

### **3. Land Use and Zoning**

#### **Introduction**

East Hartford is predominantly a suburban-scaled community, with largely single-family residential neighborhoods, interspersed with commercial, light industrial, and public uses along key corridors. The traditional center of the Town is centered along Main Street, generally between Connecticut Boulevard and Park Avenue, encompassing the walkable Central Business District and key historical sites such as the First Congregational Church and Center Cemetery. Industrial corridors are located along the rail lines on Park and Tolland Avenues, including the northeast spur toward Burnham Street, while the auto-oriented commercial corridors of Connecticut Boulevard, Main Street south of I-84, Burnside Avenue, and Silver Lane, provide most shopping, dining, and service opportunities within East Hartford. The largest concentration of office uses is in the Founders Plaza area. Scattered remnants of the agricultural heritage, in the form of small farms or nurseries, are found throughout the Town, especially at the northern and southern ends. Most East Hartford neighborhoods consist of post-war homes, interspersed with schools and parks that generally serve their immediate areas. Large areas of vacant land are at Rentschler Field and along the waterfront, in wetland and floodplain areas.

Most land use patterns as described in the 2014 Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) endure in the Town's fabric, with key changes noted in the last Plan continuing to proceed today. The residential neighborhoods that comprise most of the Town's land area have remained intact, with some infill housing occurring in vacant or underutilized areas. The land use changes that have occurred in East Hartford over the past 10 years have primarily been redevelopment projects along the major transportation corridors (i.e. Silver Lane and Main Street).

The most significant of these is the redevelopment of Rentschler Field, which has continued to transform the approximately 1,000-acre former Pratt & Whitney airfield into a mix of destination retail and warehouse/distribution facilities. Today, the site is occupied by the headquarters of Pratt & Whitney and the Raytheon Technology Research Center, as well as the 40,000-seat University of Connecticut Rentschler Field Stadium, and the 186,000-square-foot Cabela's outdoor recreation retailer. Currently, a 300-acre portion of the overall site is being developed as the 2.5 million-square-foot East Hartford Logistics & Technology Park for retailers Lowes and Wayfair.

In addition, Goodwin University has continued to grow along the Town's southern waterfront. Founded in 1999 out of the former Data Institute in East Hartford, the university has grown to a total enrollment of more than 3,000 students. In late 2008, the college opened its present campus along Riverside Drive and began pursuing an extensive program of new construction and redevelopment that has changed the pattern of development throughout the south Main Street area. Although its construction program has slowed in recent years due to changes in the larger economy, Goodwin has continued to complete strategic infill development, such as a new building at the corner of Main and Ensign Streets, and has become a key nonprofit presence in the community.

## **Land Use and Zoning Goals**

- Promote a diverse mix of uses that meet the needs of the community and support a strong tax base.
- Use targeted zoning strategies and best practices to implement desired land use patterns, bolster existing neighborhoods, and facilitate economic revitalization of opportunity areas and corridors.

## **Land Use Patterns**

East Hartford's land use pattern generally reflects its suburban residential nature. Figure 1, on the following page, depicts the land use distribution by category.

As shown, detached single-family homes comprise the greatest percentage of the Town's land use and are particularly concentrated in the southeastern/eastern portions of the Town and north of Burnside Avenue/Tolland Street. East Hartford's next-largest land-use category is open space, which is comprised of dedicated open space, cemeteries, and agriculture. This land use has increased slightly since the 2014 POCD was developed, as growth in dedicated open space has offset a decline in agricultural uses.

Vacant land is another major land use for the town; however, because East Hartford is largely built out, this use represents a substantially smaller portion of total land area than may be found in other suburban communities in the region. Very little development can be expected to occur on raw, open land; such land area is generally limited to undevelopable wetlands associated with streams and water bodies. Vacant land that is not environmentally constrained is limited to Rentschler Field and scattered properties throughout the Town; these areas represent opportunities for infill development projects that close the gaps in the existing land use pattern or redevelopment projects on key parcels. Vacant land area has decreased since the last POCD with continued development at Rentschler Field.

A relatively small proportion of East Hartford's land area is devoted to commercial or office/medical. Commercial uses are primarily concentrated along the Main Street corridor, Burnside Avenue, Silver Lane, and Connecticut Boulevard, while offices are focused in the Founders Plaza area and portions of Main Street. This pattern is consistent with 2014 POCD; however, with planned development of apartments at the former Showcase Cinemas site on Silver Lane and the Church Corners property on Main Street – as well as redevelopment of Silver Lane Plaza and significant new development contemplated at Founders Plaza – these commercial areas have the potential to evolve toward more mixed-use environments that can inject economic vibrancy and serve nearby residential neighborhoods. Such an increase in mixed uses would be a major shift in East Hartford's land use pattern, one that has been encouraged in previous POCDs.

Finally, institutional (public or semi-public) uses have become a significant land use in the Town, driven by the growth of Goodwin University along the southern riverfront. This has helped to increase activity both along the waterfront and the southern portion of Main Street.

## **Zoning**

Zoning powers are the primary control for development and redevelopment of land. Table 1, following Figure 1, summarizes the basic zoning requirements for the Town, while Figure 2, following the table, depicts the various zoning districts found in East Hartford.

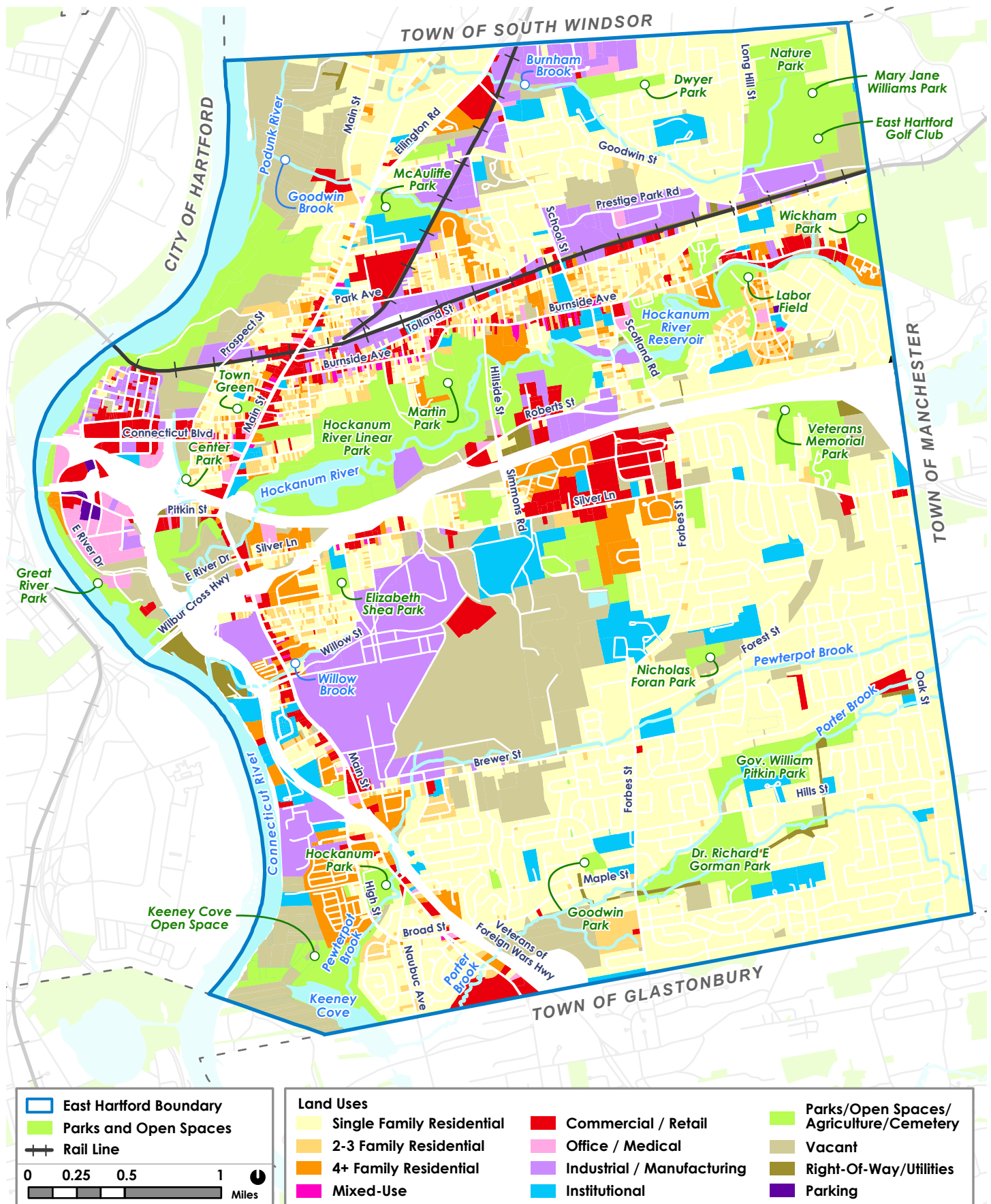


Figure 6: Land Use

## Town of East Hartford POCD

Sources: Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (CT DEEP), Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT), Town of East Hartford, Capital Region Council of Governments (CRCOG), BFJ Planning.

Table 1: Summary of Existing Zoning

Zone	Minimum Lot Size	Yard Setbacks			Building Coverage	Maximum Height
		Front	Side	Rear		
R-1 Single-Family	30,000 sf	50 ft	12 ft	50 ft	15%	35 ft
R-2 Single-Family	15,000	40 ft	10 ft	40 ft	25%	35 ft
R-3 Single-Family	10,000	25 ft	8 ft	25 ft	35%	35 ft
R-4 Single- and Two-Family	7,600 sf	25 ft	8 ft	25 ft	35%	35 ft
R-5 Multi-Family	7,600 sf	25 ft	8 ft	25 ft	35%	35 ft
B-1 Community Business	5,000 sf	25 ft	5 ft	10 ft	75%	100 ft
B-2 Neighborhood Business	7,500 sf	25 ft	5 ft	10 ft	75%	100 ft
B-3 Business/Industry	10,000 sf	25 ft	5 ft	10 ft	75%	50 ft
B-4 Founders Plaza	10,000 sf	25 ft	10 ft	20 ft	75%	210 ft
B-5 Central Business District	10,000 sf	None, consistent with existing buildings	10 ft	20 ft	75%	40 ft
B-6 Silver Lane	20,000 sf	40 ft	25 ft	40 ft	25%	50 ft
I-2 Light Industry	20,000 sf	25 ft	10 ft	25 ft	75%	50 ft
I-3 Heavy Industry	40,000 sf	25 ft	10 ft	25 ft	75%	100 ft

Source: Town of East Hartford, 2023



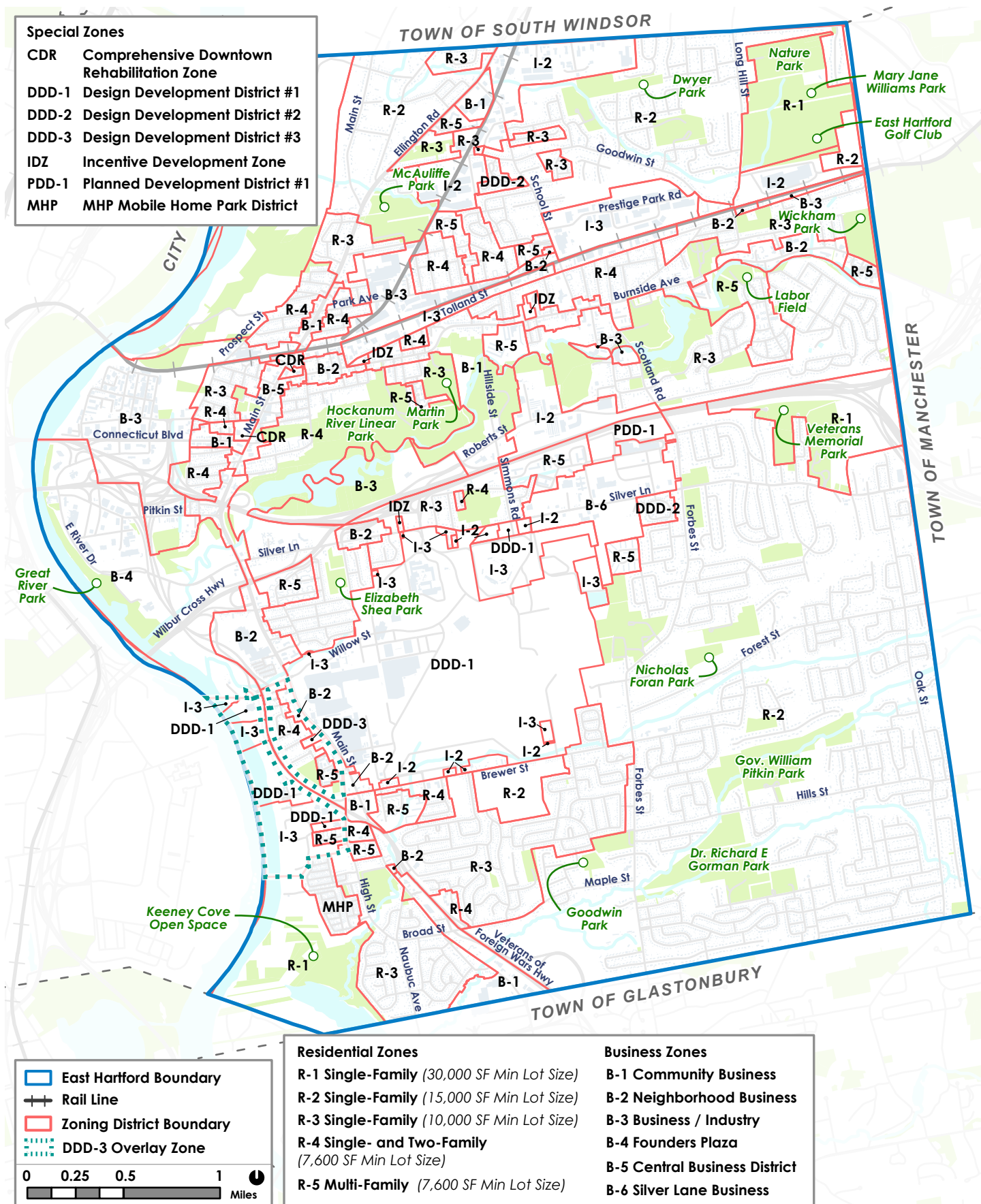


Figure 7: Zoning

The Town has also created several specialized zones to support specific uses or development goals:

- The ***Design Development District (DDD) Zone*** is a floating zone meant to promote large-scale development, providing flexibility in the development of multiple buildings owned by multiple owners on a single lot or on multiple lots. The DDD zone has been mapped in three locations:
  - ***DDD-1:*** Rentschler Field and several parcels near Goodwin University. While the underlying zoning remains in effect, additional development standards may be set in a site Master Plan approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission, subject to open space and buffer requirements. The zone has a minimum lot size of 20 acres.
  - ***DDD-2:*** Phillips Farm off Silver Lane and Goodwin Village off Goodwin and School Streets, both age-restricted housing developments. With a required minimum lot size of 10 acres, each site was developed under a Master Plan approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission, with density, bedroom mix, open space, parking, and other standards.
  - ***DDD-3:*** A larger area encompassing the Goodwin University campus, west of Main Street, south of Willow Street, and north of Carter Street. The intent is to promote a cohesive mix of institutional, commercial, and residential uses, to create a vibrant, walkable community. The DDD-3 regulations include the creation of sub-districts and design standards. One property has developed under these regulations; 361 Main Street at the corner of Ensign and Main Streets, which also houses a branch of the American Eagle Financial Credit Union and a coffee shop.



Goodwin University

Source: BFJ Planning



Phillips Farm

Source: BFJ Planning



361 Main Street

Source: Goman + York



- The ***Incentive Development Zone*** is designed to encourage reinvestment in targeted areas for substantial property improvement, by promoting the consolidation of small lots into more commercial viable sites for investment. The zone may be applied to any area identified in the 2014 POCD as a commercial node, or a designated redevelopment area or plan, but may not be applied within the Central Business District. The zone has a minimum lot size of 10,000 square feet, with a required 75-foot frontage on a State highway or a Town-designated arterial or collector road. Permitted uses are those in the B-1 zone, but the Planning and Zoning Commission may modify area, bulk and parking standards. New investment must exceed 50% of the market value of the existing structure. This zone has been mapped in three locations, two on Burnside Avenue and one on Silver Lane.
- The ***Comprehensive Downtown Rehabilitation (CDR) Zone*** is designed to provide greater flexibility for commercial and residential uses for lots in the B-5 zone with frontage on Main Street, Connecticut Boulevard, or Burnside Avenue. The zone requires a minimum lot area of 40,000 square feet, but other area, bulk and parking standards may be set by the Planning and Zoning Commission. The CDR zone also includes landscaping and architectural standards. This zone has been mapped on two sites: the Gateway Square office and retail complex at the corner of Main Street and Connecticut Boulevard, and the retail complex at the northeast corner of Main Street and Burnside Avenue.
- The ***Planned Development District (PDD)*** aims to encourage larger-scale development, supported by smaller-scale neighborhood growth within and connected to designated areas. Areas identified in the 2014 POCD for commercial or mixed-use development or redevelopment, and adjoining parcels, are eligible for PDD designation. A range of uses and flexible area and bulk provisions are provided, together with design standards to facilitate high quality architecture and pedestrian-scaled development. A PDD-1 district is mapped on the former Showcase Cinemas site to support the planned Concourse Park Apartments project. Two other districts, PDD-2 and PDD-3, are under consideration by the Planning and Zoning Commission but have not yet been adopted as of February 2024.
- The ***Mobile Home Park (MHP) Zone*** is mapped in one location, the Rivermead Pointe mobile home park off High Street, to the west of Hockanum Park and Hockanum Elementary School. In addition to mobile home parks, the zone allows all uses permitted in the R-3 district, under the area and dimensional standards for that district.



CDR-mapped sites

Source: BFJ Planning

## **Issues and Opportunities**

Based on the above discussion of existing land use and zoning regulations, this section recommends several items to be addressed in the Future Land Use Plan or through further study.

Strongly encourage mixed uses throughout East Hartford

As noted in the 2014 POCD, a healthy mix of commercial, office, and residential uses can increase street activity and strengthen local businesses by creating a market for goods and services, while combining these uses in buildings or on parcels can improve land-use efficiency through shared parking and other mutually beneficial factors. In addition, the presence of mixed-use corridors near residential neighborhoods – and the introduction of small-scale businesses into neighborhoods – can enhance access to jobs, shopping, and community amenities within walking and biking distance to residents.

While the 2014 POCD designated a significant amount of land area to mixed use, for the most part, the current zoning does not support such designation, and very little land area is actually devoted to mixed uses. Within commercial zones, only the B-2 and B-5 zones permit mixed-use buildings or sites, and only the B-1, B-2, and B-6 zones permit multifamily development. Some of the issues noted in the prior plan have been addressed; for example, addition of multifamily as a permitted use in the B-5 district. However, the area and dimensional requirements for multifamily uses continue to promote single-use multifamily parcels, rather than true mixed-use buildings.

At the same time, there is growing recognition that having neighborhoods where the only use is single-family residential forces residents to drive elsewhere for goods and services, which can be particularly isolating for those residents who do not have access to a vehicle. For those residents who do have automobile access, promoting a driving mentality makes it all the easier to drive out of town for shopping and dining. Permitting small, locally oriented businesses within neighborhoods can enhance access to local businesses, as well as support entrepreneurship and creativity to develop and test new business types that may not be at the scale of traditional brick-and-mortar locations.

The following recommendations are suggested for consideration to expand mixed-use areas within East Hartford:

- Consider adding mixed-use buildings as permitted uses in the B-1 zone. Given this zone's small minimum lot size, achieving mixed-use development is likely achievable in a mixed-use building. Mixed-use sites (i.e., different use types located on the same site but in distinct buildings) would still not be permitted in the B-1 zone. With this change, mixed uses would be permitted along much of Burnside Avenue, Connecticut Boulevard just west of the central business district, and portions of southern Main Street.
- Review and consider implementing the recommendations of the 2018 Silver Lane Revitalization Plan, including rezoning and expanding the current B-2 and B-6 zones into a Silver Lane Business and Silver Lane Design District. Both districts would use the existing zoning framework but add design criteria to create a less auto-oriented environment and a stronger visual aesthetic. A Silver Lane Business district could include the current B-2 district, IHZ, and connecting R-3 and I-3 parcels, while a Silver Lane Design District could involve expansion of the B-6 zone to include the PDD-1 district and parcels on the south side of Silver Lane that are zoned DDD-1, I-2, or I-3. Some recommendations of the 2018 study may no longer be relevant or could be considered beyond Silver Lane. For example, the study



also suggested consideration for a Silver Lane Residential Design District for the western portions of the corridor that are zoned R-3 and R-4, to permit higher residential density that would facilitate redevelopment at a strong level of design. Such an approach could be explored through an overlay zone that would be established in residential districts with frontage on Silver Lane, Burnside Avenue, and other key corridors whose housing stock is in need of improvement. The introduction of new housing along these roads, with strong, pedestrian-oriented design, would greatly improve their visual quality and bring new residents to patronize existing nearby business areas.

- Review the area and dimensional requirements for multifamily uses to remove potential unnecessary barriers to their development.
- Review the area and dimensional requirements for residential zones to effectively balance flexibility and preservation of appropriate building scale. For example, the maximum floor area requirements for accessory buildings in Section 2.5 of the zoning regulations appear to conflict with the regulations for accessory dwelling units (ADUs) in Section 6.2.E. Section 2.5 limits floor area of accessory buildings to 600 square feet, or up to one-third of the size of the principal residential structure if that structure has more than 1,800 square feet of gross livable floor area. Meanwhile, the ADU regulations permit floor area of up to 1,000 square feet or 30% of the principal dwelling, whichever is less. These provisions may need to be reconciled. In addition, the Town should consider permitting larger accessory structures based on the size of the *lot*, rather the size of the principal *structure*. There may be some oversized properties in East Hartford that could reasonably support larger accessory structures. Alternatively, there may be small lots with large, nonconforming homes, where large accessory structures would not be appropriate. Finally, the Town should review setback and coverage requirements for the R-3 district, as they are identical to the R-4 and R-5 districts, even though the permitted lot size is larger. Adjustments may be warranted to create a more meaningful “step-down” in development based on the parcel size.
- Review the existing shared-parking provisions for their effectiveness in granting flexibility to promote mixed-use development. Have the provisions been used successfully, or are there opportunities to clarify any issues? It is noted that the current provisions appear quite broad in assigning shared parking factors to various use categories. For example, a shared parking arrangement between residential and traditional retail uses would be different than an arrangement between residential and restaurant uses, given different peak parking demand times. The type of residential use (i.e., age-restricted housing) could have an impact on the effectiveness of shared parking, as could the type of lodging (i.e., standard hotel vs. extended-stay). Chapter 5: Transportation and Mobility discusses additional strategies for maximizing the efficiency of parking.
- Consider permitting multifamily housing development subject to site plan review by the Planning & Zoning Commission, rather than by special permit. The Commission would still fully review the application and apply the use standards within the regulations.
- Explore permitting, by special permit, small-scale retail, personal service, and artisan manufacturing as accessory uses within single-family neighborhoods. Standards would need to be developed to ensure that such uses are appropriately scaled to serve local

neighborhoods and do not generate significant negative impacts. Standards that could be considered include:

- Limitation on the size or percentage of the square footage of the home that can be devoted to the accessory non-residential use.
- Limitation to the non-residential use to only the first floor or garage (attached or detached).
- Restriction of such uses to parcels with frontage on an arterial or collector road or local street of a minimum width.
- Requirement that no off-street parking be demanded or provided for the accessory use.
- Restrictions on commercial lighting and signage.

Broaden permitted uses in business and industrial zones and ensure flexibility

The 2014 Plan made a number of recommendations on potential new or revised use regulations to expand economic activity, most of which were implemented. However, it is always good practice to ensure that uses permitted in the commercial (business and industrial) zones represent the latest best practices and are as broad as possible to capture economic development potential.

Some uses that do not appear to be specifically addressed in the current zoning regulations and should be explored include:

- Recreational fitness studios, e.g. exercise classes, yoga, martial arts, dance, etc. These uses should be captured in an expanded definition of indoor commercial recreation, and permitted in all industrial and business zones.
- Tutoring services and similar for-profit educational service providers; these should be permitted in all business zones.
- Food halls (multiple food vendors sharing a common space for dining and restroom facilities). These should be considered in some or all business zones by special permit, with standards established for parking/loading and other factors that speak to the use.
- Co-working spaces, permitted in all business zones.
- Retail, personal services, food service, and artisan manufacturing in combination with classes offered to the public (this would also include maker spaces). Such uses should be permitted in all business zones.
- Indoor agriculture (beyond cannabis) should be considered for industrial zones.
- Art galleries and museums, permitted in all business zones.
- Temporary “pop-up” shops, permitted in all business zones.
- Urgent-care facilities providing basic walk-in medical services, for humans or pets, should be permitted in all business zones. In addition, veterinary hospitals should also be considered in business zones.
- Pet grooming should be added to the list of service-related establishments and permitted in all business zones.
- Auto-detailing, as distinct from car washes, should be defined and considered as a special permit use in some or all business zones, as well as industrial zones.
- For-profit trade schools (e.g. for cosmetology, HVAC, technology, etc.) should be defined and considered in business and industrial zones.

While some of these uses may be considered under use categories that are permitted (for example, art galleries and museums could be considered places of public assembly), specifically identifying

them as allowable uses makes it clear to property owners and prospective business owners that these uses are both permitted and desired. Many of the above uses – together with most food-related uses – are particularly resilient to competition from e-commerce, as they are not easy to replicate in an online format.

In addition, the Town should look at other code revisions to address any potential barriers to the location of desired commercial and industrial uses. These include:

- Easing the area/bulk and parking provisions for day-care (child and adult).
- Creating adaptive reuse zoning for existing buildings, such as expanded permitted uses and modifications to area/bulk and parking regulations, to facilitate active use of existing (often historic) buildings. Examples include old mill buildings along Forbes Street and shuttered churches or schools.
- Specifying rooftop solar as a permitted accessory use in residential, commercial, and industrial zones (including on parking structures).
- Developing special permit provisions to permit ground-mounted solar arrays as principal uses (subject to development criteria such as location restrictions and minimum lot and buffer requirements) and as accessory uses within surface parking lots.

Enhance buffers and other performance standards for industrial uses

With excellent highway access and a large amount of industrially zoned land, East Hartford is likely to continue to see demand for warehouse and distribution facilities. However, the nature of these uses has changed dramatically with the rapid growth of online retail, especially in the wake of pandemic shutdowns which accelerated this trend. Traditional warehousing uses were fairly low-scale, typically up to 30-40 feet in height, and operating similarly to other light industrial uses (i.e., 9-5 or similar). Today, with high consumer demand for quick delivery of products ordered online, fulfillment centers (e.g. Amazon) may operate 24 hours a day, with large fleets of tractor-trailer sized trucks. The resulting impacts on local roadways and adjacent neighborhoods are substantial, in terms of traffic, noise, light pollution, aesthetics, and loss of pervious coverage.

With e-commerce demand anticipated to continue at a steady pace, the Town needs to ensure that its zoning regulations can appropriately address potential negative off-site impacts. The distribution facility space under construction at Rentschler Field is well-located away from residential neighborhoods and close to I-84 access, minimizing the impact on local roads. However, other locations in East Hartford may not be so optimal, and effective controls need to be in place.

First, the Town needs to ensure that its zoning definitions for large-scale truck-based operations are up-to-date. Currently, there are three definitions in East Hartford's zoning regulations that pertain to these types of uses: "truck terminal," "minor truck terminal," and major truck terminal." Each of these relates to the transfer of goods from trucks/truck trailers to other trucks/truck trailers. However, it is not clear whether this would cover large-scale fulfillment facility where goods are delivered and processed in a warehouse and then sent out on trucks for distribution.

The definitions for truck terminals do not seem to differentiate between cargo that is going to commercial/industrial users, vs. cargo that is going to individuals (i.e. cargo shipped to retailers vs. Amazon). From a traffic perspective, the difference between end user is significant; the volume of goods distributed to individuals is much higher. East Hartford should consider developing a definition for fulfillment centers that makes it clear that they are specific to individual end users, and a definition for distribution facilities that does not include fulfillment centers, such as:

FULFILLMENT WAREHOUSE/CENTER

*Those facilities involved in receipt of bulk products and the storage, separation, and distribution of said products on an individual basis to individual end-user individuals.*

DISTRIBUTION

*Those facilities engaged in the receipt, storage, and distribution of goods, products, cargo, and materials, including trans-shipment by boat, rail, air, or motor vehicle. Distribution shall not include fulfillment warehouse/center(s).*

If a separate definition for fulfillment facilities is developed, it should be treated like major truck terminals and permitted as-of-right in the I-3 district only, with regulations on the size of the site, access, visibility of docking terminals, etc.

Beyond fulfillment centers, for all industrial uses, the Town should look at additional buffer standards when such uses abut residentially zoned sites. Provision should be made for screening, fencing, and other measures to mitigate off-site impacts. The current dimensional standards for industrial uses require only a side yard of at least 10 feet and a rear yard of at least 25 feet.

Review and clarify incentive zones

East Hartford has several floating zone districts that, with some variations, are all meant to jump-start development by providing flexibility in the application of typical zoning standards such as use, area, and bulk provisions and in the approvals process. The success of these zones is mixed. Within the DDD-1 zone, two major distribution facilities are under construction and will increase economic activity at Rentschler Field, while the DDD-2 zone facilitated the creation of two age-restricted residential developments that have become an important part of the Town's housing stock. Likewise, the recently adopted DDD-3 zone resulted in the development of a new mixed-use building (coffee shop and offices) of strong architectural quality; the lack of other development for that floating zone is likely a reflection of larger economic forces and the relative newness of the zone than any underlying issues.

However, beyond the Goodwin University area and Rentschler Field, the DDD-1 zone has had less impact. Of note, revitalization of Silver Lane did not occur under the floating zone; rather, the Town rezoned most of the area into the B-6 district, after significant study and planning, and then established the PDD-1 zone on the Showcase Cinemas site. The CDR zone has only been applied to two locations, and while it did result in new development, the site and building designs (especially at the site on Main Street and Burnside Avenue) are less than optimal for the central business district. Both sites feature substantial amounts of surface parking and are more in keeping with an auto-oriented environment. The IDZ zone is in three locations, one of which remains vacant, and the other two which have developed with uses and configurations that appear to have been permitted with the underlying zoning.

In sum, it is appropriate to review the need for each of these zones. With the recommendations outlined in this chapter and the recent zoning code update, East Hartford's business zones should function more effectively and better promote the type and scale of development the Town desires, potentially resulting in less need for a floating zone approach. With that in mind, the following suggestions are offered for consideration:



- **Reduce the area zoned DDD-1.** Options should be explored to phase out this designation for areas that are also included within the DDD-3 overlay, as the two designations appear redundant.
- **Re-assess the remaining DDD-1 area.** If what remains zoned DDD-1 is limited to Rentschler Field, then the time is ripe to re-visit this area for a holistic development plan. Given the mix of uses that have been developed on the site, the Town should consider developing sub-districts with different visions, use, dimensional standards, as was done in developing the DDD-3 zone.
- **Retain the DDD-2 zone.** The Phillips Farm and Goodwin Village developments are stable and can continue to be supported by their current zoning.
- **Eliminate the CDR and IDZ zones.** Changes made to the B-5 district have enhanced flexibility for new development, while the limited developed that has occurred under the IDZ provisions (a Dunkin Donuts on Silver Lane and a small grocery store on Burnside Avenue) would be allowable under either the B-1 or B-2 districts. For industrial areas, non-zoning financial incentives (e.g., Railroad Depot Zone, Enterprise Zone, and Opportunity Zone provisions) appear to be far more effective in facilitating redevelopment than a floating zoning district.

For the central business district and portions of Burnside Avenue, many of the issues with development relate to areas not easily addressed through zoning. The Transportation and Economic Development chapters recommend other strategies that could be effective to facilitate revitalization of these and other areas, such as sidewalk and streetscape improvements, façade improvements, and creation of a Business Improvement District (BID).

- **Explore a floating zone for housing.** To support a wide range of housing types, the Town should consider creating a floating zone that facilitates cluster single-family, cottage cluster, townhomes, and multifamily housing. Existing vacant properties throughout East Hartford could be appropriate for this type of development, but are constricted by the Town's subdivision and zoning requirements.
- **Consider new flexible zoning for Founders Plaza and key gateway areas.** As described later in this POCD, the Founders Plaza area, currently zoned B-4, should be considered for inclusion either into the PDD zone or a new DDD zone, to facilitate a comprehensive redevelopment with a mix of residential, office, retail, entertainment, and recreational uses.

In addition, the Town should explore creating flexible overlay zoning for two key nodes along Main Street:

- Pitkin Avenue between Main Street and Route 2: This corridor represents a primary entry point into Founders Plaza and its connection to the rest of East Hartford. In support of future revitalization, Pitkin Street should be studied for potential new uses and infrastructure upgrades to improve pedestrian conditions and aesthetics. This area is currently zoned B-2 and B-3.
- Southern Main Street from the Glastonbury border to Maple Street: This southern gateway of the Town feels disjointed and underutilized, when it could capture the

momentum of recent development in Glastonbury and the customer base of the adjacent neighborhoods in East Hartford. Flexibility to support mixed-use and multifamily development with high-quality site and building design would enhance the experience of visitors and residents alike. This area is currently zoned B-1 and R-3.

Lastly, there are several nonconforming commercial properties on the south side of Silver Lane (1465-1495 Silver Lane) that are zoned R-2, which should be considered for rezoning either to B-1 or to a gateway zone comparable to southern Main Street.

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