking with Queen Street.

Route 6- Church Hill Road: The portion of Route 6 between the Flagpole and I-84 is designated by ConnDOT as a major arterial. It also functions as one of Newtown's busier streets by directly serving many retail businesses, the Hawley School, Queen Street and its shopping areas and by connecting to the many businesses located on Commerce Road and Edmond Road. This portion of Route 6 provides two lanes of travel, with turn lanes provided at the Queen Street and Commerce Road intersections. Traffic exiting Commerce Road and traveling east was noticed to be using the dirt shoulder to facilitate right turns and bypass traffic turning left onto Church Hill Road west bound.

Figure 8 – ConnDOT Proposals for Improvements to I-84 Exits 9 & 10

Route 6 also provides access to Interstate 84 at Exit 10. A curb cut management plan was prepared by HVCEO in 1988 for this segment of Route 6 but has not been incorporated into the Borough or Town's zoning regulation.

The railroad overpass on Route 6 has been a subject of concern for several decades. Over the years, dozens of over-height trucks have hit the overpass, stopping traffic in both directions. After many false starts, construction of a new \$4,000,000+ overpass was completed in 2002, eliminating this traffic hazard.

For many years, the section of Route 6/Church Hill Road from Commerce Road easterly to I-84 Exit 10 has been at the top of the Housatonic Valley Region's list of most problematic road segments, in terms of traffic safety. The high accident rates in this area have been attributed to the combination of high traffic volumes and numerous turning movements. In 2000, Newtown requested State assistance to address this safety issue and ConnDOT subsequently proposed improvements to this segment of Route 6. The Town should continue to pursue improvement efforts to this portion of Church Hill Road, which may include the alignment of Edmond Road with Commerce Roads.

Route 6 – I-84 Exit 10: In 2000, ConnDOT concluded an analysis of the need to upgrade I-84 from the New York border to the Housatonic River. This study calls for the widening of I-84 to three travel lanes in each direction, with significant interchange improvements. Improvements proposed for Exit 10 are designed to convert the interchange to a modified "diamond" configuration to address capacity and safety issues.

Route 302

Route 302 is a two lane roadway entering Newtown from the west at the Bethel town line, as Dodgingtown Road, and proceeding easterly, becoming Sugar Street and ending at Route 25 (South Main Street) in the Borough of Newtown. Average daily traffic (ADT) volumes on Route 302 in 2001 ranged from 7,700 ADT west of Hattertown Road, 5,500 east of Hattertown Road, 7,500 east of Key Rock Road, 8,500 west of Boggs Hill Road, 10,800 east of Boggs Hill Road and 10,500 just west of Elm Drive and Route 25.

ConnDOT has given Route 302 the functional classification of Minor Arterial from the Bethel town line to its intersection with Route 25. As such, this arterial connects the center of Newtown with the center of Bethel. This low volume State road provides access to several small commercial uses and the Dodgingtown hamlet near the Bethel town line. Route 302 also connects with numerous Town roads that provide access to western Newtown and passes through a very scenic area containing two operating dairy farms.

The Route 302 intersections with Hattertown Road and Key Rock Road have been identified as possessing alignment and/or sight line safety issues. These problems are of such a nature that it may be possible to address them through the coordinated efforts of Newtown's engineering and public works personnel working with ConnDOT's District IV staff.

Route 34

Route 34 is a two lane arterial roadway that enters Newtown from the south at the Monroe town line as Berkshire Road and proceeds northwesterly, ending at the I-84 mainline overpass. ConnDOT has given Route 34 the functional classification of Minor Arterial. Route 34 connects Newtown with the lower Naugatuck Valley, the greater New Haven area and I-95.

Average daily traffic (ADT) volumes on Route 34 in 2001 ranged from 8,800 ADT at the Monroe town line, 11,800 south of High Rock Road, 13,000 south of Pole Bridge Road, 15,200 between Pole Bridge Road and Toddy Hill Road, 19,600 between Toddy Hill Road and Wasserman Way and 5,700 just northwest of Wasserman Way.

Route 34 Bridge: An issue which may affect the future utilization of this roadway is a ConnDOT proposal to improve the bridge crossing of the Housatonic River. Route 34 currently crosses the Housatonic River on top of the Stevenson Dam, which is located in Monroe approximately 1.25 miles south of the Newtown town line. The narrowness of the roadway on top of the dam, combined with the short turning radii of the approaches at either end of the bridge and the curve in the roadway near the east end of the dam prohibit the side by side passage of large tractor trailer trucks in these three areas of the bridge. On occasion, opposing trucks must back away from one another to enable passage over the dam. Route 34 represents the most direct route for trucks traveling between the New York State/Danbury I-84 corridor and the New Haven/I-95 area. It is likely that the reconstruction of this bridge or the building of a new bridge over the Housatonic River will result in increased truck traffic on Route 34.

Route 34 –The Hill: Route 34 is quite unique in Newtown and the Housatonic Valley Region in that there are no commercial businesses fronting on this State highway from the Monroe town line to just east of Pole Bridge Road, a distance of nearly 5 miles. This section of Route 34 passes over a hill that presents a significant climb for heavily loaded trucks traveling north bound. Trucks often slow to 25 miles per hour as they proceed upgrade, causing significant backups of following traffic during AM peak flows. Consideration was given to adding a slow vehicle lane to permit passing, however this option was rejected due to the taking of front yards that would be required to accommodate the additional lane. If the proposed upgrade of Route 34's crossing of the Housatonic River does result in additional truck traffic, it can be anticipated that the idea of adding climbing lanes on this section of Route 34 will be raised once again.

Route 34- Pole Bridge Road to Wasserman Way: The section of Route 34 from Pole Bridge Road to Wasserman Way has Newtown's second highest traffic volumes (for non-expressway roads), as well as two curves, changes in roadway elevation, poor sightlines and intersections with two busy town roads. North bound morning peak hour traffic on Route 34 was observed to back-up from south of Pole Bridge Road, through the Toddy Hill Road intersection and through the intersection of Wasserman Way, to the I-84 Exit 11 on-ramp. South bound traffic on Route 34 was observed to be backed-up behind vehicles turning left into Pole Bridge Road, on a narrow corner with poor sight lines.

Route 34 – I-84 Exit 11: In 2000, ConnDOT concluded an analysis of the need to upgrade I-84 from the New York border to the Housatonic River. Significant improvements were proposed for Exit 11, including a ConnDOT proposal to provide a direct link to the I-84 onramps through a redesigned intersection with Toddy Hill Road, addressing morning peak hour congestion and safety issues on this roadway segment.

Wasserman Way

Wasserman Way is a new State numbered (SR 490 and SR 860) roadway connecting Route 34 and I-84 Exit 11 on the east with Queen Street, Mile Hill Road and Route 25 on the west. ConnDOT classifies Wasserman Way as a collector road. The portion of Wasserman Road from Route 34 to Nunnawauk Road is SR 490. SR 490 continues on Nunnawauk Road from Wasserman Way to the Garner Correctional Facility. The portion of Wasserman Way from Nunnawauk Road to Mile Hill

Figure 9 – ConnDOT Proposals for Improvements to I-84 Exit 11

Road is SR 860. A ConnDOT commuter parking lot with 78 spaces is located on the east side of Wasserman Way, between Route 34 and the I-84 ramps.

Wasserman Way was constructed at the Town's request to develop an alternate route serving the central area of Newtown. It passes adjacent to the former Fairfield Hills Hospital Campus, which the Town is currently negotiating to purchase from the State. Based upon 2001 Average Daily Traffic (ADT) volumes recorded by ConnDOT, the construction of this roadway has been well received by motorists. ADT volumes on Wasserman Way in 2001 ranged from 16,900 vehicles between Route 34 and the I-84 Exit 11 ramps, to 9,800 vehicles west of Nunnawauk Road to 12,200 vehicles between Mile Hill Road South and Route 25. The need for future improvements to the intersections along Wasserman Way are part of the Fairfield Hills Master Planning process, which should be incorporated into the POCD as they are completed. The Town should consider extending Commerce Road to Wasserman Way to provide for an alternate connection to Church Hill Road (Route 6).

Glen Road

Glen Road is a State numbered road (SR 816) and is classified by ConnDOT as a minor collector road. At one time Glen Road was a part of Route 6, the major east-west arterial serving Newtown. Glen Road provides secondary access to Southbury, bridging the Housatonic River. Traffic volumes on Glen Road increase substantially whenever I-84 is shut down for accidents or construction activity. Average Daily Traffic volumes on this road in 2001 ranged from 2,400 vehicles at the Housatonic River bridge to 3,900 vehicles just north of the intersection with Church Hill Road. Glen Road passes through the narrow northern end of the Pootatuck River valley and this section of roadway has been long recognized for its scenic qualities.

“The Flagpole”

The Flagpole in the middle of the Main Street intersection of Route's 6 and 25 and the two legs of West Street has been described as the “emotional heart” of Newtown. The Flagpole, sometimes referred to as the “Liberty Pole,” and its predecessors date from 1876. The current 100' high flagpole was erected in 1950.

Because the Flagpole sits in the middle of a busy intersection with five roadway legs, it has been the site of many accidents, which tragically include fatalities. The recent downward trend in accidents at this intersection may be related to reduced traffic volumes on Route 6 east of the Flagpole on Church Hill Road and Route 25 south of the Flagpole, possibly resulting from the construction of Wasserman Way. It can be anticipated that these volumes will increase in the future, as a result of continued population growth in Newtown and surrounding communities.

Over the years, proposals to improve safety at this intersection, such as moving the Flagpole out of the roadway or signaling the intersection, have been met with resistance from the Community because they would have adversely affected the historic community character of this intersection. One proposal to improve safety and the flow of traffic at this intersection, which has not been formally pursued, is the creation of a modern roundabout that would feature the Flagpole as a prominent community monument in the middle of a landscaped circle, in the middle of the roundabout. Modern roundabouts are not traffic circles or rotaries. They are increasingly used successfully to address the issues of traffic flow, traffic safety and community character. This proposal was advanced by HVCEO in the 2002 Inventory of Newtown Traffic Issues.

Local Road Issues

Newtown has 226 miles of local roads. While Newtown has many miles of new roads built to serve the numerous subdivisions developed during the past twenty years, most of Newtown's local collector roads serving the new subdivisions are considerably older. These older, narrower collector roads were originally built to handle low volumes of traffic traveling at relatively low speeds.

The Town has recognized the necessity to upgrade its local road network to meet the needs of a growing community, addressing such issues as drainage and bridge improvements, road bed and pavement improvements, road alignments, sightlines and intersections. The Town is currently fourteen years into a 20 year capital plan to address these roadway items. In a community growing as rapidly as Newtown, some local roads and intersections that were once adequate to handle traffic can develop safety issues. When these issues arise they are addressed by the Town in a manner that protects the safety of the traveling public.

Pole Bridge Road: An example of an intersection that is no longer adequate to safely handle increased levels of traffic is the intersection of Pole Bridge Road with Jeremiah and Philo Curtis Roads. This intersection has been identified by the Newtown Police Department, the Town Engineer and the Public Works Director as possessing safety issues relating to sightlines, road alignment and traffic control. These issues are currently being addressed by these Town departments.

Queen Street at Glover Avenue: As documented in the 1988 Center Area Traffic Plan, the Queen Street Glover Avenue corridor is used as a shortcut for traffic moving between Church Hill Road and Route 25 south and Route 302 west. The problems associated with the intersection of Queen Street with Glover Avenue have been identified by the Town Engineer, the Director of Public Works and the Police Chief. This intersection was also identified in the 1993 POD as "problematic due to congestion or high accident occurrences."

Solutions to the traffic safety issues associated with this intersection have been advanced, including signalization, but none have gained favor as they would have resulted in alterations to the "island" located in the middle of this intersection, altering the character of the adjacent residential neighborhood. It is recommended that an analysis of past traffic accidents and future traffic volumes be performed and that design alternatives for this intersection be prepared, with public involvement, to result in safety improvements to this intersection that are sensitive to the residential characteristics of the adjacent neighborhood.

As Newtown continues to grow, additional segments of the Town's existing roadways and intersections will need to be improved to handle increased traffic volumes. The process to address these needs appears to be well established.

Scenic Roads: Newtown has a scenic road ordinance for Town roads that was adopted in 1997, with revisions in 1999. The purpose of the ordinance is to "...provide a balance between the need to provide safe and convenient public transportation as well as other public safety needs along with preserving the scenic and rural values."

Newtown's scenic roads include: Sanford Road, which is a narrow, winding dirt road extending from Tamarack Road to Echo Valley Road; Zoar Road, also a narrow winding dirt road running from Route 34 to Bennetts Bridge Road; and the recently approved 4,000' unpaved portion of Pond Brook Road, between Hanover Road and Lake George Road.

Pedestrian Circulation and Bikeways

Sidewalks: Considerable interest has been expressed for improved pedestrian facilities, especially as relates to activities within the Borough and the Sandy Hook Village area. The Town and the Borough have completed a planning process that resulted in proposals for improved pedestrian movement along Queen Street.

A planning study for the revitalization of the Sandy Hook Village area has been completed with recommendations calling for improvements that will result in enhanced pedestrian mobility and safety. Recommendations for pedestrian improvements to Queen Street in the Borough and the Sandy Hook Village area have been endorsed by the Planning and Zoning Commission for incorporation into the POCD.

Trails: Because of Newtown's low density character, most local roads do not have sidewalks. However, Newtown has a very extensive network of walking trails that have been documented in a booklet prepared by Mary Mitchell and Albert Goodrich and published by the Cyrenius H. Booth Library. This booklet, titled Newtown Trails Book, contains 18 detailed maps which identify the location and condition of publicly accessible walking trails.

A recent trail proposal made by the Town's Ad HOC Open Space Task Force recommended the development of a multi-purpose trail between Fairfield Hills and the Upper Paugussett State Forest which has been incorporated into the POCD. This trail will facilitate a pedestrian connection between Fairfield Hills and the Sandy Hook Village Center, as well as to the Upper Paugussett State Forest.

Bikeways: There are currently no dedicated bikeways within Newtown. Suggestions have been raised concerning the extension of the Monroe rails to trails pedestrian/bikeway facility into Newtown and there was a proposal for the construction of a bike lane on Glen Road (SR 816) that would connect the Sandy Hook Village center with Southbury. This latter proposal has not moved forward, as there are no accurate maps of the right of way along this State numbered road that would permit preliminary engineering work and the development of cost estimates to assess the feasibility of this idea.

Public Transit

The Housatonic Area Regional Transit District (HART) is the entity responsible for providing fixed-route and elderly and disabled public transit service within the Housatonic Valley Region. Newtown is not currently served by fixed-route bus service. The nearest fixed-route bus service ends at the Bethel town line, on Route 6. HART does provide "SweetHART" bus transportation service for Newtown's seniors (age 60 or older) and persons of any age with disabilities. SweetHART provides door-to-door bus service Monday thru Friday, from 7:00 AM to 6:00 PM, with a dial-a-ride reservation system.

There have been considerations for establishing fixed-route bus service in Newtown. In 1993, HART prepared for HVCEO the Newtown/New Fairfield Bus Service Feasibility Plan. This report recommended a trial demonstration of fixed-route bus service that would serve major traffic generators such as the senior center, Church Hill Road, Queen Street, Main Street, Nunnawauk Meadows and Route 25 as far south as Sand Hill Plaza. This service would represent an extension of HART's Route 6 bus line in Bethel. No action was taken on this proposal.

As part of the process to update Newtown's Plan of Conservation and Development, a Community Planning Survey was conducted to understand residents concerns for Newtown's future. When responding to the question "Please provide us with two or three ways quality of life in Newtown might be improved?" the second most frequent response was "more mass transit."

Rail Service

In the early 1900's Newtown had an extensive system of rail lines and historic accounts indicate 153 freight and passenger trains stopped or passed through Newtown daily. Today, Newtown has one rail line, the Maybrook Line, which originates in Beacon, New York ends in Derby, Connecticut. This line is used exclusively for rail freight service. The Maybrook Line intersects with other rail lines, which provide connectivity to the national network of rail lines and rail services.

The Maybrook Line enters Newtown in the Hawleyville area, passes through the east side of the Borough, continues east of Route 25 to the Botsford area where it turns southeasterly to the Stevenson section of Monroe. The Connecticut portion of the Maybrook Line is owned by the Housatonic Railroad Company, which currently provides rail freight service to two Newtown companies; Rand-Whitney Containers on Edmond Road and Georgia Pacific warehouse, located at 201 South Main Street. There are four additional railroad sidings connected to Newtown business locations, which are not in current use.

Shepaug Reload Center: The Housatonic Railroad Company also owns and operates the Shepaug Reload and Distribution Center, which is located in Hawleyville, on the east side of Route 25. This facility enables area lumberyards to pick-up bulk shipments of lumber.

Hawleyville Transload Terminal: The Housatonic Railroad Company is in the process of expanding this facility into the Hawleyville Transload Terminal to allow for the intermodal transfer of non-hazardous bulk materials, such as flour and starch. This facility will enable area companies that do not have a rail siding to receive bulk shipments of raw goods used for manufacturing.

The Hawleyville Transload Terminal will have the capacity to load or unload forty rail cars, with storage for an additional 100 rail cars. This terminal may also have the potential to support trailer on flat car service. The construction of this facility is partially funded by a grant of State of Connecticut monies through ConnDOT.

Passenger Service: The 1997 I-84 Hawleyville Transportation and Development Study examined the potential for passenger rail service in Newtown. That analysis concluded that there was not enough potential rail ridership to justify an extension of Danbury Branch Line rail service to Newtown.

D. TRANSPORTATION: ISSUES, GOALS AND ACTION AGENDA

The following is an identification of the key issues and goals related to Newtown's transportation system and a supporting action agenda for the attainment of those goals.

ISSUE #1: FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION OF ROADWAYS

1. There are numerous differences between ConnDOT's and the Town's functional classification of roadways within Newtown.
2. The functional classification of roadways by ConnDOT can affect transportation planning policies and programming as well as eligibility for ConnDOT and Federal transportation improvement monies.

- The rapid development over the past 20 years justifies a town-wide review of both the local and ConnDOT roadway classification in Newtown.

Goal: Achieve the appropriate functional classification of state roads in Newtown.

Strategies:

Section/ Issue	No.	Strategy	Leader	Required Support	Required Support	Required Support
TRAN1	1.	Critique the local functional classifications of Newtown’s roadways and establish an updated local functional classification system.	BS	PC	PZC	
TRAN1	2.	Enlist the assistance of the HVCEO to develop the information necessary to convince ConnDOT to update the state’s roadway classifications in Newtown to better reflect their current and future functional classifications.	BS	PC	PZC	
TRAN1	3.	Critique the Newtown Roadway Ordinance to identify necessary updates and to ensure that it is consistent with current functional classification system.	BS	LC	PC	PZC

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ISSUE #2: ROADWAY CONGESTION AND SAFETY

- Current areas of traffic congestion and safety issues in Newtown have been described in a series of transportation planning documents.
- As Newtown and the surrounding areas continue to grow, Newtown’s network of State and local roads will experience increases in traffic volumes that are likely to create new points of congestion and additional safety issues.
- Newtown’s network of older local collector roads was not originally laid out to accommodate today’s traffic volumes and vehicle speeds.
- The Route 25 Expressway will not be constructed in the foreseeable future and should not be counted on to address Route 25 congestion and safety issues.
- Traffic volume on I-84 will continue to grow, partly in response to overflows from the congested I-95 corridor, growth in regional economic activity and the increasing demand for global transportation linkages.

Goal: Alleviate areas of congestion and address safety issues.

Strategies:

Section/ Issue	No.	Strategy	Leader	Required Support	Required Support	Required Support
TRAN2	1.	Develop a comprehensive transportation and land use plan similar to the 1997 Hawleyville study to:				
TRAN2	1a.	Identify current and future issues caused by further development and land use;	BS	EDC	PZC	BZC
TRAN2	1b.	Develop the preferred and alternative solutions to alleviate current and forecasted traffic problems for the town; and	PC	BS	PZC	BZC
TRAN2	1c.	Provide priorities for road changes and improvements.	PC	BS	PZC	BZC
TRAN2	2.	Request the Newtown Borough Zoning Commission adopt and implement curb-cut management recommendations for Church Hill Road between the Flag Pole and the railroad overpass.	BZC	PC	PZC	
TRAN2	3.	Consider the following actions:				
TRAN2	3a.	As redevelopment of the Fairfield Hills campus occurs, plan to mitigate the impact that traffic caused by such redevelopment has on Newtown's roads;	PC	BS		
TRAN2	3b.	Extend Commerce Road to connect Church Hill road and Wasserman Way;	BS	PC	PZC	EDC
TRAN2	4.	Implement traffic calming measures that address safety issues associated with traffic speeds that are not compatible for the character of the area through which the road passes.	PC	BS		
TRAN2	5.	Remove the requirement that a Town road must be "unpaved" to apply for Town scenic-road status.	LC	BS	PZC	
TRAN2	6.	Support multi-modal (pedestrian, bike, etc.) solutions to help alleviate traffic congestion and address safety.	PZC	PC	BZC	
TRAN2	7.	Adopt and implement a town-wide access management policy.	PZC	BZC	BS	

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Strategies for specific Routes:

Strategies - Route 25:

Section/ Issue	No.	Strategy	Leader	Required Support	Required Support	Required Support
TRAN2-25	1.	Establish a Design District for Route 25 from the Monroe border to the Newtown Borough borders with the following objectives:	PZC			

Section/ Issue	No.	Strategy	Leader	Required Support	Required Support	Required Support
TRAN2-25	1a.	Maintain the character of the corridor;	PZC	PC	EDC	
TRAN2-25	1b.	Allow mixed-use development in strategic locations along the corridor; and	PZC	EDC		
TRAN2-25	1c.	Accommodate traffic volumes generated by proposed land uses.	PZC	PC		
TRAN2-25	2.	Continue to implement the recommendations for curb cut management as previously adopted the Planning and Zoning Commission.	PZC	PC		
TRAN2-25	3.	Advocate for intersection-oriented safety improvements along the Route 25 corridor, one by one, as justified by traffic engineering studies.	PC	BS	PZC	
TRAN2-25	4.	Work with ConnDOT District IV engineering staff to develop practical solutions to safety problems identified in previous transportation planning studies, which can be implemented by the joint efforts of District IV and Town staff.	BS	PC		
TRAN2-25	5.	Enlist HVCEO's support and advocate with ConnDOT for the implementation of the recommendations of the Hawleyville Transportation and Development Study.	BS	PC		

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Strategies - Route 34:

Section/ Issue	No.	Strategy	Leader	Required Support	Required Support	Required Support
TRAN2-34	1.	Establish the state Scenic Road classification for Route 34 from Monroe to Exit 11 of I-84.	BS	LC	PZC	
TRAN2-34	2.	Work with ConnDOT District IV engineering staff to develop practical solutions to the safety problems associated with the Pole Bridge Road intersection.	BS	PC		
TRAN2-34	3.	Work with the ConnDOT/HVCEO to determine if any solutions, such as minor shoulder widening, exist to alleviate traffic congestion associated with slow-moving trucks on the Route 34.	BS	PC		

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Section/ Issue	No.	Strategy	Leader	Required Support	Required Support	Required Support
TRAN2-34	4.	Town administration, planning staff, and engineering staff should follow proposals to improve the Route 34 crossing of the Housatonic River in Monroe and to understand the consequences to Newtown of the proposed improvements.	BS	PC		
TRAN2-34	5.	Enlist HVCEO as an advocate to the ConnDOT for implementing the improvement of the Route 34 access to I-84 Exit11.	BS	PC		

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Strategies - Route 6:

Section/ Issue	No.	Strategy	Leader	Required Support	Required Support	Required Support
TRAN2-6	1.	Establish a Design District for Route 6 from the Bethel border to the Newtown Borough.	PZC			
TRAN2-6	2.	Adopt zoning regulations and incorporate curb-cut management into local road ordinance pursuant to the Hawleyville Transportation and Development Study.	PZC	BS	LL	PC
TRAN2-6	3.	Enlist HVCEO's support as an advocate to the Connecticut DOT for the implementing the recommendations from the Hawleyville Transportation and Development Study.	BS			
TRAN2-6	4.	Recommend that the Borough Zoning Commission update the <u>Newtown Center Area Traffic Management Plan</u> , adopt zoning regulations to implement access management.	BZC	BB	PC	
TRAN2-6	4a.	Consider the preparation of a Traffic Management Plan for Church Hill Road from the Borough to the Sandy Hook Center.	PZC	BS	PC	
TRAN2-6	5.	Promote ConnDOT's efforts to realign Edmond Road with Commerce Road to help alleviate the traffic conflicts at the existing Edmond Road and Church Hill Road intersection.	BS			

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Strategies - Route 302:

Section/ Issue	No.	Strategy	Leader	Required Support	Required Support	Required Support
TRAN2-302	1.	Pursue the State Scenic Road classification for Route 302 from the Bethel Town line to the Route 25 intersection at Ram's Pasture.	BS	LC	PC	
TRAN2-302	2.	Work with ConnDOT District IV engineering staff to develop practical solutions to safety problems, which can be implemented by the joint efforts of District IV and Town staff. Two examples of this cooperative effort would be improvement of the Key Rock Road and Hattertown Road intersection with Route 302, accomplished by slight improvement of Town road approaches and ConnDOT improvement of intersection sight line.	BS	PC		

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Strategies - The Flagpole:

Section/ Issue	No.	Strategy	Leader	Required Support	Required Support	Required Support
TRAN2-FP	1.	Examine the merits of HVCEO's proposal to address safety and traffic flow issues at this intersection.	BB	PC	BS	BZC
TRAN2-FP	2.	Explore the possibility of building a modern roundabout that features the Flagpole as a community monument in the middle of a landscaped circle.	BB	PC	BS	BZC

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Strategies - Sandy Hook Center

Section/ Issue	No.	Strategy	Leader	Required Support	Required Support	Required Support
TRAN2-SHC	1.	Work with the Connecticut DOT to improve the four-way intersection in Sandy Hook Center for motorists and pedestrians.	BS	PC	EDC	

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Strategies - Glen Road (SR 816):

Section/ Issue	No.	Strategy	Leader	Required Support	Required Support	Required Support
TRAN2-GR	1.	Pursue State Scenic Road status for Glen Road.	BS	LC		
TRAN2-GR	2.	When updated ConnDOT right of way maps become available, continue to investigate the possibility of developing a bike path from the Housatonic River to the Sandy Hook village center.	BS	OS	CC	
TRAN2-GR	3.	Request ConnDOT's cooperation in stabilizing Black Bridge Road and the bank along the Pootatuck River where storm water drainage from Glen Road is causing severe erosion.	BS	CC		

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Strategies- I-84:

Section/ Issue	No.	Strategy	Leader	Required Support	Required Support	Required Support
TRAN2 I-84	1.	Continue 1993 POCD endorsement of expanding I-84 to three through travel lanes in each direction.	BS			
TRAN2 I-84	2.	Work with HVCEO and ConnDOT to prepare an "Incident Management Plan" that addresses State and local actions designed to respond to the closure of I-84 due to accidents, maintenance and construction activities that result in an influx of traffic on roads within Newtown.	BS			

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ISSUE #3: PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION

The desire for improved pedestrian facilities has emerged as a planning issue for the Borough and the Sandy Hook village areas.

Goal: Improve Opportunities for Pedestrian Activities

Strategies:

Section/ Issue	No.	Strategy	Leader	Required Support	Required Support	Required Support
TRAN3	1.	Establish a long-range plan and priorities for sidewalks located in the Borough, the Sandy Hook Design District, and Fairfield Hills.	BS	BB	PC	PZC
TRAN3	2.	Identify existing and desired pedestrian circulation routes, and where sidewalk gaps exist, plan for the construction of new sidewalks, with new sidewalks in the Borough and Sandy Hook Center as priority areas and include the following:	BS	BB	PC	EDC
TRAN3	2a.	Implementation of the 2003 Pedestrian Safety Improvement Plan for the Queen Street corridor.	BS	BB	PC	
TRAN3	2b.	Develop a plan for and implement a continuous sidewalk on Church Hill Road extending between the flagpole and Sandy Hook Center.	BS	BB	PC	
TRAN3	3.	Consider bike paths as a means to travel to and from the center of Newtown and to and from the major playing fields.	BS	BB	PC	

Entity Abbreviations - BB- Borough Burgess; BE- Board of Education; BF - Board of Finance; BFC- Board of Fire Commissioners; BM- Board of Managers (Edmond Town Hall); BS- Board of Selectmen; BZC- Borough Zoning Commission; CC- Conservation Commission; CA- Commission on Aging; EDC- Economic Development Commission; LC- Legislative Council; OS- Open Space Committee; PBSC- Public Buildings and Site Commission; PC- Police Commission; PRC- Parks and Recreation Commission; PZC- Planning and Zoning Commission; TSB- Transportation Strategy Board; WPCA- Water Pollution Control Authority; YSB- Youth Service Board. **Section Abbreviations** - COCH- Community Character; CANR- Conservation and Natural Resources; OPSP- Open Space; TRAN- Transportation; HOUS- Housing; ECDE- Economic Development; COFA- Community Facilities. **Definition of Responsibilities** - Leader: Responsible to lead and coordinate the evaluation and, if justified, implementation of the strategy; Required Support: To accomplish the evaluation and/or implementation, this entity needs to provide support to the Leader

ISSUE #4: PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

1. Newtown is not currently served by fixed-route public transportation service for the general public.
2. The results of the Community Planning Survey indicate that there is a desire for public transportation service.
3. The Housatonic Area Regional Transit District (HART) has the capacity to provide fixed-route, public transit bus service for the general public in Newtown.
4. The issue of fixed-route, public transit service in Newtown has already been studied and found to be technically feasible.
5. The CT Transportation Strategy Board (TSB) is expected to examine a Danbury to Bridgeport link. The long desired Danbury to Newtown service could be a component of the new interregional service benefiting Newtown

Goal: Initiate fixed-route bus service in Newtown on a trial basis.

Strategies:

Section/ Issue	No.	Strategy	Leader	Required Support	Required Support	Required Support
TRAN4	1.	Develop an overall long-range public transportation plan involving bus and rail travel.	BS	PZC		

Section/ Issue	No.	Strategy	Leader	Required Support	Required Support	Required Support
TRAN4	2.	Work with HART, HVCEO, ConnDOT and the TSB to establish fixed-route bus service on a trial basis to determine the viability of public transit as an alternative mode of transportation for Newtown residents and employees of Newtown businesses.	BS	BB		
<p>Entity Abbreviations - BB- Borough Burgess; BE- Board of Education; BF – Board of Finance; BFC- Board of Fire Commissioners; BM- Board of Managers (Edmond Town Hall); BS- Board of Selectmen; BZC- Borough Zoning Commission; CC- Conservation Commission; CA- Commission on Aging; EDC- Economic Development Commission; LC- Legislative Council; OS- Open Space Committee; PBSC- Public Buildings and Site Commission; PC- Police Commission; PRC- Parks and Recreation Commission; PZC- Planning and Zoning Commission; TSB- Transportation Strategy Board; WPCA- Water Pollution Control Authority; YSB- Youth Service Board. Section Abbreviations - COCH- Community Character; CANR- Conservation and Natural Resources; OPSP- Open Space; TRAN- Transportation; HOUS- Housing; ECDE- Economic Development; COFA- Community Facilities. Definition of Responsibilities - <u>Leader</u>: Responsible to lead and coordinate the evaluation and, if justified, implementation of the strategy; <u>Required Support</u>: To accomplish the evaluation and/or implementation, this entity needs to provide support to the Leader</p>						

ISSUE #5: RAIL SERVICE

1. Newtown is fortunate to have an active rail line that is capable of providing freight service for area businesses with rail sidings and the utilization of bulk material rail terminals located in Hawleyville.
2. Freight service is an important asset to the economy of Newtown.
3. Rail passenger service is not a current mobility option for Newtown residents, but may become viable in the future.

Goal: Maximize Rail Mobility Opportunities

Strategies:

Section/ Issue	No.	Strategy	Leader	Required Support	Required Support	Required Support
TRAN5	1.	Take an active role in rail-freight planning activities with ConnDOT and the Housatonic Railroad Company to ensure that Newtown's economy is satisfactorily served and that resulting activities are compatible with affected neighborhoods and roads.	BS	EDC		
TRANS5	2.	Preserve the capacity along Newtown's existing rail line to implement future rail passenger service	BS	EDC	Regional Planning Agencies	
TRANS5	3.	Limit development around Newtown's former train stations if future passenger rail service appears possible	PZC	Regional Planning Agencies		
<p>Entity Abbreviations - BB- Borough Burgess; BE- Board of Education; BF – Board of Finance; BFC- Board of Fire Commissioners; BM- Board of Managers (Edmond Town Hall); BS- Board of Selectmen; BZC- Borough Zoning Commission; CC- Conservation Commission; CA- Commission on Aging; EDC- Economic Development Commission; LC- Legislative Council; OS- Open Space Committee; PBSC- Public Buildings and Site Commission; PC- Police Commission; PRC- Parks and Recreation Commission; PZC- Planning and Zoning Commission; TSB- Transportation Strategy Board; WPCA- Water Pollution Control Authority; YSB- Youth Service Board. Section Abbreviations - COCH- Community Character; CANR- Conservation and Natural Resources; OPSP- Open Space; TRAN- Transportation; HOUS- Housing; ECDE- Economic Development; COFA- Community Facilities. Definition of Responsibilities - <u>Leader</u>: Responsible to lead and coordinate the evaluation and, if justified, implementation of the strategy; <u>Required Support</u>: To accomplish the evaluation and/or implementation, this entity needs to provide support to the Leader</p>						

IV. ACHIEVING THE VISION

THE BOROUGH

A. INTRODUCTION

The Borough is the Historic Heart of Newtown. It contains shopping areas, numerous local businesses, municipal facilities, churches, beautiful single family detached homes and the Flag Pole. The Borough forms a very powerful visual image that adds to the perception of Newtown's community character. Collectively, these features of Newtown's built environment combine to provide a key focal point of "community" within the Town.

The 1993 Plan of Development (POD) identified the importance of the Borough within the Town and suggested a series of recommendations to preserve and enhance the Borough's historic role as the Center of Town. The following section is largely excerpted from the 1993 POD.

B. BACKGROUND

Existing Conditions

The intersection of Queen Street and Route 6 (Church Hill Road) developed historically as the main commercial area in Newtown. Over the years, commercial uses have expanded south on Queen Street to the Middle School and both east and west on Route 6 from Wendover Road to the railroad overpass. The Borough is the location of two shopping centers - Eton Plaza, which has become partially vacant since the preparation of the 1993 POD and the Newtown Shopping Center, which has been substantially renovated since the 1993 POD - as well as numerous shops and offices offering convenience goods and services. In addition to the shopping centers, many businesses are located in small, detached, previously residential buildings or in single or multiple tenant commercial buildings.

There are two public schools and one private school which add to the mixed nature of land uses in the area. The Hawley School is an elementary school located opposite the Eton Plaza. The Newtown middle school is located south of Eton Plaza on Queen Street and the St. Rose of Lima private school is located further east on Church Hill Road (Route 6).

The south side of Church Hill Road is zoned for retail and general business uses. A portion of the north side of Church Hill is zoned for professional uses which permits residences and professional offices. The remainder of the area is zoned for one acre residential uses.

Findings

The area has developed in a generally uncoordinated fashion which has resulted in a mixture of building types and forms, lack of uniform setbacks and symmetry among building locations and numerous, repetitive driveway curb cuts. The area suffers from its ambivalent roles as an automobile oriented shopping center and retail and service center for the surrounding neighborhood. The area fulfills neither of these roles very satisfactorily. The area is neither truly pedestrian oriented, nor does it function adequately for automobile circulation. The presence of a young student population aggravates a concern for pedestrian safety. These issues combine to create a challenging climate for the prosperity of businesses.

With the installation of sewer service, this area has the potential to become a multi-function village center with shops, services, and places of entertainment which serve not only the surrounding

neighborhood, but all of Newtown, and visitors to Newtown and to the nearby, historic Main Street area.

C. VILLAGE CENTER PLAN

The objectives of a village center plan are to:

- Improve automobile and pedestrian access and circulation.
- Create opportunities for the expansion of businesses and the creation of new businesses.
- Improve the image of the business area for residents and visitors.

A detailed design plan which takes into account existing and future development and environmental constraints should be prepared. The fundamental elements of a plan for the Village Center are described as follows:

1. Land Uses

- Land uses should encourage a broad mixture of small businesses catering to local retail and service needs, and the needs of visitors to Newtown.
- The center would be reinforced with some entertainment uses and public gathering areas such as a common.
- The area also should feature business, professional and medical offices which may be attracted to smaller scale buildings or converted residences.
- Residential uses should be permitted on the second floor of retail businesses, and home/office combinations should be encouraged. Development sites adjacent to residential areas may be used for affordable housing.

2. Village Design

- The center should be designed to convey a village feeling. Buildings should be set close to the street with a minimum and a maximum setback to achieve uniformity. Setbacks on Queen Street should be closer to the roadway than those on Church Hill Road.
- As is evident on Main Street, a range of building styles is appropriate. However, the use of natural materials and building forms that draw upon local architectural conventions should be encouraged.
- Overhead utility lines should be removed and placed underground.

3. Circulation

Among the most pressing issues with regard to the village center is access to businesses and pedestrian and vehicular movement throughout the area. The recommendations of the Pedestrian Safety Plan for Queen Street should be implemented and the Borough should consider needed improvements to the area's transportation system during implementation of the Borough's Village District Regulations.

4. Parking

- Major parking areas should be located to the side or rear of buildings. It is recognized that some service parking, loading and unloading may be required adjacent to buildings.
- Parking areas should be consolidated voluntarily by property owners to improve access and efficiency.

5. Streetscape/Landscape

- Tree strips should be preserved along Church Hill Road, Queen Street and the new collector. Street trees of native varieties should be provided at a minimum of 30 to 40 feet on center.
- Landscaping should be provided at the periphery and within parking areas in order to break up expanses of parking.
- Street trees should be provided in parking areas at a minimum of one tree per 300 square feet of area.
- Street furniture, benches, signage and other pedestrian oriented amenities should be incorporated into the plan to encourage drivers to park their cars and stroll around the area.

6. Implementation

In order to move the plan forward, an entity should be formed which can guide public improvements and encourage appropriate development. A public-private partnership should be formed of business and government interests to advocate specifically for the village center.

A special assessment district is another mechanism for funding improvements. Using this mechanism, businesses would be permitted to tax themselves for the funding of improvements which are in the common interest. As a broader incentive, the Town could offer tax relief through deferrals for improvements. Zoning incentives could also be effective. Density bonuses could be granted to businesses which provide for public amenities.

D. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Borough Zoning Commission and the Newtown Planning and Zoning Commission use the above materials as a reference when considering planning proposals for this area of the Borough. This information should be useful to the Borough's utilization of the recently adopted Village District Regulations as an additional tool to manage change.

IV. ACHIEVING THE VISION

FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

A. INTRODUCTION

The Future Land Use Plan illustrates the proposed pattern of conservation and development for Newtown. It recommends the most appropriate location and relationship of major land uses, including proposals for residential development; commercial development; business districts; industrial development; community facilities, conservation and open space areas, civic uses and institutional uses and special design districts. The Future Land Use Plan is a graphic presentation of the Town's vision for the future.

The attached Future Land Use Map provides a broad-based illustration of desired development patterns. It is based largely upon existing land use and development patterns, environmental and natural features, physical features, current zoning, planning analysis and the desires and vision of citizens and community stakeholders as expressed at public workshops and the numerous Commission meetings held throughout the plan update process.

B. NEWTOWN'S FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

About 30% of Newtown's land area, including some environmentally sensitive areas, is vacant land. The future use, conservation and protection of these areas, along with infill development along Newtown's commercial corridors and the redevelopment of brownfield and under-utilized properties can significantly impact the Town. In order to support and protect the quality of life envisioned as part of the Town's future, a balance between development, the conservation of open space and natural resources, and the preservation of the Town's historical and cultural resources is necessary. Protection of environmentally sensitive areas and the conservation of open space have been a major focus in the development of this plan update.

At the same time, it is recognized that investment and development are necessary to address tax base issues and the economic well-being of the Town and its residents. A balance between conservation, preservation and development is a primary focus for future land use issues in Newtown. The achievement of a balance between these issues can be achieved by adhering to broad policies as well as specific goals and implementation strategies. POCD goals and strategies will guide the Town's development over the next ten years and beyond.

C. POCD GOALS AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

The over-arching concerns for Newtown's future are focused on: the preservation of the Town's community character; the preservation and enhancement of the Town's open space and recreation resources; the creation of greenway linkages between open space and residential neighborhoods; the conservation and preservation of the Town's historical resources; the promotion of economic development to attract and retain businesses and to attain a more balanced tax base; the enhancement of Newtown's commercial corridors; and the promotion of community improvement activities in the Borough and the Sandy Hook village center as well as in the Hawleyville, Botsford and Dodgingtown hamlets.

The development of an updated Plan of Conservation and Development and its accompanying Future Land Use Plan serves to guide the Town's future development as an advisory and policy

Figure 10 – Future Land Use

setting document. Key to successful future development is the creation of zoning and subdivision regulations, design guidelines and implementation techniques which explicitly outline and enforce the vision for the Town, as set forth in the Plan.

The Future Land Use Plan contains a variety of land use categories which address location, density and current conditions. Due to the generalized nature of the Future Land Use Plan there may be individual parcels within an area where existing land use differs from the Plan's land use designation. As described above, the purpose of the Future Land Use Plan is to illustrate broad proposed patterns and relationships of uses and to present desirable land use patterns to guide future change. Existing land uses are not affected by the map.

D. RESIDENTIAL LAND USE CATEGORIES

1. Low Density Residential

Areas having a single family residential density of 2 or more acres per housing unit. These areas are found throughout the Town and have been developing primarily since the 1980's. The land in this category is currently zoned R-2 and R-3. The majority of the Town's remaining developable residential land is located within this land use category. Appropriate conservation design principles that emphasize the protection of open space and natural resource preservation should be incorporated as part of the development process.

2. Medium Density Residential

Areas having a single family residential density of ½ to 2 acres per housing unit. These areas are generally located within the Borough and along Newtown's older collector roads which were developed primarily between 1960's to 1980's. Most of this land is currently zoned R- ½ and R-1. Relative to the balance of Newtown, little vacant, developable land is available for future development within this land use category and in-fill development should be sensitive to neighborhood character and patterns, and provide for open space or community facilities needs and linkages.

3. Medium-High Density Residential (relative to Newtown)

Areas having a residential density of less than 1/8 acre to less than ½ acre per housing unit. This land use category can be found in the Borough, Sandy Hook village center, in some of Newtown's older lakeside neighborhoods and in the few multi-family areas of Town. Very little land is available for new development within this land use category.

E. NON-RESIDENTIAL LAND USE CATEGORIES

1. Industrial Uses

Industrial land uses include a variety of manufacturing and warehousing businesses located primarily along the Main Street South Corridor, along Commerce Road, Edmond Road, Barnabas Road and the intersection of Toddy Hill Road and Route 34.

2. Commercial and Office Uses

Commercial and office land uses include retailing and service businesses. These uses are primarily located along the Main Street South Corridor, within the Borough and along Commerce Road, in the Sandy Hook village center, in the Hawleyville, Botsford and Dodgingtown hamlets, along portions of Route 6 west, and in several other scattered locations.

3. Institutional Uses

Most of the institutional land uses located within Newtown are owned by the Town and include

uses such as schools, Edmond Town Hall and Public Works. Other institutional land uses include churches, cemeteries and fire stations.

4. Fairfield Hills- Town Owned

The Future Land Use Map identifies the area of the former Fairfield Hills Hospital that will be acquired by the Town. While the master plan for this area has not been completed, it can be anticipated that the core campus area will support a variety of future uses including a Town Hall, playing fields, community uses and limited economic development. The majority of the Fairfield Hills property to be acquired by the Town will be used as open space.

5. Parks and Open Space

Park and open space land uses include Town and State parks, as well as open space resources located throughout the Town that are owned by Newtown and private land trusts.

6. Private Open Space Uses

There are several significant open space land uses, including two golf courses and several private conservation organizations that are located across Newtown. The future continuation of these uses is important to the visual character of the Town.

7. Agricultural Uses

Newtown has a limited number of private agricultural uses. As is the case for privately owned open space, the continuation of these uses is important to the visual character of the Town. In addition, a significant portion of the former Fairfield Hills Hospital property is designated as an agricultural preserve.

8. Water Company Uses

Most of the former water company lands in Newtown have been purchased by the State for protection as open space. An important water company land use remains on Swamp Road.

F. DISTRICTS AND CORRIDORS

Several Districts, Corridors and Hamlets have been identified to bring a focus of action to the future development of these areas.

1. Main Street South Corridor Design District

This land use category encompasses Main Street South from Borough Lane southward to the Monroe town line. The purpose of this corridor district is to promote the development of a mix of uses including commercial, office, and service uses, and where appropriate, housing, to bring vitality and an uplifted visual quality to the Town's primary commercial area. The provision of linkages, both physical in terms of pedestrian, transit and vehicular linkages and functional in terms of shared usage and uses which complement future development should be encouraged in these areas.

Regulations need to be crafted that protect adjoining residential areas and areas proposed for open space protection that enhance the visual character and vitality of this corridor. Development proposals within this corridor should address the need for intersection and driveway improvements to Route 25.

2. Borough and Sandy Hook Village Districts

Support the development and implementation Village District Regulations for the Borough and the Sandy Hook village center that will govern the design of future development activities.

Encourage mixed-use development within these areas and incorporate landscaped public plazas and design features that create pedestrian friendly environments.

3. Hawleyville, Botsford and Dodgingtown

Newtown has three historical, mixed-use hamlets that add to the Town's community character and provide services required by the surrounding neighborhoods. These historical mixed-use functions should be reinforced. In addition, the Future Land Use Map reinforces the development of the Planned Commercial Development zone and Hawleyville Center Design District as one of the key economic development growth areas within Newtown.

4. Commerce Road / Edmond Road Employment Center

The Future Land Use Map reinforces the infill development of these important employment center locations near the heart of Newtown.

5. Route 34 / Washington Avenue Scenic Corridor

This six mile corridor, extending from the Sandy Hook village center to the Monroe town line, represents an opportunity to preserve an important visual asset of Newtown's community character. Nearly five miles of Route 34 have no commercial uses fronting on this State highway, a rarity in western Connecticut.

6. Route 302 / Sugar Street Scenic Corridor

This corridor, extending from the Bethel town line to the Monroe town line, represents an opportunity to preserve an important visual asset of Newtown's community character. Nearly five miles of Route 34 have no commercial uses fronting on this State highway, a rarity in western Connecticut.

7. Wetlands and Water Course Corridor Focus Areas

While not technically land uses, the land use map identifies wetlands and watercourse corridors. These are important natural resource features of Newtown's landscape and provide a focus for the management of future land use proposals that may affect the functioning of these assets.

8. Aquifer Protection Areas

This designation identifies critical water supply areas requiring protection from pollution by managing land use. The Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection is in the process of finalizing regulations that would limit the types of land uses that could be sited in a protection area that coincides with a well recharge area of an aquifer. The Town of Newtown has taken a proactive approach and has adopted zoning regulations limiting the type of development allowed over the Pootatuck River's sole source aquifer, as identified on the Town's Zoning Map.

VI. MANAGEMENT OF THE PLAN

This new plan presents recommendations for change that will lead to the Vision for Newtown. There are far too many objectives contained in this plan for any one entity to undertake. However the Vision will be achieved if each town agency takes ownership for those strategies for which they have the expertise, capability, and in some instances, the authority to implement.

The Planning and Zoning Commission has identified many town agencies whose role is critical to lead the evaluation and possible implementation of each strategy. In addition, generally one agency cannot fully evaluate or implement the result without the support of other town agencies and those outside of the town such as the Housatonic Valley Council of Elected Officials (HVCEO) and Housatonic Area Regional Transit District (HART). Therefore for each strategy, the Plan of Conservation and Development shows both the leading agency as well as others whose support is needed. Each leading partner will involve these and any other required supporting agencies in such a way as to achieve the best path forward.

On an annual basis, the Planning and Zoning Commission will request that all “Leader” agencies provide a status report on their progress in implementing the sections of the plan for which they are responsible. This information will be compiled and made available to all town agencies that request status reports.

Following the receipt of these status reports, the Planning and Zoning Commission will invite representatives from the agencies to an annual meeting for the purpose of developing solutions to any barriers which may exist in completing work on the strategies. With the collective skills, resources, mutual support and authority of all the agencies coupled with the support and involvement of the people of the Town, Newtown will achieve the Vision.