



Plan of Conservation
and Development
Advisory Committee
Meeting #4
March 13th, 2025



Agenda

1. Public Workshop Summary and Engagement Update
2. Review and Discussion of Open Space and Natural Resources
3. Review and Discussion of Cultural and Historic Resources
4. Next Steps



Engagement Update



Online Survey is Live!



- Targeted questions highlighting demographics, trends, and plan topics
- Anonymous input from residents who may not otherwise take part in the planning process
- 350 responses to date



Windsor 2035 Plan of Conservation and Development

Welcome to the Windsor 2035 Community Survey!

The purpose of this survey is to collect information to assist the Town with its update to the Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD), known as Windsor 2035. The plan covers areas such as economic development, housing, transportation, infrastructure, open space, environment, and municipal services.

The Town would like your thoughts on how Windsor should grow and change in the future. Your response to this survey will help in updating the POCD. This is an opportunity for everyone in the community to decide how to guide change over the coming decade. By participating in this survey, you will be contributing to this effort. The survey should take approximately 5-10 minutes to complete. Thank you!

Public Workshop

- Over 50 attendees from the public
- Presentation discussing the Plan and its elements
- Topic based break-out sessions
- Report back at the conclusion of the workshop



Public Workshop – What we heard



Housing

Issues

- More housing options needed for seniors
- Poor quality of existing senior housing
- Limited space for new housing
- Aging housing stock
- Growing aging population
- Many homes need energy and sustainability upgrades
- Need to address homelessness

Ideas

- Lower energy costs to improve affordability
- Allow flexible zoning and smaller lot sizes
- More affordable senior housing and assisted living options
- Promote townhouse and co-op models
- Home maintenance assistance for seniors
- Mixed-use developments like Great Pond
- Senior campuses with services
- More two-bedroom, workforce, and rent-to-own units
- Offer low-interest loans and support first-time homebuyers
- Encourage mixed-use, infill, and energy-efficient construction
- Explore ADUs and Board and Care options
- Provide AirBnB guidance

Public Workshop – What we heard



Mobility and Infrastructure

Issues

- Speeding concerns
- Need more ADA accessibility
- Gaps in the sidewalk network
- Unsafe truck traffic, especially near Day Hill
- Parking issues in Downtown

Ideas

- Solar canopies on parking lots
- Protected bike lanes
- More sidewalks, crosswalks, and carpool services
- Increase micro transit and circulator buses
- More train service and better CT transit routing
- EV charging stations and electric vehicle fleet
- Support traffic calming plans

Public Workshop – What we heard



Cultural and Historic Resources

Issues

- No organized preservation efforts
- Capitalize more on local history
- More events and activities to attract people
- Preserve the town green
- Increase advertising

Ideas

- Artist of the Month at the library
- Coffeehouses and sculpture walk on Windsor Avenue
- More advertising for Historical Society classes
- More art spaces and equipment sharing
- Create a Windsor National Parks Passport program
- Promote local tourism
- Use informational panels, QR codes, and engage youth
- Windsor Junior Ranger program for youth
- Offer more materials in Spanish
- Historical Society's inclusive efforts
- Block parties to celebrate the community
- Highlight Windsor's tobacco farming history

Public Workshop – What we heard



Economic Development

Issues

- Need more jobs that match the highly educated population of Windsor
- No more warehouses
- No AI data centers

Ideas

- Fill existing buildings on Day Hill Road before building more
- Fill vacancies downtown to promote tourism
- Heavily promote the radio museum- more promotion needed in town in general
- Mixed use needed in the great pond area, no big box, no warehouses
- Capitalize on the two rivers in Windsor- Farmington and Connecticut area a draw
- Support the brewery and more breweries
- Need for STEM focused maker spaces
- School to career initiative and other training programs
- More restaurants that stay open and survive
- Want vibrancy of businesses in all commercial areas of town
- Maintain the charm of Windsor
- More variety of businesses

Public Workshop – What we heard



Open Space, Natural Resources, and Sustainability

Issues

- Need more flood planning and mitigation
- Need more farmland preservation
- Lack of trail maintenance

Ideas

- More bike paths
- Pay-by-weight sanitation pick-up
- Better trails and open space
- Connect open spaces and riverfront to cultural
- Lights-out initiative for light pollution
- Electrify town equipment and vehicles
- More community gardens
- Incentivize sustainable construction
- Preserve wildlife corridors and habitats
- Add land to Trap Rock Ridge
- Provide more environmental education for families
- Establish a pollinator pathway
- Focus on infill development
- Expand solar energy around town
- Create a climate and sustainability position
- Increase buffers around waterways to prevent flooding

Public Workshop – What we heard



Quality of Life

Issues

- Loosing small town feel and character
- Vacancies in the Town Center
- Need more daycare and childcare options
- Need more retail in the town center
- Need more senior affordable housing

Ideas/ Assets

- Great library and town services
- Promote the excellent school district
- More resources for kids and students
- Great EMS services and facilities
- Evaluate community spaces and identify needs
- More programs and facilities for teens
- Town Center is the heart of Windsor
- Promote civic pride
- More activities and public events
- Access to pools desired
- Ensure that the public events calendar is up to date
- Historic architecture is a highlight
- Make the town website more user-friendly
- More parking at town facilities
- More employment opportunities for youth
- More local shops needed

Developing the Plan



Review of
Plans and
Studies

Review of
Trends and
Conditions

Community
Input

Vision

- Windsor's values
- What the Town will strive toward
- Desires and aspirations of the community

Goals

- Commitments towards achieving the vision
- Desired outcomes

Strategies

- Methods for achieving goals

Actions

- Specific steps taken as part of a larger strategy

DRAFT Vision Statement



Windsor is committed to building a thriving, inclusive community that blends its rich history with sustainable growth. We will expand affordable housing options for seniors and families, improve home quality, and prioritize energy efficiency. Our streets will be safer and more accessible, with better sidewalks, bike paths, and public transit connections. A vibrant town center will support local businesses, celebrate arts and culture, and offer engaging public events. By preserving historic charm, protecting natural resources, and promoting environmental sustainability, Windsor will remain a welcoming place where residents of all ages can live, work, and thrive.

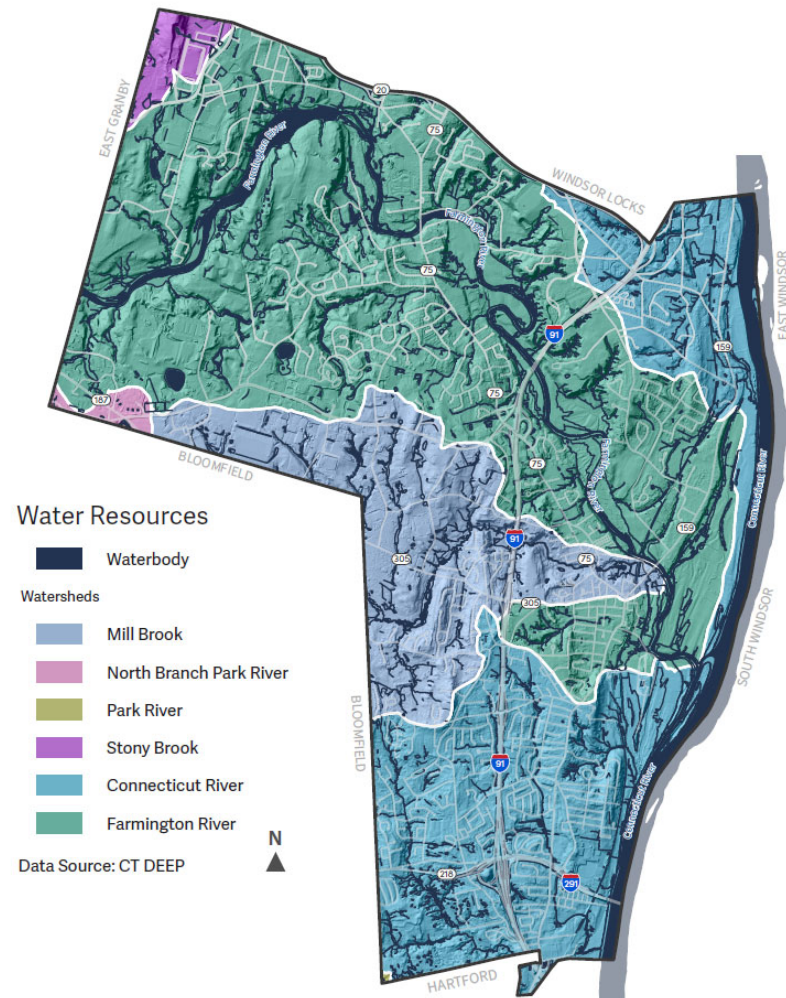
Open Space and Natural Resources Discussion



Open Space and Natural Resources

Water Resources

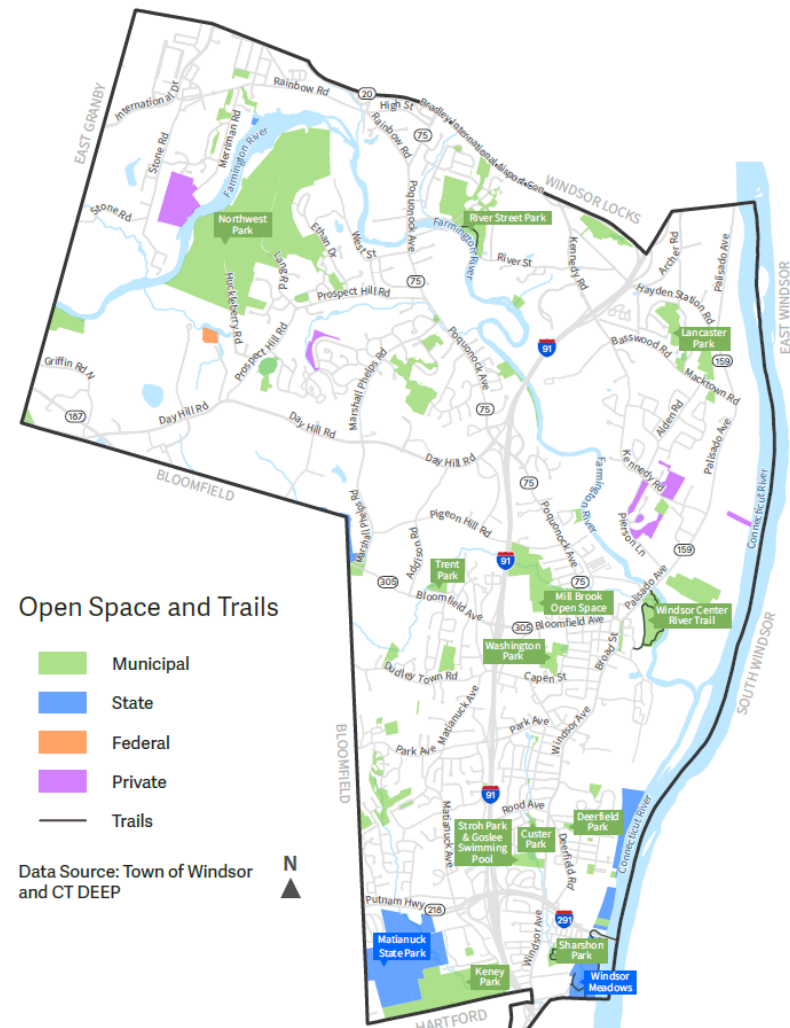
- Farmington River
- Connecticut River
- Six Watersheds
 - Mill Brook
 - North Branch Park river
 - Park River
 - Stony Brook
 - Connecticut River
 - Farmington River



Open Space and Natural Resources

Open Space and Trails

- Numerous parks and open space properties
- Both publicly and privately owned
- Include
 - Northwest Park
 - River Street Park
 - Washington Park
 - Keney Park
 - Deerfield Park
 - Many others

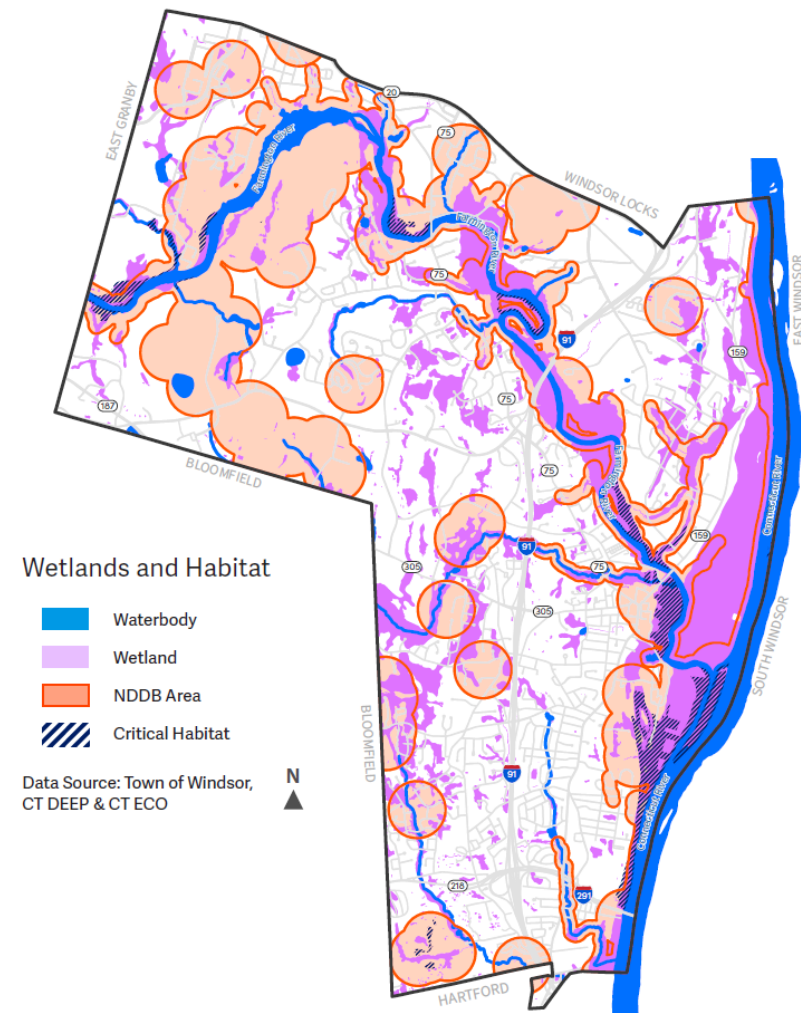


Open Space and Natural Resources



Wetlands and Habitat

- Natural Diversity Database Areas
- Critical Habitat
- Wetlands
- Waterbodies
 - The majority of the town's NDDB areas, critical habitats, and wetlands are found along the Connecticut River, the Farmington River, and their tributaries.



Community Feedback



Key Themes:

- **Environmental Protection & Sustainability:** Focus on preserving wildlife corridors, expanding solar energy, incentivizing sustainable construction, and enhancing climate and sustainability efforts (e.g., creating a dedicated position).
- **Flood Management & Land Conservation:** Emphasize flood planning and mitigation, farmland preservation, and increasing buffers around waterways to reduce flooding.
- **Community Engagement & Education:** Increase environmental education, establish a pollinator pathway, and promote community gardening.
- **Infrastructure & Connectivity:** Improve trail maintenance, expand bike paths, connect open spaces to cultural areas, and focus on infill development.
- **Energy & Resource Management:** Electrify town equipment, promote pay-by-weight sanitation pick-up, and consider lights-out initiatives to address light pollution.

Draft Goal



Protect and enhance Windsor's open spaces and natural resources to support a healthy environment and promote sustainability. Expand greenways, conserve farmland, and encourage environmental stewardship.

Strategy 1: Protect Windsor's Natural Resources



1. Strengthen protections for Windsor's wetlands, floodplains, and critical habitats to support biodiversity and climate resilience.
2. Partner with local conservation organizations (e.g., Traprock Ridge Land Conservancy) to manage land, control invasive species, and protect native biodiversity.
3. Encourage the creation of pollinator pathways and the use of native plants in residential and commercial landscapes.
4. Provide educational programs to residents on the importance of protecting natural resources and how they contribute to a sustainable future.
5. Enhance coordination with neighboring towns and regional conservation groups to align efforts on natural resource protection.
6. Balance development priorities with natural habitat and wildlife corridor preservation to maintain ecological integrity.
7. Support the Connecticut River's designation as a "National Blueway" to promote its environmental, recreational, and economic value.
8. Promote Low Impact Development (LID) strategies in Windsor's zoning, subdivision, and construction standards.

Strategy 1: Protect Windsor's Natural Resources



8. Require applicants to identify potential impacts to resources contained in Windsor's natural resources inventory and provide mitigation measures, if feasible and prudent.
9. Provide additional zoning incentives or flexibility to minimize tree clearing when designing a site for development.

Strategy 2: Maintain and Expand Windsor's Parks and Open Space



1. Seek funding and grants for the acquisition and management of open space properties, focusing on parcels that enhance connectivity between green spaces.
2. Create more passive recreational areas, utilizing tools such as the Connecticut Outdoor Recreation Fund, to expand Windsor's trail and open space systems.
3. Focus on increasing open space connectivity, especially in the town center and surrounding residential areas, to promote health and well-being through increased access to nature.
4. Support regional land preservation efforts by collaborating with organizations like the Connecticut Land Conservation Council and local land trusts.
5. Encourage open space preservation that contributes to a meaningful overall open space system.
6. Establish a greenway/trail network in Windsor that interconnects open space areas together.
7. Prepare more detailed plans for the main spine of the greenway/trail along the Connecticut and Farmington Rivers.
8. Work with major property owners to obtain reasonable public access to their properties and integrate into an overall trail network.
9. Prioritize open space acquisitions according to established criteria in order to make the most of limited resources available for acquisition
10. Ensure that the ownership of open space matches the intended use.

Strategy 3: Ensure Resilience of Windsor's Critical Facilities



1. Explore options for expanding or developing new critical facilities in Windsor to ensure they are accessible during emergencies such as storms, floods, or heatwaves.
2. Partner with the Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) to continue hazard mitigation efforts and improve emergency preparedness.
3. Support the Public Works Department, Fire Department, and Police Department in enhancing their roles as first responders to storm events and other emergencies.
4. Continue to promote energy conservation programs, alternative energy incentive programs, and simple steps that residents and businesses can take to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
5. Continue to upgrade town facilities to be more energy efficient and to install alternative energy sources.
6. Commit to designing new town facilities to meet or emulate green building standards, such as LEED.
7. Educate the public on long-term cost savings of energy efficient buildings.
8. Reinvigorate the town Energy Task Force.

Strategy 4: Enhance Windsor's Community Resilience by Reducing Flooding and Erosion Risks



1. Develop capital plans and seek funding for improving Windsor's drainage infrastructure to reduce flooding risks and minimize property damage during extreme storms.
2. Identify critical drainage infrastructure improvements needed to maintain roadways and public safety during flooding events.
3. Educate property owners on floodproofing measures, including elevating structures and resilient construction practices that reduce the impact of flooding.
4. Monitor development in or near sensitive areas and enforce regulations and conditions of approval.
5. Participate in FEMA's Community Rating System and Flood Mitigation Assistance Programs to reduce flood hazards as well as flood insurance claims and premiums.

Strategy 5: Protect Water Quality in Windsor



1. Continue to implement watershed-based management practices to protect water quality across Windsor's watersheds, including enforcing relevant regulations.
2. Develop educational programs to inform Windsor residents about practices that can negatively affect water quality (e.g., improper chemical use) and encourage the adoption of environmentally friendly alternatives.
3. Seek funding for land acquisitions that protect water quality by focusing on parcels with wetlands, watercourses, or floodplain areas.
4. Promote Low Impact Development (LID) techniques to reduce stormwater runoff and improve water quality across the town, in line with Windsor's MS4 Stormwater Permit requirements.
5. Train Windsor's public works and planning staff on best practices for water quality management and environmental protection.
6. Reduce town use of pesticides and fertilizers.
7. Work with farmers to minimize water quality impacts of agricultural practices.
8. Continue to provide user-friendly information about when permits are needed.
9. Continue to monitor construction activity and enforce conditions of approval.
10. Identify funding assistance for low-income homeowners with failing and outdated septic systems.
11. Ensure that all homeowners with a septic system are aware of the MDC pump-out assistance program.
12. Continue to track and monitor the removal of underground storage tanks.

Strategy 6: Support Windsor's Local Farms and Farmland Preservation



1. Review and update Windsor's agricultural zoning regulations to support local farmers and preserve agricultural land for future generations.
2. Preserve and protect prime farmland through the acquisition of development rights, ensuring that agricultural activities remain viable in Windsor.
3. Continue to maintain and enhance Windsor's Farmers Market, making it a key venue for local produce and fostering community engagement.
4. Leverage Windsor's agricultural heritage to secure funding for farmland preservation efforts and support local farmers in their sustainability practices.
5. Explore opportunities to create more community-supported agriculture initiatives and public access to farmland for educational and recreational purposes.
6. Maintain the Agricultural Zone as a tool to help preserve prime farmland soils for agricultural use.
7. When developed residentially, encourage open space development patterns that maximize preservation of farmland or open space while minimizing infrastructure costs.
8. Encourage local farmers to apply for the Connecticut Farmland Preservation Program and assist them in submitting applications if necessary, in order to preserve farmland and agricultural uses.
9. Continue the farm assessment program (PA 490) in order to assist farmers with maintenance of agricultural uses.

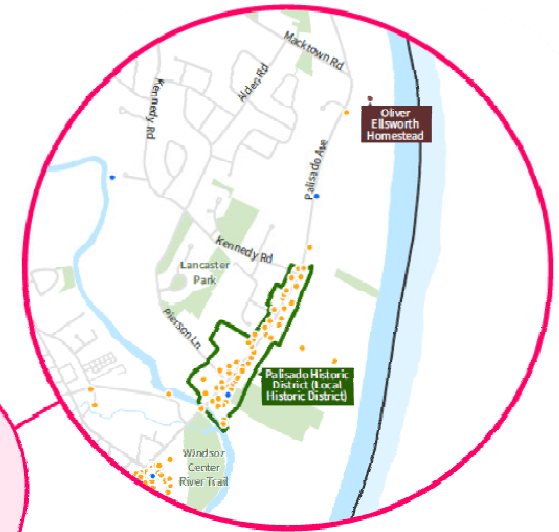
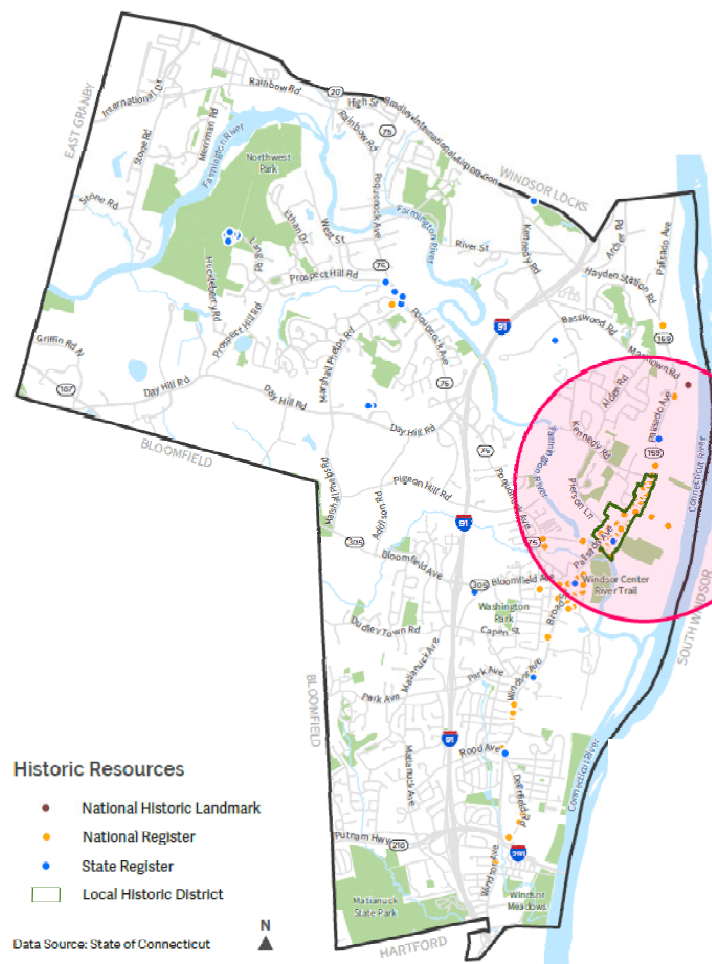
Cultural and Historic Resources Discussion



Cultural and Historic Resources

Resources

- 1 National Historic Landmark – the Oliver Ellsworth Homestead
- 126 National Register Properties
- 26 State Register Properties
- Palisado Local Historic District
- Cultural Resources
 - Agricultural heritage
 - Tobacco farming heritage
 - Aviation heritage



Community Feedback



Key Themes:

- **Promote Local History and Arts:** Programs like "Artist of the Month" at the library, coffeehouses, sculpture walks on Windsor Avenue, and creating more art spaces with equipment sharing.
- **Engage the Community with Local History and Culture:** Highlight Windsor's tobacco farming history, offer more inclusive efforts by the Historical Society, and create programs like a Windsor National Parks Passport and Junior Ranger program for youth.
- **Enhance Tourism and Local Activities:** Promote local tourism through events, advertising for Historical Society classes, and block parties to celebrate the community.
- **Increase Accessibility and Youth Engagement:** Use informational panels, QR codes, and offer more materials in Spanish to reach diverse audiences and engage younger generations.
- **Organized Preservation and Capitalization on Local History:** Establish organized efforts to preserve Windsor's local history and historical landmarks.
- **Increase Community Engagement:** Develop more events and activities to attract visitors and engage residents.
- **Preserve Key Town Assets:** Ensure the preservation of important cultural spaces like the Town Green.
- **Improve Visibility and Marketing:** Increase advertising and promotion to raise awareness of Windsor's history, events, and attractions.

Draft Goal



Safeguard, promote, and celebrate Windsor's cultural and historic resources for future generations by encouraging the preservation of historic landmarks and properties and supporting the growth of cultural assets within the community.

Strategy 1: Promote the preservation of Windsor's historically and architecturally significant resources.



1. Support the Historic District Commission in performing its duties to protect the locally designated historic district and properties.
2. Ensure publicly owned properties (sites, artifacts, structures and buildings) of historical and architectural significance are protected and preserved.
3. Assess risks and vulnerabilities of historic properties located within floodplains and work with CT DEEP and SHPO to reduce those risks while preserving the property's historic character.
4. Continue to update and maintain a list of the Town's historic properties, including national and state register properties and historic resources inventory (survey of the state), which can be easily accessed and updated on Windsor's town website.
5. Consider adopting a Demolition Delay Ordinance to protect historic structures that are located outside of the Local Historic District and that are not currently protected by State mandated demolition delay periods associated with local historic districts.
6. Encourage adaptive re-use of existing historic sites, buildings, and structures.
7. Complete updates to the Windsor Local Historic District survey– 1981.
8. Establish a historic preservation line item in the budget and seek other funding to implement the strategies.
9. Determine appropriate protection measures for barns and tobacco sheds.

Strategy 2: Support and promote arts, entertainment, and cultural organizations.



1. Continue to work with the Windsor Historical Society and other organizations that promote historic preservation.
2. Continue to ensure that arts and cultural events are well advertised through the Town's websites and social media channels.
3. Continue to work with local schools and community organizations to ensure that Windsor's youth have access to arts, cultural, and entertainment programs.
4. Take advantage of technical assistance offered by the state and non-profit preservation organizations.
5. Promote Windsor's archaeological resources.

Strategy 3: Continue to educate residents and visitors about Windsor's importance as a historic community.



1. Encourage and support owners of historical properties to properly steward them. .
2. Provide educational programs on historic preservation and local historic resources.
3. Provide education and training opportunities for commissioners and homeowners such as that provided through Preservation Connecticut's Local Historic District Training.
4. Continue to provide information to new residents who purchase homes in the Historic District.
5. Consider developing programs like a Windsor National Parks Passport and Junior Ranger program for youth.
6. Highlight Windsor's tobacco farming history through the use of informational panels and QR codes with additional information.

Strategy 4: Continue to promote Windsor's historic and cultural resources as tourism destinations.



1. Continue to market Windsor's history and celebrate its heritage through community events.
2. Consider becoming a Cultural District through the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) to leverage Windsor's arts, cultural assets, and promote tourism.
3. Pursue opportunities to expand arts and cultural resources throughout all of Windsor, not only in Old Windsor.

Next Steps



Next Steps

- Continue to promote online survey
- Schedule and conduct stakeholder interviews with Town Department Heads
- Attend a spring Pop-Up Event
- Continue existing conditions review
- Next AC meeting on Thursday, April 10th!



