

# 2016 Plan of Conservation & Development

City of Derby, Planning & Zoning  
Commission  
Proposed POCD for Adoption



Prepared by the:

Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments  
June 2016

**Planning and Zoning Commission**  
City of Derby



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Dear Derby Residents,

This document is the proposed 2016 Plan of Conservation and Development for Derby, Connecticut. It is intended to be a strategic plan to guide the changes that will inevitably occur in Derby's future so they reflect the priorities and vision of Derby residents.

The Plan is the product of a comprehensive planning exercise that included many meetings and discussions by the Derby Planning and Zoning Commission, a robust public outreach effort conducted by the Land Use Practice Collaborative of the Pace Land Use Law Center and Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies, and input from you, Derby's valued community members.

The Commission is grateful for the assistance of Mark Nielsen, Director of Planning and Assistant Director of the Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments (NVCOG) and the entire NVCOG staff; the invaluable contribution of Lynn DiGiovanni for her tireless contribution making this Plan truly reflective of Derby's past and future; and for the participation of the citizens of the City of Derby for whom this Plan is intended.

We invite you to read and reflect on the Plan, and take an active role in its implementation as we strive to make Derby the best community it can be today and in the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Theodore J. Estwan, Jr.', is written over a large, faint watermark of the letter 'D'.

Planning and Zoning Commission  
Theodore J. Estwan, Jr., Chairman

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## Introduction

### Overview

The City of Derby is located in southwestern Connecticut, and is part of New Haven County. It is located 10 miles west of New Haven, 12 miles north of Bridgeport, 16 miles south of Waterbury, and 37 miles southwest of Hartford. New York City is approximately 67 miles from Derby, and Boston lies 125 miles to the northeast. Derby is bounded by Seymour and Ansonia on the north, Woodbridge on the east, Orange on the south, and Shelton on the west.

Based on the 2010 Census, Derby's population is 12,902, representing a 4.1% growth over its population in 2000.

With a land area of approximately 5.3 square miles, Derby is geographically the smallest municipality in Connecticut.

### About Plans of Conservation and Development

This Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) is a tool for guiding the changes that will inevitably occur in Derby's future. Its purpose is to establish a common vision for the future physical development of the City and recommend policies that will help attain that vision. It was prepared by the Derby Planning and Zoning Commission with input from Derby residents and local officials.

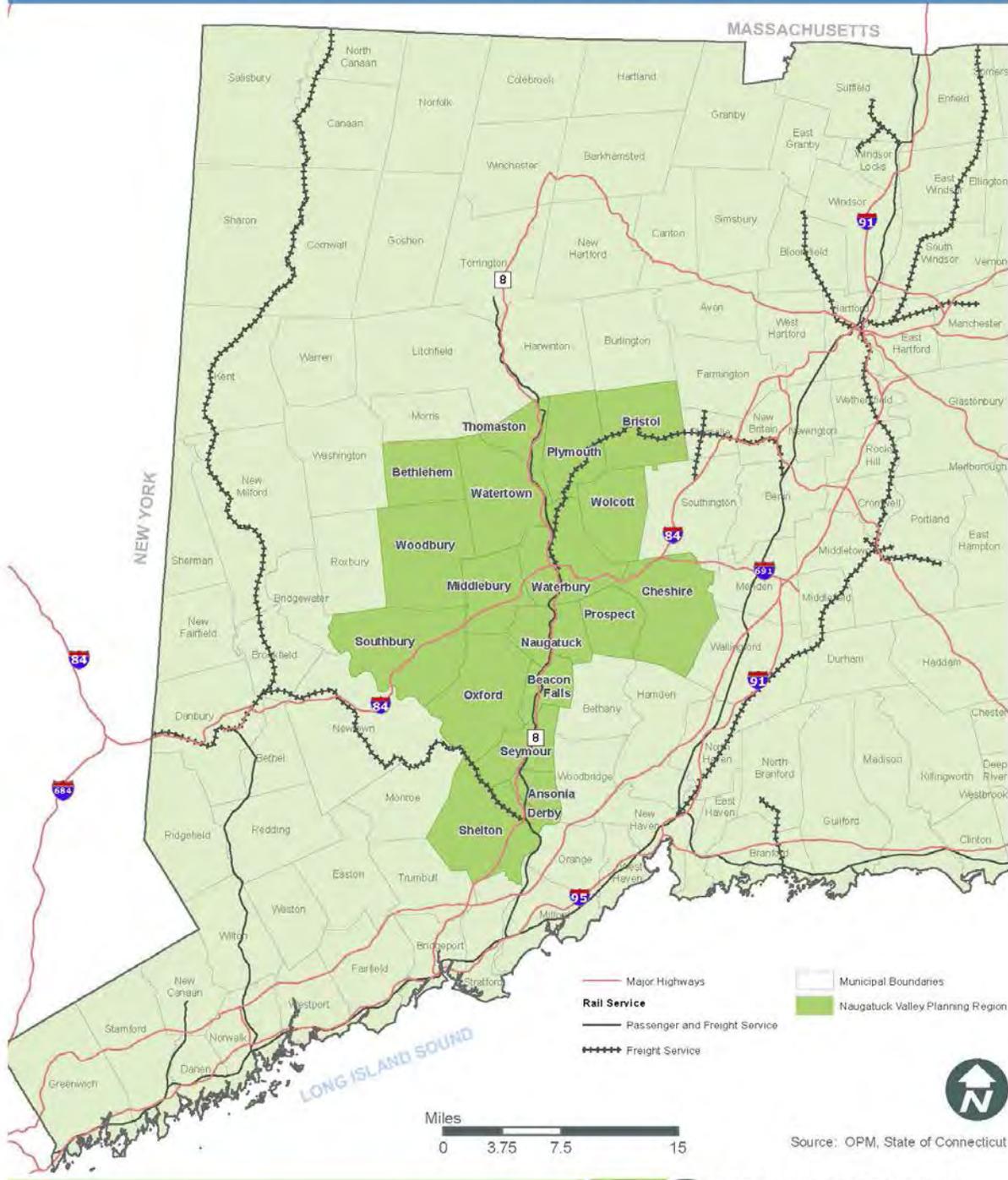
In addition to the City's physical layout, the Plan addresses social and economic development in Derby including human resources, education, housing, recreation, social services, public utilities, and public protection.

The Plan's goals and recommendations reflect the overall consensus of what is best for Derby and its residents, with consideration given to existing conditions and trends.

The POCD is a far reaching document, used not only by the Planning and Zoning Commission, but by other city-elected leaders and municipal officials.

Chapter 126, Section 8-23 of the Connecticut General Statutes requires that the planning commission of each municipality in the state prepare, adopt, and amend a Plan of Conservation and Development at least every ten years. The City of Derby's current POCD was adopted in 2002; this update will bring the City into compliance with state requirements.

# Naugatuck Valley Planning Region



## Statement of Derby's Fundamental Values

Derby's Plan of Conservation and Development is rooted in its Fundamental Values, those aspects of the City that are treasured by the community. The overall objective of this Plan is to protect and build upon these values, while enhancing the character, economic vitality, and quality of life in Derby.

**Residents:** The residents of Derby are spirited and compassionate, showing concern and offering help to one another during times of sickness, grief, unemployment, or other difficulty. They celebrate their cultural roots through participation in various ethnic clubs, activities, places of worship, and festivals. There is strong support for community-based youth sports in Derby, cultivating hometown pride and community spirit. Residents appreciate the unique attributes of living in a small town.

**Volunteers:** To a great extent, Derby is a community empowered by citizen volunteers. Volunteers contribute countless hours of work on government boards and commissions, and are the backbone of local recreational programs, nonprofit organizations, and other community-based groups. They are also responsible for providing the City's fire protection, with a tradition of volunteerism dating back to 1830. Derby's volunteers are dedicated to fostering a vibrant, inclusive community as exemplified by the success of longstanding traditions including century old Boy Scout Troop #3, the Derby Day street celebration, weekly summer concerts on the Green, the Memorial Day parade, Independence Day fireworks, and various seasonal church festivals.

**Parks and Open Space:** Derby is extremely fortunate to have an abundance of parks and open space providing residents the opportunity for picnicking, socializing, observation, or simple relaxation in the open sun or cool shade. Many of these areas have been preserved through the generosity of conservation-minded people. The Osborne Homestead Museum, Kellogg Environmental Center, Osbornedale State Park, Witek Memorial Park, and the Derby Greenway Trail are some of the attractions that have been safeguarded from development for the enjoyment of future generations. These amenities provide excellent opportunities for community gardening, field sports, hiking, fishing, cross-country skiing, walking, biking, exploring and more.

**Waterways:** Derby is located at the confluence of the Naugatuck and Housatonic Rivers. The Rivers, as well as other smaller water bodies throughout Derby, are an integral part of its landscape and provide for seasonal activities such as fishing, canoeing, kayaking, and ice fishing. These natural attractions add a wonderful visual element to the community, while providing a refuge for ducks, geese, and other aquatic life.

**Derby City Center:** Derby is located along the Metro North Waterbury Branch Line, just off the busy Route 8 corridor. Both history and geography helped shape its compact city center, which is dedicated to public and commercial use with a variety of local shops, offices, restaurants, and residences. The Center's traditional New England town green provides Derby with a true public place - a central, open area for announcements, dedications, memorials and festivals, where

people can gather to meet with friends or simply relax. Derby City Center is within walking distance to the Derby-Shelton rail station.

**Historical:** Settled in 1651, Derby has a rich history that was greatly influenced by its strategic location at the confluence of the Housatonic and Naugatuck Rivers. The City's economy evolved over the decades from one based on agriculture to one reliant on shipbuilding, and later on manufacturing. While most factories are now gone, a well-developed infrastructure remains, which includes bus and rail networks. Throughout its evolution, Derby endeavored to maintain its ties to the past. These historic linkages include the Old Derby Uptown Burying Ground (aka Colonial Cemetery), majestic Sterling Opera House, Victorian-era homes, mills, and farmland. Clustered together or standing alone, Derby's historical amenities provide an interesting and important contrast to later development, and provide a glimpse into Derby's colorful history.

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## Use of the Plan of Conservation and Development

This Plan of Conservation and Development is an advisory document that is intended to guide the decision-making of the Planning and Zoning Commission, as well as other City boards and commissions, officials, and residents, with regard to conservation and development activities in Derby. Strategic actions that will be implemented over the next decade will flow from and need to be consistent with the POCD. Likewise, the Plan will assist the City in aligning conservation and development activity with state and regional plans.

While the statutory responsibility to adopt the Plan rests with the Planning and Zoning Commission, implementation will occur only with the diligent efforts of the residents and officials of the City of Derby.

### EXCERPTS FROM CONNECTICUT GENERAL STATUTES (CGS) 8-23 – PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT

#### The Commission may:

- adopt such geographical, functional or other amendments to the plan or parts of the plan... as it deems necessary.
- prepare, amend and adopt plans for the redevelopment and improvement of districts or neighborhoods which...contain special problems or opportunities ...

#### The Plan shall:

- be a statement of policies, goals and standards for the physical and economic development of the municipality...
- provide for a system of principal thoroughfares...sidewalks, multipurpose trails...
- be designed to promote...the coordinated development of the municipality...to have compact, transit accessible, pedestrian-oriented mixed use development patterns and land reuse... recommend the most desirable use of land within the municipality for residential, recreational, commercial, industrial, conservation and other purposes and include a map showing such proposed land uses...
- recommend the most desirable density of population in ... the municipality...
- note any inconsistencies with the following growth management principles:
  - redevelopment and revitalization of commercial centers...
  - expansion of housing opportunities and design choices...
  - concentration of development around transportation nodes...
  - conservation and restoration of the natural environment, cultural and historical resources and existing farmlands...
  - protection of environmental assets critical to public health and safety...
  - integration of planning across all levels of government...
- make provision for the development of housing opportunities...
- promote housing choice and economic diversity in housing...
- consider the following:
  - the need for affordable housing...
  - the need for protection of existing and potential drinking water supplies...
  - the use of cluster development and other development ...
  - the state plan of conservation and development ...
  - the regional plan of development...
  - physical, social, economic and governmental conditions and trends...
  - the needs of the municipality ...
  - the objectives of energy-efficient patterns of development...
  - protection and preservation of agriculture.

#### The Plan may:

- show the commission's recommendation for
  - conservation and preservation of traprock and other ridgelines...
  - airports, parks, playgrounds and other public grounds...
  - the general location, relocation and improvement of schools...
  - the general location and extent of public utilities...for water, sewerage, light, power, transit and other purposes...
  - the extent and location of public housing projects...
  - programs for the implementation of the plan...
  - proposed priority funding areas...

## Public Outreach

In order to ensure the POCD accurately reflects current conditions and captures the vision of Derby residents, the City conducted extensive public outreach during the preparation of the Plan as part of its information gathering process.

While statistical data can be garnered from the U.S. Bureau of the Census, input from residents is vital to understanding what is good about Derby, what issues the City is facing, and how to make the City a desirable place to live, work, and visit.

A survey, which included 33 questions, was circulated to gather resident interests and opinions on a broad range of topics including housing condition and quality, transportation, city services, recreation, education, and commercial development, as well as other issues relevant to the lives of Derby residents. The survey was available on the City's website from January 2015 to April 2015. Printed copies were also made available at public workshops hosted by the City in March 2015. 96 survey responses were received. The results will be used, along with other data, to inform the POCD and provide a vision for the City's future.

Most people who responded to the survey were long-time residents, living in Derby for more than 10 years. The majority likewise owned their own homes and used their own cars to travel to and from work outside the City.

While many of the survey results and opinions are discussed and presented throughout the Plan, several common opinions were revealed.

The vast majority of respondents identified the Derby Greenway Trail as Derby's best asset. They also recognized the City's convenient access to the regional highway network and public transit as a desirable community feature.

Respondents similarly shared a number of common concerns, including the need to revitalize the downtown area, enhance Derby's general appearance, and improve its educational system.

Looking forward, survey respondents suggested that the City focus its efforts over the next five to ten years on providing mixed-use developments in the downtown area, beautifying Main Street, and redeveloping the area south of Main Street.

In addition to the opinion survey, a series of public workshops was held in March 2015. The City of Derby retained the Land Use Practice Collaborative of the Pace Land Use Law Center and Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies (“the Collaborative”) to facilitate general public meetings aimed at gathering additional resident feedback. Collaborative and City staff solicited participation in the meetings through flyers, canvassing, electronic announcements, press releases, and newspaper articles.



Three general public meetings were held at locations throughout the City to engage residents in each of the City’s three voting wards.

- March 15, 2015, 1:30 p.m. at Kellogg Environmental Center
- March 19, 2015, 6:30 p.m. at Archie Moore’s Bar & Restaurant
- March 25, 2015, 6:30 p.m. at Grassy Hill Lodge

Two stakeholder meetings, intended to specifically solicit feedback from senior citizens and high school students, were also held by the Collaborative and City staff.

- March 26, 2015, 10:00 a.m. at Derby Senior Center
- March 26, 2015, 12:30 p.m. at Derby High School

The same agenda and format was used for both series of meetings.

The purpose of this comprehensive public engagement effort was to gather resident insight to create a common vision for future development. Just as with the surveys, the meetings sought to identify priority issues, assets, challenges, and strategies with regard to the City’s land use patterns. The meetings attracted 189 participants.

At each meeting, participants broke into small discussion groups which were moderated by Collaborative staff. Feedback was solicited on four land use topics.

#### 1. Conservation, Green Places, and Recreation

This topic refers to the City’s natural environmental features, including topography, scenic resources, ridgelines, wetlands, parks, open space, sustainability, habitats, and the connections among these natural resources, including those needed to provide maximum benefits to the community. This topic includes passive and active recreation.

## 2. Public Works, Infrastructure, Transportation, and Public Services

This topic refers to the City's roads and streets, public transportation, paths and sidewalks, traffic signals, and the need to accommodate a variety of methods to move people and goods into and throughout the community. This topic also includes other infrastructure improvements, such as cellular communication facilities, cable, electricity, water, sewers, drainage, flood control, and other utilities. Lastly, this topic refers to City-provided services, such as senior services, libraries, building permits, garbage collection, recycling, schools, and educational facilities.

## 3. Commercial Development and City Centers

The Commercial Development and City Centers topic provides a framework to discuss the quality and character of the City's economic centers, both present and future. The topic includes economic development, jobs, and needed tax revenues.

## 4. Housing

This topic refers to the housing needs of both the City and surrounding region. This includes housing choices and types required to accommodate the needs of the City's current and future residents, including seniors, young households, workers, City employees and volunteers, and others in the region who are searching for suitable housing.

Collaborative staff facilitated discussions by asking leading questions: "What is good now, what is not working, and what are some strategies to overcome what is not working?"

As participants discussed each topic, facilitators recorded exact responses on flipcharts, as well as on laptop computers. The team also collected private comment cards from participants. Participants were likewise encouraged to complete the on-line survey or submit comments via email. All meeting comments were then consolidated by discussion topic for review and analysis purposes.

Collaborative staff documented and tabulated all comments received during the public meetings. The results and analyses are presented and explored in a separate document, [Derby Plan of Conservation and Development Public Engagement Report](#). The general objectives for the POCD were gleaned from this analysis and integrated into the topical sections throughout the Plan.

## Overall Objective

### Strategies

Overall, the POCD suggests strategies to enrich the City's fundamental values and improve the quality of life for Derby residents. These strategies include improvements to community facilities and infrastructure, the promotion and preservation of natural and historic resources, provisions

for high quality open space and recreational opportunities, and the revitalization of the downtown area.

More specifically, these strategies aim to:

- Preserve, maintain, and provide better access to Derby's public open spaces, including the Derby Greenway, Naugatuck and Housatonic Rivers, and the City's riverfronts.
- Improve the management of and provide enhancements to existing parks.
- Arrange for better enforcement of environmental regulations and policies, including litter removal, recycling, stormwater mitigation, and wetlands protection.
- Upgrade and modernize the City's water pollution control facilities.
- Maintain and upgrade the City's existing transportation infrastructure by repairing and rehabilitating deteriorated and deficient City streets and roads, and fixing non-functioning traffic signals.
- Enhance pedestrian and bicycle travel by maintaining and extending sidewalks, installing highly visible crosswalks, expanding the Derby Greenway Trail, and providing bicycle lanes and routes, where appropriate.
- Improve Derby's public education system and school facilities to meet modern learning needs and technology demands.
- Upgrade and provide better access to the Derby-Shelton rail station from the downtown area.
- Improve the City's retail portfolio through the attraction of more diverse shopping, dining, and entertainment opportunities.
- Revitalize Derby's City Center through well-planned commercial development, neighborhood enhancement programs, and streetscape improvements.
- Encourage and promote higher density and mixed-use transit supportive developments within walking distance of the Derby-Shelton rail station.
- Encourage more owner-occupied housing, especially in the downtown area.
- Provide more housing for seniors and young professionals.
- Encourage the renovation of distressed properties.

- Support and promote the adaptive reuse of older, former industrial buildings for residential and/or commercial activities.

## Development History

Prior to the European settlement of Connecticut, a Native American tribe, called the Paugussetts, inhabited land along the Housatonic River. In the mid 1600s, settlers from New Haven purchased land from the Paugussetts in an area known as the *Great Neck*. This land, which the Europeans settled in 1651, was named *Derby* after Derby, England in 1675. Derby was first incorporated as a town in 1775, and then as a city in 1893.

Originally, Derby occupied a 10-mile strip of land extending north on both sides of the Naugatuck River from its confluence with the Housatonic River. Over time, however, land was ceded to the towns of Oxford (1798), Seymour (1850), and Ansonia (1889), reducing Derby to its present size.

Derby's strategic location, at the confluence of the Housatonic and Naugatuck Rivers, had a significant influence on its development. During the Colonial Period (1607-1776), trade and industry complemented the area's predominantly agricultural economy. Many residents earned a living grinding grain, sawing lumber, and producing cloth, activities facilitated by the nearby rivers.

In the late 1600s, Derby began to emerge as a center for shipbuilding. This trade grew to become a major industry for the town, supporting a large workforce. Consequently, Derby became an active port and leading business center in Connecticut, establishing itself as a commercial hub for much of the Naugatuck Valley.

However, in the early 1800s, Derby's economy began to change, particularly in response to the loss of the West Indies trade near the end of the War of 1812, and the arrival of the Industrial Revolution (1760-1840). Derby's economy evolved from a relatively dispersed, isolated society of farmers to one that was more complex and differentiated. Changes in the town's physical layout reflected this evolution. Streets were constructed and the area near the rivers was developed for factories. The land where the Naugatuck and Housatonic Rivers met became



the site of a new community called Birmingham. During this time, Derby's prominence as a shipping port declined.

The Industrial Revolution marked an important transition in manufacturing, as well as in Derby's history. Hand production methods transitioned to machines, and new chemical manufacturing and iron production processes emerged. Waterpower greatly improved the efficiency of the manufacturing process. Derby's riverside location played a pivotal role in its emergence as a leading manufacturing center.

Derby, like many Naugatuck Valley communities, specialized in the production of various metal products. Some of the world renowned businesses that emerged from Derby's industrial period include:

- Phelps Copper Mill
- Ansonia Brass & Copper Company
- Farrel Company (brass and iron castings)
- Wallace & Sons (brass and copper goods)
- Ansonia Clock Company

The construction of the Naugatuck Railroad (1849-1887) supported Derby's industrial growth, giving it greater access to supply and distribution markets. (The Naugatuck Railroad is now known as the Waterbury Branch Line, and is an extension from the main New Haven rail line.)

During the peak of its industrial period, Derby developed the infrastructure to support this important economic sector. Infrastructure investments included a public water supply and sanitary sewers. Residential developments were designed and built to provide workforce housing in close proximity to the manufacturing plants.

Steep slopes along the rivers confined Derby's development to one central area, giving rise to an intimate downtown. With jobs and housing clustered in this area, goods and services businesses flourished, and residents were soon able to meet all their essential needs in the town's center. This area became the hub of community activity.

However, over time, industries consolidated and eventually left the area. This had a devastating impact on Derby's economy. The geographical features that once enabled it to flourish as an industrial town, ultimately contributed to its decline. While the steep slopes along the rivers led to the creation of a compact town center, they reduced opportunities for expansion. With limited land available for new residential development, little growth occurred in Derby after 1920.

Another devastating blow was dealt the City in 1955 when severe flooding of the Naugatuck River occurred. In August 1955, two named hurricanes, Connie and Diane, hit the east coast within days of each other. While neither storm made direct landfall in Connecticut, their combined rainfall was massive. Hurricane Connie produced eight inches of rain, particularly saturating

southwestern Connecticut. Five days later, Hurricane Diane dumped another 16 inches of rain on the state. The flooding that resulted was arguably the most devastating inland flooding ever to hit Connecticut.



According to the state highway department, at least 17 bridges had been destroyed, isolating communities, and numerous roads were blocked by rock slides. Major dams broke, railroad tracks were swept away, homes and businesses were destroyed, and drinking-water supplies were compromised. Statewide, the financial cost of the flooding was nearly \$185.5 million. Financial losses to the Naugatuck Valley, including Derby, topped \$46 million, in part because so much business, transportation, and industry was located in the flood plains.

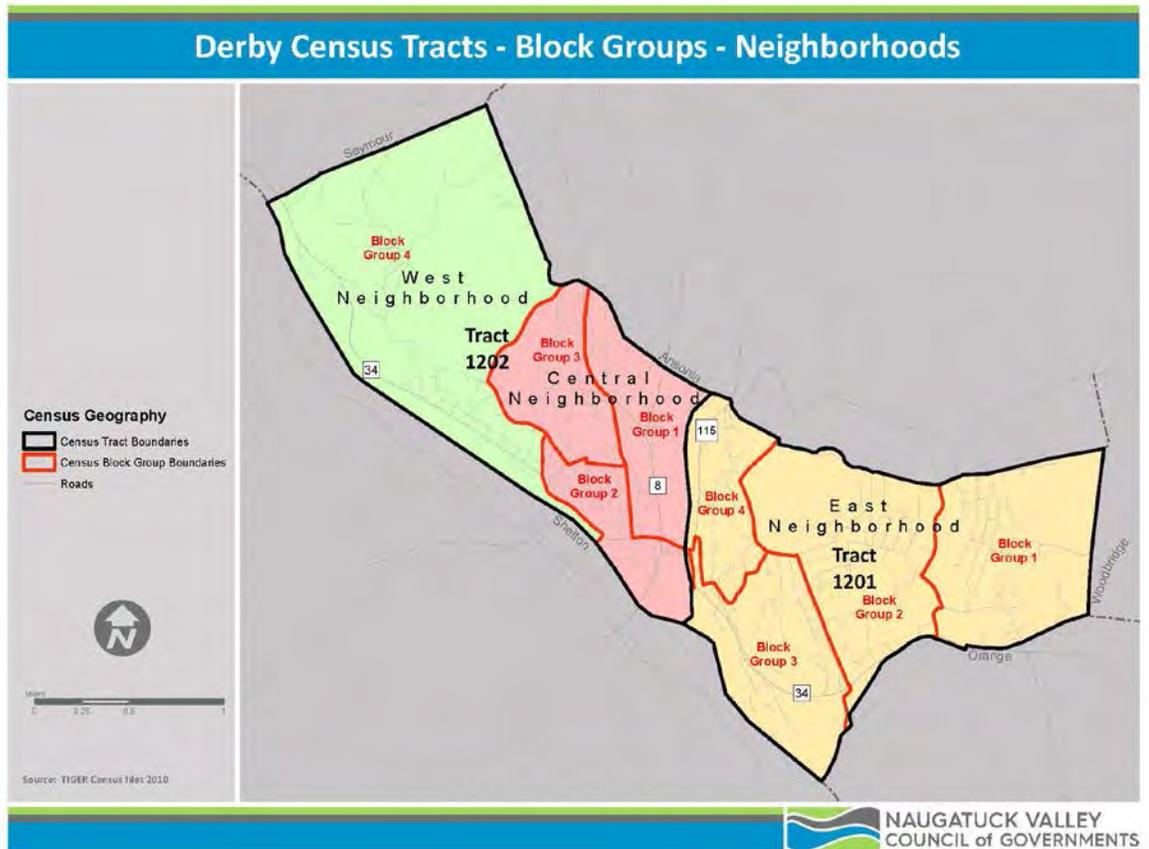
Modern improvements to the area's transportation network also contributed to the decline of Derby's once vibrant town center, though it was not the only Naugatuck Valley community to be affected. Before the proliferation of the automobile, residents relied on the Waterbury rail line for intercity and inter-regional connections; trolley lines met their demands for local travel.

However, the expansion of the road network following World War II (1939-1945) changed all that. There were now more convenient ways to get around. Residents began to travel to other communities for shopping and social activities; businesses began to relocate to areas with less expensive operating costs. The construction of Route 8 in the early 1960s provided an additional means for Naugatuck Valley residents to conveniently travel beyond their town centers. Today, these town centers are under-populated and contain brownfields from years of manufacturing operations. However, these communities still retain the benefits of a well-developed infrastructure, and continue to be served by bus and rail systems.

## Current Trends and Demographics

This section of the POCD presents various population, housing, economic, and other demographic data, and examines current and near-term trends. Data are diverse and were obtained from several sources, including the 2010 Census, the 2013 American Community Survey (ACS), and the Connecticut State Data Center. In many cases, it was possible to break the data down into smaller geographic areas that approximate the principal areas of Derby. While the Census data does not match neighborhoods perfectly, the following are the approximations used for the POCD:

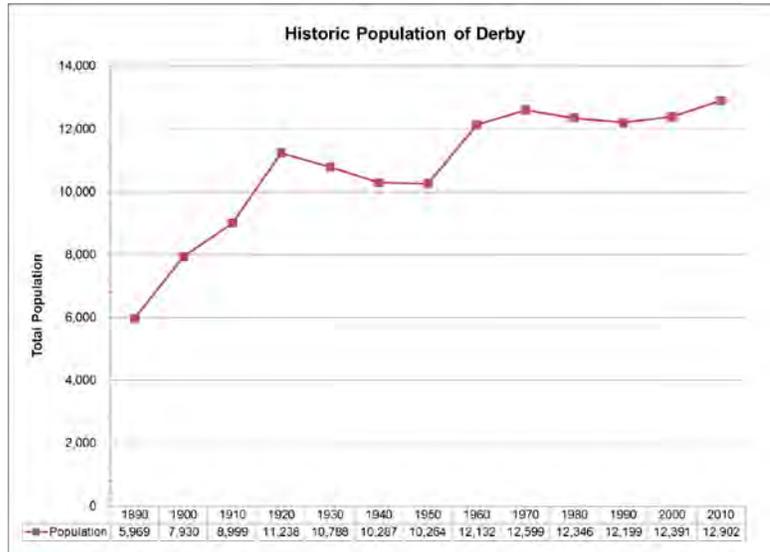
- **West Derby** (corresponding to Census Block Group 1202-4): bounded by the Housatonic River, Seymour, and Ansonia, north of Hatfield Street and west of Hawthorne Avenue and Route 34.
- **Central Derby/Downtown** (corresponding to Census Block Group 1202-1, 1202-2, and 1202-3): bounded by the Naugatuck River and Ansonia, south of Hatfield Street, east of Hawthorne Avenue, and along the Housatonic River to Bridge Street.
- **East Derby** (corresponding to Census Block Group 1201-1, 1201-2, 1201-3, and 1201-4): bounded by the Naugatuck River, Ansonia, Orange, and Woodbridge.



## Population

Based on the 2013 American Community Survey, the total population in Derby was 12,841 people. This is slightly less than the population of 12,902 derived from the 2010 Census.

Since 1920, the population of Derby has remained relatively stable, despite fluctuations between Census surveys. Between 1920 and 2010, Derby's population grew by 14.8%, reaching its highest level.



The 1950s showed the largest gain between decennial censuses, growing at a rate of 18.2%. In 1960, Derby exceeded 12,000 persons for the first time, and its population has remained at that level in all subsequent Census surveys.

To get a better idea of how Derby's population is dispersed throughout the City, the 2010 Census population was allocated to its three neighborhoods: East Derby, Central Derby/Downtown, and West Derby.

### Population of Derby by Neighborhoods 2010 Census

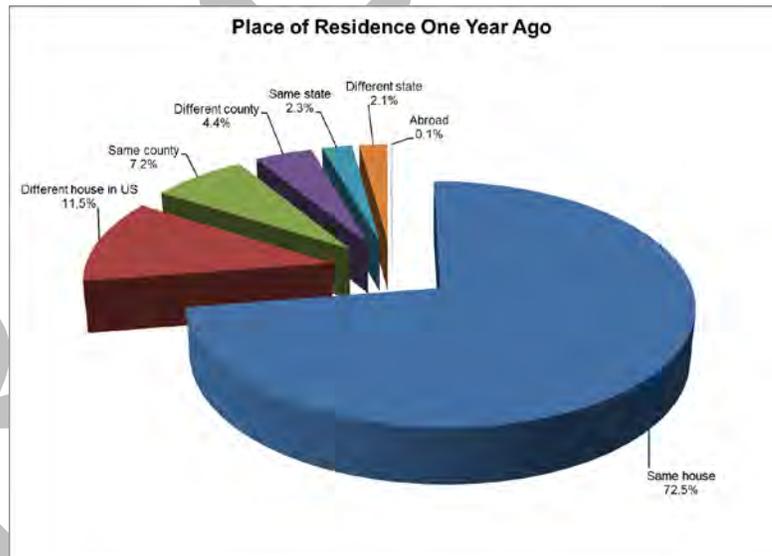
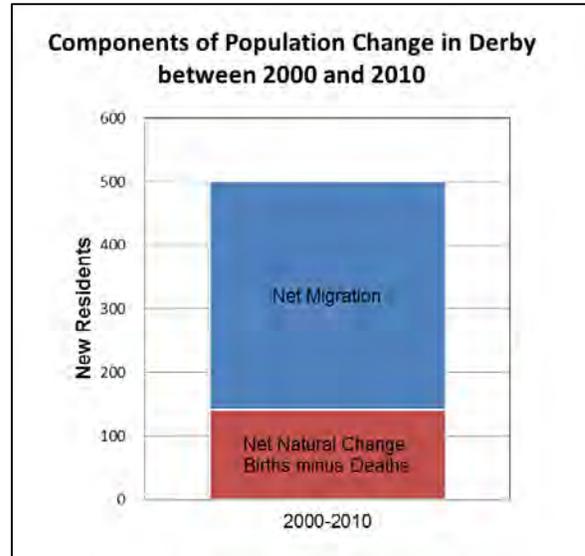
Neighborhood	Population	Percent
East Derby	6,721	52.1%
Central Derby/ Downtown	4,681	36.3%
West Derby	1,500	11.6%
Total	12,902	

Based on this breakdown, over half (52.1%) of the City's residents (6,721) live in **East Derby**. The **Central Derby/Downtown** area is home to 36.3% of the City's residents, and **West Derby** is the least populated with only 1,500 residents.

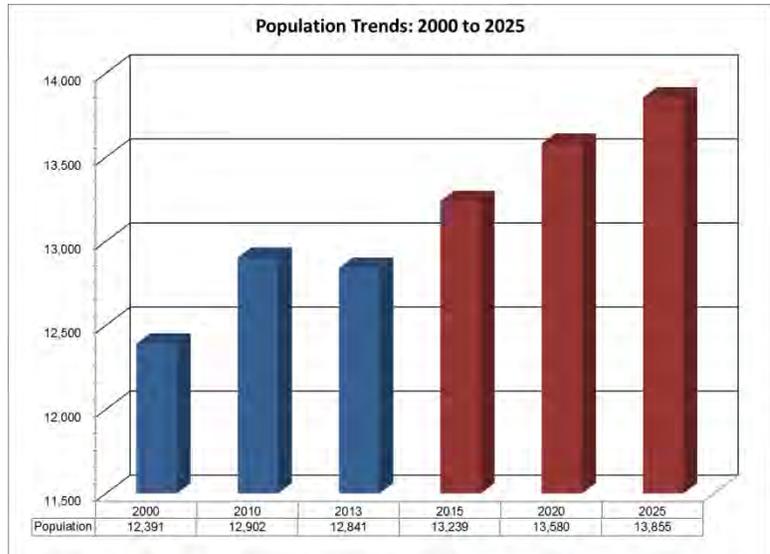
Changes in population are attributable to two causes: *net migration*, which is the difference between the movement of people into or out of Derby, and *natural change* due to births and deaths.

Between 2000 and 2010, net migration was a stronger factor in population variation than natural change. Over the ten-year period, net migration accounted for an increase of 360 people. Natural change accounted for a net increase of only 141 people over the same period of time, with total births at 1,659 and total deaths at 1,518.

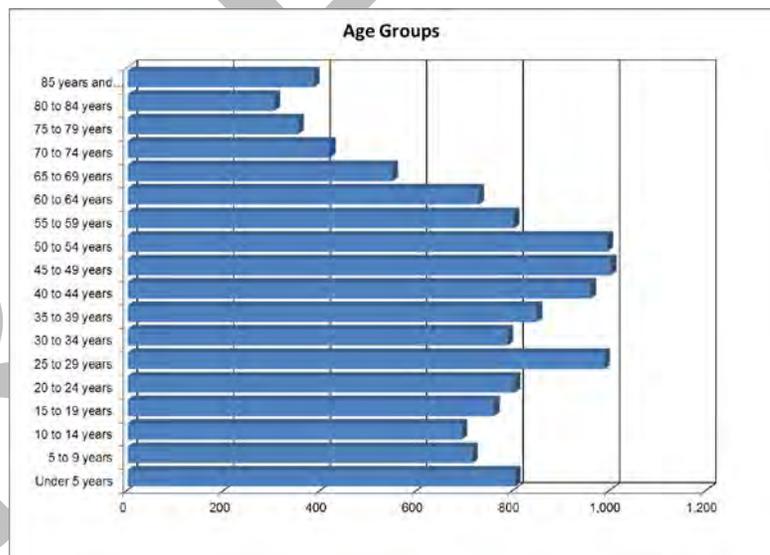
Based on the 2013 American Community Survey, 72.5% of all Derby residents were living in the same house as the year before. Of those who moved in within the year, 25.3% had moved from somewhere within Connecticut, 2.1% had moved from another state, and only 0.1% had emigrated from somewhere outside the United States.



These stable population trends are expected to continue. Based on population projections developed by the Connecticut State Data Center, the population of Derby is expected to reach 13,855 persons by 2025. This represents a 7.4% increase over the 2010 Census population.



The median age of Derby residents is 38.5 years. This is slightly younger than the median age of all Connecticut residents (40.0 years). Since 2000, the age of Derby's population has increased slightly: the median age in 2000 was 37.7 years.



There is a distinct variation in the median age of Derby's population by neighborhood. West Derby has the oldest population with a median age of 45.6 years. Central Derby has the youngest population with a median age of 34.3 years. East Derby falls between them with a median age of 41.8 years.

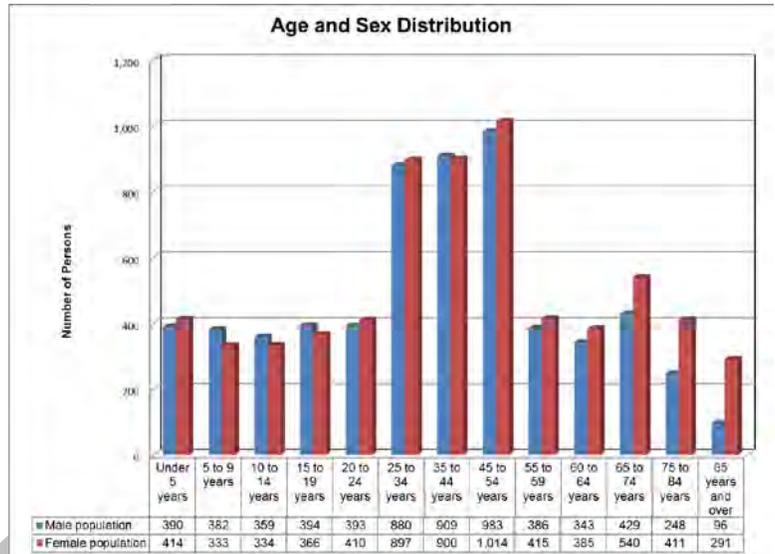
Children (persons younger than 14 years old) account for 17.1% of Derby's total population, while elderly persons (over 65 years old) represent 15.6% of the population. By comparison, 18.6% of Connecticut's population is younger than 14 years old, and 14.3% is 65 years or older.

At 20.6%, Central Derby has the greatest proportion of children as a percentage of total persons living in that neighborhood; East Derby follows at 15.7%. West Derby has the smallest proportion, with children representing 13.0% of the total neighborhood population.

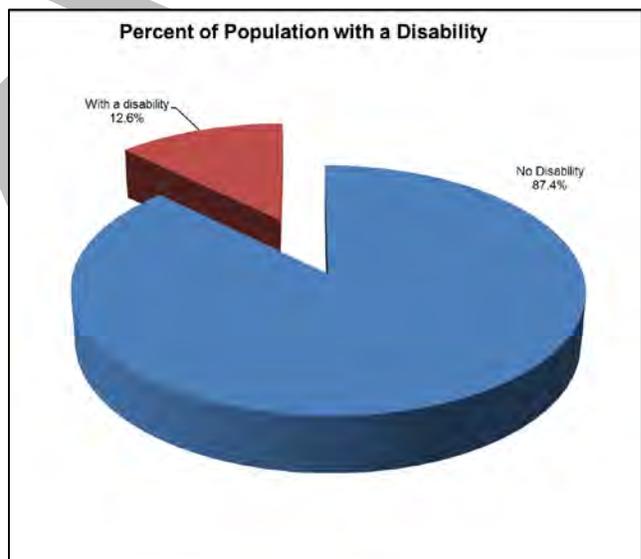
Baby Boomers, generally considered those persons between the ages of 45 and 65, account for 27.3% of the total population of Derby.

Millennials, those between the ages of 18 and 35, represent about 19.8% of the population.

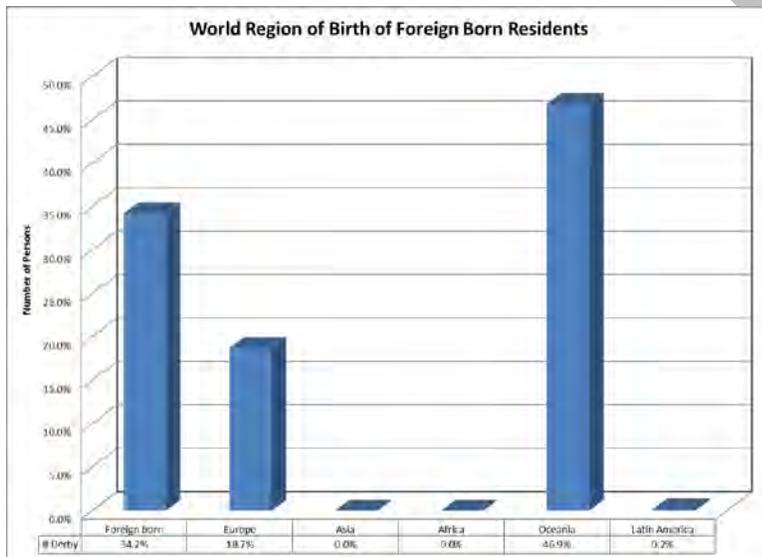
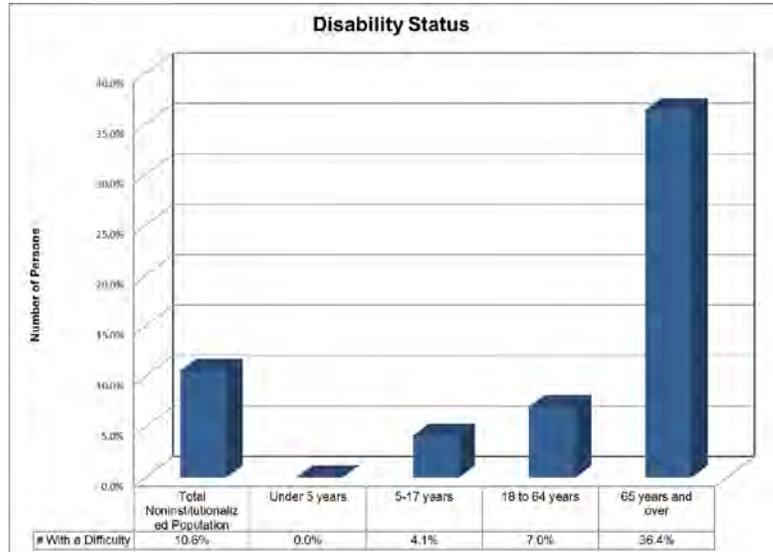
Slightly more females (52.0%) live in Derby than males (48.0%). This breakdown is similar for each of the neighborhoods, although the proportion of females in East Derby (52.9%) is slightly higher than the City as a whole. The age-gender cohort graph shows a fairly consistent breakdown between male and female residents for each age category. However, the pattern diverges toward a higher percentage of females as the population ages. The portion of female residents living beyond 75 years is much greater than male residents.



Approximately 1,600 Derby residents have an identified disability. Difficulties include hearing or vision impairment, mobility restrictions (ambulatory disability), cognitive difficulties, self-care difficulty, and problems maintaining independent living. Some residents have multiple difficulties.



Not unexpectedly, age and disability show a strong correlation. Only 11.1% of residents under 65 years old have a disability; however, over 36% of those over 65 have some kind of impairment. Older persons more often have difficulties related to mobility, self-care, and independent living.

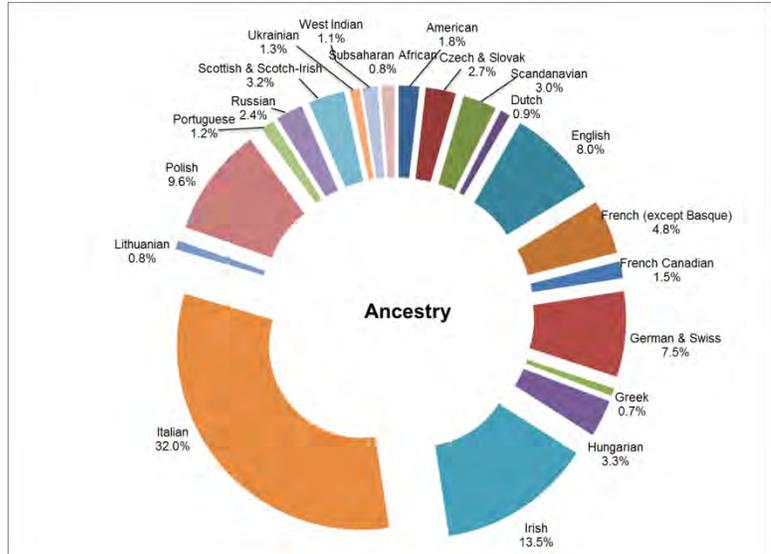


Comprised of persons from a wide range of nationalities and ancestry, Derby's population is somewhat diverse. Most residents (85.7%) were born in the United States, while only 13.2% were born in a foreign country. The remaining persons were born in a territory of the United States, or abroad to American parents.

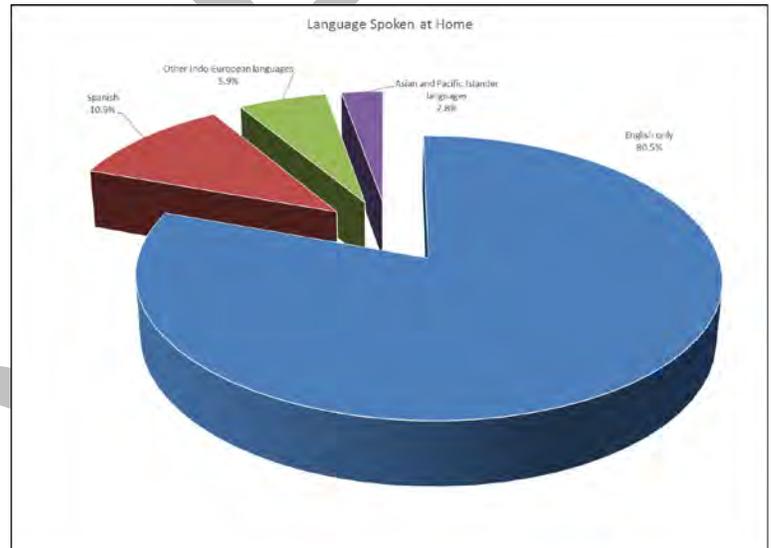
Nearly half of Derby's foreign-born residents come from Latin America, while 34.2% come from Europe and 18.7% come from Asia.

Over half of Derby's foreign-born residents are naturalized U.S. citizens; only 6.0% are not U.S. citizens.

The three most prevalent nationalities of Derby residents - Italian, Irish, and Polish - account for the ancestry of 52.1% of all residents; those of Italian descent make up almost one-third of Derby's population.

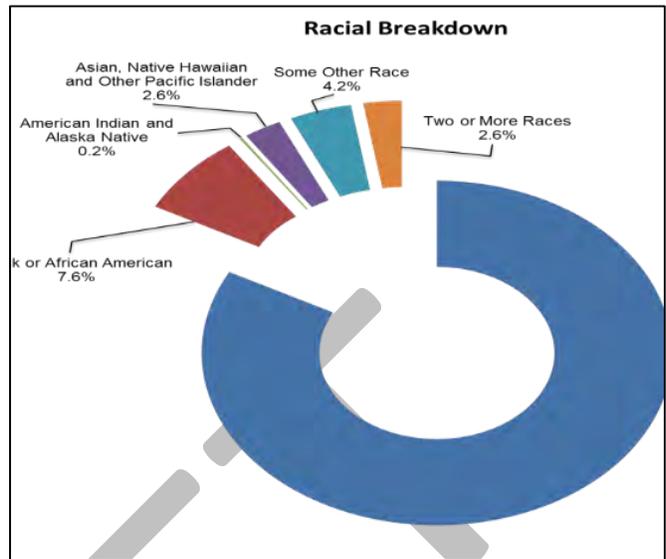


Despite Derby's population diversity, English is the prevalent language spoken at home; however, it is spoken by only 80.5% of the total population. Other languages spoken at home include Spanish (10.9%), other Indo-European languages (5.9%), and Asian languages (2.8%). English is spoken very well by over half of these persons; 9.2% of all residents do not speak English very well.

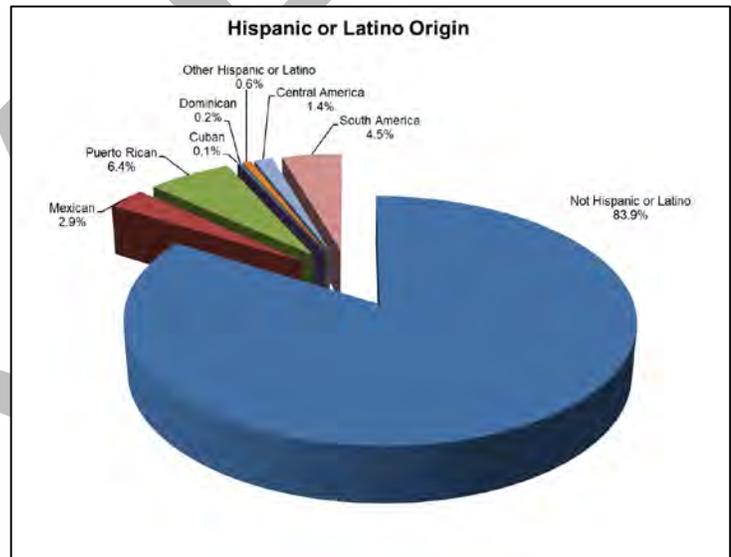


With 82.8% of Derby's total population classified as white, its racial make-up is fairly homogeneous. African Americans make up 7.6% of the population, Asians 2.6%, and other races 4.2%, with the remaining 2.6% belonging to two or more races.

A slightly higher concentration of African Americans reside in Central Derby: 12.6% of residents living in this area are African Americans, as compared to 5.1% of residents in East Derby, and 3.1% in West Derby.



16.1% of Derby's population is Hispanic or Latino. Places of origin include: Puerto Rico, Mexico, Central America (primarily Guatemala), South America (primarily Ecuador), and the Caribbean Islands (Cuba and the Dominican Republic). This proportion is similar to the state as a whole, given that 16.4% of Connecticut's population is of Hispanic or Latino descent.

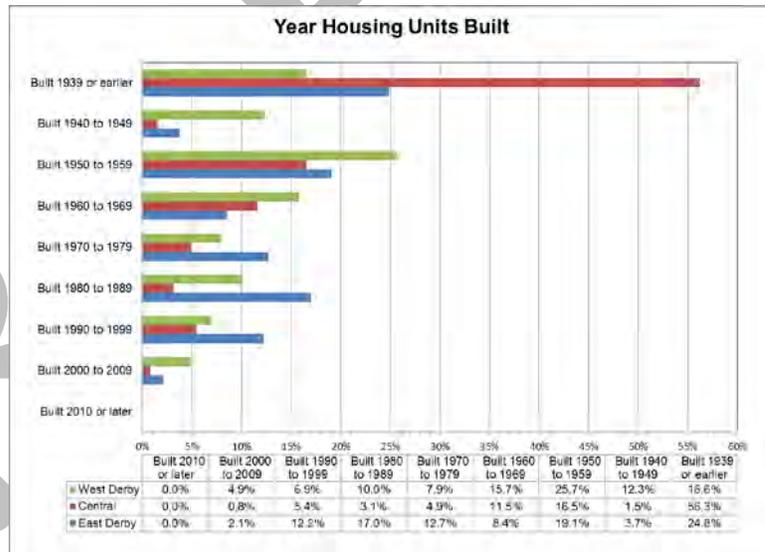


## Housing

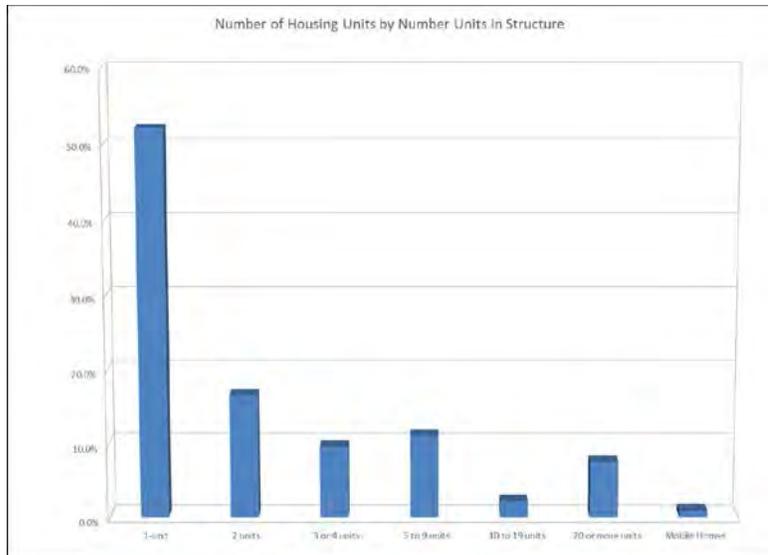
Based on the 2013 American Community Survey, there are 5,721 housing units in Derby: 2,866 units are located in East Derby, 2,263 in Central Derby, and 592 in West Derby.

Housing Units & Median Year Structures Built by Neighborhoods 2013 ACS		
Neighborhood	Units	Median Year
East Derby	2,866	1963
Central Derby	2,263	1945
West Derby	592	1958
Total	5,721	1955

Generally, Derby's housing structures are relatively old: 58.9% of all units were built before 1960, with a median construction year of 1955. The City's newest housing is located in East Derby: its units have a median construction year of 1963. Central Derby has the oldest housing with a median construction year of 1945. 56.3% of all housing units in Central Derby were constructed prior to 1940.

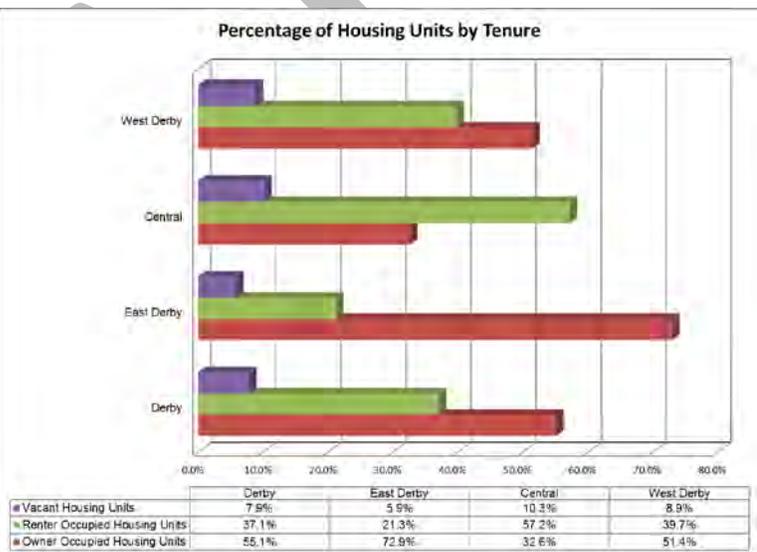


Over half (52.1%) of the housing structures in Derby contain one housing unit. The remaining housing structures (47%) contain two or more units, with the majority of these structures containing two to four units.



While data by neighborhood were not available, there is a marked difference in the type of housing structures located in different areas of the City. Census Tract level data indicate that 67.4% of the housing units in Census Tract 1202, which corresponds to Central and West Derby combined, are located in structures with two or more units. By contrast, only about 28.5% of the units in East Derby (Census Tract 1202) are in structures with multiple units.

Nearly all of the City's housing units are occupied; with only 7.9% vacant. The vacancy rate is slightly higher in Central Derby (10.3%) and West Derby (8.9%). The lowest vacancy rate is in East Derby (5.9%).

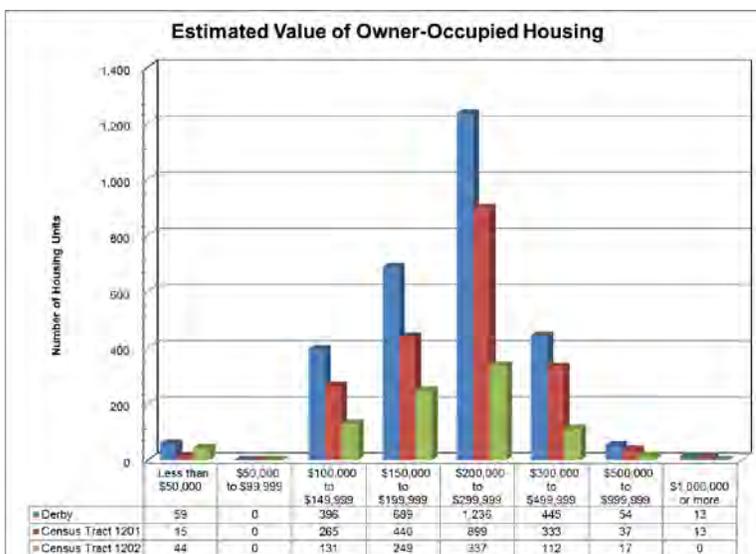


Unoccupied units for sale or rent account for most vacancies. A small number of seasonal units (vacant for part of the year) are also included in the vacancy rate.

Citywide, over 55% of all housing units are owner-occupied. The percentage increases to 72.9% for units located in East Derby. Central Derby has the lowest percentage of homeownership, with homeowners occupying only 32.6% of housing units; renters account for 57.2% of the occupancy rate in this area.

The median value of owner-occupied housing in Derby is \$221,400. The median value is slightly higher in East Derby (\$224,400), but notably lower in Central and West Derby combined (\$208,100).

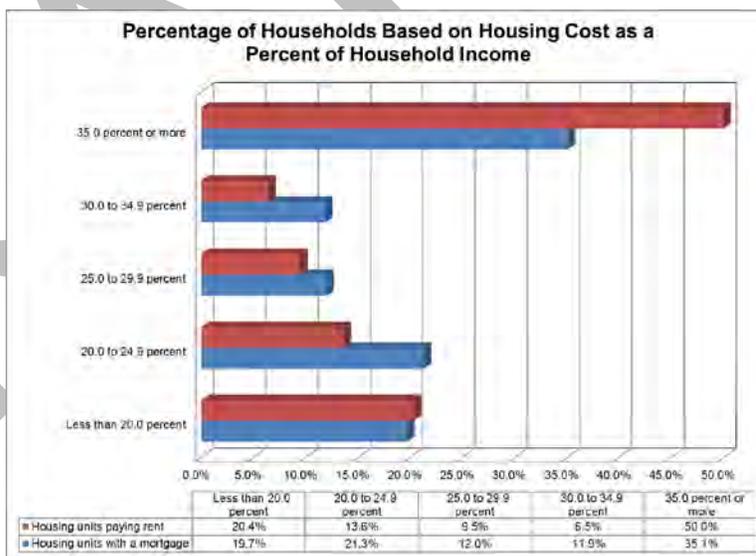
42.7% of owner-occupied housing in Derby is valued between \$200,000 and \$299,999; 17.7% is valued at more than \$300,000; 15.9% is valued at less than \$150,000.



The cost to own a home in Derby includes monthly mortgage and other home loan payments, real estate taxes, property insurances, utilities, and fuel. For homeowners with a mortgage, the median cost of homeownership is \$1,956 per month; for those without a mortgage, the monthly cost drops to \$818.

For 35.1% of homeowners in Derby, the monthly cost of homeownership consumes more than 35% of their monthly household income.

Gross rents typically include many of the same costs associated with homeownership. The median gross rent in Derby is \$1,102 per month. However, 14.8% of renter-occupied units have a gross rent in excess of \$1,500 per month.



Even though the average gross rent is less than the monthly cost of homeownership, it tends to consume a larger portion of household income. For half of all renters in Derby, gross rent represents at least 35% of monthly household income.

Connecticut's Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) tracks the number of new construction housing permits issued each year; it also tracks the number of housing units demolished.

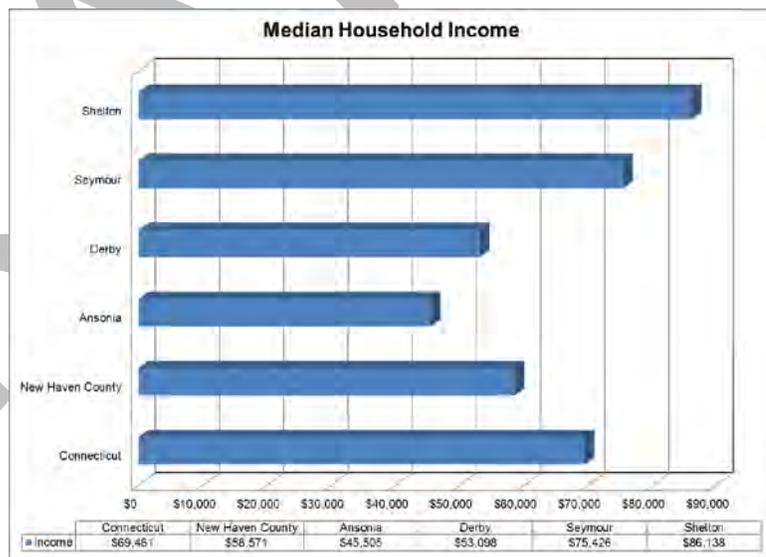
Between 1990 and 2013, 360 permits for new housing construction were issued in Derby, for an average of 15 per year. The number permits peaked at 74 between 1993 and 1994. The period between 1997 and 2001 was also significantly above average with 156 permits issued, equating to about 31 per year. From 2007 to 2013, however, only 24 permits were issued, an average of less than four per year.



From 1990 to 2013, 21 housing units were demolished.

## Income

With a median household income of \$53,098, Derby residents typically earn less than the state average of \$69,461. On average, they also earn less than the median household income of New Haven County residents (\$58,571).



24.6% of Derby households have an income less than \$25,000, while 21.3% have an income over \$100,000.

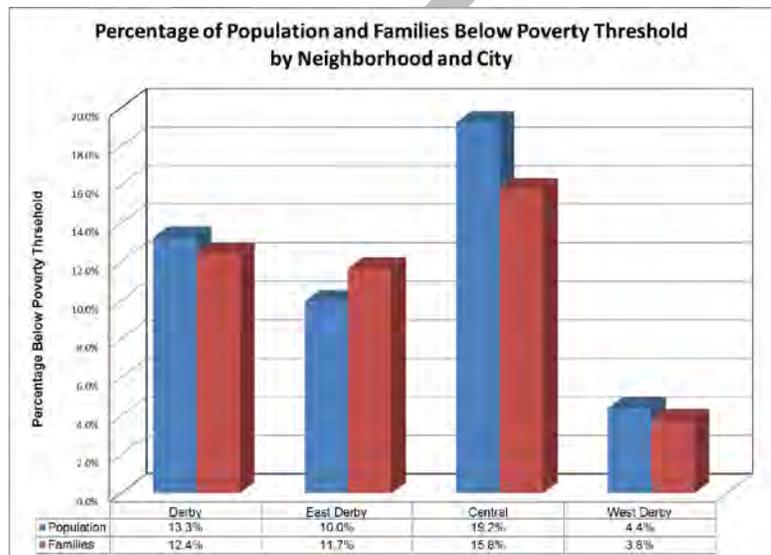
Households located in East Derby tend to have higher income levels than those of the other neighborhoods. The median household income for East Derby is \$67,647. Households in Central Derby (\$43,774) and West Derby (\$51,504) tend to earn substantially less than the City average of \$53,098.

To meet basic income needs, 2.3% of households in Derby receive public assistance. The majority of these households (76.0%) reside in Central Derby. Only 2.6% of households in West Derby receive public assistance. Less than one percent of households in East Derby require help meeting basic income needs.

The Census Bureau determines poverty thresholds based on a family's size and the ages of its members. However, national poverty thresholds do not account for all variables. For instance, poverty levels are not adjusted geographically, so they do not reflect differences inherent in the cost of living among various areas of the country.

There are 48 potential poverty thresholds. For a single individual under the age of 65, the income threshold is \$12,119; for a family of four, with two related children under the age of 18, it is \$23,834.

Based on current poverty thresholds and the income level of Derby residents, 13.3% of the population lives below the poverty level, with 12.4% of all Derby families having an income deficit. A higher proportion of those residents live in Central Derby. 19.2% of Central Derby's population (15.8% of families) live below the poverty threshold. By contrast, only 4.4% of single residents (3.8% of families) located in West Derby live below the poverty level.

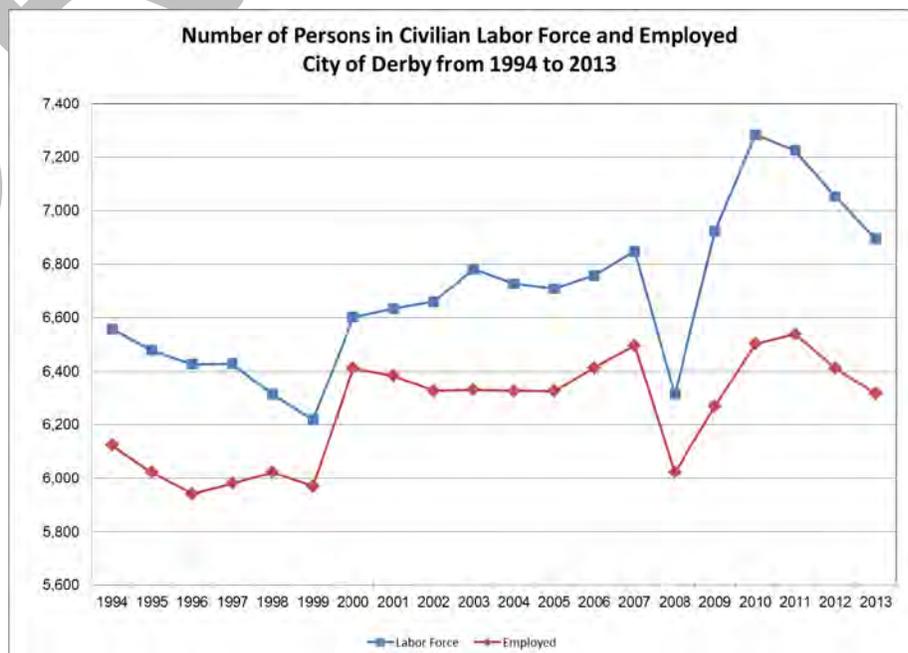


## Employment

Derby is located in the Bridgeport-Stamford Labor Market Area.

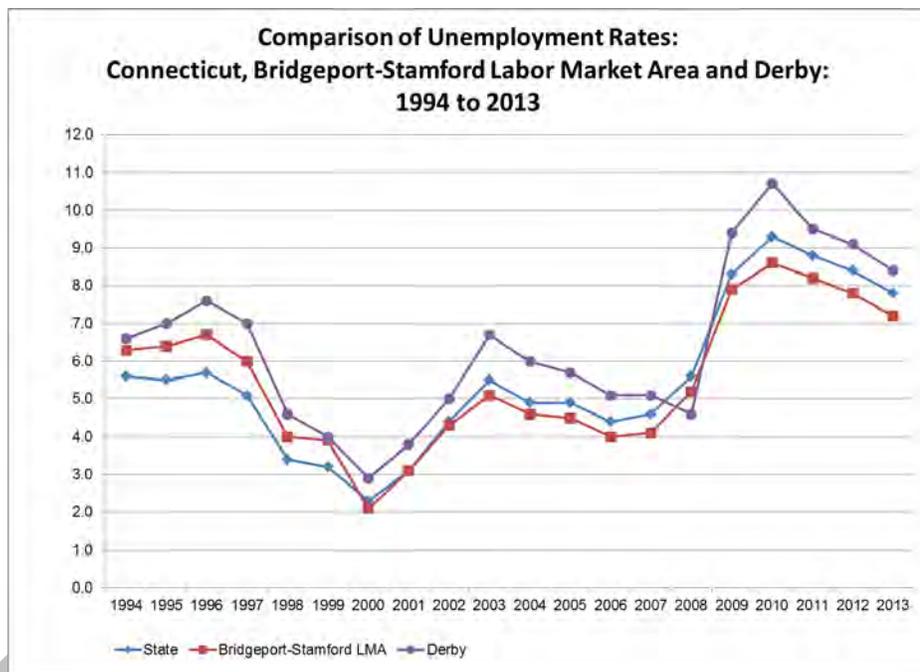
Civilian labor force and employment status data was obtained from the Connecticut Department of Labor, and is based on statistics available from 1994 through the end of the 2013 calendar year.

The blue line in the adjacent chart represents the number of persons in Derby's civilian labor force



(those seeking employment); the red line represents the number of residents employed. The difference between the two lines reflects the unemployment rate. From 1994 through 2013, Derby's civilian labor force fluctuated between 6,200 and 7,300 people, with a peak labor force of 7,284 recorded in 2010. The number residents employed was also variable over the same timeframe, dropping below 6,000 three times, and exceeding 6,500 twice. In 2013, 6,895 residents were in Derby's civilian labor force; 6,316 of those people were employed, 579 were not.

In the adjacent chart, the unemployment rates for Derby residents (purple line) are compared to those of the Bridgeport-Stamford labor market area (red line), and the state (blue line).

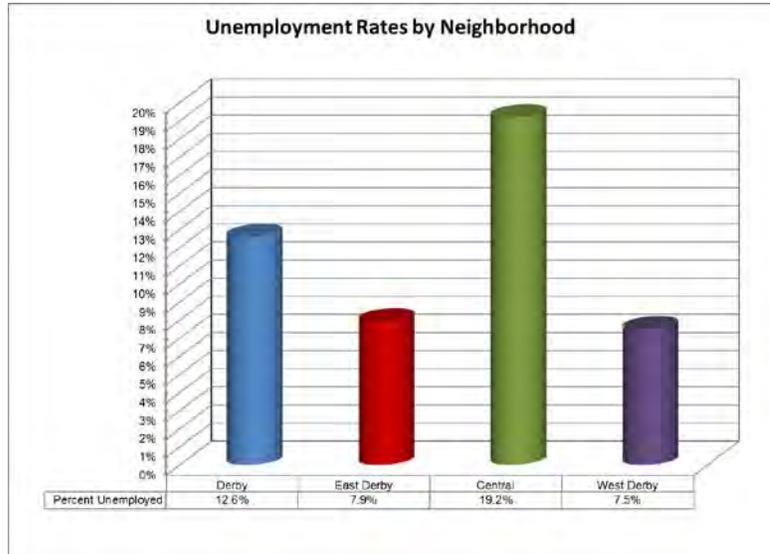


Over the past twenty years, the unemployment rate for Derby residents has averaged 6.5%, ranging from a low of 2.9% in 2000 to a peak of 10.7% in 2011. For ten years, between 1998 and 2002, and again between 2004 and 2008, the unemployment rate was 6.0% or less. Since 2009, the unemployment rate has averaged 9.4%.

The unemployment rate for Derby residents tends to be higher than that of the Bridgeport-Stamford Labor Market Area, as well as the state, even during periods of low unemployment. The highest unemployment rate during the study period for the Bridgeport-Stamford Labor Market Area was 8.6%; the state was 9.3%; Derby was higher than both at 10.7%. Furthermore, between 1994 and 2013, the labor market area and the state averaged a 5.5% unemployment rate; Derby's rate was higher at 6.5%.

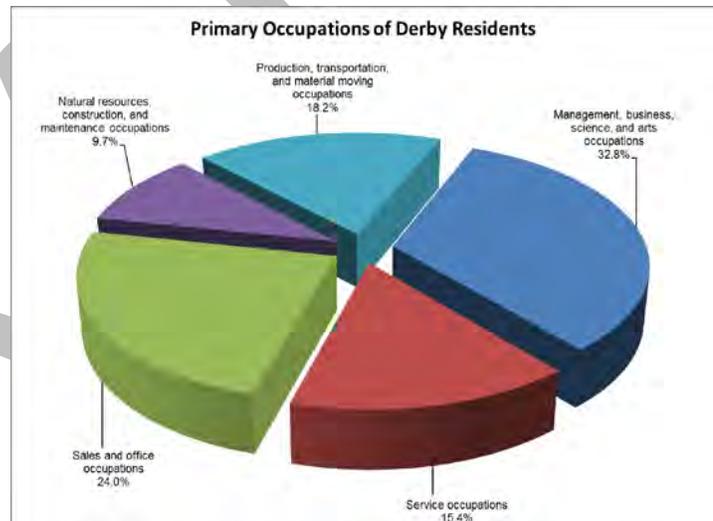
The American Community Survey (ACS) collects data on employment status, occupation and industry. While unemployment rates are not as precise as the data collected by the Connecticut Department of Labor, the data does provide the ability to determine if unemployment is higher in one part of the City than another.

Further analysis of Derby's unemployment rates reveals a disparity in employment among its neighborhoods. Based on the ACS data, the estimated unemployment rate for the City was 12.6% in 2013. However, when the data is broken-down by neighborhood, it is revealed that the unemployment rate for residents living in Central Derby is substantially higher (19.2%) than that of the City as a whole. In fact, Central Derby's unemployment rate is also significantly higher than East Derby (7.9%) and West Derby (7.5%), both of which are notably lower than the overall city rate.



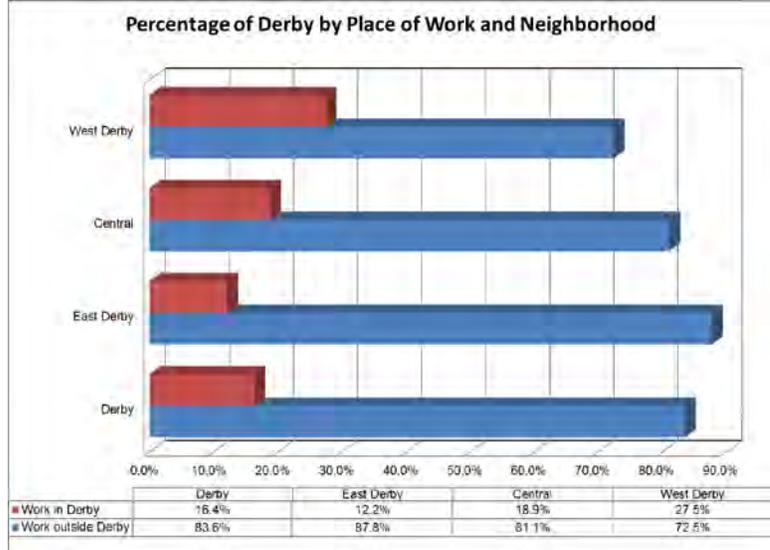
The civilian labor force in Derby is categorized into five broad occupations:

- Management, business, science, and arts;
- Service;
- Sales and office;
- Natural resources, construction, and maintenance; and
- Production, transportation, and material moving.



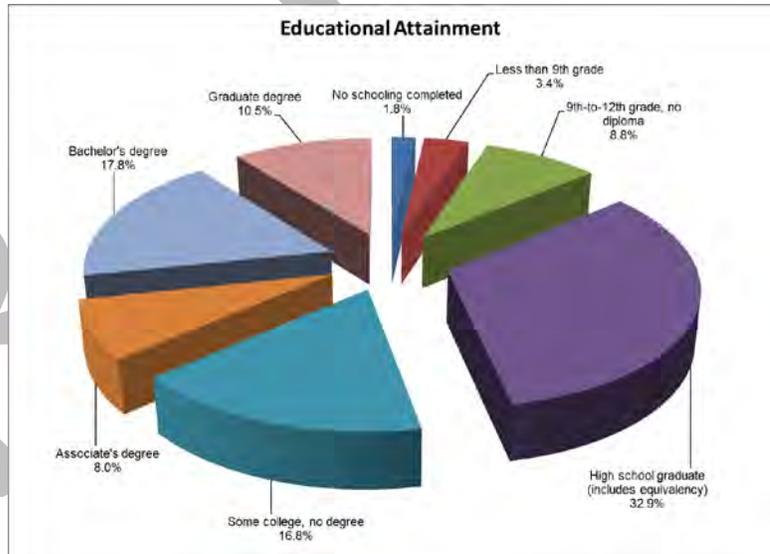
The majority of workers living in Derby (nearly one third) are employed in management, business, science, and art occupations. Less than ten percent of employed workers are in construction and maintenance fields, while 15.4% work in service related jobs.

Most Derby residents travel outside of the City for work. Specifically, 83.6% of all residents in the civilian labor force work somewhere other than Derby. This pattern is consistent throughout the City: 87.8% of residents living in East Derby, 81.1% of those living in Central Derby, and 72.5% of those living in West Derby commute to jobs outside the City.



## Education

Based on the 2013 American Community Survey (ACS), there were 3,075 Derby residents over the age of three enrolled in an educational institution. The majority (57.2%) were enrolled in either elementary school (grades 1-8) or high school (grades 9-12); 30.4% were enrolled in college or graduate school.



In terms of educational attainment, 86.0% of Derby residents 25 years of age and older have at least a high school diploma. Of those who have a high school diploma, 61.7% have some college experience, or have received an associate, bachelor, or graduate degree.

Overall, a relatively small percentage (14.0%) of Derby residents over the age of 25 years old have not earned at least a high school diploma or equivalent. The majority of these residents (57.5%) live in Central Derby.

## Fiscal Issues

### Expenditures

Derby spends approximately \$39 million annually to run the City and provide services to residents and property. Expenditures in Derby are lower than the state average on a per capita basis and are the lowest in the region. Local expenditures, as in most Connecticut municipalities, are primarily focused on education. Almost five of every ten dollars spent by the City of Derby goes to fund education expenses.

### Revenues

While the City generates most of its revenue from local property taxes, Derby is fortunate to receive a larger than average amount of state aid and other intergovernmental revenue. As a result, the amount of money raised from current taxes is less than the state average but typical for the area.

### Tax Base

Derby is **not** considered to have a wealthy tax base, since it has less property wealth (measured by Equalized Net Grand List) than the state average. This makes Derby eligible for more state aid under current state formulas. Derby has a lower business tax base than some surrounding communities, but a higher percentage than neighboring Ansonia and Seymour.

## Historic Resources

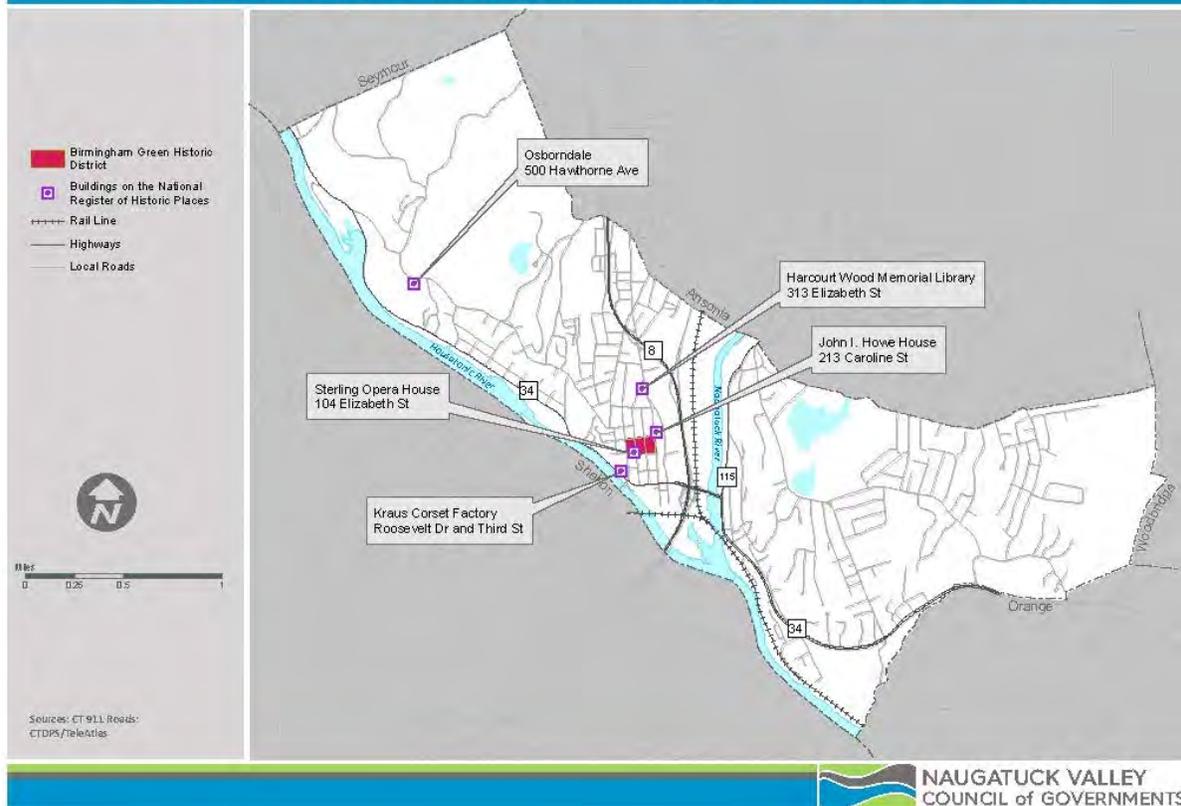
Historic activity in the area now occupied by Derby dates back to the establishment of a trading post in 1642 at the confluence of the Naugatuck and Housatonic Rivers.

The town of Derby was incorporated in 1775, and, at the time, included present day Ansonia, Beacon Falls, Seymour, and parts of Oxford.

Over time, trading gave rise to shipbuilding, grain grinding, lumber milling, and cloth production, which complemented the area's predominantly agricultural economy. From the first water-powered gristmill in 1681, to the opening of the Housatonic Dam in 1870, Derby emerged as a successful manufacturing town due to its efficient use of water power. In the nineteenth century a wide-variety of goods were produced in Derby factories, including hoopskirts, pins, and corsets. Housing and commercial establishments rose up around the manufacturing plants.

The development patterns that emerged from Derby's economic growth provided the City with a vast array of historically significant properties, and a wealth of architectural styles. However, nature, time, and neglect has taken its toll on its historic resources; many of the deteriorated structures have been lost to demolition. Thus, efforts need to be made to ensure the remaining resources are identified, and their qualities are documented and preserved.

## Derby Properties on the National Register of Historic Places



Central Derby has a significant concentration of historic buildings, many over 50 years old. Today, eleven 19th and early 20th century buildings remain along both sides of Main Street. Buildings on the north side of Main Street create an almost contiguous line, despite a few vacant lots. Several fine examples of historic buildings include the former Home Trust Company (currently Derby Senior Center) and the Birmingham National Bank (currently Twisted Vine Restaurant).

On the south side of Main Street, many of the structures have been demolished because of severe deterioration and condemnation. Five remaining structures, grouped at the east end of Main Street (near Factory Street), are slated for demolition as part of the reconstruction and widening of Main Street by the State of Connecticut through the Downtown area.

The National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) recognizes historic properties that are worthy of preservation due to their architectural, archaeological, and cultural value to American history. The State Register of Historic Places (SRHP) recognizes places significant to the history of Connecticut. There are six properties in Derby that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places:

- **Birmingham Green Historic District:** Bounded by Fourth Street, Minerva Street, Fifth Street, and Elizabeth Street, the district is comprised of the Green and its surrounding buildings on the east, west, and north sides. A large 20th century retail building, not included in the historic district, abuts the south side of the Green. The building replaced several historic buildings located along 4th Street. The Birmingham Green qualified for the NRHP because it is a good example of successful 19th century urban planning that created a new neighborhood around a public square in an established town. The principal buildings surrounding the Green remain in a good state of preservation and represent a range of 19th century architectural styles.



- **John I. Howe House:** Located on a steep portion of Caroline Street, which rises from Main Street, the Howe House is a masonry building constructed of granite ashlar in the Greek Revival style. It dates back to 1850. The house is one of only a few surviving granite buildings in Derby, and it remains in an excellent state of preservation.



- **Kraus Corset Factory:** This property includes a large brick industrial building located at the corner of Roosevelt Drive and 3rd Street. The oldest part of the building dates back to 1879. A three-story addition was built around 1910 and extends along Roosevelt Drive. The Kraus Corset Factory is significant because of its association with two industries important to the development of Derby: corset-making and pin manufacturing.



- **Osbornedale Homestead:** The Osbornedale Homestead is a well-preserved Colonial Revival property that was home to Frances Osborne Kellogg, a prominent businesswoman of the early 20th century. The house is located on Hawthorne Avenue in the Derby Neck section of the City. It is a two-story dwelling that was built around 1840 in the Greek Revival style. Between 1919 and 1925, it was completely remodeled in the Colonial Revival style. The homestead was left to the State of Connecticut in 1954. The house and surrounding farmland are now preserved as Osbornedale State Park.



- **Sterling Opera House:** A well-known landmark in the Downtown area, the Opera House is located at the northwest corner of 4th Street and Elizabeth Street. Its design is mainly Victorian Palladian with brick quoins and trim, and concrete stucco walls. The theater was constructed in 1889 with seating for 1,250 patrons. During its heyday, the theater hosted a wide range of well-known performers and attracted crowds from well beyond the Naugatuck Valley. It is a rare example of Victorian architecture in Connecticut and is a dominant structure in the area.



- **Harcourt Wood Memorial Library:** Constructed in 1902, this two-story granite ashlar building is located at the intersection of Elizabeth Street and Caroline Street, north of Downtown. It serves as an outstanding example of turn-of-the-century Colonial Revival architecture executed in granite; its interior superbly illustrates trends in post-Victorian-era interior design.

Other examples of historic features in Derby include:

- **Yale Gilder Boat House:** While the current boathouse was built in 2000, Yale University has been using the Housatonic River for rowing competitions since 1918.

- **Ousatonic Dam (Derby Dam):** Built in 1870 of solid masonry and covered with granite, the dam supported a wide diversity of manufacturing plants throughout the region's industrial history. Canals were built to supply water power to adjacent factories.
- **Old Cow Shop:** Located on scenic Roosevelt drive, about a mile from Downtown, the brick building is one of Derby's remaining industrial landmarks.
- **Churches:** Several 19th century churches, including St. James Immanuel Episcopal Church (c.1843), St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church (c.1882), United Methodist Church (c.1894), and Second Congregational Church (c.1866) complement Derby's diverse stock of historic buildings.

These historic resources contribute to community character and the quality of life in Derby. However, inclusion on the NRHP list does not provide any protection from alteration or demolition. By contrast, local designation of a historic district, established by municipal ordinance, is much more restrictive in terms of permissible alterations, and is intended to protect designated areas.

Connecticut General Statutes enable municipalities to establish local historic districts and designate local historic properties (Chapter 97a, Section 7-147). A district is established by:

*“vote of its legislative body and in conformance with the standards and criteria formulated by the Department of Economic and Community Development, establish within its confines a historic district or districts to promote the educational, cultural, economic, and general welfare of the public through the preservation and protection of the distinctive characteristics of buildings and places associated with the history of or indicative of a period or style of architecture of the municipality, of the state or of the nation.”*

A historic district is defined as, *“an area, or a cluster of related buildings, or objects and structures, in a compatible setting which, taken as a whole, visually expresses styles and modes of living representative of various periods in American History.”*

A community needs to follow certain steps before designating a historic district, which include conducting a detailed study of the area and appropriateness of the properties to be included. Two-thirds of residents living within a proposed district must vote to establish it. Currently, there are no local historic districts in Derby.

As part of the Route 34 (Main Street) reconstruction project (State Project No. 0036-0184), a cultural and historical reconnaissance survey was conducted. While the project will cause significant disturbances to the south side of Route 34, several historic features will remain visible in the area. The survey suggested that the surviving buildings along the north side of Route 34, from about 3rd Street to Factory Street, retain substantial historical and architectural integrity that make the area, as a group, eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The City should consider pursuing the nomination of this area.



Given a most recent incident involving the demolition of a significant historical structure in Derby, attention to historic preservation needs to be expedited. The Samuel Bowers-John Durand house, circa 1686, locally known as “Brownie’s Castle,” and the oldest surviving house in Derby, was demolished January 2016 by its owner, despite local efforts to save it.

Unfortunately, this home had no legal protections as a historic resource. It was not situated within a historic district, nor listed on National or State Registers, nor subject to any preservation easements.

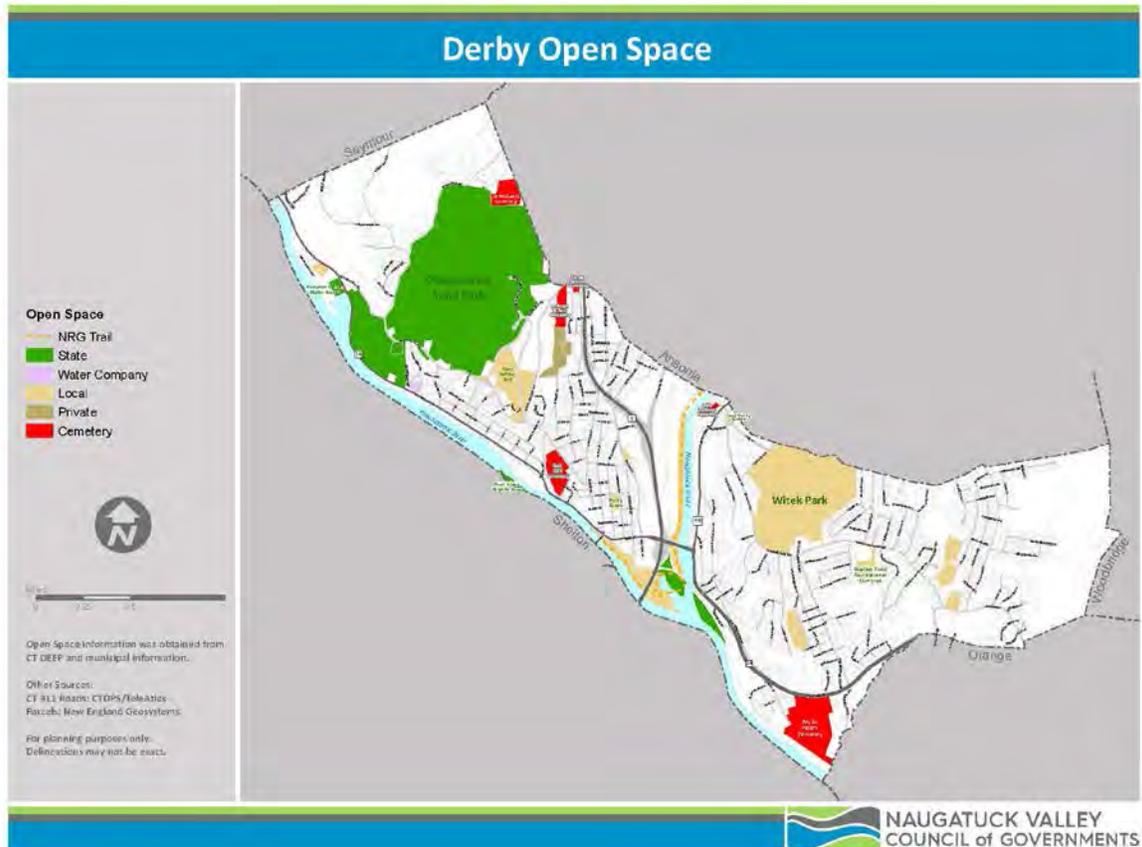
The City of Derby needs to consider implementing a demolition delay ordinance, as well as a municipal-wide historic preservation ordinance, similar to one recently enacted by the City of Milford, in an effort to save such properties in the future.

It might also be suggested to educate private owners of historic properties about national or state register nominations for their buildings. In addition to affording better long-term protection against demolition, such a listing also carries other benefits, such as eligibility for state and/or federal historic tax credits.

### Open Space & Parks

For a geographically small city Derby has a relatively large amount of land dedicated to open space and parks: over one square mile of Derby’s 5.3 square mile footprint is made up of parks. These areas offer opportunities for both active and passive recreation, as well as the chance to learn about nature and the environment.

The City's recreational opportunities are further enhanced by its location along two major rivers: The Housatonic River and the Naugatuck River.



## The Housatonic and Naugatuck Rivers

Historically, both rivers served as transportation routes and food sources for Native Americans and early European settlers. During the Industrial Revolution, a time of great prosperity for the region, the rivers were a key source of power for the area's factories. Water power was used to run mills that produced brass, rubber, textiles, and a myriad of other products.

The **Housatonic River** originates at its headwaters in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, and flows 149 miles through western Connecticut before emptying into Long Island Sound; its drainage basin totals 1,948 square miles.

The third largest river in New England, the Housatonic River was tapped for hydroelectric power beginning in the early 20th century. Several large hydroelectric dams were built on the river, including the Stevenson Dam (1919), which carries Route 34 over the Housatonic River connecting Monroe and Oxford. The Shepaug Dam (1955), located between Newtown and Southbury, also impounds the Housatonic River, along with the Shepaug River, for hydroelectric

power. The reservoir it creates, Lake Lillinonah, is the second-largest lake in the state, second only to Candlewood Lake.

In Derby, the Housatonic River is impounded by the Ousatonic Dam (1870) to form Lake Housatonic. This is the last in the series of impoundments of the river. South of the Ousatonic Dam, the Housatonic River is tidal, and forms an estuary of Long Island Sound where fresh and salt water mix.

The Naugatuck River is the largest tributary of the Housatonic River, flowing about 40 miles from its headwaters in Torrington, Connecticut; it drains a watershed of approximately 312 square miles.



The Naugatuck River starts as two branches: The East Branch is 11.4 miles long, and originates in Winchester as a tributary of Lake Winchester; the West Branch is 5.9 miles long, and begins at the confluence of Jakes Brook, Hart Brook, and Hall Meadow Brook in the western part of Torrington. The two branches merge in downtown Torrington to form the main stem of the Naugatuck River. The Naugatuck River eventually joins the Housatonic River in Derby.

In all, the Naugatuck River drops about 540 feet in elevation before joining with the Housatonic River, at about three feet above sea level. Its water flows swiftly due to the elevation change, which also causes occasional rapids. Several dams were built along the length of the Naugatuck River to harness its power, another key factor in the region's industrial success.

Historically, however, the Naugatuck River was not always kind to its neighbors. Following the devastating flood of 1955, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers installed a series of dams, floodwalls,

and dikes along the river to protect residents and property during extreme precipitation events. These flood protection works, evident along the river in Derby, are still in operation today.

Unfortunately, all the development fostered by the rivers came at a cost to the rivers themselves. Years of unregulated industrial dumping and sewage outflows resulted in serious water pollution. However, modern conservation and regulatory efforts have paid off, with marked improvements in water quality. Today, both the Housatonic and Naugatuck Rivers are welcoming fish and wildlife back, and residents are enjoying the recreational benefits of these valuable natural resources.

## O'Sullivan's Island

There are several public access points to the Housatonic River in Derby. One access point is O'Sullivan's Island, the southwestern portion of a peninsula located where the Naugatuck and Housatonic Rivers meet. O'Sullivan's Island is located directly south of Derby's downtown commercial district, and can be accessed from Main Street (Route 34) between Caroline Street and Factory Street; it extends under the railroad tracks and Route 8.



Though O'Sullivan's Island is unimproved, it has been the site of varied activity over the years. In the 1800s, it was used as the City's landfill. From the 1950s until 2000, the northern portion of O'Sullivan's Island was used for training exercises by the Valley Fire Training School. During this time, fire training buildings were constructed and various liquid and solid combustibles were burned to simulate real-life fire scenarios. In 1968, the Army Corps of Engineers acquired control of the peninsula for flood control and protection. In the 1970s and early 1980s, the southern portion of the site was used as a source of sand and gravel for cover material at the nearby Derby Landfill.

However, in 1983, the consequences of years of environmentally unfriendly land use became apparent when rusted, leaking 55-gallon drums were uncovered. From 1983 to 1985, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) worked to remove 900 drums and a large amount of contaminated soil from the southern portion of the site. Over the next 20 years, the site remained off-limits to the public. In 2007, the fire training buildings were demolished.



In 2008, the EPA returned to O'Sullivan's Island to remove piles of contaminated soil left behind because there was no disposal site available during the 1980s cleanup. While there, the EPA conducted additional polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB) soil testing resulting in the agency's removal of an additional 50 drums (some of which contained volatile chemicals and unknown products) and a large amount of contaminated soil from the southern and eastern portions of the site. Upon completion of its work, the EPA placed clean soil over all of the excavated areas, and planted grass and trees. The City reopened O'Sullivan's Island to the public in 2009.

However, subsequent environmental investigations revealed the continued presence of hazardous material on O'Sullivan's Island. Therefore, the area was once again closed in January 2014 while additional assessments were being conducted.

In 2009, a \$325,000 grant for the construction of a handicapped-accessible fishing pier at O'Sullivan's Island was awarded to the City of Derby by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) on behalf of the Connecticut Housatonic Natural Resource Trustee Council. The money is a small part of a \$15 million settlement with General Electric for the effect of its activities on the Housatonic River for decades. The fishing pier project was intended to establish the property as one of the the best places to fish in the state.

Release of the funds was initially delayed due to the ongoing environmental issues at the site. As a result of a cooperative effort led by the Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments (NVCOG), and following further analysis of the soils and groundwater at the site, the funds were finally released in September 2015, and work on the project resumed. At this time, a request for qualifications has been issued for engineering and design services.

Although much of O’Sullivan’s Island still remains closed to the public, a car-top boat launch and parking area allow access to the Housatonic River for canoes, kayaks, and small boats.

## Fishing Along Derby’s Rivers

Given its riverside location, it’s no surprise that fishing is a popular recreational activity in Derby; a few fishing areas are worth noting.

The waters off of O’Sullivan’s Island, where the Housatonic River is tidal, provide a chance to catch a variety of fresh and saltwater species including striped bass, Atlantic salmon, bluefish, fluke, trout, perch, catfish, and even shad during the spring. O’Sullivan’s Island is located directly south of Derby’s downtown commercial district, and can be accessed from Main Street (Route 34) between Caroline Street and Factory Street.

Upstream not far from there the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) leases a small site on the Housatonic River just below the Ousatonic Dam for fishing. The site can be accessed from Route 34, just south of the Yale Gilder Boathouse. A gravel ramp at the toe of the dam provides access to the eastern shore of the river. The area is very popular when shad and striped bass are running. Waterfowl also congregate near the toe of the dam which generates hydroelectric power.



Another popular fishing location in Derby is Pink House Cove, a sheltered area along the Housatonic River, just north of the Ousatonic Dam. The cove, formed at the mouth of Pink House Cove Brook, is protected from the flow of the river. This allows the water to freeze over during the winter providing one of only a few locations in the lower Naugatuck Valley for ice fishing.

It is important to note that the Connecticut Department of Public Health issues yearly advisories on the consumption of fish caught in Connecticut’s waters. Unfortunately, some fish take up chemicals such as mercury and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) in the water. Eating these fish may increase health risks.

## The Derby Greenway Trail

The Derby Greenway Trail, officially opened in 2006, brings thousands of pedestrians and cyclists to Derby each year. The 10-foot wide, 1.7 mile paved trail is a road-separated, multi-use path, extending from the intersection of Bridge Street and Main Street to the Ansonia town line at Division Street.

Most of the trail, which parallels the Naugatuck and Housatonic Rivers, runs on top of a flood control dike, offering expansive views of both rivers. A portion of the trail goes across O'Sullivan's Island, at grade, cutting between an inner pond and an open lagoon; it loops around the northeastern (Hogs Island) portion of the peninsula along the Naugatuck River. One of the centerpieces of the trail in this area is a footbridge that provides great views of the Housatonic River.

The Derby Greenway is part of the larger Naugatuck Valley Greenway Trail System, which is proposed to span approximately 44 miles from Torrington to Derby. Proposed plans also call for the trail to cross the Naugatuck River to Shelton.

The Derby Greenway Trail is open from dawn to dusk.



Parking for trail users is available at several locations:

1. **Intersection of Bridge Street and Route 34:** A small unpaved lot with access from Bridge Street has space for 18 vehicles. The lot is expected to be eliminated as part of the Route 34 reconstruction and widening project. A new gateway plaza and park is planned for this location that includes a new paved parking lot along Route 34 with 32 parking spaces.
2. **End of Caroline Street:** An unpaved parking area is located on O'Sullivan's Island, underneath and south of the Route 8 overpass. Here, there is direct access to the Derby Greenway Trail. The parking area also serves as a boat launch for the Housatonic River. There is sufficient space to accommodate 50 vehicles.
3. **Division Street, Derby/Ansonia:** A small paved lot with nine spaces is located at the northern terminus of the Derby Greenway Trail; one space is designated for persons with a valid handicapped parking permit. At this location, the Greenway crosses Division Street and continues as the Ansonia River Walk Trail. Three parking areas, with accommodations for a total of 51 vehicles, are located on the Ansonia side of Division Street near the beginning of the Ansonia River Walk Trail.
4. **BJ's Wholesale Club:** As part of the planning and zoning approvals for the BJ's Wholesale Club development, the City of Derby has an agreement with the property owner to allow trail users to park in the retail parking lot.

### Osbornedale State Park, Osbornedale Homestead Museum, & Kellogg Environmental Center

Derby is home to Osbornedale State Park, Osbornedale Homestead Museum, and the Kellogg Environmental Center. All three facilities are owned and operated by the Connecticut Department Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP), and are located on western side of the City.

**Osbornedale State Park**, consisting of nearly 350 acres of rolling hills, forest lands, and open meadows, is located in the Naugatuck Valley Hills just east of the Housatonic River in Derby and Ansonia. The land was once the lushly forested hunting grounds of the Paugussett Indians. However, the new settlers who purchased the land from the Indians cleared the land for farming. The park was eventually the farm and homestead of John W. Osborne, one of the Naugatuck Valley's early industrial entrepreneurs.



Though never commercially successful, lands within the park off Silver Hill Road were mined for silver for a short period of time after the Revolutionary War. In addition, a spring water bottling business was part of the present park land. In 1956, Osbornedale State Park was willed to the people of Derby.

The park offers several hiking trails, picnic areas, and fishing at Pickett's Pond. An area within the park provides public garden plots for residents. The plots are plowed in the spring, and water and manure are included in the nominal rental fee.

**The Osborne Homestead Museum**, adjacent to Osbornedale State Park, encompasses the house and grounds of the former Frances Osborne Kellogg Estate. Originally constructed in the mid-1800s, the house was enlarged and completely remodeled in the Colonial Revival style during the 1920s. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, its restored interior now displays the original contents of the estate which constitutes a significant collection of antiques and fine arts.

While learning about the history of the Osborne family, visitors can explore what life was like in the early 20th century. The Museum's grounds are landscaped with formal flower gardens, ornamental shrubs, and flowering trees, providing visitors with an endless pageant of color from spring through autumn.

The Osborne Homestead Museum is part of the Connecticut Historic Gardens Trail. The Museum also joined the prestigious Connecticut Women's Heritage Trail, a collection of museums and institutions that highlight the role of women in Connecticut's history.

While exploring this national historic site, visitors learn about women and history, life in the early 1900s, and the connections between agriculture and the environment. Special programs and hands-on activities, including hikes, lectures, art shows, and an annual holiday tour, bring history to life for visitors of all ages.

The Kellogg Environmental Center offers workshops, exhibits, nature activities, and lectures for the general public. Through hands-on programs, families can learn about nature and the environment. Throughout the year, the Center offers special weekend programs, nature walks, and family workshops.



For teachers, the Center offers a variety of CEU-accredited educator workshops on a wide variety of environmental topics. In addition, the Center facilitates workshops on award-winning, national environmental curricula including Project Learning Tree; Project WILD; Project WET; Project FeederWatch; Aquatic WILD; and Food, Land, and People. Environmental education workshops and student activities are correlated to the state and national curriculum standards.

The Center also offers programs specifically for students. Its inquiry-based field studies cover many topics and are appropriate for students in grades four through twelve.

## Frank P. Witek Memorial Park

Frank P. Witek Memorial Park is a 144-acre city-owned park on the east side of Derby that is accessible from Sentinel Hill Road.

In 1859, the Birmingham Water Company bought the land, which was mostly meadows and farmland, to provide a stable water supply to residents of the Borough of Derby. The Company created two reservoirs on the land, the Lower Ansonia Reservoir and the Upper Ansonia Reservoir, by damming local brooks in the area. The reservoirs were used until 1996, at which time the land was sold to the City of Derby. On May 29, 1999 the City dedicated the park in honor of Medal of Honor recipient PFC Frank P. Witek, a Derby native and United States Marine who was killed in action during World War II.

In addition to two beautiful ponds, the complex also contains trails for walking and hiking, and two soccer fields, which were officially opened on September 16, 2006.

In 2015, the park was improved once again with the installation of a wooden footbridge. The 9-foot by 22-



foot bridge enables hikers to safely travel over the spillway and around the lower reservoir without having to traverse the steep hill below the dam. The bridge includes aprons at either end to allow for wheelchair access.

## Additional Parks & Recreational Facilities

The following is a list of additional parks and recreational facilities located in Derby:

- **Birmingham Green:** Located in the heart of Downtown Derby on Elizabeth Street, this traditional New England town green is the site of many community announcements, observances, and festivals. A number of veterans' memorials are showcased here.
- **Founders Common (aka East Derby Green):** A small, historical open space located at the base of Academy Hill Road in East Derby; dates back to the early settlement of Derby.
- **Derby Dog Park:** Located at 5 Coon Hollow Road, the Derby Dog Park was opened in 2013 on the previous site of Derby's dog pound. The fenced in park is equipped with benches and drinking water. It is jointly operated by the City of Derby and the City of Ansonia.
- **Community Gardens:** Gated public gardening plots are available to Naugatuck Valley residents for a nominal fee. The plots, measuring 22 feet by 35 feet, are plowed and harrowed in late April, and water and manure are provided. The plots are located in Osbornedale State Park at Silver Hill Road.
- **Shelton-Derby Skate Park:** Located at 58 Wheeler Street in Shelton under the Commodore Hull Bridge; jointly operated by the City of Shelton and the City of Derby.
- **Bradley School Playground:** Modern play areas with modular climbing structures, slides, and ladders; located at Bradley School in East Derby.
- **Irving School Playground:** Modular climbing structures, slides, and ladders in modern play areas; located at Irving School in West Derby.
- **Leo F. Ryan Athletic Complex:** Home of Derby High School athletics, the complex on Chatfield Street has a football field, baseball field, tennis courts, and basketball courts.
- **Bonaventure "Buddy" Amendola Sports Complex:** Located on the grounds of Bradley School in East Derby, the complex, consisting of soccer fields and a baseball field, supports Derby Middle School athletic programs, as well as some high school athletic activities.

- **Ken Marcucio, Sr. Little League and Youth Sports Complex:** Site of a regulation Little League baseball field, as well as a smaller baseball field; used for youth baseball programs.
- **Coon Hollow Park (aka Derby Picnic Grove):** Located on Nutmeg Avenue, the city-maintained picnic grove has an open field with a large, covered pavilion, ample parking, and some horseshoe pits. There are tennis courts and basketball courts adjacent to the grove; the Leo F. Ryan Athletic Complex is within walking distance. The site is available for rental to residents and non-residents for a fee.
- **The Recreation Camp:** The Recreation Camp is a privately owned summer camp located on banks of the Housatonic River in Derby. It operates as a nonprofit member of Valley United Way and has been running continuously since 1917. With a staff of eight State of Connecticut certified teachers and the region's only Red Cross certified kayaking, canoeing, and sailing instructor, the Camp's mission is to provide early childhood education and water-related activities to children from the communities of Derby, Shelton, Ansonia, Seymour, and Oxford during the summer recess.
- **Yale Community Rowing Program (YCR):** Based out of the Yale Gilder Boat House on the Housatonic River in Derby, YCR offers a unique summer program to youth from the lower Naugatuck Valley. The program, which began in 1999, introduces participants to the sport of rowing, free of charge, while reinforcing the value of discipline, teamwork, and commitment. In the summer of 2005, YCR's high school program added a college counseling service. This service continues to be free of charge to any high school student currently within the program.

## Open Space & Parks Conservation Strategies

The City of Derby maintains a Parks & Recreation Commission, and employs a part-time Director of Parks & Recreation to oversee its parks and recreational programs. Despite this, many of the City's programs are run by volunteers.

One of the discussion topics included in the general and stakeholder forums was *Conservation, Green Places, and Recreation*. Based on input from forum participants and responses to the online survey, a large percentage of residents (nearly 60%) have a high opinion of the parks and recreational facilities in Derby. However, they identified a need for the City to better publicize, promote, and manage its existing parks; increase its recreational offerings; add better park amenities to increase user experiences; and provide greater access to its parks and open spaces.

The following are suggested action items to address these concerns:

1. Protect and maintain green and public open spaces.
2. Maintain parks – Witek Park, Coon Hollow Park.
3. Strengthen and enforce local environmental regulations and policies.

4. Maximize Derby's location on two rivers through better use and management.
5. Maintain and provide more opportunities for outdoor activities.
6. Address safety issues related to wildlife (e.g. coyotes).
7. Continue to address environmental issues at O'Sullivan's Island.
8. Install amenities at Founders Common (East Derby Green).
9. Create urban/community gardening plots for residents.
10. Install facilities at O'Sullivan's Island – playground, docks, and piers.
11. Enhance Derby Greenway Trail – gateway parks, landscaping at entrance points (shrubs and vegetation), information/educational signs.
12. Extend the Derby Greenway – connect to Osbornedale State Park.
13. Preserve the waterfront.
14. Clean-up litter and debris along the rivers and Greenway.
15. Assess suitability of city-owned parcels as pocket parks and urban gardens.

## Water Quality and Storm Water Management

Water quality protection is the most important natural resource protection priority. While the Clean Water Act continues to address point source pollution associated with industrial discharge, reduction of non-point source pollution continues to be the focus of states and municipalities including Derby.

Non-point source pollution is caused by rainfall or snowmelt moving over and through the ground, picking up natural and human-made pollutants as it moves over roads, parking lots, lawns, agricultural fields, and other areas, finally depositing them into lakes, rivers, wetlands, coastal waters, and ground waters.

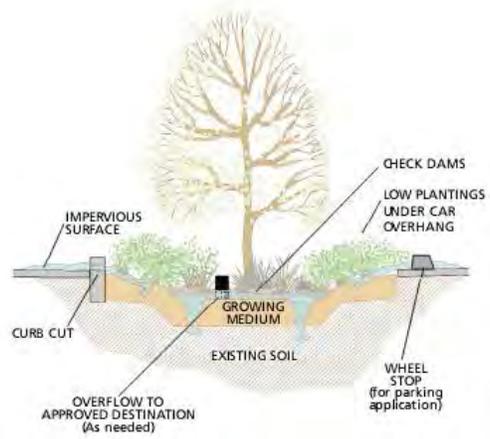
Common contaminants include salt/sand from roads, oil/gas from gas stations and roads, agricultural chemicals from farmlands, and nutrient and toxic chemicals from lawns.

Non-point source pollution is largely a result of how land is developed and used. As more impervious surfaces are built, less water percolates into the soil, and more polluted runoff flows into streams and rivers.

As development increases, Derby should protect water quality by integrating low impact development techniques into site design requirements to reduce impervious cover that contributes to water quality impairment. This can be achieved, in part, by modifying current development practices that are recognized to have resulted in commercial and industrial development templates with 70% to 90% impervious cover and residential coverages of 15% in one-acre zoning districts and 65% in 1/8-acre zoning districts.

The following elements should be included in land use regulations and site review standards to minimize runoff and protect watershed lands:

- Limit clearing and grading of sites to minimize the impact on natural drainage patterns.
- Emphasize the economic and environmental benefits of natural drainage systems (such as grassed swales, vegetative filters, and porous pavement materials) over piped systems.
- Adopt and enforce wetland and riparian buffers to filter pollutants and protect them from direct runoff.
- Emphasize preservation of open space and landscaped areas to filter polluted runoff from adjacent impervious areas.
- Install and incorporate “green” infrastructure into municipal projects such as stormwater planters, rain gardens, bio-swales, and permeable asphalt.
- Encourage site design that minimizes imperviousness of streets, parking lots, driveways, and structures.



## Natural Resources and Hazard Mitigation Plan

The City of Derby is included in the regional *Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan (NHMP)*. The NHMP identifies natural hazards and risks, existing capabilities, and activities that can be undertaken by a community to prevent loss of life and reduce property damage associated with identified natural hazards. The regional plan was prepared and endorsed in 2012 for the Lower Naugatuck Valley planning region that encompasses Derby, Ansonia, Seymour and Shelton.

Municipalities are required to have a FEMA-approved mitigation plan in order to be eligible to apply for and receive certain hazard mitigation assistance grants.

The primary goal of the NHMP is to reduce loss of or damage to life, property, infrastructure, and natural, cultural, and economic resources from natural disasters and to examine response time and recommend or establish priorities for restoration of services. Limiting losses of and damage

to life and property will also reduce the social, emotional, and economic disruption associated with a natural disaster.

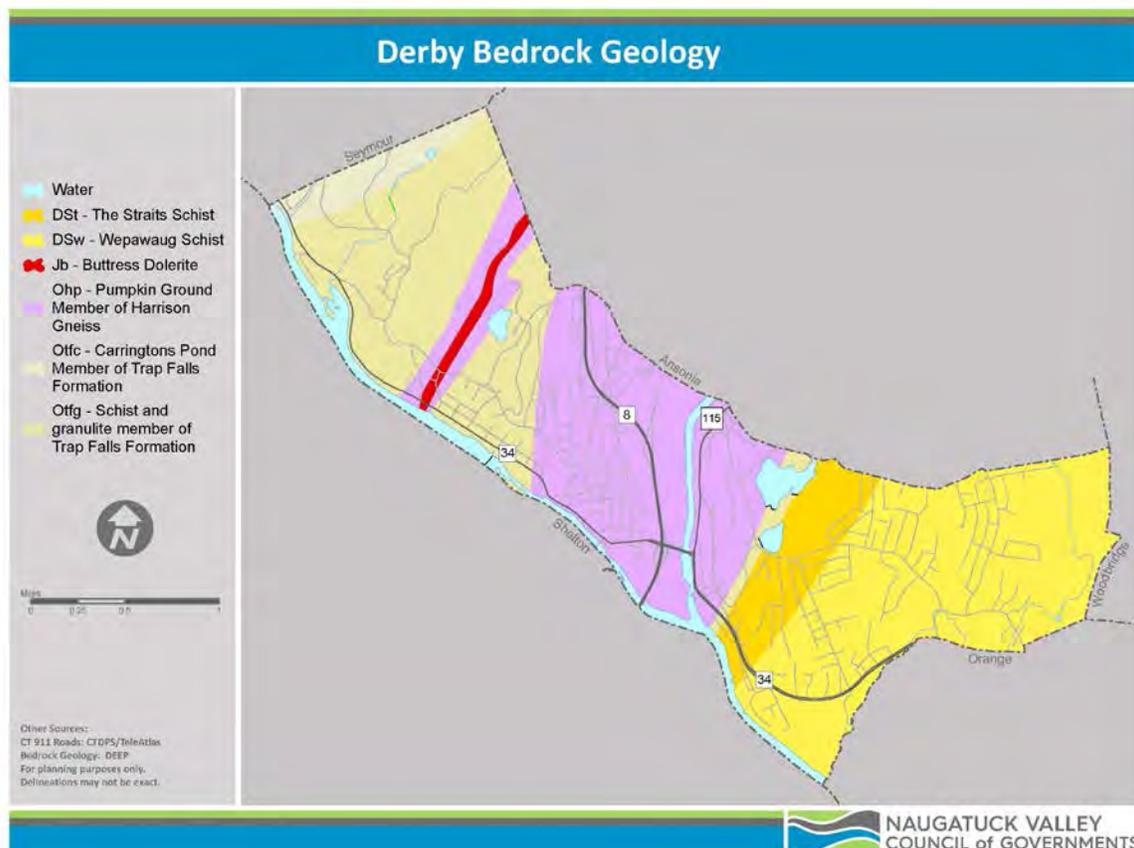
The following natural hazards were assessed and included in the regional NHMP:

- Flooding
- Hurricanes and Tropical Storms
- Summer Storms and Tornadoes
- Winter Storms and Nor'easters
- Earthquakes
- Dam Failure
- Wildfires
- Landslides

To assess the frequency of the above events occurring, and their anticipated effects, the NHMP looked at the City's natural and physical setting, climate, existing land uses, and past history of events.

Derby is located in the section of Connecticut commonly referred to as "the Valley," with geographic features that include a classic valley (a low area between hills that is longer than it is wider) formed by the Naugatuck and Housatonic Rivers. The topography is characterized by rolling hills with intermittent steep slopes. The highest point in Derby (440 feet) is in the Derby Hill section along the Ansonia border.

With respect to bedrock geology, Derby is located in the northeastern part of the Appalachian Orogenic Belt, also known as the *Appalachian Highlands*. The underlying geology contains



various bedrock types that run in diagonal bands stretching from northeast to southwest. One main fault line, the *East Derby Fault*, is oriented from northeast to southwest, and runs to the east of Route 8 through the eastern portion of Ansonia, Derby, and Shelton. The East Derby Fault stretches from Bethany southwest to Bridgeport, over a span of approximately 16.25 miles. The fault is classified as an overturned thrust fault, and is currently inactive.

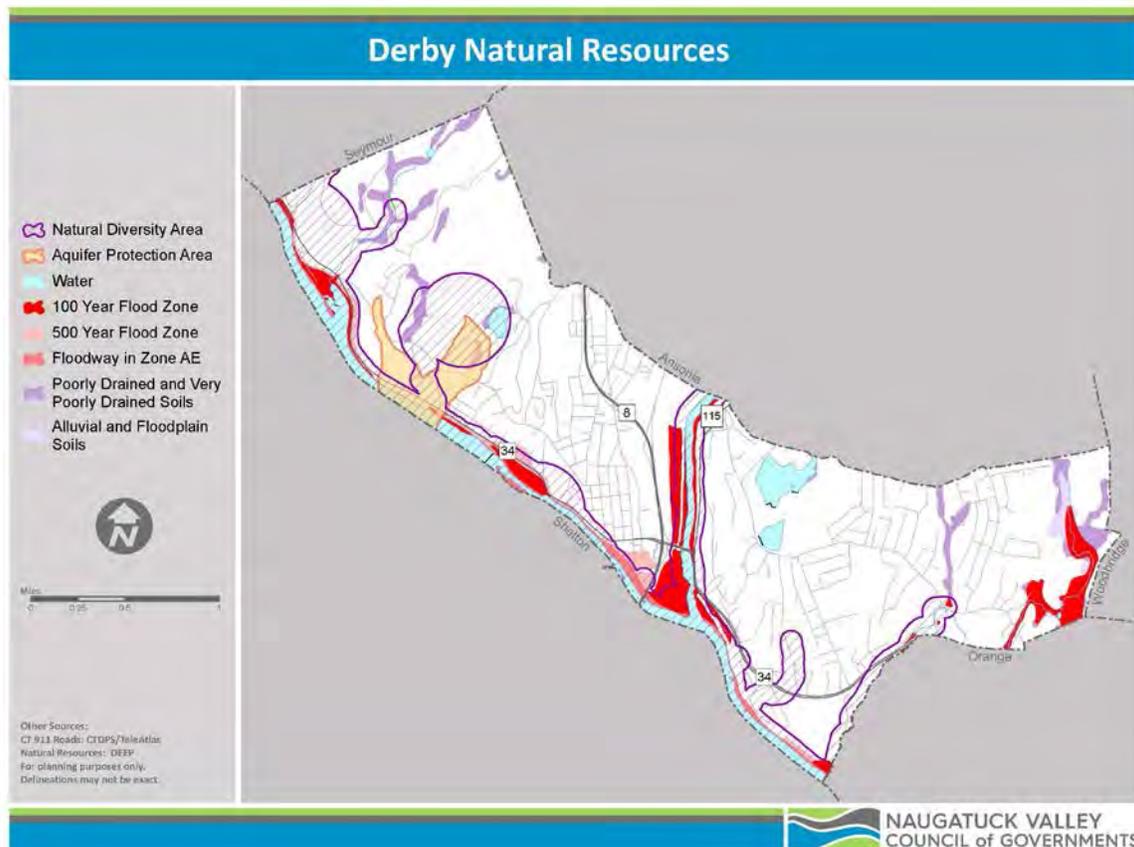
Surficial geology was formed over the past three million years by glacial activity and movement.

The City is primarily covered by glacial till, sand and gravel, and artificial fill. The City's most common soil types are those that make up the Charlton-Chatfield complex, the Hollis-Chatfield Rock outcrop complex, and the Canton and Charlton soils; 43 other various soil types are present in smaller increments.

As described in other sections of this Plan, Derby is divided among two drainage basins: The Housatonic River Basin and the Naugatuck River Basin.

The climate of the area is generally considered *agreeable*, characterized by moderate but distinct seasons. Summer temperatures, as measured in Fahrenheit, regularly rise to the mid 80s, and winter temperatures regularly dip into the upper 20s to mid 30s. Extreme conditions raise summer temperatures into the 90s, and approach 100 degrees on rare occasions; winter temperatures, from time to time, drop below zero. Median snowfall is approximately 25 inches per year and the average annual precipitation is about 42 inches. However, average annual precipitation in Connecticut has been increasing by 0.95 inches per decade since the end of the 19th century (Miller et al., 1997; NCDC, 2005).

Flooding is the most common natural hazard facing Connecticut. In Derby, flood prone areas are aligned along the Housatonic and Naugatuck Rivers. Central Derby, surrounding Route 8 east to the Naugatuck River, is protected by a series of flood control walls. The system of levees was constructed in the late 1960s and early 1970s following the devastating floods that occurred in 1955. The City is also protected from severe flooding by a series of flood control dams on the Naugatuck River and its tributaries.



Flooding incidents occur relatively frequently along the Housatonic River, generally in the spring from a combination of melting snow and heavy rains. Residential properties along the Housatonic River in Derby are particularly flood prone, including homes in the McConney Grove neighborhood off Roosevelt Drive. O'Sullivan's Island, because of its location at the confluence of the Housatonic and Naugatuck Rivers, is also susceptible to frequent flooding. However, there are no structures on the site.

The Gilbert Street area suffers flooding, as well, but not from Derby's rivers. The flooding is caused by a stream that flows from two reservoirs at Witek Park. To minimize flooding, the City has a policy of drawing down the two dams to provide some flood abatement and reduce flows in the outlet stream. However, high flows sometimes occur, which jump the culverts and cause flooding downstream in the Gilbert Street area, at times overtopping Route 34 with up to a foot of water.

Several natural hazards are associated with the occurrence of severe thunder storms, tropical storms, hurricanes, and tornadoes. These storms bring heavy rains and high winds that may cause flooding, downed trees, and power outages; they may also spawn tornadoes.

Though tropical storms have a greater probability of occurrence, the region does have the potential for hurricanes each year. Derby is located within ten miles of Long Island Sound and its shoreline, making it susceptible to hurricane force winds and flooding from heavy inland precipitation. The stretch of the Housatonic River below the Ousatonic Dam is tidal, further increasing its vulnerability to storm surges associated with hurricanes.

Winter storms can create severe driving conditions, downed trees, and power outages due to high wind, heavy snow falls, freezing rain, ice, and extreme cold. In recent years, heavy snow falls and accumulation of snow pack have caused roof collapses.

The classic severe winter storm is the Nor'easter, a storm that forms along the East coast as a warm, moist low-pressure system moves up from the south and collides with a cold, dry high-pressure system moving down from the north. Past data indicates that Connecticut will experience one severe winter storm every five years. Despite this general trend, it is possible that a blizzard or blizzard-like winter storm will occur every year.

Though the frequency and magnitude of earthquakes and associated damage is low, Derby and the surrounding region have experienced earthquakes. Local land use policies do not directly address earthquake hazards. The State Building Code contains provisions that include seismic coefficients in potentially affected areas.

Due to the infrequent nature of damaging earthquakes, land use policies do not directly address earthquake hazards. However, various regulations indirectly address areas susceptible to earthquake damage and the City has adopted building codes for new construction that include seismic coefficients.

There are several dams in Derby, so dam failure poses a potentially catastrophic hazard, depending on the downstream population. However, despite the potential impact, dam failures are not considered a likely hazard.

Dam failures can be triggered suddenly with little or no warning, and often occur in connection with natural disasters such as floods and earthquakes. Failure often occurs during flooding, when the additional force of floodwaters causes a dam to break. Failure of one dam can initiate a series of dam failures downstream due to the sudden release of floodwaters.

There are four registered dams in Derby:

- **Lake Housatonic Dam (Ousatonic Dam)** – Class C dam; high potential hazard if fails. The dam stretches the width of the Housatonic River just upstream of its confluence with

the Naugatuck River. A failure of the dam would flood Roosevelt Drive (south of D Street), and low areas not protected by flood control levees.

- **Ansonia Reservoir Lower Dam** – Class C dam; high potential hazard if fails. The 423-foot long dam, owned by the City of Derby, is located in the northern section of Derby.
- **Ansonia Reservoir Upper Dam** – Class C dam; high potential hazard if fails. The dam, 345 feet in length, is owned by the City of Derby, and is located in the northern section of the City.
- **Picketts Pond Dam** – Class A; low hazard potential if fails.

Wildfires are among the potential natural hazards that could occur in Connecticut. The most common causes of wildfires are arson, lightning strikes, and fires started from downed trees coming in contact with electrical lines. They have the potential to occur anywhere, any time, in both undeveloped and lightly developed areas, although wildfires are more common in rural, less developed areas.

Because of the developed nature of Derby, and the presence of natural water features, the forest fire risk is low. However, fires, most likely the result of carelessness or arson, have occurred in Osbornedale State Park and Witek Park, though damage was minimal due to the quick response of local fire personnel. The installation of soccer fields at Witek Park in 2006 has reduced the fire potential at that location.

Slopes introduce the potential for landslides; steep slopes are prime locations for them. A landslide generally refers to the mass movement of rock, debris, and soil down a slope of land. A variety of factors contribute to landslides; however, they commonly result from earth materials with low shear (minimal friction), high groundwater saturation, and an interruption of the slope by natural or human activity. Steep slopes exist in many areas of Derby. Development in the proximity of these slopes further increases the likelihood of the slope material shifting, resulting in a landslide. Though several locations in the City are susceptible to or have experienced landslides, the probability of occurrence is low and the extent of damage is expected to be limited to small areas.

The Department of Public Works is the principal municipal department that responds to problems caused by natural hazards. The Board of Aldermen, as well as other boards, commissions and committees, provide input and direction. Many of these commissions and departments play a role in hazard mitigation, including the Planning and Zoning Commission, the Inland Wetlands Commission, the Building Official, the Fire Department, and the Police Department. Comments regarding hazard mitigation can also be heard from the public at City Meetings.

There are several strategies the City of Derby can adopt to minimize loss and damage from natural hazards.

The recommended mitigation actions listed in the 2012 regional *Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan* for the Lower Naugatuck Valley provide important guiding principles. They include:

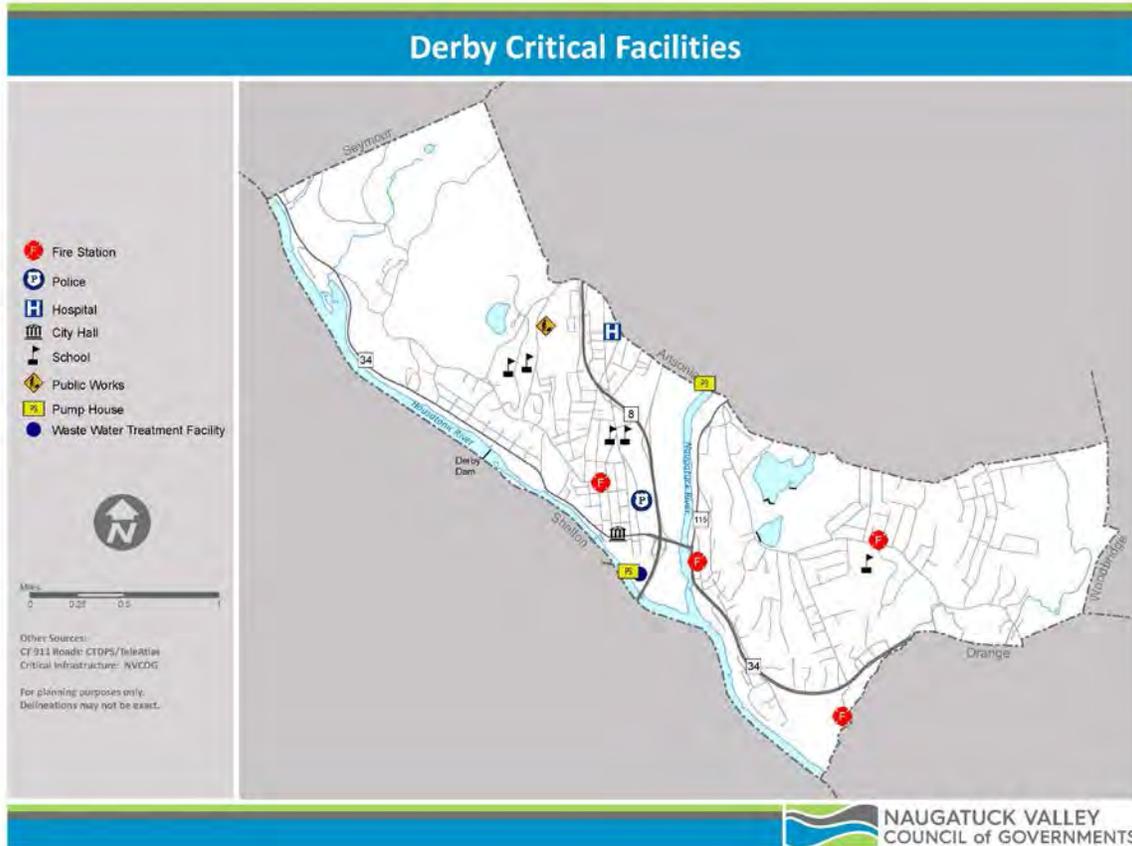
1. Preserve and acquire open space to reduce flooding.
2. Regulate and/or prohibit development in protected and sensitive flood prone areas.
3. Upgrade drainage systems and culverts to handle storm water discharges.
4. Require the use of wind-mitigation structural techniques in new structures.
5. Assess municipal buildings, critical facilities, and commercial/industrial buildings that are vulnerable to roof damage or collapse.

There are specific actions Derby can take consistent with those principles.

1. Maintain and remove old and threatening trees on City property and within the City's rights-of-way to reduce potential damage during a tropical storm, thunderstorm, or hurricane.
2. Inspect and maintain dams, and develop and implement Emergency Action Plans for High Hazard and Significant Hazard dams.
3. Continue to support municipal fire departments, purchase and modernize equipment as needed, and promote subdivision regulations and development that ensure adequate emergency access.
4. Restrict development on slopes of 25% or greater, and restrict excavation and clearing on lands above steep slopes.
5. Install and incorporate *green* infrastructure into municipal projects – stormwater planters, rain gardens, bio-swales, permeable asphalt – to mitigate stormwater before it enters the drainage system.
6. Continue enforcement of local zoning and subdivision regulations that protect natural resources and promote low impact developments.

### Community Services & Facilities

Community services and facilities include such governmental functions as education, public works, public safety, and recreational services. Such services, which address the short-term and long-term needs of residents, contribute significantly to the character of the community and greatly affect quality of life. Many of these services are equally important to Derby's business community members.



## City Hall and Staffing

On May 18, 2005, Derby City Hall opened at its current location at the corner of Main Street and Elizabeth Street. The facility, constructed in 1976, was previously home to Derby Savings Bank. Following the bank mergers in the 1990s, Derby Savings Bank became part of Webster Bank; Webster subsequently sold the building to the City.

Derby's earlier government centers date back to the 1840s when Nathan's Hall (aka Gould's Armory) hosted civic offices for the Borough of Birmingham. When Derby ceded Ansonia and incorporated as a city in 1893, the government center was located in the newly constructed Sterling Opera House. In the 1960s, Derby City Hall moved from the Opera House to a newly constructed building on Fifth Street. The building also housed the police station and the Derby Veterans Community Center at that time. Today the Community Center is the sole occupant of the Fifth Street facility.

Aside from a part-time Mayor, the City is administered by a nine-member Board of Aldermen, ten-member Board of Apportionment and Taxation, and City Treasurer. These officials are elected by Derby voters every two years. This biennial voting cycle should be evaluated to facilitate continuity in long-range planning and implementation. These and other governance provisions can be addressed by amending the Derby City Charter.

Overall, Derby operates with reduced professional and administrative staffing in comparison to other similarly-sized communities. For example, many municipalities have full-time planners, parks and recreation directors, and engineers. Hiring staff, rather than paying on a contractual basis for these services, may improve the overall operation and efficiency of the City.

In consideration of this, the City may benefit from a comprehensive assessment of current staffing configurations, as well as an assessment of job responsibilities, to ensure services are being provided in the most cost-efficient and effective manner.

It would also be prudent to examine the physical space requirements for the City's administrative offices, as the current City Hall facility is not used to its capacity. Likewise, it occupies prime commercial space in the downtown area. Perhaps City officials should explore alternative locations for municipal functions currently housed at the Elizabeth Street location.

In 2015, Derby City Hall completed a major overhaul of its computer technology. The previous system, severely outdated and plagued with viruses, prohibited the City from conducting business efficiently in today's technology-based society. Along with this upgrade, the City launched its first municipally-administered website to provide more government accessibility and transparency to its citizens. The website includes a customer request portal for capturing inquiries and issues. The backend of this function provides response tracking and accountability to ensure customer needs are met in a timely fashion.

To sustain functionality, it is important for the City to adopt periodic technology upgrades and continue website maintenance. Furthermore, the website itself holds the potential for improved interdepartmental communication and workflow management. Resources should be allocated to take advantage of this potential.

## Municipal Parking Garage

The Derby Municipal Parking Garage, a 310-space garage located on Thompson Place between Elizabeth Street and Olivia Street, was built in 1975 to promote downtown revitalization. It was a federally funded project.

The garage is critical to the service, operation, and vitality of the downtown business community.

The garage opens at 7:00 a.m. Monday through Saturday. It closes to new entries at 8:00 p.m. on Monday and Tuesday. On Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday vehicles may enter until 10:00 p.m. On Sundays and holidays, the garage is only open to monthly pass holders. Monthly cardholders can access to the garage at all times.

At 40 years old, a number of structural issues have advanced to the point where a complete renovation of the facility is needed in the interest of both continued facility operation and public safety. These issues include degradation of the concrete and masonry components of the

structure as well as deficiencies in its lighting, drainage, mechanical, ventilation, fire protection, and plumbing systems. Furthermore, the structure is not handicapped-accessible.

An estimate for the removal and replacement of the concrete slabs, in addition to the other needed improvements, was completed for the Derby Parking Authority in September 2013; the cost was projected to be approximately \$6.9 million. Fees for architectural and engineering design services would likely add another 7%-10% to the total cost of construction.

After the garage was closed for emergency life-safety repairs, the City requested grant funding of \$7,945,000 to renovate this critical structure. However, the funding request was denied. This funding request was to include an examination of the feasibility of incorporating ground floor retail and/or office space into the garage structure. Any future assessments should do the same.

The garage is now under municipal control, which has resulted in an immediate operational cost savings. However, in the interest of long-term fiscal objectives, Derby's Community Development Office is currently pursuing private investment opportunities as well as other options for facility renovation and improvement. The City has also requested the Board of Aldermen to evaluate potential operational and development scenarios including the lease or sale of the facility.

## Housing Authority

The Derby Housing Authority manages three state-owned senior citizen housing complexes (Cicia Manor, Stygar Terrace, and Lakeview Apartments/Guardiano Terrace) within the City; the complexes have a total of 106 units. There is often a waiting list for rental units because there is little turnover in occupancy.

Derby's Housing Authority operates under the direction of an Executive Director and a five-member volunteer board.

### Cicia Manor

Cicia Manor contains 40 one-bedroom rental units. All units are on the ground floor with four units per building. There is also a community room for resident use. Cicia Manor is conveniently located in close proximity to Derby's City Center which includes the Derby Post Office, the historic Derby Green, and the Derby Senior Center.

### Stygar Terrace

Stygar Terrace, located on the City's west side across the street from Osbornedale State Park, contains 36 units consisting of efficiency and one-bedroom units. All units are ground level with four units per building. There is also a community room available for group activity.

### Lakeview Apartments (aka Guardiano Terrace)

Lakeview Apartments has 30 one-bedroom units within four buildings. The units are located on the City's west side in a private setting just off Route 34 (1/2 mile from the Yale Gilder Boathouse) adjacent to the Osborne Homestead Museum and Kellogg Environmental Center. Units are on

two levels; the property is equipped with an elevator. There is also a community room available for group activity.

The Housing Authority also operates a **Section 8 Voucher Program** for the City. The housing choice voucher program is the federal government's major program for assisting very low-income families, the elderly, and the disabled to afford decent, safe, and sanitary housing in the private market.

Since housing assistance is provided on behalf of the family or individual, participants are able to find their own housing, including single-family homes, townhouses and apartments. Participants are free to choose any housing that meets the requirements of the program and are not limited to units located in subsidized housing projects.

Housing choice vouchers are administered locally by public housing agencies (PHAs). The PHAs receive federal funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to administer the voucher program.

## Education

The quality of education plays a significant role in the sustainability of a community. Modern facilities and contemporary programs are important to the attraction and retention of new families to Derby and prepare the City's youth to meet the demands of a diverse global society.

The Derby public school system operates under the direction of Derby's Board of Education (BOE) whose members are elected by Derby voters every two years. The BOE works together with the City's full-time Superintendent for the betterment of Derby schools.

In Derby, poverty and a transient population present challenges to learning.

On November 1, 2010, representatives from Derby Public Schools, community leaders, parents, and students gathered to begin discussion of the future of the Derby public school system. This group was charged with developing strategies to build on the strengths of the school system and the impact of the organization's programs. From this discussion, the following statements emerged. They are the foundation for strategic decision-making.

**Vision:** The Derby Public Schools rigorously prepares all students for high achievement and success in a competitive society.

**Mission:** The mission of the Derby Public Schools is to team with our community to provide all students with a high quality education and the tools necessary to compete and succeed in a diverse, global society.

### **Key Strategic Areas:**

- **Academic Excellence:** Each of our students is academically prepared to succeed in life and in the global economy.
- **Organizational Efficiency:** Promote greater economic efficiencies while preserving educational quality.
- **Quality Instructional and Administrative Staff:** We will recruit, develop, evaluate, and retain a highly effective, diverse staff dedicated to student achievement and success.
- **Student Well-Being and Family & Community Partnerships:** We will ensure a positive quality of school life for every student while actively engaging parents and other citizens as partners.

Additional details of the 2010 study, which was published September 2011, can be found on the District's website under the *Derby Public Schools Strategic Plan*.

The City of Derby has two neighborhood elementary schools, a middle school, and a high school.

- Bradley Elementary School – grades Pre-K through 5; located on David Humphreys Road in East Derby.
- Irving Elementary School – grades Pre-K through 5; located on Garden Place in Central Derby.
- Derby Middle School – grades 6 through 8; located on Nutmeg Avenue in West Derby.
- Derby High School – grades 9 through 12; located on Nutmeg Avenue in West Derby.

Irving School is the oldest school facility with a construction date of 1953. Bradley School was constructed in 1960. Derby High School was built in 1967. Derby Middle School, the most modern facility, was constructed in 2010 on the grounds of the high school campus. Some facility investments have been made in the older school buildings over the years. However, renovation opportunities remain.

According to a 2006 report from the Early Childhood Committee of the Valley Council of Health and Human Services, roughly 53% of Derby students coming into kindergarten did not attend a formal preschool before enrolling in Derby Public Schools. That was among the lowest percentage in the lower Naugatuck Valley; it was also lower than the state average.

In response to that need, Derby opened the Little Raiders University, a collaborative preschool, in January 2015. Though it is located within the high school facility, it has its own entrance and is completely segregated from older students. The preschool, which accepts applications from Derby residents, is a state-of-the-art facility with several learning centers for dramatic play, computers, writing, science, and math.

Any child who is at least three years old and not eligible for kindergarten is encouraged to register for the preschool program, though space is currently limited to 25 students. There is an effort underway to eventually make the program available (though a sliding scale payment system) to all Derby children who are preschool aged. The District is applying for grants to fund costs associated with enrollment expansion.

The opening of the Little Raiders University preschool coincided with additional investments made to the Derby High School learning environment for the 2015-2016 school year. The school district, with the help of state bond funds, made an aggressive push to advance learning into the internet-age environment.

The bond funds provided for the purchase of 400 laptops, eight interactive whiteboards and projectors, and 23 mobile teacher desks, so every classroom is now equipped with interactive smart board technology. A digital curriculum is likewise expanding.

With this award, every student now has use of a laptop with 24-7 connectivity. Furthermore, funds also provided for the redesign and renovation of several classrooms at the high school, which included new student desks — *flex type* furniture that is easy to move, allowing for different configurations for both student-led and teacher-led small groups. A newly designed media center also opened at the high school in October 2015.

Despite this renewed focus on improving education, feedback from residents seems to suggest a need for further improvement to the educational programs and school facilities in Derby. Over 52% of on-line respondents thought education was an issue. Likewise, participants at the public forums expressed concern that the current school system is not rigorous enough. By contrast about 10% of respondents to the on-line survey indicated that education and school facilities were one of the best assets in the Derby, while a higher percentage viewed these areas as one of the most important issues facing the City. Overall, these comments suggest a need to further evaluate the City's educational facilities and programs to identify near term and future improvements.

Furthermore, due to consistently low high school enrollment and the burdensome cost of supporting an educational infrastructure that is not used to capacity, alternative options for secondary education for grades 9 through 12 should be explored, including regionalization and the conversion of the current high school facility into a magnet school with a focus on trending technologies.

## Public Works

Derby's Public Works Department operates out of a complex on Coon Hollow Road that was built in 1975; the facility includes a 6,000-square foot adjoining storage building.

Operations are under the direction of a full-time director (Street Commissioner). The Department is additionally staffed by one foreman and 12 full-time employees. Temporary non-bargaining unit employees may be hired to supplement the existing workforce in the summer and fall season; outside contractors may be also be hired as needed.

The Public Works Department provides a broad spectrum of services for the City including the maintenance and repair of city-owned infrastructure.

The following is a brief list of the Department's primary responsibilities.

- Maintenance of approximately 40 miles of city-owned roads
- Care and maintenance of city-owned sidewalks, parking lots, and traffic islands
- Stormwater management
- Solid waste management, including collection and disposal of residential bulk trash
- Grounds maintenance for all municipal buildings and city-owned parks
- Maintenance of city-owned vehicles, including some fire trucks
- Street sweeping
- Snow/ice removal
- Athletic field and facility maintenance
- Maintenance of the City's flood control system including:
  - Earthen berms along the Housatonic and Naugatuck Rivers
  - Four pumping stations
  - Four railroad closure gates

Participants in the public engagement sessions and online survey, while generally satisfied with the services provided by the Public Works Department, offered some suggestions for improvement. These suggestions were primarily with respect to the City's waste collection.

Overall, there was an interest in enhancing curbside recycling. Citizens would like to see larger recyclable receptacles; older residents, in particular, would like to have containers on wheels for easier mobility. Residents have likewise requested additional hazardous waste disposal days and better communication about alternative disposal options.

Survey respondents also suggested that the City consider regionalizing or consolidating public works services with nearby municipalities to lower costs and enhance service delivery.

## Public Safety

### Police Service

The Derby Police Department is responsible for patrolling the City, investigating crimes, and ensuring public safety. The Department operates out of a modern facility located on Water Street near the intersection of Route 34.

The **Patrol Division** is the heart of the Department, as it provides the primary police functions. It is also the largest unit in the Department. This Division is commanded by a lieutenant and six sergeants responsible for patrolling highways and streets within the City's 5.3 square miles. It provides service, protection, and assistance to the estimated 13,000 residents of Derby.

The **Records Division** of the Derby Police Department is primarily responsible for the storage and maintenance of all police reports, arrest records, and the compilation of statistical data as reported to state and federal agencies. The Records Division is also responsible for issuing initial pistol

permits as well as vendor, raffle, amusement, and bazaar permits. This Division is overseen by a lieutenant and is staffed by one full-time officer and one part-time clerk.

The **Detective Division** is commanded by a lieutenant and is staffed with a sergeant and three full-time detectives during the hours of 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday; specific detectives are on-call 24-hours.

Several units make up the Detective Division; each is responsible for conducting activities relevant to their specific function. Detectives responsible for these units undergo extensive training to become intimately familiar with the equipment, technology, and procedures that facilitate their respective investigations.

Specifically, the Detective Division is responsible for the investigation of all major crimes such as murder, robbery, sexual assault, burglary, and serious assaults. This division also investigates any other crimes that warrant an in-depth investigation or those of a sensitive nature as determined on a case-by-case basis.

Units falling under the Detective Division include:

- Youth / Juvenile Unit
- Evidence and Property Management
- Narcotics Unit
- Crime Prevention
- Training

The **Derby Police Commission** is a civilian oversight board for the Derby Police Department. The Commission meets on the second Monday of each month at 6:00 p.m. unless otherwise noted on the agenda. Meetings are held at Derby City Hall.

As a means of cost control, **Animal Control** services are no longer provided by the Derby Police Department. The City currently engages the services of the City of Shelton to assist with animal control issues.

The **Local Traffic Authority** of the City of Derby is responsible for approving all requests for the use of roads and traffic signage within the city.

#### Fire Protection

Fire protection and control is provided by four independent volunteer fire companies located throughout the City:

- East End Hose Company - located at 10 Derby-Milford Road
- Hotchkiss Hose Company #1 - located at 200 Humphrey's Road
- Paugasset Hook and Ladder Company #4 - located at 57 Derby Avenue
- Storm Engine Company #2 - located at 151 Elizabeth Street

The fire department is headed by a fire chief, three assistant chiefs, and a commissioner. The department is also responsible for emergency medical response.

The City of Derby also employs a full-time Fire Marshal. The mission of the Derby Fire Marshal's Office is to promote fire safety in all City occupancies. The Office is responsible for the enforcement and stewardship of City and state building codes, standards, ordinances, and regulations in order to ensure all buildings within the City are in proper compliance. Responsibilities also include investigating fires for origin and cause, mitigating the risk of fires and explosions, and assisting in the prosecution of arson. The Fire Marshal is assisted by two City Fire Inspectors.

### Emergency Medical Services (EMS)

The Storm Ambulance Corps, in existence since 1948, is an all-volunteer nonprofit group that provides emergency medical services to the residents of Derby at no charge. It operates with 42 Emergency Medical Technicians, 25 of which are also rescue and HAZMAT trained. They respond to emergencies 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Over the years, the Storm Ambulance Corps has been a pioneer in delivering emergency medical care and rescue services to the Naugatuck Valley. The volunteers of the Corps were the first to have two-way radio contact with Griffin Hospital; they were also the first to have certified Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs).

The Corps was a leader in shaping the EMS system in the region. The organization had representation on an ad hoc committee that formed the South Central Emergency Medical Services Council. The Corps also joined the C-MED radio system on the day it went into operation. C-MED made it possible, for the first time, to have direct communications between hospital doctors and EMTs in the field.

In addition to emergency medical care, the Corps has also been a leader in rescue technology. The Storm Ambulance Corps was the first in New England, and the third in the nation, to purchase the Hurst "jaws of life" rescue tool.

In 1993, the Corps placed a Special Hazards Unit online in response to the concern of its technicians. Members identified that hazardous materials calls and those for persons trapped in confined spaces presented potentially serious and deadly situations for both victims and responders.

### Office of Emergency Management

To facilitate emergency management planning, regional emergency collaboration, and response to declared natural and man-made disasters, Connecticut developed five emergency preparedness regions. The City of Derby is located in and is a member of the state Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (DEMHS) Region 2 Emergency Planning Team.

The Director of Derby's Emergency Management Office (OEM) plans and prepares for emergencies, educates the public about preparedness, coordinates emergency response and recovery, and collects and disseminates emergency information. Services are provided to the City of Derby and other towns in the region.

## Recreational Services

### Derby Senior Center

The City of Derby operates a Senior Center five days a week, Monday through Friday, in an effort to meet the diverse social, physical, and intellectual needs of its older adults. The facility, housed in a restored bank building, is located on Main Street near the intersection of Bridge Street. Its quality programs and services attract members from across the Naugatuck Valley and beyond.

Operations at the facility fall under the leadership of a full-time Executive Director. An Executive Board provides additional guidance to the Center.

The Center offers a daily luncheon program and provides a broad range of activities for its members, including painting, country line dancing, quilting, bingo, bridge, yoga, and low impact aerobics. It also sponsors group trips in and out of the state, provides access to discounted services such as tax preparation and haircuts, and serves as a resource for a wide range of topics important to older adults. Computers are available on the premises for public use.



Although the Center's overall rating was good, with 67% of survey respondents rating the facility as good, very good, or excellent, concerns were raised during the public forums about the accessibility of the existing building. Participants expressed a desire for more convenient and dedicated parking. Some also suggested constructing a new center that could house all program offerings on one floor.

Dial-a-Ride transportation services are available five days a week through the Valley Transit District.

The Derby Senior Center publishes a monthly newsletter highlighting its many activities and programs.

As the community ages, it will be necessary to provide sufficient services to meet the needs of older residents. The Center's operations are part of a broader initiative by the City to identify and respond to the needs of its older population.

Derby maintains a Commission for the Elderly. The Commission is charged with continuously studying the condition and needs of elderly persons in the community in relation to housing, economics, employment, health, recreation, and other matters. Recommendations are then made to the Mayor and Board of Aldermen for further evaluation.

### Derby Veterans Community Center

The Derby Veterans Community Center, located at 35 Fifth Street in the City's center, is a health and fitness complex partially subsidized by the City of Derby.

The facility, originally constructed in the 1960s as a new location for Derby City Hall, underwent a major renovation in 1999 which included a complete remodel of its health club with state-of-the-art fitness equipment and a new whirlpool. The Center also features a pool, sauna, and gymnasium. It is open daily to the public with nominal fees charged for use of the health club and pool; annual memberships may be purchased. The Center can also be rented for private parties; a variety of party packages are available.

In 2000, the Center became part of the City's Parks & Recreation Department to allow for increased staffing and programming. Zumba classes, youth basketball, and private swim lessons are among the programs currently offered. Program fees apply.

The facility's functioning is somewhat hampered by lack of dedicated parking.

### Public Libraries

Derby has two public libraries; both support a wide variety of programming to fulfill the interests and needs of community members of all ages.

The Derby Public Library/Harcourt Wood Memorial Library is located in a restored historic building at the intersection of Water Street and Elizabeth Street just north of Downtown.

The Library was officially presented and dedicated to the City of Derby by Colonel H. Holton and Mrs. Wood in memory of their son, Harcourt, on December 27, 1902; Harcourt died in 1897 at the age of eleven. The Woods made an offer to donate the land, building, and \$5,000 for books, provided the City would match funds and promise to upkeep the Library. Upon its opening, Derby was no longer the only city in Connecticut without a free circulating library.

Visitors will note a memorial plaque in Harcourt's memory displayed at the front entrance of the facility. Flowers are placed throughout the Library on Harcourt's birthday.



In addition to maintaining a free circulating library, the facility offers a host of community programming. Current offerings include resume writing sessions, sports talks series, a winter reading club, game nights, an assortment of children's activities including a teen chess club, and a myriad of special events. Computer access and free wireless internet are also available to visitors.

The Derby Neck Library, a 14,950-square foot facility, is located on the west side of town on Hawthorne Avenue. It was founded in 1897 with a \$50 donation. Over the years it underwent a number of expansions, the most recent in 2002.

The mission of the Derby Neck Library is to provide its patrons access to the ideas and information that are necessary to allow them to fully participate in the life of the community and in a democratic society. This philosophy has encouraged a variety of programs geared toward community members of all ages and interests, including children's music and movement sessions, guest speakers and musicians, Shakespeare performances, and computer classes.

Derby Neck Library also hosts a dedicated teen space. Teens are invited to come to the Library to enjoy a good book, participate in a writer's club, play checkers, finish homework, or play games on a computer. The Library also provides free tutoring, homework support, and test preparation assistance. Movie nights are likewise held throughout the year.

Programming is supported by the Friends of the Derby Neck Library.

Both libraries maintain websites and publish a bimonthly newsletter highlighting their various activities and programming.

### Cultural Events & Activities

The City of Derby has a Cultural Commission that was established by City ordinance in 1996. The purpose of the Commission is to encourage and promote cultural enrichment and diversity within the community. The volunteer Commission consists of seven members appointed by the Mayor and approved by the Board of Aldermen; members serve a three-year term on a staggered schedule.

Some of the activities sponsored by the Cultural Commission include summer concerts on the Green, Derby Day, an annual Ecofest, and the holiday tree lighting festival.

There was an overwhelming request by public engagement session and online survey participants to expand the frequency and scope of community events for residents of all ages. Respondents likewise demonstrated an interest in hosting a farmer's market within the City.

### Griffin Health Services

Derby is home to Griffin Health Services, a campus which includes a 160-bed acute care hospital, cancer center, and breast wellness center. Its mission is:

- To provide personalized, humanistic, consumer-driven healthcare in a healing environment.
- To empower individuals to be actively involved in decisions affecting their care and well-being through access to information and education.
- To provide leadership to improve the health of the community served.

Aside from being one of the largest employers in the greater Naugatuck Valley, Griffin Health Services brings a tremendous amount of value to the community. Derby residents are the beneficiary of many free programs and community outreach initiatives, including prevention and wellness programs, support groups, educational and training workshops, and health screenings.

### Community Services & Facilities Strategies

The quality of community services and facilities has a direct impact on the quality of life in a community. This is an important consideration when looking to retain and attract residents, businesses, and visitors. It is reasonable to expect that community growth will increase the demand for municipal services and facilities.

Particular attention should be paid to the needs of Derby's growing aging population, as well as its youth. A key strategy to meeting increasing demands will be to phase in amenity improvements on a priority basis.

The following strategies are recommended in consideration of current and future needs, as well as feedback from participants in the public engagement sessions and online survey.

1. Maintain essential public safety departments and services, and purchase equipment and vehicles as necessary to ensure public safety.
2. Undertake a comprehensive study of community facilities and services (municipal offices, public safety services, community center, senior center, school facilities, public works, etc.) to identify current deficiencies, determine long-term community needs, set priorities, and create plans for implementation.
3. Assess the feasibility of regionalizing or consolidating community services with nearby municipalities to lower costs and enhance programs and determine a plan for implementation.
4. Improve coordination of volunteer services and resources to respond to community needs.

5. Incorporate “green” energy sources and conservation measures into the renovation and construction of new and existing community facilities.
6. Explore the feasibility of installing solar panels on existing community facilities to increase operational efficiency; establish a plan for implementation where viable.

## Infrastructure

Infrastructure, for the purposes of this Plan, will include a discussion of utilities, waste water treatment, and transportation.

### Utilities

Derby has access to all major utilities, including electric, natural gas, cable television, and wireless communication networks. The City is serviced by The United Illuminating Company, Eversource, Comcast, Frontier, and South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority. These companies are directly responsible for the supply, maintenance, and upgrade of their services which are vital to the growth and sustainability of the community.

### Public Water Service

Most of Derby subscribes to public water service, with only a small number of residences receiving water from private wells. The City is expected to have an adequate public water supply throughout the planning period.

South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority (RWA), a nonprofit public corporation operating out of New Haven, Connecticut, supplies water to the residents and businesses of Derby. A September 2000 water supply plan done by Birmingham Utilities, Inc., which was purchased by RWA in 2007, indicates that “the water supply is more than adequate to meet the need of current customers through the year 2040.” Water quality was consistent with state requirements.

Population and water consumption in both Derby and Ansonia have decreased since 1970.

Existing water supply sources include the Housatonic and Derby well field and connections to the Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority. The total safe yield of all sources is 8.0 million gallons per day (MGD); the average usage in 1999 was 3.43 MGD.

Future public water expansion could be expected in the industrial park zoned land in the western section of Derby.

### High Speed/Fiber-Optic Internet Access

Advances in technology allow city governments to provide services more efficiently and to better connect with residents and businesses. However, enhancing technology and increasing internet speed is likewise a valuable economic development tool that is essential to making the City attractive to residents, businesses, and visitors. Certain businesses in particular depend on

moving large amounts of information at high speed; they include: healthcare, finance, technology, education, and manufacturing. If the City's technological infrastructure is not on pace with advances, community systems can be overburdened. Therefore, it is important for the City to support modern utility demands including high speed and fiber-optic internet service.

### Green Energy

Solar is a growing source of power for residential and commercial users. The reasons for promoting this alternative energy source are manifold, not the least of which is environmental conservation. In 2015 the City of Derby completed the installation of solar panels on the former Pine Street landfill site. The power generated from these panels will be used to offset municipal utility costs at meters around the City.

The City was honored for its promotion of clean energy within the community by Energize CT in October 2015. According to Energize CT, 541 Derby households have participated in residential energy savings programs; 72 business and municipal energy-saving projects have been completed in the community as well. It is important for Derby to continue to promote and advance clean energy initiatives. The City should likewise explore the feasibility and installation of solar panels on municipal facilities.

### Waste Water Treatment

Most of Derby is serviced by a sanitary sewer system. Only West Derby, mainly north of Osbornedale State Park, and a few scattered streets in East Derby, are not currently connected to the sewer system.

Derby's Water Pollution Control Authority (WPCA) oversees the City's sanitary sewage collection system and the extension of sewer mains; reviews and approves expense and capital budget items; establishes policy, procedures and regulations; authorizes expenditures; and approves of assessment and connection charges.

The WPCA operates under the direction of a Superintendent and an appointed five-member volunteer board; board members serve five-year terms.

Almost three million gallons of effluent flow through the system each day (MGD). The current water pollution control facility has a design flow rate of 3.5 MGD with a peak flow capacity of 9.1 MGD.

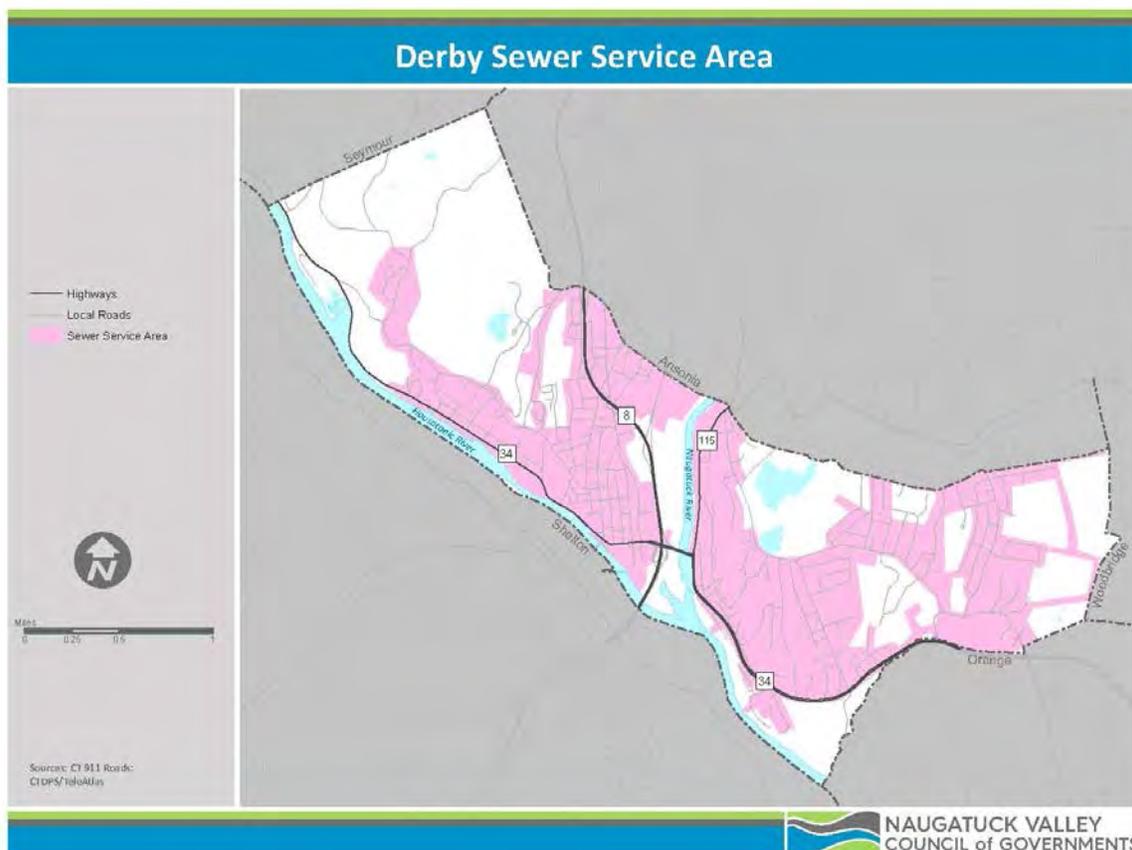
The current system includes portions of combined sanitary and stormwater pipes that increase the amount of flow through the treatment facility. Because of this, the system tends to overload during times of heavy rainfall.

Sanitary flows are also affected by infiltration due to pipe segments and structures in poor condition.

Planned and anticipated sewer extensions, as well as in-fill connections, will likely increase flows to the treatment facility.

Currently, Derby's sanitary sewer system and sewage treatment facility are in dire need of critical repairs and upgrades. The Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) echoed the urgency of the condition of the City's wastewater infrastructure in an Order issued August 2015 stating that the Derby sewage treatment plant is "in overall disrepair." As a result, state environmental officials have ordered the City to hire an engineering firm to propose a formal plan to either upgrade the facility, or abandon it and pump sewage elsewhere.

The DEEP Order followed a referendum in November 2014 in which Derby voters approved \$31.2 million in bond funding for repair and upgrades to the City's sewer system and treatment facility.



Due to the extremely high cost of the project, as well as the anticipated economies associated with cooperative regionalization of municipal services, it is strongly advised that the City examine the feasibility of alternative sewage treatment methods as it evaluates repair and upgrade options. In addition, the waste water treatment facility is situated in Derby's Downtown Redevelopment Zone; its location creates challenges to the potential development of this area.

Strategies for addressing this critical infrastructure issue can be summarized as follows:

1. Assess the most effective manner to upgrade the waste water treatment system and facilities to meet clean water requirements, minimize cost, maximize efficiency, and complement long-term development planning.
2. Separate combined stormwater and sanitary sewer systems.
3. Determine the feasibility of re-directing wastewater flows from Derby's current sewage treatment facility to neighboring towns as a way of reducing improvement costs and future maintenance expenditures.

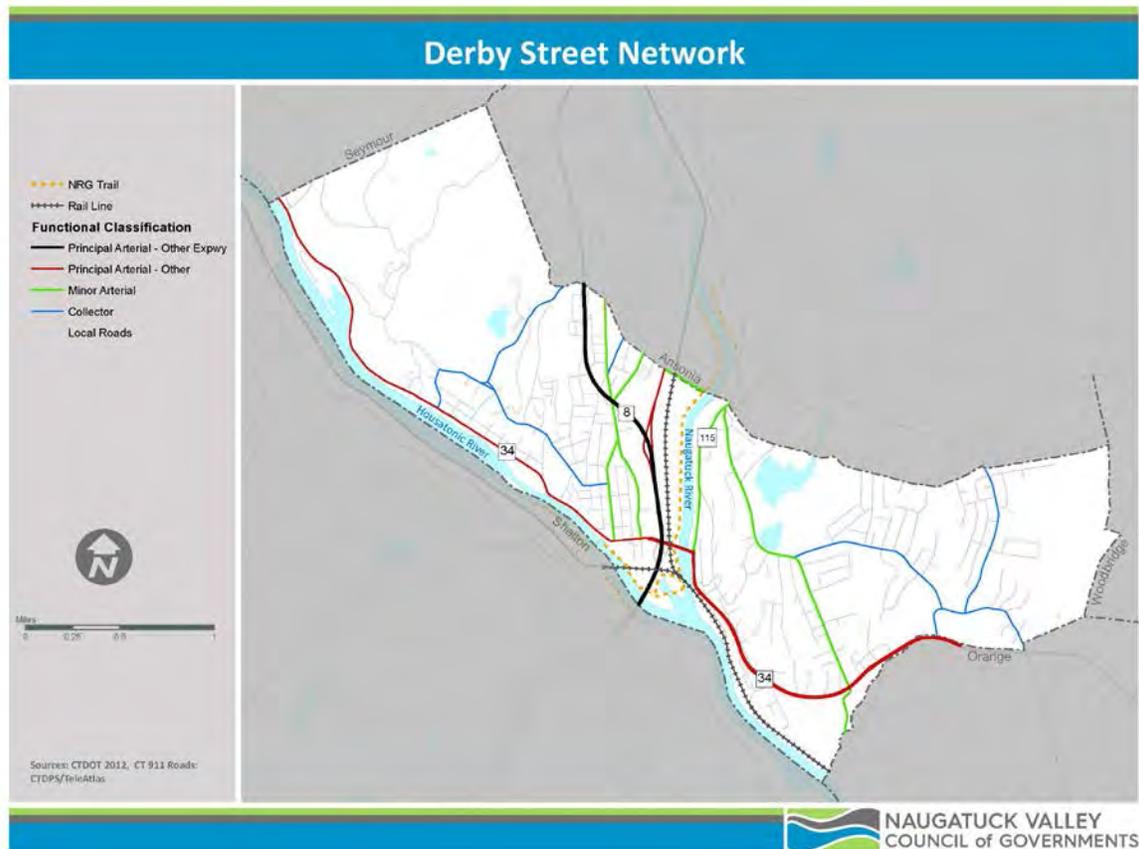
## Transportation

The transportation system in a community is an important factor in its growth and development. This element of the Plan is concerned with the means by which people and goods are moved from one place to another.

Derby's transportation system includes a mix of state and local roads, public transit options, and a well-developed multi-use trail. Pedestrians are further accommodated by a network of interconnected sidewalks. This system is critical to the well-being of the community. Its functionality determines how easily residents can navigate the City, and whether non-residents will be attracted to work, visit, and shop.

### Road Network

The City is well served by a state-maintained road system dominated by the Route 8 Expressway. Route 8 is a major north-south limited-access highway that extends 58.3 miles through the Naugatuck River Valley. It begins in Bridgeport, at the junction of Interstate Route 95, and extends to the town of Winchester in the northwest corner of the state. The highway was constructed as an expressway in the early 1960s. However, several sections remained as two-lane roads until 1982, when expressway construction was finally completed. The section through Derby dates to the early construction period and reflects design standards of that time.



Average daily traffic volumes (ADT) though Derby on Route 8 range from 60,400 vehicles per day (vpd) to 82,500 vpd. Vehicles were counted on the Commodore Hull Bridge at the interchange with Route 34.

Though Route 8 extends only 1.85 miles through Derby, the expressway has four interchanges in the City:

- Route 34 - Exit 15
- Pershing Drive (State Road 727) - Exit 16
- Seymour Avenue - Exit 17
- Division Street - Exit 18

These interchanges feature poorly designed on- and off-ramps that lack adequate acceleration and deceleration lanes, are short in length, and often connect with residential streets.

Congestion occurs daily along Route 8, primarily southbound during the morning and northbound in the evening. The configuration and geometry of the on- and off-ramps contribute to the congestion problems.

Three other state roads traverse Derby: Route 34, Route 115, and Pershing Drive (State Road 727).

### Route 34

Route 34, extending 24.37 miles, is classified as a principal arterial, and provides inter-city and inter-regional travel between I-95 in New Haven and I-84 in Newtown. Route 34 serves as the main transportation artery between New Haven and the Naugatuck Valley region, providing connections with State Route 15 (Wilbur Cross Parkway) and Route 8. A short section of Route 34 (as it approaches I-95) is a limited-access highway.

Through eastern Derby, Route 34 is a four-lane divided highway that carries between 35,700 vehicles per day (vpd) and 46,300 vpd. Access to local streets is limited; traffic flow is controlled mostly by traffic-signalized intersections.

After its interchange with Route 8, Route 34 becomes Downtown Derby's Main Street, narrowing to two lanes. Daily traffic volumes along this section range from 17,200 vpd to 22,300 vpd.

Within the downtown area, Minerva Street, Elizabeth Street, Caroline Street, and Olivia Street are the key north-south access points linking Main Street to the heart of the City's center. Bridge Street spans the Housatonic River via the Derby-Shelton Bridge, connecting downtown Derby with downtown Shelton.

After the downtown area, Route 34 becomes known as Roosevelt Drive, which provides access to the west side of Derby. Here, traffic volumes decline substantially northwest of the Derby-Shelton Bridge, with counts between 12,400 vpd at the bridge and 10,800 vpd near the Seymour town line. This section of the roadway, which is in the vicinity of Derby's historic canals, features a narrower road width and curves, both which contribute to safety concerns.

Peak-hour traffic congestion often occurs on Route 34, especially in the downtown area. A 90-degree bend in the road, at the east end of the Atwater Bridge at its intersection with Route 115, significantly contributes to this problem.

### Route 115

Route 115 extends from Route 34 northward to the downtown area of Ansonia and the Seymour town center, a distance of about 5.7 miles. It is functionally classified as an urban minor arterial; daily traffic volumes are in the range of 10,200 vpd to 13,400 vpd. At the north end of the road, Route 115 intersects with Division Street and provides access to the retail developments along that street.

In 2015, the Department of Transportation renovated the railroad crossing at Division Street, including its signaling; the crossing exceeded its 20-year lifespan. Renovations to the crossing also included the installation of electrical conduits to accommodate a new signalization system along the Waterbury Branch Line. The signalization is part of a safety system that will, hopefully,

allow the state and Metro North Railroad to provide enhanced rail service on the Waterbury Branch Line.

### Pershing Drive (State Road 727)

At Exit 16 on Route 8, the northbound off-ramp melds into Pershing Drive, designated as unsigned State Road 727. In the southbound direction, Pershing Drive continues as the on-ramp to Route 8. Pershing Drive is relatively short, but serves to connect Route 8 with the commercial and retail centers along Division Street, as well as those along Pershing Drive. About 22,800 vpd travel on Pershing Drive.

Road resurfacing, and intersection and traffic signal upgrades were completed in 2015 along Pershing Drive to Division Street to accommodate new retail development in the area.

### Other Roads

Other important local roads in Derby include:

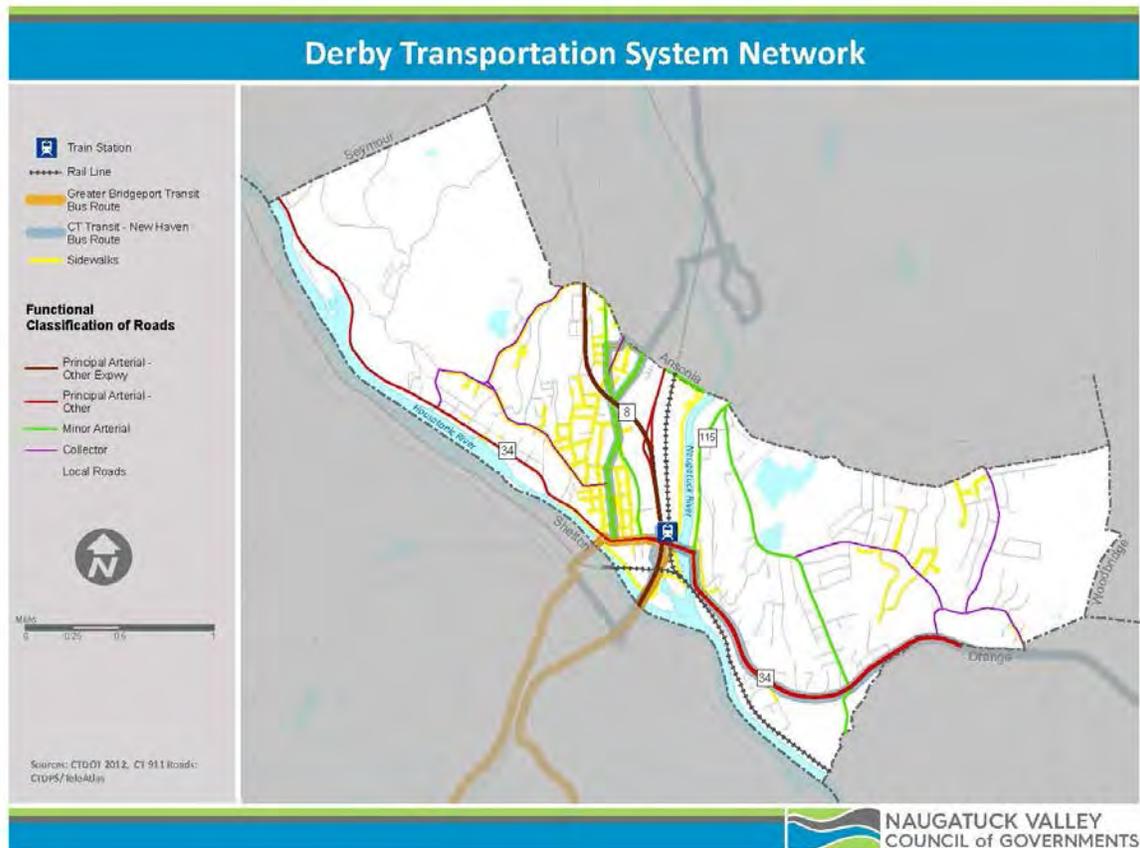
- Academy Hill Road
- Atwater Avenue
- Division Street, which functions as the town line with Ansonia
- Seymour Avenue
- Sentinel Hill Road

Several collector roads connect residential neighborhoods with the higher classed arterial network. These include:

- Hawthorn Avenue
- Sixth Street
- Chatfield Street
- Maple Avenue
- Cedric Avenue
- David Humphreys Road
- Sodom Lane
- Marshall Lane

### Public Transit Systems

Downtown Derby is a hub for public transit systems operating in the City. Rail, bus, and dial-a-ride services are all accessible from the area. In addition, the compact arrangement of city blocks and expansive sidewalk network make walking a viable mode of transportation in Derby's downtown commercial district.



### Rail Service

The Derby–Shelton Metro-North Railroad station serves residents of Derby and Shelton via the Waterbury Branch of the New Haven Line. The station house and parking lot are located on the northeast corner of Exit 15 on Route 8, and are accessible from a frontage road along the west side of Route 8 at its intersection with Route 34; ramps leading on and off southbound Route 8 are also nearby. The rail station is located at the eastern edge of Derby's downtown area and is within walking distance of downtown Shelton.

Derby-Shelton is the last regular stop on the Waterbury Branch before it joins the New Haven Main Rail Line, which is part of the Northeast Corridor. Through service to Bridgeport takes an average of 22 minutes, though a peak hour run in each direction also stops at Stratford. The distance between Derby-Shelton and either of the next stops is the longest between any two stations on the Metro-North system (10.5 miles to Stratford, 15.1 miles to Bridgeport).

The station is 69.5 miles to Grand Central Terminal, with travel time there being an average of one hour, 54 minutes depending on transfer time at Bridgeport. Travel time to New Haven is an average of one hour, two minutes depending on transfer time.

The Waterbury Branch Line (WBL), owned by the Connecticut Department of Transportation, extends inland 27.1 miles from the New Haven Main Line (NHML) in Milford (Devon) to Waterbury. Service is provided via diesel-haul equipment; it is not electrified. The rail line is a single track with no passing sidings, and is maintained at Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) Class 3 track standards. (As part of its jurisdiction, FRA categorizes all track in six classes, segregated by maximum speed limits. Class 3 indicates a maximum speed of 40 mph for freight, 60 mph for passenger. This classification is common for regional railroads.)

The WBL is considered “dark territory,” as there are no communication signals along the line. This prevents the simultaneous operation of more than one train set; one train needs to clear the line before another one can be sent.

The Derby station was necessitated by the relocation of the former New Haven and Derby Line tracks that ran through Derby. An effort to double track the line spurred the relocation.

The station house was constructed in 1903 by the New York, New Haven, and Hartford Railroad (New Haven Railroad) as a rectangular-plan brick building; it is capped by an asphalt shingle-clad hipped roof. The original floor plan features a large central waiting room with a ticket office, restrooms, and a fireplace. Although the building no longer functions as a train station, it retains many of its unique historical features and qualities, and appears to be historically and architecturally significant as an example of an early 19th century New Haven Railroad station.

Although the Derby-Shelton Rail Station is a transfer point between fixed-route bus and commuter rail services, there are a few amenities present. Trackside, a canopy covers the low-level platform. Aside from this, the only passenger shelter is a small, unheated, plexiglass structure. It provides minimal protection from the elements, as it is open on one side.

Signage directing patrons to the station is minimal as well, although a gateway sign has been installed in recent years. A relatively large lot, owned by the State of Connecticut, provides parking for about 75 vehicles at the station. No parking fee is required. A standard bicycle rack is on site for those commuting by bicycle.

No ticket-vending kiosk is available at the site, and train and bus route information is limited.

Although trash receptacles have been installed, there is track-level trash and litter.

### Fixed-Route Bus Service

Multi-modal connections can be made at the Derby-Shelton rail station to fixed-route bus service. Bus routes are operated by the Greater Bridgeport Transit Authority (GBT), and the Connecticut Transit (CT Transit) New Haven Division.

GBT operates three routes from downtown Bridgeport to the Valley planning region. The following two routes stop at the Derby-Shelton rail station:

- **Route 15** - Travels along Bridgeport Avenue in Shelton, providing access to area businesses
- **Route 23** - An extension of regular bus service through Stratford; operates along Route 110, servicing office parks on Constitution Boulevard in Shelton

Fixed-route bus service operated by CT Transit extends from downtown New Haven to the town center of Seymour via Route 34. It offers stops at the Derby-Shelton Rail Station and downtown Ansonia.

#### Dial-a-Ride

10.6% of Derby residents have some type of disability, ranging from hearing or vision impairments, to self-care or independence difficulties; 6.0% have ambulatory challenges that limit their ability to use regular fixed-route bus service. Many of these residents, the majority of whom are over 65 years old, are in need of specialized paratransit services.

The Valley Transit District (VTD) provides dial-a-ride and specialized paratransit services for Derby's disabled and elderly residents. Riders need to call VTD at least 24-hours in advance to reserve a ride.

VTD operates the service using accessible mini-buses that can accommodate wheelchairs and other mobility devices. The ADA service area is limited to a buffer within 0.75 miles of the regular fixed-route bus service provided by GBT and CT Transit.

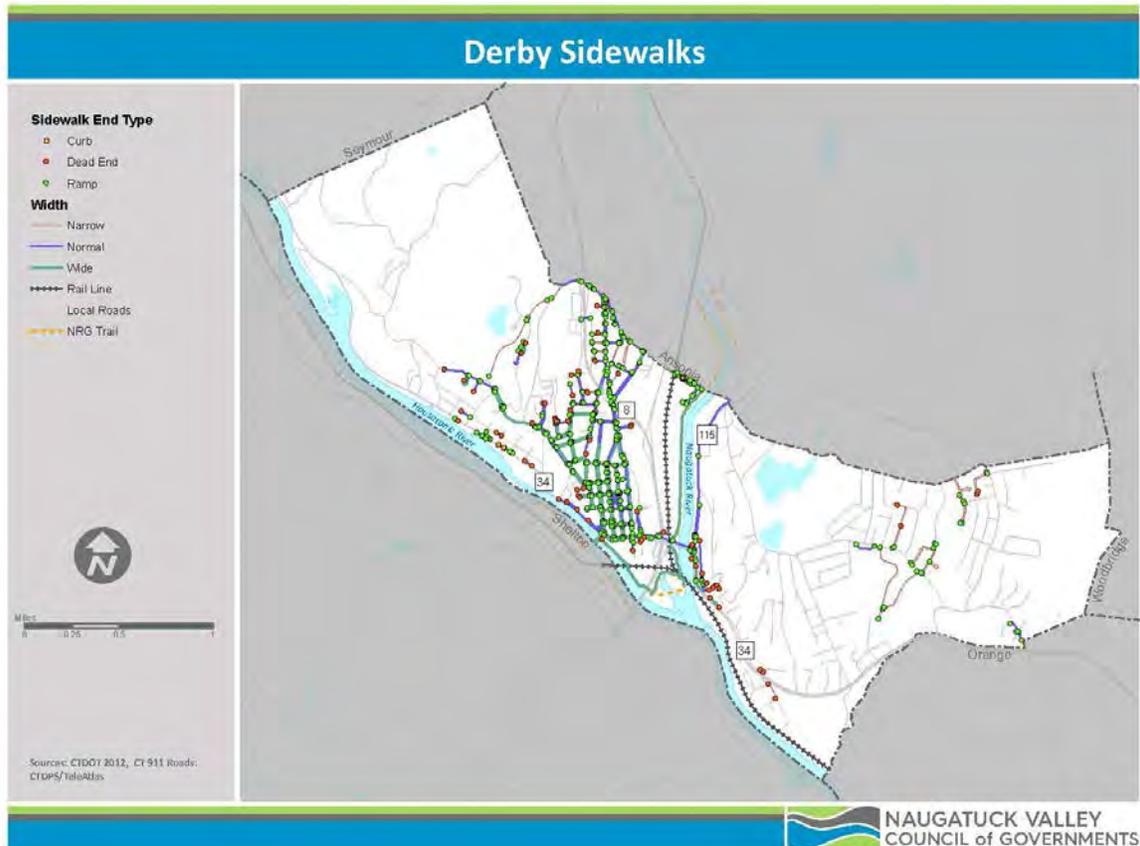
Most of Derby is covered by VTD service. The only area not included in the service boundaries is the western edge of the City near the Seymour town line.

#### Non-Motorized Connections

Walking is the most common form of transportation; every trip, at some point, involves walking. Despite this, walking is often the least emphasized mode of transportation, and adequate facilities for safe and convenient pedestrian travel are often not provided.

Sidewalks are important to pedestrian travel. When provided in Derby, sidewalks are not always built to high design standards, and they are not always properly maintained.

Almost the entire commercial district in Central Derby has sidewalks; sidewalks also extend along Hawthorne Avenue. There are few sidewalks in West Derby or East Derby. There are no sidewalks along Route 34, through the east side of Derby. However, on the north side of the City, between Route 115 and Prospect Street, there are short segments of sidewalk along Route 34.



Bicycle travel is another increasingly popular mode of transportation. On-road bicycle routes in Derby include Route 243 (Pulaski Highway) connecting to Prindle Avenue in Ansonia.

The Derby Greenway Trail offers an option for pedestrians and cyclists alike to travel without interference from motorized vehicles. The Derby Greenway Trail extends from Bridge Street in Central Derby at its border with Shelton, to the Derby-Ansonia town line at Division Street. It was built on top of the flood control levee along the Naugatuck River, and includes land south of Route 34 formed by the confluence of the Housatonic and Naugatuck Rivers.

The Greenway Trail likewise provides a non-motorized transportation connection between downtown Shelton and the Derby-Shelton rail station. However, it is located on the east side of the Waterbury Branch Line tracks, and does not have a well-defined connection to the station. Currently, travelers need to exit the station site, walk along the existing sidewalk on the north side of Route 34, cross the on-ramp to Route 8 northbound, and follow a short access driveway before reaching the Greenway. In addition, the alignment does not provide a direct connection with the

rail station, as it winds through O’Sullivan’s Island, south of Main Street and the Route 8 viaduct. This alignment is longer than a straight-line connection.

### Transportation Improvement Projects

Several important transportation improvement projects for Derby are in advanced planning, and are programmed for implementation over the course of the next five years:

- **Route 34 – Main Street Reconstruction and Major Widening Project**

State Project No. 0036-0184 will reconstruct and widen the section of Route 34 through Downtown Derby, from the Route 8 overpass to just north of Bridge Street and Olivia Street. The work will convert the existing two-lane arterial into a median-divided, four-lane road; new turn lanes will be installed for better access the main downtown area.

Route 34 is a major travel corridor that connects Derby to New Haven; however, it is also the City’s *Main Street*, with several local businesses located along its north edge. This function requires careful design considerations, so that local needs are accommodated. To accomplish this, planners are applying a *Complete Streets* approach.

*Complete Streets* is a transportation policy and design approach that requires streets to be planned, designed, operated, and maintained to enable safe, convenient, and comfortable travel and access for users of all ages and abilities, regardless of their mode of transportation. *Complete Streets* allow for safe travel by those walking, cycling, driving automobiles, riding public transportation, or delivering goods.

Several *Complete Streets* design elements are being incorporated into the project plans. They include: a landscaped median; curb extensions, to shorten the walking distance across the roadway; pedestrian crossing signals, with highly visible markings and crosswalks; and tree-planters, to manage stormwater more effectively.

The Route 34 concept plan likewise envisions the construction of a wide pedestrian walkway, and a two-cycle track for bicyclists; each facility will be separated by landscaped buffers. Project plans include the construction of a small parking lot, creating a gateway park at the corner of Route 34 and Bridge Street. Importantly, the lot will connect the cycle track to the Derby Greenway.



Downtown circulation will be modified by converting Elizabeth Street and Minerva Street to one-way operations; angled parking will be provided along Minerva Street.

As part of the project, the existing buildings along the south side of Route 34 will be demolished. While this will remove several older buildings that provide character to the streetscape, it will also provide an opportunity to rebrand the area, and open it up for new development.

The project, as of January 2016, is in final design with an anticipated construction year of 2017.

- **Derby-Shelton Bridge Renovation Project**

The Derby-Shelton Bridge, built in 1918, spans the Housatonic River, and connects Downtown Derby with the downtown area of the City of Shelton. The structure is approximately 466 feet in length and 63 feet wide.

Currently, two travel lanes are maintained on the bridge for motorized vehicles; five-foot wide sidewalks are located on either side of the travel lanes.

Both Derby and Shelton have promoted the rehabilitation and renovation of the Derby-Shelton Bridge as a catalyst for revitalizing and linking their downtown areas.

A concept plan has been developed to renovate the bridge beyond a means to carry cars over the Housatonic River. The plan would create an aesthetically attractive environment and gateway entry into Derby, and encourage people to walk and ride their bicycles. The Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments was allocated \$2 million in state funding to design and implement the vision.



Elements of the Derby-Shelton Bridge rehabilitation plan include:

- Complete renovation and rehabilitation of the bridge deck, surface, and parapet walls, including the replacement of existing old-style lighting with historic period light standards and dark-sky compliant fixtures.
- Reconfiguration of the bridge deck to provide a pedestrian plaza and separated two-way cycle track along the south side of the bridge.
- Installation of amenities along the bridge including benches, tree boxes, planters, and landscaping.
- Connection of the cycle track to the Derby Greenway Trail.

The project, as of January 2016, has not been initiated.

- **Route 34 Bridge (Atwater Bridge) over the Naugatuck River Rehabilitation Project**  
State Project No. 0036-182 - As of January 2016, the Atwater Bridge, which carries Route 34 over the Naugatuck River, is undergoing reconstruction and rehabilitation. The old bridge deck is being removed and resurfaced. Once complete, the new deck will provide two travel lanes in each direction, with a new lane arrangement at Route 34's intersection with Route 115. The new alignment will allow eastbound traffic to continue along Route 34 without stopping. A temporary channeling island has been installed and is in operation during construction; a permanent island will be installed as part of the project.
- **Route 34 at Derby-Milford Road Intersection Improvement Project**  
The State has initiated the design of improvements along Route 34 at Derby-Milford Road. The project will realign Derby-Milford Road to provide a better turning radius at Route 34. The road will also be widened to reduce daily traffic back-ups. A right-turn lane will be installed along the Route 34 approach to Derby-Milford Road to provide a safer connection.

The project, as of January 2016, is in design; construction is expected in 2018.

## Transportation Strategies

There are a number of strategies Derby can undertake to strengthen the City's transportation network.

1. Maintain and preserve City roads by implementing an annual pavement rehabilitation and preservation program that is intended to provide a 15-year pavement life.
2. Maintain and improve the existing sidewalk network; extend sidewalks to eliminate gaps between existing sections; install new sidewalks where they are lacking to adequately separate pedestrians from traffic and improve safety.
3. Install pedestrian signals with countdown displays and audible messaging at critical intersections.

4. Install high visibility crosswalks and curb ramps at critical intersections where there is a high volume of pedestrian activity.
5. Work with VTD to ensure adequate transit services for Derby residents, including seniors and those with mobility impairments.
6. Work with VTD and the NVCOG to replace bus shelters, and identify locations for the placement of new shelters.
7. Install new way-finding signage, and/or relocate existing signage to direct travelers to and from the Derby-Shelton rail station, Route 8, and Route 34.
8. Install an information kiosk at the Derby-Shelton rail station to provide static and interactive commuter information for both rail and bus operations.
9. Reconfigure the existing parking area and access roadways at the Derby-Shelton rail station to create a defined bus circulation pattern, designated bus bays for loading and unloading passengers, and a parking area for commuters.
10. Replace the existing passenger waiting shelter at the Derby-Shelton rail station with a larger, heated structure.
11. Construct a bicycle path and pedestrian walkway into and through the Derby-Shelton rail station property, with a terminus at the boarding area, and direct connections to the Derby Greenway Trail and planned Route 34 cycle track. This action includes constructing a path, ramp, and steps up the embankment at the south end the site to the existing sidewalks along Route 34. Decorative elements should be installed to visually highlight the distinct paths for walkers and bicyclists, and alert drivers of their presence in the area.
12. Install decorative lighting throughout the Derby-Shelton rail station site.
13. Increase downtown parking availability, and improve existing garages, especially to support businesses.

## Housing & Residential Development

The City of Derby contains a fairly diverse housing stock with about half of all residential housing units defined as single-family attached or detached units; the remaining stock is defined as multiple units.

The median year of construction for Derby's housing units is 1955. Most units were constructed prior to 1970; nearly one-quarter of the City's residential units were built before 1940. This data is consistent with responses to the online survey.

60% of all survey respondents indicated that their home was over fifty years old. Despite this, most felt that their homes were in good condition; only 28% stated that the structure needed some improvement; no one indicated that their home was in poor condition.

Conversely, many respondents commented that, in general, Derby's housing stock needs renovation, and there is a need to improve the condition and quality of housing.

The median value of owner-occupied housing in Derby is \$221,400 (2013). This value is lower than for all homes in New Haven County (\$256,900), and Connecticut (\$278,900).

The cost of owning a home is relatively affordable in Derby. For the majority of home-owners, mortgage payments consume less than 35% of household income. However, for half of the renters living in the City, the monthly cost of housing represents more than 35% of their monthly household income. This projection is based on a median monthly rent of \$1,079.

In general, there are few remaining undeveloped parcels suitable for new residential development. And, there are differing opinions regarding the type, style, and affordability of new housing that might be constructed in the City. Some survey respondents voiced concern about the number of multi-family housing units in Derby, going as far as to suggest the City reduce the number of existing units. Others stated that the City should provide more housing options, such as multifamily residences for young professionals.

In addition, respondents expressed an interest in expanding senior housing in Derby. Specifically, they indicated a desire for alternative housing options, including 1-bedroom and 2-bedroom, age-restricted developments with on-site services.

Despite these differences, most view Derby's diversity and affordability of housing stock as an asset.

## Housing & Residential Development Strategies

Derby's diverse housing stock, affordability, central location, and public transit options should make it an attractive alternative for residential investment. The following strategies will assist the City in meeting current and future housing needs, while accommodating the vision of its residents.

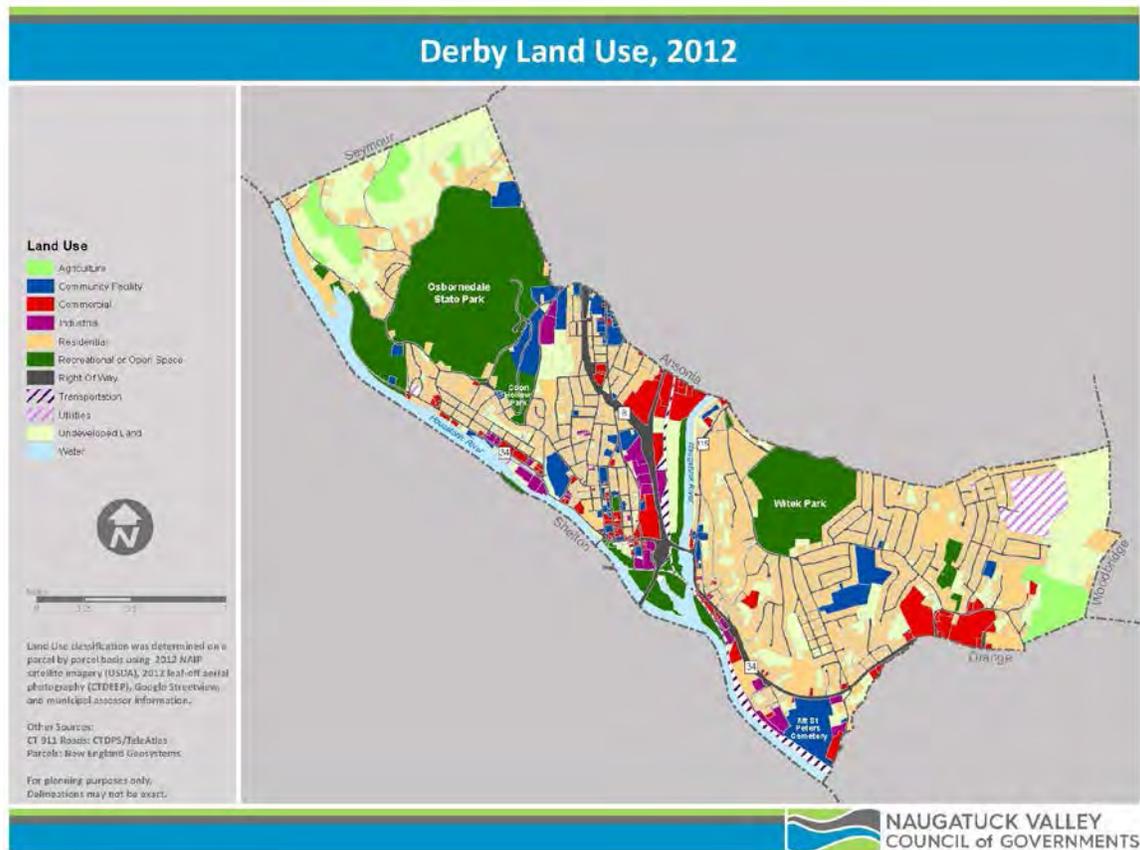
1. Create housing for young professionals and "empty-nesters" including townhouses and condominiums in locations along Roosevelt Drive, Downtown, and as a component of transit-oriented development goals.
2. Ensure sufficient supply of senior-only housing opportunities.
3. Encourage the renovation of old factories into residential and mixed uses.
4. Adopt policies to help remediate abandoned and distressed housing.
5. Evaluate Roosevelt Drive zone change to encourage mixed use, historic preservation, and adaptive reuse of industrial buildings.
6. Analyze Derby's housing stock and market rates on a regular basis to monitor neighborhood stability.

## Commercial & Industrial Development

According to a community and economic development professor with the University of Connecticut, economic development is "a set of purpose-based strategies and actions that improve the economic well-being and quality of life for a community. These actions are defined through a process of identifying and analyzing economic issues, building and mobilizing assets, and reconciling differing values and goals."

It is important for the City to grow its commercial and industrial tax base to provide better municipal services that raise the quality of life for residents without placing a high burden on them. Encouraging the creation of high paying jobs to attract middle income residents is also means to improve quality of life. These objectives are among the key goals to advance the economic well-being of the community.

The City of Derby has a mix of commercial and retail land uses concentrated in a few areas. Large commercial developments are located along the east end of Route 34 near the town line with Orange; along Pershing Drive and Division Street at the border with Ansonia; and within the downtown area. Smaller commercial activities are also located along Roosevelt Drive.



One of the primary factors impeding additional commercial growth in Derby is lack of physical space. The City is fairly developed, with only a few areas of developable land remaining, which include large tracts of vacant land in the far east and west sides of the City that have been zoned for industrial use.

Additionally, in the downtown area, parcels south of Main Street are available for economic redevelopment. In the late 1990s and early 2000s, the City purchased 15 parcels at the west end of the corridor due to age and deterioration. The structures were demolished and the land re-graded.

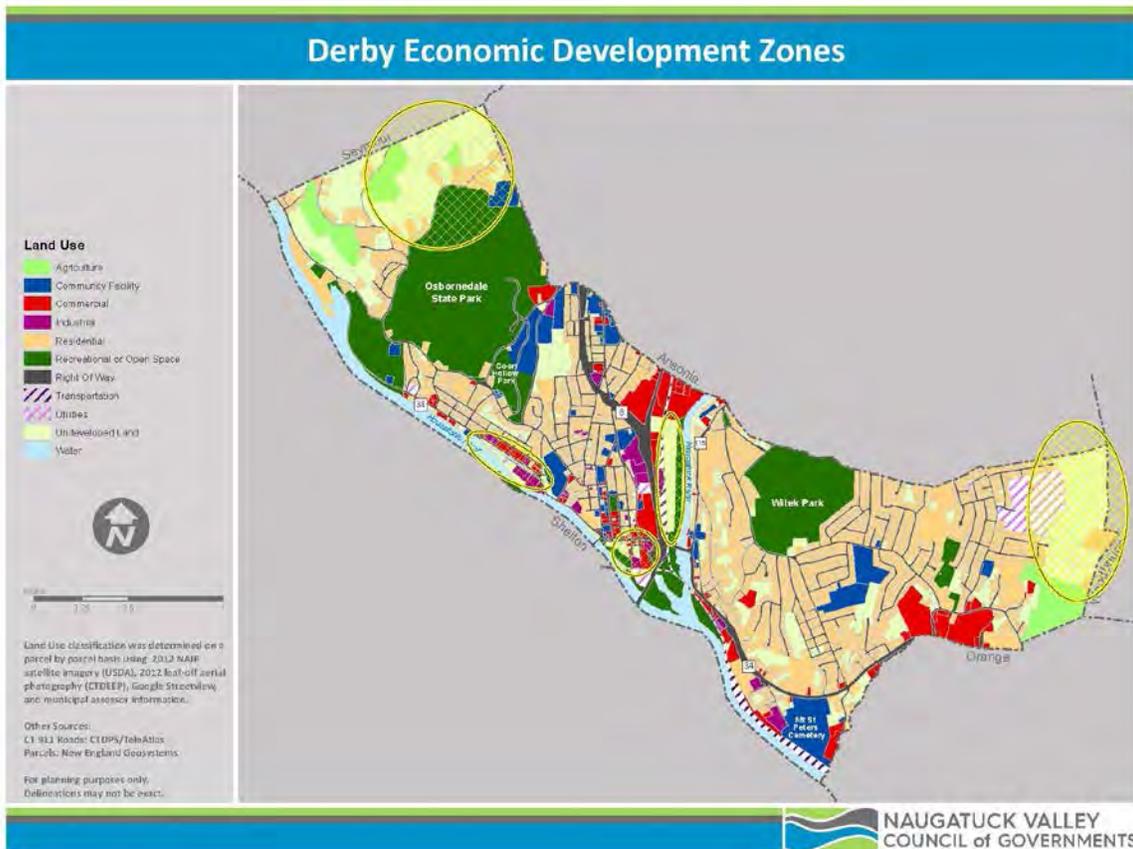
However, the development potential of these parcels, totaling about 14 acres, is somewhat limited because of the lack of access. Improvements in transportation infrastructure may be necessary to attract economic investment. The City is hopeful that the Route 34 reconstruction and widening project will serve as an impetus for redevelopment activity; road construction is expected to begin in 2017.

As part of the Route 34 project, several remaining commercial properties are being acquired and demolished to accommodate the road's widening. The project will provide new frontage for commercial buildings along the south edge. Because of the steep slope, it is possible to provide a second frontage along the back side of any new construction, at a level about one story below the Main Street level. The site has the potential to be redeveloped at a higher intensity, with greater floor area ratios, density, building height, and a variety of uses.

To best position development activity, the City is currently in the midst of a comprehensive planning exercise funded by an Urban Act Grant. The goal of this exercise is to create a clear path for credible development scenarios that reflect the community's vision and incorporate existing conditions, inform zoning changes, and feature transit-oriented development principles, while capitalizing on the site's downtown riverfront location. Completion of the planning exercise will coincide with the anticipated commencement of construction on the Route 34 road-widening project.

There is also a parcel, totaling approximately 15 acres, east of the Waterbury branch rail line that remains undeveloped. Access to the site was built from the north end of the property via Division Street several years ago. The new road connection makes the site more likely to be developed because it has the necessary infrastructure in place. However, flood zone considerations, flood control easements, and stormwater issues make development a challenge. The area is protected from a one percent or greater flood hazard by a flood control system.

Aside from undeveloped land, there are other opportunities in the City for economic revitalization. Adaptive reuse of older industrial and mixed-use buildings is an effective approach for encouraging economic development; it also brings the added benefit of preserving historic industrial structures. Furthermore, adaptive reuse is a good way to promote site clean-up of older facilities to incent private investment. This initiative will require improved code enforcement to help revitalize dilapidated buildings and will necessitate consideration of new zoning regulations that specifically permit adaptive reuse of existing structures. Continuation of the Brownfield Pilot Program, which assists with the identification and clean-up of environmental contamination at older industrial sites, is an important component to facilitating reuse. Prime target areas for such efforts should be the former mill buildings located along Roosevelt Drive.



## Commercial & Industrial Development Goals and Strategies

During the public outreach sessions, participants were asked to comment on the economic direction of Derby. Their responses proposed that the City adopt policies to attract and support businesses that will create jobs, and maintain and promote Derby's unique character.

While many viewed the existing commercial and retail establishments as a positive attraction for the City, the general vision was to maintain and focus future commercial development on Derby's Downtown area, including the Derby-Shelton rail station. Instead of promoting one type of commercial activity, residents voiced a desire for a diversity of appropriate retail, food, and service establishments such as shops and restaurants. They also advocated for the creation of entertainment uses to attract consumers Downtown to make it a vibrant, high activity area.

Many citizens expressed interest in renovating the abandoned Sterling Opera House located in Downtown Derby on Elizabeth Street across from the historic Birmingham Green. The Opera House is a municipally-owned structure which was built in 1889; it was abandoned in 1965. Tremendous challenges exist to bring the facility into compliance with modern building code requirements. If the structure were to be successfully restored, it would certainly introduce the opportunity for increased vitality in the City's Center. However, before restoration can be assessed, the community must first define its vision for the facility.

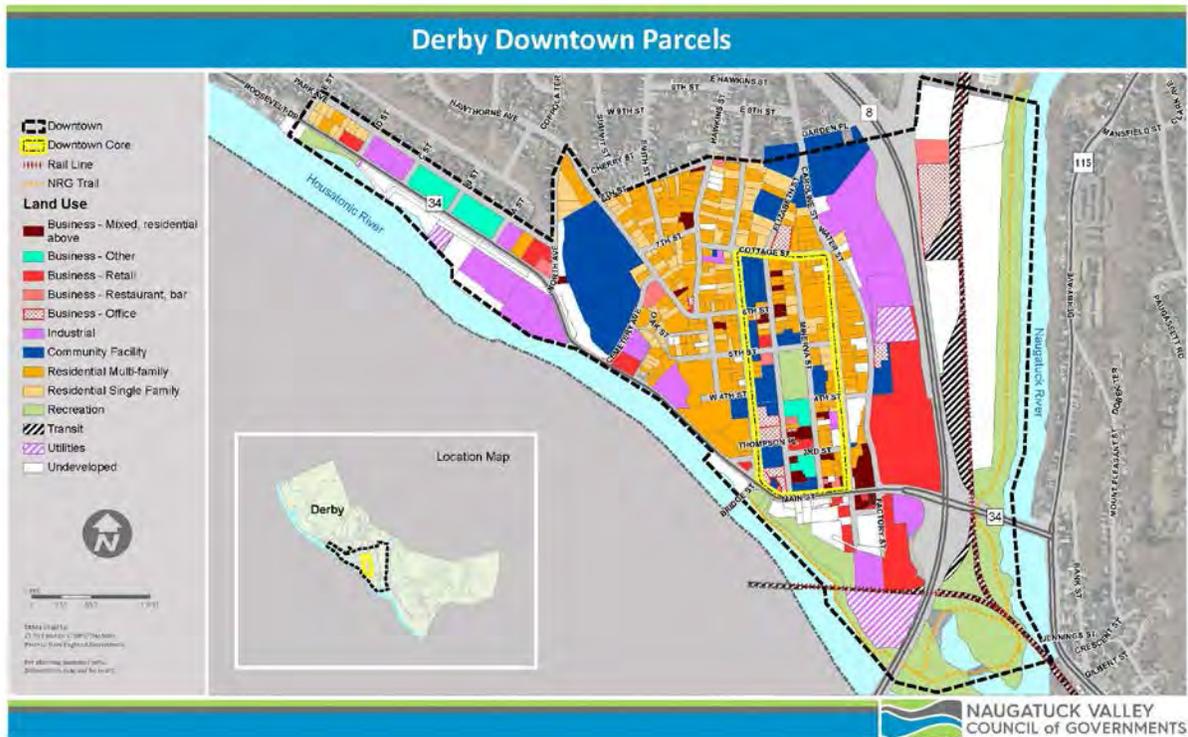
The following are some suggested strategies to support the community's overall vision for commercial development that recognize and capitalize on Derby's existing economic opportunities.

1. Create and adopt new zoning regulations that encourage:
  - a. the preservation and adaptive reuse of existing older structures;
  - b. rehabilitation and redevelopment of older industrial lands and facilities;
  - c. design review for appropriate architectural character and style.
2. Continue participation in the regional Brownfields partnership, and assess and remediate brownfield sites to make them ready for redevelopment.
3. Prepare existing industrial sites for business and development by investing in required infrastructure.
4. Market the City as a location for retail, service, and trade-related businesses.
5. Create and adopt new zoning regulations that would allow more intensive land uses, higher density, and taller structures in the area south of Main Street.
6. Conduct community engagement exercises to help define the community's vision for the Sterling Opera House.

## Downtown Action Plan: Transit-Oriented Development (TOD)

Downtown Derby is currently defined as the area bound by the Naugatuck River to the east; the Housatonic River, Route 34, and North Avenue to the west; and 8<sup>th</sup> Street to the north. This area is comprised of a wide variety of land uses, including retail; small business; office; multi-family and single-family residential; and municipal and community facilities.

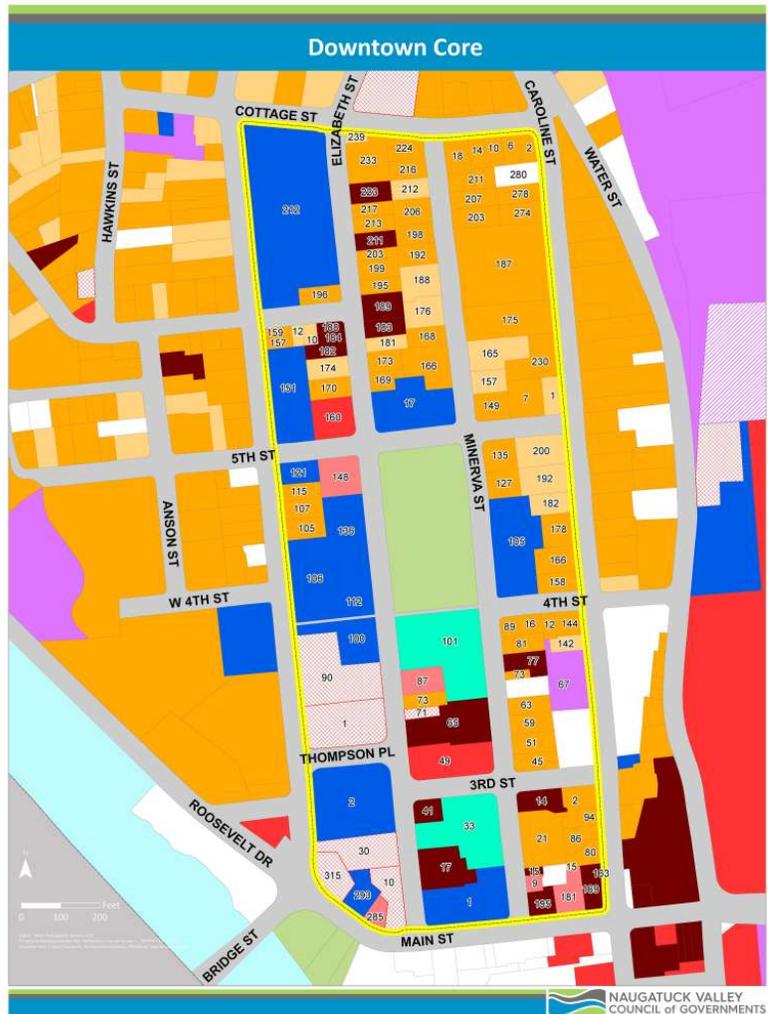
In Downtown Derby, many small retail and business buildings provide apartments above the first floor; these buildings average two to three stories high.



The location of the City's town green, right in the center of Downtown, is unique to Derby. The Green is surrounded by churches and historical buildings, making it a well-used public space; it is likewise the site of many community events and celebrations.

The area is mostly located in the *Center Design Development (CDD) District*, with the land along the rail line zoned *Industrial-1*. Across the Naugatuck River, within a half-mile radius, the zoning changes to residential and business districts.

The CDD District was created to provide more land use flexibility for the downtown area. Within the District, permitted uses, exceptions, and bulk requirements are replaced with a thorough description of the zone’s intent, and a broad and inclusive list of residential, commercial, and public uses typical of a traditional New England town. The intent provides a vision for maintaining the character of downtown, while promoting continued economic development. Zoning applications are evaluated with this vision in mind. For example, bulk requirements and use restrictions are waived provided the “spirit and intent” of the district is preserved. Parking requirements can be reduced up to 20% if the intended use is supported by pedestrian or bicycle traffic. New residential use is capped at 12 dwelling units per acre, but this density can be increased where existing buildings are being rehabilitated.



An important revitalization strategy for the downtown area is the promotion and creation of Transit-Oriented Development (TOD). TOD is typically defined as “a mixed-use community within an average 2,000-foot walking distance of a transit stop and core commercial area.”

Successful TOD projects build upon and enhance existing communities and historic downtowns by capitalizing on mobility choices and transit service opportunities. They are characterized by a mix of residential, retail, office, open space, and public uses at a density that is more supportive of transit use. With a variety of land uses within a reasonable walking distance, residents and employees can conveniently travel by transit, bicycle, or foot, making them less reliant on travel by car. As a result, healthy, walkable, and safe neighborhoods flourish.

With its short block lengths, and proximity to the Derby-Shelton rail station, Derby’s downtown area is particularly suited to TOD.

The Derby-Shelton rail station is the first station along the Waterbury branch rail line (WBL); the WBL extends from the New Haven main rail line (NH-ML). A half-mile radius drawn around the train station encompasses Derby's entire downtown area and includes access to Route 34 (Main Street), the Derby Greenway, and the Derby-Shelton Bridge. The area's existing land patterns and street layout are inviting to pedestrians.

All of these conditions, coupled with available land, makes Derby's downtown area a prime location for TOD growth and redevelopment.

Compact, mixed-use TOD communities are desirable places to live, work, and visit. They include housing in varying income ranges, jobs, an improved environment for pedestrians and bicyclists, and amenities like entertainment venues, parks, and retail – all within a short walk from a transit stop.

Potential TOD sites in Derby include the parcels south of Route 34 (Main Street), vacant land along the east side of the WBL, and parcels just north of the rail station site. There are also various smaller parcels scattered around the downtown area that could be converted to more intense use.

The State of Connecticut is currently planning for the reconstruction and widening of Route 34 (Main Street) from the vicinity of the rail station to Bridge Street. The plans include the construction of a bicycle path along the south edge of Main Street, and the creation of a landscaped pedestrian space. These enhancements will provide bicyclists and walkers with a safe and direct route between the downtown areas of Derby and Shelton, and the Derby-Shelton rail station.

Future plans envision the redevelopment of vacant lots on the south side of Main Street, many of which are under the City's control, and the replacement of commercial buildings removed to accommodate the road widening.

In addition, in 2015, the Connecticut bond commission approved a \$2 million authorization to construct renovations to the Derby-Shelton Bridge. Plans include bike lanes, a pedestrian plaza, and viewing areas along the Bridge. These elements will ultimately enhance walkability and livability Downtown and make the area more attractive to TOD projects.

While *CDD* zoning provides the flexibility needed to promote TOD, it may not promote the concentration of the wide variety of business, retail, and residential uses desired for the core downtown area. Transit supportive development regulations need to be enacted to make public-private partnerships, financing options, and land use controls possible.

TOD projects are varied and diverse; there is no one way to encourage or implement a development. It is important to build community consensus for TOD projects, and engage a wide range of support that includes local government, transit operators, redevelopment authorities, economic development corporations, private developers, and neighborhood organizations.

A local TOD plan and/or zoning regulations that support TOD projects, especially allowing mixed-uses and higher densities, are critical to achieving goals and objectives. Therefore, Derby's

position on TOD needs to be clearly defined, and new zoning regulations that support TOD projects should include a preamble describing the purpose and goals of the TOD regulations.

To facilitate the goals and objectives of transit supportive land uses and sustainable communities, the zoning regulations within Derby's Downtown should be modified. However, careful consideration is required so that new zoning codes are not overly complicated or too rigid. The new regulations need to be flexible and sufficiently broad to accommodate a range of land uses.

The following actions are recommended to promote and facilitate TOD developments in Derby.

1. Revise the current *Center Design Development (CDD) District* zoning regulations and map. The current regulations extend well beyond the core downtown area.
2. Modify the zoning map to better, and more accurately, define the core downtown area to include Main Street, Olivia Street, Minerva Street, Elizabeth Street, and Caroline Street. The existing areas outside the core downtown, but within the CDD, would remain zoned as CDD to ensure continuity of land uses within the District. This would likewise prevent and/or minimize non-conforming uses that would result if the zoning of these parcels were to be changed.
3. Create zoning regulations within this area to promote more intensive land uses and higher density; encourage reuse and restoration of existing structures; and support first floor commercial/upper floor residential occupancies. The City can achieve this goal through the use of several zoning tools:
  - a. Form-based Zoning: Define the space and not the use. Specifically, define what can be built, but leave broad discretion to the developer as to what uses can fill the space. Form-based codes are particularly adaptable and effective in urban spaces where the municipality aims to enable mixed-use.
  - b. Overlay Districts: Such districts modify underlying zoning districts without replacing them. Overlays are often used to add additional requirements to the base zone. To help provide an outline of the diverse possibilities, a TOD overlay would allow projects, that meet municipal TOD goals, to choose an alternative development path that permits smaller lots, substantially higher densities, and mixed uses. For example, a TOD overlay might allow for the development of a mixed-use residential-commercial project which exceeds height limits in a base zone that is either commercial, residential, or neither. While the application is subject to additional review, much like a special use permit, the requirements are clearly articulated in the zoning ordinances. This type of overlay can be successfully used to integrate form-based code into traditional, Euclidean zoning.
  - c. Floating Zone: A Floating Zone is an overlay zone where the exact regulations are not defined until an application has been received, reviewed, publically heard,

and a zoning change been made. A Planned Unit Development Overlay (PUD) is often a floating zone. Once the site has been rezoned, the new regulations will apply to all future development on the parcel. This strategy is used to encourage flexibility in the development of land, creative design, and to promote and preserve the scenic features of the site.

- d. Incentive Zoning: Incentive Zoning is a means of achieving a community's vision by providing tradeoffs for developments to address specific planning goals. Whereas traditional zoning is restrictive, incentive zoning encourages specific types of development, and increases a development's profitability. Incentive Zoning gives the municipality flexibility in negotiating community benefits and developer rewards. For example, a developer may be permitted to exceed zoning ordinance limits [i.e. density, building height, floor area ratio (FAR)], or receive an exemption from certain impact (or other) fees in exchange for constructing affordable housing, pedestrian amenities, or a park. FAR bonuses could be granted for desirable residential land uses. While this is a powerful tool, it should be used with caution. A community's goals must be clearly defined to ensure that the resulting development is on par with the benefits to the community.
  - e. Planned Unit Development (PUD): PUD is a technique that allows a mixed use development to be reviewed and approved as a single development, instead of subjecting individual uses within the development to zoning considerations. It often allows flexibility, once approved, for minor adjustments without requiring a new zoning review. Various innovative zoning techniques can be incorporated into the plan.
  - f. Design standards or guidelines: Design standards or guidelines allow the community to control the appearance of a development, and the uses within it, through site planning, densities, building heights, and pedestrian/streetscape amenities (e.g. curb extensions, landscaping, street furnishings, wider sidewalks, outdoor dining areas). Design standards can serve to promote transit supportive developments.
4. Authorize the Planning and Zoning Commission to approve site plans for TOD projects that meet the purpose and goals of the City's TOD vision, as opposed to drafting specific zoning by right.
  5. Include *placemaking* elements in TOD projects to give them an identity. (*Placemaking* is a people-centered approach to the planning, design, and management of public spaces.) Examples include providing a town center or green around which retail uses would be placed. This would enliven the area and make it a more desirable place for people to visit. A key element of placemaking is walkability and pedestrian safety; traffic should be located on the periphery, and traffic-calming features need to be integrated to slow vehicle speeds.

6. Consider alternatives to zoning regulations, such as the use of development agreements and station area plans that provide more flexibility for the achievement of prescribed goals. This approach may require public investment in infrastructure, streetscapes, parks, etc., and may necessitate the adoption of zoning regulations to support and enable such plans.

TOD projects may be more expensive to build than traditional developments because of the need to include placemaking amenities such as structured parking (in order to avoid large expanses of surfaced parking), pedestrian connections (to encourage walking), and common civic areas or plazas (to create welcoming gathering places). To this end, there are a number of financial incentives available to attract TOD projects.

The creation of public-private partnerships, where one or more public entities help fund an aspect of a TOD project, has been successful in other parts of the country. Other financial incentives include:

- Tax Increment Financing (TIF) – TIF is a technique municipalities use to fund economic development in designated areas. It rests on the assumption that economic development increases property tax revenue by boosting property values in the designated area. TIF uses that additional revenue - the increment - to fund the economic development.

In Connecticut there are three primary ways in which TIF is applied: (1) any increase in property tax revenue beyond a base level will be spent locally to fund improvements; (2) the municipality issues bonds to pay for the new development; any increase in the property tax revenue beyond a base level will be used to pay back the bond; and (3) a public-private partnership where all upfront development is done by a private developer, with an understanding that any increase in property tax will be spent on additional pre-agreed upon improvements within the district.

Within the scope of transit, TIF is most effective at capturing value on new development, as opposed to that on properties with existing improvements. Therefore, this strategy is less effective in a town or city center that has very little open space for new development or redevelopment. Because TIF does not create any new taxes, and only earmarks revenue beyond a baseline, it is generally more politically tenable than a special assessment.

In 2015, the Connecticut State Legislature passed legislation enabling towns to more easily create TIF districts. Previously TIF districts were fairly restricted for economic development purposes. Public Act 15-57 widely expanded that definition to include, but be limited to, transportation-oriented development, land acquisition, infrastructure, and construction.

- Tax credits
- Waiving local fees

- Publically funded infrastructure: new pedestrian paths and walkways, parking facilities, and parks.
- Local approval of non-conventional construction: increased density, increased building heights, and new design standards.

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