

TOWN OF COVENTRY

PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT



July 2020

PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT

FOR THE TOWN OF COVENTRY, CONNECTICUT

PRESENTED BY THE COVENTRY PLANNING AND
ZONING COMMISSION

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*This Plan of Conservation & Development is dedicated to the people
of Coventry.*

*You gave your thoughts and feelings on wide-ranging issues affecting
the Town's growth, and they are here in this document.*



North Coventry Green

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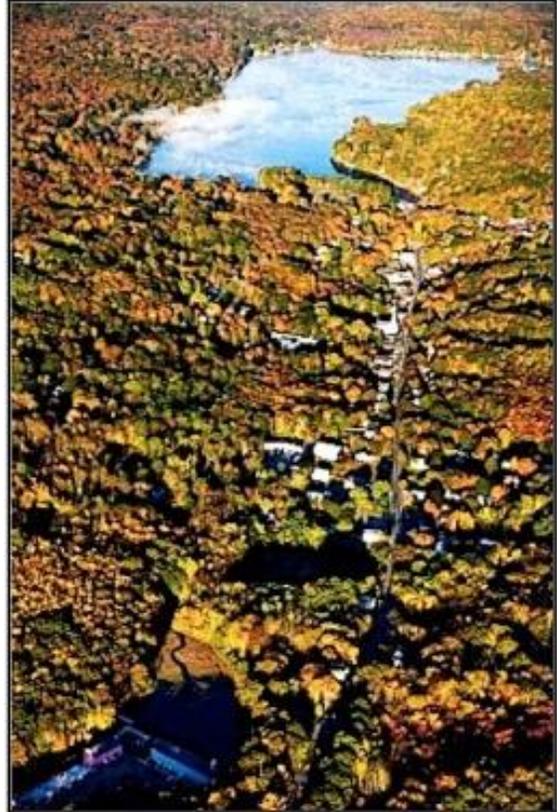
1 INTRODUCTION

A. Coventry

Some 20 miles east of Hartford lies Coventry, a town with rich rural character and a place Native Americans called Wangumbaug, meaning “crooked pond,” after the shape of the then-300-acre lake within its bounds. The town is probably best known as the birthplace of America’s young Revolutionary War hero Nathan Hale.

But its claims to history are much more varied. From the Civil War to the onset of the Great Depression, its strategic waterways fed one of the highest concentrations of mills in New England, the majority along the Mill Brook. To this day, South Coventry Village retains its authenticity, interrupted by two modern-day commercial retail buildings.

The town divided itself into two societies of sorts, connected to the two early churches. The North Parish farmers called themselves the “woods” people and maintained ties to the Second Congregational Church and life along the Boston Turnpike, now Route 44. Their work and education was connected to Manchester and Rockville. The southern residents called themselves the “village” people and were oriented to the First Congregational Church, the railroad depots, the lower Windham Turnpike and the lake. Their occupational and educational orientation was to Willimantic.



The way we think of Coventry today springs from our Town’s rich and colorful history.

- Fine old homes and a pair of town greens remain from colonial times.
- Stone walls wind along farm fields and through re-grown woodlands, pleasing reminders of our agricultural period.
- Venerable traces of mills beside streams that powered them, recalling our industrial era.
- Rustic farms and barns from all periods speak of our ties to the land.

The connection we make with these and countless other links to Coventry's past is what we call rural character. Rural character is the essential nature of our Town and keeps it vital and fresh.

Many choose to live here for the enduring charm of our Lake, the scenic vistas opening to fields, woodlands, hills and quaint historic sites, the small villages and communities, the quiet and privacy, farmland and the dark sky at night. These are among the many expressions of Coventry's rural character and we cherish them.

In surveys and interviews over the years, the people of Coventry have endorsed these sentiments. They've made it clear they feel rural character is the Town's most important quality and should be preserved.

B. The Plan of Conservation and Development

The State Requires a Plan of Conservation and Development

The State of Connecticut recognizes the benefits of cities and towns planning their future. Section 8-23 of the Connecticut General Statutes requires that each municipality prepare a Plan of Conservation & Development (POCD), in consideration of the Conservation and Development Policies Plan for Connecticut (2013-2018). This POCD is consistent with the State Plan of Conservation & Development and the Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) Regional Land Use Plan.

Purpose of the Plan

A good plan is a blueprint for the future. Our POCD records wide-ranging community input and projections by experts on Coventry's growth, and gives direction to public and private development that will define that growth. The Plan's objectives are meant to look a decade or more into the future and then offer guidance on short and mid-term land use decisions.

Creating the Plan

This POCD took more than two years of dedicated effort to complete. A Planning & Zoning sub-committee was charged with assembling the new thought and information needed for presentation in the POCD. They met in bi-weekly sessions beginning in the summer of 2017, consulting extensively with the Town Planner and other Town staff, boards and commissions, civic groups and the general community.

This collaborative work was aided by information gleaned from a statistically valid citizen survey completed in 2019. Survey results were supplemented by Town-sponsored visioning sessions for Coventry citizens to help determine their prevailing thought on future growth, development, conservation and public facilities.

In addition, significant guidance was obtained from future demographic trends for the town and the State, existing zoning regulations, commercial, retail and service trends, and the Fundamental Values expressed later in this section.

This document is the fruit of those efforts. It is presented in a format of goals and recommendations for each element of the Plan along with an overview of the relevant factors behind them, and mapping to reflect current and future Plan recommendations.

The Plan document is final when the people of Coventry have the opportunity to comment during scheduled public hearings and is then adopted, with any amendments based on public comment, by the Planning & Zoning Commission.

POCD Implementation

Going forward, the Plan's legitimacy is validated as it guides and informs the Town's many decisions on land use, zoning, land acquisition, public works, new public facilities and infrastructure, among many other official decisions.

Key to the Plan's effectiveness is how well it's understood and supported by the public, and how thoroughly the Planning & Zoning Commission and Town Council act, in harmony with the Town's staff and Boards and Commissions to implement its recommendations.

To help achieve a broader understanding of the Plan, some supplemental background material has been included in it. This material is available for review at the Town Clerk's office and on the Town website. A list of these supplements—including the survey of Town residents—is given at the end of this document.

Once officially adopted, this POCD supersedes the 2010 Plan. It is an advisory document, and its recommendations are not legal mandates.

The POCD is seen as a living document.

The Plan must be adaptable enough to respond to changes in its underlying assumptions, principally the social, economic and technological structure of the town and region. It should be reviewed from 3-5 years after its adoption to be sure those assumptions are still viable. If changes are needed, the Plan should be amended to show them. It is strongly encouraged that all responsible parties in the creation of the POCD participate in the review and/or update.

Although prepared by the Planning & Zoning Commission, this POCD belongs and pertains to the entire Town of Coventry. It reflects community consensus on all aspects of future growth in Town.

C. Community Vitality

By its very nature the Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) embodies the concept of Community Vitality. The planning elements and action items of the POCD are created to insure a community sustains and improves its quality of life for the present and future generations of residents and visitors. The elements described below serve as building blocks for the structure of the plan and were constantly considered when the document was revised and updated.

Community Vitality may be characterized as a place that is comfortable and safe, with good quality housing and infrastructure, low crime rates, good jobs, a growing population, strong civic organizations and civic pride, good schools, social and recreational opportunities and a responsible government.

To maintain its vitality a community must be:

Thriving

- All people have access to quality education, and opportunities for rewarding and satisfying work.
- Every child is guided and supported to develop self-respect, social awareness and respect for others
- Every person who needs to earn a living is supported to find meaningful work that is compensated well enough.
- Every senior citizen has the opportunity to live their final years with comfort and dignity.
- All people have meaningful opportunities for informed and responsible civic engagement, and their energies, and talents are utilized well.
- The business sector maintains healthy and sustainable growth.
- All residents have the facilities for outdoor sports and recreation

Resilient

- Resilience is often associated with city planning and design. Its goal is to give cities the structures, systems and resources that allow them to exist and grow while facing the challenges of society, economics and the climate. However, it clearly relates to towns that are defined as rural, as well as the urban landscape.
- It involves balanced development, an active business climate, and well-designed infrastructure including water, sewer, roads and internet.
- Resilience also includes maintaining the natural systems and resource efficiency (energy, water, waste and recycling)

Collaborative

- Communities should foster a process of shared decision-making in which all the parties with a stake in a problem may constructively explore their differences and develop a joint strategy for action. This concept is both about creating space and opportunity for rational discussion as well as respecting the opinions of those involved. The discussions should center on community problems and solutions, not personal differences.
- Community boards and commissions, libraries, community centers and volunteer-based service organizations all provide the “space” for collaboration. These ‘spaces’ can provide a springboard for the development of partnerships within the community where the stakeholders are better able to leverage their resources and gain more mutual success.
- Positive, accurate and unbiased communication is critical to sharing messages in a community by using a variety of available mediums to be as inclusive as possible. Social media is a powerful tool that can be a good source for collaboration provided it is done in a positive sense.

Forward Looking

- Forward-looking statements are expectations or predictions of future conditions, events or results. They are not guarantees of future performance, but provide a process to continually assess the future needs and risks, and to develop actions consistent with those needs.
- The Plan of Conservation and Development and its full support by the local government and residents is a primary forward-looking tool.



Coventry Farmers' Market

D. Our Fundamental Values

In Coventry, we manage change with a vision, expressed in this Plan and animated by our fundamental values- the shared ideals and standards nurtured over three centuries and most treasured by our citizens.



Agriculture: The Town's rural character has its roots in the tradition of New England agriculture. Farms, large and small, offer pleasing vistas and provide residents with a local source of foods, forest products and other valued commodities. The Coventry Farmers' Market embodies this value.

Community: Coventry's citizens and town staff take pride in caring for the basic needs of all residents. Often they show unique resourcefulness in doing so. The community engages in networking, church groups, schools, clubs and civic associations that build trust, sharing and a refined sense of personal charity.

Neighborhoods: The fundamental building block of any community is its neighborhoods. They promote a sense of ownership, family and cooperation. Neighborhood character and its diverse housing must be protected from encroachment.

Volunteers: Much of the work done to plan and carry out the work of positive growth in Town is done by citizen volunteers. We take heart in these efforts, believe in them, and strongly encourage citizens to volunteer in service to the community.

Vistas: Perhaps the most striking way to define rural character is to look at the scenic vistas in Town. These are an unflinching inspiration to residents and visitors alike. Some of them are singled out in this Plan.

Open Space: Open space is a powerful asset for the Town. We hold environmental, economic, recreational and visual factors in high regard. When we set aside open space to be enjoyed just for what it is, we speak eloquently of our community pride.

Mobility: Coventry is an expansive community that strives for safe, convenient access and mobility in a rich diversity of roads, sidewalks, paths and trails.

Villages: Coventry is blessed with an authentic 19th century mill village on lower Main Street, and an equally historic north village on the Boston Turnpike. These charming areas feature farms and well-kept old homes along with buildings once used as taverns and stage coach stops. Both areas have a Village Green. They are unique facets of our identity.

Businesses: Local enterprise is the backbone of any community's well-being. Jobs and revenue flow from it, residents can get to work easily, and the Town's vital volunteer services enjoy its longstanding support. Many of Coventry's small businesses attract regional visitors as well.

History: Our links to the past range from our stone walls, old homes and barns to mill sites that trace back to the first settlers. We intend to preserve these ties to the past as defining instruments in our Town's character.

Waterways: Coventry is fortunate to have three rivers and three lakes within or along its borders, along with a rich assortment of ponds, brooks and wetlands. Some of these waterways were central to Coventry's early history and helped create its character.



The Skungamaug River

E. Long Range Planning

Proceeding directly from our ideals and values are the long range planning objectives for the future growth of Coventry. These were arrived at by asking citizens and a broad range of experts what's important to them as they view Coventry over the next 10 to 20 years.

In developing these objectives, consensus was taken from many sectors of the community. The means of gathering input are described earlier in this Plan. The recent Citizen Survey provided the baseline. That was supplemented by public visioning sessions and many meetings with civic groups and Town department managers.

The conclusions were quite clear. Coventry's citizens have a high regard for the character of their town and its neighborhoods, and a strong sense of community. The town is considered a safe place to live, with a relatively high quality of life. At the same time, there is a demand for more local jobs, more commercial and specific retail services and more recreational opportunities.



Crossen Farm

Goal

Preserve and maintain the essential rural character of Coventry as change and growth occur in future years.

Recommendations (Action items include the responsible party, in brackets)

1. Anticipate growth so that it can be accommodated by Town facilities and services. Update regulations to guide development and prevent unintended sprawl and to establish appropriate architectural and related standards. [Planning & Zoning Commission, Town Staff]

2. Coventry's future growth should respect the Town's capacity to handle it, including roads, sewers, water supply, drainage, recreation areas and schools, along with fire and police services. Residents must be able to pay for new infrastructure without undue hardship. All plans should respect the integrity of Coventry's rural character.[Town Staff, Boards, Commissions]

3. Create and maintain a positive image of the community as a rural historic visitor's destination, and nice place to call home and to do business. [Town Staff]
4. Provide for public buildings and commercial/industrial development to be sited and designed to enhance the surrounding area and to fit contextually with Coventry's rural character through regulations that stipulate the appropriate setbacks from streets and property lines, landscaped areas or natural terrain, minimal areas of impervious surface, parking areas attractively designed and landscaped, and signage designed and located for a rural setting as specified in the Town's Commercial Development Design Guidelines. [Planning & Zoning Commission, Economic Development Commission and Land Use staff]
5. Recognize that Coventry and its neighboring towns are interdependent in many ways. Explore all viable options for regional cooperation in providing services and reducing their cost. [Town Manager/Council, Public Works, Board of Education]
6. Incorporate into municipal regulations and standards the best progressive means of protecting the physical, social, historic and aesthetic well-being of neighborhoods old and new. [Planning & Zoning Commission, Inland Wetlands, Conservation Commission & Land Use Staff]
7. Take measures to prevent the spread of blight. The Town should consistently support rehabilitation of sub-standard areas where private efforts have not worked. [Town Council, Planning & Zoning and Conservation Commissions, Land Use Staff]
8. Encourage actions by all town bodies to reflect the goals and recommendations of the Plan. All codes, regulations and ordinances that affect conservation and development should be strengthened where necessary, and duly enforced to support the Plan. [Town Staff, Boards, Commissions]
9. Promote greater citizen involvement in local planning efforts, by public meetings, social media, publications, local cable TV access and the Town web site. [Town Staff]
10. Adhere to statutory requirements that all changes to the zoning regulations and map must be consistent with the Town's Plan of Conservation & Development. [Planning & Zoning Commission, Land Use staff]
11. Control the issuance of variances by the Zoning Board of Appeals. [Zoning Board of Appeals and Land Use Staff]
12. Support continuing education for members of Town land use boards and encourage them to communicate fully among themselves. [Town Manager and Director of Planning]

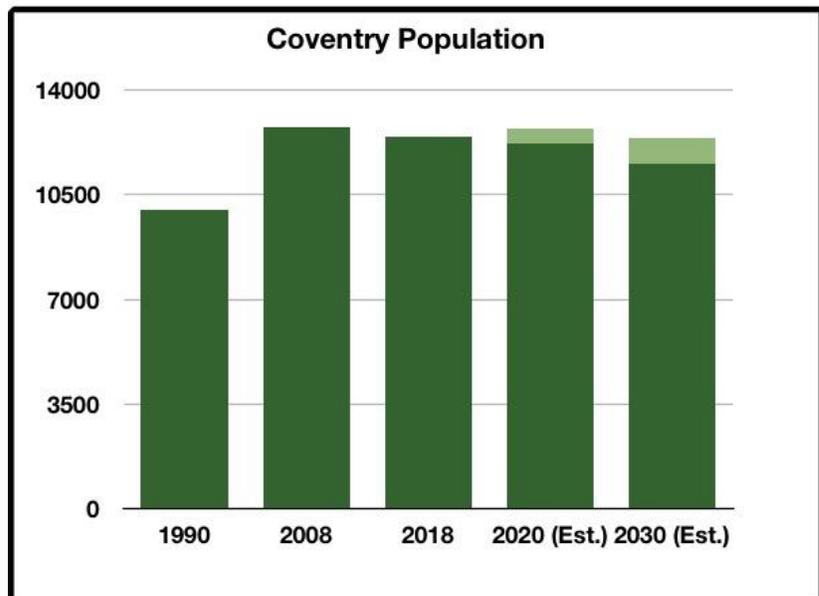
2 DEMOGRAPHICS

Coventry, part of Tolland County, is located 20 miles east of Hartford and includes its signature Lake Wangumbaug. The Hop River forms part of its western border and the Willimantic River its eastern boundary. Its main thoroughfares are Route 44 (east to west) and Route 31 (north to south). The University of Connecticut is five miles east and the town of Windham is southeast. The majority of the working population commutes out of town.



A. Population

Coventry's population in 2018 is estimated at 12,458, a 1.6 percent decrease since 2008. This compares with similar population decrease in the surrounding towns and for Tolland County, and an average 0.6 percent increase for the state in total. Projections for the next ten years vary, by source, some indicating a modest increase, others a modest decrease.



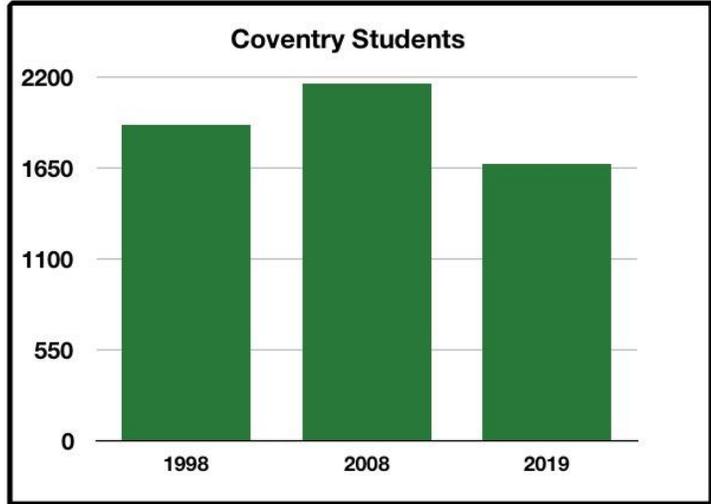
(Projections for 2020 and 2030 show low and high ranges)

B. Households

Households in 2018 numbered 4,710, nearly the same as 2008. This compares with similar averages in the surrounding towns and for Tolland County, and an average of 2.6 percent for the state in total. The vast majority (~91%) of households live in single-family units, many of those (~50%) located on one acre or less.

C. Schools

Total school enrollment of 1,677 in 2019 has decreased 12 percent since 2008 and will continue modest reductions for the future. Projections do not include 104 students who attend school outside of town and 97 students in the Hale Early Education Center.



D. Household Income

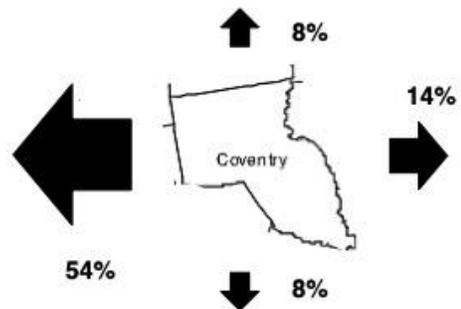
Median household income for 2018 stands at \$88,562, a 10 percent increase from 2008, compared to an average increase of 11 percent for Tolland County, and 10 percent for the state in total.

E. Employment

Employment is dominated by local government and the Board of Education, followed by retail trade, food services, health care and construction. The largest employers in town are the Board of Education, CVS & Walgreens, Highland Park Market, Pelletier Builders and Teleflex.

F. Commuting

The adjacent sketch shows the percentage of those residents who commute out of town, and in which direction they travel. Commuters to the west include those to Manchester, East Hartford, Windsor and Hartford with the largest segment commuting to Hartford. Rush hour traffic is congested particularly at the Route 31 intersections in North Coventry and at the Bolton town line.



G. Age Composition

An analysis of age composition can be an effective tool for anticipating public facility and service needs. The following information illustrates that while Coventry's total population will increase modestly in the future, the age sectors will change more dramatically. Included with the various age sectors is a comment on the needs of those sectors which helps formulate municipal plans and strategies.

H. Age Related Data

<u>Description</u>	<u>Age Range</u>	<u>Needs</u>	<u>% Change to 2025</u>	<u>% Change to 2035</u>
Children	0-19	Child care, schools, recreation	-15	-24
Young Adult	20-29	Housing, jobs	-3	-17
Middle Age	30-49	Family programs, Trade-up homes	-17	-17
Mature Adults	50-64	Smaller homes	-3	-28
Retired	65+	Tax relief, housing options, elderly care	+40	+60

I. Race/Ethnicity

	Coventry	Tolland County	State
White Non-Hispanic	11,681	129,519	2,446,049
Black Non-Hispanic	69	4,425	350,820
Asian Non-Hispanic	89	6,690	154,910
Native American Non-Hisp	0	38	5,201
Other/Multi-race Non-Hisp	221	3,059	84,917
Hispanic or Latino	398	7,860	551,916

Sources:
 Connecticut Economic Resource Center (CERC)
 Connecticut Data Center (UConn)
 Coventry Board of Education
 Coventry Tax Assessor

3 COVENTRY CITIZEN'S SURVEY & COMMUNITY INPUT

A. The Citizen's Survey

The Citizen's survey was conducted in early 2019 by the National Research Center, Inc. (NRC) and the International City/County Management Association (ICMA). The survey and its administration are standardized to assure high quality research methods and directly comparable results across communities. The survey captures residents' opinions within the three pillars of a community, (Community Characteristics, Governance and Participation) across eight central facets of community (Safety, Mobility, Natural Environment, Built Environment, Economy, Recreation and Wellness, Education and Enrichment and Community Engagement). This report compares the 2018 ratings for the Town of Coventry to its previous survey results in 2008.

Overall, ratings in Coventry for 2018 generally remained stable. Of the 69 items for which comparisons were available, 36 items were rated similarly in 2008 and 2019, 11 items showed a decrease in ratings and 22 showed an increase in ratings. Comparisons were not available for 65 items. Notable trends include the following:

- Within the pillar of Community Characteristics, ten aspects were scored more positively in 2019 than in 2008. Three scores for general measures of community livability increased: overall appearance, Coventry as a place to raise children, and the overall image of Coventry. However, evaluations for Coventry as a place to retire decreased. Coventry was seen as a better place to work and educate children; K-12 education and child care/preschool received more positive scores. Ratings for affordable quality housing also increased. Aspects of Recreation and Wellness showed an increase in ratings for health care, but a decline for the availability of affordable quality food.
- Ratings within the pillar of Governance were similar to 2008 ratings, but there were increases for nine measures and decreases for four measures. Evaluations declined for welcoming citizen involvement, recreation programs and cable television. Residents gave higher marks for snow removal, sidewalk maintenance, garbage collection, recycling, sewer services, land use, planning and zoning, public information and the overall direction of the Town..
- Where comparisons were available, Coventry residents tended to report lower levels of participation in 2019 compared to 2008. Fewer residents reported that they had visited a Town park, used Coventry public libraries or attended or watched a local public meeting. In addition, fewer residents contacted Coventry employees in 2019. However, a greater number of residents voted in local elections, and more residents thought the economy would have a positive impact on their income.

B. First Impressions Program

In the fall of 2017, representatives from Coventry participated in a “First Impressions Program” with the town of North Branford. The First Impressions community exchange program was designed to help communities learn about their strengths and shortcomings through the eyes of first-time visitors. Volunteer teams undertake unannounced visits, record observations, and give constructive feedback to the exchange community. The North Branford representatives’ impressions are:

The Village has a historic feel with nice shops and a bakery/coffee shop would be a nice addition. There was a nice variety of antique stores, but additional specialty retail is needed. Outside of the Village there were nice retail options and suggestions included a larger grocery store, a hardware store and a clothing store. They note a variety of housing options, particularly KenyonFalls condominiums and were impressed with Patriots Park and the Hale Homestead.

In summary:

The positive things you observed about this community:

- Historic resources, including renovated village center and Nathan Hale Homestead.
- Rural character
- Recreational opportunities, including town parks and the lake.

The potential opportunities available to this community:

- Revitalized historic village center, including a coffee shop, specialty retail, and arts and culture
- Market other assets such as the lake (non-motorized boating) and Hale homestead
- Capitalize on proximity to UCONN

The biggest obstacles or challenges facing the community:

- Rural location, off the beaten path, and need for public transportation (aging population)
- Lack of industry
- Downtown – limited storefront space and need to connect to housing developments

C. Community Visioning Forums

The Planning & Zoning Commission has conducted community visioning forums in the fall of 2019 where citizens expressed their opinions on a range of subjects such as Housing, Economic Development and Environment/Open Space, and their input was used to help create this POCD.

4 Land Use

A. Existing Land Use

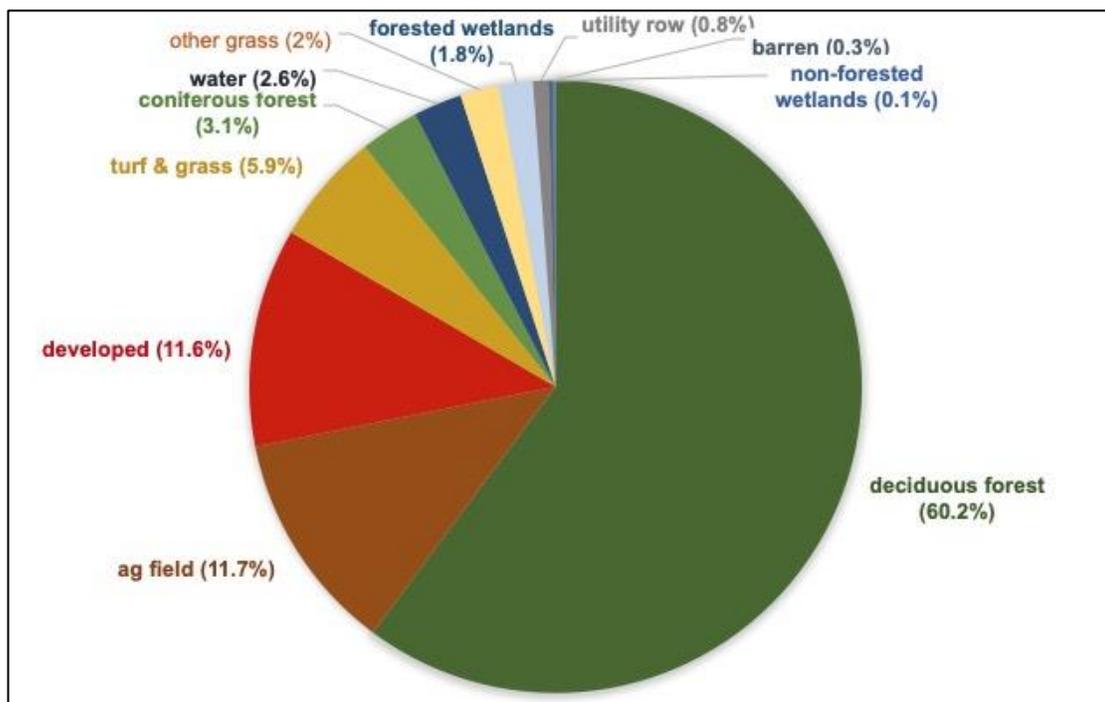
The existing land use pattern of Coventry essentially reflects the Town's rural character. Most of the Town's 24,505 acres is still undeveloped as shown in the data below. The majority of undeveloped land is forest followed by farms, open space and public/private clubs.

B. Town of Coventry Land Use

TOWN OF COVENTRY LAND USE (BY TAX ASSESSOR DATA OWNER/PARCEL)*

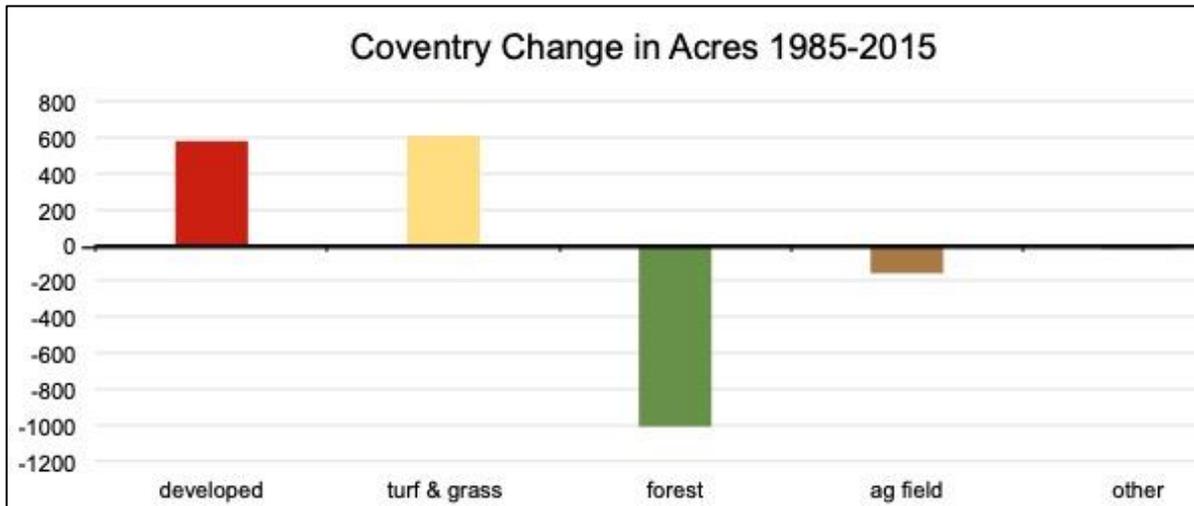
CATEGORY	Acres	Percent	Comment
RESIDENTIAL	12,596	51%	Excludes Conservation Easements (see open space)
COMMERCIAL	1169.2	5%	Includes Utilities
TOWN FACILITY	268.50	1%	Schools, Town Hall, Police, Fire, Exc.
ROADS/RIGHT OF WAY	714.4	3%	
PUBLIC LAKES/PONDS/RIVERS	468	2%	
RELIGIOUS/SOCIETIES	161.4	1%	
PROTECTED OPEN SPACE	2,723	11%	Town Owned, State, Conservation Easements, Land Trust, etc.
PRIVATE CLUBS	919	4%	
FARMS	1239	5%	
VACANT/FOREST	4,247	17%	
TOTAL	24,505.50	100%	

*Calculations are based on tax assessor and GIS data. The calculations are intended to give a general depiction of land use in Coventry. There are expected inconsistencies with the calculations due to the nature of the information available.



C. Coventry Land Use History

	2015	2010	2006	2002	1995	1990	1985	Change
Deciduous forest	60.2%	60.0%	60.3%	60.9%	61.5%	62.4%	64.1%	▼ 3.95%
Agriculture field	11.7%	11.7%	11.6%	11.7%	11.8%	12.4%	12.3%	▼ 0.63%
Developed	11.6%	11.5%	11.4%	11.0%	10.6%	10.2%	9.2%	▲ 2.36%
Turf & grass	5.9%	5.9%	5.9%	5.5%	5.0%	4.6%	3.9%	▲ 1.98%
Coniferous forest	3.1%	3.1%	3.1%	3.1%	3.1%	3.1%	3.2%	▼ 0.06%
Water	2.6%	2.6%	2.6%	2.6%	2.6%	2.7%	2.7%	▼ 0.14%
Other grass	2.0%	2.3%	2.2%	2.4%	2.4%	1.7%	1.6%	▲ 0.49%
Forested wetlands	1.8%	1.8%	1.8%	1.8%	1.8%	1.8%	1.9%	▼ 0.07%
Utility R.O.W.	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%	▼ 0.02%
Barren	0.3%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.3%	0.2%	0.3%	▲ 0.03%
Non-forested wetlands	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.00%
TOTAL	100%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	



Although forests and farmlands still dominate the land area of Coventry, there are small, but substantially developed areas throughout the Town. This is most evident in the area around Lake Wangumbaug, including Coventry Village along Main Street. The Village is Coventry's traditional "downtown." It is home to many of the Town's retail businesses, as well as some public and other institutions.

Approximately one-quarter of the Town's population lives around Lake Wangumbaug and a smaller community at Pine Lake Shores on Eagleville Lake. Most homeowners in this area are members of associations that own and maintain some of the roads, beaches and other community facilities. Homes in the area were typically built as seasonal vacation cottages, but were subsequently converted to year-round dwellings. The density of development is relatively high, with many houses on lots of 5,000 square feet or less.

There is a smaller concentration of commercial and institutional uses in northern Coventry, around the intersection of Main Street (Route 31S) and the Boston Turnpike (Route 44). The area contains several small shopping centers, free-standing commercial buildings, a school, a church and a fire station.

Smaller clusters of commercial uses are located at the intersection of Daly Road and Main Street; along the Boston Turnpike near the Bolton town line and near the intersection of Boston Turnpike, Bread & Milk Street (Route 31) and Swamp Road, the latter two of which have near term plan for growth.

Residential development, aside from the Lake area, is generally distributed throughout the Town. There are many newer residential subdivisions spread throughout the Town, reflecting recent growth and respecting the open space subdivision regulations.

D. Non-Residential Development Potential

The current zoning map allocates about 600 acres to commercial/retail buildings. About 50 percent of that land is not developed primarily in the areas of Route 6, Bread & Milk Street, Route 44 across from Highland Park Plaza and lower Main Street. With the assumption that two-thirds of that property has the soil and terrain for development, and assuming a suburban commercial floor area ratio (total building floor square footage divided by total site square footage) of .20 to .25, the potential exists for over two million square feet of new floor space.

Commercial/retail development in Coventry is limited by distance to limited-access highways, traffic count and little or no public water or sewer infrastructure. Currently, there is just over 400,000 square feet of commercial/retail development in town and it would seem feasible, based on the above data, that the town could support at least double the amount of current floor space, given that development retains its respect for the character and landscape of the town.

Development in the areas of existing water and sewer infrastructure will remain limited because of available land and sewer capacity. In areas without infrastructure, public water systems are logical and are encouraged by the State Department of Public Health. Community sewer treatment systems to support commercial development are an area that requires more study and possible regulation.

E. Impervious Surfaces

Impervious surfaces can have an effect on local streams, both in water quality and streamflow and flooding characteristics.

A significant portion of rainfall in forested watersheds is absorbed into soils (infiltration), is stored as groundwater, and is slowly discharged to streams through seeps and springs. Flooding is less significant in these conditions because some of the runoff

during a storm is absorbed into the ground, thus lessening the amount of runoff into a stream during the storm.

With any development vegetation is replaced by impervious surfaces, thus reducing the area where infiltration to groundwater can occur. Thus, more stormwater runoff occurs - runoff that must be collected by extensive drainage systems that combine curbs, storm sewers, and ditches to carry stormwater runoff directly to streams. More simply, in a developed watershed, much more water arrives into a stream much more quickly, resulting in an increased likelihood of more frequent and more severe flooding. Frequent flooding causes problems for residents and also the local government including erosion, property damage, as well as sand, sediment and ice on roads which have to be cleaned up.

Impervious Coverage Data

14% of land in the Lake Residential Zone is impervious, 9% of which falls on private property as buildings/structures, driveways and parking lots.

	Location	Location Area (Acres)	Impervious Acres	Percent Impervious
All Impervious	Town Boundary	24505	1129.9	5%
All Impervious	LR Zone	971.8	138.39	14%
Roads	LR Zone	971.8	47.3	5%
Buildings/Structures, Driveways, Parking Lots	LR Zone	971.8	91.09	9%
All Impervious	GR40 Zone	4598.3	258.3	6%
All Impervious	GR80 Zone	15361.5	557.2	4%
All Impervious	R/A Zone	1788	48.4	3%

5 CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL

Coventry's historical and cultural resources affect the potential for growth and are major contributions to the Town's quality of life. In addition, the remarkable views are a major contributor to rural character and are a significant factor that draws residents here. (Refer to map #4)



A. Archaeological Resources

According to the Connecticut State Museum of Natural History, archaeological resources in the Town of Coventry range from single artifacts to entire villages and span both the historic and prehistoric periods beginning as early as 10,000 years ago. They provide the primary sources of knowledge of the latter. Archaeological resources in Coventry are particularly important where Native American cultures prior to colonial settlement had no written history or records.

Archaeological sites are often fragile and not immediately apparent. Only a few sites have been inventoried. Special attention must therefore be given to ensure that archaeological resources are not needlessly damaged or destroyed by current land use activity. Not only must it be determined whether archaeological resources are known to exist on a project area, but the likelihood of their presence should be ascertained before an irreversible action is taken. If their presence is likely, more detailed investigations are then warranted to determine the extent and significance of the resources, the potential impact of the proposed project, and the appropriate mitigation measures.

There are numerous areas in Coventry that can be considered archaeologically sensitive. At this time there are 58 identified prehistoric sites. Many of the archaeological sites can be found along the Skungamaug River, Theims Brook adjacent to Hop River Road, Route 31 and Parker Bridge Road. Other locations are along North School Road, an unnamed brook south of Reed Brook (North Coventry), and along the Willimantic River. When one examines the map of known archaeological sites it is clear that over 50 percent of Coventry can be considered archaeologically sensitive. Due to the number of mills along rivers and streams in Coventry's historical past, there are sure to be undiscovered sites as the Town develops and grows.

Current subdivision regulations require a developer to obtain a statement from the State archaeologist regarding potential damage to archaeological elements on their site. If the site is five acres or larger or there are five lots or more, or if there is a potential for impact on archaeologically sensitive areas, then the Planning & Zoning Commission will determine the need to protect the site or excavate for artifacts before construction begins.

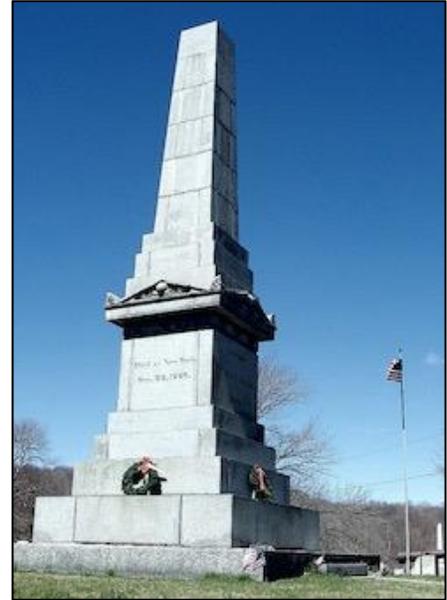
B. Historic Sites

Historic districts:

The Coventry Glass Factory, Boston Turnpike and North River Road, 1815-1848.
South Coventry Historic District, South Coventry Village, 19th Century Mill Village.

Houses on the National Historic Register:

- The Loomis-Pomeroy House, 1747 Boston Turnpike, built in 1810
- The Brigham Tavern, 12 Boston Turnpike, built in 1778
- The Capron-Phillips House, 1129 Main Street, built ca1864
- Captain Nathan Hale Monument, 120 Lake Street, erected in 1846
- The Hale Homestead, 2229 South Street, built in 1776
- The Parker-Hutchinson Farm, 207 Parker Bridge Road
- The Strong-Porter House, 2382 South Street, built in the 1730's.



Recently the David Hayes house at 905 South Street has been designated a historical landmark by the State. David Hayes (1931-2013) was a world renown sculptor.

Historic Museums include the Hale Homestead owned by the Connecticut Landmarks Society, the Strong-Porter House and the Brick School House owned by the Coventry Historical Society, the Turner House owned by the Museum of Connecticut Glass, the 1876 Building (Main Street Visitors Center) and the Tracy Mill building (recently converted to Mill Brook Place- a community rental space), both owned by the town.



Mill Buildings exist on the Mill Brook in South Coventry including the Boynton Mill on Lake Street- now apartments built in 1815; the Tracy Mill on Main Street- town owned, built ca1890; the National Silk Factory and the Kingsbury Box Shop- privately owned, built ca1870 on Mason Street; the old Washington Mill building- now a private business, built ca1890 on Bradbury Lane; and the Kenyon Mill, built ca1864, recently redeveloped as Kenyon Falls condos on Armstrong Road.

More than 250 houses were built in town before 1900, with a fair number erected in the 1700's. The historical and archaeological survey conducted in 1990 by Andrews and Lewis identified nearly 80 homes in the Village area, built in the 19th Century, that are notable for their historical character. While they have no formal preservation controls, many are owned by families wishing to maintain their historical character. This large number of historic homes also creates part of the character of the town and its neighborhoods.

While regulations to limit or prohibit the deterioration or destruction of any of these old structures are not practical, design guidelines exist for development in South Coventry Village and for selected sites on Route 44 and Route 31 known as Special Planning Areas (SPA). These design guidelines apply to commercial development, and residential owners are urged to consider their impact on all structures.



Like many New England towns, Coventry has many enduring stone features that add to the character of the town. They include bridges (Mill Brook under Main Street), dams (Teleflex, Woods Lane, and Depot Road), foundations, root cellars and many miles of stone walls. The town wishes to recognize and preserve these features and to protect them from development impacts over the long term.

Goal: Maintain and improve those aspects of a historical, cultural and rural nature important to the quality of life.

Recommendations- (Action items include the responsible party, in brackets)

1. Protect the Town's historically and architecturally significant structures and sites, and areas of unique natural beauty through acquisition, land development controls, and other preservation techniques. Include the use of historic signage. [Planning & Zoning and Conservation Commissions, Coventry Historical Society and Land Use staff]
2. Promote significant cultural and historical elements that reflect the town's identity and are important to attract tourism. [Planning & Zoning and Conservation Commissions, Coventry Historical Society and Land Use staff]
3. Improve the gateway entrances into the Town, particularly at the Route 44 Bolton town line. [Planning & Zoning Commission and Public Works]

4. Provide for periodic meetings among the Historical Society, the Village Improvement Society and the Conservation and Economic Development Commissions to discuss common issues related to historic preservation. [Town Council, Town Manager]



The State Vietnam Veteran's Memorial on Lake Street

6 LAND AND WATER RESOURCES

Preservation and protection of natural resources and the environment continues to be of prime importance. The quality of ground and surface water, prime agricultural soils, wildlife habitats and unfragmented forest land are necessary for the health of our entire ecosystem. The careful acquisition of open space helps keep a stable mill rate. These elements are a major contributor to the quality of life of the town.

Protecting Natural Resources

The Inland Wetlands Agency and the Planning & Zoning Commission have regulations and review procedures that cover the maintenance and preservation of our local natural resources. Many of their activities are directed by the Connecticut General Statutes as well as the State Department of Energy and Environmental Protection. The Conservation Commission provides additional support and guidance in an advisory capacity.

For development applications, the current zoning regulations require the identification of land contours, easements, wetlands, watercourses, wooded areas, stone walls, open space, flood zones, public or private water supplies, etc. They also require hydraulic studies, an erosion and sedimentation control plan, consideration of passive solar techniques, archaeological evidence studies, environmental assessments and protection of historic resources that can be used to modify the site design.

The Coventry Town Council, in 2008, created the Conservation Corps. The Corps is composed of volunteers who monitor town owned open space. Corps members are assigned in groups of two or more, to walk properties at least four times a year to observe and report the status of the property to an appropriate town official. The Corps was changed in 2016 to the Protected Lands Stewardship Committee whose responsibility is trail blazing and maintenance of the properties

Goals:

1. Provide adequate protection and preservation of the town's natural resources while providing open space along with recreational opportunities for all town residents.
2. Formally protect a minimum of 20 percent of the town's land area as open space. Consider as high priorities: farm soils, river aquifers and unfragmented forest. Strive to make open space land contiguous.
3. Protect the water quality of Lake Wangumbaug, Eagleville Lake, Upper Bolton Lake, the Skungamaug, Hop and Willimantic Rivers.

Water Resources

A. Lake Wangumbaug



Lake Wangumbaug at the dam

The Coventry Lake Advisory and Monitoring Committee is the Town appointed entity that focuses its efforts on education, protection and management of the lake. The committee prepared a lake management plan in 2016 that serves as a helpful resource regarding the lake's future.

Moderate to high density residential development occupies 40 percent of the Lake's drainage area. However, several natural features of the lake-watershed ecosystem make Lake Wangumbaug somewhat resistant to processes where excess nutrients stimulate excessive plant growth. The following are rather unique, "healthy attributes" of the Coventry Lake ecosystem:

The area which drains to the lake ("watershed") is small when compared to the large, deep lake. This means that the lake does not need to process a large mass of additional watershed organic matter that would result in oxygen demand.

The mean depth and surface area of the lake are large compared to the drainage area. This gives Coventry Lake a "clear water" tendency.

The shape of the lake basin results in a small sediment-contact area at the depth where water remains cold in summer. The lake is also oriented such that wind mixing is strong compared to lakes of similar size. These features are beneficial to the aquatic life in the lake.

B. Eagleville Lake

Eagleville Lake was created by a dam on the Willimantic River to provide a source for the old Eagleville Mill. The lake is 80 acres on the border of Coventry and Mansfield. The Coventry side has an 80+ housing development from the 1930's and some forest.

The Mansfield side is bordered by the railroad, fields, forests and a gravel pit.

Fishing and paddling are popular and there is a boat launch on the west side of the impressive dam. The lake is shallow (about one to 2.5 meters deep.)

C. Lake Threats

1. Lake Wangumbaug

Wastewater, storm water, sedimentation, and road runoff impacts have been analyzed and indicate that Coventry Lake is a healthy ecosystem that has the characteristics of a high quality water resource with a moderate amount of dissolved nutrients. All physical, chemical, and biological evidence indicates that if Coventry Lake has an increase in spring phosphorus level, its resource quality will decline. Restoration would be costly, so preservation is desirable through preventative maintenance, primarily in the limitation or elimination of phosphorous from lawn fertilizers.

Other data shows the lake's water clarity has improved since 2000. Starting in 2018, water clarity recorded using a Secchi disk indicated the water clarity to be excellent. Excellent water clarity is a result of sunlight reaching greater depths, an indication of less particulates suspended in the water. In the fall of 2018, the trend of warmer than normal weather resulted in an increase in blue-green algae. Blue-green algae, also known as cyanobacteria, can be toxic at high concentrations. Continued monitoring is needed to assist in developing a response plan for identifying conditions suitable for potential blue-green algae blooms.

Invasive aquatic plant species present in the lake require close monitoring, especially curly-leaf pondweed, Eurasian Milfoil, and Hydrilla. Hydrilla, discovered in the lake in 2015, is the greatest invasive aquatic threat. Treatments began in 2016 and have demonstrated success at controlling the spread of hydrilla. Full eradication will require yearly monitoring and additional treatments for the foreseeable future. The Town has partnered with Connecticut DEEP to manage the treatment program.

Although the drainage basin is small, it is also steep and the watercourse length is short. This results in a rapid runoff of rainfall which tends to make stable lake level management difficult.

2. Eagleville Lake

In 2012, the CT. Agricultural Experimental Station conducted an aquatic invasive plant survey of Eagleville Lake to determine the presence of any species of concern. The survey revealed the presence of an aquatic invasive plant known as Fanwort which can be very damaging to the ecology of the Lake due to how quickly and how thick it grows, and can create a significant impairment to the recreational use of the Lake. The Towns of Coventry and Mansfield have worked cooperatively to address the infestation since the plant survey was conducted. The Towns were successful in

obtaining a State of CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection grant to assist in funding a chemical treatment of the Lake in 2015. The Towns have continued to share in the cost to chemically treat the Fanwort. This will be an ongoing effort over time to continue to address the plant in order to protect the Lake's environmental quality and capacity to support recreational uses such as paddling and fishing.

3. Upper Bolton Lake Watershed

Upper Bolton Lake's watershed contains stands of Atlantic White Cedar forest. The Eastern Connecticut Environmental Review Team has reported that Atlantic White Cedar forests are imperiled ecosystems in Connecticut due to changes in land use that stresses their environment. Coventry should consider actions along with the towns of Tolland, Vernon and Bolton to protect the watershed and this unique ecosystem.

Land Resources

A. Open Space

Coventry defines open space as land that is preserved, protected and may have use restrictions for any of the following purposes:

1. Maintains or enhances the conservation of natural, scenic, cultural and historic resources.
2. Protects wetlands/watercourses and other bodies of water.
3. Protects water supply sources.
4. Promotes the conservation of soils and prime farmland.
5. Enhances the public value of abutting or neighboring parks, forests, wildlife preserves, natural reservations and sanctuaries, and/or other open space.
6. Enhances public recreation opportunities.
7. Preserves historic and/or culturally significant sites.
8. Assists in the promotion of orderly growth and development.

There is other undeveloped land nominally considered open space that is not protected from development and includes sportsmen's clubs, camps, golf courses, farms, forests and vacant tracts. They remain a primary focus for preservation and formal protection.

According to the Natural Resources Conservation Service, Connecticut is the 4th most densely populated state in the country. An increase in sprawl development patterns threatens water supplies, wildlife habitat, agricultural lands, historic resources, and the quality of life for urban and rural communities. In response,

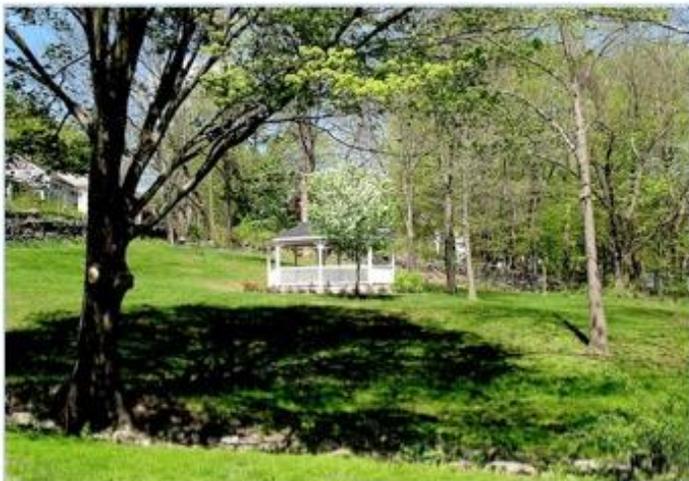


Connecticut's citizens have accelerated their efforts to preserve remaining open space. Connecticut is among the 12 states with the highest rate of land conversion to urban/suburban. The state is losing a significant number of acres of farmland a year, a rate exceeding most other states. Connecticut has made progress in preserving open space and working lands. The state has set a goal to preserve 21 percent of the state's land as open space by 2023. In addition, they have a goal of protecting 130,000 acres of working agricultural lands. To date, 75% of these goals have been reached.

In Coventry, over 500 acres of land have been dedicated as open space by direct conveyance or easement in thirty-six subdivisions since 1990. Seventy-five percent of that has occurred since November of 1999 when Open Space Subdivision regulations were adopted.

The Planning and Zoning Commission adopted new subdivision regulations in 2011. The open space design, or 'cluster' subdivision regulations, consider building siting and open space dedication more from a natural resource protection perspective. This will enhance open space initiatives and provide better regulation both from the developer's and the town's standpoint. The Commission should monitor these regulations over the coming years to assess their use and effectiveness.

B. Open Space Plan



13.5 percent (~3,300 acres) of Coventry's total land area (24,505 acres) is presently protected open space by fee simple deeds and conservation easements.

The Planning & Zoning Commission developed, in 2014, an Open Space Report for Coventry (Included in the Appendix). A very accurate map has been prepared that delineates all open space in town (public and

private) and it will serve as a baseline. (This is included in the map collection section.) The primary function of the Plan and Report is to distinguish and identify areas that merit various levels of long term protection, and suggest appropriate methods to acquire and designate open space. It will serve as an educational tool and a guide for municipal organizations and private land owners.

This Plan recognizes farmland, forest, lakes and rivers as the prime candidates for protection and preservation. Opportunities for additional protected open space include: about 1,000 acres owned by sportsmen's clubs (i.e. Manchester Coon & Fox Club and Manchester Sportsmen's Association) and the Channel 3 Kids Camp, aka Times Farm Camp, over 1,000 acres of land designated as farmland, but having unused wooded

areas, and several thousand acres of privately owned residentially zoned land, some of which may be subject to open space subdivision mechanisms or other protection. With consideration of the opportunities above, a significant increase in protected open space is possible consistent with the community's goals. Much of this land is adjacent or near to one of our rivers, and being designated as open space will help protect our surface and ground water. Unfragmented forest land is another important component. For the following reasons open space acquisition is a key element in future planning: Combining the desire of residents to maintain and protect our rural character, the need to protect natural resources, particular water and forest related, and the fact that open space will mitigate service and revenue demands.

C. PA490

Public Act 490 is Connecticut's law that allows farm, forest or open space land to be assessed at its use value rather than its fair market value, for a period of ten years, resulting in a tax savings to the property owner as long as the land is not used for applications other than farm, forest or open space. Approximately 13.7 percent of Coventry's land base is under PA 490 protection. While this is a temporary measure, it does offer both protection and tax relief for the land owners.

D. Joshua's Tract

Joshua's Tract Conservation and Historic Trust is a non-profit organization based in Mansfield that protects more than 4,000 acres of land in northeastern Connecticut. Several properties are owned in Coventry. The Trust may provide funding and other assistance relative to their goals that include unfragmented forests, water shed protection and properties of community value. The town has an informal relationship with the organization to work collectively in identifying and acquiring selected properties for preservation either by easements or acquisition. This relationship must be maintained and strengthened to build on the assets and expertise of both the town and the Trust.

Recommendations- (Action items include the responsible party, in brackets)

1. Protect the surface and groundwater resources in town with ongoing efforts to limit impacts from waste water, storm water, sedimentation and road runoff. [Inland Wetlands, Planning & Zoning, Commission Water Pollution Control Authority and Land Use staff]
2. Preserve and enhance water quality and minimize or eliminate phosphorus runoff and eradicate the incursion of invasive species in Lake Wangumbaug and Eagleville Lake. Educate the public regarding the potential negative impacts of these conditions. [Inland Wetlands, Conservation Commission and Land Use staff, Coventry Lake Advisory & Monitoring Committee]
3. Continue to support the Coventry Lake Advisory and Monitoring Committee.

4. Consider the following:

- Monitoring the boat launches (public & private) to prevent the transfer of invasive species.
- Support the limiting of phosphorous-containing fertilizers impact in the lake watershed.
- The formation of a consolidated lake authority to address the issues above.
- Utilize the 2016 Lake Management Plan to guide decision-making regarding the care of Coventry Lake; particularly regarding maintaining long-term ecological health, providing safe recreational opportunities, and preserving the economic value of surrounding properties.

5. Protect and conserve prime farmland soils, productive woodlands soils and large, unfragmented forest blocks, notable wildlife or plant life and fisheries habitat, stream belts composed of watercourses, inland wetlands and other associated riparian habitat components, and scenic views and vistas, through a range of preservation techniques, as identified in the 2014 Open Space Plan. [Planning & Zoning Commission, Inland Wetlands Agency, Land Use Staff]

6. Promote farmland operations and forestry management and resist economic pressures that force land into development. [Planning & Zoning, Conservation and Economic Development Commissions and Inland Wetlands]

7. Educate the property owners on the options to protect open space including conservation easements, outright conveyance of ownership, and cash payment to the town instead of property conveyance in subdivision applications, Transfer of Development Rights, tax incentives and Public Act 490 protection. [Conservation and Planning & Zoning Commissions and Land Use staff]

8. For developed areas, pay particular attention to stormwater runoff from impervious surfaces and encourage natural drainage systems for new and modified developments such as vegetative filters, porous surfaces and other bioinfiltration methodologies. Encourage proper septic/sewer maintenance. [Planning and Zoning Commission, Inlands Wetlands Agency, Land Use Staff]

9. Maintain and increase interconnected, linear open spaces, greenways, trails and wildlife corridors, and when appropriate, link with other town, or state greenways. [Conservation and Planning and Zoning Commissions, Land Use Staff]

10. Utilize the 2014 Open Space Plan and the POCD to guide town land acquisition strategies and acquire more open space and coordinate the plan with recreational needs as expressed in the Parks & Recreation section. [Conservation Commission, Town Council, Land Use staff]

11 Continue monitoring and improving our natural resource based subdivision regulations. [Planning & Zoning and Conservation Commissions and Land use staff]

12. Promote the “greening” of the Town by installing and maintaining landscaping such as trees and shrubs along streets and other public rights-of-way and in public open spaces, and by requiring landscaping in new private developments using plants indigenous to the area. [Planning & Zoning Commission and Land Use staff]

13. Consider strategies to reduce tree clearing, minimize grading and maintaining existing vegetation for new or modified developments, and promote, to the maximum extent possible, the underground installation of utility services for all new major residential projects, commercial and industrial development. [Planning & Zoning Commission and Land Use staff]

14. Consider methods to provide guidance to landowners who are seeking ways to “naturalize” their residential lot, pursue forest management plans or other natural resource protection activities of interest to the community. [Conservation Commission]

15. Cooperate with federal and state agencies to upgrade and maintain the air quality of the Town and encourage energy conservation and the use of alternate energy sources. [Energy Committee, Town Staff]

16. Employ resiliency and sustainability actions that serve to address relative impacts caused by climate change related events.[Town Staff]

17. Encourage and promote water conservation practices. [Conservation Commission]

18. Encourage the support and protection of pollinators by promoting native, pollinator friendly landscape species and the use of integrated pest management techniques. [Conservation Commission]

19. Continue to support the ongoing operation with the community gardens at Creaser Park. [Parks and Recreation]



North Coventry Green

E. Vistas

Vistas are a key element in Coventry's rural character and are always there to be enjoyed by residents and visitors. Saving these vistas is an integral part of development plans. The Coventry Historical Society has prepared a list of significant vistas presented here.



1. Giglio Property - Route 44 at the Bolton line looking south.
2. Bread & Milk Street - Looking north from Route 44 to Zeya Drive.
3. Route 44 - Looking east from Perrachio's Farm to Main Street.
4. Silver Street - Looking south from Route 44 to South Street.
5. South Street #1 - Looking west from Silver Street.
6. South Street #2 - Looking West from the Hale homestead.
7. South Street #3 - Looking Southeast from the old Huntington house.
8. Crossen Property - Looking southwest from South Street & Bunker Hill Road.
9. Hop River - Looking southeast from Bunker Hill Road to the Hop River.
10. Flanders Road - Looking southeast from Plains Road to the Willimantic River.
11. Pucker Street - Looking southeast from South Street to the Hop River.
12. Parker Bridge Road - Looking south from Bunker Hill Road to the Hop River.
13. South River Road - Looking south from Route 31 along the Skungamaug River.
14. Town Green - Looking west from the Town Green over Lake Wangumbaug.
15. Stonehouse Road - Looking northeast from the "Stonehouse" to the Eagleville dam.
16. Brigham Tavern Road - Looking north from Route 44 along the Willimantic River.
17. Brigham Road - Looking east from Lewis Hill Road to the Willimantic River.
18. Broadway - Looking east from Hannah Drive to the Skungamaug River.
19. Cassidy Hill Road - Looking east from the Cassidy Hill Winery.
20. South Village - Looking northwest from Depot Road to Lake Wangumbaug including Main Street and the Mill Brook.

7 AGRICULTURE

Agriculture has become a prominent issue from a land use, economic and quality of life viewpoint. For decades, communities have been concerned about the loss of farmland for development. The State and municipalities have instituted various programs to preserve farmland with limited success. Coventry was one of the first towns in the state to offer tax relief for farmland.



A significant issue is the economic viability of the relatively small farms in Connecticut that sometimes results in the need to sell for development. In addition, with the recent globalization of food sources, concerns have been raised about the quality and safety of food acquired from sources that have little oversight, and the transportation costs in delivering that food.

A. Benefits of Agriculture

The benefits of local agriculture include:

- The preservation and creation of jobs
- Respectful land use and preservation
- Maintenance of the town's rural character and positive identity
- Fresh and safe food growing and production
- Land use that uses less in municipal services than it pays in taxes
- Opportunities for unique recreation, tourism and education activities

Farm related commercial opportunities in town are typified by the Coventry Farmers' Market, roadside stands, pumpkin patch rides, hobby farms, corn mazes, horseback riding, Christmas tree cutting, wine production, farm educational tours, food and agriculture production and others. There has been a recent resurgence of horse stables and pastures and opportunities for horse riding trails on public land.

Coventry has a variety of agricultural and livestock entities including dairy, hay and vegetables, horses, llamas, goats, herbs, Christmas tree farms, a winery, etc. With the recent success of the Farmers' Market, the community has taken advantage of and benefited from locally grown foods and have appreciated the recreational and social benefits of attending and supporting the Farmers' Market.

Goal: Preserve farmland and support farming activity and preserve working farms, both crops and livestock, for their economic benefits, their educational/recreational opportunities and local food production.

Recommendations- (Action items include the responsible party, in brackets)

1. Promote the farm assessment program (PA 490) to assist farmers with maintaining their agricultural land use. (Approximately 13.7 percent of Coventry's land base is under PA 490 protection.) [Conservation Commission, Land use staff]
2. Continue to explore opportunities for a municipal or public/private program for purchase of farm development rights. [Town Council, Town Staff,]
3. Encourage local farmers to collectively apply for the Connecticut Farmland Preservation Program and assist them in submitting applications where necessary. Additionally, the Connecticut Farmland Trust offers expertise to preserving farmland. [Conservation Commission, Town Council, Town Staff]
4. Monitor the effects of the Commercial/Agriculture Zone and modify, if necessary, to assist farmland preservation, agricultural businesses and related uses. [Planning & Zoning and Land use staff]
5. Create educational and other farm friendly activities to support agriculture. (Conservation and Economic Development Commissions, Land use staff)
6. Encourage the use of Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) programs. [Town Staff]
7. Continue the sponsorship and support of the Coventry Farmers' Market, particularly as it relates to local farming opportunities and look for opportunities to strengthen and expand the market to connect with "brick and mortar" businesses. [Economic Development Commission, Town Manager, Town Council]
8. Consider the recent popularity of horse stables/farms and pastures and collectively find ways to encourage or expand horse related activities. [Planning & Zoning and Conservation Commissions, Town Staff]
9. Continue the Conservation Commission's efforts to establish a goal for agricultural land preservation priorities and monitoring agricultural land use in Town. [Conservation Commission and Land Use staff]
10. Encourage and support the formation of an Agricultural Commission that will establish and maintain an open line of communication between the Town and the agricultural community. [Economic Development Commission and Town Council]

8 PUBLIC SERVICES AND FACILITIES

A. Municipal Facilities - General

The 2019 Citizen's Survey (See Chapter 3) included specific questions regarding residents' opinions on infrastructure priorities, and the results were:

The respondents indicating strong support for:

- Road/bridge improvements- 57%
- Water supply for fire suppression- 39%
- Community Center- 25%
- Athletic field complex- 17%



Goal: Continue to provide existing municipal services facilities and programs to best serve citizens' needs and expectations, and encourage their use. Retrofit existing facilities to reduce energy usage.

Recommendations- (Action items include the responsible party, in brackets)

1. When considering the nature and location of public facilities, examine demographic variations from one section of the town to another, as necessary. [Town Manager, Town Council]
2. Explore alternative uses of educational facilities during non-school hours. [Board of Education and Town Manager]
3. Complete the planning and construction of a replacement Community Center. [Town Council and Town Manager]
4. Prior to the future development of all types of land uses, consider the feasibility of public/private partnerships to provide infrastructure and other amenities consistent with other policies in this plan and with other governmental agencies such as the WPCA. [Town Council and Town Manager]
5. Plan capital improvements on the basis of a priority system carefully related to the needs of the community and fully integrated with the Plan of Conservation and Development. [Town Council and Town Manager]
6. Upgrade or replace Town facilities and parks to provide handicapped accessibility, gender equal, energy efficiency, environmentally sound and efficient public use. [Town Staff, Town Council]
7. Acquire land for future unanticipated needs. [Town Council, Town Manager]

B. Parks and Recreation

The Parks and Recreation Commission was formed in the mid 1950's to develop and supervise recreational activities for the community. The Commission carefully interprets public opinion in deciding how it will best serve Coventry residents. The Parks and Recreation Department fosters active lifestyles, social well-being, and environmental stewardship.

The Department is responsible for the administration of all Town-sponsored recreation activities and facilities, including the management and planning for Town parks and recreational facilities. It also provides essential community benefits, including:

- Healthier residents. Physically active adults and children are less prone to obesity, diabetes, heart disease and depression.
- A wide range of free and low cost opportunities to experience the outdoors, engage in exercise and to ensure social equity.
- A sense of well-being and community spirit.
- Safer neighborhoods and a higher quality of life.
- Increased property values and economic vitality. Parks offer the perfect venue for community and regional events- tournaments, concerts, exhibitions, food festivals- that draw visitors and new dollars into our backyard.
- Respect for nature. Spending time outside reminds us of our unique place in the world. Air, water and land are our greatest natural treasures. Conserving and enjoying green spaces and waterways for the future is crucial.

Vision

To have well maintained and actively used parks, open spaces, and trails that provide opportunities for all citizens to maintain active, healthy lifestyles; while appreciating our community's natural resources and preserving them for future generations. Community spirit is fostered by the town's diverse cultural fabric; facilitated and coordinated in quality recreational programs, facilities, services and special events.

Mission

To foster active lifestyles, social well-being, and environmental stewardship.

Goal: Provide park facilities that strengthen community image and sense of place; in an inviting and safe family atmosphere.

Strategy: Protect and enhance our investment in infrastructure of our public parks and facilities

Recommendations: [To be implemented by the Parks and Recreation Commission.]

1. Create an inviting and safe family atmosphere using consistent policies for patron use.
 - Install wayfinding directional signs to all parks and trails to improve public accessibility.
 - Develop a consistent trail marking system.
2. Develop funding streams and provide direction to address ongoing maintenance of town parks.
 - Complete Master Plans for all park properties. Address condition of furniture, fixtures, and equipment in buildings. Utilize GIS system with parks, Trails and equipment inventory.
 - Develop a Joint Planning Process with the Dept. of Public Works and the Board of Education to develop practices and policies, as well as define roles and responsibilities for maintenance, development, access and joint use of facilities. Use CIRMA Risk Management Audit as a tool.
 - Coordinate recreational needs with the Open Space Plan by holding joint meeting of Conservation Commission and Parks & Recreation Commission. [Parks & Recreation]
3. Improve sustainability with green management practices to reduce carbon footprint and enhance habitat.
 - Install recycling at Patriot's Park to reduce litter costs or use of solar powered trash compactors.
 - Complete Model Environmental Policy Scorecard.
 - Install solar arrays at community center & lodge buildings.
4. Provide direction for future development options with consideration given to demographic/cultural requirements.
 - Create a Community Center Feasibility Study Committee.
 - Design and construct Boat House building that coordinates the use and consolidates the footprint of the boat launch areas at Patriots Park.
 - Assess future recreational possibilities at Miller Richardson Park, addressing the relocation of the transfer station and the Department of Public Works Gravel Pit.

Goal: Provide recreational opportunities to encourage positive youth development, inclusion of special populations, healthy lifestyles and lifelong learning opportunities.

Strategy: Utilize parks and recreation to increase physical activity and improve our community's overall health.

Recommendations:

1. Advocate for health and wellness initiatives.
 - Continue to promote recreational opportunities that enable and support unstructured, self-scheduled, multi-ability and low cost activities:

(Geocaching, hiking, pickle ball, disc golf, kayak, stand up paddleboards, cross country skiing, snowshoeing etc.)

- Implement Park RX program to partner with Health professionals. Park Prescription programs involve health or social service providers encouraging people to spend time in nature to improve their health and well-being.
- Identify location for Installation of an Adult Fitness Park

2. Connect kids & families to nature and the outdoors.

- Increase efforts to offer more outside of the camp & afterschool environment. Geocaching, letterboxing. Increase youth involvement in Community Gardens.
- Offer separate programs for families on weekends such as Walktoberfest guided hikes.
- Implement recommendations of Creaser Park Environmental Review report.
- Address Nature Deficit Disorder with environmental education programs that develop our citizenry into stewards of our environment.

3. Increase social equity in parks, recreation programs and services.

- Develop Implementation & promotion plan for inclusion/Americans with Disabilities Act compliance. Provide Staff training.

Coventry Parks Inventory (*using the 1995 National Park and Recreation Association the classification table*)

Neighborhood Parks:

Windswept Farms

School Parks:

Robertson Intermediate School
Coventry Grammar School
Captain Nathan Hale Middle School
Coventry High School

Community Parks:

Miller-Richardson Field - 6.3 acres
Laidlaw Park - 37.3 acres
Creaser Park - 54 acres
Patriots Park- 17.5 acres
Lisicke Beach - 2 acres
Mill Brook Park - 7.4 acres
Mill Pond Park - 7.2 acres

C. Trails, Sidewalks and Greenways

1. Greenways



The Millbrook-Greenway linear trail project is anticipated to offer a formal pedestrian link from the Lake Wangumbaug boat launch area to the Village Center and then along the Mill Brook to the Willimantic River. The section from the Lake boat launch along Lake Street and Monument Hill Road, then through Mill Brook Park to Mason Street has been completed. A sidewalk along Cross Street also connects this Greenway to South Street and its sidewalks.

A new pocket park at the DeCew mill on Depot Road that possesses frontage on the Mill Brook was completed in 2019. It was funded by a State of Connecticut recreational trails program grant. Parking improvements for Town owned land that

fronts along the Willimantic River was also funded by this grant.

The Willimantic River Greenway is a long-term project to link existing open spaces and to extend walking trails and bike routes along the 25-mile length of the river. Other goals include improving the existing canoe/kayak route from Stafford to Windham and also protecting natural resources.

The Willimantic River Alliance maintains a regional greenway vision for the towns and offers information about potential projects and about resources for town and regional projects. Although the greenway projects will be planned and completed over many years, they will in time offer residents and visitors better opportunities to access the river and enjoy its natural beauty and historic features. Several riverside towns are working together on multi-town trails along the Greenway. The section in Coventry is partially completed and work continues on the remaining areas.

2. Trails

a. Riverview Park Trail - Merrow Road/Riverview Drive- Inter-municipal trail system along Willimantic River frontage and part of the Willimantic River Greenway.

b. Hop River Trail (Rails to Trails) - Inter-municipal trail system linking towns along the former railway bed as part of the East Coast Greenway from Calais, Maine to Key West, Florida.

c. Patriot's Park Forest & Trail - The hiking trail is an adjunct to the Cross Street/South Street sidewalk system.

d. South Street/Cross Street sidewalk system - Provides pedestrian friendly access over southern and most of western shore around Coventry Lake.

e. Creaser Park Trails - Four different marked trails offer a variety of lengths and access to unique natural features.

Coventry has a number of horse farms/stables and some of the owners have expressed an interest in developing a horse-riding trail system in town. This opportunity will be further explored.

3. Sidewalks

Over the past several years sidewalks have been installed in the Village, on Main Street from the Village to the High School, on Lake/Cross Street from Main Street to South Street, and on South Street from Cross Street to Daly Road. They have been well accepted and well used.

Futures plans include:

- Extending the Main Street sidewalks from the High School to Lisicke Beach with an additional connection to Daly Road.
- Extending the South Street sidewalk from Daly Road to the Strong-Porter House. (A grant has been awarded to complete this section within the next few years and will facilitate access to the Farmers Market, the hale Homestead and the Strong-Porter Museum.)

Goals:

1. Develop an interconnected system of trails and sidewalks that serve transportation and recreational needs and accommodate a variety of skill levels.
2. Guide implementation of infrastructure by developers, public agencies and others.
3. Increase the number of trips made by foot and bicycle for both transportation and recreation.
4. Make pedestrian use and bicycling safer and more convenient for residents and visitors.

D. Fire & EMS Protection

The Town of Coventry Fire-Emergency Medical Services Department was established in 2015 by local ordinance. At this time, our Town also created the position of Fire-EMS Administrator for the purpose of managing policies, purchasing and training. Shortly thereafter a Joint Fire Budget was created to merge the expenses that Coventry Volunteer Fire Association and North Coventry Volunteer Fire Department shared.



Coventry Volunteer Fire Association (CVFA) has been in operation serving our community since 1936. CVFA currently provides fire and EMS protection to our residents. They operate from 2 locations. The main station is located at 1755 Main St (opposite Town hall) and they have a sub-station at 1645 South St.

(corner of Judd Rd). These fire stations have different types of emergency vehicles designed to provide the best fire protection possible. The membership making up the volunteer fire department varies and averages about 50 active members.

North Coventry Volunteer Fire Department (NCFD) has been in operation proudly serving our community since 1947. NCFD currently provides fire and EMS protection to our residents. They operate from 2 locations. The main station is located at 3427 Main St. and they have a sub-station at 999



Merrow Rd. These fire stations have different types of emergency vehicles designed to provide the best fire protection possible. The membership making up the volunteer fire department varies and averages about 30 active members.



On February 24, 2017, the Town of Coventry Fire-EMS Department took over the Emergency Medical Response responsibility. We currently contract with a private business to provide personnel coverage for the ambulance from 5am – 5pm during the weekdays. The remaining times are covered by our local dedicated volunteers. The Ambulance averages approximately 950 calls

per year. Starting in November 2018, an interim organizational structure was established to assist in managing the day to day operations of the EMS Division of the Town of Coventry Fire-EMS Department. In January 2019 a formal transition team authorized by Town Council began meeting to discuss the future of the Fire-EMS services in town, with an emphasis on joint efforts in as many areas as possible. The primary mission of the transition team is to plan and implement an organizational structure and policies to govern one Coventry Fire Department.

In 2019 the Town received a designation of 5/5Y by the Insurance Services Office (ISO). This rating is used by a number of insurance companies when determining the premiums charged for the policies they write. The lower the classification the lower your rates could be. Numerous factors are taken into consideration during the

evaluation, such as distance to a fire station and distance to a water source. The ratings are estimated to be re-evaluated every 5 years.

E. Police Protection

The Coventry Police Department was organized by town ordinance on August 26, 1965. The agency is centrally located on Main Street in its own separately facility close to town hall and other town facilities.



The police department is a full-service law enforcement agency consisting of sixteen sworn officers (including the chief), three full time dispatchers, an executive assistant and a community service officer. One officer, assigned as a detective, conducts follow- up investigations on more serious or time-consuming criminal cases. Part time dispatchers are used on weekends and holidays. A part-time lake patrol officer is employed on most weekends and holidays during the boating season.

The department keeps current on best practices and advancements in police technology. The agency became accredited at the advanced level by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies in 2010 and has been successfully re-accredited three times since. The agency was awarded accreditation with excellence in 2016. They are also accredited at the Tier III level by the Connecticut Police Officers Standards and Training Council.

The agency uses in-car video cameras and each officer is assigned and uses a body camera. The in-car computer system allows for processing electronic traffic citations. The agency participates with other area law enforcement agencies in a number of regional partnerships and initiatives.

Long term planning goals for the department include:

- Continue to monitor population, growth and traffic trends to ensure resources necessary to provide effective law enforcement services.
- Transition to 800 lt/Hz radio system utilizing the state central core infrastructure.
- Evaluate emerging police technologies to maximize effective utilization of personnel and provide for pro-active crime prevention tools.
- Continue to coordinate with the Coventry School District and town emergency services on school safety and security.

F. Schools

Existing Facilities



Currently, the town has six schools located on three sites. Coventry High School (grades 9-12) shares a facility with the Capt. Nathan Hale School (grades 6-8), Coventry Academy, and Hale Early Education Center (Pre-K). This shared facility is located on a 99-acre site on the south central portion of town. This site is also shared with the Town Hall and the school administration building.

Coventry High School has a current enrollment of 431 students, Coventry Academy has 18 students, Capt. Nathan Hale School has 399 students, and the Hale Early Education Center has 97 students.

The town has two elementary schools. The Coventry Grammar School (grades K-2) is located on a 21-acre site on the northern part of town and has an enrollment of 358 students. The George H. Robertson School (grades 3-5) is located on a 20-acre site in the southern part of town and has an enrollment of 370 students. Total enrollment is 1,677. There are 104 students attending other schools. (Source: Coventry Board of Education- December 2019)

Projected School Enrollments

Projected enrollment trends for the next ten years show that the enrollment for grades PK-12 will likely decrease slightly consistent with overall population trends.

Projected Facility and Site Requirements

Coventry High School's reaccreditation through the New England Association of Schools and Colleges Visiting Committee was conducted in 2016. This reaccreditation happens every 10 years. Included in the Visiting Committee's Report, was a recommendation to "Ensure adequate funding to update the physical space of the weight room to make the weight room more inviting to all students, and to implement best practices for weight room safety and sanitizing protocols."

The Larry A. Pietrantonio Athletic Field Complex is a heavily used facility at Coventry High School. The field is accessed throughout the year by soccer, football, and track and field teams. The infield has more than appropriate drainage allowing the field to remain usable even during an average wet season. The field drains so well that during the dry season the field above becomes excessively dry. Using the field during this

time destroys the grass root system that, in turn, damages the soil and causes poor drainage during the rainy season. These conditions cause ruts that could cause injuries to students. An irrigation system would alleviate the concerns by using an old existing well as its water supply, thus, improving the condition of the infield of the track allowing the district to maintain the integrity of the turf during all seasons.

The Board of Education should develop a strategy and associated plans to fund both of these projects.

Technology

During the past ten years, the district has advanced its technology infrastructure and offerings to help meet its mission to "...prepare every student for life, learning and work in the 21st century." The district developed a comprehensive wireless network that ensures high speed connectivity. All students in grades 8-12 are assigned an individual device (Chromebook in grades 9-12 and iPad in grade 8), which teachers integrate regularly into their instruction to help enhance learning. Students in grades 2-5 will have access to both Chromebooks and iPads through individual classroom carts. Preschool through grade 1 students' primary devices will be iPads. All buildings provide access to PC labs to use for research, project development, and assessment. The Technology Department keeps apprised of changes to the technology landscape and works to ensure that all stakeholders have access to the devices and programming they need.

Hale Early Education Center (HEEC)

Established as part of the Coventry Public Schools in 2017 and accredited by the National Association for Education of Young Children (NAEYC), the Hale Early Education Center offers a high-quality preschool experience for Coventry's youngest learners. A curriculum based on the Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards (CT ELDS) and practices aligned with the Coventry Grammar School, along with a strong partnership between the two schools, ensures that students develop a strong foundation and have a smooth transition into kindergarten.

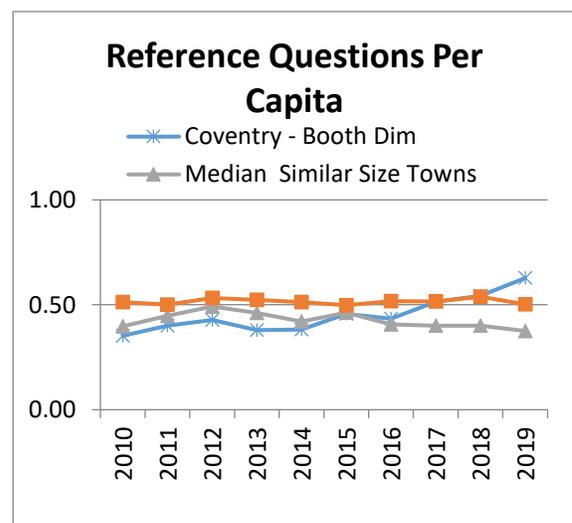
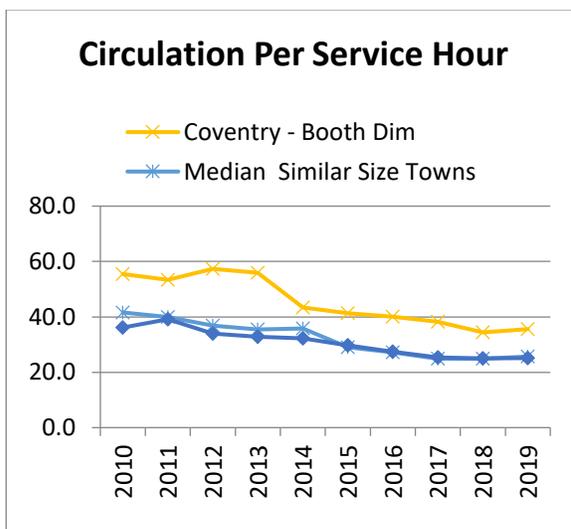
Funding for HEEC comes from a variety of sources, including two large grants. These grants enable the center to offer programming to families who require financial assistance. 41% of HEEC families receive assistance for their children to attend the center. 19% of the HEEC students receive some type of special services, which may include specialized instruction, speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, and physical therapy. All classroom teachers are dual-certified in regular and special education. Students with special needs are fully integrated into all the classrooms which provides excellent opportunities for all students to learn from each other.

G. Booth & Dimock Memorial Library

In 1911, Henry Dimock of Coventry offered the South Coventry Library Association \$40,000 under the condition the association changed its name to honor his father Dr. Timothy Dimock, and grandfather Reverend Chauncy Booth. The association officially became The Booth & Dimock Memorial Library on May 20, 1911, and a new building opened on October 24, 1913. Since then, the library has expanded in ways our predecessors would not have thought possible, including adding 8,000 square feet to the building in 1989 and bringing in computers and technologies unfathomed in the early twentieth century. It is the goal of the library to continue to expand, grow, and develop in ways matching the community's expansions, growth, and development.

Today, the Booth & Dimock Memorial Library exists to provide materials and services to help all residents of the community meet their informational, educational, cultural, and creative needs. In fiscal year 2018-2019, the Booth & Dimock Memorial Library:

- Housed a total physical collection of 49,359 items
- Welcomed 46,497 visitors
- Hosted a total of 121,420 internet sessions
- Circulated items 79,650 times
- Circulated electronic items 6,187 times
- Answered 7,789 reference questions
- Hosted 435 programs with 7,586 attendees
- Issued 389 new library cards



The above charts show Booth & Dimock's circulation and reference questions compared to state averages.¹

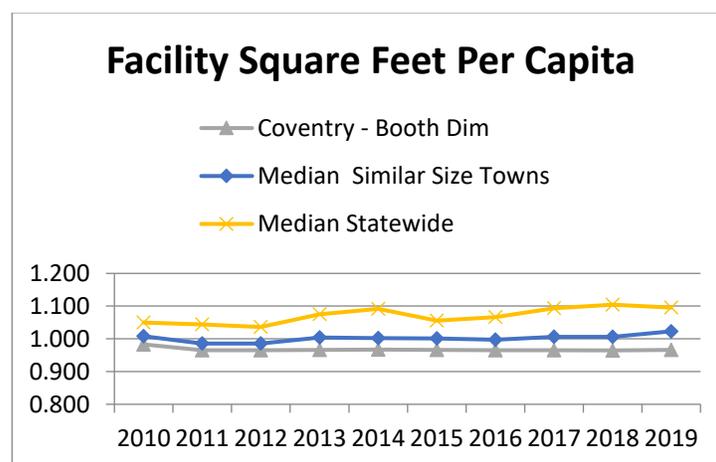
¹ Chart provided by Connecticut State Library's "Statistics for Connecticut Public Libraries"
<https://libguides.ctstatelibrary.org/dld/stats/chartmakers>

The Booth & Dimock Memorial has three main areas of improvement and development to focus on in the next ten years.

1. Library Building
2. Salaries and Benefits
3. Services and Resources

Together, these areas make up the Library’s platform of operation. A building with adequate space and without structural and cosmetic shortcomings provides a safe and comfortable place for the community to learn and explore. Competitive wages and salaries allow the Library to maintain their excellent staff and create a stable team. Providing relevant and community-specialized services is indication of a library doing its job. Changing with the times assures that the library has the most up-to-date and accurate information and services for consumption. Excellence in all three areas guarantees the Library’s ability to provide optimal service to its community. By planning to enhance these areas over the next ten years, the Booth & Dimock Memorial Library dedicates its commitment to the future of the Town of Coventry.

Library staff have to overcome many obstacles in order to provide their regular services. Challenges due to facility shortcomings and a tight operating budget put a burden on the staff. The library’s building is no longer adequate to accommodate the needs of the community. The community room is too small, our physical collection is unable to grow at the rate our patrons need due to space limitations, and the addition built in in 1989 is not effective for hosting the technological demands for everyday use. Additionally, the building faces issues including water intrusion at multiple locations, code violations, lack of storage space, and a counter-intuitive layout. The building has 30-year-old carpeting, roofing, and windows, all overdue for replacement. It is imperative that in the next ten years these building issues are addressed. Leaving these issues unattended much further would be to neglect a central need of the community.



The chart above shows how the Booth & Dimock Memorial Library falls below state averages for facility space per capita.²

² Chart provided by Connecticut State Library’s “Statistics for Connecticut Public Libraries” <https://libguides.ctstatelibrary.org/dld/stats/chartmakers>

By 2030, Booth & Dimock Memorial Library would like to provide their staff with fair wages that meet industry standards. Full-time, professional staff (staff who hold Masters Degrees in Library and Information Science) are some of the most underpaid library professionals in the State.³ Currently, our librarians do not meet the Connecticut Library Association's minimum recommend salary for an entry level librarian. The FY20 budget line for benefits is not enough to afford both health insurance and retirement for an individual, let alone employee plus one plans, or family plans. The Library does not offer paid maternity leave or paid medical/family leaves of absence. Providing competitive salaries and comprehensive benefits is part of what the Library will be working to achieve in the next ten years.

Finally, it is a top goal of the Booth & Dimock Memorial Library to develop the services it offers to match national, state, and local trends and needs. Libraries nationwide are undergoing an enormous 'growth spurt' as their place and purpose in the community is required in new ways. In the upcoming years the Booth & Dimock Memorial intends to address this change by focusing heavily on programing, providing access to new and reliable technologies, and developing collections (physical and electronic) to match changing user needs. Across the state libraries are seeing shifts in trends: programing numbers are rising while circulation numbers are declining; the demand for public computers, free Wi-Fi, and support for mobile devices continues to grow; traditional reference resources, like encyclopedias, are being overlooked in favor of databases and software which have the ability to create specialized and unique user experiences. By being aware of these changes we can maximize our preparedness for the future.

H. Human Services

The Human Services Department also includes Youth Services and Senior Services. The department staff serve the Human Services Advisory Committee and the Youth Services Advisory Board and Coventry Council for the Prevention of Student Drug and Alcohol Abuse.

The Human Services Department's overall goal is to allow Coventry residents to achieve and maintain personal and social wellness. Youth Services provides a comprehensive delivery of prevention, intervention and support services for children, youth and their families. The Senior Center is committed to providing adults 55 and older, a welcoming, inclusive, and supportive environment to participate in recreational, educational and wellness programs.

The department consists of the Human Services Director, Youth Services Coordinator, Senior Center Coordinator, Senior Center Assistant, Transportation Coordinator and Administrative Assistant.

³ "Connecticut Public Libraries: A Statistical Profile, 2018-2019" <https://libguides.ctstatelibrary.org/dld/stats/overview>

Goal: Provide the necessary human services and educational opportunities to Coventry residents.

Recommendations- (All actions are the responsibility of the Human Services Department)

1. Encourage the provision of services such as child and adult day care, and public transportation for all who need such services to allow them to enter and remain in the job market.
2. Encourage adult education, which can expand/upgrade general knowledge, vocational skills and cultural endeavors at times and locations that are easily accessible to potential enrollees.
3. Encourage programs of education in health care, housing care and maintenance, personal growth, and other “non-academic” subjects for all town residents.
4. Encourage the establishment of programs and facilities which address the Town's needy and homeless families and individuals.
5. Make social services available at the local neighborhood level, whenever possible, on a comprehensive and coordinated basis. Provide necessary health care education and service options.

I. Public Works

1. Public Works Responsibilities

- Maintenance of roads, schools, and park grounds
- Road and bridge projects
- Coventry Lake Sewer Expansion Project
- Trash / recycling

2. Facilities and Future Plans

The Town of Coventry Public Works Facility is located at 100 Olsen Farm Road in Coventry CT. The building was completed in 2011 and is a 20,000 sq. ft. steel building located on a 11 acre site. The building includes 4,000 sq. ft. of office space, a 4,000 sq. ft. storage mezzanine, a 5,000 sq. ft. maintenance garage and 11,000 sq. ft. of vehicle storage. The site also includes a 1,500 sq. ft. heated truck washing bay, a detached 5,000 sq. ft. storage building and a 4,000 sq. ft. detached salt storage building. The facility is located very close to the geographic center of Town to maximize productivity during snow removal operations.

The perimeter of the 11 acre Department of Public works (DPW) parcel is fenced with two remote controlled entrance gates that provide maximum security for construction

materials and larger construction equipment that are stored outside. The DPW Facility is served by the Town Sewer System allowing gray water used to wash equipment to be discharged effectively through the Water Pollution Control Plant.

Future DPW expansion would include relocation of the Town Transfer Station to a five acre parcel of land adjacent to the DPW Facility and adding a 10,000 sq. ft. cold storage building on the site. Relocation of the Transfer station would improve logistics and productivity of Transfer Station operations, reducing costs for travel time of employees and wear and tear on equipment used at the Transfer Station. In addition, the relocation of the Transfer Station would allow ballfields to be built at the current Transfer Station site providing needed expansion of public athletic fields.

J. Town Hall

The existing Town Hall was built in 1964. With the Police Department move to a separate building and the addition of the Annex for meeting space, the immediate space needs of the Town Hall were addressed. Renovations of the mechanical systems and energy efficiency has occurred but additional security is still required. While not fully code complaint, most ADA issues have been addressed. Long term, the need for larger meeting space to accommodate larger Council and Planning & Zoning Commission meetings, will need to be addressed. Solutions could include an ell-wing addition of meeting space off the rear entrance or enlargement of the Town Hall Annex. A room capable of holding 125 people is envisioned.

K. Water Pollution Control Authority

In 1973, the Town Council created a sewer commission designated as the Sewer Authority in accordance with the provisions of the Chapter 103, General Status of Connecticut, 1958 Revision. The Sewer Authority was succeeded by the Water Pollution Control Authority, (WPCA), on March 17, 1980 under Section 7-246, Connecticut General Statutes, and Town of Coventry Ordinance No. 134. The WPCA is responsible for the Operation and Maintenance of the Water Pollution Control Facility and associated Collection System.

The purpose of the WPCA is to prepare and periodically update a water pollution control plan for the Town of Coventry. The plan designates and delineates the boundary areas:

Served by any municipal sewerage system

Where municipal sewage facilities are planned

Where sewers are to be avoided.

To be served by any proposed community sewage system not owned by a municipality.

1. Sewer System- Original Orders

The Department of Environmental Protection found that a community pollution problem existed in the Town of Coventry at Waterfront Manor and Lakeview Terrace and issued an order on February 20, 1971 to: "Construct sewerage facilities within the Town of Coventry consistent with the recommendation of the report on the Sewerage System-Coventry, Connecticut, prepared for the Coventry Town Council by Cahn Engineers, Inc., and Griswold Engineering, Inc. dated January, 1971."

The design and construction, and startup of the sewerage system encompassed 1982-1987. The system was installed to abate pollution by providing wastewater disposal for densely developed properties which could not meet their needs by continued use of on-site subsurface disposal. A limited sewer system was designed to serve 310 properties and avoid induced growth within the Coventry Lake Basin. The sewers were planned to allow future service to certain identified additional areas (e.g. the Westerly Lake area) should off-site sewage disposal become necessary. The sewers were also planned to support "revitalization" of the Village area and to serve the industrially zoned area in the vicinity of Route 31 and South Street Extension in the future.

2. Sewage System- Geographical Identification

The Wastewater Treatment Facility is located at 394 Main Street. The associated lateral collection system encompasses Lakeview Terrace, Waterfront Manor, South Coventry Village, Main Street from Route 275 to the High School, Lakewood Heights, Gerald Park, Waterfront Park, Bellevue Association, Oak Grove Association and Standish Shores.

A significant expansion to the sewer system was completed in 2008. It encompassed many of the properties in close proximity to the Lake. There are now 85,000 feet of sewer pipe (45,000 added recently). There are about 1,000 properties in the service area and about 115 homes are not yet connected. Once all connections are made, the treatment facility will be near 90 percent capacity.

3. Sewer System Future Plans

Future sewer service areas anticipated in the facility plan include the Upper Oak Grove, Cheney Lane, Hemlock Point and Waterfront Heights. Currently developed areas on the eastern side of Lake Wangumbaug and the industrial zoned area on Route 31 near the treatment plant are considered high priority areas by the WPCA. Community Treatment Systems will be considered by the WPCA to correct septic problem areas where they may develop. Regarding Community Treatment Systems, dialog is needed with the State DPH and DEEP regarding jurisdiction. DEEP policy is that sewers cannot allow residential development in the lake basin.

The Authority should consider sewer plant expansion and/or connecting to another town's sewer system within the next ten years. Connecting to Bolton's sewer system

to facilitate limited economic growth in the Western route 44 sewer planning area is being explored. A community septic system or a "package plant" could be considered for the Route 44 Main Street area.

4. Solid Waste Management

The Town decided to close the landfill on Route 31 next to Miller-Richardson Field in 1993. Waste management is now managed by the Coventry Municipal Resource Recovery Authority (COVRRRA) in order to satisfy new state regulations and mandates regarding solid waste and recycling initiatives. The Authority receives advice from the Conservation Commission and Department of Public Works on day-to-day operations relative to recycling education and initiatives and the "pay-per bin size" trash disposal system.

COVRRRA functions to meet the regulatory requirements and mandates of the Connecticut General Statutes relative to the regulation and control of solid wastes and recycling programs. Under State Law, the Town is responsible to provide for the disposal of solid waste generated by its residents and businesses located in the Town. State mandates recyclables include plastic, paper, cardboard, waste antifreeze, tires, brush, electronics, mattresses, metal, magazines and junk mail.

A Regional Hazardous Waste Center, located in Willington, began operation in the spring of 1994, under the general supervision of Mid-NEROC. The communities that are members of Mid-NEROC share in having a common drop-off place for residents to dispose of household chemical hazardous and other hazardous wastes.

The Town has been recycling for some time and is currently in compliance with State recycling requirements. The town has a high recycling rate. The Town contracts for waste and recycling collection and has a long-term contract with Willimantic Waste for waste and recycling disposal.

In November of 1994, the Town opened a residential recycling drop-off facility on the site of the old landfill to provide residents with disposal options for material not covered by contract with the Town's contractor. The facility was constructed using a State of Connecticut Grant administered through Mid-NEROC. The facility is permitted by the CT DEP to receive construction debris, metal, tires, electronics, CFC's, leaves, cardboard, mattresses and empty propane tanks. The relocation of this facility, which is between two athletic fields, should be considered.

Household Chemical Hazardous Waste is also an area where public education needs to be emphasized. Education can also serve to point out alternative nonhazardous substitutes for problem substances. An education program can help people to identify hazardous materials that they already have stored in their garage, basement, or barn. If upon identifying a material as being hazardous, and the resident wishes to properly dispose of it, the Town can direct the resident to the Household Chemical Waste Drop-off Facility located in the Town of Willington.

5. Future Development

It is expected that in the future there will be both voluntary and legislated programs to continue to reduce the amount of household hazardous chemical waste generated. Programs that require sellers to take back dead batteries, unused paint and household chemicals, etc. would seem to be the best way to have those responsible for generating hazardous wastes pay for the costs of disposal or recycling.

Recommendations- (Action items include the responsible party, in brackets)

1. Public education is of primary importance in making the waste stream minimization and recycling programs work. State mandates serve to ensure that minimal efforts and results are obtained but it will take a willing public to make any waste reduction or recycling efforts viable. [Conservation Commission, Town Council and Public Works]
2. The Residential Recycling Transfer Center and the Town's current Waste Disposal Program should adequately handle the Town's waste disposal needs for the foreseeable future. There are no recommendations to consider the construction and operation of a full Transfer Station.

L. Energy Conservation and Resource Policy

The United States consumes about one-quarter of the world's energy resources. It is imperative that we do our part at the town level to reduce our energy footprint and work to minimize the amount of natural resources we locally use. Coventry has historically been a leader in energy conservation and sustainability within Connecticut but we continue to strive to reduce our energy costs and make our community a better place to live.

Vision: The Town of Coventry, understanding the importance of energy conservation and reducing dependence on scarce energy resources for the sustainability of our community, commits to develop and follow, within budgetary and operational constraints a commitment to the achievement of energy saving goals, the use of better energy practices, and the pursuit of energy saving projects, alternative financing, incentives and opportunities to help the Town of Coventry reach those goals. [Recommendations listed below involve a variety of Town and Board of Education staff.]

1. Energy Efficiency Goal: Seek a 5% reduction in Town of Coventry municipal and school annual energy consumption over five years (July 1, 2018 - June 30, 2023).

Recommendations:

- Tracking of energy usage should be ongoing and follow formats as available with the Energy Star Portfolio Manager or similar to record oil, propane, electric and water usage.
- Reduce energy loads whenever possible by integrating occupancy sensors for lighting, switching to LED lighting fixtures, all equipment should be programmed to enter automatic Sleep modes when not in use.
- Continue to pursue net metering or low-risk solar projects.

2. Energy Efficiency Goal: Seek a 5% reduction in purchased oil over the next five years.

Recommendations:

- Increase utilization of the waste oil furnace at the Department of Public Works.
- Install remote access thermostats at rental facilities to assure maximum and minimum temperatures in buildings are maintained.
- Replace the boiler at GHG Robertson School, Coventry Grammar School and Booth and Dimock Library with a high efficiency boiler.

3. Energy Efficiency Goal: Seek a 5% reduction in transportation fuel (diesel/gasoline) used in the municipal fleet over the next five years.

Recommendations:

- Purchase and integrate alternative fuel and plug-in electric vehicles where possible into the municipal fleet.
- Adopt more stringent idling policies for municipal staff.
- Continue to look for grant opportunities to purchase more efficient and clean diesel heavy duty trucks.

4. Energy Efficiency Goal: Increase residential recycling rates by 5% while concurrently reducing household waste tonnage by 5% over the next five years.

Recommendations:

- Increase education on non-curbside recycling like household chemicals, fabrics, oil, paints, electronics, metals, prescription drugs, leaves/grass.
- Make additional dumpsters for co-mingled recyclables available for peak holiday seasons.
- Continue the residential compost program and make more educational resources available.

- 5 Energy Efficiency Goal: Increase the number of educational energy efficiency, sustainability, and environmental awareness event over the next five years.

Recommendations:

- Partner with Booth and Dimock Library, school environmental advocacy groups, the town recreation department, and civic groups in their efforts to educate the public about clean energy awareness.
- Continue hosting annual energy/sustainability events and forums.
- Promote the Home Energy Solution energy audits to residents through letters and workshops.
- Use email lists generated from Energy events to send out bi-monthly energy tips to interested residents.



Solar Array North Coventry Fire Station



Solar Carport Town Hall/School Complex

9 HOUSING

Housing has long been a central focus of public policy. Governmental agencies on the federal, state and local level are constantly evaluating the quality, availability and the cost of housing. On a local level, housing is often the principal land use, and it affects all residents. Its condition, cost, form and availability are major determinants of the quality of life in a community. An examination of the Town's housing stock has been conducted resulting in a determination of the future needs and actions to address those needs.

Housing policy goals:

- Meet the economic and social needs of the current residents, both renters and owners
- Incorporate future demographics in policy considerations
- Maintain the rural character and natural landscape of the town in the design and location of new housing
- Preserve and expand the existing affordable housing stock in the community



A. Housing Data

Data provided by the Connecticut Economic Resource Center (CERC) and the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) for 2017 indicate Coventry has 5,070 housing units. This represents just under 1% growth per year. Ninety-one percent are single family, six percent are multi-family and two percent are condominiums. Ninety-one percent are owner occupied. Country Place condominiums are located on Merrow Road (98 units) and Bidwell Village on Stonehouse Road (37 units, 23 under construction). Kenyon Falls condominiums are on Armstrong Road (46 units), and Flanders Woods on Flanders Woods Lane has 16 stand-alone units. In addition, Orchard Hill Estates, 80 one and two bedroom subsidized units for low and moderate income elderly, is located at 1630 Main Street.

The median price of a house in Coventry is \$243,500 which is 98 percent of the county median and 91 percent of the state median. Fifty-two percent of the houses are located on one acre or less of land, and about one-quarter of the housing stock is located around Lake Wangumbaug. Housing permits since 2008 have ranged between 16 and 30 units, a significant decrease from the previous ten years.

The neighborhoods around Lake Wangumbaug and Eagleville Lake were originally subdivided into relatively small lots. Most of the homes in these neighborhoods were originally constructed for use as vacation homes during the summer. Many of the lots have been combined, but there are still homes on lots of 5,000 square feet or less. Until recently, each house had an individual well and septic system. Many of these houses were only used seasonally, but with the conversion of homes to year round dwellings, some problems have arisen such as inadequate heating and the concentration and overuse of individual wells and septic systems. This led to a variety of public health issues and the potential degradation of the lake water quality, which resulted in the incorporation of sewers around portions of Lake Wangumbaug.

Dramatic improvements of neighborhoods have occurred over the past 26 years enabled by Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) for housing rehabilitation as well as many private owners adding significant investment to their properties. The recent sewer expansion project, completed in 2008, has provided the majority of the lake homes with sewer service, addressing many of these issues.

The 2019 Citizen's Survey (See Chapter 3) included specific questions regarding residents opinions on the availability of housing types, and the results were:

- Options for young residents- 78% of the respondents indicated "somewhat too little or about right".
- Option for seniors- 84% of the respondents indicated "somewhat too little or about right".
- Multi-family housing- 79% of the respondents indicated "somewhat too little or about right".
- Townhouses- 82% of the respondents indicated "somewhat too little or about right"
- Single family homes- 82% of the respondents indicated "about right".

B. Fiscal Impact

Municipal finances in Coventry rely heavily on single family detached housing, primarily because they place more demand on municipal and public education services. Commercial, farmland and Open Space, conversely have a positive effect on municipal finances.

In comparison, attached single family homes and multi-family housing generally consist of smaller units with fewer bedrooms, and are generally not as attractive to large families. In addition, much of this type of housing is oriented towards specific population groups, such as "empty nesters" who generally demand less in municipal services. With fewer school children, attached single-family homes and multi-family housing generally have less of a negative fiscal impact. Furthermore, streets and utilities within these developments are often privately maintained, which can reduce the municipal fiscal burden.

C. Demographic Trends Create Challenges

Demographic trends in Coventry for the next fifteen years indicate the following:

- Age 24 years or less- The population will decrease by fifteen to twenty percent
- Age 24 to 64 years- The population will shrink by seven to fifteen percent
- Age 65 year and up- The population will increase by 25 to 50 percent

The median housing price in Coventry has increased over ten percent in the last 10 years to \$259,000. 20% of the units were below \$100,000, 65% were between \$100,000 and \$300,000 and 15% over \$300,000.

These trends indicate the two most significant housing challenges are those related to the affordability of housing for lower income residents, and for those over the age of 65. The multitude of smaller houses around the lakes helps to address the first challenge. The second is more complicated. Seniors have several options for housing including: staying in the present family home, downsizing to a smaller single family residence, finding an apartment or condominium that allows less attention to maintenance, living with a child or relative in a common or separate area, and a smaller apartment near other like families such as Orchard Hills. With the significant population increase of the over-65 group, housing policies must recognize the need for these options.

D. Affordability of Housing

The issue of housing affordability is extremely complex, and defies simple solutions. The cost of housing is affected by a wide variety of factors including mortgage interest rates, labor and material costs, land costs, consumer preference, environmental regulations, disposable income and local economic conditions. Most of these factors are beyond the control of local government, though there is encouragement and guidance through the regulatory process. Regulations have encouraged a particular style of development that provides mutually beneficial trade-offs between the developer and the community, such as density bonuses in subdivisions. Federal and State governments have used a variety of housing programs that involve a direct or indirect financial subsidy to lower the cost of constructing housing units.

A 2015 report by the Partnership for Strong Communities (Hartford, Ct.) noted that housing is more affordable in Coventry than most other municipalities in the state, as measured by the cost of housing versus household disposable income. This data indicates the town has a diversity of housing opportunities that should be maintained.

Coventry has over 25 years' experience acquiring and managing Community Development Block (CDBG) grants that promote equal opportunity housing for residents at or below 80 percent of the median Hartford-Metro region family income. The grants can be applied to rehabilitation or maintenance of existing homes where owners meet certain criteria. The projects include improvements to the Town's senior housing project, Orchard Hills Estates. Nearly 650 projects totaling approximately \$8.5 million have been completed.

Given that Coventry has a multitude of residences that qualify for these grants, and since the demographic trends indicate the continued need for these modest homes, this program is an effective way to preserve affordable housing and should be continued.

E. Subdivisions

In 1998, The Planning and Zoning Commission adopted open space subdivision regulations. These regulations provide for a more flexible design, sustainable neighborhoods, and more logical and connective open space areas. The developments are density neutral when compared to traditional subdivisions. The Commission has made several amendments since the adoption of the regulations that has enabled better collaboration with the developer, designer and land owner to achieve ultimately the best design possible for the property that provides compatibility with the natural landscape.

F. State of Connecticut Initiatives

The State requires that municipal Plans of Conservation and Development address the issue of affordable housing. A program to address the housing needs of Coventry should be consistent with the other land use goals and objectives of the Town, as set forth in this Plan. A multifaceted approach that utilizes a number of strategies would be the most effective program. The primary State/Federal Program that applies to Coventry is the CDBG Housing Rehabilitation Grant Program that is designed for low and moderate income homeowners and landlords with low and moderate income tenants to address safety and public health code violations, and to provide funds for necessary house repairs.

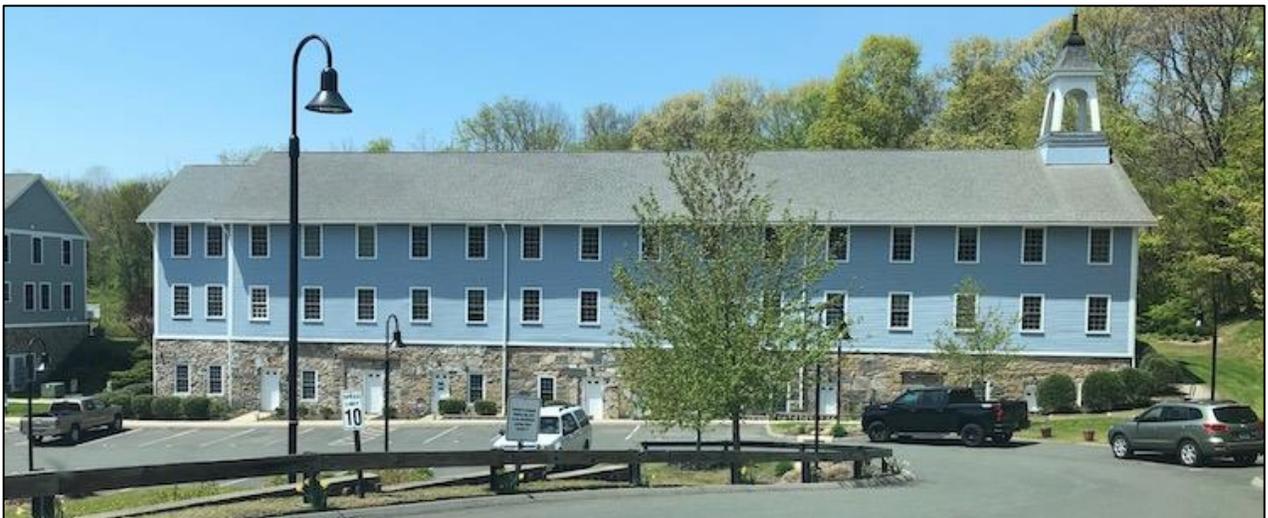
Recommendations - (Action items include the responsible party, in brackets)

1. Continue attention to the progress of open space subdivisions and modify regulations as necessary to provide sustainable neighborhoods, open space protection and increased land values. [Planning & Zoning and Conservation Commissions and Land Use staff]
2. Encourage and protect stable residential development of long-term quality and a favorable range of housing values. Dwellings and related land and buildings will constitute the bulk of the tax base. [Planning & Zoning Commission and Land use staff]
3. Support the preservation of the physical and architectural characteristics of large houses and their sites. Encourage the conversion of large houses into uses compatible with the neighborhood, structure and site. The overall goal is to maintain and/or improve the exterior of the houses and to provide opportunities for adaptive reuse. [Planning & Zoning Commission]
4. Accommodate residential development at densities (lot size and families per acre) that can be supported by slope and soil conditions and also fit the natural landscape without major re-grading or slashing of wooded areas. Consider water quality needs as related to existing/new infrastructure. [Planning & Zoning Commission]
5. Continue to encourage mixed-use and nodal development in appropriate areas, particularly the Route 44/Main Street intersection and Route 44 near the Bolton town line. [Planning & Zoning and Economic Development Commissions, Land use staff]
6. Monitor the Coventry Village regulations/design guidelines that provide for mixed use development and improve as necessary. [Planning & Zoning and Economic Development Commissions and Land use staff]
7. Work to adaptively reuse older buildings, particularly mill structures and build on the recent success of the Kenyon Falls condominiums that provide 34 affordable housing units. [Planning & Zoning and Economic Development Commissions and Land use staff]
8. Pursue an affordable housing plan which emphasizes public-private cooperation. The plan should be specific as to potential sites for affordable housing and methods of implementation. The plan should ensure that the affordable housing be dispersed throughout Town and integrated within the community. [Planning & Zoning Commission, Land use staff and Town Council]
9. Apply for additional Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding to upgrade existing low-to-moderate income housing and insure zoning regulations allow appropriate housing initiatives. [Planning & Zoning, Town Council, Land use staff]

10. Encourage alternative housing options for mature families (empty-nesters) and senior citizens who no longer desire single-family housing but who would prefer to live in multi-family planned environments that offer a wide range of residential amenities or in other alternate living arrangements more appropriate for their stage of life (e.g., accessory apartments, multi-family housing, congregate housing, self-care facilities). [Planning & Zoning Commission, Town Council and Land use staff]

11. Based on the demand for apartments at Orchard Hills, as well as the fact that the site has public sewers, conduct a study as to the feasibility of expanding housing units on site. Apply for CDBG funding to make necessary improvements and modernization to Orchard Hills under the State of Connecticut 2013-18 Action Plan for Housing and Community Development. [Planning & Zoning Commission, Town Council and Land use staff]

12. Continue efforts to upgrade the neighborhood environment of the communities around Coventry Lake. Efforts should be oriented towards the improvement of the neighborhood's public infrastructure, water supply and roads, as well as the upgrade of the homes of low and moderate income residents. Participation in the CDBG program is a method for financing and implementing these improvements and should be continued. An emphasis of any program should be the leveraging of public actions to encourage private investment in the area. [Planning & Zoning Commission, Land use staff, Town Council]



13. Consider areas in Town with adequate existing or emerging infrastructure where some moderate density residential development may be appropriate. Development at this density could be in the form of single-family detached, single-family attached, two-family or multi-family housing with more than two units. The analysis performed with Home-CT grant will help identify housing needs and solutions. Zoning regulations may need to be revised where appropriate to reflect these recommendations and the needs of the community. [Planning & Zoning Commission and Land use staff]

14. Consider Amending Zoning Regulation 5.13.01 to allow apartments or condominiums in the lake watershed area with available sewer and appropriate safeguards to the Lake. [Planning & Zoning Commission]
15. New regulations adding flexibility for farm labor quarters should be monitored and updated as experienced is gained. [Planning & Zoning Commission and Land use staff]
16. Promote, where possible, residential development that is pedestrian friendly- sidewalks, pathways or bikeways- that allow access to neighborhoods and non-residential amenities. [Planning & Zoning and Conservation Commissions and Land use staff]
17. Promote residential development that conserves energy and takes advantage of active and passive solar techniques. [Planning & Zoning Commission and Energy Conservation Committee]
18. The zoning regulations were changed in 2006 to address houses with accessory apartments for family members. Monitor the administration of these permits and address issues as necessary. [Planning & Zoning Commission and Land use staff]
19. Acknowledge the “Crumbling foundations” issue in the area and participate and be supportive of potential solutions. [Planning & Zoning Commission and Land use staff]

10 TRANSPORTATION



The transportation system of a community is important in its growth and development. It represents a major public investment, and the service provided by the facilities in the system is often cited as an important factor in the quality of life of a community. Like other public facilities, the transportation system is usually impacted by growth in the community and region.

However, traffic congestion is more readily apparent to residents than growth impacts on many other services.

The goal of the transportation system in town is to provide multi-modal accessibility, connectivity, and mobility for citizens of all ages and abilities. Accessibility is the overall ease by which a person can reach a desired destination. Connectivity is the directness of travel paths and the density of intersections. Mobility refers to the ability to travel from one place to another at a reasonable cost.

A. Regional Setting

Coventry lies along several major regional transportation corridors. U.S. Route 44, in conjunction with Interstate 384 links the Town with Hartford and other major traffic generators such as the University of Connecticut at Storrs, as well as shopping, employment and housing in Mansfield. Coventry also lies between Willimantic and Vernon/Tolland.

Preferred routes emanating from Willimantic generally skirt Coventry via Routes 195 and 32 to the east, or U.S. Route 6 to the southwest. However as these routes have become increasingly burdened with heavier volumes, alternate routes through Coventry have experienced increased use as well. Route 31 is the primary access to Coventry Center from points north and south, while Route 275, (Stonehouse Road), connects Coventry Center easterly with Eagleville and Routes 32 and 195 to Mansfield and Storrs.

According to the latest census data, about 80 percent of Coventry's working population commute out of town, with the majority of workers traveling towards the Hartford area.

B. Mass Transportation

Coventry is served by the CT Transit system with commuter bus service to Hartford and a commuter parking lot on Route 44 at the Second Congregational Church. The commuter service to Hartford should be monitored to ensure its continued adequacy in terms of convenient parking, scheduling and promotion to encourage its use. CT Transit provides service from Hartford to the UConn transportation center.

At present there is no transit service between Vernon and Windham. It would be desirable to investigate this route through Coventry for future mass transit opportunities. Currently there is no student bus service from UConn to Coventry. The opportunity exists to connect the University with commuter bus service and retail establishments in North Coventry Village and with commercial uses and housing in or near South Coventry Village.

Bradley International Airport is approximately 34 miles from Coventry and the State owned Windham Airport is less than ten miles from Coventry Center. Only freight, charter and other general aviation services are currently available at Windham Airport but its significant surplus capacity may attract increased usage in the future, as other competing facilities approach capacity.

C. Existing Road System

Coventry participated in the Route 6 Hop River Corridor Transportation Study that also included the towns of Andover, Bolton and Columbia. The Study was performed subsequent to the completion of the Route 6 – Hop River Corridor Economic Development Study. The Transportation Study serves as a compliment to the Economic Development Study since it provides detailed analysis on Route 6 as well as specific transportation related recommendations that coincide with the visions and policies on future growth in the Corridor.

The Eastern Gateways Transportation Study analyzed the Route 44 and 195 corridors through the towns of Bolton, Coventry, Mansfield and Tolland. The Study examines the growth that is expected in the subject towns as well as the projections for the University of Connecticut campus, which is the largest employer and generator of traffic in the subject towns. The Study provides detailed transportation related recommendations that focuses on a multi-modal and a context sensitive approach.

The highest traffic volumes in Town are where Routes 31 and 44 intersect. Route 44 crosses the northern part of the Town east-to-west. Where 1-384 terminates at the junction of Routes 6 and 44, nearly equal proportions of traffic continue on Route 44 as those which travel south on Route 6 toward Willimantic. Traffic volumes on Route 44 will increase over the long term. The State has modified the road with increased pavement width with left turn lanes from the Bolton town line to the east intersection of Route 44 and Carpenter Road. The Eastern Gateways Transportation Study provides insight on potential improvements for Route 44.

Route 31 north of Route 44 is an important link in the Town's transportation system, providing access to I-84. Although traffic volumes are currently not very high, they are expected to increase as more development occurs in northern Coventry. The road is in generally good condition and has been improved by the State DOT through several projects along specific sections of the road.

Due to increased development on Route 44, the Town has identified the intersections of Route 44 and Bread & Milk Street and Swamp Road as severely congested and potentially unsafe, particularly at rush hours. Recently, a plan has been developed to significantly change the road system in the area by combining Swamp and Northfields Roads to one southerly intersection with Route 44 and to upgrade the pass-through and turning lanes in the area. The project is slated for completion in 2022.

A most significant improvement of the Regional Plan of Transportation has been concluded. It encompasses Route 31 between Route 275 and Woods Lane, a "context sensitive" project which softened the curve east of Route 275, as well as added pedestrian, curb cut and parking access improvements.

While the state highways form the corridors for through-traffic and the spine of local circulation, other important roads for internal circulation include Daly Road, South Street, Pucker Street, Flanders Road, Flanders River Road, North River Road and Goose Lane. The Town should evaluate these "urban area" roads as local intercyclings to include in the LOTCIP program for State aid.

As growth continues in the northern part of Coventry, east-west circulation will rely increasingly on Broadway, Merrow Road and North School Road. The completion of an east-west connection between Bread & Milk Street and Cedar Swamp Road, would facilitate east-west access in North Coventry, and keep some local traffic off of Route 44.

Cedar Swamp Road and Grant Hill Road are important collectors as well. Brigham Tavern Road, River View Drive and Jones Crossing Road, as improved, should serve as a convenient connection along the easterly Town boundary and as access to Route 195.

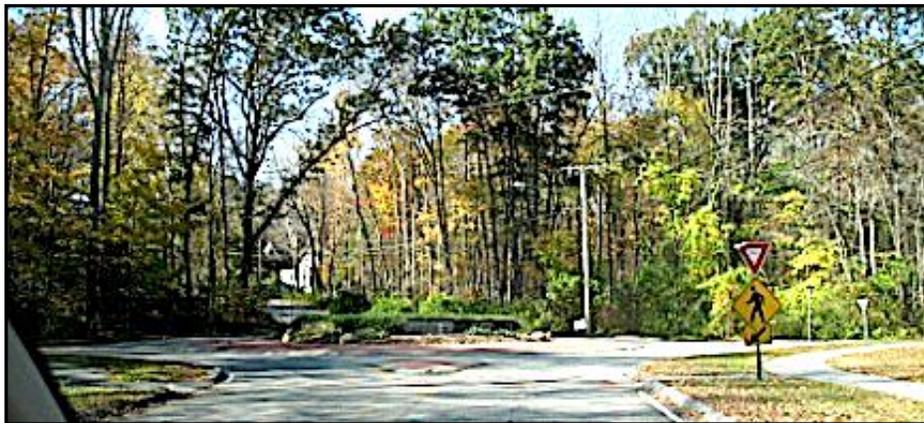
Dead end and single access roads create potential issues for circulation and emergency access. For example, Riley Mountain Road and several subdivisions exhibit these conditions. Considerations should be given to correct these situations where possible.

With the new development at the intersection of Route 44 and Main Street, Stage Road has become an area of concern due to its outdated intersections with Route 44 and Grant Hill Road. The Eastern Gateways Transportation Study includes recommendations for this area.

In the east-central section of Town, Lewis Hill and Ripley Hill Road complete the link along the east edge of Town between Route 31 and Brigham Tavern Road toward Route 195. Sam Green Road and Richmond Road serve as secondary local streets and access new development in the vicinity of Old Tolland Turnpike. The intersection of Old Tolland Turnpike and Route 31 is unsafe due to its alignment and vertical grade and is currently discontinued, though a right-of-way remains.

In the west-central section, Silver Street, or a combination of Swamp Road and Brewster Street provide access between South Street and Route 44. Silver Street should be improved to standards of a major local street, because of its central location and direct configuration. In the future it may also be desirable to provide a connection between Wrights Mill Road (at the intersection of Case Road) and Swamp Road via Love Lane.

South Street from Route 6 to Flanders Road is the longest major road linking central and southern sections of town. At the eastern end, South Street Extension is not improved through to Route 31. Completing this connection would improve east-west circulation through the south part of Town, and provide an alternative connection between Route 31 and Route 6. The Town is currently considering possible pedestrian linkage on South St. Ext. on the closed portion of that road. The intersection of South Street and Swamp Road is narrow and dangerous and a significant upgrade is needed.



Upgrading Snake Hill Road and High Street would improve the circulation around Coventry Village. Snake Hill Road has particularly dangerous sight lines. To improve traffic flow in the Village it would be desirable to provide a connection (along an old right-of-way) between the intersection of Bradbury Lane and Prospect Street southward to High Street. Eagleville Road and Depot Road provide an alternative connection between Routes 31, 275 and 32.

D. Railroads

A short stretch of railroad track runs through Coventry, crossing Depot Road. It is part of a line that extends from New London north into Canada, running along the Willimantic River. The line is used primarily for freight traffic. There is increasing support for passenger service on this line from the New London to Montreal, Canada. The tracks have been recently upgraded and its terminus at the port of New London holds promise for future traffic increases.

The former rail line between Willimantic and Manchester that goes through the southern part of Coventry has been abandoned. It is currently under the control of the Department of Environmental Protection and is now used for recreational purposes. The right-of-way will remain intact, should it be needed in the future.

E. Street Classification

A street classifications system is used to define the variety of functions served by different types of roads in the community. The system is useful in formulating this Plan in that it can be used to describe the functions and the associated level of improvements and construction standards which should be maintained.

The Town uses a system of street classification in its zoning regulations as one basis for regulating development, with different standards for the development of property along different classifications of streets. The existing street classifications are generally determined by existing road conditions and use or actual traffic volumes. Coventry Zoning Regulations define streets in four classifications:

1. Principal State Route: Connecticut Routes 6, 31, 44, and 275.
2. Major Local Street: Bunker Hill Road, Cross Street, Daly Road, Flanders Road to Route 32, Flanders River Road, Goose Lane, Lake Street, Lewis Hill Road, Merrow Road & Broadway, Grant Hill Road, North River Road (to Goose Lane), North School Road, Pucker Street, Ripley Hill Road and South Street.
3. Secondary Local Street: Babcock Hill Road, Case Road, Cedar Swamp Road, South River Road, Seagraves Road, Silver Street, Snake Hill Road, Swamp Road and Wright's Mill Road from Case Road to Route 31.
4. Minor Local Street: All other Streets in Town.

The current classification system is defined primarily by street construction and right-of-way standards. In order for it to be effectively used in the Plan of Conservation and Development, definitions should be expanded to include function which can then relate to construction, right of way standards and contextual sensitivity as follows:

1. Limited Access Highways, as their name implies have limited, controlled access from the local street network and provide no access to adjacent property. They are integral components of the State transportation system and are intended to carry large volumes of traffic between communities and regions.

2. Principle State Routes are intended to carry large volumes of traffic between different neighborhoods and communities. They are important components of the regional transportation network. Transportation is their primary function, with access to properties along them a secondary function, which should not interfere with traffic carrying capacity and level of service (LOS).

3. Major Local Streets are intended to collect traffic from neighborhood areas and carry it onto the state routes. They are not intended to be used for long trips or to carry large volumes of traffic. They are also used to connect different sections of a community. Although their primary function is transportation, access is also important, providing that it does not significantly interfere with the traffic carrying capacity of the road.

4. Secondary Local Streets are similar to major local streets, except that access to adjacent property is a more important function than transportation. They are intended to fill short potential gaps in the local transportation network.

5. Minor Local Streets provide access to adjacent properties. They are intended only for low traffic volumes and should not be used for through traffic. The street system should be designed to avoid extensive travel on local streets and employ traffic calming measures where appropriate.

F. Unimproved Roadways

The Town of Coventry currently maintains and oversees 5.1 miles of unimproved roads. These roadways are surfaced with gravel and receive grading twice a year.

The following roadways are deemed unimproved; North School Road from Dunn Road to Route 31; Hop River Road, approximately one half mile in from Bunker Hill Road to the Town Line of Columbia; Riley Mountain Road, approximately one half mile in from North River Road to the end; South Street Extension, from Plains Road to the end; Times Farm Road, from Town Line in Andover to the end at Channel 3 Camp, and Whites Hill Road, starting .02 miles in from Route 275.

G. Scenic Roads

The Town Scenic Road Ordinance (#184) provides for an overlay designation which could be applied to Minor Local or in some cases Secondary Local Streets, which by virtue of their unique beauty, including vistas, stone walls, mature trees, historic structures and the like, could be degraded by otherwise desirable improvements to comply with design standards for its street classification. The following roads have been designated as scenic roads:

- North School Road
- Skinner Hill Road
- South Street (in the area of the Hale Forest)
- River View Drive

H. Compliance with Metropolitan Transportation Plan

In April of 2019, the Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) adopted a revised Metropolitan Transportation Plan for the region, which includes Coventry, under the jurisdiction of (CRCOG). The Plan identifies how the Capitol Region will manage and operate its multi-modal transportation system (including transit, highway, bicycle, pedestrian and accessible transportation) to meet the region's economic, transportation, development and sustainability goals, among others, with a planning horizon to 2045 within a fiscally constrained environment.

Transportation System Goal: Provide for the efficient and orderly movement of people and goods into, out of, and within Coventry and provide adequate access to places of employment, residences, recreational and commercial activity. The Plan recognizes that residents are automobile-oriented and that will serve as the primary means of transportation.

Recommendations- (Action items include the responsible party, in brackets)

1. Provide for adequate circulation within and between all sections of the town. Dead-end roads or cul-de-sacs in new development should not preclude strategically located through-streets that would improve traffic flow. Pedestrian and bike access to connect subdivisions and their open space are important considerations. [Public Works, Planning & Zoning Commission]

2. Provide and maintain public infrastructure facilities such as roads, sewers and storm drainage, where appropriate, in all areas throughout the town to prevent physical deterioration, in keeping within the town's Capital Improvements Program. Any new roads or existing road improvements should be accomplished in a "context sensitive" manner that respects the natural environment and landscape, considers non-vehicular mobility and is compatible with the neighborhood. [Public Works]

3. Work with the State and other affected communities to evaluate future transportation needs as they could impact Route 31, Route 44, Route 6, Route 195 and Route 275, and implement improvements in a manner which is not disruptive to the communities. [Town Manager, Town Engineer]
4. Monitor traffic volumes on town roads to assess capacity and future needs. [Public Works]
5. Continue to support the improvement of Lake Association roads through joint cooperative effort between the Town and the Associations, including facilitating transfer of ownership. [Public Works, Town Engineer, Town Council]
6. Consider Scenic Road designations and educate the public about the benefits of scenic road designation. Review the applicability of the ordinance over time and make appropriate changes. [Town Council, Planning & Zoning Commission and Land Use staff]
7. Encourage the use of public transit by maintaining and improving amenities such as related parking facilities and publicizing their benefits. Consider public transit from Vernon to Willimantic and extending the UConn student bussing routes to include Route 44 and Route 31/275 in Coventry. [State of Connecticut]
8. Strive to minimize the number of curb cuts to State and Major Local Streets. [State of Connecticut]
9. Intersections, crosswalks, alignments and drainage should be improved on local streets as needed to promote public safety. [Public Works]
10. Consider pedestrian on and off road mobility as a significant opportunity in the context of subdivisions and their relation to retail/commercial nodes where appropriate. An example of such an opportunity is the plan to connect the Pilgrim Hills subdivision to Grant Hill Road, then to the Williams subdivision and then along Coventry Brook to Route 44 with potential extensions to the Skungamaug River. [Planning & Zoning, Commission, Land Use Staff]
11. Provide pedestrian/bicycle access from the High School to Daly Road, via Main Street, and consider "Share-the-road" for bicycles on Daly Road. [Public Works, Town Council, Town Engineer]
12. The Conservation Commission is encouraged to complete its town wide bicycle route mapping for connecting densely populated areas and along scenic viewsheds. [Conservation Commission and Land Use staff]

13. Continue and expand inter-municipal cooperation for trail systems such as the Hop River Rail trail and the Willimantic River Greenway, and continue planning for the Nathan Hale Greenway on the former Route 6 land acquired by the Town. [Town Engineer, Land Use staff, Town Manager, Town Council]

14. Publish biking and walking trail systems on the town web site. [Land Use Staff]

15. Follow a policy of “Complete Streets” whereby provisions are made for vehicles, bicyclists and pedestrians on every major transportation project. [Planning & Zoning Commission, Public Works, Town Engineer]

16. Locate off-street parking behind or to the side of buildings to maintain aesthetic value and pedestrian accessibility between adjacent destinations. [Planning & Zoning Commission]



Jones Crossing Road Bridge Replacement

11 COVENTRY VILLAGE

Coventry Village was the traditional social and economic center of South Coventry until the 1970's when economic and demographic factors diminished its role and function. Residential growth shifted to northern Coventry and the loss of small businesses created challenges. The Village layout of small lots and underused mill sites are more conducive to small scale development.



In 1990, a Plan of Preservation and Development for Coventry Village was commissioned and updated in 2012. Its recommendations, which still apply today, have been actively pursued by municipal and private entities. The aforementioned plan says: "Coventry Village remains an area of impressive architectural and natural beauty, retaining the significant cultural assets associated with its 18th and 19th century life as an industrial mill village....The landscape features of the area around the Mill Brook contribute to its significance and beauty."

Driving development in the Village since then has been an awareness of its basic qualities of small scale, dense development patterns, multi-use buildings and shared parking. Most of the Village is served by public water and sewer, which fits the infrastructure well and enhances smart-growth principles. Zoning regulation changes supported this new approach.

The Natural and Built Environment

The key natural feature of the Village is the Mill Brook. It fostered the development of many water-powered mills and associated structures as well as many fine homes, along with rich stone features that create a strong visual element. The Village is fortunate in the amounts of fields, woodlands and wetlands that survive. The challenges are mainly in the preservation of these elements and the adaptive re-use of existing mill and commercial buildings and landscapes.

The Village was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1994 due to its strong mix of styles ranging in age from the early 1800's to the early 1900's that still exist. The lack of protection of these historic elements have allowed development of non-compatible uses and some destruction or alteration of historic structures.

The Village's traditional role has been a mixed-use service center for residents which is relatively stable, but has the potential for further economic vitality, particularly with the recent curve realignment project completion.

The Village Today

As recommended by the 1990 and 2012 Coventry Village plans, significant public and private infrastructure improvements have occurred in the Village. A seven-acre tract has been preserved as open space and named the Mill Brook Park. The Zoning Regulations also include design guidelines to help preserve the character of the area. The long-envisioned Mill Brook walkway has been implemented from the Lake to Mason Street, and future portions are being planned.

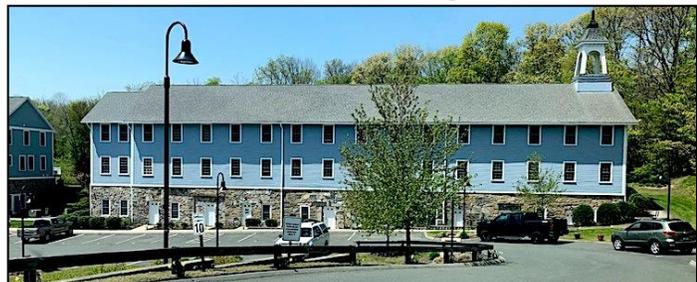


The recent curve realignment project has dramatically improved the roadway, added sidewalks and streetscapes and encouraged private building renovations. Significant improvements have been made to Mill Brook Place and Mill Brook Park and new community partners including the Coventry Arts Guild and the CT Main Street Center are now active in events and economic vitality.

State of Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development grant money has been used to greatly improve the facades of twelve buildings, and it has encouraged private investment. Another grant allowed the placement of eighteen interpretive historic signs in the Village as an educational and recreational asset.

The lake outlet to the Mill Brook has been completely renovated to allow better control of the lake water level and a small landscaped area has been installed. Lake Street sidewalks have been added from Main Street to the Town Green.

Two major residential projects, including the Bidwell Village condominiums the Kenyon Falls condominiums have added to the residential base. The Village now includes an eclectic mix of shops, personal care options, and dining establishments in addition to the existing post office, Booth & Dimock Memorial Library and the First Congregational Church. While there has been significant revitalization progress made in



the past ten years, continuing effort is required to realize the opportunities to improve the quality of life of the residents and visitors to the Village.

Goal: Preserve the historical and architectural resources in Coventry Village in addition to increasing its economic and functional vitality.

Recommendations- (Action items include the responsible party, in brackets)

1. Continue to preserve the Village's architectural and historical resources. [Planning & Zoning and Economic Development Commissions, Land use staff, Village Improvement Society]

- Continue to apply and modify Zoning Regulations as necessary and employ the design guidelines to their fullest extent. Apply the experience that was gained with the successful brownfield remediation activities at Kenyon Falls to the other sites in the Village that possess chemical contamination which can limit adaptive reuse.
- Encourage strong advocacy for historic preservation by existing or new groups. The Village is on the National Register of Historic Places.

2. Increase economic and functional vitality. [Planning & Zoning and Economic Development Commissions, Land use staff]

- Selectively promote intensive and appropriate residential and commercial uses.
- Plan a careful strategy to combine new uses, including services, retail starter businesses, clustered housing on the Village edges, and infill commercial development along Main Street.
- Target new uses that will have regional attraction, including those associated with local universities.
- Develop the Village's tourist potential in tandem with Coventry's significant tourist draws; the Hale Homestead, Coventry Lake, Historical Society Sites and the Farmers' Market.
- Participate actively in planning with "The Last Green Valley" Heritage Corridor.

3. Adaptively reuse Coventry Village's historic mills and under-utilized properties. [Planning & Zoning and Economic Development Commissions, Land use staff, Town Council]

- Develop adaptive re-use plans for the mills as new centers for commercial growth. Each mill may serve as a different thematic center or for housing, although the appropriate flexibility of land scale must be allowed. Target the two mills on Mason Street.
- Develop and promote a plan for the following properties: Woodland Road lakeside parcel, the old roller rink/auction house on Lake Street in combination with the Lakeview Restaurant, potential commercial use of the front lot across

from the First Congregational Church, potential commercial use of the buildings at 1340 Main Street (old Antiques shop), Sanborn's Garage, the corner of Main and Paden Roads and the lot at 41 Stonehouse Road.

- Continue working with the Teleflex Corp. for potential expansion adjacent to their present facilities, and assist in maintaining their presence in the Village.

4. Enhance significant natural resources. [Planning & Zoning and Conservation Commissions, Public Works, Land use staff]

- Continue the development of a linear park, where appropriate, hike/bike trail along Mill Brook, with public access and open space linkages to Main Street. Restore the old mill ponds and dams where feasible.
- Continue planning for improved recreational opportunities and community support at Patriots Park and at the linear park near the Willimantic River with potential connections to Miller-Richardson Field.
- Encourage open space preservation through such processes such as incentive zoning, conservation easements, outright purchase and other techniques.
- Designate roads that might be considered under the Scenic Roads ordinance.

5. Initiate public actions and improvements. [Town Council, Public Works, Town Engineer]

- Design, implement and maintain, in conjunction with the Route 31 curve realignment project, a program of coordinated parking facilities and new sidewalks, crosswalks, lighting, street furniture, signage, and landscaping in the Village Center, where the project did not include these. Develop a comprehensive streetscape plan, with indigenous plants, which includes sidewalks on the southerly side of Main Street from Post Office area to Armstrong Road and sidewalks from Main Street to the Bidwell Village condominiums.

6. Establish financial incentives and a revitalization strategy. [Town Council, Economic Development Commission, Town Staff]

- Implement the existing property tax incentives for economic development, and consider same for historic restoration.
- Create a revitalization loan and grant program, with public and private funding, participation and leveraging.
- Continue to support funding and other resources to facilitate projects and citizens groups' activities that support the Village and the Town.

7. Explore the potential of financing public improvements that may include the creation of a special assessment district, tax increment financing and Community Development Block Grants. [Town Council, Manager and Staff]



Historic Coventry Village

12 NORTH COVENTRY VILLAGE

North Coventry Village was the traditional social and economic center of North Coventry and included the Second Church, a tavern and stage coach stations in the 1800's. It encompasses the area bounded north and east by Coventry Brook, south by the North Coventry Volunteer Fire Station and west by Silver Street.

The layout and configuration of the area, are a potential attraction to large scale development. Traffic on the Boston Turnpike has the highest volume of any road in town which supports development. The large farms present an opportunity for farm and rural character preservation and an increase in agri-business/tourism.



Development in the area began in the 1970's with the creation of Meadowbrook Plaza and was followed by Vinton Village, the CVS/Dunkin Donuts/Key Bank complex and the Walgreens pharmacy. Due to the local traffic volume and the increase in residential development, more activity is anticipated.

An "Eastern Gateways Strategy and Implementation Plan" sponsored by CRCOG, completed in April 2019, addresses current and long-range travel demand surrounding the area of Route 44 in Coventry and adjacent towns. Route 44 traffic is expected to increase 25% by 2040. The plan makes specific recommendations for the intersection of Route 44 and Main Street including adding a left turn lane, closing Stage Road access to Route 44, realigning curb cuts, a landscaped median and crosswalks and sidewalks. This plan is consistent with Coventry's plan for the North Village and will be closely monitored.

The issues at this location are:

- Traffic congestion created by further development around the intersection of Main Street and Route 44.
- The need to preserve the neighborhood character, preserve farm land and provide for needed commercial services.
- The lack of sewers limits development.
- The perceived need for public transportation both easterly and westerly.
- Threats to historic buildings.

The opportunities at this location are:

- Public water (Connecticut Water Co.) in relatively close proximity.
- A high bandwidth fiber optic cable under Route 44.
- Parcels of land available and conducive for development close to the intersection.
- Opportunities to use proximate open space for passive recreation and walking trails.
- An available commuter parking lot.
- High traffic count on Route 44.

Goal: Preserve the historical and architectural resources in the North Village in addition to increasing its economic and functional vitality.



Recommendations- (Action items include the responsible party, in brackets)

1. Balance the architectural, historical and agricultural resources of the area with future growth. [Planning & Zoning Commission, Land Use staff, Coventry Historical Society]

- Conduct a thorough site plan review of all land use proposals and continue to apply the design guidelines to facilitate harmonious development.

2. Increase economic and functional vitality. [Planning & Zoning and Economic Development Commissions Town Staff]

- Consider adaptive re-use of existing residential properties in the commercial zone.
- Selectively attract appropriate commercial, retail, service and agriculture uses.
- Work with the State of Connecticut Department of Transportation on road improvements, curb cuts and safe ingress/egress for both pedestrians and vehicles, consistent with the Eastern Gateways Transportation Study.
- Plan a careful strategy to combine new uses, including services, especially professional and medical offices, and infill commercial development.
- Target new uses that will have regional attraction, including those associated with local universities.

3. Develop and promote an integrated plan for future growth involving the following properties: [Planning & Zoning and Economic Development Commissions, Town Staff, Town Manager]

- The commercially zoned property east of Walgreens and adjacent town-owned land.

- The next phase of development behind Dunkin Donuts/CVS.
- The re-development of Vinton Village and adaptive re-use of adjacent residences.
- Meadowbrook Plaza, and adjacent vacant land, the corner gas station and access to both Routes 44 and 31.
- The residential properties on Main Street across from the Dunkin Donuts.
- Commercially zoned land east of the old Pomeroy Tavern (#1804 Boston Turnpike) with attention to set back and sensitivity to the adjacent historic homes.

4. Monitor zoning regulations and modify as necessary to respond to the above noted recommendations. Special attention should be made to design criteria, historic character, and strict standards for sign design and layout. [Planning & Zoning Commission, Land use staff]

5. Conduct a study on the necessary infrastructure needed for rational development of the area including water supply, package treatment sewer systems and public and shared transportation. [Planning & Zoning Commission, Town Engineer]



North Coventry Green

13 ECONOMIC VITALITY

Introduction

Economic Vitality is the sustainment of livable and viable communities. It may be characterized as a community that is comfortable and safe, with good quality housing and infrastructure, low crime rates, good jobs, a growing population, strong civic organizations and civic pride, good schools, social and recreational opportunities and a responsible government. The community and the government must actively support the retention of existing businesses and the development of selected new businesses in robust commercial districts attractive to residents and visitors. This allows residents to enjoy a high quality of life and to care for the community's future. This section of the POCD will deal with the business related aspects of Economic Vitality.

A. Overall Fiscal Analysis

The local tax burden in Coventry is placed squarely on residential property due to the lack of diversity of the tax base. The growth of the grand list is nearly all attributed to the development of single family homes which creates fiscal pressure on the education and Town services budgets.



B. 2016 Grand List Assessments of Real Property in Coventry:

Residential	96 %
Commercial	4%

The percentage of commercial assessment relative to the total in Coventry is one of the lowest in the State.

C. Citizens Surveys

The 2019 Citizen's Survey (See Chapter 3) included specific questions regarding residents opinions regarding Commercial/Business Growth, and the results were:

1. Commercial Development

65% of the respondents indicated Coventry should encourage some commercial development to provide jobs, services and tax revenue.

2. Support for Business Growth

The respondents indicated strong support for:

- Outdoor recreation- 65%
- Restaurants and Food Service- 48%
- Technology- 40%
- Arts and Entertainment- 29%
- Healthcare- 27%
- Professional Offices- 27%
- Tourism- 26%

3. Business Preference

The respondents indicated they would like to see the following business in Coventry:

Coffee shop/café	63%	Professional Services	35%
Casual Restaurant	62%	Personal Services	29%
Small Retail	55%	YMCA	25%
Sit-down Restaurant	52%	Automotive Parts	20%
Recreation	52%	Lodging	20%
Hardware Store	49%	Quick Oil Change	17%
Special food/grocery	44%	Fast Food	17%
Medical Services	35%	Large Retail Chain	11%

4. Growth Locations

The respondents indicated the following locations for growth;

Route 44 at Bolton Town Line	72%
Route 44 at Bread & Milk Street	59%
Coventry Village	58%
Route 44 at Route 31 South	52%

D. Employment

Nearly 50 percent of the employment in town is in the service and government sector. Thirty percent of the population (over age 25) have a high school degree and 34 percent have a bachelor's degree or more. Roughly 40 percent of those employed in town commute from the surrounding towns. The vast majority of the labor force commutes out of town with the following towns having the highest number commuting: Hartford, Manchester, Mansfield, East Hartford and Windham.

E. Economic Development Opportunities

The Town should broaden its economic base without losing its rural character. Business development is welcomed particularly when it complements and enhances the town's rural and historic nature, is appropriate for the neighborhood, creates high-quality jobs and provides goods or services that are needed by the residents of Coventry and the immediate surrounding towns. Coventry's geographical location has not made it a prime target for commercial development, but there are indications that the population count, household income, and traffic on main roads are now approaching the level that will attract business attention, particularly in the area of personal and medical services.

In 2006 the Town significantly updated its zoning regulations and zoning map to more clearly define the areas of development and to some extent focus the kind of development.

The enhancements included Design Guidelines in the South Coventry Village and other commercial districts. It also recommended several



levels of home-based business and their compatibility with the neighborhood. Significant efforts continue to be made to streamline the approval process for development applications. This has served as a good base for future development.

The Special Planning Areas map and narrative, included later in this section, provides details of future growth and infill in various areas of Town.

Goals:

- Support a stable diversified economic base
- Increase high quality jobs
- Provide the goods and services needed by the community
- Reduce the distance traveled for work, shopping and recreation

- Improve the balance between the commercial/ and the residential components of the grand list (Commercial is 4.2% of the grand list)

These goals should be achieved within the current zoning map categories and include adaptive re-use of existing structures, infill of existing development and new development. Mixed use development is appropriate where allowed, and infrastructure needs will be a major issue particularly public sewer and water. Traffic and pedestrian access management and the application of the design guidelines will also be a critical part of the equation.

Recommendations- (Action items include the responsible party, in brackets)

1. Encourage balanced commercial, light industrial, retail and service development and home-based businesses, subject to proper location and standards. [Economic Development Commission, Planning & Zoning Commission, Land Use Staff]

2. Protect neighborhoods from commercial encroachment by discouraging zone changes unless they are compatible with the neighborhood. [Planning & Zoning Commission]

3. The Route 6 Regional Economic Development Council's land use strategic plan recommends the adoption of corridor based zoning regulations and design guidelines that will encourage appropriate land use strategies that are compatible in each of the four towns. The towns should work cooperatively to complete this task.

4. The Town should coordinate local and regional efforts with the Capitol Region Council of Governments to guide and coordinate economic development efforts. The plans should address issues of existing businesses, as well as potential new businesses. For existing businesses, the strategy should include methods to encourage their economic health and growth. The economic development strategy should also address the need to attract appropriate businesses into Coventry. [Economic Development Commission, Town Staff]

5. An EDC Strategy Plan has been created (See Appendix) using current market and spending data. Implement this strategy with further enhancements from emerging market analysis and cooperation with regional towns, such as the Regional Economic Vitality Action Plan. Expand data sources to be able to react to market changes. Specific methods are being developed to pursue the economic development objectives, such as developer contacts, the use of state programs, public infrastructure or regulatory means to further the objectives. [Economic Development Commission, Town Staff]

6. Using the Special Planning Areas (SPA), maintain the target site development plans with specific uses of the available land that meet the needs of the community. Monitor and react to the changing market and modify the inventory as needed. [Economic Development Commission, Town Staff]

7. Facilities for growing industries, particularly those involving research and development, professional services and internet-based services require different types of physical facilities than traditional manufacturing firms. Truck or railroad access is not as vital as there are fewer goods with a service based industry. Coventry's rural nature matches this need very well, and particular emphasis should be made toward these types of businesses. [Planning & Zoning and Economic Development Commissions, Town Staff]

8. Encourage the growth of small businesses and industries through a variety of methods, including: [Planning & Zoning and Economic Development Commissions Town Staff]

- Application of the home business zoning regulations.
- The use of incubator facilities.
- Continue EDC sponsored educational forums.
- Continue EDC supported efforts to encourage businesses to work collaboratively for mutual benefit. (i.e. Connecticut Main Street Program)

9. Promote the revitalization of Coventry Village zoning district as a mixed-use activity center in accordance with the recommendations of this document. Recent improvements to the transportation and pedestrian facilities are a key element to promoting the Village as a destination. Employ low impact development design and context sensitive development design where appropriate in site and architectural plans that are developed. The Village has both water and sewer infrastructure. [Planning & Zoning and Economic Development Commissions, Town Staff, Village Improvement Society]

10. Promote the revitalization of the North Coventry Village (Route 44 and Main Street) as a mixed-use activity center of the Town and continue to apply design guidelines in the zoning regulations to supplement existing regulations. Employ low impact development design and context sensitive development design where appropriate in site and architectural plans that are developed. [Planning & Zoning and Economic Development Commissions Town Staff]

11. Promote the economic interests in agricultural, forest land, and other natural and cultural resources especially as they apply to tourism and recreation. Encourage the preservation and creation of viable and active farms that provide varied products to the regional populace. Consider methods to allow commercial agricultural operations and the processing and/or sale of locally grown products. Encourage farm related enterprises for recreation and education. [Planning & Zoning and Economic Development Commissions, Town Staff]

12. Improve the overall appearance and safety of the Town's business areas through the use of graphic symbols, planting of indigenous trees and shrubs, public art, installing sidewalks, non-obtrusive lighting and street furniture, the improvement of public safety, and the provision of other amenities that will make these areas more

desirable for pedestrians and shoppers. [Planning & Zoning and Economic Development Commissions, Town Council and Land Use staff]

13. Continue to monitor and adjust the zoning regulations to be more 'user friendly', reduce uncertainty, and streamline the review process. Continue to monitor the Zoning Map to insure adequate land is set aside for needed municipal and private services. [Planning & Zoning and Economic Development Commissions, Land Use Staff]

14. Evaluate small, town owned parcels that would be better served by sale to the public with proceeds to be used to acquire more suitable public land. [Planning & Zoning Commission, Land use staff]

15. Continue methodologies to expand needed public infrastructure (water, sewer, internet and cell service) in specific targeted commercial areas where the location and capacity is consistent with agreed upon goals and objectives. Apply green and innovative technologies where appropriate. [Planning & Zoning Commission, Land use staff, Public Works, Town Engineer]

16. Develop a cooperative relationship with the University of Connecticut, Eastern Connecticut State University, the Capitol Region Council of Governments, the Connecticut Main Street Center and Chambers of Commerce for economic development efforts and business development education. Maintain awareness and promote partnering with the State Economic Development entities to take advantage of the services and initiatives offered. [Economic Development Commission, Town Manager, Town Staff]

17. Continue the support of the Coventry Farmers' Market and stress its importance in supporting regional agriculture and local businesses. Encourage local business collaboration with the Market. [Town Staff]

18. Continue to support the revitalization and future adaptive re-use of the former Caprilands property on Silver Street. [Town Staff]

F. Tourism-Recommendations-

1. The Town should continue to encourage the growth of tourism as an economic component of the community. An initial step is the formulation of a tourism plan, preferably as a part of the regional tourism efforts both public and private. [Economic Development and Planning & Zoning Commissions Town Manager, Town Staff]

The plan should address the development of attractions and the marketing of the community. It should build on the successes of recent tourism initiatives, primarily the Farmers' Market, and should strive to provide a quality buying experience, show how tourism benefits local businesses, and protect natural and historical resources. [Economic Development Commission, Town Staff]

2. The creation of the Regional Economic Vitality Action Plan serves as an important first step in examining how tourism can be enhanced. Further analysis can be considered that provides a deeper focus on the matter. [Economic Development Commission, Town Staff]

G. Special Planning Areas for Growth and Infill

(Depending on the nature of proposed development, the following areas will be subject to the application of the Commercial Development Design Guidelines.)

Between 2016 and 2018, the Towns of Bolton, Coventry, Mansfield and Tolland have been involved with the Eastern Gateways Transportation Study, which has focused on the Route 44 and Route 195 corridors between member towns. The study is exploring multi-modal transportation options and strategies to address traffic safety and traffic volume issues that have resulted from recent development at UCONN as well as future development in the respective towns.

1. Rte. 44/ Bolton Gateway- (refer to the Strategic Plan in the Appendix) Commercial, Professional Office and adjacent Commercial Agricultural zones. The area presently contains several commercial/retail establishments on the south side of Route 44. Opportunities exist for new development, in-fill and re-use, particularly with the potential of the new sewer service entering from the Bolton town line. There are two houses of historic value on Cedar Swamp Extension, and there is a significant vista to the south. There is good access to route I-384. Improvements to Route 44 in Bolton, and future plans in collaboration with Bolton present new opportunities.

- Recognize that this area is the gateway to Coventry and creates a first impression of the Town.
- Consider changing zoning regulations (i.e. a floating or overlay zone) to create flexibility, mixed use development and encourage rational growth.
- Apply access management strategies to minimize curb cuts and consider shared and interconnected parking.
- The area includes a commercial/agriculture zone and uses should target the economic vitality of farms.

2. Rte. 44/ Bread & Milk Street- Commercial zone. The area currently contains several retail and service establishments on the north side of Route 44 and a public golf course on Bread & Milk Street. Opportunities exist for new development along the east side of Bread & Milk Street where there is a large vacant parcel that has had prior commercial interest. The Eastern Gateways Transportation Study may offer new potential for this area. There is a historic house on the northwest corner of Route 44 and Bread & Milk Street. Public sewer does not exist. A public water supply exists in the adjacent Pilgrim Hills subdivision. Cumberland Farms has built a full service gas station and convenience store on the northeast corner replacing an antique shop whose owners have retired.

- Consider a community sewer treatment system
- Work closely with the State DOT on planned intersection changes (primarily with Swamp Road) to improve traffic flow and safety
- Minimize curb cuts particularly adjacent to the intersection
- Utilize the commercial development design guidelines
- Target businesses compatible with the residential neighborhood.
- The site includes a commercial/agriculture zone and uses should target the economic vitality of farms.

3. North Coventry Village (Route 44/Route 31/Grant Hill Road) - Commercial zone. One of the most active retail sites in town, this area includes Meadowbrook Plaza which, in 2009, received a significant exterior upgrade. The North Coventry Fire Station and the Coventry Grammar School are adjacent to the east. Several historic homes exist on Stage Road and north of Route 44 to the west. The Walgreens and the CVS/Bank sites have further potential development adjacent to them. No sewers exist, but there are public water supply infrastructures on site. Develop an overall strategic plan for the area that includes:

- The potential for a community septic system to serve the area.
- Careful attention to traffic patterns at and near the intersection, particularly on Route 44 near the entrances to Meadowbrook Plaza.
- A rear traffic access from Route 44 to Main Street (southwest side)
- Respect the historic homes, the rural character and the adjacent farms.
- Utilize the commercial development design guidelines.
- Target new development on the site east of Walgreens, northeast of Dunkin Donuts, across Main Street from Dunkin Donuts, the area adjacent to Meadowbrook Plaza, a site north of Route 44 west of the old Pomeroy Tavern, and a site north of Stage Road.
- Consider shared and interconnected parking where possible.
- Consider a zoning map change to restrict commercial access to Grant Hill Road.
- Respect Coventry and Olson Brooks as natural resources.
- Maintain or expand the Town green, landscaped areas adjacent to the intersection.
- The site includes a commercial/agriculture zone and uses should target the economic vitality of farms.
- Utilize the Eastern Gateways Transportation study and its recommendations that may include bikeways, bus lines and pedestrian connectivity

4. Rte. 31 North (Bread & Milk Street) - Rural Development zone. The area contains small commercial and manufacturing establishments with potential to expand. The nature of the soils (high water table) present challenges to expansion. I-84 is in close proximity northward. Business, light manufacturing, technical/construction trades and service facilities are deemed suitable for this zone which is separated from neighborhoods. Several historic houses exist on the west side of the road as well as some active farms. Public water and sewer does not exist.

- Commercial development should be designed to limit their potential negative visual impact on the neighborhood.
- Utilize the commercial development design guidelines.

5. Daly Road/Main Street - Neighborhood Commercial zone. Commercial enterprises exist on both sides of Daly Road. The parcel on the east side has a large older building suitable for redevelopment with a lake view. Sewers are available. Adequate parking exists. Development is restricted to retail and services due to the proximity to neighborhoods.

- Target businesses that can benefit from good traffic count and accessibility, sewers and proximity to the lake.
- Consider access management changes in line with future development.
- Utilize the commercial development design guidelines

The Towns of Andover, Bolton, Columbia and Coventry created the Route 6 Regional Economic Development Council to guide the creation of a land use strategic plan and a transportation plan for the Route 6 corridor. The Council's work was completed when the plan preparation was concluded.

6. Rte. 6 Corridor - Commercial zone. This 100+ acre parcel is undeveloped. It has had interest in the past for large scale development including a holistic conference center, a residential condominium and retail outlet stores. The two challenges are: access to the parcel requires crossing the Hop River, and the topography is very challenging. The site is about two miles from I-384 and has no public water or sewer. Large scale, mixed-use development is the likely candidate for this site.

- Coordination with adjacent towns (Bolton, Andover and Columbia) through land-use exercises and plans by the respective land use staffs, will serve to provide guidance for future development is recommended.
- Consider specific, corridor based, zoning regulations to accommodate the envisioned multifaceted development.
- Consider alternate access via Bolton's South Road.

7. Rte. 195- Neighborhood- Commercial zone. There is no commercial activity on this site which borders Route 195. The parcel is about ten acres and suitable for re-use, infill or new development. It is close to the Willimantic River Greenway and open space in Coventry and Tolland with walking trails.

- On site sewer and water supply needs to be provided.
- Consider the proximity to Willington, Tolland and Mansfield's commercial nodes.

8. South Coventry Village- Village zones. The area has fairly dense residential and commercial development with public water and sewer.

Future development includes mill re-use, some in fill, and mixed residential/commercial uses. Strict design guidelines exist.

The area is a designated historic zone and retains significant characteristics of a nineteenth century mill village. The success of the Kenyon Falls and Bidwell Village condominium project points to the fact that mill reuse can be successful in the Village and also provides more of a residential base.



- Utilize the existing Village Design Guidelines.
- Consider maintaining involvement with the Connecticut Main Street Program
- Utilize the Route 31 curve realignment project with safer pedestrian and vehicular traffic to facilitate destination oriented and service businesses
- At the Main Street/Stonehouse Road intersection, potential exists for new and infill development north of the gas station and east of Coventry Corners.
- On Mason Street potential exists for significant adaptive reuse of the old mill buildings along the Mill Brook.
- Some infill opportunities exist on Main Street particularly at the old antiques shop just south of Stonehouse Road, and a parcel across from 1159 Main Street.



- Studies are ongoing for potential sites for new high-density housing.
- A site on Woodland Road was approved for a small office complex which did not proceed, and the auction house building on Lake Street has potential for re-development.
- The recently rehabilitated Tracy Mill building and Mill Brook Park offer potential for community based activities and social interaction.
- The building on Main Street south of the Paden Road intersection has potential for adaptive re-use.

9. Depot Road/Main Street- Neighborhood Commercial and Commercial Agricultural zones. This area, similar to the Daly Road/Main Street zone, has a few small service businesses. There are historic homes along Depot Road, and the Mill Brook and an old mill pond intersect the site. It is a short distance west of the Miller-Richardson sports field, the recycling center and the old town landfill. Infill and re-use opportunities exist for small scale commercial development consistent with the neighborhood and the well-traveled Main Street. Public sewers exist on Main Street.

- Consider small service related businesses.
- Respect the neighborhood and the proximity to the Mill brook and wetlands.
- Consider access management issues.

10. Depot Road at the Willimantic River- River Aquifer zone. An old railroad station and an auto repair garage exist on the site. There are several historic houses on Depot Road. A rail bed for a spur exists.

- Consider potential long-term expansion of rail service (New London to Montreal) that may occur along the existing line, and the opportunities presented here.
- Respect the residential neighborhood and the River Aquifer Zone.
- Consider adaptive reuse of the former railroad station.
- Consider uses that benefit from the proximity to the Willimantic River and associated open space amenities.

11. Route 31 South- Rural Development zone. There is no commercial development on this site bordering both sides of Main Street. An office park was approved several years ago but was not built. Light manufacturing or service businesses are likely candidates. No public water supply or sewer exists, but it is in close proximity to the sewer treatment plant.

- Development should occur in a manner removed from proximity to Main Street with a single curb cut and respect for the local neighborhood.
- Public sewer could be considered for this site.
- Consider the proximity to the Miller-Richardson sports fields and the town recycling center and old landfill.
- Consider the proximity to the Willimantic River Greenway