A large American flag waves in the upper left corner against a clear blue sky with some light clouds. Below the flag, a waterfront scene is visible. In the middle ground, there are several two-story brick buildings with green roofs and windows. A white railing bridge or walkway runs along the water's edge in front of the buildings. The water is dark and reflects the sky. The overall scene is bright and sunny.

# WESTPORT

**2017 PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

**Planning and Zoning Commission**



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# WELCOME



Dear Friends:

This is the adopted 2017 Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) for Westport. The POCD was adopted by the Planning and Zoning Commission on September 28, 2017 with an effective date of October 22, 2017.

This document is meant to guide the town for 10 years, but in terms of conservation and resilience we are looking toward Net Zero 2050. We recognize that technology will continue to bring new and hopefully more beneficial information and we should remain flexible to meet our ever changing needs.

The POCD is an advisory document which is centered on the following three themes or strategies

- Conservation-related strategies - Things Westport wants to preserve or protect in the future (such as community character, historic resources, open space, water quality and our excellent schools, etc.).
- Development-related strategies - How to guide future growth or change (including Downtown, Saugatuck Center, Route 1, and residential neighborhoods) whether it be new development or redevelopment / improvement of existing sites.
- Infrastructure-related strategies - How to address the services / facilities Westport wants or needs to support the overall vision and/or quality of life in the community (including pedestrian improvements, traffic circulation, community facilities, schools etc.).

Implementation of the various POCD recommendations will help make Westport an even better place in the future. While the Planning and Zoning Commission will lead the way, implementation will be strengthened with the coordinated efforts of the Selectmen, town employees, businesses, business organizations, developers, boards, commissions, and the residents. We look forward to working with all of you in implementing this 2017 POCD.

Sincerely

Catherine A. Walsh, Chair  
Planning and Zoning Commission

## What About ...?

Boxes like these are located throughout the POCD to outline:

- emerging issues,
- new technologies, and
- potentially disruptive approaches to the way that Westport has typically addressed things.

During the term of this POCD, some of these issues may emerge to the point where Westport will re-evaluate some of the strategies in this POCD or other policies / programs of the Town.

## Goal Boxes

Blue boxes like these (triple outline) are used to identify goals in each of the policy chapters in the Plan of Conservation and Development.

## Blue Boxes And Sidebars

Blue boxes like these (single outline) in the main text and sidebars are used in the Plan of Conservation and Development to define terms, present data, explain ideas, and otherwise help readers with POCD concepts. The information in the blue boxes and sidebars is not necessarily a policy recommendation of the POCD.

## Sustainability



While sustainability has its own chapter in the POCD (Chapter 11), the concept of sustainability runs through many parts of this POCD.

This symbol is used in each policy chapter to identify how that chapter relates to the overall concept of sustainability for Westport.

# INTRODUCTION

# 1

## 1.1. Overview

---

Welcome! This document is the 2017 Plan of Conservation and Development for Westport, Connecticut.

A Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) is prepared and adopted by a municipality in order to establish a common vision for the future of the community and identify policies that will help attain that vision. While its key purpose and function is to address the physical development of a community, it will often address issues related to the economic development and social development. Under Connecticut law, the POCD is adopted by the Planning and Zoning Commission.

The goals and recommendations of the POCD are intended to reflect an overall consensus of what is considered desirable for Westport and its residents in the future. In order to understand that consensus, the Planning and Zoning Commission undertook a number of exercises to learn about what is important to Westport residents.

While the Plan of Conservation and Development is primarily an advisory document, it is intended to guide local boards and commissions about issues important to the community. The POCD can guide local priorities and provide a framework for consistent decision-making with regard to conservation and development activities in Westport over the next decade or so.



## 1.2. Evolution of Westport Plans

---

Westport has a history of preparing and adopting Plans of Conservation and Development and these plans have:

- influenced the current development patterns and land use regulations and in Westport, and
- helped guide the overall conservation and development of the community.

This Plan of Conservation and Development is the most recent of several plans which have been prepared for Westport over the years. Other plans were prepared and adopted in 1959, 1975, 1982, 1987, 1997, and 2007.

Each plan addressed the community needs and interests as perceived at the time. Yet, as the community has grown and developed over time, there have been notable shifts in Westport priorities and concerns.

In the 1950s and 1960s, as residential growth accelerated and school expansion costs were a major concern, the Plans looked at how to control residential growth and how to promote commercial development to expand the tax base and offset school costs. During this time, Westport was able to preserve some of the significant open spaces which residents presently enjoy (Longshore).

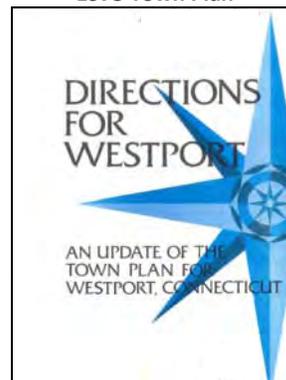
In the 1970s there was a shift away from the expansion of commercial development as concern grew over the changing community character and increased traffic associated with that philosophy. In addition, due to concern over the potential impacts of multi-family residential development, there was reduced emphasis on providing for such types of housing. School enrollments began to decline following the peak from the “baby boom”.

In the 1980s, there was a growing emphasis on environmental protection and a strengthened emphasis on neighborhood character as Westport became almost entirely built up. Changing demographics (“baby boomers” entering the house buying market) and economic policies resulted in rapid escalation of residential sale prices.

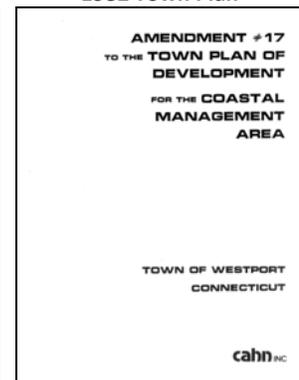
1959 Town Plan



1975 Town Plan



1982 Town Plan

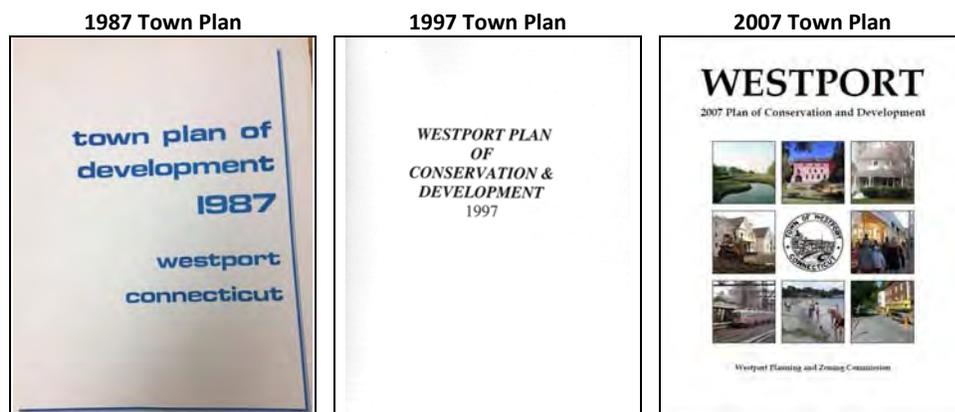


In the 1990s, the emphasis continued on conservation of natural and cultural features and maintaining the quality of residential neighborhoods and business districts. Due to the lack of building sites, people began to acquire older homes to replace them with larger homes. School enrollments again began to rise as older households who settled in Westport in the 1950s and 1960s were replaced with younger families.

After the year 2000, Westport completed upgrades to its educational facilities to accommodate the enrollment increase and address current educational programs. Replacement of older houses with larger homes continued and residents were concerned about the overall impact on community character and natural resources. There were numerous discussions about whether to adopt regulations regarding “teardowns” and “McMansions.” Concerns about escalating housing prices also emerged as a potential concern. Traffic volumes on local streets continued to grow.

In recent years, there have been land use applications for affordable housing and other developments which have been provocative and strengthened resident’s concerns about the changing character of the community. At the same time, the overall age composition of Westport continues to change and people’s interest in other housing options continues. Businesses in Downtown and elsewhere in Westport have seen the impact of “internet shopping” and the changing nature of commerce. Although “teardown activity slowed for a period due to overall economic conditions, the replacement of older houses considered obsolete with newer houses is clear evidence of the continuing desirability of Westport as a residential community. It certainly feels to residents like traffic volumes on local streets continued to grow. With growing attention to fitness and overall health, interest in sidewalks and bicycling became more evident.

Thus, it can be seen that Westport has prepared, adopted, and amended Plans to address the appropriate conservation and development of the community. It is in that spirit that this Plan was prepared.



### 1.3. Philosophy Of This Plan

---

#### Westport's Vision

Westport's vibrant downtown area and healthy commercial environment generate the feeling of a New England town with the conveniences of modern life, and this continues to attract people who are leaders in all facets of society.

Residents enjoy Westport's quality of life because of our commitment to conserve our natural resources, preserve our traditions, and support community events. We meet the recreational needs of our citizens by providing a wide range of leisure activities, and the town government offers quality services that are effective and efficient.

We recognize that our society's strength is based upon an educated populace and we devote proper resources to this endeavor. In keeping with our town meeting heritage, all citizens are encouraged to join in the civic dialogue with diverse opinions in order to fully explore and answer questions facing the town.

[westportct.gov](http://westportct.gov)

Overall, this Plan does not chart an entirely new direction for Westport. Rather, it seeks to build on the various assets that have attracted people to Westport for generations. This is what people have indicated they want – enhancing this beautiful place and making it better over time.

Themes from past Plans that weave through the various chapters of the 2017 Plan of Conservation and Development are presented below.

#### Plan Themes

*This POCD is a guide outlining Westport's approach to balancing social, economic, and environmental concerns in order to enhance the quality of life in, and the overall character of, Westport.*

*The POCD seeks to maintain the essence of what has made Westport a unique and desirable place to live while accommodating desirable changes after careful reflection.*

*Conservation of existing character and important resources is valued more in Westport than the promotion of new or expanded commercial or residential development.*

*The POCD is intended to be flexible about how specific goals and objectives are achieved while accomplishing the long-term goals of the community.*

*The POCD can only be effective in fulfilling the overall vision if strategies are put into action by the community.*

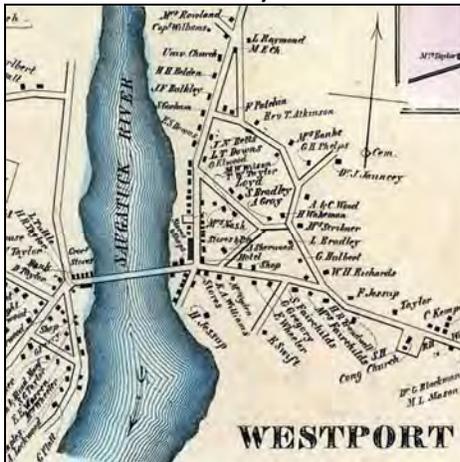
# CONDITIONS & TRENDS

# 2

## 2.1. Overview

This section of the Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) provides a general overview of conditions and trends affecting Westport at the time this POCD was being prepared.

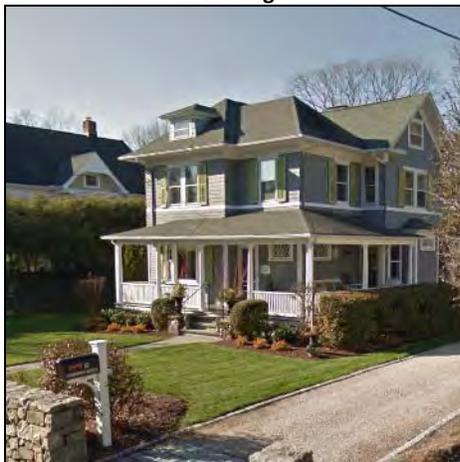
History



People



Housing



Economy



## 2.2. History of Westport

---

The area we now know as Westport was first settled by people of European descent around 1648. For the prior 10,000 years or so, this general area had been inhabited by Native Americans who hunted in the woods, fished in the sea and grew crops on the land. The first visual contact of Europeans may have come in 1614 when Dutch explorer Adraien Block explored Long Island Sound.

Between 1614 and 1648, Dutch and English explorers initiated trade with Native American tribes. Eventually, this led to the establishment of trading posts and settlements. The English settlements of the “new world” began in what is now Massachusetts while Dutch settlements began in what is now New York. Settlement of the area now recognized as Connecticut began in the 1630s at Windsor, Wethersfield and Old Saybrook.

Territorial and other disputes between the English, Dutch, and Native Americans created a sense of unease and eventually this boiled over into armed conflicts. Following the “Pequot War” with Native Americans in 1637 and the English capture of New Amsterdam (now New York) in 1664, this area came under consolidated control of English settlers. The area became known as “New England.”

Following the Pequot War, the first European settlements in this area began with the settlement of what is now Fairfield (1639), Stamford (1641) and Norwalk (1649). Around 1648, five Fairfield settlers became the first inhabitants of what we now know as Westport when they moved to an area of what is now Beachside Avenue and established their homesteads. As other families joined them, the growing settlement became known as “Machamux.”

In Colonial times, the church was main element of society and governance. When “Machamux” was part of Fairfield, settlers would travel to church and town meetings in Fairfield. This was a long distance in the days of horses and carriages, especially in inclement weather.

In 1711, the residents of Machamux successfully petitioned the General Assembly to create a separate parish with their own meetinghouse. This became known as “the West Parish of Fairfield,” with an initial membership of 270.

While the above arrangement lasted for over 120 years, the growing success of the port in Saugatuck, plus the interests of residents, combined to create support for the establishment of a new municipality.

A petition to the General Assembly was approved in 1835 and the Town of Westport was born. The name reportedly came from a blend of “West” Parish, and the “Port” on the Saugatuck River. Additional land from Weston was added in 1842 to create the community known today as Westport.

## Growth Of Westport

As new settlers arrived, land was allocated further and further out to accommodate them. Agricultural practices were not particularly efficient at the time and so each family needed a lot of land to meet their needs. Then, with the passing of generations, it was not always possible to divide the land among the heirs and so settlements expanded further afield as well.

Roads were established to access property and enable trade between settlers. River crossings were created on the Saugatuck River and other waterways to connect settlements along the shore. And, as the population grew, mills were set up on almost every available stream or river, in order to grind grains.

Around 1800, Westport became an active port because the Saugatuck River was navigable for quite a way up river. Westport became a center for trade in the region and a major supplier of farm products to the growing population in New York City. When the railroad came around 1850, it was proposed for the middle of the port area so that it would compete most directly with the maritime trade.

In the late 1800s, due to its waterfront location and rail access, Westport was considered a resort area and, after the turn of the century, it also developed a reputation as a haven for artists, writers and other celebrities. Population continued to grow, even during the “Great Depression” in the 1930s.

Following completion of the Merritt Parkway in the 1930s, Westport became more accessible by automobiles. Following World War II, the proliferation of the automobile and a desire for suburban living resulted in significant immigration to Westport. Residential developments replaced farmlands as people sought to blend urban employment with suburban living. Westport’s population grew from about 8,000 people in 1940 to about 12,000 people in 1950 to about 21,000 people in 1960, before peaking in 1970 around 27,000 people.

Although Westport’s population declined slightly from 1970 to 1990, a result of the aging of the population that had moved here in the previous four decades, the population grew again to 2010 as a result of demographic changes and housing development.

## Impact of Interstate 95

Since its opening in 1958, the Connecticut Turnpike (Interstate 95) has had significant impacts on Westport.

This roadway improved automobile access to Westport and took through traffic off local roadways.

On the other hand, the roadway also:

- split Saugatuck and the beach area from the rest of Westport,
- causes significant traffic jams on local roadways when I-95 backs up,
- negatively affects air quality, and
- increases the costs of emergency services responding to incidents.

Main Street



State Street



## Westport's Population

1840	1,803
1850	2,651
1860	3,293
1870	3,361
1880	3,477
1890	3,715
1900	4,017
1910	4,259
1920	5,114
1930	6,073
1940	8,258
1950	11,667
1960	20,955
1970	27,414
1980	25,290
1990	24,410
2000	25,749
2010	26,391
2020	25,775 – 26,214
2030	22,508 – 25,934
2040	21,810 – 25,654

US Census data for 1840 to 2010. High projections from Connecticut State Data Center. Low projections from Planimetrics reflecting local (rather than regional and/or statewide) migration patterns.

## Using Census Data

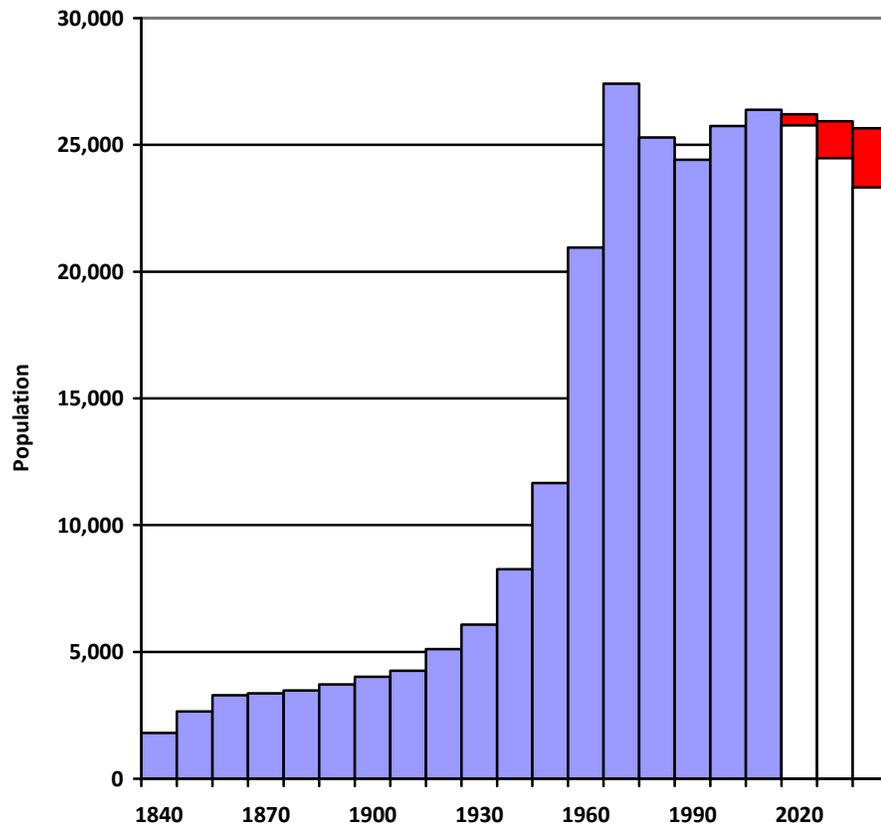
Some of the data used in this POCD is from the 2010 Census and this data is already seven years old. However, other available data sources are estimates based on small samples and the margin of error can be quite large. The POCD has used the data with the highest precision and it is intended that this data will be updated with current Census data when it becomes available.

## 2.3. Population Trends

After several decades of fluctuation, a population decrease is projected in Westport in the coming years if past trends continue. The decrease in the number of residents is likely due to:

- lower birth rates (especially in the economic downturn after 2007),
- fewer women of child-bearing age in Westport (due to slower in-migration after 2007), and
- an aging population (which tends to exhibit declining household sizes).

Of course, this projection could change if recent trends change. For example, population could grow (or the decrease could slow) if Westport attracts more young families with children (or births), retains more older residents, or the number of housing units.



## Components Of Change

Population changes over the next several decades are expected to result from:

- natural change (the number of births and the number of deaths), and
- net migration (the number of people moving versus the number of moving out).

As can be seen in the table below, there has been a pattern of net out-migration from Westport since about 1970.

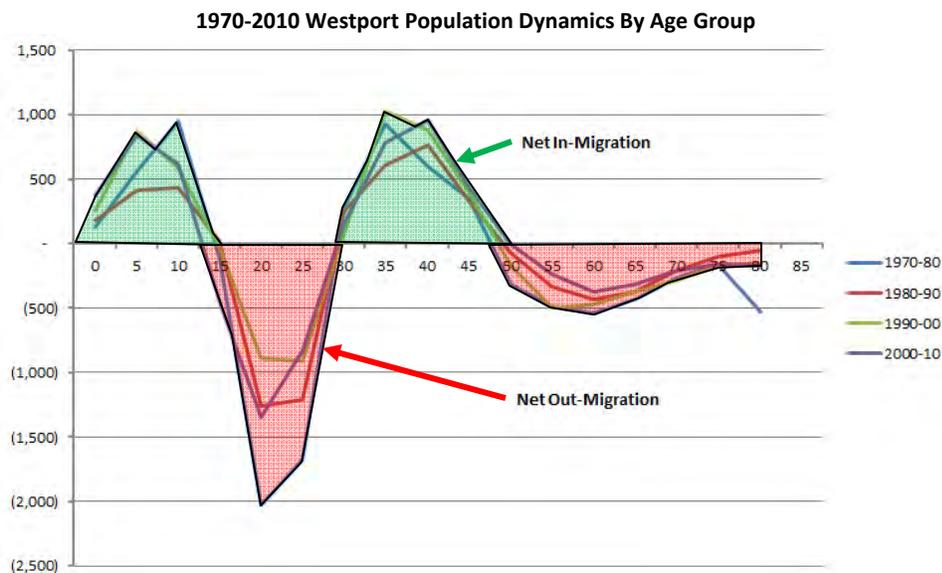
	1950s	1960s	1970s	1980s	1990s	2000s
<b>Total Change In Decade</b>	<b>9,288</b>	<b>6,363</b>	<b>(2,028)</b>	<b>(880)</b>	<b>1,339</b>	<b>642</b>
<b>Births</b>	3,218	2,850	1,671	2,050	3,178	2,570
<b>Deaths</b>	1,301	1,730	1,767	1,804	1,771	1,579
<b>Natural Increase</b>	<b>1,917</b>	<b>1,120</b>	<b>(96)</b>	<b>246</b>	<b>1,407</b>	<b>991</b>
<b>Estimated Net Migration</b>	<b>7,371</b>	<b>5,243</b>	<b>(1,932)</b>	<b>(1,126)</b>	<b>(68)</b>	<b>(349)</b>

Sources: US Census 1950-2000, Connecticut Department of Health 1950-2000

When looked at in more detail, it can be seen from the following chart that Westport has historically experienced:

- net in-migration of families (ages 30 to 50) with children (ages 0 to 15),
- net out-migration of young adults (ages 15 to 25), and
- net out-migration of older adults (ages 50 and higher).

This is part of the normal ebb and flow of a community like Westport.



Sources: US Census 1980-2000, Planimetrics

## Estimating Migration

Migration patterns are deduced by comparing the expected population in an age group to the actual count from the US Census.

The expected population is estimated by aging the population in each age group by 10 years, adding the number of local births, and deducting the number of deaths allocated by age group.

## What About ...?

*How will societal and working pattern changes impact future populations of Westport?*

*Will people continue to "commute" to and from Westport in the post WWII pattern?*

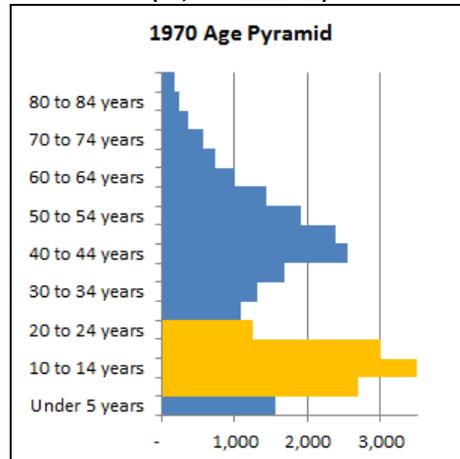
*Who should the Town try to attract in the future to assure appropriate demand for housing and services?*

*What is the role of autonomous vehicles?*

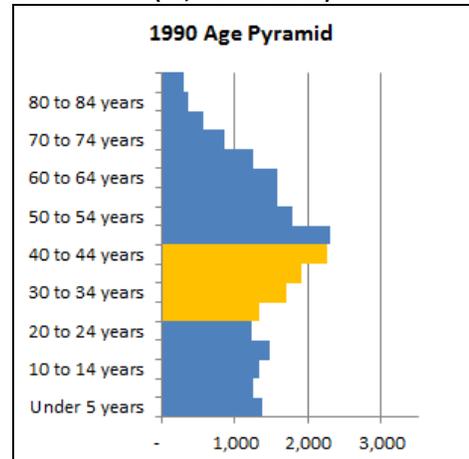
## Changing Age Composition

When these demographic trends are put into motion, the end result is a changing age composition of Westport. The following "age pyramids" illustrate how the age composition of Westport has changed over the years and how it is expected to change in the future if past trends continue. Each bar represents the number of people in that five-year age group. The orange bars represent "baby boomers" (people born between 1945 and 1965).

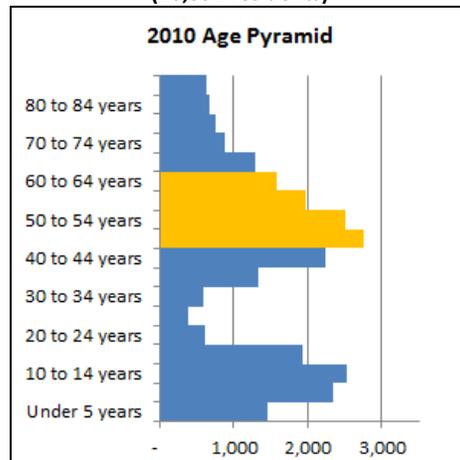
**1970 Age Composition**  
(27,414 residents)



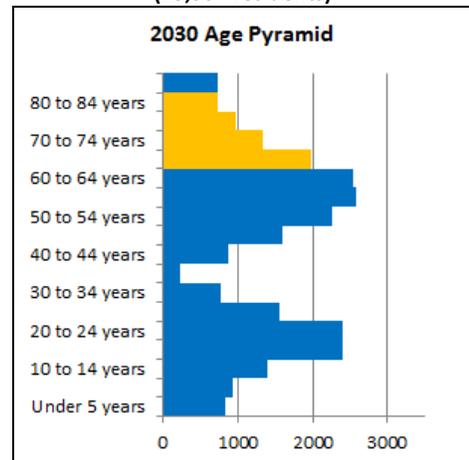
**1990 Age Composition**  
(24,410 residents)



**2010 Age Composition**  
(26,391 residents)



**2030 CSDC Projection**  
(25,934 residents)

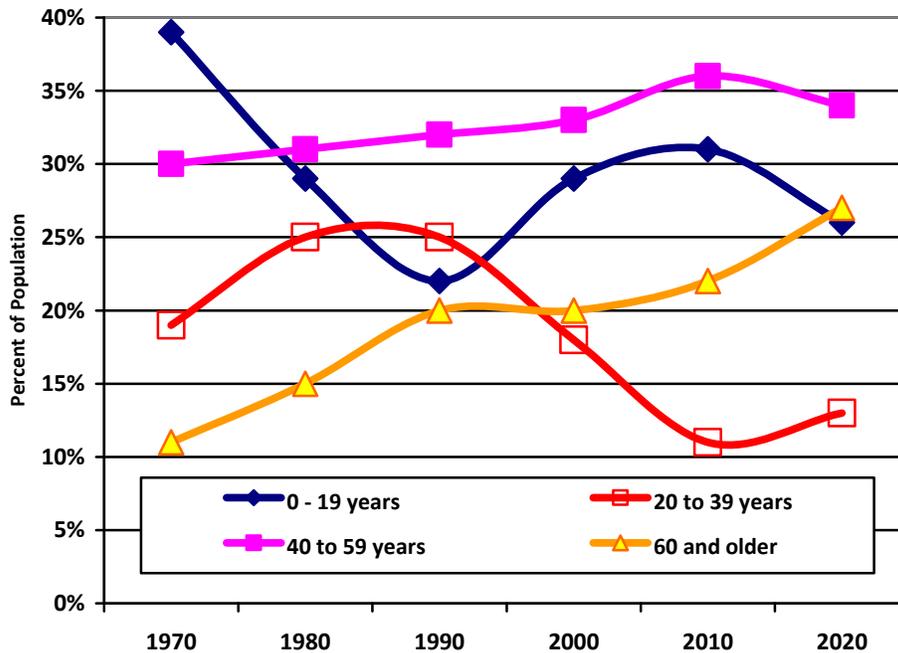


Breaking the population into 20-year age groups can help illustrate some of the changing composition patterns. As the following chart indicates, Westport has been a community where people aged 40 to 59 (the pink line) have been the largest age grouping on a percentage basis. This is likely part of the reasons for Westport’s reputation as a family-friendly and family-oriented community.

On the other hand, the number of people aged 0 to 19 (the blue line) has fluctuated as a result of the “baby boom” (people born between 1945 and 1965), the “baby bust,” and the “baby boom echo.” In the near future Westport may experience a “baby bust echo” as there are fewer women of child-bearing age and birth rates overall are lower.

The two key demographic trends are these:

- the significant drop in younger and early-middle-age adults (the red line representing ages 20 to 39) between 1990 and 2010 probably resulting from the “baby bust”, housing prices that may have made it harder for younger people to move to Westport, and overall economic conditions.
- The growing number of older persons (the orange line) as the “baby boom” generation swells the ranks of people aged 60 and over. Even though Westport has experienced net out-migration in these age groups over the last several decades (more people moving out than moving in), the large number of people “aging” into these age groups means that it will grow significantly in the future.



Sources: US Census 1960-2000, Connecticut State Data Center

Westport needs to consider how these changes will affect the community and how to address it.

**Percent Single-Family**

Weston	97%
Darien	93%
<b>Westport</b>	<b>92%</b>
Wilton	91%
New Canaan	84%
Fairfield	84%
<b>State</b>	<b>65%</b>
Norwalk	53%

2010 Census

**Median Sales Price**

<b>Westport</b>	<b>\$1,000,000</b>
New Canaan	\$1,000,000
Darien	\$1,000,000
Weston	\$863,200
Wilton	\$809,500
Fairfield	\$575,000
Norwalk	\$406,600

CERC

**Affordable Housing As Defined By Statute**

Norwalk	12.3%
<b>State</b>	<b>11.6%</b>
Wilton	3.9%
Darien	3.4%
<b>Westport</b>	<b>3.1%</b>
New Canaan	2.6%
Fairfield	2.3%
Weston	0.1%

CT Department of Housing, 2017

See Chapter 10 for additional information about affordable housing.

## 2.4. Housing In Westport

According to the U.S. Census, Westport had about 10,400 housing units in 2010. Since 1990, housing growth has slowed significantly in Westport to about 28 units per year. Prior to 1990, Westport had been building an average of more than 70 units per year.

The housing stock in Westport consists primarily of single-family detached homes. As a result, the vast majority of homes in Westport (85%) are owner-occupied.

Local housing prices reflect:

- Westport’s location within the New York City region,
- train service into Lower Fairfield County and Manhattan,
- the recognized quality of the local school system, and
- the tremendous amenities available in the community.

Residential lot sizes in Westport vary from two acres or so in the northern areas of the community to smaller lots in older neighborhoods and shoreline areas.

**Housing Units**

<b>1980</b>	9,119
<b>1990</b>	9,841
<b>2000</b>	10,065
<b>2010</b>	10,399

US Census

**Housing Tenure**

	Own	Rent
<b>Westport</b>	85%	15%
<b>State</b>	68%	32%

2010 Census

Historic Homes



Smaller Beach Area Homes



In-Town Neighborhoods



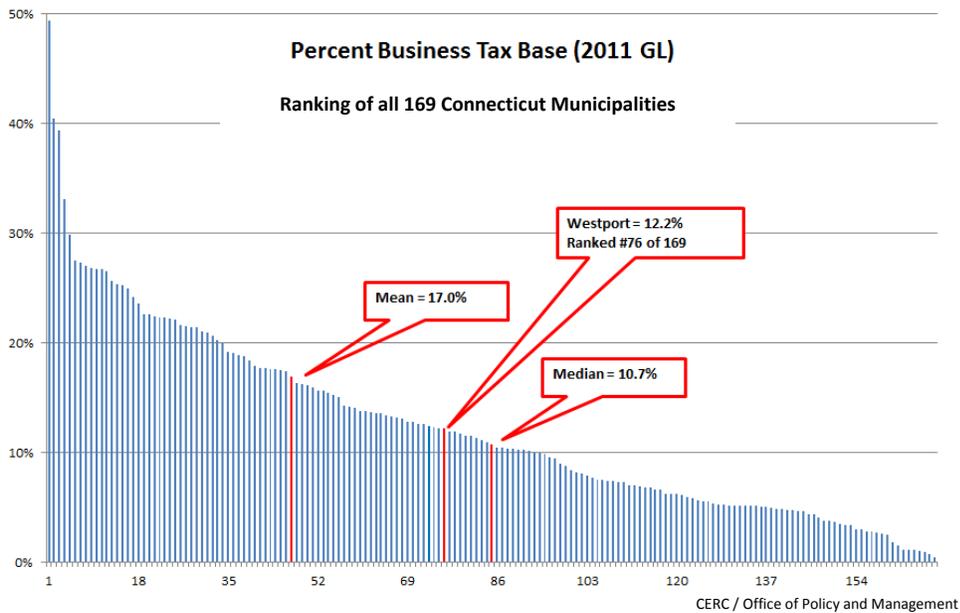
Rural Homesteads



## 2.5. Economy of Westport

Westport can be considered an employment center since there are more jobs in town (over 16,000) than people in the labor force (about 12,000). Although employment has dropped below the peak around the year 2000, there are still a strong number of jobs in Westport and this supports the local economy.

Since Westport is predominantly a residential community, the Grand List (the value of taxable property) is heavily influenced by the value of residential real estate. According to data from the Connecticut Economic Resource Center, the business component of the tax base is about 12.2 percent. It is important to Westport to maintain a strong tax base with a solid business component.



### Jobs In Westport

1970	7,960
1980	13,090
1990	15,260
2000	18,120
2010	16,258

CT Labor Dept.

### Jobs

Norwalk	45,063
Fairfield	25,183
<b>Westport</b>	<b>15,503</b>
Wilton	12,239
Darien	8,093
New Canaan	6,462
Weston	1,269

CERC

### Business Tax Base

Norwalk	21.6%
<b>State</b>	<b>17.0%</b>
Wilton	13.7%
<b>Westport</b>	<b>12.2%</b>
Fairfield	10.4%
Darien	7.3%
New Canaan	4.4%
Weston	1.1%

CERC

Providing Employment



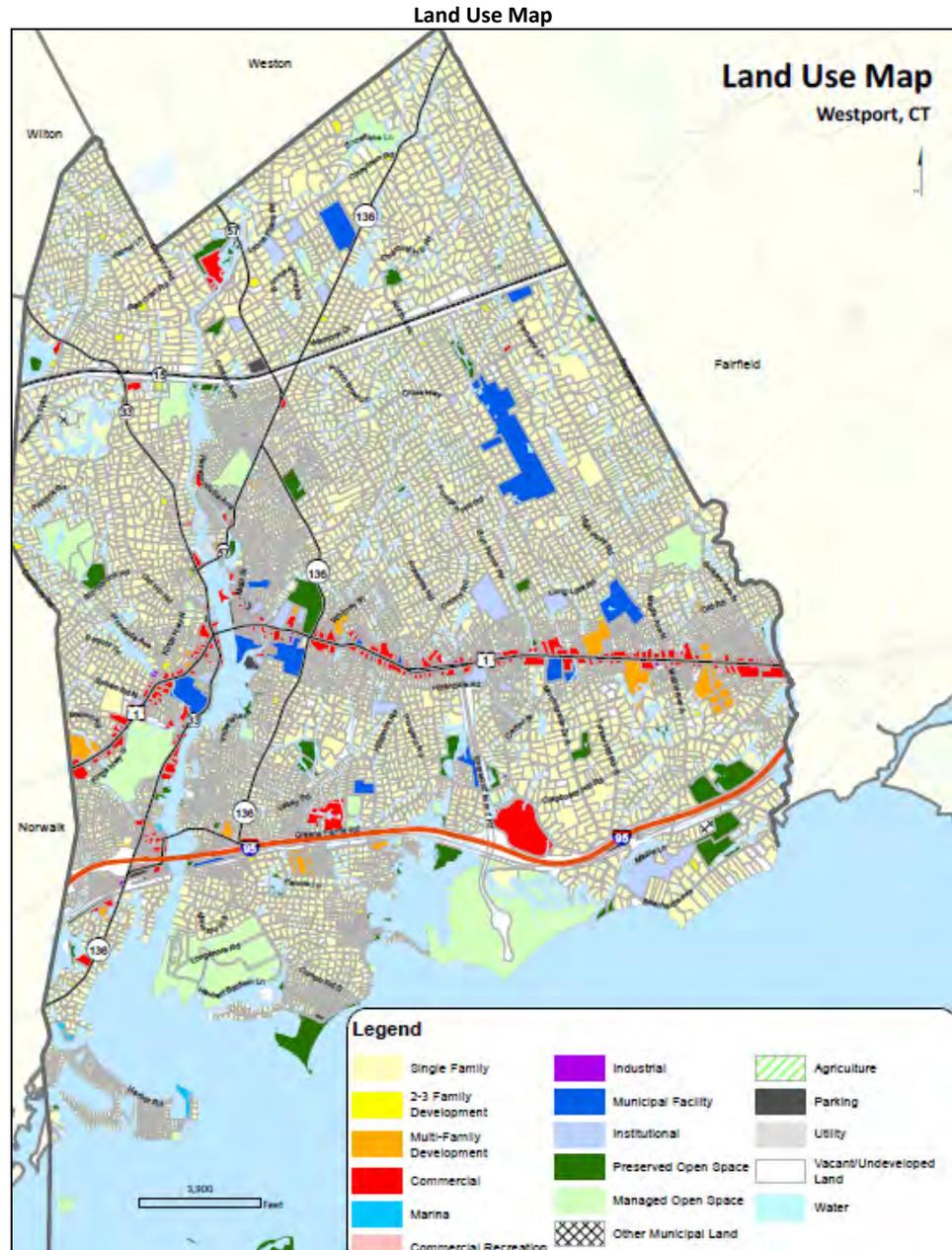
Providing Goods and Services



## 2.6. Land Use In Westport

Based on the assessor's database, most of the land in Westport is:

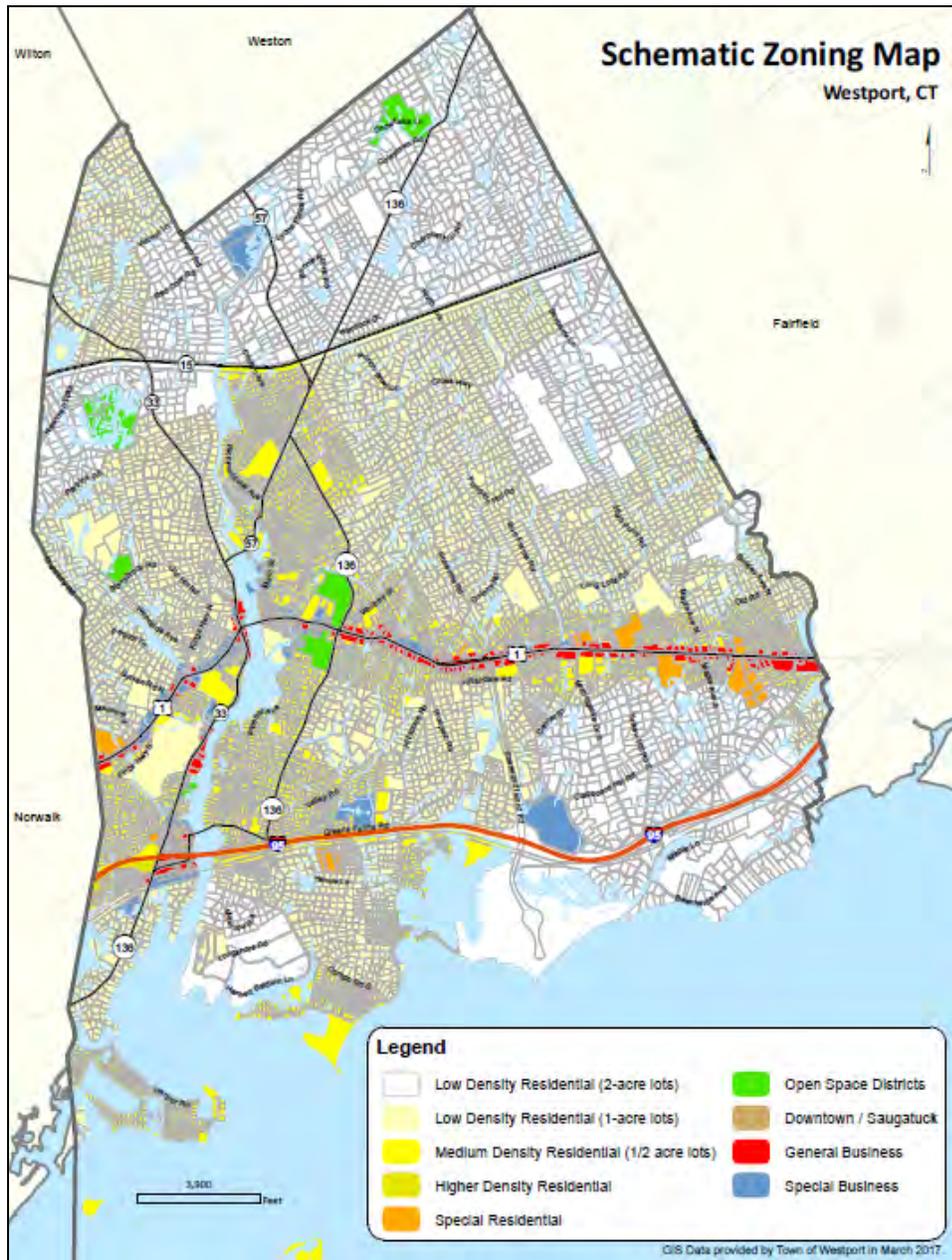
- developed for residential, commercial or other purposes, or
- committed to open space or other use.



## 2.7. Existing Zoning

Based on analysis of the zoning map:

- about 95 percent of Westport is zoned for residential use (mostly single-family residential use),
- about four percent is zoned for business uses, and
- about one percent is zoned for other uses.



## 2.8. Fiscal Conditions

Fiscal conditions for Connecticut municipalities are going through a major change as the State seeks to reduce state payments and push state costs to municipalities. This issue is likely to continue during the planning period and will place greater importance on communities growing their tax base and adjusting services to what residents are willing to pay.

Westport's overall grand list (the value of all taxable property in the community) was over \$11.0 billion in 2016. On a per capita basis, Westport's tax base (\$537,102) is robust when compared to surrounding communities. On a per capita basis, Westport's expenditures (\$7,726) are higher than surrounding communities.

**Per Capita Tax Base (ENGL)**

Darien	\$574,088
New Canaan	\$560,589
<b>Westport</b>	<b>\$537,102</b>
Weston	\$345,341
Wilton	\$323,904
Fairfield	\$263,186
Norwalk	\$188,013

CERC

**Per Capita Expenditures**

<b>Westport</b>	<b>\$7,726</b>
New Canaan	\$6,980
Weston	\$6,733
Wilton	\$6,723
Darien	\$6,429
Fairfield	\$4,834
Norwalk	\$3,804

CERC

Westport's revenue raised from taxes is higher on a per capita basis than some surrounding communities. The effective tax rate (property taxes as a percent of estimated market value) is lower than many surrounding communities.

**Per Capita Tax**

<b>Westport</b>	<b>\$6,428</b>
Weston	\$6,105
New Canaan	\$5,972
Wilton	\$5,868
Darien	\$5,370
Fairfield	\$4,188
Norwalk	\$3,195

CERC

**Effective Tax Rate (% of market value)**

Wilton	1.81%
Weston	1.77%
Norwalk	1.70%
Fairfield	1.59%
<b>Westport</b>	<b>1.20%</b>
New Canaan	1.07%
Darien	0.94%

CERC

# COMMUNITY ISSUES / CONCERNS

# 3

## 3.1. Overview

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During the process of updating the Plan of Conservation and Development, Westport residents shared some of their issues and concerns about how the community has developed in recent years and how it might develop in the future. These issues and concerns were identified through:

- working sessions of the Planning and Zoning Commission,
- input from a community meeting devoted to hearing from Westport residents,
- responses to a survey of Town department heads and members of local boards and commissions,
- interviews with a number of local officials and interested persons,
- field trips around Westport, and
- responses to an on-line survey.

## 3.2. Setting The Stage

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At the community meeting in January 2017, participants were asked to think about things in Westport they were proud of or sorry about. Participants were asked to signify those "prouds" and "sorrys" by putting colored dots on a map and writing what they were thinking on a card so the results could be tabulated.

This same exercise was also conducted as part of the preparation of the POCD so the results can be compared and contrasted.

***“There is no power for change greater than a community discovering what it cares about.”***

Margaret Wheatley, American writer

## "Prouds" Over Time

There is a great deal of similarity between the placement of the dots on the maps in 2007 and 2017.

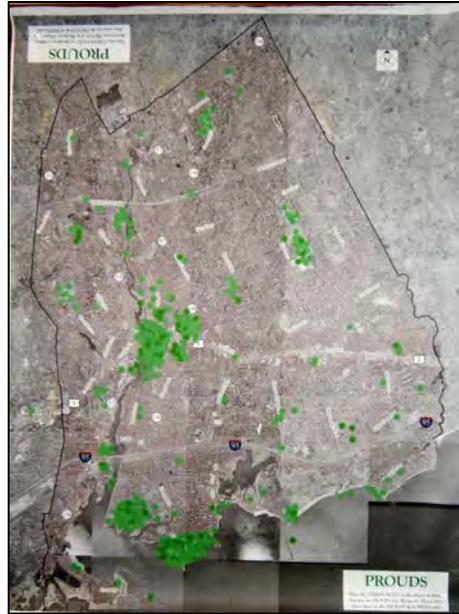
This suggests that the things that make people proud of Westport and they want to encourage are both:

- "sticky" in that they are persistent and enduring over time, and
- "resonant" in that they connect with a variety of people.

## "Prouds" Exercise

When asked to identify things in their community that make them proud, people tend to think of things in their community that provide happiness or satisfaction or that contribute to their quality of life or that make them feel good on a regular basis. Since these are things that a community might want to try to promote and accomplish, the "prouds" are things that Westport should try to **encourage** in the future.

2007 "Prouds" Map



2017 "Prouds" Map

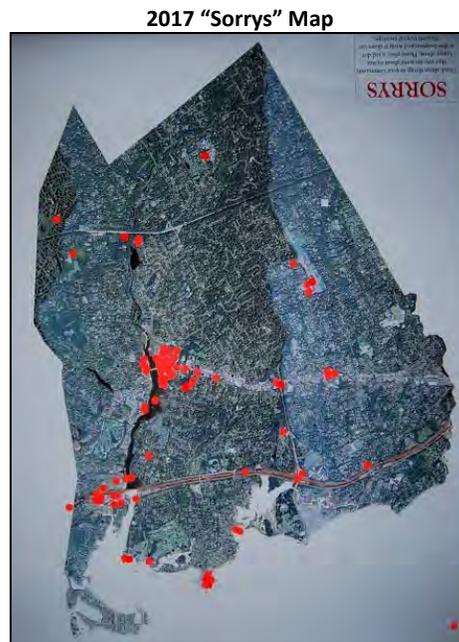
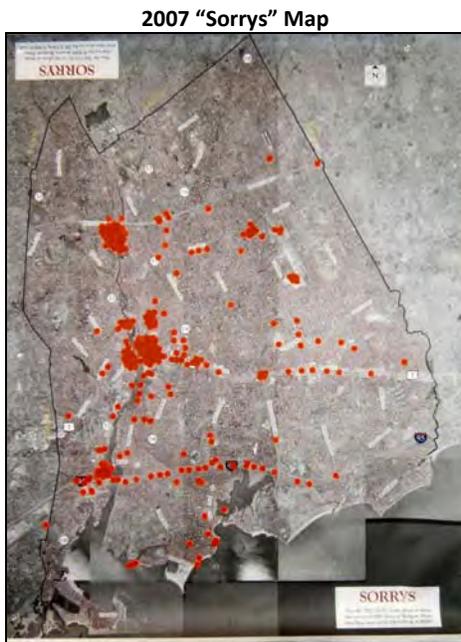


In summary, the things that Westport residents are proud of and that they might want to encourage in the future include:

- **Facilities That Enhance Quality Of Life**
  - Schools / Education
  - Compo Beach
  - Longshore
  - Library
  - Levitt Pavilion
- **Villages and Places With A "Sense of Place"**
  - Downtown
  - Saugatuck
- **Things That Enhance Community Character**
  - Coastal areas
  - Open spaces
  - Saugatuck River
  - Sense of community

## "Sorrys" Exercise

Similarly, when asked to identify things in their community that make them sorry, people tend to think of things in their community that irritate them or that detract from their quality of life or that make them feel that nobody is watching out for the best interests of the community. Since these are things that a community might want to try to avoid or prevent, the "sorrys" are things that Westport should try to **discourage** in the future.



In summary, the things that Westport residents are sorry about and that they might want to discourage in the future include:

- **Challenging Traffic / Circulation Issues**
  - Traffic congestion / problem intersections
  - Discourteous drivers
- **Annoyances In Downtown / Saugatuck**
  - Downtown / Main Street / traffic / parking
  - Saugatuck / traffic / parking (train)
- **Walking / Biking Challenges**
  - Lack of sidewalks
  - Unsafe bike lanes

## "Sorrys" Over Time

There are both similarities and differences between the maps from 2007 and 2017.

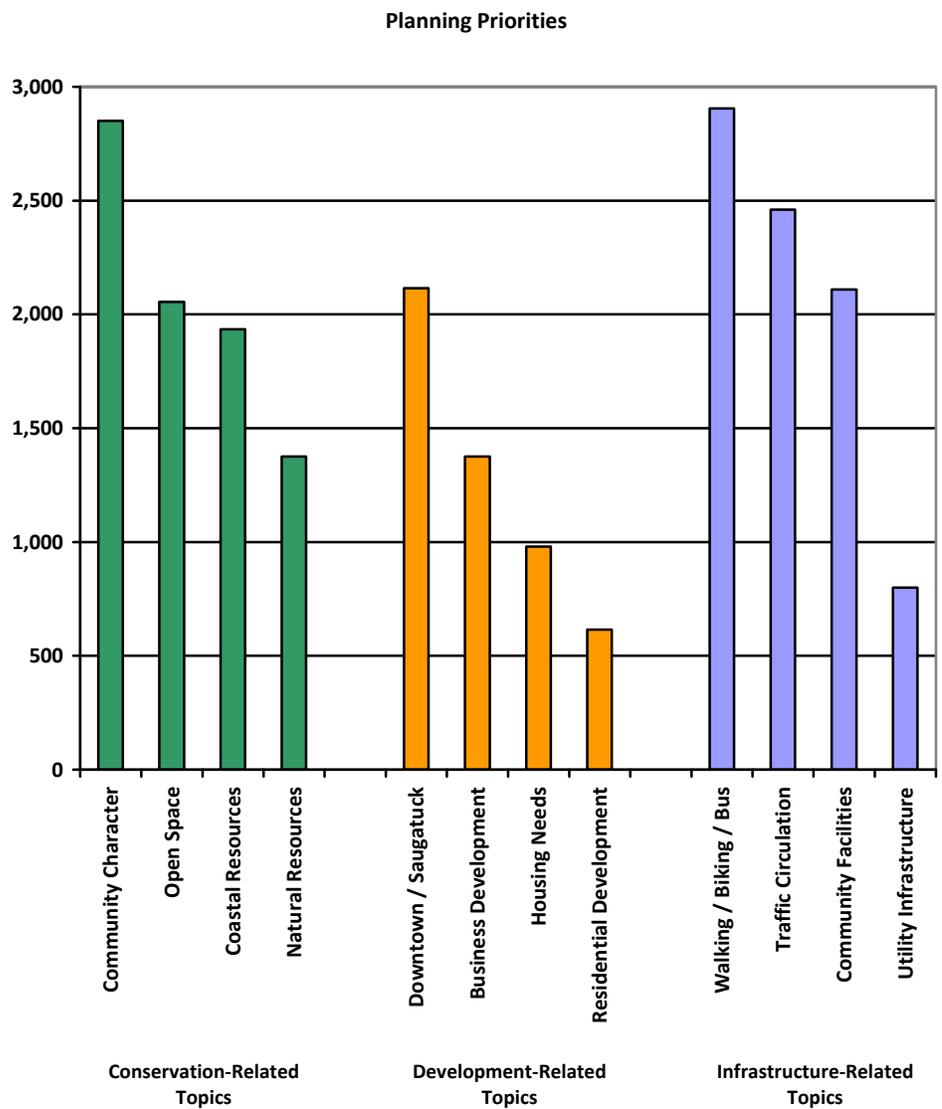
The similarities suggest some enduring issues or problem areas that the community may want to address.

The differences reflect how community issues and concerns can change over time. For example, an issue related to the relocation of the YMCA caused some discomfort to participants in the 2007 meeting.

### 3.3. Key Issues and Topics

As part of the community meeting (January 2017) and the on-line survey, participants were asked to identify the issues most important to them as part of the POCD update. If the results of these separate exercises are combined, the planning priorities identified as being most important to participants were:

- Walking / biking / bus
- Community character
- Traffic circulation
- Downtown / Saugatuck
- Community facilities
- Open Space



## 3.4. Other Input

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### Plan Review Meetings

To help guide this POCD update, the Planning and Zoning Commission met with their POCD consultant to review and discuss the various chapters in the 2007 Plan and other issues in the community.

### Mini-Surveys

With the help of Town staff, the POCD consultant distributed a survey to municipal department heads and a similar survey to members of local boards and commissions.

### Interviews

In addition, the POCD consultant interviewed a number of local officials and “stakeholders” to get insight into issues facing the community.

### Planning Program Survey

After the community meeting in January 2017, an on-line survey was conducted to learn more about residents feelings about current planning programs and possible future planning programs. Those results are reported in the individual chapters of the POCD.

Community Meetings



On-Line Surveys



### Additional POCD Guidance

In addition to following the general organization of the 2007 POCD, the Planning and Zoning Commission expressed a desire to improve upon the user-friendliness of the 2007 POCD by:

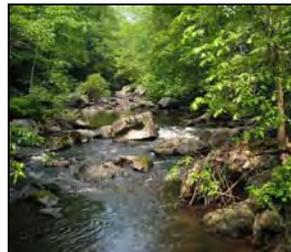
1. Crafting a shorter, well-illustrated POCD focusing on the key strategies for Westport going forward rather than being an encyclopedia of information.
2. Adding the Town’s overall “vision statement.”
3. Creating separate chapters for important topics so the strategies are easier to find rather than grouping topics together.
4. Using a logical numbering system to be able to refer to policies and programs.
5. Providing guidance in the event of conflicts between recommendations.
6. Continuing the implementation guides to identify who will be responsible for implementing each recommendation.

### 3.5. POCD Approach

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As part of preparing this POCD, the Planning and Zoning Commission reviewed the 2007 Plan (and the 1997 Plan) and came to the consensus that, overall, the 2007 POCD seemed to capture many of the things that are still important to Westport. The Commission concluded that the 2017 POCD should primarily be an update to reflect the progress made in the past ten years and to address current issues.

In addition, the Planning and Zoning Commission decided to organize the 2017 POCD around the following thematic elements:



#### Things To Protect

- Things Westport wants to protect or preserve in the future (i.e. - natural resources, water resources, historic resources, and town character)
- These are “conservation-related” strategies



#### How To Guide Growth / Change

- How Westport wants to guide future growth or change (i.e. - Downtown, Saugatuck, Route 1 corridor, and residential neighborhoods)
- These are “development-related” strategies



#### Supporting Our Vision

- Services / facilities wanted or needed to support the overall vision and/or quality of life (i.e. - pedestrian improvements, community facilities)
- These are “infrastructure-related” strategies



#### Implementation

- Policies and action steps to accomplish the overall goals and objectives
- Who is responsible for implementing what and when