# Brookfield, Connecticut

## 2015 Plan of Conservation and Development - Draft

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## Acknowledgements

**Brookfield Planning Commission**

Jon Van Hise, Chairman
Arthur Kerley, Vice Chairman
David Frankel, Secretary
Geoffrey Hunton, Regular member
Linda Taylor, Regular member
Irv Agard, Alternate member
George Blass, Alternate member
Former Commissioners who participated

**Board of Selectmen**

Bill Tinsley, First Selectman
Bill Davidson, Selectman
Martin Flynn, Selectman
Former Selectmen who participated

**Other contributors**

Ryan Blessey, Chairman and other Zoning Commission members
Katherine Daniel, Community Development Director
Alice Dew, Chairman and other Conservation Commission members
Dennis DiPinto, Parks and Recreation Department Director
Parks and Recreation Commission
Sharon Fox, Chairman and other Inland Wetlands Commission members
Richard Groski and the Brookfield Housing Authority
Denise Hames, Assessor and her staff

Ralph Iassogna, Acting Superintendent and the Board of Education

Hal Kurfehs, Chairman and other Economic Development Commission members,

Rebecca Lollie and the Chamber of Commerce

Betsy McIlvaine and the Library Board of Trustees

Nelson Malwitz and the Water Pollution Control Authority commissioners and staff

Lou Memoli and the Brookfield Open Space Legacy

Jacqueline Salame, Robert Brown and other Historic District Commissioners

Ralph Tedesco, Director of Public Works

Michael Jastremski, Housatonic Valley Association

Candlewood Lake Authority

First Light Hydrogenerating Company

Paul Elconin and others from Weantinoge Land Trust

The Brookfield Craft Center

Carol Gould, Francisco Gomes and Mike Morehouse, Fitzgerald and Halliday, Inc.

Todd Poole and Darlene Wynne, 4ward Planning

Rebecca Augur, David Sullivan, Kwesi Brown and Kristen Braun of Milone and MacBroom

Joseph Lenahan and other staff of Fuss and O'Neill

Dave Hannon and Jonathan Chew, Housatonic Valley Council

of Elected Officials

And not least *all members of the public who participated* in meetings, workshops and online through EnvisionBrookfield.com and the town website.

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# I. Introduction to Brookfield and Plan Objectives

Brookfield is located in Fairfield County in southwest Connecticut. The town is bounded by New Milford to the north, Bridgewater to the east, Newtown and Bethel to the south, and Danbury and New Fairfield to the west. Brookfield is located about 55 miles west of Hartford, the State capitol.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Brookfield had a 2010 population of 16,452 people within its land area of about 20.4 square miles (13,040 acres). This is an increase of 788 people (5 percent) from the 2000 Census.

The pace of population growth, housing growth, and economic growth in Brookfield has slowed over the past decade compared to the 11 percent growth in the previous decade and the demographics of those growth sectors is changing. This Plan has been prepared to help evaluate growth and progress since 2002 and to recommend the most desirable avenues for both conservation efforts and development opportunities as we look toward the future.

The intended readers and users of this document include Land Use commission members (Zoning, Planning, Inland Wetlands & Zoning Board of Appeals), development and conservation commissions or organizations (Conservation Commission, Historic District Commission, Economic Development Commission, Chamber of Commerce), other elected officials (Board of Selectmen, Board of Finance, Board of Education). Developers and real estate professionals are also a potential audience.

Brookfield residents have participated via multiple formats in the creation of this planning document. This document is intended to update progress in key areas from the 2002 Plan of Conservation and Development (2002 Plan), reflect the consensus opinion of Brookfield residents on the direction for future conservation and development goals and present a set of strategies for reaching these goals.

## Brookfield's History and Regional Role

While Brookfield's landscape was formed over millions of years, human settlement of this area is believed to only have occurred within the past 10,000 years. After 1630, the Dutch and English began trading with Native Americans and this led to the eventual colonization of New England. The area we now know as Brookfield was first settled by Europeans shortly before 1700.

A separate ecclesiastical society (called "Newbury Parish" from a combination of the names of Danbury, New Milford and Newtown) was established in 1754 to shorten travel distances to church for the growing population. In 1788, the General Assembly authorized the Newbury Ecclesiastical Society to establish a new town called Brookfield after its first pastor Rev. Thomas Brooks. The first "meetinghouse" (church) and "town house" (Town Hall) were established in the geographic center of the community (at the present day intersection of Route 25 and Route 133).

Brookfield had very limited regional role while it was primarily a farming community. With establishment of a grist mill, saw mill, paper mill, an ironworks, cotton mills, lime and granite mines, and a few hat factories, Brookfield became more economically integrated with the region. This regional, and even national, integration continued with the arrival of railroads in the 1800s and the advent of the automobile in the early 1900s.

After 1950, Brookfield evolved into a community with the two regional roles we recognize today. First, social trends that made suburban living a desirable option for many people after World War Two resulted in Brookfield's development as a residential suburb. The construction of I-84 along the southern part of Brookfield in the 1960s accelerated this growth. Brookfield's role as a residential suburb is evidenced by the fact that, in 1990, 78 percent of Brookfield workers commuted to other areas for employment.

The second regional role (that of a business and employment center) evolved in response to local and regional population growth and Brookfield's strategic location at the confluence of I-84 and CT Route 7. In 1990, Brookfield had almost 1.25 jobs for every housing unit in Brookfield, the highest jobs-housing ratio in the region after Danbury. Brookfield's regional integration is also evidenced by the fact that about 60 percent of people who work in Brookfield come from other communities.

## Principles and Objectives of the Plan of Conservation and Development

The **basic principles** that formed the foundation of the 2002 Plan of Conservation and Development are

**Enhance Community Character** through preservation of important resources including natural resources, open space, historic resources, and community character.

**Grow Smarter** through improving the quality of development and managing the quantity of development

**Meet Community Needs** through improvement of community facilities and resolution of transportation and utility issues.

The 2015 revision to the Brookfield Plan of Conservation and Development retains these basic principles. Town's people have echoed these principles in comments made through EnvisionBrookfield* and during regular meetings and public hearings held on the revision to the document and the way forward for the town.

The **strategies** identified for focus subsequent to the adoption of the 2002 Plan were as follows:

- Establish a Village Center
- Establish Greenbelt System with Trails
- Promote Open Space Development Patterns
- Modify Zoning in the Federal Road Corridor
- Establish an Advisory Design Committee
- Address Infrastructure Issues
- Address Staffing Issues

Progress on these strategies is addressed in the body of this document.

# II. Conditions and Trends

## Demographic conditions and trends

### *Millennial, Gen X'ers and Baby Boomers – Age distribution*

The terms used to describe generations reflect the changing nature of our population. As the Baby Boomers begin to enter their 70's, Brookfield's population of "Empty Nesters" is growing. Like many New England small towns, population growth is most notable in the age groups 55-64 and 65 and older. The following data from the US Census and 2009-2013 American Community Survey 5-year estimates shows that this growth is also reflected in the proportion of Brookfield residents who are in the 55+ age groups. In the year 2000, 22% of Brookfield residents were 55 or older, whereas in 2010 28% of the total population comprised this age group. The 2002 POCD predicted that almost a third of all Brookfield residents would be elders by the year 2020.

The 2002 Plan of Conservation and Development predicted modest growth in school aged children, which was born out in the 2010 census data; however as a proportion of the population the greater growth of the older population segments overshadows these increases. The overall percentage of this youngest portion of the population has decreased from 29% in 2000 to 27% in 2010.

***Table 1.*** *Population Changes in Brookfield 1970-2013*

| Age groups | 1970 | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 | 2010 | 2013 Estimate |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **0-4** | 967 | 786 | 958 | 1,023 | 813 | 799 |
| **5-19** | 3,231 | 3,911 | 2,921 | 3,511 | 3,614 | 3,392 |
| **20-34** | 1,885 | 2,610 | 3,087 | 2,086 | 2,037 | 2,568 |
| **35-54** | 2,369 | 3,754 | 4,724 | 5,662 | 5,388 | 5,058 |
| **55-64** | 663 | 962 | 1,275 | 1,698 | 2,279 | 2,266 |
| **65+** | 573 | 849 | 1,148 | 1,684 | 2,321 | 2,531 |
| **Total** | 9,688 | 12,872 | 14,113 | 15,664 | 16,452 | 16,614 |
| **Growth rate over previous decade** | | 32.8% | 9.6% | 10.9% | 5.03% | |

*Source: 209-2013 American Community Survey 5-year estimates*

***Table 2.*** *Age groups as a percentage of total population 1970-2013*

| Age groups | 1970 | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 | 2010 | 2013 Estimate |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 0-19 | 43% | 37% | 28% | 29% | 27% | 25% |
| 20-54 | 44% | 49% | 55% | 49% | 45% | 46% |
| 55+ | 13% | 14% | 17% | 22% | 28% | 29% |
| Total | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |

*Source: 209-2013 American Community Survey 5-year estimates*

The data discussed below is represented in a graphic drawn from the Housing Study prepared by 4ward Planning for this POCD update. It compares population change by age cohort from 2000 to 2010 for a three county area, the Town of Brookfield and a 10-minute driving contour around Brookfield.

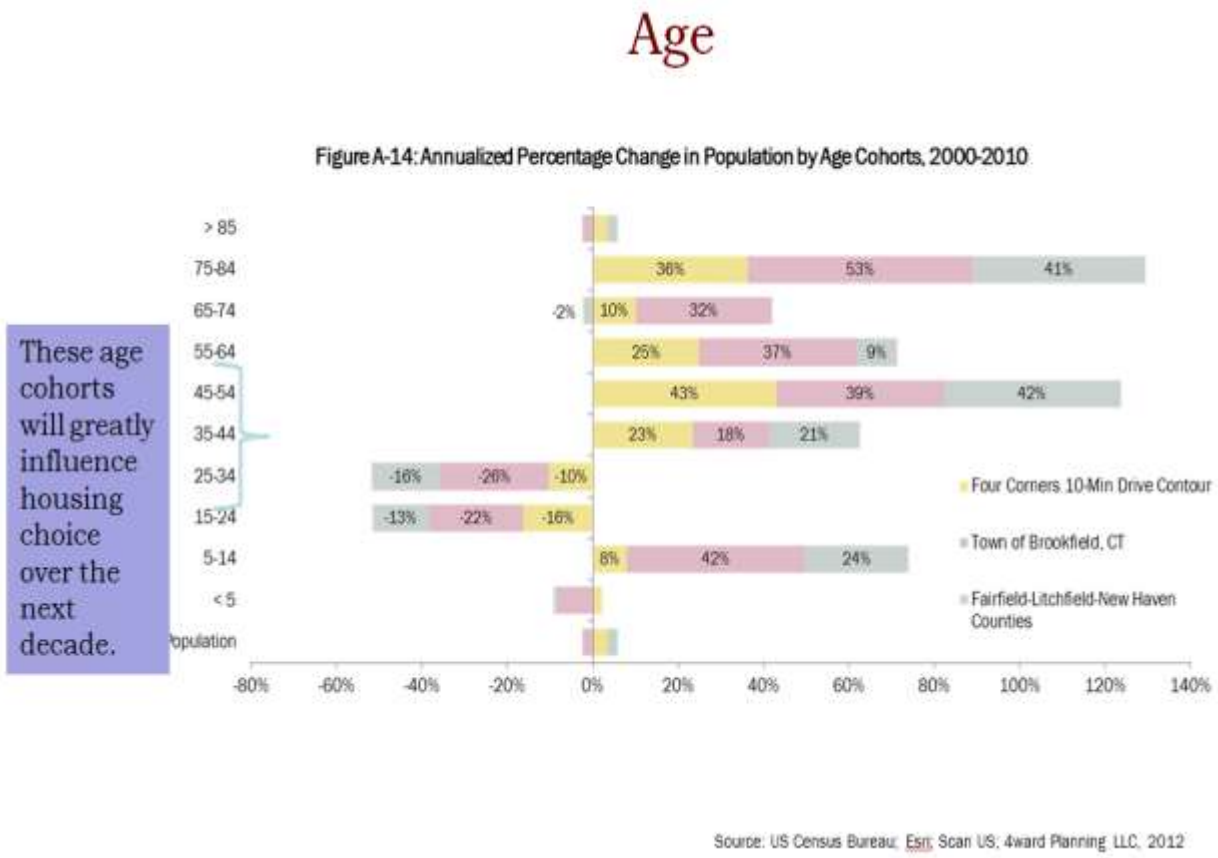


**Figure 1.** Annualized Percentage Change in Population by Age Cohorts, 2000-2010

Notably within the 65-74 year age cohort, there has been a 32% increase in this age group in the Town of Brookfield. The 75-84 year cohort also increased more in Brookfield from 2000-2010 than in the surrounding counties growing 53%.

By contrast, the growth of the sector of the population aged 20-34, the young adults, also termed Millennials having come of age at the turn of the 21st century, has remained essentially flat over the period 2000 to 2010 and the middle aged population dipped by several hundred in the same period. Overall the proportion of the population of Brookfield comprised of adults 20-55 declined from 49% of the total population in 2000 to 45% in 2010.

### *Household growth and income*

4ward Planning's market and real estate analysis for the Brookfield Four Corners Town Center Revitalization Study yielded the following key findings.

- Brookfield's median household income in 2010 was estimated at $108,210, notably higher than median incomes in the 10-minute drive contour ($81,274) and the region ($74,314). Growth in upper-income households is projected to increase through 2015.
- A high owner-occupancy rate is consistent with high incomes and educational attainment levels. Single-family housing in Brookfield has consistently stayed among the highest priced in the immediate region.
- Brookfield is experiencing greater growth in non-family households*, due to lower fertility rates and the overall increase of married couples choosing to have fewer children. *This term, non-family household, may appear to be a contradiction; however it means single person households or households of people unrelated by blood or marriage. These smaller households will influence housing choice (smaller units), as well as school budgets (fewer pupils).

The nature of households is changing in Brookfield, as it is in the rest of Connecticut. The number of households with children under 18 years old is decreasing from 41% of households in 2000 to 35% of households in 2011. In contrast, the number of households with someone over age 65 has increased over the last decade from 21% of household in 2000 to 26% of households in 2011.

***Table 3.*** *Changes in household composition from 2000-2013*

| Year | 2000 | 2010 | 2013 Estimate |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Housing units – Owner occupied** | 4,960 | 5,349 | 5,041 |
| **Housing units- Renter occupied** | 612 | 780 | 864 |
| **Total occupied units** | 5572 | 6129 | 5,905 |
| **Vacant** | 209 | 433 | 585 |
| **Total** | 5,781 | 6,562 | 6,490 |
| **Household size- owner occupied** | 2.88 | 2.77 | 2.83 |
| **Household size- renter occupied** | 2.16 | 2.06 | 2.67 |

## Impact of demographic shift on community services

These trends have implications for future services and community culture. As the population ages there is greater demand for smaller homes or condominiums that alleviate the need for yard and garden maintenance. The demand for programs for the elderly and the services provided by the relatively new Brookfield Senior Center are likely to increase in the next decade.

Similarly decreases in the school-aged population have implications for community facilities such as schools as well as services such as parks and recreation programs. The following graph illustrates the data from Table 1.

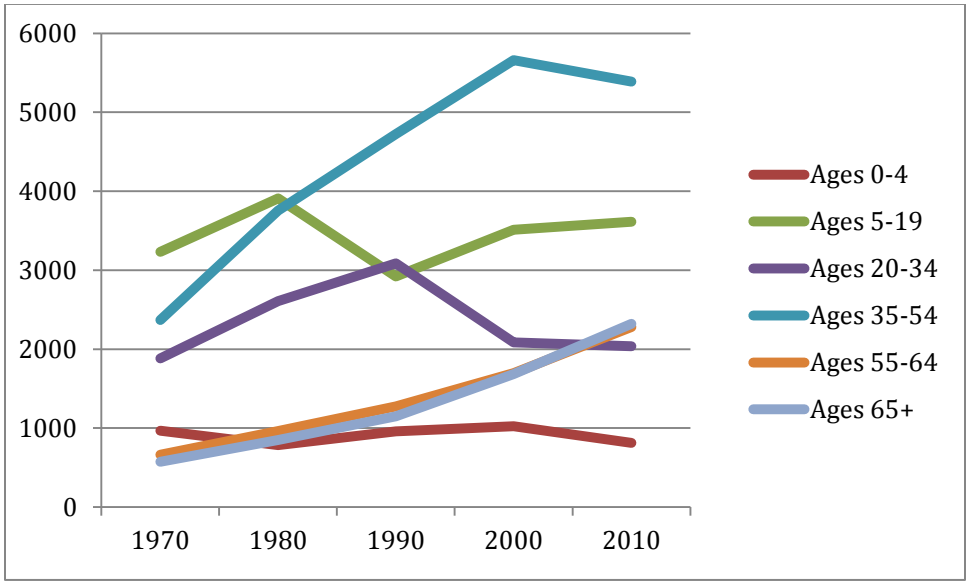


***Figure 2.*** *Population Changes in Brookfield 1970-2010* ***Source:*** *US Census*

A study conducted for the Board of Education to assist in educational facilities planning used a build out analysis and review of the housing market to conclude that Brookfield Public Schools may continue to face enrollment declines in the coming decade. Milone and MacBroom, the consulting planning and engineering firm from Cheshire, CT, concluded that due to population and housing trends, enrollment yields from recent developments, and limited build-out potential, there will be fewer new enrollments in Brookfield schools than there will be graduates

Although housing permit activity decreased in 2008, it began to rebound in 2011 and 2012, causing housing sales to rebound in 2012 as well. However, in Brookfield single-family housing has consistently stayed among the highest priced in the immediate region.

Milone and MacBroom estimated the rate of new school enrollments for each new housing unit, including single-family homes, townhouses and apartments. Newly constructed single-family housing is not currently in high demand, but there is potential for turnover of existing homes in the next ten years. These three- and four-bedroom homes generate the most school enrollment. Rental housing, which in Brookfield is concentrated on the western side of town, tend to have smaller student yields than single-family detached dwelling units. Using recent new housing construction as a metric (including age-restricted units at Newbury Village), one student was added to the school district in 2013-14 for every 13 new housing units.

# Housing Conditions and Trends

## *Relative Cost of Housing in Brookfield*

Socio-economic trends that influence housing availability and cost were evaluated in the 4ward Planning Housing Study. The study found that while growth in population and household formation has remained relatively flat and is forecasted to remain so into the near future, a number of demographic indicators suggest *there is a need to increase the supply of affordable housing stock in Brookfield*. The relevant demographic indicators include the following:

- Nearly half of all renter households are cost burdened, spending more than 30 percent of their income on housing.
- Strong growth in non-family households (typically, these are small one- and two-person households which opt to rent, rather than own their homes) suggests a likely increasing demand for small, affordable rental units.
- The fast-growing segment of Brookfield's population 55 years of age and older, retired or near to it, that there is a need for affordable housing choice attractive to those who want to downsize within their home community – again, a demand driver for smaller housing units, a good portion of which are rental
- The age groups under 55 are declining as a percentage of total population, suggesting that the supply of housing for these age groups may be inadequate or too expensive for young persons and families establishing households. Employer interviews indicate most younger, single and/or new professionals hired cannot, or choose not to, live in Brookfield – a possible affordability issue.

Balanced age demographics and housing that is affordable to a variety of income earners are two factors that contribute to the vitality of any community. Having a disproportionate population of any one group (classified by age or income), can impact the perception of a community and adequate provision of public services.

## *Future Demand in the Housing Market*

In the near term (the next seven years) and long term (beyond the next seven years), housing demand in the 15-minute drive contour and Brookfield area will likely come from within the demographic groups highlighted here. The 55-to-74 age cohort (empty nesters) will exert considerable influence on the type of housing developed, specifically smaller housing units, as they downsize from traditional single-family

units. As previously highlighted, this group is increasing as a share of the total county population.

To a lesser extent, young professionals (ages 25 to 34) may also influence the county's housing market over the coming years. While this age group is forecasted to decline slightly as a percent of the total population through 2018, they also typically seek small, affordable, rental units with convenient commutes to jobs or school, and thus, may be more likely to locate to a town that has such housing types.

### *Changes in numbers and types of housing units*

The number of total housing units has increased over the last decade; however the composition of households and household size is changing to reflect the changing demographics of our town. From the year 2000 to the year 2010 housing units increased by 10 percent, however rental units as a proportion of the total number of housing units has increased from 11% in 2000 to 13% in 2010 through 2012 based on estimates for those non-census years. This trend is likely to continue given the recent increase in multi-family, mixed-use projects approved for construction in the Four Corners area.

### *Affordable Housing*

Brookfield has been adding affordable housing units in the last three years through both the Affordable Housing statute and through the Incentive Housing provisions of the Connecticut General Statutes (CGS) as modified by the Brookfield Zoning Commission. A recent study commissioned for this Plan of Conservation and Development has added to understanding about the place of affordable housing in the residential market place and about what exactly "affordable" means.

Affordability is a relative term. The median income of a family of four in Brookfield in 2014 was $110,800. Incentive Housing regulations calculate affordable rents or sales prices and eligibility of families based on the Area Median Income. Our area includes Danbury, Ridgefield, Bethel and parts of Newtown. In 2014 the AMI was $113,600 for a family of four. Developers are required to price 20% of the total units to be affordable to families who earn no more than 80% of the AMI.

Affordable Housing as outlined in CGS 8-30g bases affordability on the State Median Income (SMI) ($86,600/year for a family of four in 2014) and requires that 30% of the total units be affordable to families who earn no more than 80% of the SMI. The Housing Study conducted by 4ward Planning puts these numbers in perspective with the market rate for housing, particularly the rental market.

The Incentive Housing statute also allows the town to locate affordable housing through the use of an overlay zone. Affordable housing statutes do not permit the town to designate the location for multi-family projects and they place a high bar allowing only safety and health as valid bases for denial by Zoning Commissions for zoning permits.

In 2015, Brookfield contains 1255 multi-family dwelling units of which 991 are condominiums, 88 are townhomes and 132 are apartments and 24 are single-family homes on common land (Carriage Homes on the Pond). In the last three years 416 apartments and 104 townhomes have been approved through the Land Use commissions predominantly through Incentive Housing overlay regulations. To date 236 of those apartments and approximately 90 of those townhomes have been substantially completed or have received Certificates of Occupancy.

Of the previously constructed multi-family units, only 35 apartments and 7 condominium units are affordable under the Affordable Housing, CGS8-30g method of calculation based on the State Median Income. There are also 10 single family homes constructed in an Affordable Housing (CGS 8-30g) development on Meadowbrook Road.

The State of Connecticut mandate for provision of affordable housing requires towns to work toward making 10% of the town's housing stock affordable using deed restrictions that last 30 years. The most recent Affordable Housing Appeals list is from 2012; it indicates that Brookfield contained a total of 6,562 housing units of which 2.12% were deed restricted as affordable units (55 units) or qualified based on mortgage type CHFA/USDA mortgages) or governmentally supported (Brooks Quarry elderly housing).

Brookfield is positioned to increase the number of affordable units through the construction of approved Incentive Housing projects. The multi-family units that have not yet been constructed are approved to contain 51 apartments and 3 townhomes designated as affordable based on the Incentive Housing units. Although this will nearly double the number of affordable units in Brookfield, the town will still fall short of the 10% threshold for exemption from the Affordable Housing Appeals list.

## Employment Conditions and Trends

Brookfield became a suburb for many during the development of residential suburbs in the 1960's. The view of the town as a suburb suggests that many Brookfield residents leave town to work. In 1990, 78% of Brookfield workers commuted to other areas to work. This continues to be the case for many today reaching 87% in 2011. In 2009, an

estimated 34,000 people worked within a 10-minute drive of the Four Corners of these 31,000 lived outside that 10-minute drive contour.

4ward Planning's housing study found that in 2012 a higher percentage of workers are commuting to jobs in Brookfield while fewer people are commuting out, causing the overall net job inflow to increase by over two percent. This trend indicates there are more employment opportunities in the Brookfield.

In the last decade some employers in Brookfield have consolidated and reduced the number of jobs in Brookfield, while other new employers have moved in. The American Community Survey 5 year estimates for 2011 indicate that Brookfield is home to 2,541 firms of which 672 had paid employees. Changes since this data was collected include a major reduction in Brookfield based Siemens employees and the construction of a new facility for Eastern Account System in Berkshire Corporate Park.

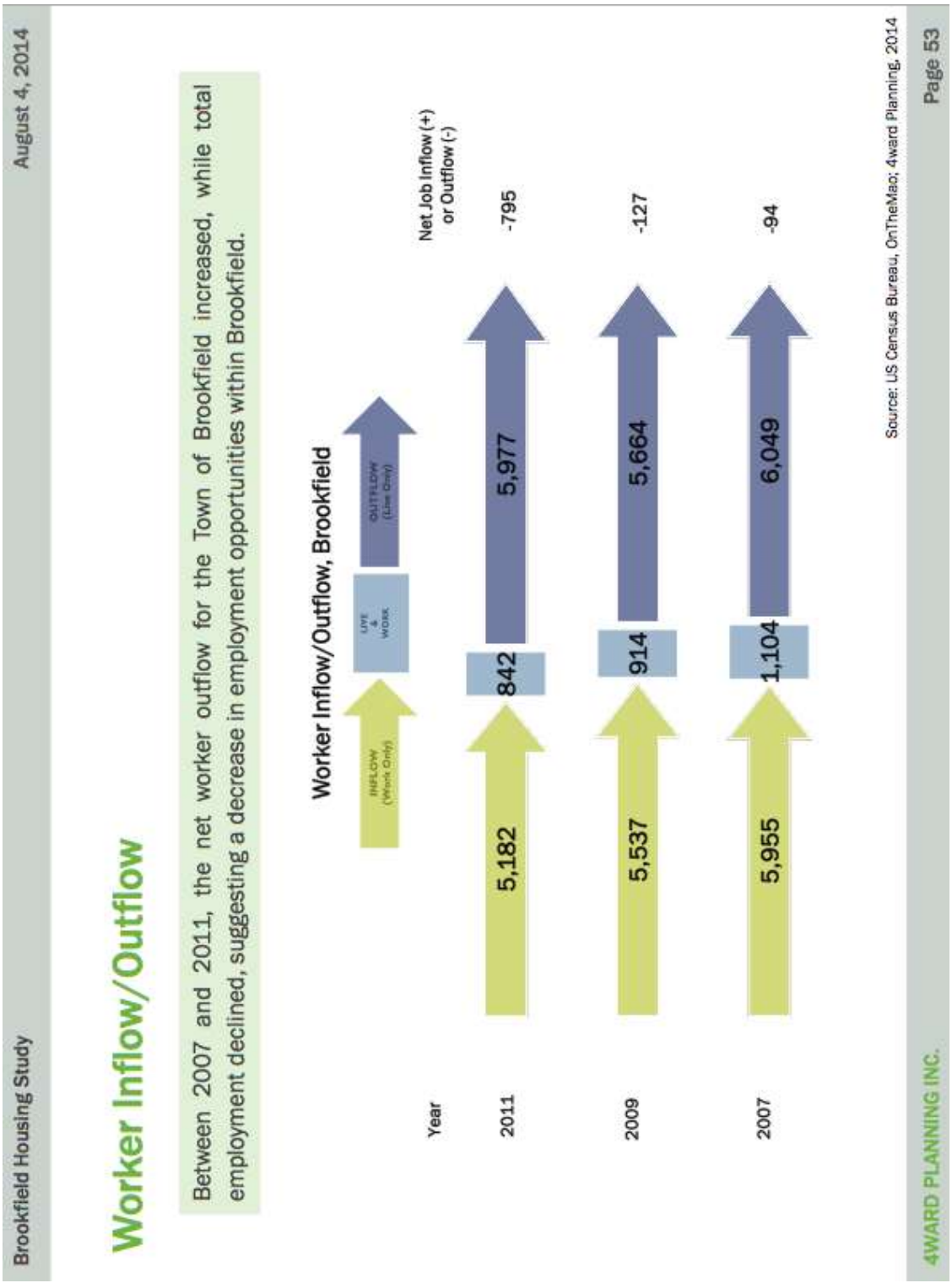


***Figure 3**. Worker Inflow and Outflow in Brookfield*

## Labor and Industry Trends

While the Tri-County Region surrounding Brookfield has recovered some employment losses resulting from the 2007-2009 recession, there are still 37,000 fewer jobs than before the economic crisis. Further, unemployment within the region, though down in 2013, remains persistently higher than pre-crisis levels. The regional trends, below, also impact demand for housing in Brookfield:

Between 2007 and 2012, a majority of industries (12 out of 20) within the Tri-County Region saw inflation-adjusted earnings decline. Representing more than 60 percent of regional workers, this decline in earnings equates to less spending power for housing, as well as other consumer expenditures.

The greatest employment growth is projected to occur within industries which, traditionally, offer relatively lower wages (e.g., Healthcare and Social Assistance, Retail, and Accommodation and Food Services), and whose employees are particularly in need of affordable housing.

## Real Estate Trends

The residential market within Brookfield and the surrounding area exhibits a tight supply of housing, with signs of growing demand over the coming years. With such strong demand and a shortage of inventory, the multifamily market, particularly for apartment-style units, is robust. This market potential suggests that concentrating this growth in the Four Corners will allow both the maximum absorption of this potential growth while maintaining the less dense suburban developments that attracted many to Brookfield to retain their character.

Based on modest household growth estimates, the housing market study forecasts Brookfield will be able to support demand for nearly 1,200 units over the next 15 years. Even with no growth, the Town could support more than 600 units over the next 15 years. Many of these 1,200 units are likely to be one- and two-bedroom units. Local real estate professionals confirm that 1,200 units is a reasonable, if not low, estimate for new housing construction in Brookfield, particularly rental product. This rationale is based on very high occupancy rates in existing multifamily rental properties (98 to 99 percent) and long waitlists; the age (30+ years) and quality of much of the rental housing stock; and demographic trends and preferences.

Based on population and employment trends, the study estimates 60 percent of the demand will be for rental units. Introducing more of this type of residential product to Brookfield will help balance Brookfield's aging population, by making it more attractive and more affordable to

singles and young couples just starting out. Without providing reasonable options to attract this segment of the population – through housing, jobs, retail, and leisure – Brookfield's population will continue to skew heavily toward the empty nester and retiree populations.

## Land Use Conditions and Trends

***Table 4.*** **2015 Brookfield Land Use/Development Potential**

| Use | Acres | No. of Parcels | Percent of Developed Land | Percent of Total Land |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Residential** | **6,590.74** | **5061** | **53.7%** | **48.8%** |
| Single Family | 6,494.55 | 5012 | | |
| Multi-family | 96.19 | 49 | | |
| | | | | |
| **Business** | **649.95** | **251** | **5.3%** | **4.8%** |
| Retail/Service/Office | 361.80 | 144 | | |
| Mixed use | 38.14 | 32 | | |
| Industrial | 250.01 | 75 | | |
| | | | | |
| **Public & Institutional Uses** | **326.01** | **59** | **2.7%** | **2.4%** |
| Public | 222.72 | 19 | | |
| Private | 103.29 | 40 | | |
| | | | | |
| **Public Land and Open Space** | **3,289.85** | **161** | **26.8%** | **24.4%** |
| **Dedicated Open Space** | **2,365.22** | **114** | 19.3% | 17.5% |
| TOB Open Space | 1,875.33 | 75 | | |
| Land Trust Open Space | 322.23 | 12 | | |
| Conserved Land/Private Open Space | 167.66 | 27 | | |
| **Managed Open Space** | **924.63** | **47** | 7.5% | 6.9% |
| State of CT Lands | 683.77 | 17 | | |
| Managed Land | 99.84 | 14 | | |
| PL490 Lands | 141.02 | 16 | | |
| | | | | |
| **Other** | **1,423.61** | **29** | **11.6%** | **10.5%** |
| Utility Land | 545.75 | 25 | | |
| Transportation | 73.00 | 1 | | |
| Water | 804.86 | 3 | | |
| | | | | |
| **Vacant** | **1,217.54** | **488** | | |
| Residential land | 852.51 | 414 | | |
| Commercial zones Total | 147.44 | 25 | | |
| Industrial Zones Total | 184.75 | 33 | | |
| Unbuildable Land | 32.84 | 16 | | |
| | | | | |
| **Developed/Committed** | **12,280.16** | | **100.0%** | **91.0%** |
| **Vacant/Underdeveloped** | **1,217.54** | | | **9.0%** |
| | | | | |
| **Total Land Area** | **13,497.70** | | | |

# III. Updating the Plan

The Town of Brookfield Planning Commission and Community Development Director have been working steadily toward updating the Plan of Conservation and Development over the last two years using an in-house approach. Until 2010, the commission alone had taken on the tasks of plan updates. Prior to 2010 a corridor study of the central portion of Federal Road was undertaken and after the role of town planner was established, a master planning effort focused on the village center development concept was completed. These two efforts mark the progress toward this more comprehensive updated 2015 Plan of Conservation and Development.

The 2002 POCD contained a large number of strategies, many of which have been accomplished. There are a number of significant strategies that have not been acted upon, but which are discussed in this 2015 Plan of Conservation and Development.

## Central Federal Road Corridor Study

In April 2008 Oswald Inglese completed a study of the roadway extending north from Route 133 (Junction Road) to the Route 7 interchange.

A review of the 2002 Plan of Conservation and Development was conducted to determine whether an amendment to the Plan was necessary to maintain viable and realistic development options and remain in accordance with the plan for properties south of the Route 7 interchange but north of the intersection of Federal Road with Route 133. The study reviewed land development criteria and standards in light of the physiographic characteristics of the parcels within the study area and did not recommend an amendment to the Plan in order to promote the transitional uses indicated in the Plan. The study concluded that the combined effect of land characteristics including factors limiting their development together with close adherence to existing land use controls will result in development that will closely approximate the goals and objectives of the 2002 POCD.

## 2012 Amendment of 2002 POCD: Four Corners Town Center Revitalization Plan

The Four Corners Town Center Revitalization Plan (the Revitalization Plan) represents an intensive planning effort intended to address one of the principle strategies of the 2002 Plan, the establishment of a village center. The Revitalization Plan developed a future scenario for the Four Corners and associated implementation steps to realize the master plan.

The Revitalization Plan outlines the goals and guiding principles that frame the overall study process for the Four Corners and articulate the community vision for the Four Corners and associated community input to the design of the Revitalization Plan concepts. The Revitalization Plan includes an overview of current physical and market conditions informing the design outcomes, a master plan and an implementation program. The Revitalization Plan was reviewed in public hearings in the Planning Commission and adopted as an amendment to the 2002 Plan of Conservation and Development by the Planning Commission. Although the 2002 Plan was not formally amended at that time, this updated plan formally includes the findings and master plan for developing a village center in the Four Corners/Town Center District based on the Revitalization Plan.

## Current Update Efforts

This update to the Plan of Conservation and Development has addressed the progress made since the 2002 Plan and addresses the changing face of the Town of Brookfield. The current update is intended to be more comprehensive in scope than the previous two targeted updates mentioned above.

The Planning Commission has led this effort utilizing resources available within our town rather than hiring an outside consultant to accomplish this. One rationale for conducting an in-house update to the POCD is based on the observation that a number of large-scale changes proposed by the 2002 Plan have been completed and an internal review of our progress on these strategies is in order. Secondly, particularly in the area of natural resource management and conservation objectives, the 2002 Plan set out a range of strategies to be employed and the past decade has allowed the town's residents and members of town government to evaluate which of these directions best suits the town residents moving forward into the next decade.

The Planning Commission has employed a number of strategies to incorporate the point of view held by residents and business owners into this new plan. The increase in online and social media to gather public opinion is noteworthy as a method for updating this plan with respect to public perception and objectives of residents. In developing this POCD, online surveys, workshops and focus group discussions were used as well as the traditional public meeting forum. Another tool available to the Planning Commission and the Community Development Director now is the up-to-date geographic information system or GIS, which has made the development of maps by town staff and the evaluation of geo-located data possible in-house.

# IV. Vision Statement

Residents' vision of Brookfield in 2025 includes "maintain[ing] the …country charm while modernizing" and protecting the quiet residential districts where Brookfield residents enjoy wide, well maintained streets that can accommodate neighborhood walks and bike riding. Brookfield has ten named open space properties apart from the more managed open space properties like the Town Beach and Cadigan Park or Kid's Kingdom and the sports fields at Town Hall. The vision includes enhancing recreational opportunities at Brookfield's parks and open spaces with open space planning for maintenance and trail establishment. In 2025 Brookfield residents envision better access to, enjoyment of and water quality in the Still River, Candlewood Lake and Lake Lillinonah.

The vision for the future of Brookfield also includes economic growth centered on filling out existing mixed-use, commercially and industrially zoned properties. Increasing the tax base is important to Brookfield residents' view of the future. Making the most of our highly educated workforce to promote new economy industry is important to our residents. Brookfield residents are aware of the gradual greying of our townspeople and understand that attracting young families and young professionals to live in Brookfield is as important as providing suitable housing for aging residents who would like to stay in town without having to maintain a single family home and yard.

Focusing development in areas with public infrastructure will allow the town to prosper while maintaining spacious single family home districts. The commercial corridor has been served by a comprehensive sewer plan that facilitates development and anticipates a reasonable growth rate. Public water service has been unified under a primary water supply company. Brookfield residents envision the addition of sidewalks, bike paths, commuter rail service and improved bus service to complete the multi-modal transportation system residents imagine in 2025.

The advances in public water and sewer service, in addition to the transportation improvements that have occurred since the last Plan of Conservation and Development in 2002, have paved the way for creating a pedestrian friendly village in Brookfield at the intersection of Whisconier Road and Federal Road. Brookfield residents envision this area developing differently than the convenience of large format shopping centers, wholesale establishments and light industrial uses on Federal Road south of Junction Road. The section of the corridor between Junction Road and the Route 7 interchange will be defined during the course of this planning period, but working together to finally accomplish the rebirth of a village in Brookfield at the Four Corners is central to Brookfield residents' vision for 2025.

# V. Achieving the Vision

## Community Character

### *Aspects of Brookfield's Character*

Of those who responded to the question "What sort of a town is Brookfield?" on the EnvisionBrookfield.com website, small town and suburb were the most common answers. Brookfield's history reflects these descriptors.

### *Farming history*

Brookfield's farming history underpins the values of open space preservation and conservation of structures that supported farm families. The motivation for restoring and utilizing the barn, forge and other farm buildings on the Gurski farm, although some of them were relocated there from other farms during the active period of the homestead, stems from a sense of Brookfield's farming past. Dairy farms in particular were a going concern for farmers here.

### *Religious origins*

Brookfield's Congregational Parish established by forbearers whose homes still stand in Brookfield Center formed the kernel of the town's origins. The importance of Brookfield's religious communities continues to influence the social fabric of the town.

### *Two small towns*

Brookfield Center and Ironworks were two small town centers that formed the hubs of community life in the 1800's to early 1900's. The power of the Still River at the Four Corners fueled mills and manufacturing, while the freight trains that provided rapid transportation for perishable farm products like milk and durable products like thread and scissors, made Ironworks the commercial center of Brookfield at that time.

Both Brookfield Center and the Four Corners area formerly called Ironworks continue to impart their unique characteristics to life in Brookfield.

### *Suburban growth*

As Danbury's economy grew, so grew residential subdivisions of Brookfield and surrounding bedroom communities. Two hundred and seventy-five subdivisions were developed between 1960 and 1990 with the greatest number of subdivisions (115) created in the 1980's.

The rapid residential growth that peaked in the 1980's supported rapid commercial growth extending the commercial corridor of Federal Road in Danbury. The infrastructure for sewer service to allow protection of groundwater resources took place after a good portion of the development had occurred. The delivery of public water to the commercial corridor has similarly lagged behind commercial development.

### *Centers of Culture and Celebrations*

A wide array of cultural events take place in Brookfield some long-time traditions, such as the Memorial Day Parade, and some more recent but equally well received, such as FarmFest and the Four Corners Block Party. There are theater events and art shows as well as centers for making art.

These celebrations and traditions help form the culture and character of Brookfield. Bringing the various groups of people in Brookfield together at these events can help strengthen the unique features of our town that both newcomers and families with deep roots here can appreciate.

### *Brookfield's Physical Character*

The historic buildings that remain in Brookfield lend character to our town. In particular the historic district in Brookfield Center is a focus of town pride. These primarily residential buildings centered on the several churches at the intersection of Whisconier Road (Route 25), Silvermine Road and Obtuse Hill Road (Route 133) exhibit the physical character of Brookfield's history.

The commercial buildings constructed in the southern Federal Road corridor represent franchise and big box architectural style. This contrasts starkly with the traditional New England architecture of many residential buildings both historic and modern and some buildings mixing commercial and residential uses in the Four Corners area. The Zoning Commission has addressed architectural style in three primary ways since 2002.

The Zoning Commission attempted to encourage traditional styling in commercial structures through architectural standards. An extensive technical section of the zoning regulations addresses architectural standards, nevertheless industrial and warehouse type buildings continue to dot the Federal Road corridor.

An Architectural Advisory Committee was established and applications for commercial development were referred to this committee for review for Special Permit applications. Due partly to time constraints experienced during the review/revision process, the committee was

sidelined in 2010. The ability of a developer to revise architectural elements of the proposal on occasion caused delays in the statutory time allotment for Zoning Commission decisions to be rendered. Committee positions were not filled effectively rendering the committee non-functional.

The most recent strategy for encouraging and commercial building design that supports Brookfield's New England character is focused on developments in the Four Corners area (the Town Center District and Incentive Housing sub-zones). Mixed-use development combining residential uses with commercial or office uses was made permissible in the Town Center District in 2010, but the form of these developments were not yet defined.

The advisory committee strategy is being re-employed by the Zoning Commission for consideration of projects in the Four Corners area and for Incentive Housing projects. A Design Guidelines and Standards manual was developed and made part of the zoning regulations to guide the architectural and landscape design in the Four Corners area. The process also includes a mandatory pre-application evaluation that includes an architect and a landscape architect as well as other relevant town officials (building, zoning, wetlands, health, sewer, fire)

This sort of review has become mandatory for Incentive Housing Zone (IHZ) projects or projects in the Town Center District, but a second, less formal Design Services Team was launched by the First Selectman in 2014. These pre-application reviews are flexible and may be conducted for any projects at the discretion of the applicant.

## *Community Character – Issues, Goals and Action Agenda*

Defining and promoting Brookfield's character, especially as relates to the Four Corners area, is important to attracting the middle and upper-middle class echelons of newcomers, both corporate and residential.

**Issue***: Supporting Brookfield's cultural institutions*

- Cultural institutions require community support to be viable enterprises.
- Volunteers are valuable resources and many of Brookfield's volunteers support multiple community endeavors, both governmental and not for profit.
- Supporting and promoting our cultural institutions requires new energy from newcomers, young people and those who might reconsider volunteering for a local organization whether civic or cultural.

**Goal:** Channel the many talents of Brookfield's residents into endeavors to improve our community through volunteer efforts.

**Strategies:**

| Section/Issue | No. | Strategy | Leader | Supporting Resources |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **ComChar1** | **1** | Encourage participation in town volunteer commissions. | BOS | |
| **ComChar1** | **2a** | Study the potential for and roadblocks to increased public participation in government boards and commissions. | BOS | |
| **ComChar1** | **2b** | Solicit participation from community residents for both governmental and not for profit community boards. | BOS | |
| **ComChar1** | **3** | Integrate training and professional development opportunities for volunteers into the support functions for all commissions. | CDD | |
| **ComChar1** | **4** | Designate a point person who will coordinate volunteerism for Brookfield governmental boards and commissions, and who will support volunteerism of community non-profits. | BOS | |

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## Issue: *ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER*

Many of Brookfield's historic structures have been demolished as the town's economic engine along southern Federal Road grew. Easy access to this commercial corridor occupied by successful large-scale businesses is also one of the reasons people like living in Brookfield. On the other hand, residents comment that the appearance of new development is becoming increasingly important to them. Some residents as well as some real estate professionals express the opinion that Brookfield's reputation as the location of big box retailers must be balanced with the development of a quaint New England aesthetic in the Four Corners and perhaps throughout the remainder of the undeveloped commercial core.

- The convenience and economical nature of large-scale retail businesses such as those on southern Federal Road in Brookfield is balanced by the franchise architecture most of these businesses are housed in.
- The architectural standards that apply to commercial and industrial zones in general in the Zoning Regulations and the newly developed Design Guidelines and Standards found in Appendix 3 of the Zoning Regulations are at odds. The Design Guidelines and Standards apply to the Four Corners area and Incentive Housing subzones, while the separate Technical Standards section on Architecture applies to all other commercial and industrial zones.
- Reconciling these can help define the physical character of future commercial construction throughout the commercial corridor. Clear expectations in terms of architectural features may improve developers' confidence about what type and quality of architecture is required for zoning special permit approval.

**Goal:** Make Brookfield's commercial corridor an architecturally appealing destination through continued attention to architectural character. Encourage consistent application of architectural standards for commercial projects that results in enhancement of Brookfield's architectural character.

## Strategies:

| Section/ Issue | No. | Strategy | Leader | Supporting Resources |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **ComChar2** | **1a** | Evaluate the use of a form-based code for new commercial construction and site plan modifications involving facades to achieve the goal. | ZC | ZEO, CDD |
| **ComChar2** | **1b** | Evaluate the revision of the existing zoning regulations for architectural standards in the commercial and industrial zones to achieve the goal. | ZC | ZEO, CDD |
| **ComChar2** | **1c** | Evaluate the applicability of the Design Guidelines and Standards for the TCD and IHZ zones to achieve the goal. | ZC | ZEO, CDD |
| **ComChar2** | **1d** | Reach a consensus on the role of architectural considerations in the approval of commercial projects. | ZC | ZEO, CDD |
| **ComChar2** | **1e** | Modify zoning regulations to define the architectural elements required to achieve the goal. | ZC | ZEO, CDD |
| **ComChar2** | **2** | Encourage consolidated development with shared access, parking and circulation. | ZC | ZEO, CDD |

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# Natural Resources

## *Introduction*

Protecting water quality is basic to the town's environmental health and to the health of many of Brookfield's residents. Water quality protection and improvement involves understanding the sources of pollution to both surface and ground water. The cumulative effects of our efforts to protect the water resources of our town are evidenced by the quality of water in the receiving waters, such as Candlewood Lake, the Still River and Lake Lillinonah and the ground water that supplies drinking water wells, both private and public.

Watershed based environmental planning supports both the appropriate use of the land and the effect of construction on the both surface waters and groundwater.

## *Inventory of Brookfield's Natural Resources*

One of the principle features of Brookfield that residents name when asked why they like living here is the landscape. Fields and streams, wooded space on large residential lots and open spaces of both upland and wetland, Brookfield's open space, public and private, contain all of these types of landscape.

### *Watersheds*

Brookfield is part of four principal watersheds, areas defined by topography that drain into surface waters. Upland areas drain to lower lying wetlands and watercourses. The principle watersheds in Brookfield are the Candlewood Lake watershed, the Still River watershed, the Housatonic River watershed and the Pond Brook watershed. These are depicted in Physical Conditions Map 2 titled Watershed Map.

The water quality of Candlewood Lake is affected by the dense residential development in the watershed. The Candlewood lake watershed in Brookfield is occupied by very dense residential neighborhoods that rely on septic systems for sanitary treatment of wastewaters. Due to the small lot sizes, increased impervious surface has the potential to negatively impact neighboring properties as well as the quality of the water in Candlewood Lake.

Brookfield has had in place for ten years zoning regulations designed to minimize additional run off from new construction in the Candlewood Lake Watershed District. These regulations had not been consistently utilized to limit the impact of new impervious surfaces to lake water quality or to neighboring property until 2010. Current enforcement

requires the use of best management practices in a storm water management plan to reduce run off volumes and to improve infiltration of storm water protect septic systems in the area.

## *Surface Water Resources*

### *Candlewood Lake and Lake Lillinonah Water Quality*

Recent toxic algal blooms in Candlewood Lake and Lake Lillinonah have grabbed the attention of Brookfield's leaders, the Director of Health and lake side residents. Another water quality concern in both lakes is the presence of Eurasian milfoil, an aquatic invasive plant species. Eurasian milfoil covers hundreds of acres of lake bottom and hampers the ability of swimmers and boaters to enjoy this natural resource. Algal blooms have periodically reached toxic concentrations putting recreation on Candlewood Lake and Lake Lillinonah beaches, among Brookfield's most important cultural and economic features, at risk.

The declining water quality in these lakes and rivers has been the focus of study and the object of efforts to mitigate the impact to those who swim or boat on theses water bodies. The Northeast Environmental study commissioned by the towns surrounding Candlewood Lake evaluated previously collected data and drew conclusions regarding causes of algal blooms and effects of lake drawdowns on the control of Eurasian milfoil. This study found that water quality trends in Candlewood Lake are a result of in-lake phosphorus being released from sediments.

Concerns about another invasive species, the Zebra mussel, have prompted the institution of a test program to wash boats before launching. Zebra mussels are not a serious problem in Candlewood Lake at the moment, but they have been found in limited locations in the lake.

### *The Still River*

The impact of pollutants carried in surface run off is a concern both in the lakes and in the Still River. The Housatonic Valley Association is engaged in evaluating non-point source pollution impacting the water quality of the Still River. Non-point source pollution refers to eroded sediments, toxic contaminants, nutrients and debris that originate from diffuse sources such as storm water runoff. The US EPA has reported non-point source pollution to be the number one threat to surface water quality nationwide. Numerous studies have established a direct relationship between the amount of impervious surface within a watershed and pollution of its surface waters.

The Inland Wetlands Commission (IWC) cooperates closely with the owners of Candlewood Lake and Lake Lillinonah, First Light Power

Resources, to coordinate permitting for activities within 200 feet of these water bodies. The federally mandated Shoreline Management Plan has become a primary source for management of the lands adjacent to the lake. The IWC also regulates activities 200 feet from the Still River in order to avoid both short-term and long-term detrimental effects of soil disturbance to the river and associated wetlands.

The Zoning regulations currently require the incorporation of best management, green infrastructure practices such as vegetated swales, bio-retention structures such as rain gardens and groundwater infiltration systems to protect Candlewood Lake from nutrient enrichment or contamination with excess fertilizers or suspended oils from driveways. These regulations currently pertain only to the Candlewood Lake watershed. The two other primary watersheds in Brookfield, the Still River watershed and the Housatonic (Lake Lillinonah) watershed are also impaired. Green infrastructure measures to provide primary water treatment for residential improvements will help protect surface water quality throughout our town.

### *Aquifers and Groundwater Resources*

Brookfield's groundwater resources are the source for both individual residential wells in addition to wells contributing to public water service. At the time of the 2002 POCD, no major water companies served Brookfield's businesses or residences. Aquarion Water Company has now acquired the larger water companies that previously split the town into the northern and southern service areas as well as many of the smaller ones. This change has resulted in better protection of highly productive wells located south of the Quarry. Further improvements in the application of existing zoning regulations for properties within the 1980's era Aquifer Protection District have strengthened protection of groundwater resources.

As a result of Aquarion Water Company's acquisition of Brookfield's smaller water companies, the productive Meadowbrook wells located in stratified drift (layers of sand and gravel deposited as the Ice Age receded) have come under the requirements of the State Department of Energy and Environmental Protection's Aquifer Protection Program. As mandated, Brookfield has created an Aquifer Protection Agency (APA) to register and regulate uses that have the potential for contamination of this vital source of water. The APA has adopted mapping of the watershed that flows toward these wellheads and adopted model regulations vetted by the CT DEEP that restrict uses of hazardous materials and outline best management practices for other uses.

This separate regulation of the 1980's era Aquifer Protection District by the Zoning Commission and the recent CT DEEP Aquifer Protection Area by the Aquifer Protection Agency may create some confusion for business. Bringing these two sets of regulations under one umbrella with one set of best management practices and prohibited uses is a further step to be taken for the protection of Brookfield's precious groundwater resources.

The quality of Brookfield's groundwater is generally quite good; however the presence of high levels of radium in some wells and the small water systems that serve multifamily developments has been a concern to the Brookfield Director of Health. Recent progress through the extension of the public water lines to these locations has alleviated this hazard for the residents of Sandy Lane Village and what other condo complex

## *Floodplains*

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) updated the Federal Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM) in 2010 and required updates to the floodplain regulations. These regulation changes now require compensatory storage for floodplain areas impacted by development to ensure the storage function of floodplains will remain intact.

The concurrent map amendment updated the Brookfield Zoning Map to reflect the Federal Insurance Rate Map changes. Brookfield's GIS maps also display the features and data included in FEMA flood maps. The FIRM is presented on Physical Conditions Map 4 titled FEMA Floodplain Map superimposed on Brookfield's parcels and streets.

## *Soils and Habitats*

### *Soils*

Brookfield enjoys a wide array of soils and habitats from wetland swamps such as the Hop Brook swamp and those wetlands around the Still River to upland stands of hardwood forest. These features have been mapped with the GIS in order to promote development that suits the soils it is supported by and to conserve the soil resources adjacent to developed land. Broad soil characteristics formed the basis of Brookfield's residential zoning in order to require larger lots on rocky, thin soils or wet and poorly drained soils.

The Inland Wetlands Commission has jurisdiction over activities that affect wetland soils and watercourses. This commission has improved the process by which significant projects are reviewed The practice of requiring a third party review of engineering for drainage and environmental reviews to ensure quality project design protective of

inland wetlands and watercourses has become standard practice. The Inland Wetland Commission has also revised their regulations to expand the jurisdiction of these regulations through the incorporation of the element of slope. These changes further protect Brookfield's sensitive wetland soil resources.

### *Natural Diversity Database and Habitat Mapping*

The State of Connecticut maintains a database that tracks rare and endangered plant and animal species across our state. This database is built from confirmed sitings of such species. Confirmation of many more sitings of State Listed Threatened or Endangered species was recorded during the construction of the Route 7 Bypass in the Still River basin. The Still River basin also contains forested floodplain habitat that the State of Connecticut recognizes as warranting particular protection. This recognition of the quality of the habitats still present in Brookfield reinforces the value of these natural landscapes, especially as they are in close proximity to development and major transportation arteries.

## *NATURAL RESOURCES – ISSUES, GOALS AND ACTION AGENDA*

**Issue:** ***SURFACE WATER QUALITY NEEDS TO BE IMPROVED.***

Surface waters become turbid or overloaded with nutrients when sediments or dissolved nutrients leach from residential lawns or discharge in storm water to streams and ponds. The 2002 POCD noted that sediments were entering surface waters when catch basins on public roads became filled with eroded materials that are not removed. The Department of Public Works prepared a Storm Water Management Plan in 2004 as required by the CT DEEP General Permit for Discharge of Storm Water from Small Municipal Storm Sewer Systems the goal of which is to improve surface water quality particularly in storm water runoff.

**Goal:** Improve surface water quality in Brookfield's lakes and streams so that toxic algal blooms or excessive growth of invasive aquatic plants does not inhibit recreational use.

## Strategies:

| Section/ Issue | No. | Strategy | Leader | Supporting Resources |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **NatRes1** | **1a.** | Require primary storm water treatment for new commercial, multifamily and mixed-use developments to minimize pollutants in post construction runoff from discharging into surface waters. | ZC, IWC | HD, WPCA |
| **NatRes1** | **1b.** | Consider requirements for "green infrastructure" techniques to treat storm water runoff for new residential projects adjacent to wetlands and watercourses throughout the town. | IWC | |
| **NatRes1** | **2.** | Consider the impediments to annual cleaning 1/3 of the catch basins along town roads; evaluate the means for overcoming them. | DPW | |
| **NatRes1** | **3.** | Conduct public education campaign to inform residents about lawn care practices and pet waste removal practices that protect water quality. | HD | |
| **NatRes1** | **4.** | Evaluate the Storm Water Management Plan and update practices related to storm water quality. | DPW | |
| **NatRes1** | **5** | Collaborate with the Housatonic Valley Association in its Still River Watershed project focused on non-point source pollution. | BOS | HD, CDD |
| **NatRes1** | **6** | Explore appropriate actions to ameliorate water quality in Lake Lillinonah and Candlewood Lake as discussed in the Northeast Environmental Study. | CLA, LLA | |

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### Issue: *HABITAT CONSERVATION AND RAISING AWARENESS ABOUT ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES*

The conservation of natural habitat and increasing awareness of the variety of ecological communities in Brookfield is a worthy endeavor.

Brookfield residents support the maintenance and improvement of our many open space properties providing a basis from which to improve understanding and appreciation for the wildlife and ecological systems in our back yards. An example is the transformation of the once closed canopy wooded wetland south of Brookfield High School. In the last seven years or so, this wooded swamp has become inhabited with a number of beavers, which are transforming this ecology before our eyes. This is both a challenge for the DPW, which has a maintenance garage adjacent to the swamp, and also a potential outdoor classroom for science classes.

The Still River Greenway plans include educational kiosks to inform walkers and bikers of the biology and ecology of the vernal pool wetlands and streamside areas the trails will travers. The understanding of our environment will improve support for conservation allowing Brookfield to build on its reputation for wonderful natural spaces. Supporting our commission members with educational opportunities in this area will help them apply the regulations and statutes with which they are charged, such as the review of the Natural Diversity Database, FEMA floodplain regulations and the Connecticut Wetlands Act.

**Goal**: Build awareness of the environment both through educational programs for students as well as educational programs for volunteer commission members.

### Strategies:

| Section/ Issue | No. | Strategy | Leader | Supporting Resources |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **NatRes2** | **1** | Develop a public education strategy perhaps in conjunction with the Brookfield Library for adults and children that addresses a wide range of environmental topics. | WEO | BL |
| **NatRes2** | **2** | Consider extending the opening hours and services of the Town Brush Dump. | DPW | |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **NatRes2** | **3** | Collaborate on development of informational signage for Still River Greenway in a manner that contributes students' awareness of environmental topics. | DPW, WEO | PRD |

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# Open Space Conservation and Preservation

## *INTRODUCTION*

Brookfield has focused recent decisions about open space on availability for passive recreation. There has been a focus on the provision of access for walking trails when open space parcels are donated to the town through the subdivision process. This interest for access has recently been balanced by open space acquisitions designated predominantly for conservation such as the designation of Old Bridge open space as a bird sanctuary and the designation of Erickson Farm Open Space as particularly focused on open field bird habitat.

## *PROGRESS SINCE 2002*

Among the principle accomplishments in natural resource planning in Brookfield since 2002 are the completion of the design and the securing of funding to construct the Still River Greenway. The Greenway will be a multi-modal trail connecting the existing trails south of the Town Hall across the Still River just north of Silvermine Road along a system of paved and boardwalk trails up to the Four Corners area. This trail will join with the sidewalk network in the Four Corners. (For more on the sidewalk network see Chapter 8 and Chapter 13)

Brookfield has more than doubled the amount of acreage held in permanently preserved open space since the completion of the 2002 POCD. The 2002 Plan reported 773 acres of Town owned dedicated open space and in 2015 the Town owns 1875 acres of dedicated open space. The Town has utilized the "fee in lieu of open space" provision in subdivision regulations to acquire key parcels. In addition the donation of some difficult to develop parcels has allowed the Town of Brookfield and the two private land trusts, Brookfield Open Space Legacy (BOSLI) and Weantinoge Land Trust to protect 114 parcels with a total acreage of 2,365 acres of dedicated open space.

## *OPEN SPACE PLAN – ISSUES, GOALS AND ACTION AGENDA*

### Issue: *GREENBELT TRAIL SYSTEM*

The development of the what the 2002 Plan calls the "Riverway" began as the inspiration of Arthur Harris who proposed the establishment of trails near the Still River in the 1960's. Trails were established in 1987-88 and by the mid-1990's the concept of a trail heading north to the Four Corners was discussed and endorsed by the town. In the 2002 Plan the extension of the trail system to the north after the Route 7 by-pass is reaffirmed.

One of the big accomplishments of the Parks and Recreation Department during the years since the 2002 Plan has been to fund the design and permitting process for a multi-modal trail called the Still River Greenway. The greenway plan connects the existing trails south of the Town Hall to a paved fully accessible trail to the Four Corners. The trail goes north bridging the Still River just north of Silvermine Road and continues along a system of paved and boardwalk trails up to the Four Corners area. The town received its first funds for the project from a State DOT grant in 2003, a grant that has grown into a project worth $2.2 million dollars of combined local and State funds.

The Still River Greenway will add 1.6 miles of trail suitable for bikes, inline skates and wheelchairs to the current 2.2 miles of woodchip paths. The Four Corners Sidewalk and Access Management plan connects the Still River Greenway to a network of sidewalks throughout the Four Corners area. Further development of walking paths along the Still River to take advantage of river views has yet to be developed.

The public outreach to develop this Plan of Conservation and Development included a survey about open space use and a workshop on the greenbelt system of trails presented in the 2002 POCD as the Open Space Plan. Consultation with Conservation Commission members and land trust representatives inform the re-evaluation of the ambitious greenbelt system and propose the development of an Open Space Improvement and Maintenance Plan as a central strategy for this planning period.

The Greenbelt Trail Workshop held in November 2014 had as its objective the evaluation of the connectivity, practicality and desirability of the greenbelt system of trails presented in the 2002 POCD.

Residents who took the online survey on this topic prioritized the "Riverway" trail, in part perhaps because of the visibility of the plans for the Still River Greenway over the course of the last decade. The workshop participants noted the difficulty of creating walking trails south of Junction road along the Still River, but noted the possibility of working with Danbury's Still River Commission to improve a "Blueway" trail on the river. There are currently several kayak put in or take out locations along the Still River in Brookfield including an improved location at 777 Federal Road, and improved kayak ramps and steps at Newbury Village and near the New Milford town line.

The "Lakeway" trail beside Lake Lillinonah and southwest toward Burr Farm involves property owned by both local land trusts, the Town of Brookfield and a utility company. Completing the section from Burr Farm

to the Lillinonah Woods Open Space would require access across currently unsubdivided 25+ acre privately owned parcels.

The "Eastway" trail leading from the Municipal Center toward Lake Lillinonah through the extensive, long established much used trails through Williams Park might be established with the cooperation of the two condominium complexes. The connection from Williams Park to the "Lakeway" trails also appeared to be feasible.

**Goal:** Develop feasible set of trails some of which connect places people want to go and others that serve more recreational purposes.

**Strategies:**

| Section/ Issue | No. | Strategy | Leader | Supporting Resources |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **OSPlan1** | 1 | Prioritize trail desirability based on feasibility for completion, opportunities for small parking areas, variation in terrain and difficulty of trails | CC | WHLT, BOSLI |
| **OSPlan1** | 2 | Create a Trail Plan by evaluating input from Greenbelt Trail Workshop and other forums to plot connections along greenbelt system trails and connections by water. | CC | WHLT, BOSLI |
| **OSPlan1** | 3 | Map conservation easements for all subdivisions using GIS and use this resource to further refine Trail Plan. | CDD | PC |

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## Issue: *USE OF OPEN SPACE PROPERTIES*

Brookfield's open space and managed open space land is extensive; however there has been disagreement about how some properties should be used.

Brookfield has open space lands for every type of outdoor lover. Conservation properties frequented for the abundant bird life and fields of former farms perfect for a leash walk with the dog; wetland habitat and river gorge views. A kayak paddler's paradise and a place for a brisk walk with the kids in the stroller, a bike ride or inline skating. Despite this variety there has been difficulty siting a small dog park, a fenced in acre or two for dogs to be off-leash with other dogs.

**Goal:** Determine whether a dog park or a dog play space is needed in Brookfield and select an appropriate location for it.

**Strategies:**

| Section/ Issue | No. | Strategy | Leader | Supporting Resources |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **OSPlan2** | 1 | Inventory open space properties and clarify the purposes and uses that are appropriate on all open space properties, both town and land trust-owned | CC | WHLT, BOSLI |
| **OSPlan2** | 2a | Define characteristics of an off-leash park area for dogs. | PRD, residents | CDD |
| **OSPlan2** | 2b | Review potential locations for an off-leash park are for dogs and discover drawbacks and negative consequences along with positive features of each potential location | PC | CDD |
| **OSPlan2** | 2c | Select and promote the most advantageous location. | BOS | CDD |
| **OSPlan2** | 3 | Develop funding sources for this project. | BOS | CDD |

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**Issue:** ***COLLABORATION***

**Goal:** Promote coordinated management of open space land through the Conservation Commission and private land trusts, Brookfield Open Space Legacy and Weantinoge Land Trust.

**Strategies:**

| Section/ Issue | No. | Strategy | Leader | Support Resources |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **OSPlan3** | **1.** | Improve communications and collaboration with land trusts. | CC | WHLT, BOSLI, CDD |
| **OSPlan3** | **2** | Establish a forum for exchanging information about planned improvements and issues that need to be addressed in maintaining open space properties throughout the town. | PC | |
| **OSPlan3** | **3.** | Collaborate with Brookfield Open Space Legacy Inc. and Weantinoge Land Trust to re-establish parking facilities for Birch Rocks Open Space. | CDD | DPW |

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**Issue:** ***MAINTENANCE AND IMPROVEMENT OF TRAILS AND OPEN SPACE PROPERTY***

Maintenance and improvement of trails and open space requires regular annual expenditures as well as project-based expenditures.

There are only a few remaining large lots that represent potential residential subdivisions. The development of the Open Space Plan should consider the potential for extending desirable greenbelt system trials using easements through these parcels. In addition the judicious placement of these easements will allow for contributions in lieu of open space parcels donated to the town when subdividing the land. In this way the Town can grow the Open Space Fund for use in improving and

maintaining Brookfield's open space and trail plan. Grant funding could support project-based improvements.

**Goal:** Develop an administrative structure, capital investment plan and funding sources to permit the improvement and maintenance of trails and town-owned lands.

**Strategies:**

| Section/ Issue | No. | Strategy | Leader | Supporting Resources |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **OSPlan4** | **1** | Identify key portions of the last remaining large residential parcels that could feasibly connect trails identified in OSPlan1, Strategy 2 via conservation easements. | PC | CC |
| **OSPlan4** | **2** | Identify strategic open space parcel acquisitions where easements would not allow trail connection. | PC | |
| **OSPlan4** | **3** | Identify priority areas of open space for application of forest management practices in order to remove invasive species and encourage native plants. | CC | TW |
| **OSPlan4** | **4** | Develop capital improvement plan to finance trail improvement and operating budget for annual maintenance. | CC, PRD | |
| **OSPlan4** | **5** | Identify sources of funding such as grants for project-based initiatives. | CC, PRD | |
| **OSPlan4** | **6** | Consider whether staffing or consulting services would be required to develop the Trail Plan, define forestry management projects, and provide GIS mapping skills, administrative and grant writing support. | PRD, CC, CDD | |

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## Protecting Historic Resources

### *History of Brookfield's protection of historic resources*

The protection of Brookfield's historic resources was among the considerations for granting Certified Local Government status in 1992. Resources were allocated for the 1997 Architectural Survey and resulted in a survey that satisfied the basic requirements of the CLG designation, but missed resources considered by the Brookfield Historical Society to be significant to the town's character. Maintaining Brookfield's status in this program was in question as described in the 2002 POCD. The advantage of maintaining this status is that it makes Brookfield eligible to receive funds from the Connecticut Historical Commission.

Brookfield's Historic District Commission and members have dedicated significant volunteer time to the protection of historic resources in the first (and to date, only) Historic District. The members of the Brookfield Historical Society also supported historical preservation by sustaining the museum and hosting educational and informational presentations; however, there is a perception on the part of advocates for historic preservation that insufficient political capital - not to mention governmental resources both human and financial - has been brought to bear to preserve what remains of Brookfield's historic resources.

Residents responding to requests for comment during in this planning process stated that retaining what historical buildings can feasibly be restored is important for retaining local character in Brookfield. Concentrations of historic residential and mixed-use buildings outside the Historic District can be found in the Four Corners area (formerly a commercial and industrial center called Ironworks, or the Ironworks District) and dispersed throughout town along Obtuse Road South and North and Obtuse Hill Road as well as in the northern section of Long Meadow Hill Road.

The concept of a second historic district including the Brookfield Craft Center campus may help further the artistic and educational goals of this venerable Brookfield institution. The former hotel building and the market building along with the train station and the mill buildings form a cohesive area with plenty of New England charm. Several other buildings on the western side of the Still River continue this aesthetic and may also benefit from being in a second historic district.

### *Gurski Homestead*

The Gurski Homestead is an open space property that joins Williams Park to create Brookfield's largest park. Many people use these properties and some people say their favorite natural spot in Brookfield is in one of these two properties.

The Town of Brookfield purchased the Gurski Homestead property, (18.49 acres) from Stanley Gurski and Frank Gurski, Jr. in 2002. Buildings included a front farmhouse, and farmhouse towards the rear (which is currently rented by a Brookfield Town employee) dairy barn, chicken coop, root cellar, blacksmith shop and other outbuildings. A tobacco barn, once located behind the blacksmith shop and next to the Merwin Brook Cemetery, was taken down years ago. The rear rental house and the blacksmith shop which is leased by the Brookfield Museum and Historical Society are in good condition. All other structures need renovation.

The Gurski Homestead Committee was established to manage the property. In 2009 a state grant of $50,000 was received for repairs to the barn and the town approved matching funds. This grant was for re-roofing the barn and installing temporary shoring to maintain stability until a second grant could be secured. Remediation of the front farmhouse basement was paid for through a state grant of $27,500 and matching funds from the town, for a total of $55,000. This was for the foundation of the front farmhouse to prevent flooding in the basement. These grants were received from the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) with the condition that a conservation easement lasting ten years would be placed on the property. This easement was filed in April 2011 and will expire in 2012. No additional improvements can be made to the structures without the approval of SHPO while the easement is in place.

Gurski Homestead has recently come under the care of Conservation Commission. They applied for and received a grant for $5,000 from SHPO and used matching funds for a total of $10,000 to develop an engineered structural assessment and stabilization plan. Plan was completed by Conlon Engineering of Brookfield, CT and is currently under review by CT SHPO.

### *Village District designation for Four Corners area*

Public Act 00-145 provides a means for providing significant protection of historic resources that is particularly suited to business areas. The Brookfield Zoning Commission utilized this designation for the current Town Center District centered in the Four Corners area with limited success. Balancing the requirement for architectural review with the time

constraints placed on zoning commissions to make well considered decisions on applications for development became difficult, so the designation was removed.

### *Demolition Delay implemented*

Delaying demolition of structures 50 years old or more allows time for historic preservation efforts. Although the delay is only for a period of up to 90 days, the implementation of this statutory protection had not been routinely practiced in the processing building applications in the Land Use office until 2010. The administrative workflow was revised to better integrate this provision. The Historic District now comprises a layer in the GIS mapping tool and the HDC continues to be integrated into the sign off process for building and demolition permits town wide.

### *Design Guidelines address historic resources in the Four Corners now*

Recent efforts to provide predictable, measurable standards for design in the Town Center District and Incentive Housing Zones have resulted in Design Guidelines and Standards. This document expresses the importance of preservation of historic structures that support the fabric and desired character of the Four Corners area. The guidelines state that site design should consider preservation and context sensitive design that incorporates buildings and features on state or national registers of historic places or those listed in the 1997 local survey titled "Historical & Architectural Resource Survey of the Town of Brookfield. 1996-1997" (1997 Architectural Survey).

The Zoning Commission and the Land Use staff worked with Fitzgerald & Halliday to develop the Design Guidelines and Standards and incorporate them into the Zoning Regulations applicable in the Town Center District and Incentive Housing Overlay sub-zones. The commitment of the Zoning Commission to the spirit of these regulations is evident in the Residences at Laurel Hill project where one of Brookfield's oldest houses was relocated and reincorporated into the site.

## *Historic Resources – Issues, Goals and Action Agenda*

Among the strategies proposed in the 2002 POCD for preservation of historic resources that have not been implemented are the development of a Historic Preservation Plan, the establishment of additional historic districts, and the adoption of tax abatement programs to allow for deferred tax assessment increases resulting from property rehabilitation. In addition to pursuing these strategies, Brookfield would benefit from joining the Connecticut Main Street Program, a non-profit that promotes mixed-use development while utilizing context sensitive design.

## Issue: *BROOKFIELD HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN*

The development of a community Historic Preservation Plan for preservation of Brookfield's historic resources would support the town's planning process and begin to restore confidence with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) of Brookfield's commitment to the values and goals of the Certified Local Government program the program.

The use of SHPO sponsored grants for historic preservation in Brookfield has become complicated due to a lack of shared objectives.

**Goal:** Develop a town-wide Historic Preservation Plan

**Strategies:**

| Section/ Issue | No. | Strategy | Leader | Supporting Resources |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **HIST1** | **1a** | Define the objectives of a Town Historic Plan to include the issues surrounding Gurski Homestead and the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) Conservation Easement. | CDD | HDC, BHSM |
| **HIST1** | **1b** | Allocate sufficient human and capital resources to develop an Historic Preservation Plan with broad community support and which satisfies the standards of local and state historic preservationists. | BOF | HDC, BHSM |
| **HIST1** | **2** | Evaluate how tax abatement may provide incentives for owners of historic properties to improve or restore these buildings. | CDD | AO, BOS |

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## Issue: *HISTORIC RESOURCES OUTSIDE HISTORIC DISTRICT #1*

Many of Brookfield's remaining clustered historic resources are unprotected to the extent that a historic district designation can provide. Historic properties may be protected with single property historic designations.

Interest in creating a second historic district has been expressed by the members of the Board of Directors for the Brookfield Craft Center, which occupies a number of State Historic Register buildings built in the 1700's in the Ironworks District that currently serve as the campus of the arts and cultural center. Participation of adjacent historic properties may add to the significance of this second district and will help to retain the charm of the remaining historic buildings in the Four Corners area.

**Goal:** Retain the charm of Brookfield's mill buildings and historic commercial hub as well as specimen properties, those properties representative of a particular architectural style, in residential districts.

**Strategies:**

| Section/ Issue | No. | Strategy | Leader | Supporting Resources |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **HIST2** | **1** | Work with property owners to develop a concept for the historic district and purpose for the designation. | BCC | CDD |
| **HIST2** | **2a** | Develop a proposal for a second historic district to be considered by the BOS | BCC | CDD, HDC, BHSM |
| **HIST2** | **2b** | Assemble a study group whose task it is to evaluate the feasibility, desirability and objectives of a second historic district. | BOS | CDD |
| **HIST2** | **3** | Promote the research required and support the application for designation of specimen properties with appropriate recognition of historic status. | HDC | |

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## Issue: *GURSKI HOMESTEAD*

The Gurski Homestead property has the potential to be a wonderful community space. The Lion's Club community garden is located there along with a small orchard planted by the Girl Scouts. The soon to be three-year tradition of FarmFest, a harvest festival put on by the Conservation Commission, has introduced newcomers and old timers alike to Brookfield's farming and forging history.

Many of the structures were transported to this property when the farm was active; however, in an effort to fund their restoration, time has claimed the viability of several of them. In addition the legal obligation to pass all improvements through the approval process of the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) has further delayed restoration or preservation efforts.

Residents who commented on what the Town of Brookfield should do with the Gurski Homestead buildings felt that preservation should be attempted, salvaging what was useable and focusing on the house by the road, the barn and the forge. In order to keep expenditures low, one resident suggested a volunteer-backed, donor-funded project. Another suggested constructing a storage building for the community garden.

**Goal:** Make the Gurski Homestead a welcoming, safe community space.

**Strategies:**

| Section/ Issue | No. | Strategy | Leader | Supporting Resources |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **HIST3** | **1a** | Negotiate appropriate steps with SHPO to improve the Gurski Homestead and develop a master plan for improvement of the Gurski Homestead property. | FS | BOS, CC, CDD |
| **HIST3** | **1b** | Work with SHPO to clarify the process for proposing and gaining approval for improvements or actions that will increase the safety of these buildings. | FS | BOS, CC, CDD |
| **HIST3** | **1c** | Define priority actions or projects and work with SHPO to identify funding sources | FS | BOS, CC, CDD |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **HIST3** | **2** | Develop a private fund raising campaign and gather volunteer supporters who are willing to work on improvement projects. | CC | CDD |

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# Revitalizing the Four Corners: Creating a new downtown

## Four Corners Vision Statement

In the future, the Four Corners will become a center of activity in Brookfield and a destination. It will be a "downtown" for Brookfield that is well defined visually and aesthetically, providing a positive experience for residents and visitors, with a distinctive identity that is well known throughout Brookfield and the region. Development will have complementary scale, character and density that will contribute to a sense of both history and vitality. It will offer places to live, work, shop, eat, find entertainment, and cultural enrichment. The area will provide a diversity of services that enhance the quality of life for residents, and invite travelers to stop. This will be complemented by access to the Still River as a scenic resource in the Four Corners. It will have complementary civic spaces, in the form of outdoor parks and plazas, and public community facilities. Most new development will result from infill and from reuse or redevelopment of existing sites. No new strip or large-scale single-use developments will be built.

The area will be easy to access and navigate by car, bicycle, transit, and on foot. There will be a variety of opportunities to travel by all these means along all roads within the Four Corners area including walking, biking, rail, and bus, along with key connections among those means. Streets in the Four Corners will offer a balance among motor vehicle and pedestrian and bicycle traffic, with an enhanced streetscape that is pedestrian friendly and complementary to the character of the area. This will be accomplished through improvements such as landscaped sidewalks, aesthetic lighting, areas to pause and relax, with plazas with benches near public art and other public spaces. Traffic on Federal Road will flow at reasonable speeds through the area as a result of measures designed to encourage drivers to slow down; to improve safety and to minimize any degradation of the character of this special place.

3 Four Corners Brookfield Town Center District Revitalization Plan

## *Establish a Village Center in the Four Corners*

Several efforts were made over the last 10 years to encourage development like that in a village center through zoning regulation text and zone designation changes. The Zoning Commission and the Economic Development Commission made the first strides toward a comprehensive plan by making changes to zoning regulations and engaging consultants to evaluate the redesign of the streetscape to include on street parking. A video was created to give a sense of the transformation being contemplated.

In 2011 another effort was undertaken to create a comprehensive plan for the revitalization of the Town Center District. The Four Corners Town Center Revitalization Plan (the Revitalization Plan) was the culminating document laying out a district-wide plan for new development and redevelopment of underutilized properties and laying out pedestrian and bicycle routes along the main roads of the district along with paths along the Still River, a wetland park, and connectivity among parcels to limit curb cuts onto main roads. It was developed with wide community participation through an online survey and a four-day charrette. The Revitalization Plan was made an addendum to the 2002 POCD by the Planning Commission in September 2012 and comprises Chapter 8 of this plan.

The Four Corners Revitalization study was undertaken to establish the economic base for and the master plan to accomplish the revitalization of a historically important downtown area that was obscured. The study evaluated the general market and real estate conditions in Brookfield, a 15-minute drive contour around the Four Corners or Town Center District and the Tri-county region. These details are covered in Chapter 2 Trends and Conditions. 4ward Planning assumed that about five percent (155 workers) of workers who currently live outside Four Corners desire to live closer to work, and they concluded that they could be captured in residential or mixed-use projects in Four Corners.

## *Four Corners Future Concept Plans*

The concept plans which follow were developed through the technical analysis and community input and guidance described in the complete document which is available as an appendix to this plan. The plans start at the 'big picture' level covering the Four Corners as a whole and then focus in on each of four subareas represented by four quadrants of the area and then emanating from the Four Corners intersection. An additional concept plan is presented with a recommended concept for heart of the area right at the Four Corners intersection itself. This is complemented by concepts for Federal Road with streetscape

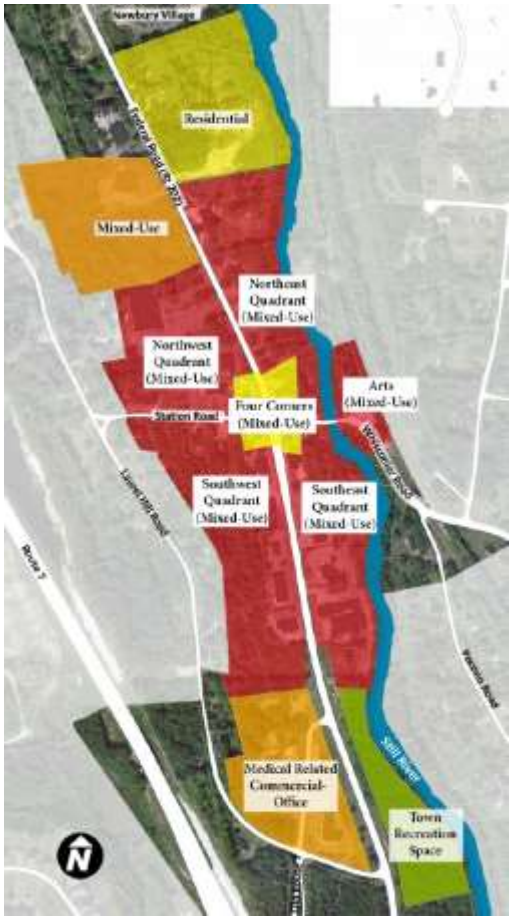
improvements and a complete streets approach under which the design for Federal Road balances the goals for the Four Corners character with ease of access for all means of travel and with an emphasis on pedestrian access. Recommended enhancements in the area of the Craft Center are also presented.

The 'big picture' view is that of an overall future land use plan with broad categories of land use for the Town Center District as a whole. The quadrant plans then each show a proposed mixed-use environment that blends existing viable businesses and residences with redevelopment and infill development.

The quadrant concept plans and 'core intersection' concept plan show potential building locations, parking, walking routes, internal vehicle circulation routes within properties, civic use, and public spaces such as plazas. Where proposed vehicle access routes occur across properties, they are envisioned on the scale of a driveway that would be integrated with the pedestrian-oriented intent of the development.

The overarching concept for the Four Corners area is one of a cohesive development node centered on the four corners intersection. Development would be most dense and intense at the Four Corners intersection and become less dense moving outward from the core area. The intersection and concentration of development at the core would be the heart of the envisioned 'downtown' for Brookfield.

The design principles that guided the development of the concept plans are listed below. It is intended that these design principles also serve as a guide to site design, density, and scale of all future development throughout the Town Center District.



## Guiding Design Principles:

- Public preference is for buildings to be up to two-stories in height
- Primary buildings should be oriented to the street and meet the sidewalk there; sidewalks should be provided as part of site design
- Building design should be 'traditional' for New England; not uniformly New England Colonial – some diversity of architecture is desirable but all should be complementary to traditional New England themes
- Separation of buildings along the street may be minimized to achieve a sense of neighborhood and place
- Parking should be located behind buildings
- Sites should have internal pedestrian ways, pedestrian respite areas, and bicycle access as well as pedestrian and bicycle connections to adjoining parcels

- Sites should have no more than one curb-cut onto Federal Road with shared access among adjoining parcels; alternate or primary access to Station Road is encouraged
- Sites design should include some green/public spaces and access ways to trails and greenways
- Site design should include both interior and perimeter landscaping, including shade trees; notable existing natural features such as mature trees should be preserved
- Impervious surface area should be minimized

The concept plans were created with the idea in mind that the four gas stations are currently active businesses that are not available today for reuse. There should be a future development concept that can occur if those gas stations remain in place.

Yet, the Town Center District zoning classifies this use as non-conforming with the intent of the zone and conflicting with the vision for the area. Therefore, if one or more of those gas station properties becomes available for redevelopment, there should be a preferred concept for those sites, which includes an alternative use and layout for them.

Finally, it should be noted that the concept plans are focused on the desired character of development for the Four Corners in the future. The approximate square footage of new development shown in the quadrant plans for the core does not directly correlate to the market potential. It is assumed that additional new development, in particular residential development, could and will create additional infill in the remainder of the Town Center District outside the core quadrants over time. It is also assumed that as the vision for the Four Corners begins to take form, the dynamic nature of the new downtown will have potential to generate more market demand above that which today's market conditions reflect. All new development throughout the TCD should incorporate the core design principles and be organized as shown on the Master Land Use Plan.

### *Northwest Quadrant*

The northwest quadrant of the Four Corners area possesses several strong occupants in addition to relatively new structures that if connected properly, could create a very engaging area for shopping and entertainment. Existing assets include Brookfield Lanes, Alexander's Restaurant, and the Union Savings Plaza, an example of one of the more agreeable styles of building form in the Four Corners area.

Parking in this area is ample although disjointed and pedestrian walk- ways are all but absent between developments.

The existing Union Savings Bank plaza and Alexander's Restaurant can provide a core around which infill development and redevelopment could occur.

By connecting the various parking areas internally and adding pedestrian walkways between businesses, this area could become more inviting to those shopping on foot. Vacant space on Federal Road where the bowling alley parking access is located may provide an ideal location for a civic building such as a library or theater. The existing parking area could then be expanded and serve as municipal parking for the Four Corners area. Additional opportunities include the development of public plazas between buildings, residential redevelopment along Station Road, and the construction of sidewalks on Federal and Station Roads. In this scenario the Union Savings Bank drive-through would be redirected directly to Federal Road with the pavement in front of the building reclaimed as public space.

Recommended improvements within the northwest quadrant include:

- Improving pedestrian circulation within and between the various businesses.
- Improving auto connections between various parking lots
- A municipal parking lot with 150 spaces

- A plaza between the Union Savings Bank and Alexander's Restaurant.
- Redesigned access to Brookfield Plaza from Federal Road
- A civic building (approximately 30,000 square feet) such as a library or theater on Federal Road with an adjoining public plaza.
- Residential redevelopment (20-30 units) on Station Road.

## *Northeast Quadrant*

The northeast quadrant of the Four Corners area holds considerable potential for infill development. A large property at the northern end of this area is a prime candidate for locating a medium scaled grocer. This would potentially act as an anchor for infill development along

Federal Road. This potential infill could resemble the existing historic buildings in use and function. The capacity for infill development of this scale is approximately 20,000 square feet. There is additional potential for a shared parking agreement amongst the various property owners on Federal Road that would allow for auto circulation and a pedestrian walkway at the rear of the properties.

Historic structures on Federal Road are already used for office, retail and residential space. Infill development with similar building form and use would create a more dynamic environment

Recommended improvements for the northeast quadrant include:

- Soliciting a grocery store to develop a site and build a store
- Infill development between existing buildings
- Continuous walkway at the rear of buildings
- Develop a shared parking arrangement between property owners
- Develop internal auto circulation between Whisconier Road and the proposed grocery location.
- Create a multiuse path along the top of the bank along the Still River

## *Southeast Quadrant*

Improvements for the southeast quadrant are focused upon pedestrian conditions recommended along Federal Road and thereby producing a more favorable environment for businesses and shopping. The east side of Federal Road is also the proposed location for a multi- use pathway that would ultimately connect to the Town's existing trail system along the Still River. In creating a safe and hospitable environment for pedestrians and bicyclists, curb cuts onto Federal Road should also be reduced. This reduction becomes feasible if an internal circulation system is created between properties. Additionally, the reduction of curb cuts creates the opportunity for infill development along Federal Road. Approximately 30,000 square feet of this is feasible within the existing development

Empty storefronts, lack of sidewalks, frequent curb cuts, and a lack of connectivity between parking diminish the potential for shopping from business to business.

Summarizing the recommendations for this area, they include:

- Construction of multi-use pathway on Federal Road
- Sidewalk and streetscape improvements on Federal and Whisconier Roads
- Reducing curb cuts and creating internal circulation between parking
- Infill development
- Creating a trail along the Still River

## *Southwest Quadrant*

Improvements to southwest quadrant are focused upon a collection of properties off Federal and Station Roads that is actively being considered for redevelopment. This area could prove to be the catalyst for redevelopment within the Four Corners. The potential development would include street level retail and upper level residences. Total square footage of development could be in the magnitude of 30-40,000 sq. ft. The redevelopment of this site would also allow for the inclusion of public spaces between and adjacent to buildings and off- street pedestrian circulation.

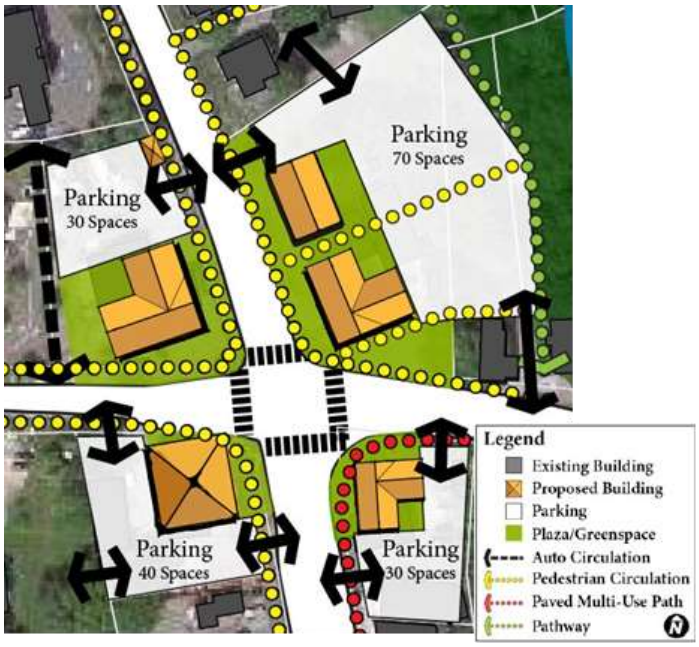
Aging strip malls with multiple vacancies allows the potential for a complete redevelopment of this area at the southwest corner of the Four Corners.

Additional improvements within this area could include:

- Sidewalk construction of Federal and Station Roads
- Reduction of curb cuts along Federal Road and connectivity between adjacent parking lots and businesses.
- Development of a trail system and green space in the wooded area to the rear of the properties

## *Four Corners*

The Four Corners intersection is currently dominated by gas stations on all four corners. Ultimately market forces may create the opportunity for redevelopment of one, or all, of these sites. In a redevelopment scenario, the four corners could be occupied by new buildings at each corner. This development could be retail, entertainment, office, and residential or mixed use in nature. The total building area that these sites could accommodate is constrained primarily by parking and would likely range between 30-40,000 square feet. Parking would be located at the rear of the businesses so as to allow for a pedestrian scale environment along Federal, Station and Whisconier Roads.



Gas stations occupy each of the Four Corners locations. Ultimately a higher and better use of these properties may become a market reality.

Summary of potential improvements to the Four Corners intersection area:

- Redevelopment of gas station sites into retail, entertainment, office, residential or mixed use development
- Off-street parking at the rear of properties
- Parking connectivity between adjacent parking lots and parcels
- Public spaces between and adjacent to new development

A comprehensive Implementation Plan is also part of the complete document and outlines four initiatives to bring the vision of the Four Corners to reality. They are the Community Form Initiative, a Marketing Initiative to brand and promote the Four Corners, a Complete Streets Initiative to connect roadways with pedestrian and bicycle ways, and a Cultural/Civic Enhancement Initiative to promote the location of at least two community gathering destinations in the Four Corners area to enliven the neighborhood.

## *New Downtown at the Four Corners – Issues, Goals and Action Agenda*

**Issue:** ***Four Corners Revitalization Plan Implementation strategies are not fully evaluated and utilized.***

**Goal:** Assess implementation plan for the Four Corners Town Center Revitalization Plan and complete remaining strategies to support developments both public and private to create a new downtown from an historic commercial hub.

**Strategies:**

| Section/ Issue | No. | Strategy | Leader | Supporting Resources |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **4C1** | **1** | Assess Community Form Initiative | ZC | CDD, EDC |
| **4C1** | **1a** | Critique how the implementation of this initiative has supported development in the Town Center District and Incentive Housing Zones and which strategies should be further utilized. | ZC | CDD |
| **4C1** | **1b** | Implement remaining strategies | ZC | CDD |
| **4C1** | **2** | Assess Marketing Initiative | EDC | BOS |
| **4C1** | **2a** | Evaluate the implementation strategies of this initiative and determine which strategies should be further utilized or which other strategies should be employed. | EDC | |
| **4C1** | **2b** | Implement these strategies | EDC | |
| **4C1** | **3** | Assess Complete Streets Initiative and Town Center District Sidewalk and Access Management Plan and adopt as an appendix to the Zoning Regulations | DPW, ZC | CDD |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **4C1** | **3a** | Ensure that STEAP funds available to the town currently are utilized to begin construction of the plan. | CDD | DPW |
| **4C1** | **3b** | Secure funding for the completion of the central sidewalks as illustrated in the Sidewalk and Access Management Plan. | CDD | FS |
| **4C1** | **3c** | Complete engineering for the remaining phase of the Sidewalk and Access Management Plan. | DPW | CDD |
| **4C1** | **3d** | Construct final phase of Sidewalk and Access Management Plan | DPW | CDD |
| **4C1** | **4** | Assess Cultural/Civic Enhancement Initiative | CDD | 4CA |
| **4C1** | **4a** | Consider the development of a Four Corners Civic Spaces Plan | ZC | 4CA |
| **4C1** | **4b** | Partner with relevant organizations in order to promote the Civic Spaces Plan. | CDD | 4CA |
| **4C1** | **5** | Join the Connecticut Main Street Program for support with technical assistance grants and resources for creating economically successful downtowns while preserving historic character. | BOS | CDD |

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## Promoting Economic Development

Some of the strategies of the 2002 Plan have been implemented, but the many remain only partly explored or unaddressed.

Promoting economic development through simplification of zoning was partly addressed. The Zoning Commission extended the IRC 80/40 zone throughout the mid-section of town removing persistent non-conformity issues there. Regulations were modified to address particular incongruities in the Permitted Use Table, but a thorough review to broaden classes of uses has not been undertaken. The Zoning Commission has fully explored the definition of Mixed Use through the revision of the definition of the Central Core Incentive Housing sub-zone. The designation of the Perimeter Incentive Housing sub-zone allowing exclusively residential uses has begun to define the northern most transitional area illustrated in the 2002 POCD. The Transitional Use Areas illustrated between Old New Milford Road and Silvermine Road has been the site of two new residential developments and a shopping center. The opportunity presented by vacant land in this area urges the consideration of development in clusters or nodes encouraging small offices, institutional uses, multi-family developments all within reach of daily needs and transit options.

The 2002 Plan encouraged supporting variety in the scale of retail establishments, from big-box to boutique, well-located industrial and manufacturing uses and recognition for the need to encourage mixed use development by locating multi-family residential uses in close proximity to transit, retail, commercial and certain light industrial uses. Central Federal Road between Junction Road and Silvermine Road remains a jumble of development forms. A wide array of uses are currently made of these properties, from wholesale businesses to put-put golf and barbeque to older single family homes, and new townhomes and apartments that will number about 290 units when fully constructed. The proximity of the Town Hall, Kid's Kingdom, sports fields, the Senior Center and a possible location for a new library is key in evaluating how to plan for development in this area.

### *Tax Assessment Deferral Program*

The Board of Selectmen passed an ordinance in 2014 that allows for deferred tax assessment increases for mixed use development projects in the Town Center District. This ordinance was aimed at jump starting development in the Four Corners area. The ordinance does not deal directly with historic rehabilitation or restoration of buildings in the district, but may provide a springboard for discussion of tax abatement programs to support historic preservation efforts.

## *Business development*

There are two primary groups that promote Brookfield businesses and some innovative ideas for incubating good business ideas. The Brookfield Chamber of Commerce continues to be active in presenting periodic workshops and informal settings for making business connections. The Brookfield Economic Development Commission has launched a new website aimed at promoting Brookfield as a place to relocate and have become members of the Connecticut Economic Resource Center (CERC) in order to better market available commercial properties in Brookfield. An initiative of the First Selectman involved the concept of creating a town-sponsored facility for incubating young business or budding ideas that might become businesses. Resources devoted to economic development have historically been extremely limited. Making the most of the existing resources and targeting needed additional resources will improve these groups' effectiveness in promoting Brookfield and will help retain more of our existing businesses.

**Issue:** ***SUPPORT BROOKFIELD BUSINESSES THROUGH COORDINATED APPROACH***

**Goal:** Coordinate the efforts of groups focused on promoting Brookfield business and promote our town through coordinated efforts to bring in new businesses and employers as well as helping existing businesses to grow.

**Strategies:**

| Section/ Issue | No. | Strategy | Leader | Supporting Resources |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **EconDev1** | **1** | Encourage collaboration between Brookfield Chamber of Commerce and the Economic Development Commission when implementing informational programs, workshops and training classes to maximize the effectiveness of these groups to promote growth of existing businesses and to attract new businesses. | CofC, EDC | |
| **EconDev1** | **2** | Develop a strategy, action plans, resources and performance metrics with a goal of maximizing economic growth. | EDC | PC |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **EconDev1** | **3** | Collect contact and business information for all businesses and add that information into the EDC website Business Directory and email distribution list. | EDC | CDD, ZEO |
| **EconDev1** | **4** | Provide additional resources to assist the Economic Development Commission in achieving the economic development action items. | BOF | |

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## Issue: *FOCUS DEVELOPMENT ON EXISTING COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR*

**Goal:** Fully develop Brookfield's commercial corridor in a balanced manner that both broadens the tax base and protects the quiet residential districts that Brookfield is known for.

## Strategies:

| Section/ Issue | No. | Strategy | Leader | Supporting Resources |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **EconDev2** | **1a** | Consider how to best develop the area bounded by Federal Road, Junction Road, Silvermine Road and Pocono Road to incorporate transitional zones and development in a nodal pattern to protect adjacent residential neighborhoods and support alternative transportation modes. | PC | ZC, ZEO, EDC, CDD |
| **EconDev2** | **1b** | Revise zoning regulations to require the desired development pattern in this area. | ZC | ZEO, CDD |

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# Housing

## *Residential Development Patterns*

Housing in Brookfield is predominantly in single family homes. Multi-family condominium developments built in the 1980's are predominantly centrally located. Zoning changes in the Town Center District, the zone including the Four Corners intersection of Route 25 and Route 202, defined parameters for the development of Planned Age Restricted Communities. Subsequently more zoning regulation changes permitted apartments on the second and third floors of mixed use buildings. A further zoning regulation change created an Incentive Housing Overlay based on Connecticut General Statute 8-13m that further promote a mixed use residential development pattern.

These recent zoning regulation changes have spurred more multi-family developments. They have taken the form of residential communities, townhouses and apartments with some units set aside for rental or sale to families making 80% of the area median income, and mixed-use projects that include a retail, restaurant or office component.

Affordable Housing developments – density, location

### *Single family homes*

The majority of Brookfield's single family homes are on lots of 1 acre or more, many on 2 acres or more. This low density residential development provides the quiet, private suburban character that many residents value. There are only a few large parcels remaining in the residential zones. Refer to Land Use Map 4 titled Subdividable Residential Land.

The 2002 Plan addressed methods for conserving greater land area within the context of subdivision layouts. During the past planning period the Zoning Commission changed the definition of lot area to remove any area of wetlands and watercourses, steep slopes and floodplains.

The other technique discussed in the 2002 Plan to maximize land conservation while retaining that large-lot suburban character was to consider residential density of subdivisions rather than requiring a minimum lot size. In this way the residential lots could be clustered in such a way as to maximize the open space. This strategy was not acted on. Minimum lot size in Conservation Subdivisions is 20,000 sq. ft., however the number of lots permitted may not exceed the number of lots permitted for a conventional subdivision. The motivation for a developer

to consider a Conservation Subdivision is reduced, if no more lots can be developed than with a standard subdivision.

More than eight of ten housing units within Brookfield are single-family, detached units, which is significantly higher than Fairfield County and the Tri-County Region. Such high concentration of this housing type may contribute to lower housing affordability, as single-family homes are typically less affordable than multifamily units.

### *Multi-family Development*

Brookfield has a low availability of listed multifamily properties for rent, suggesting a tight multifamily market relative to the surrounding area. The majority of Brookfield's multifamily structures hold condominiums and townhomes, however recent zoning approvals for five separate projects could add over 350 rental units to Brookfield.

The Housing Study conducted by 4ward Planning found that the projected demand for new housing units within the Town of Brookfield through 2028 is just under 1,200 units, using a modest growth scenario.

### *Publicly Assisted Elderly Housing*

Brooks Quarry is supported by the Brookfield Housing Authority and provides affordable housing for the elderly. The Housing Authority has completed plans for upgrading the sanitary system to improve conditions in the current apartments and to allow expansion of the facility to address the demand for low cost housing dedicated to seniors. They are seeking funding through the Community Development Block Grant program.

## *Housing Needs*

### *Empty nesters and Millennials*

According to the Housing Study conducted by 4ward Planning, in the near term (the next seven years) and long term (beyond the next seven years), housing demand in the 15-minute drive contour and Brookfield area will likely come from within the following demographic groups: The 55-to-74 age cohort (Empty Nesters) will exert considerable influence on the type of housing developed, specifically smaller housing units, as they downsize from traditional single-family units. This group is increasing as a share of the total county population.

To a lesser extent, young professionals aged 25 to 34(the Millennials) may also influence the county's housing market over the coming years. While this age group is forecasted to decline slightly as a percent of the total population through 2018, they also typically seek small, affordable,

rental units with convenient commutes to jobs or school, and thus, may be more likely to locate to a town, which has such housing types.

Increasing the diversity of housing options available in Brookfield will enable our town to provide appropriate housing options as the economics of our aging population change. Providing diverse housing options along with a mix of leisure, restaurant, convenience and boutique retail may also attract young professionals.

The telephone survey conducted for the 2002 Plan highlighted the viewpoint that housing for elderly people, first-time home buyers and households of moderate income are too few. In 2015 these demographic groups continue to lack sufficient housing options, both due to the growth of the older segments of the population and the paucity of lower-cost, lower-maintenance housing options.

The majority of Brookfield's residential units are owner-occupied. The proportion of owner-occupied housing is greater in Brookfield than it is in the surrounding area. The figure below was part of the study conducted for the Four Corners Revitalization Plan and shows the percentage of renter-occupied units in Brookfield, a 10-minute drive contour from the Four Corners and the tri-county region including Fairfield, Litchfield and New Haven counties.

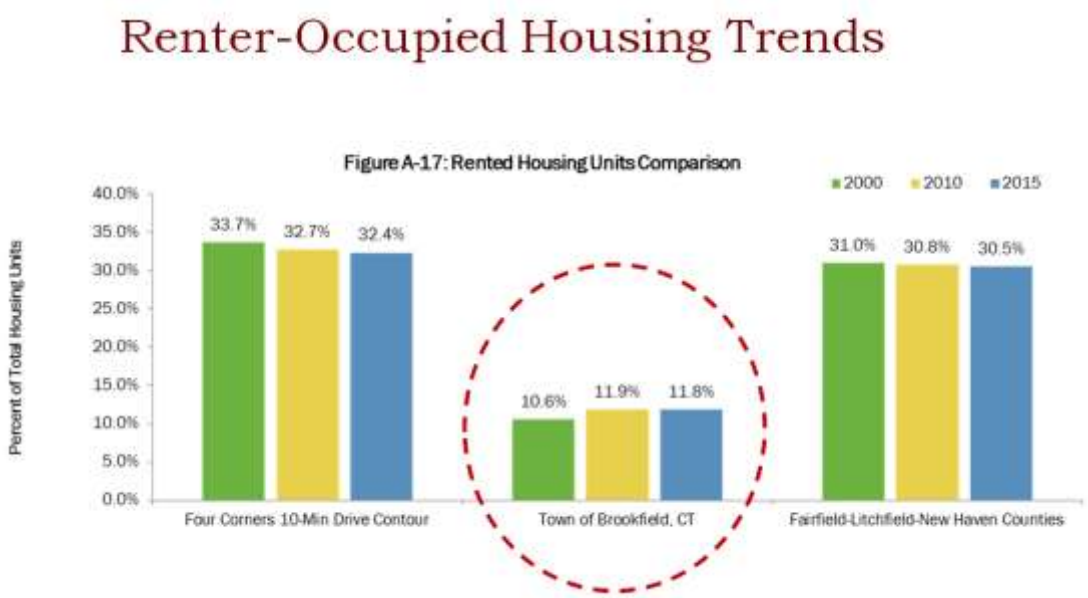


***Figure 4.*** *Rented Housing Units Comparison*

This analysis indicates a market potential for renter-occupied housing in Brookfield.

The observation made in the 2002 Plan, that Brookfield could improve the diversity of housing opportunities in order to better provide for an economically diverse population, continues to be true. A diverse housing stock provides housing opportunities for a diverse population and this can provide a variety of benefits for a community. A diverse housing stock engenders a more diverse social, cultural and economic environment. Diverse housing options also providing opportunities for local employees (teachers, administrators, clerical staff) to live in Brookfield as well as the flexibility for elders to adapt to changing housing needs while remaining close to friends and family members.

**Issue:** ***ATTRACTING THE YOUNG PROFESSIONALS***

Our town needs to encourage diverse housing options that will attract young professionals and young families. Brookfield's population is aging; a vibrant town needs young families and young professionals to keep the school system from shrinking and to support healthy community development.

**Goal:** Encourage developers to build housing that is affordable to young families and young professionals just beginning their careers.

**Strategies:**

| Section/ Issue | No. | Strategy | Leader | Supporting Resources |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **HOUS1** | **1** | Evaluate the current Incentive Housing restrictions and the level of affordability required by the IHZ overlay sub-zones. Compare housing options with starting salaries in the area's growing employment sectors. | CDD | ZC |
| **HOUS1** | **2** | Develop a Housing Plan to guide development of housing that includes developments tailored to young mobile professionals and young families. | CDD | ZC |

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Zoning Enforcement Officer; **4CA** 4 Corners Association

## Issue: *KEEPING THE EMPTY NESTERS IN BROOKFIELD*

Our town should promote housing options for elders who no longer want the responsibilities for maintenance of a single family home or who need increased support to live independently, but who want to remain in Brookfield near friends and family.

**Goal:** Encourage developers to build a wide array of housing, in particular housing designed for older, less mobile residents with associated amenities favored by seniors.

**Strategies:**

| Section/ Issue | No. | Strategy | Leader | Supporting Resources |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **HOUS2** | **1** | Consider revision of zoning regulations regarding Planned Age Restricted developments to allow these sorts of developments in specific zoning districts targeted for higher residential densities such as the Town Center District. | ZC | |
| **HOUS2** | **2** | Promote design of residential structures and public spaces that accommodates the needs of older residents. | ZC | |

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## Issue: *HOUSING DEVELOPMENT SHOULD NOT PUSH OUT CURRENT RESIDENTS DUE TO "LUXURY" PRICING*

Our town should strive to retain residents on fixed or lower incomes by promoting a wide range of housing prices. Housing priced affordably will serve current residents whose incomes become fixed as they age as well as young families just getting started.

**Goal:** Residents of all income levels will be able to find suitable housing in Brookfield whether they are a young family, a newly divorced or widowed individual, a young professional or a couple downsizing while remaining in their home community.

**Strategies:**

| Section/ Issue | No. | Strategy | Leader | Required Support |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **HOUS3** | **1** | Evaluate the affordability of Incentive Housing priced units; Affordable Housing priced units, requirements of state CHFA loans to developers for affordability and the market rate for both rentals and condominiums or townhomes for purchase. | CDD | |
| **HOUS3** | **2** | Develop a strategy for broadening the range of housing prices to accommodate current residents' housing needs as they change over time and to encourage new residents to move here. | | |

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# Facilities

## COMMUNITY FACILITIES

### *Senior Center*

The addition to the Senior Center was completed in 2007 creating a center for a wide range of activities for Brookfield residents over 55. Activities range from knitting and book clubs to yoga and wellness classes. The Social Services department runs the Senior Center and is also housed in this building. The Senior Center parking lot is the location for weekly donations of fruits and vegetables by Stew Leonard's, a local grocer, and in the summer, a budding Farmer's Market.

### *Food Pantry*

The Brookfield Food Pantry serves residents who need a helping hand to put food on the table. The Town Hall facilities house the pantry, the donation box and the patron pick-up location. A 2010 shuffling of Town Hall office locations provided the Food Pantry with a more appropriate location for recipients that are closer to the Social Services office in the Senior Center.

### *Library*

The Brookfield Library is small library facility built in the mid-1970s to meet the community's needs for library service; it replaced a 1500 square foot building. At the time the library was built, its size was more than adequate to support library services. Since that time, population growth in Brookfield, the widespread use of technology, and the community's changing expectations about the use of libraries have resulted in a library facility that is inadequate for a community the size of Brookfield.

The Brookfield Library is a center of community activity. Recent comments by residents via the website EnvisionBrookfield.com noted that the library is used for concerts and musical performances outside as well as indoors. The library is seen by respondents as a community space to meet and share with neighbors, a place to learn about and access technology, a place to join a book group and a place to take a class. Many people also come to the library to enjoy a movie or to attend a children's program.

The Library Board of Trustees commissioned a study in 2002 by Leslie Burger and Kevin McCarthy of Library Development Solutions, Princeton Junction, NJ. This study was updated by a committee formed in order to plan for a new library and approved by the Library Board in June 2009 and subsequently in February 2015.

The philosophy of the consultants is that the library is one of the few community spaces where people from all ethnic, racial and economic backgrounds can gather together in a neutral, comfortable, safe, and welcoming environment to enjoy the written word, find information, socialize, become technologically proficient and celebrate what it means to be part of a community. The early 21st century library in many suburban communities is a community hub – a magnet for community life and culture. This is a particularly important role in communities that lack a well-defined town center, such as Brookfield. The library plays an important role in providing the "social capital" needed to maintain a healthy and vibrant community.

The document initially prepared by the consultants, the Brookfield Library Building Program last revised in February 2015 by the Committee for a New Library represents a substantial amount of preparation and design effort. The study concludes that for the materials already held by the library and for the services that a community of our size should expect from a library, our library is too small. Expansion on the current property was explored and construction of a two story building on the municipal center grounds was also considered.

Since those site options were explored, the Ptak property adjacent to the Town Hall has become a possible additional parcel for expansion and the concept of locating the library in the Four Corners area has also been discussed. The small Cape Cod style house at 108 Pocono Road will be demolished and add 1 acre to the municipal center property that currently houses the Town Hall, the Senior Center, the Police Department and the recreational facilities. Alternatively, the location of the library in the Four Corners area would address the 2012 Revitalization Plan suggestion that locating a civic use in the Four Corners area would help draw people to the area. The Town of Brookfield does not own any centrally located property of sufficient size near the Four Corners. Nonetheless, several developers have discussed the possibility of donating land to the Town for the library in the expectation that it would be an amenity to their developments and the area as a whole.

**Issue:** ***THE CURRENT BROOKFIELD LIBRARY FACILITIES ARE TOO CONSTRAINED TO MEET THE PATRONS' NEEDS.***

Our library needs to be able to grow and adapt to meet the new role of libraries in our society. Among the most significant findings from focus group interviews were the following:

- Newer residents have high expectations for service.
- The library is seen as being an important part of the community's identity.

- Residents commented that they use other area libraries for information or materials.
- Nevertheless, these libraries cannot provide the sense of community, belonging and social identity that the Brookfield Library can provide.

Since the time of the original report, The Brookfield Library has substantially increased the number and variety of programs offered to the public, making the lack of meeting space even more severe, but also drawing more (and new) people to the library.

Using space-planning guidelines developed by the Connecticut State Library, the amount of space recommended for a community the size of Brookfield was calculated as part of the plan. This calculation resulted in a recommendation for a library of 27,000 square feet, roughly three times the library's current size. The new building should emphasize additional space for children, teens, community events, and more shelf space to increase the ability to browse the collection.

**Goal:** Develop a plan for serving the library's current patrons with the current slate of activities as well as expansions to meet growing patron needs and 21st century library functions. Construct a new library that the community will consider as a cultural center of Brookfield, the community's living room, and a destination for cultural, educational and recreational programs.

**Strategies:**

| Section/ Issue | No. | Strategy | Leader | Supporting Resources |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **FAC1** | **1** | Support the work of the Committee for a New Library as they selecting a proposed location for a new library; vet that selection through the 8-24 referral process. | CNL | LBT, PC |
| **FAC1** | **2a** | Evaluate the attributes to include in a new library building and grounds along with the associated costs and potential benefits of desirable features. | CNL | LBT |
| **FAC1** | **2b** | Develop a Library Site and Building plan for meeting the library's needs, both current and future anticipated needs for indoor and outdoor space. | CNL | CDD |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **FAC1** | **3** | Develop a funding strategy including municipal bonding, grants and a fundraising campaign. | BOS | FOL, LF |
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## *GOVERNMENT FACILITIES*

### *Town Hall*

Since the 2002 Plan several improvements to the Town Hall have been accomplished. A secure deep storage facility was built and improvements to the Town Clerk vault and the Land Use office vault were completed. When the probate court offices were relocated to New Milford, space was freed to allow the relocation of some offices. The Parks and Recreation offices and equipment were relocated from their extremely cramped quarters to second floor offices, the Food Pantry relocated to provide a more convenient entry point and adequate storage for food and supplies. The building windows were upgraded to conserve energy, original carpeting was replaced and the building interior was painted.

Town Hall meeting rooms are commonly used for community uses in addition to commission meetings. School buildings and the library also contain some rooms that are used for community group meetings. There are X spaces that fit groups of X size and larger meeting rooms and auditoriums designed for school use and commission or board meetings with audience seating. Meeting spaces that suit smaller community groups (10-50 people) are in short supply.

**Issue:** ***APPROPRIATE SPACES FOR SMALL MEETINGS OF COMMUNITY GROUPS CONTINUES TO BE INADEQUATE***

The Housatonic Valley Council of Elected Officials (HVCEO) has been joined with the South West Regional Planning Agency (SWRPA) and is currently housed in Old Town Hall. The new regional planning

organization, WCCOG, will establish their offices in another town leaving the Old Town Hall vacant.

**Goal:** Meet the needs of community groups for free public space to use.

**Strategies:**

| Section/ Issue | No. | Strategy | Leader | Supporting Resources |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **FAC2** | 1a | Review the Facilities Planning group report and re-evaluate conclusions reached by that group. | PC | |
| **FAC2** | 1b | Consider how the Old Town Hall, which currently houses Housatonic Valley Council of Elected Officials, and the current library - should a new library be built - can be used to fill community needs. | PC | |

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### *Public Works: Town garage*

The Town garage has been identified by the Hazard Mitigation Plan as being located in the Still River Floodplain. The Public Works Garage, located on Gray's Bridge Road was found to lie within the 1% annual chance floodplains. While this building is not known to have experienced serious flooding damage in recent years, its proximity to the Still River makes it at risk to flooding and the town would eventually like to relocate the facility to an area with lower flood risk. Potential measures for mitigating future flooding damage at this critical facility include the construction of a berm or floodproofing of the structure.

## *EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES*

A principle concern about Brookfield's educational facilities is that they are aging. Established in 1938, Center School is the oldest wooden school building still in use in Connecticut. It holds pre-school, kindergarten and first grade classes. Maintenance of this building is key to continued use.

The roof of Huckleberry Hill School was replaced recently; however, the exclusive use of electricity to heat and cool this building is a substantial annual expense. Upgraded windows are needed to reduce heating and cooling energy losses.

Brookfield High School completed a major addition during the prior planning period including classroom space and science facilities addressing the issues presented in the 2002 Plan. The gymnasium floor was refinished but upgrades to the auditorium continue to be a need.

At both Huckleberry Hill Elementary and Whisconier Middle School portable classrooms have been used to accommodate the need for more classroom space. A Space Utilization Study is underway by the consulting firm Milone and MacBroom to project the need for more permanent solutions to space requirements in light of projected demographic shifts and limited potential for addition of significant numbers of single family homes.

### *RECREATIONAL FACILITIES*

Progress on Brookfield's recreational facilities during the prior planning period has included upgrades to Cadigan Field and Town Beach, and replacement of Kid's Kingdom play structures. The Department of Parks and Recreation has also shepherded the plans for new a new paved fully accessible bike path through the design and permitting processes and secured the funding to complete the first and second phases of the Still River Greenway Project. The Still River Greenway will connect the municipal center with the Four Corners through a 2-mile multi-use path that bridges the Still River and meanders along its shores.

Among the projects the Parks and Recreation Department hopes to undertake in the next decade include the following:

- Plans for field replacements/upgrades
- BHS will need new lighting on stadium field ($300K)
- Complete renovation of tennis courts
- Replacement of the BHS turf field
- Cadigan Field lighting project
- Proposed Field House
- Recrowning of grass fields
- Splash pad at Town Park
- Development of underutilized Town property
- BHS facilities (such as restrooms and locker rooms)
- Grounds Department facility presently at BHS will need to be replaced

## Transportation System

A number of factors are at play in the consideration of Brookfield's transportation system and ways for improving it. Among these factors, the facilities for pedestrians and cyclists have risen in ranking of importance. The individual health benefits and the twin environmental benefits have influenced state public policy on this matter. Respondents to surveys and invitations for comment on EnvisionBrookfield.com contributed comments and suggestions for improvements to all modes of transportation in Brookfield. This plan integrates improvements for all modes of transportation into consideration for resolving transportation issues during the coming decade.

Both commercial and residential growth in the Federal Road corridor necessitates the implementation of policies that include all modes of transportation. These Complete Streets policies plan for the safe use of the roadway by all users. Inclusion of mass transit options, in particular bus and commuter rail, will address the full range of transportation options.

Brookfield residents responding to a survey about walking, biking and getting around town by car note the need for facilities for pedestrians, improvements to Federal Road. This is particularly important in connecting shopping areas and multifamily developments along southern Federal Road and throughout the Four Corners area.

Sidewalks have been planned for the Four Corners area Town Center District and a portion of that plan has been funded for construction in 2015. However, these are essentially the first sidewalks in Brookfield. Zoning Commission regulations permit inclusion of sidewalks and roadway improvements for Special Permit approvals. The Zoning Commission is responding to public interest in completing streets for all users by requiring sidewalks for new developments with the expectation that connections will be made to a wider network as the town grows.

A roadway improvement plan for southern Federal Road prepared by Milone and MacBroom for HVCEO comprises a portion of the following section. It includes improvements for pedestrians, cyclists, bus riders and drivers. A transportation plan for the central section of Federal Road has not been prepared, but new residential projects in this area are a significant reason to develop a complete street approach to the section of Federal Road between Junction Road (Route 133) and the Route 7 interchange.

The low-density pattern of residential development has not included requirements for sidewalks in subdivisions, but Brookfield residents report that they walk comfortably in their neighborhoods when shoulders

are wide and vehicles travel at slower speeds. Improvements to local roads that include considerations for pedestrians and cyclists are part of this section.

## ROUTE 7 BYPASS

### *Traffic congestion dramatically reduced*

US Route 7 is a limited-access expressway that enters Brookfield from Danbury and provides access to Brookfield from both the north and south. It is a major north-south route for Western Connecticut bringing significant numbers of shoppers to southern Federal Road. It previously terminated in Brookfield near the Four Corners area. Traffic volumes from the limited-access highway caused considerable congestion in that area until the bypass was completed.

The planning and permitting for the Route 7 bypass involved environmental approvals from the Army Corps of Engineers and the Federal Highway Administration. Construction began in 2006 and was completed and open in 2009. The impacts have included reduced congestion with traffic volumes dropping dramatically and reduced commercial activity in the Four Corners area.

### *Impacts to Four Corners area*

The dramatic reduction in traffic volumes north of the Route 7 Interchange has had mixed economic effects. Reports in the Danbury News Times quoted merchants whose loyal customers were glad to be able to turn left easily to reach their businesses. Other established Four Corners businesses built new facilities on lower volume roads in the Four Corners and invested in the area.

The reduction in traffic has added to the changes that support the development of a revitalized downtown node around the intersection of Route 202 and Route 25. The provision of public water and sewer to the area were also necessary changes to facilitate the development of a village. This intersection of Federal Road (Route 202) and Whisconier Road (Route 25) was the location where commerce was traditionally thriving in 19$^{th}$ and early 20$^{th}$ century Brookfield fueled by the railroad, an old fashioned Transit Oriented District, a development pattern this area may revisit once again in the decade ahead.

**Issue**: ***THE VISIBILITY OF THE FOUR CORNERS***

- Commuters who used to pass through the Four Corners area now utilize the Route 7 bypass reducing the commute related traffic to the Four Corners.
- Signage on Route 7 does not highlight the location of the Brookfield Craft Center, a significant cultural resource, or convenience shopping close to the exit 11 ramps.

**Goal:** To improve the visibility of the Four Corners to travelers on Route 7 from both directions to promote businesses in the Four Corners.

**Strategies:**

| Section/ Issue | No. | Strategy | Leader | Supporting Resources |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **TRANS1** | **1a** | Work with Four Corners businesses and CT DOT to locate signage for commercial and non-profit entities in the Four Corners | CDD | |
| **TRANS1** | **1b** | Identify funding sources, design and install signage on Route 7 directing drivers to Four Corners businesses | BOS | |

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## *STATE ROUTE 202 IMPROVEMENTS*

### *Northern Portion*

For the portion of Federal Road (Route 202) north of the Route 7 Interchange a conceptual plan for sidewalks and a continuation of the bike path entering the area via the Still River Greenway are planned. A portion of this plan has been developed into the Four Corners Sidewalk and Access Management Plan prepared by URS Corporation for which construction funds are partially secured.

This complete street plan has been developed to facilitate the creation of Brookfield's new downtown at the Four Corners. The plan includes 8' wide sidewalks, lighting, street furniture and a bi-directional bike path on

the western side of Route 202, Federal Road that brings cyclists to the center of the district.

Town staff and elected officials collaborated with CT DOT to secure approval of these facilities. Both parallel and angled on-street parking was central to the discussion with the CT DOT.

Another feature of the downtown streetscape design is a short section of Route 25 from the Four Corners intersection east to the Brookfield Craft Center. Although the location of the crosswalk to the Brookfield Craft Center would not be approved there today based on the CT DTOT Highway Design Manual, improvements to the intersection will make this location safer for pedestrians to cross. Slowing traffic for pedestrian crossing is important at this location because of the lack of parking adjacent to the central Brookfield Craft Center building.

### *Central Portion*

The portion of Route 202 between Route 133, Junction Road, and the Route 7 interchange carries much lighter traffic than the southern part of the corridor. The effect of two large housing projects and an approved, but as yet unconstructed, shopping center in this section of roadway is unclear.

The 2002 Plan refers to the creation of a half interchange for Route 7 at Route 133. The concept discussed in the plan was for a northbound off ramp and southbound on ramp. There are currently no plans to move forward on this idea.

### *Southern Portion*

Due to the intensity of land uses and traffic volumes south of Route 133, widening was considered desirable in the 2002 Plan as part of new developments. The CT DOT plan prepared in 1990 consisted of a three-lane roadway (two north-bound lanes) from the southern end of Old New Milford Road to Route 133 and a five-lane roadway south of Old New Milford Road with a center lane for left turns at intersections and a two-way left-turn lane at selected locations between intersections. The roadway is currently two lanes each north- and south-bound with additional left turn lanes at some intersections.

Brookfield has seen redevelopment in this section of Federal Road during the last decade along with the commensurate traffic congestion. Portions of this section carry 30,000 vehicles per day. A long vacant property at 106 Federal Road was redeveloped for BJ's Wholesale Club along with the sale of gasoline. Costco, a long established wholesale club location, made a significant addition to its principle building and added the sale of

gasoline. New construction and new tenancy at several retail and restaurant uses has stoked the economic engine of Brookfield in this section of Federal Road.

The HVCEO sponsored Route 202 study conducted by Milone and MacBroom provides proposals for Driveway Management, Complete Streets facilities and roadway improvements. The Complete Streets facilities include sidewalks, crosswalks and wide shoulders for bikes. The draft Driveway Management plan and the Roadway Improvements plan propose to add some dedicated turn lanes, new traffic signals and improved circulation at both ends of Old New Milford Road.

The ideal road cross section provides five foot wide shoulders for safe biking, a two foot grass shelf for winter snow storage and five foot wide sidewalks. The location of crosswalks at key intersections is part of the improved roadway plan. Fitting all of these features into both sides of the roadway is challenging when the addition of turn lanes is also needed to facilitate the movement of vehicles. This is not feasible throughout the entire corridor. Current conditions throughout the corridor lack both wide shoulders and sidewalks, so making the most of the existing roadway will be challenging.

Vehicular circulation must be improved through traffic control devices at key locations and roadway design that provides for smooth merging. The following are the three primary issues addressed by this portion of the Route 202 study: Old Gray's Bridge Road and Federal Road intersection does not provide means for southbound traffic; left turn lanes in both directions at Shoprite/Chick-fil-A/Savings Bank of Danbury; Old New Milford Road and Federal Road.

### Issue: *THE PEDESTRIAN-FRIENDLY VILLAGE IN THE FOUR CORNERS AREA*

The Revitalization Plan outlines a Complete Streets initiative that has been acted on by developing construction level documents for the building sidewalks and the continuation of a bike path. The Four Corners Sidewalk and Access Management Plan was completed by URS in January 2015 and the encroachment permit from the CT DOT was issued in March 2015. Partial funding is secured and construction of the central portion of the plan is slated to be completed by November 2015.

**Goal:** Complete the improvements necessary to make the Four Corners area a pedestrian and bike friendly district.

## Strategies:

| Section/ Issue | No. | Strategy | Leader | Supporting Resources |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **TRANS2** | **1** | Identify funding sources to complete the conceptual layout for sidewalks extending along Federal Road, Station Road and Whisconier Road | CDD, BOS | |
| **TRANS2** | **2a** | Develop a conceptual layout for complete street features on Laurel Hill Road and Old Route 7. | DPW | |
| **TRANS2** | **2b** | Develop a conceptual layout for interior connections among adjacent lots | ZC | |
| **TRANS2** | **2c** | Identify funding to complete the sidewalk and non-motorized access throughout the Four Corners area | CDD, BOS | |
| **TRANS2** | **3a** | Develop a public spaces plan for the Four Corners including amenities in lands donated to the Town for park use and foot paths along the Still River on lands granted in easement to the Town. | PC | ZC |
| **TRANS2** | **3b** | Identify funding sources for public spaces plan. | CDD | BOS |

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## Issue: *CENTRAL FEDERAL ROAD*

- The addendum to the 2002 Plan that addressed this section of roadway did not recommend any changes to the plan at that time. In light of recent approvals for developments that will increase residential density in this area and zoning regulation changes affecting this area, a review of long-term goals for this area is recommended.

- Zoning regulation changes extended the IRC 80/40 zone to include all of this portion of the corridor, an incentive overlay zone was place on three parcels in this area allowing multi-family development outside the CGS 8-30g Affordable Housing framework and regulation text changes permitting indoor boat storage in this zone were adopted.
- Improvements for bikes and pedestrians to the central portion of Federal Road between Route 133, Junction Road and the Route 7 Interchange may be necessary due to two multifamily housing projects comprising 290 new residential units and other large scale commercial and industrial uses that have yet to be constructed.

**Goal:** To develop a master plan and strategies for addressing the needs of this section of Federal Road rather than allowing uncoordinated growth.

**Strategies:**

| Section/ Issue | No. | Strategy | Leader | Required Support |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **TRANS3** | 1 | Define the transportation needs of this section of the Federal Road corridor. | CDD | DPW, ZC, BOS |
| **TRANS3** | 2 | Develop a master plan for roadway improvements to accommodate the anticipated uses along the roadway. | PC | |
| **TRANS3** | 3 | Consider zoning regulation changes to accomplish the master plan objectives. | ZC | ZEO, CDD |

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**Issue:** ***SOUTHERN FEDERAL ROAD CONTINUES TO BE DIFFICULT TO NAVIGATE AND AT TIMES CONGESTED.***

- The CT DOT project focused on lower Federal Road has been on hold for a number of years. The revision to this plan for HVCEO by Milone and MacBroom updates this plan with complete street principles in mind.

- The success of Brookfield's commercial corridor on Federal Road south of Route 133 will be influenced by the easy and safety with which visitors to the area can navigate the roads and sidewalks.
- The ability to get around with other means than cars is important for Brookfield to remain attractive to new residents and retain current residents as they age. There is a significant overlap in the roadway features preferred by those in wheelchairs, those using walkers or strollers and those using bikes.

**Goal:** Alleviate areas of vehicular congestion and address safety issues for pedestrians and cyclists on southern Federal Road.

**Strategies:**

| Section/ Issue | No. | Strategy | Leader | Supporting Resources |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **TRANS4** | **1a** | Enlist the support of WCCOG for the Route 202 Improvement Plans. | FS | |
| **TRANS4** | **1b** | Identify funding opportunities for complete street plan improvements. | CDD | |
| **TRANS4** | **1c** | Implement the curb cut management plans as new tenants move into vacant commercial spaces or when property owners redevelop property. | ZC | |

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## *Local Road Issues*

### *Intersection site lines and geometry*

The accident rate on Brookfield's town roads is very low in general with few difficult and dangerous intersections. Those intersections with Federal Road are an exception to that statement.

Among the local road intersections reviewed, several intersections were identified as warranting review.

Long Meadow Hill and Whisconier Road (Route 25) – The geometry of this intersection makes visibility difficult.

Rabbit Lane and Whisconier Road (Route 25) – Turning left to go south at this intersection is difficult.

Silvermine Road and Pocono Road – The turning radius for the truck traffic given the commercial locations on Pocono Road. Another possible place to consider is each end of Whisconier Road.

Stony Hill Road and Ironworks Hill Road– Both of these are narrow road with narrow shoulders that is often traveled in excess of the 25 mph speed limit and is also designated with a sign alerting drivers to share the road with bicycles.

Huckleberry Hill Road and Rocky Road and Huckleberry Hill Road and Old New Milford Road are both three point intersections with only two-way stops may hold potential for accidents.

### *Pavement management*

In April 2010, the Town of Brookfield began a five-year road paving and restoration program to bring our streets up to an acceptable level. At the beginning of the program the overall system PCI rating is 39 out of 100. Through the approval of a Town Referendum the Department of Public Works has available $10 million to be spent in no more than five years for the purpose of road restoration and reconstruction. In the initial years the Department of Public Works concentrated most of the funding on more heavily used main arteries and collector roads. In the last year we are turning our attention to residential roads aiming to repair a large percentage of those with the funds available. Apart from funds for repairs, funds for maintenance must continually be allocated in the town budget so that these good conditions can be retained for as long as possible.

The Town is using a variety of restoration and reconstruction methods. Some of these include crack sealing and micro-surfacing, milling and paving, cold in place recycling, overlays and reclamation and paving. To make the program work the correct restoration or reconstruction method must be selected that best matches the current condition of the road being addressed. Each road will be re-evaluated on a yearly basis. The goal of this phase of the program is to raise our system PCI rating of 65, an acceptable level that we have attained in 2015.

The Department of Public Works will continue to improve local roads as funds allow, however after this phase the town should allocate funds annually to maintain and reconstruct roads as part of its capital

investment program. The roads that were reconstructed at the beginning of the program will be five years old, a third of their normal lifespan.

### *Bike Routes*

Brookfield residents report that they bike both for recreation and to get from one place to another, however, until recently there has been little awareness about biking in Brookfield. Bicycle advocates have assisted the town in designing and locating signage to alert motorists about making room for cyclists on three principle cycling routes, Pocono Road.

The Housatonic Valley Council of Elected Officials (HVCEO) completed a report on biking in the region called The Greater Danbury Regional Bike Plan in December 2014 (Report 160) to update an earlier effort on this topic. The plan outlines general considerations as well as specific recommendations for each town in the region and should be a guide to Brookfield on this topic.

**Issues**: ***BIKING***

- Biking has become a principle alternative for a small but influential group of citizens. Facilities for bike commuting are one of the factors that can make Brookfield a desirable place to live.
- Residents who are comfortable biking on most roads in Brookfield state that they don't feel comfortable biking on Federal Road and Stony Hill Road, or where vehicles travel at 45 miles per hour and shoulders are narrow.
- Other residents, who are comfortable riding on back roads and in their neighborhoods, see a place for bike paths in public parks.
- The Complete Streets Plan in the Route 202 Improvement Plan ends approximately 1,000 feet from the intersection of Candlewood Lake Road and Federal Road. This is a dangerous intersection for bikes, but a crucial point en route to or from Danbury.

**Goal:** Improve safety and accessibility for bikers in Brookfield, both recreational users and bike commuters.

**Strategies:**

| Section/ Issue | No. | Strategy | Leader | Supporting Resources |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **TRANS5** | **1** | Collaborate with CT DOT, bike advocates and DPW to improve safety for bikes in the vicinity of Federal Road, White Turkey Road and Candlewood Lake Road. | PRD | BOS, CDD, DPW |
| **TRANS5** | **2** | Develop a town-wide Bike Plan. | PRD | PC, CDD |
| **TRANS5** | **3** | Consider how to work with the Bike Friendly Communities network to improve bike safety in Brookfield | PRD | DPW, CDD |

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## *Transit Options*

### *Commuter Rail Service*

The CT DOT project evaluating the Danbury Branch and possible extension of commuter rail service from Danbury to New Milford is continuing. The Danbury Branch Study maintains a website at www.danburybranchstudy.com where the documents and maps for this CT DOT project (# 302-008) can be found. The Federal Transportation Environmental Assessment was published in May 2013 and the State of Connecticut launched a public engagement platform to develop ideas to transform transportation in Connecticut. The current governor has expressed support for this extension of commuter rail service to New Milford via Brookfield.

Other potential rail connections may be feasible if ridership continues to rise. The CT DOT efforts to generate good ideas to improve transit in Connecticut can be seen on their website http://www.transformct.org/ where ideas can be mapped.

During the Danbury Branch Study community outreach of the CT DOT in 2010 representatives of the Town of Brookfield indicated a preference for the location of a station stop in Brookfield at the Four Corners. A conceptual drawing of the required parking for this proposed station

stop was developed. In the preferred conceptual layout, the historic train station would be relocated to accommodate this plan, but the historic hotel adjacent to the train tracks would be retained.

**Issue:** ***COMMUTER RAIL SERVICE***

The extension of commuter rail service to Brookfield and north to New Milford is an improvement the decisions about which rest primarily at the state level. Towns are consulted, but are not the primary decision makers in this area. Nonetheless, local feedback and changing local circumstances can contribute to the state level decision making process.

**Goal:** Provide support and community feedback to state level decision makers to support extension of commuter rail service to Brookfield and New Milford as priority projects and promote the allocation of state funds for this purpose.

**Strategies:**

| Section/ Issue | No. | Strategy | Leader | Supporting Resources |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **TRANS6** | **1** | Work with local proponents and state representatives from our region who support improving and extending commuter rail service. | FS | CDD |
| **TRANS6** | **2** | Advocate with CT DOT and their consulting engineers for the re-evaluation of ridership models to get a truer view of ridership potential. | WCCOG | CDD |

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## *Bus Service*

The Housatonic Area Regional Transit District (HART) operates both fixed route buses and SweetHart, a dial-a-ride program for seniors and the disabled. Both of these transportation options continue to run with anticipated additions to hours of operation for SweetHart and possible

modifications to the fixed route buses for greater efficiency as funding permits.

## Utility Services

### *Sewer Service*

The Brookfield sewer system is comprised of a collection system that has over 18 miles of gravity and force main piping and ten pumping stations. The collection system conveys all the sewerage to a single pump station, known as the "Caldor Pump Station" at the intersection of Federal Road and Candlewood Lake Road.

In 2009 a major expansion of the sewer system was completed and during this same time the Brookfield WPCA transitioned from a Special Revenue Fund in the Town to and Enterprise Fund with finances separate from the Town. Consequently, the Brookfield WPCA is responsible and accountable to run the sewer operation as a stand-alone entity with a long-term view. The Brookfield WPCA has operated since 1975. The analysis conducted as part of this report shows average daily flows over the last 30 years generally follow economic growth as measured by the Grand List of Values of town properties.

### *2012 Sewer Study*

A study titled 20 Year Sanitary Sewer Flow Projections (the Sewer Study) was conducted in 2012 to insure that the Town of Brookfield reserves adequate wastewater treatment capacity in the regional Danbury treatment plant to accommodate future growth. Birdsall Services Group was retained by the Water Pollution Control Authority (WPCA) to present data and estimate future sanitary sewer flows in Brookfield over twenty years. The Town of Brookfield utilized this study to make decisions in 2012 when renegotiation of the 1992 Interlocal Agreement with the City of Danbury that permits the town to discharge up to 500,000 gallons per day (GPD) to the Danbury wastewater treatment plant.

The Sewer Service Area map (Physical Conditions Map 8) in the study represents all properties that are currently within the existing sewer service areas that are eligible to connect but are not currently connected, future projects and other properties with potential to build. Properties in the Four Corners area are included in these categories and will be a part of the 2017 review of the projections for future sewage flows to the Danbury plant.

The result of the analysis of historical flow data, identification of future anticipated sewer service areas and an evaluation of the economic growth potential concluded that 10-year flow projections range from 80-95% of

current allocation. The analysis projects flow based on Connecticut Public Health Code and then compares these projections with actual flow to increase the accuracy of the flow projections.

The study recommended that the WPCA maintain the current capacity commitment for the next 10 years, but re-evaluate the projection of sewer flows every five years. This recommendation would have the reassessment completed in 2017 as some of the approved mixed use and residential projects in the Four Corners area are completed and occupied.

### *Further Expansion*

The future sewer limit areas used in the sewer study aimed to insure that there is adequate infrastructure and reserved plant capacity to support the desired land use patterns rather than have the availability or unavailability of sewerage capacity dictate land use and future growth in the town. Several factors were reviewed including current growth patterns, current zoning and environmentally sensitive areas.

Among those properties that are eligible to connect, or are buildable some have been constructed and are producing sewage flows. These include BJ's Wholesale Club, The Residences at Laurel Hill, 871 Federal Road (Riverview Townhomes) and the High Meadow, Ledgewood and Newbury Crossing condominium complexes.

Among the planned future connection projects are areas zoned more densely than 80,000 square feet (~1.8 acres) per lot such as Candlewood Shores, Arrowhead Point, Candlewood Lake Road, Meadowbrook Manor, Greenridge, Dean Road, Pleasant Rise, and Vale Road. Whisconier School and Center School line expansion are also on the list of planned future connection projects (Tables 4, 5 and 6 in the study).

The continued growth of the Four Corners area could be enhanced with the addition of sewer and water service to the properties on the east side of the river. This historic section of the area would benefit from these services in order to permit more intensive land uses perhaps including a train station stop or changes of use in existing historic structures. This extension was considered previously and has recently been approved by the Planning Commission through an "8-24 referral" as a project meeting the intent of the Plan of Conservation and Development and therefore recommended for investment of town resources.

**Issue:** ***SEWER CAPACITY FOR GROWTH***

Brookfield has been successful in accomplishing a number of the strategies laid out in the 2002 Plan. This achievement will help the town accommodate increased residential density in the limited area where both zoning regulations and infrastructure allow. The Incentive Overlay zone

in the Four Corners area allows residential densities up to 24 dwelling units per developable acre are permitted along with retail, restaurant, office uses or other non-residential uses on the street front buildings. Periodic re-evaluations of the sewer capacity calculations will help control growth in Brookfield.

**Goal:** Plan mixed-use village style development and older residential neighborhood upgrades to sanitary systems in a manner that allows future planning for sewage plant capacity.

**Strategies:**

| Section/ Issue | No. | Strategy | Leader | Required Support |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **UTIL1** | 1 | Evaluate projections for future flows as outlined in the Sewer Study every 5 years. | WPCA | CDD |
| **UTIL1** | 2 | Promote low impact development and storm water infiltration techniques to protect aging residential septic systems | HD | ZEO, WEO |
| **UTIL1** | 3a | Evaluate the impact on the sewer flow projections of a project to extend sewer and water service across the bridge crossing the Still River at the Four Corners. | WPCA | |
| **UTIL1** | 3b | Identify the resources that could fund this project including Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP) and Transit Oriented Development grants | WPCA | CDD |

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### *Public Water*

The previous division of the town into two service areas has been replaced by the purchase of Brookfield's small community water systems by Aquarion Water Company. This change has created the requirement for the Town of Brookfield to protect the Meadowbrook well fields which now serve more than 1,000 residential customers. This was done by establishing a DEEP approved Aquifer Protection Area Program.

### *Natural Gas*

Natural gas is available along Federal Road in some other adjacent locations in Brookfield. Iroquios Gas Company constructed a gas compressor station on High Meadow Road to improve natural gas service in the area.

### *Wireless Communication*

Improvements in wireless communication have been made over the course of the last decade under the jurisdiction of the Connecticut Siting Council. The Planning Commission has approved the placement of a cellular tower behind the Pocono Road Fire House.

# VI. Management of the Plan

The plan should be reviewed annually by the Planning Commission. This will involve an annual update from all boards, commissions and staff who have contributed to the plan. The results of this update will be presented to the Board of Selectmen annually on a date to be determined upon prior to adoption of this plan.

# VII. Supporting Documents

1. Four Corners Brookfield Town Center District Revitalization Plan, prepared by Fitzgerald and Halliday, Inc., dated September 2012
2. Brookfield Housing Study, prepared by 4ward Planning, dated August 4, 2014
3. Demographic Study and Population Growth Analysis, prepared by Milone and MacBroom, dated March 19, 2014
4. Four Corners Sidewalk and Access Management Plan, prepared by URS/AECOM
5. Draft Route 202 Complete Streets Evaluation and Driveway Management Plans, prepared by Milone and MacBroom, current draft dated November 2014
6. 20 Year Sanitary Sewer Flow Projections, prepared by Birdall Services Group, Inc., dated June 2012
7. Candlewood Lake – 30 Year Water Quality and Drawdown Efficacy Analyses, prepared by New England Environmental, Inc., dated May 27, 2014
8. Still River Watershed Plan, conducted by Housatonic Valley Association, ongoing
9. Town of Brookfield Hazard Mitigation Plan, prepared by Milone and MacBroom, adopted November 2014
10. Public comment and survey data collected through EnvisionBrookfield.com, a website hosted by Urban Interactive Studios
11. GIS System developed for the Town of Brookfield

# VIII. Tables and Figures

## Tables

1. ***Table 1.*** *Population Changes in Brookfield 1970-2013*
2. ***Table 2.*** *Age groups as a percentage of total population 1970-2013*
3. ***Table 3.*** *Changes in household composition from 2000-2013*
4. ***Table 4.*** *2015 Brookfield Land Use/Development Potential*

## Figures

1. ***Figure 1.*** *Annualized Percentage Change in Population by Age Cohorts, 2000-2010*
2. ***Figure 2.*** *Population Changes in Brookfield 1970-2010*
3. ***Figure 3.*** *Worker Inflow and Outflow in Brookfield*
4. ***Figure 4.*** *Rented Housing Units Comparison*

# IX. Supporting Maps

## Physical Conditions Maps

1. **Topography Map**
2. **Watershed Map**
3. **Wetland Soils and Watercourses Map**
4. **FEMA Floodplain**
5. **Critical Habitat and Natural Diversity Database Map**
6. **Surface Water Quality Map**
7. **Ground Water Quality Map**
8. **Sewer Service Map**
9. **Public Water System Map**

## Land Use Maps

1. **Current Land Use Map**
2. **Current Zoning Map**
3. **Subdividable Residential Land Map**
4. **Residential Density Map**
5. **Open Space Map**
6. **Historic Resources Map**