

WINDSOR 2035

Vision, Principles, Goals, Strategies, and Actions

1. Vision Statement

Windsor is committed to building a thriving, inclusive community that blends its rich history with sustainable growth. It is a vibrant town that supports local businesses, celebrates arts and culture, and fosters a strong sense of community. By preserving historic charm and balancing economic growth with good environmental stewardship, Windsor will remain a welcoming place where residents of all ages can live, work and thrive.

2. Guiding Principles

A. Promote Our History and Identity

Preserve Windsor's historic character, cultural heritage and small-town charm while welcoming thoughtful innovation and change.

B. Strengthen Neighborhoods and Housing Choice

Expand affordable housing options for all generations, elevate housing quality and promote energy-efficient, sustainable development.

C. Promote a strong local and regional economy.

Support small businesses, attract innovative industries and encourage vibrant villages and corridors that reflect Windsor's identity.

D. Connect People and Places

Enhance sidewalks, bike paths, trails and public transit to make Windsor safer, more accessible, and regionally connected.

E. Culture and Community Services

Celebrate cultural diversity, arts and community events; invest in schools, services and recreation to ensure Windsor remains a welcoming and engaging place to live.

F. Open Space and Natural Resources

Balance conservation and development by protecting environmental resources, supporting farms and open space and promoting energy-efficient, climate-resilient infrastructure.

3. Land Use and Zoning

Goal: Promote balanced growth and development that fosters a livable community, enhances economic vitality and supports healthy, active lifestyles while preserving Windsor's small-town character and safeguarding its natural resources.

A. Strategy A: Encourage a mix of land uses that promote sustainable land use practices and walkable neighborhoods utilizing the 20 minute suburb model.

- I. Promote higher density developments in areas adequately served by transit, community services, utilities and transportation infrastructure.
- II. Evaluate the zoning regulations and map with focus on modernization to ensure innovative, sustainable techniques that are used in accordance with the goals and strategies of this Plan.

- B. Strategy B: Review the zoning and subdivision regulations to increase its usefulness and understandability.
 - I. Update zoning regulations to reflect the Future Land Use Plan that will provide for increased development opportunities in appropriate areas, protect the unique attributes of neighborhoods, minimize impacts to Town infrastructure, and preserve agricultural and open space land.
 - II. Update zoning regulations to enhance sustainability measures such as Low Impact Development (LID) strategies to reduce impervious surface coverage and tree planting guidelines to reduce the heat island effect.
 - III. Continuously review and evaluate current zoning regulations regarding definitions, permitted uses, building form standards, setbacks, frontage, lot area, parking, impervious areas and other such dimensional requirements and any redundant and confusing standards.
 - IV. Revise the current subdivision regulations to align with zoning updates, as needed.

4. Housing

Goal: Ensure that Windsor offers a diverse, affordable and sustainable range of housing options that meet the needs of all residents including seniors, young adults, families and those experiencing housing insecurity, while preserving neighborhood character.

- A. Strategy A: Expand Housing Options for All Ages and Incomes
 - I. Support the Windsor Housing Authority in its efforts to maintain current facilities and provide additional housing options.
 - II. Conduct a housing needs assessment to identify specific gaps in unit types, affordability levels and geographic distribution as part of the required periodic Affordable Housing Plan update.
 - III. Promote access to the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority first-time homebuyer assistance programs, including down payment support and homeownership education.
 - IV. Continue to provide financial support to regional agencies addressing the challenge of under and unhoused individuals. (e.g. Journey Home)
- B. Strategy B: Modernize and Sustain the Existing Housing Stock
 - I. Consider devoting additional resources to the Housing Rehabilitation Program to include multi-family buildings and energy efficiency enhancements.
 - II. Encourage energy-efficient design standards above-code performance for all new residential construction and substantial renovations.
- C. Strategy C: Encourage Mixed-Use and Innovative Housing Models
 - I. Ensure the Town's Zoning Regulations and Future Land Use Map continue to encourage housing in areas where infrastructure exists to support it, including public water, public sewer, road capacity and public transit.
 - II. Support the Great Pond campus and other village-style development concepts that mix residential, commercial, and recreational uses.
 - III. Encourage development of smaller housing units (1–2 bedrooms) suitable for seniors, young adults, and small households.
 - IV. Work with the Metropolitan District Commission (MDC) to conduct a capacity analysis of sewer and water systems to plan for future housing growth.
 - V. Explore creating a Housing Trust Fund and inclusionary zoning regulations with increased density incentives and fee-in-lieu of affordable housing requirements.

- VI. Identify opportunities for potential small-scale infill housing and foster public-private partnerships to advance development.
- D. Strategy D: Support “aging in place” for older residents.
- I. Incentivize development of affordable senior housing, assisted living and “age-in-place” models.
 - II. Continue to provide social services and other support services for people that choose to remain in their homes as they age.
 - III. Expand outreach with social workers, visiting nurses, and other resources to reduce social isolation and enhance quality of life for older adults.
 - IV. Develop resources and community partnerships for senior-focused maintenance services (e.g., yard care, minor repairs).
 - V. Encourage universal accessibility standards for new construction and substantial renovation. Promote statewide programs that offer loans and grants for home accessibility improvements.

5. Economic Development

Goal: Promote sustainable economic growth by creating high-quality jobs, enhancing underutilized commercial areas and building vibrant, mixed-use places that honor Windsor’s historic character and natural assets.

- A. Strategy A: Promote Economic Growth in Industrial Zoned Areas
- I. Inventory and market available land and buildings to target industries such as manufacturing, financial and insurance services, information technology, clean-energy and bioscience.
 - II. Partner with regional and state economic development agencies to promote Windsor opportunities.
- B. Strategy B: Align Job Growth with Local Workforce Strengths
- I. Partner with local schools, colleges, the Chamber of Commerce and the regional workforce development board to expand work-based learning (school-to-career pathways, internships and apprenticeships).
 - II. Support the creation of a STEM-focused maker space or innovation hub in collaboration with businesses and educational institutions.
 - III. Continue regular communication and partnerships between the Town and major employers to encourage local hiring and workforce alignment.
- C. Strategy C: Prioritize Smart, Infill-Based Development
- I. Facilitate mixed-use and infill development in appropriately zoned locations throughout the community.
 - II. Inventory, market and support redevelopment of properties on the Priority Redevelopment Properties list, as amended, annually.
 - III. Continue to offer design and planning assistance to property owners pursuing redevelopment or mixed-use conversions.
- D. Strategy D: Support Small Business and Entrepreneurship
- I. Assist small businesses to identify available spaces and facilitate occupancy.
 - II. Refer businesses to programs offering micro-grants or low-interest loans to help small, minority- and women-owned businesses launch or grow.

- III. Partner with small business resource centers to provide regular business training workshops focused on digital marketing, finance and operations.

6. Location Based Highlights

Goal: Guide investment to Day Hill Corridor, Windsor Center, Wilson, and Poquonock Village to deliver distinctive, walkable districts with high-quality design, strong local businesses, housing near jobs and transit, resilient infrastructure and memorable public spaces.

A. Day Hill Corridor

Vision: A regional employment center, incorporating new housing, recreational and mixed-use opportunities to augment traditional industrial, office and hospitality uses.

- I. Strategy I: Land Use & Development Framework
 - a. Use the Guiding Principles outlined in the Day Hill Corporate Area Planning Study when making land use decisions.
 - b. Adopt Day Hill Design Development District overlay for focus areas relating to the Day Hill Corporate Area Planning Study
 - c. Enable office-to-housing or mixed-use conversions.
 - d. Further development in Great Pond based on the form-based code and regulating plan.
 - e. Partner with Great Pond Village to facilitate development of planned “village center”.
 - f. Prohibit or limit development of large scale AI data centers and high velocity warehouses.
 - g. Reserve land on the south side of Day Hill Road for flexible industrial uses outside of the recreation/service node and hotel sites.
- II. Strategy II: Walkability, Access Management, and Network Connectivity
 - a. Complete the Day Hill multi-use path with connections to key employment, mixed-use and transit locations.
 - b. Review and update access-management standards (shared driveways; consolidated curb cuts) along Day Hill Road.
 - c. Upgrade bus stops with shelters, seating and real-time information; require end-of-trip bike facilities in new projects.
 - d. Designate and manage truck parking/operations to reduce conflicts.
- III. Strategy III: Blue-Green Infrastructure, Identity, and Placemaking
 - a. Formalize connected open space and trails along the Farmington River from the Bloomfield town-line to Northwest Park.
 - b. Encourage adoption of energy efficiency improvement and use of renewable resources in existing buildings and new construction.
 - c. Seek opportunities to add amenities to the Corridor that will help attract businesses and residents.

B. Windsor Center

Vision: A lively, walkable, historic town center with more residents, destination retail, dining, arts and culture, strong transit and attractive public spaces.

- I. Strategy I: Implement Recommendations from the Windsor Center Transit Oriented Development Master Plan

- a. Pursue Traffic Calming and pedestrian safety improvements on Broad Street.
 - b. Identify and implement streetscape and safety improvements to local streets.
 - c. Promote appropriately scaled infill and renovations, with shared landscapes, parking and walkways.
 - d. Develop shared parking opportunities with private sector.
 - e. Monitor State of Connecticut plans regarding the train station area.
- II. Strategy II: Enhance Windsor Center Gateways
 - a. Improve the look, feel and functionality of the roadway and associated land uses along Palisado Avenue from the Farmington River into the Center.
 - b. Improve the look, feel and functionality of the roadway and associated land uses along Poquonock Avenue from Pigeon Hill Road area into the Center.
 - III. Strategy III: Enhance Center Business District
 - a. Explore providing financial assistance including loans for commercial façade treatments and tenant space improvements.

C. Wilson

Vision: A vibrant neighborhood business district with safe streets, everyday services, a range of housing choices and attractive public spaces.

- I. Strategy I: Enhance Neighborhood Business District
 - a. Promote appropriately scaled infill and renovations, with shared landscapes, parking and walkways
 - b. Explore providing financial assistance including loans for commercial façade treatments and tenant space improvements.
- II. Strategy II: Pursue Park Development and Connectivity Projects
 - a. Assist Riverfront Recapture's efforts to establish a new park at the end of Meadow Road.
 - b. Further the Keney Park Connectivity Project and East Coast Greenway Preferred Route to link Keney Park to the new Riverfront Recapture Park.
 - c. Improve public amenities at the East Barbet Street Boat Launch
 - d. Partner with community groups to activate Wilson Gateway Park
- III. Strategy III: Develop Plans for Key Properties along Rail Line
 - a. Determine appropriate uses for land along the rail line at the end of Meadow Road, Wilson Avenue and Garden Street; make required zoning changes and identify opportunities for connectivity to public space.
- IV. Strategy IV: Support Quality Services at Neighborhood Anchors
 - a. Support services at 330 Windsor Avenue Community Center including Adult Daycare
 - b. Support programming at the Wilson Branch Library.

D. Poquonock Village

Vision: A village with historic charm, small-scale mixed-use, a nod to its farming heritage and connection to the Farmington River.

- I. Strategy I: Enhance the village district

- a. Assess potential improvements to signage, tree planting, street furniture, façade improvements and planters to add visual interest, slow traffic and improve pedestrian comfort.
- b. Fill gaps in sidewalk network and improve pedestrian safety.
- c. Encourage local-serving commercial uses that enhance the village's attractiveness.
- d. Promote village-scale infill and renovations, with shared landscapes, parking and walkways.
- e. Explore providing financial assistance including loans for commercial façade treatments and tenant space improvements.
- f. Facilitate Agro-tourism, river related activities and park use.

7. Mobility and Infrastructure

Goal: Expand transportation options and infrastructure to improve mobility and accessibility for all residents. Prioritize upgrades to transportation networks, utilities and public facilities to create a resilient, sustainable community capable of meeting both current and future needs.

- A. Strategy A: Encourage transportation infrastructure improvements that improve the accessibility and safety for all users and enhance transportation sustainability.
 - I. Develop a multi-year plan to evaluate and reinvest in the pedestrian access network throughout the town and complete the segments of missing sidewalks. Provide improvements to sidewalks and pedestrian crossings as needed including ADA accessibility, crosswalk markings, signage, signal enhancements, and lighting enhancements.
 - II. Implement traffic calming measures and continue traffic safety enforcement.
 - III. Provide appropriate bicycle facilities (shared roadway, bicycle lanes, etc.), as feasible, when road improvements are undertaken.
 - IV. Continue to foster strong partnerships with CT DOT, DECD, CRCOG, and other local and regional partners to implement a balanced and sustainable multimodal transportation system.
 - V. Adopt a Complete Streets policy and coordination framework with CTDOT/CRCOG to standardize design and access potential funding.
 - VI. Review current and future town center parking needs and consider public private partnerships to meet short and long term needs.
- B. Strategy B: Support the expansion and improvement of transit services across Windsor and the region.
 - I. Work with CT transit to identify improvements to increase accessibility and service on intra- and inter-town transit routes.
 - II. Upgrade bus shelters through CTDOT's bus stop enhancement program and town resources.
 - III. Coordinate with Greater Hartford Transit District to maintain and expand town dial-a-ride services for older adults and persons with disabilities
 - IV. Exercise long term lease extension of Train Station and Freight House with Amtrak and Greater Hartford Transit District.
- C. Strategy C: Promote Low-Carbon Transportation Alternatives.

- I. Continue to plan for transitioning the municipal fleet to electric vehicles and equipment where cost effective.
 - II. Pursue grant opportunities for installing electric vehicle charging stations at municipal sites and commercial areas.
 - III. Work with major employers to mitigate the use of single occupancy vehicles through carpooling, ride sharing, biking/walking to work, and using transit service.
 - IV. Implement Safe Routes to School and walk/bike-to-work/errand initiatives to reduce single-occupant vehicle trips.
 - V. Add secure bike parking and end-of-trip facilities at civic destinations and employment centers.
- D. Strategy D: Maintain and Enhance Utility Infrastructure
- I. Coordinate with the Metropolitan District Commission (MDC) to improve and, where appropriate, expand public water and sewer service—to ensure capacity and water quality, bolster fire protection, reduce inflow/infiltration, and align line replacements with roadway projects to minimize costs and construction disruption.
 - II. Explore potential for placement of powerlines underground when opportunities present themselves.

8. Quality of Life

Goal: Deliver high-quality, fiscally responsible services and facilities that adapt to the evolving needs of residents at every stage of life, while fostering a vibrant community and promoting civic pride.

- A. Strategy A: Provide excellent services to residents, property owners, and businesses
- a. Monitor the evolving needs of the community and seek input on desired services that could benefit Windsor's residents.
 - b. Advance a multidisciplinary Aging-Friendly Windsor plan (housing, adult daycare, mobility, caregiving, health).
 - c. Pursue shared-service partnerships with regional partners where quality and cost savings are demonstrable.
- B. Strategy B: Promote events and activities that contribute to community pride and spirit.
- a. Continue to promote community events throughout all of Windsor to support community cohesion and vibrancy.
 - b. Promote and encourage volunteerism in town agencies and civic groups.
 - c. Continue to develop partnerships for sponsoring community events.
- C. Strategy C: Prioritize improvements to the Town's facilities to meet diverse program needs.
- a. Conduct a comprehensive Town and School facilities plan which evaluates current and future needs.
 - b. Continue to implement an asset-management program with preventive maintenance schedules and life-cycle costing for town and school facilities and parks through annual budgeting and the Capital Improvements Program.
- D. Strategy D: Advance sustainability and resilience.
- a. Implement MS4 Stormwater Management Plan tasks and report annual progress.
 - b. Embed green infrastructure in public projects and adopt LID standards in zoning/subdivision and inland wetlands regulations.
 - c. Pursue higher Sustainable CT certification with a cross-department "green team."

- d. Partner in regional/state climate initiatives (heat, flooding, air quality) and align emergency shelter/back-up power plans.
- e. Incentivize resident actions (rain barrels, native plantings, composting, home energy audits) through workshops and rebates.

9. Open Space and Natural Resources

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.

- A. Strategy A: Conserve Sensitive Lands, Greenways and Public Access.
 - I. Partner with Traprock Ridge Land Conservancy and other entities to acquire and maintain open space and sensitive lands.
 - II. Pursue opportunities to implement a greenway plan for the Connecticut/Farmington corridors and key spines.
 - III. Work with property owners to secure reasonable public access and trail segments.
 - IV. Analyze open-space ownership/management with intended use and maintenance capacity.
- B. Strategy B: Resilient Facilities & Clean Energy
 - I. Ensure critical facilities remain operational during storms, floods, and heatwaves.
 - II. Partner with the Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) to continue hazard mitigation efforts and emergency preparedness.
 - III. Continue to upgrade town facilities to be more energy efficient and install alternative energy sources where financially feasible.
- C. Strategy C: Storm water, Flooding & Water Quality
 - I. Fund and build priority drainage/culvert upgrades; monitor sensitive areas and enforce approvals.
 - II. Implement watershed-based practices and MS4 requirements.
 - III. Participate in FEMA's Community Rating System.
 - IV. Educate property owners on flood proofing and resilient construction.
 - V. Expand public education on water-quality practices (e.g., fertilizer/pesticide reduction)
- D. Strategy D: Working Farms & Farmland Preservation
 - I. Preserve farmland via development-rights purchases/easements and pursue available funding sources.
 - II. Encourage open-space subdivision patterns that retain agricultural fields and lower infrastructure costs.
 - III. Strengthen farm-to-community outlets (Farmers Market, CSA) and agro-tourism to support farm incomes.

10. Cultural and Historic Resources

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.

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

- I. Ensure publicly owned properties (sites, artifacts, structures and buildings) of historical and architectural significance are protected and preserved.
 - II. 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.
 - III. Continue to update and maintain a list of the Town's historic properties, including national and state register properties and historic resources inventory, which can be easily accessed and updated on Windsor's town website.
 - IV. Encourage adaptive re-use of existing historic sites, buildings, and structures.
 - V. Determine and implement appropriate protection measures for barns and tobacco sheds, including pursuing funding opportunities to preserve and maintain town-owned tobacco sheds.
- B. Strategy B: Support and promote arts, entertainment, and cultural organizations.
 - I. Continue to ensure that arts and cultural events are well advertised through the Town's websites and social media channels.
 - II. Continue to work with local schools and community organizations to ensure that Windsor's youth have access to arts, cultural and entertainment programs.
 - III. Take advantage of technical assistance offered by the state and non-profit arts, culture and preservation organizations.
- C. Strategy C: Continue to educate residents and visitors about Windsor's importance as a historic community.
 - I. Encourage and support owners of historical properties to properly steward them by providing educational programs on preservation resources.
 - II. Provide education and training opportunities for commissioners such as that provided through Preservation Connecticut's Local Historic District Training.
 - III. Highlight Windsor's history through the use of various mediums to reach a broad audience.
- D. Strategy D: Continue to promote Windsor's historic and cultural resources as tourism destinations.
 - I. Continue to market Windsor's history and celebrate its heritage through community events.
 - II. Become a Cultural District through the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) to leverage Windsor's arts, cultural assets, and promote tourism.