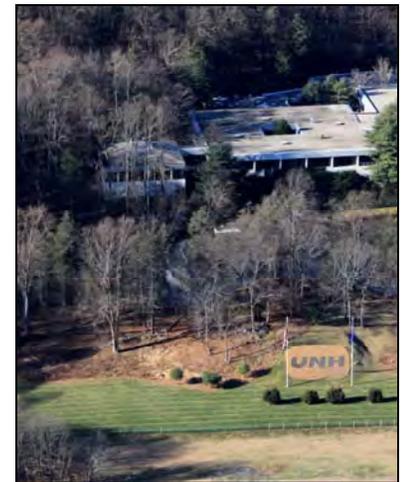


ORANGE

2015 Plan of Conservation and Development



Town Plan and Zoning Commission

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INTRODUCTION

1

Overview

This document is the 2015 Plan of Conservation and Development for Orange, Connecticut. It has been adopted by the Town Plan and Zoning Commission in accordance with the provisions of Section 8-23 of the Connecticut General Statutes.

At its most basic level, the process of preparing a Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) is really a process for making informed decisions about the future. A POCD is a document whose purpose is to establish a common vision for the future of a community and then determine policies that will help attain that vision. While it will often address issues related to the economic development and social development, its key purpose and function is to address the physical development of a community.

Over the course of many months, the Town Plan and Zoning Commission discussed issues and topics thought to be important to the future of Orange and possible approaches and strategies that might be wise to consider. Public workshops were held to involve residents in identifying issues to be considered as part of the POCD and providing feedback on some of the strategies identified. As a result of this process, the POCD is felt to reflect a consensus about desirable strategies for Orange to consider and desirable future outcomes.

Following adoption of the POCD, attention will turn to implementation. While the POCD is primarily an advisory document, it provides a framework for consistent decision-making with regard to conservation and development activities in Orange over the next decade or so. There is a POCD chapter devoted specifically to implementation.

“If you don’t know where you’re going, you’ll wind up somewhere else.”

**Yogi Berra,
Baseball Legend
Renowned Punster**

Prior Orange Plans

Orange has prepared, adopted and implemented comprehensive plans in the past.

The most recent plan, which was adopted in 2000, was prepared with the assistance of O'Brien and Marmo Associates of Hamden, CT.

The preceding Town Plan, which was adopted in 1985, was prepared with the assistance of Robert S. Bryan and Associates of Fairfield, CT.

Other Town Plans were prepared in earlier years.

This POCD is intended to continue this approach of evaluating and promoting the appropriate conservation and development of the community.

STATUTORY PROVISIONS

EXCERPTS FROM CONNECTICUT GENERAL STATUTES 8-23 – PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT

The Commission shall:

- prepare, adopt and amend a plan of conservation and development ...
- review the plan of conservation and development at least once every ten years ...
- adopt such amendments to the plan or parts of the plan ... as the commission deems necessary to update the plan.

The Plan shall:

- be a statement of policies, goals and standards for the physical and economic development of the municipality, ...
- show the commission's recommendation for the most desirable use of land within the municipality for residential, recreational, commercial, industrial and other purposes and for the most desirable density of population in the ... parts of the municipality.
- be designed to promote with the greatest efficiency and economy the coordinated development of the municipality and the general welfare and prosperity of its people.
- be made with reasonable consideration for restoration and protection of the ecosystem and habitat of Long Island Sound ...
- make provision for the development of housing opportunities, including opportunities for multifamily dwellings consistent with soil types, terrain and infrastructure capacity, for all residents of the municipality and the planning region ...
- promote housing choice and economic diversity in housing, including housing for both low and moderate income households, and encourage the development of housing which will meet the housing needs ...
- take into account the state plan of conservation and development ... and note any inconsistencies it may have with said state plan.
- consider the use of cluster development to the extent consistent with soil types, terrain, and infrastructure capacity.

The Plan may:

- show the commission's recommendation for a system of principal thoroughfares, parkways, bridges, streets and other public ways; for airports, parks, playgrounds and other public grounds; for general location, relocation and improvement of public buildings; for the general location and extent of public utilities and terminals, whether publicly or privately owned for water, sewerage, light, power, transit and other purposes; and for the extent and location of public housing projects.
- include recommended programs for the implementation of the plan ...
- (include) such other recommendations ... in the plan as will ... be beneficial to the municipality.

CONDITIONS & TRENDS

2

Overview

This chapter provides a general overview of conditions and trends affecting Orange. It has been prepared for the Town Plan and Zoning Commission and for people interested in preparation of the 2015 Plan of Conservation and Development.

“If we could first know where we are and whither we are tending, we could then better judge what to do and how to do it.”

**Abraham Lincoln,
American President**

History



People



Housing



Economy



History Of Orange

Pre-European Settlement

The basic landscape of Orange evolved over millions of years as a result of massive natural and geologic processes. While human settlements of this area are believed to date back about 10,000 years, a written history of settlement patterns is only available for the past 400 years or so. It is known that, by the early 1600s, Native Americans of the Paugusset tribe and other Algonquian people inhabited the coastal parts in this area. The Paugusset tribe subsisted as hunters and gatherers supplemented by fishing, shell fishing, and rudimentary agriculture.

Colonialization

Although Dutch and English explorers and traders came to areas along Long Island Sound after 1614 and traded with the Native American tribes, it was not until 25 years later that European settlement of this area occurred. In 1639, land in the area we now know as Milford and Orange was “purchased” from the Native Americans for six coats, ten blankets, one kettle, twelve hatchets, twelve hoes, two dozen knives and a dozen small mirrors. Due to differences in cultures, the Paugussets may not have realized that the English settlers believed they were acquiring the exclusive rights to the land area.

Settlement began soon thereafter and the population grew over time. The soils in this area were good for agriculture and the land and waters supported hunting and fishing. As population increased, settlement spread out.

By 1800, this area (then known just as Milford) had grown to a community of about 2,400 people.



Community Evolution

By 1822, residents of this area successfully petitioned the Connecticut Legislature for permission to establish a separate municipality - the town of Orange. The town is said to be named after King William III, "Prince of Orange", successor to the British king who tried to seize Connecticut's Charter. About 100 years later, in 1822, the boundaries of Orange as we know them today were established when West Haven split off as a separate community.

Orange was a predominately rural and farming community for many years. Even though railroad service and trolley service started in the late 1800s and connected Orange to surrounding communities, Orange remained rural. Even though speculators proposed a new development called "Tyler City" with 2,000 lots and sold many of the lots, it never really took off and Orange remained rural. The construction of the Wilbur Cross Parkway also did not change rural nature of Orange. In 1940, Orange had a population of only 2,009 people.

Post-War Suburbanization

However, after World War II, Orange experienced the same surge of growth that affected other suburban communities. The proliferation of roads and the automobile made individual transportation more convenient and areas more accessible. Construction of Interstate 95 in the 1950s encouraged the suburban development of residential areas and Orange was no different. By 1970, Orange had grown to be a community of over 13,500 people and was well on its way to being a suburban community.

Postcard (circa 1906)



Tyler City Map



Community Formation

The conditions that resulted in the establishment of other communities in Connecticut generally proceeded as follows.

People built houses in outlying areas (that would eventually become other communities) so that they did not have to travel back and forth from the village to their fields on a daily basis.

Settlers then established parishes or ecclesiastical societies in outlying areas near their houses so that they would not have to travel back and forth to the meetinghouse for religious services on a regular basis.

Finally, parishioners established a town (with the approval of the General Assembly) so that they would not have to travel back and forth to the village for town meetings and other governmental purposes on a monthly or annual basis.

Population Change

1830	1,341
1840	1,329
1850	1,476
1860	1,974
1870	2,634
1880	3,341
1890	4,537
1900	6,995
1910	11,272
1920	16,614
1930	1,530
1940	2,009
1950	3,032
1960	8,547
1970	13,524
1980	13,237
1990	12,830
2000	13,233
2010	13,956

1900 - 2010 Census

Projections

	<i>Low</i>	<i>High</i>
2020	14,147	14,449
2030	14,719	14,915
2040	15,373	15,381

Low projections by Planimetrics. High projections by Connecticut State Data Center at UConn with extrapolation to 2040.

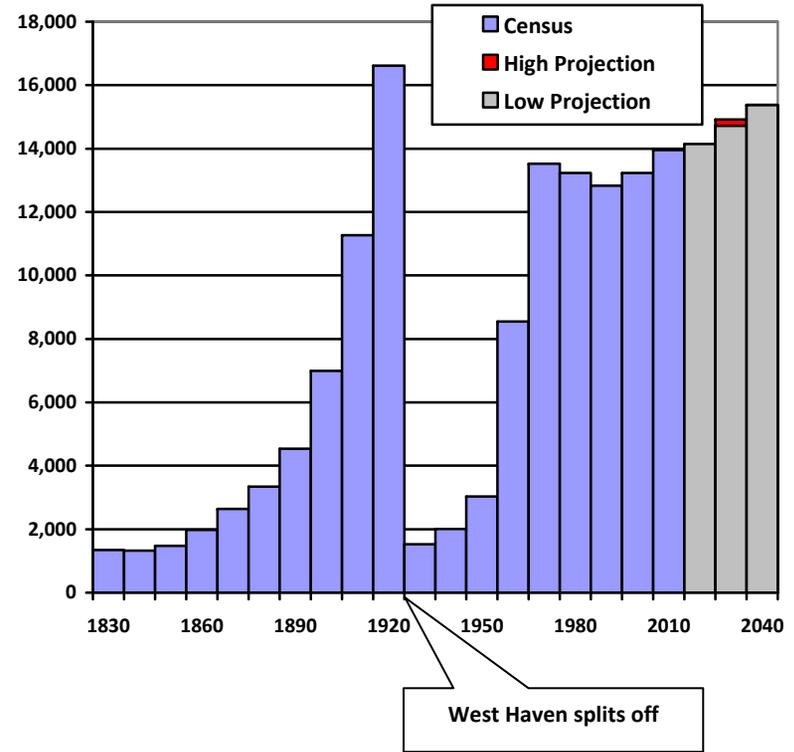
People Of Orange

According to the U.S. Census, Orange had a population of 13,956 people in 2010. The increase of 723 people (5.4 percent) from the 2000 Census was the most growth in a decade in Orange since 1970.

The post-war trend of suburbanization swelled Orange’s population from 1950 to 1970. Population growth has been slower in the last few decades since housing growth has slowed and the residents of new houses have been offset by the decreasing size of existing households.

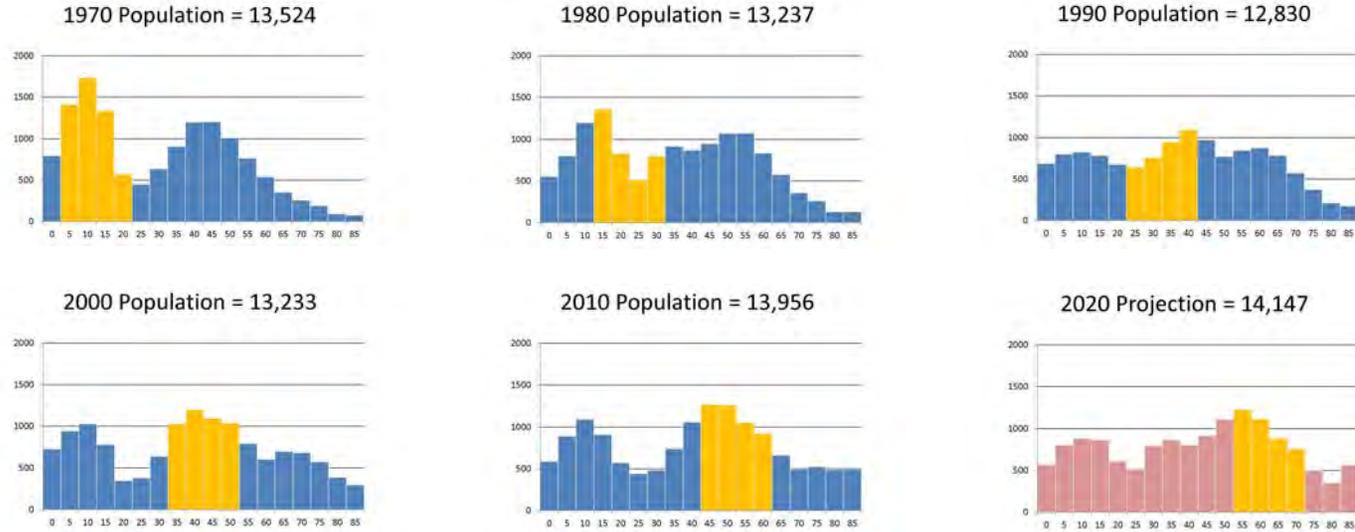
If recent trends continue, Orange’s population could grow modestly to 2020 and beyond.

Orange’s Population (1830 – 2040)



Age Composition

Although Orange’s overall population has not changed significantly since 1970, there have been changes in the age composition of the community. Overall, the number of older residents has been increasing as has the median age.



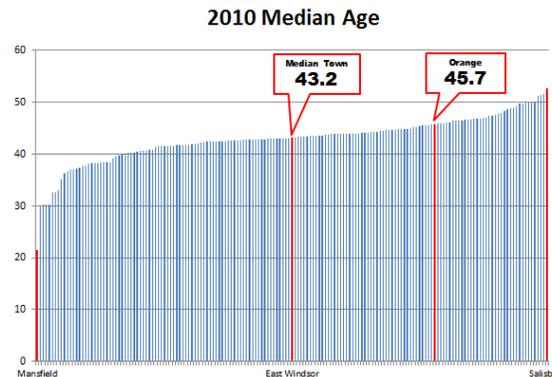
Age Composition

In the charts on this page, each column represents a 5-year age group and the height of the column represents the number of people in that age group in that Census.

The “baby boom” generation (people born between about 1945 and 1965) is highlighted in yellow.

Since the median age in Orange is already higher than for many of the municipalities in Connecticut, the needs and desires of older residents may have more of an impact in Orange than some other places.

Note that the “baby boom” will be aged 55 to 75 in the year 2020 and the changing needs and desires of this age group and their children (the “baby boom echo” - born between about 1980 and 2000) will have implications for Orange and for other communities.



Dynamics of Migration

By comparing the size of each age group in the Census with the same birth year in the prior Census (the group that was 10 years younger ten years earlier), migration patterns by age group can be evaluated.

Dynamics of Population Change

Population change in a community can occur due to natural change (the number of births compared to the number of deaths) and/or migration change (the number of people moving in compared to the number of moving out). Over the last six decades, net migration has been the major influence of overall population change in Orange.

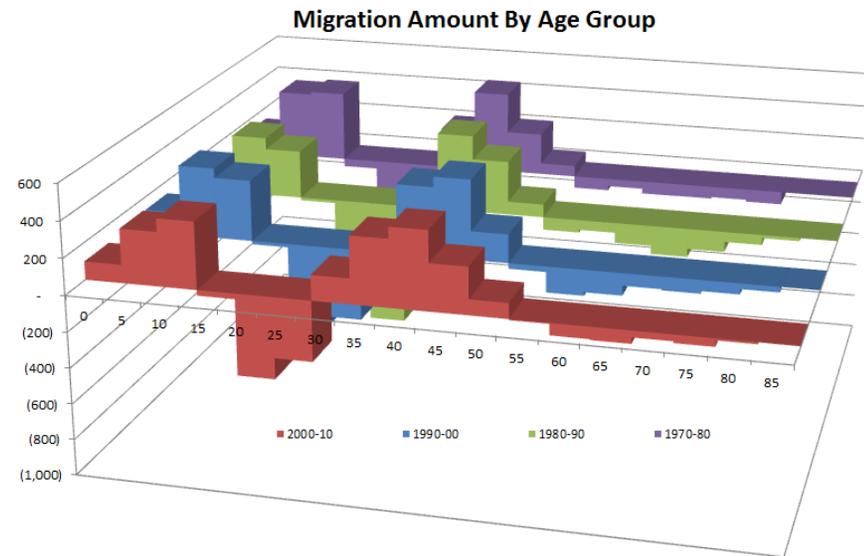
Components of Population Change

	1950s	1960s	1970s	1980s	1990s	2000s
Total Change	+5,515	+4,977	(287)	(407)	+403	+723
Births	910	1,436	845	1,021	1,152	1,089
Deaths	377	732	941	1,060	1,050	1,222
Change By Natural Increase	+533	+704	(96)	(39)	+102	(134)
Change From Net Migration	+4,982	+4,273	(191)	(368)	+301	+857

Connecticut State Department of Health, Planimetrics

Looking at migration by age group over the last four decades reveals an interesting pattern.

During that time period, Orange has consistently attracted families with school age children and lost young adults (off to college and to find jobs) and older households (above age 50).

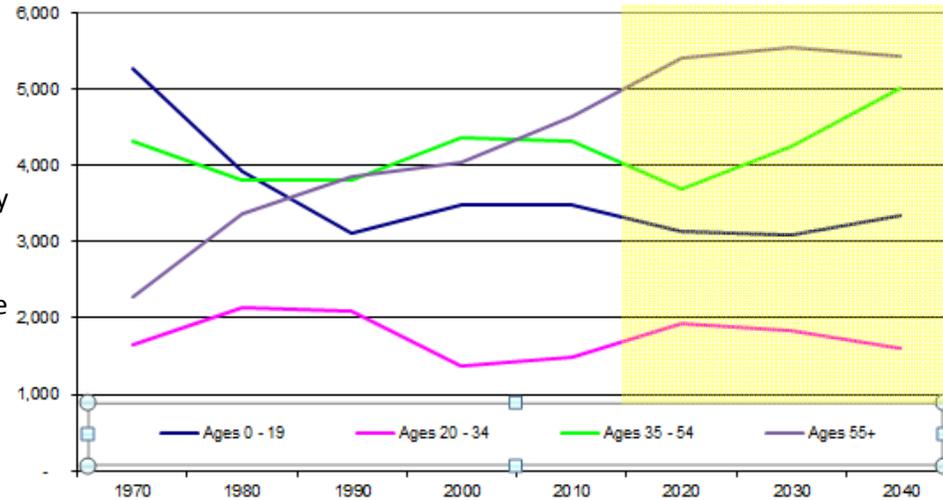


Age Composition Projections

While modest population growth is expected in Orange over the next 20 years or so, the age composition of the community is expected to change. The adjacent chart illustrates anticipated trends in Orange’s age composition.

Since different age groups have typically had different needs and desires, the table on the bottom of this page suggests how past behaviors may affect the community over the next 20 to 30 years.

Orange Age Composition – History And Projections (1970 – 2040)



Demographic Changes

The overall age composition of a community changes as a result of demographic changes in:

- new housing units (where new residents move in),
- sales of existing units (where new households moving in may be different than those moving out), and
- stable units (where existing residents may age, have children, move out, divorce, separate, marry, adopt, or die).

Description	Possible Needs / Desires	Projection to 2040
Children (Ages 0 to 19)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Care • School facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recreation facilities/ programs <p>Expected to remain fairly steady / possible uptick towards 2040</p>
Young Adults (Ages 20 to 34)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rental housing • Starter homes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social destinations <p>Possible uptick to 2020 due to “baby boom echo”</p>
Middle Age Adults (Ages 35 to 54)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family programs • Educational programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trade-up homes <p>Uptick anticipated after 2020 due to “baby boom echo”</p>
Mature Adults (Ages 55+)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing options / smaller homes • Second homes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tax relief • Elderly programs <p>Increase expected to 2030 as “baby boom” ages</p>

Household Size

The term “household size” refers to the number of persons per occupied housing unit.

Many people are surprised to learn that more than half of the housing units in Orange (53 percent) are occupied by one or two people.

2010 Household Size

1-person	948	19%
2-person	1,754	34%
3-person	953	19%
4-person	972	19%
5-person	346	7%
6+-person	150	3%

Housing In Orange

According to the Census, Orange had 5,345 housing units in the year 2010. This represents an increase of 475 housing units (9.8 percent) since the 2000 Census. Due to overall economic conditions, growth has been slow since the late 2000s.

Housing Values

The 2010 median housing sale price in Orange (\$355,000) was higher than the median for New Haven County (\$243,000) and for all surrounding municipalities except Woodbridge.

2010 Housing Values

Town	2010 Median Sales Price
Orange	\$355,000
Woodbridge	\$420,000
Shelton	\$319,000
Milford	\$284,900
Derby	\$204,800
West Haven	\$174,950
New Haven	\$162,500
New Haven County	\$243,000
Fairfield County	\$522,000
Connecticut – Median Town	\$260,000
Connecticut – Median Price	\$250,000

Median Sales Price (2010)



Housing Portfolio

The overall housing mix in Orange is dominated by single-family homes. About 90 percent of the housing units in Orange were classified in the American Community Survey as single-family units and about 10 percent were classified as multi-family units. This housing mix most likely reflects Orange’s growth phase in the 1960s and 1970s when there was a strong preference for single-family detached homes to house young families in a suburban setting.

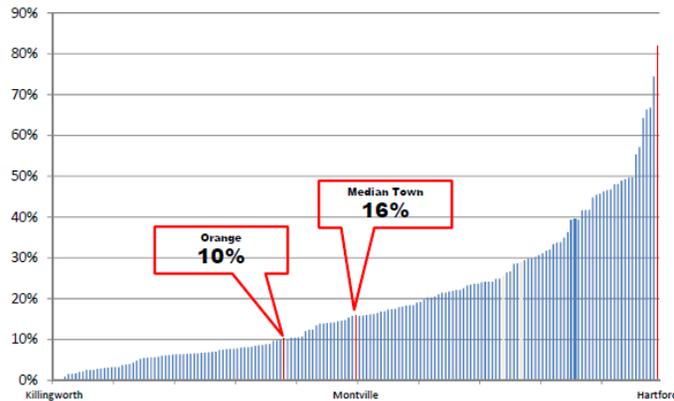
Connecticut has established a goal for all communities to have at least 10 percent of their housing stock affordable to persons and families earning 80 percent of the area median income (or less). Communities which do not have at least 10 percent of their housing units “governmentally assisted” or “deed-restricted” to affordable prices or rents are subject to the Affordable Housing Appeals Procedure (CGS 8-30g). As of 2014, about 1.2 percent of the housing stock in Orange met that standard and so the Town may be subject to that procedure. However, housing in Orange is considered more affordable than housing in many areas of Fairfield County.

Affordable Housing

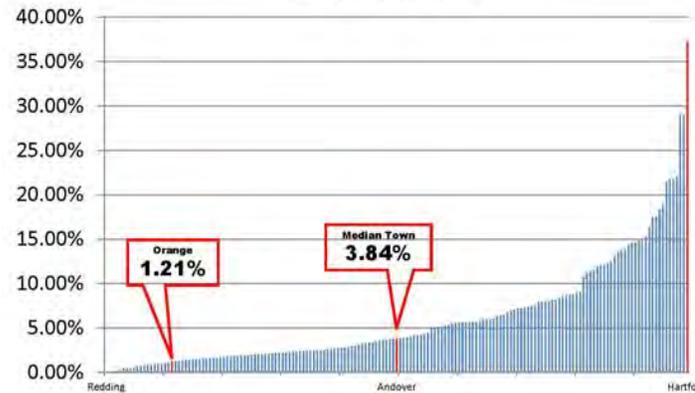
Town	Percent Affordable
Connecticut	11%
New Haven	29%
West Haven	12%
Derby	11%
Milford	7%
Shelton	3%
Orange	1%
Woodbridge	1%

Department of Housing

Percent Multi-Family



Percent Affordable



Economy of Orange

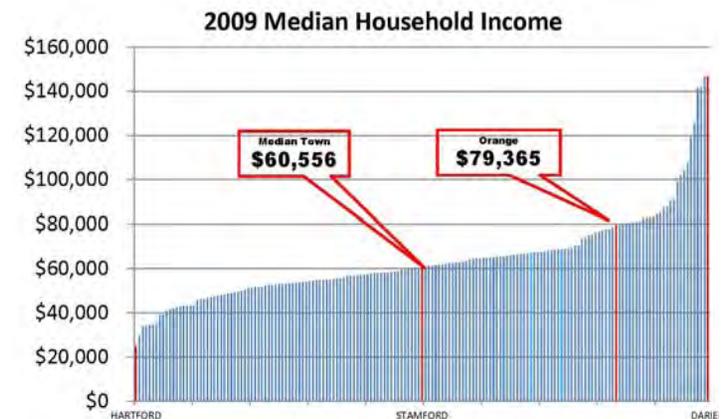
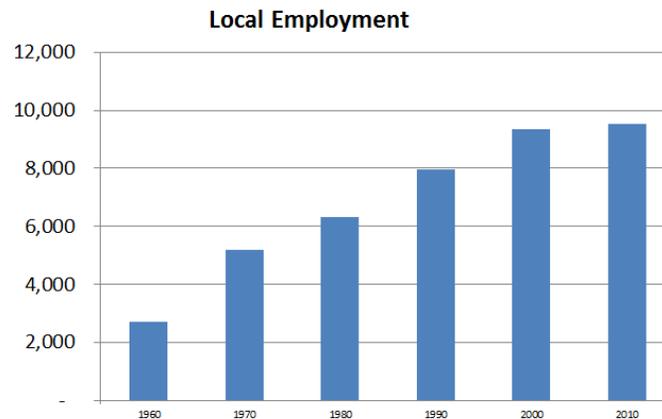
While Orange is often perceived to be a residential community, it is also an economic powerhouse based on the number of jobs in the community, retail sales, and local income. Note that the excellent highway access and the concentration of jobs and people in and around Orange make Orange a desirable community due to its proximity to employment opportunities (for residents) and to other commercial enterprises and a labor force (for businesses).

Overall Employment

In 2010, Orange was the location of about 9,500 jobs at the various businesses and other organizations in the community. Since only about 600 of these workers live here, a significant number of people commute to Orange on a regular basis.

Income of Residents

Median household incomes in Orange have historically been higher than that for both the state and New Haven County.



Retail Sales

In terms of retail sales, the fact that per capita sales in Orange are more than double that for the median town indicates that Orange is serving a larger population than just local residents.



Regional Relationships

As can be seen from the following data, Orange is an integral part of a larger region. On a daily basis, Orange sends thousands of workers to jobs in other communities and accepts thousands of workers who live in other places.

Commuters (2010)

Workers In Orange Commute From		Residents of Orange Commute To	
West Haven	970	New Haven	1,029
New Haven	806	Milford	738
Milford	652	Orange	614
Orange	614	West Haven	390
Bridgeport	442	Bridgeport	366
Hamden	382	Stratford	356
Stratford	305	Shelton	225
Shelton	248	Hamden	224
East Haven	217	Fairfield	175
Meriden	188		

Concepts

Developed Land - land that has buildings, structures, or improvements used for a particular economic or social purpose (such as residential or institutional)

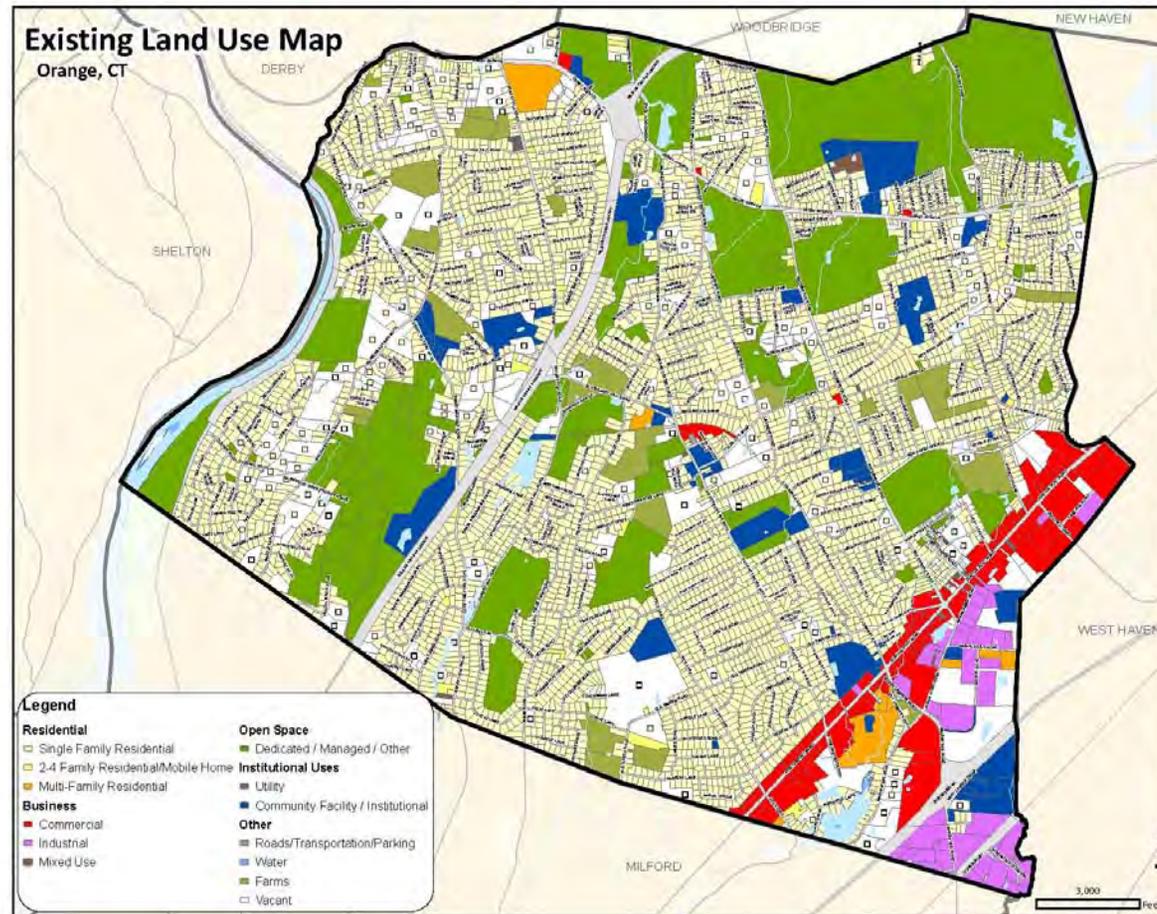
Committed Land - land that is used for a particular economic or social purpose (including open space)

Vacant Land - land that is not developed or committed

Potentially Developable Land - land that is developed or committed but that has development potential remaining (such as a house on a 10-acre parcel that might be subdivided into additional lots)

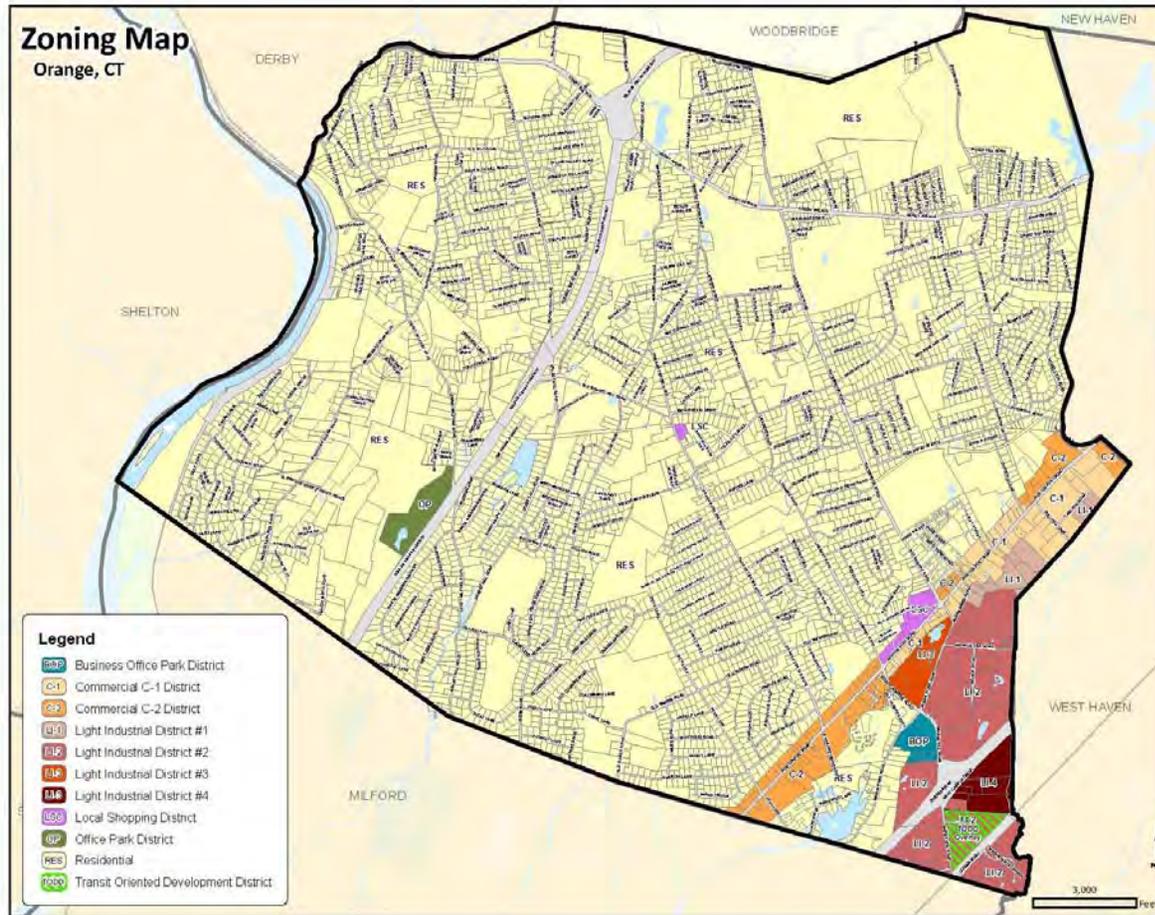
Use Of Land

Orange contains approximately 11,190 acres. Information from the assessor’s database estimates that about 83 percent of Orange (about 9,291 acres) is either developed for residential, business, industrial, or institutional purposes, or committed to a specific use such as open space or agriculture.



Zoning Of Land

About 81% of Orange (9,056 acres) is zoned for residential use. Approximately 8% of Orange is zoned for business development. The remaining land area is road and rail rights-of-way (1,155 acres). In addition, there is a Transit-Oriented Development Overlay District which affects 37 acres near the proposed train station on Marsh Hill Road.



Buildout Potential

If potentially developable land in Orange were to be developed in accordance with existing zoning, it is estimated that this land might generate:

- about 700 additional housing units,
- about 2,000,000 square feet of additional business floor area.

The residential build-out could be higher if farms, golf courses or similar uses were converted to residential use.

Per Capita Spending

Woodbridge	\$4,936
Orange	\$4,461
New Haven	\$3,937
Milford	\$3,872
Derby	\$3,091
Shelton	\$2,868
West Haven	\$2,761

Revenue From Property Tax

Orange	90%
Woodbridge	89%
Shelton	83%
Milford	80%
Derby	64%
West Haven	58%
New Haven	45%

Fiscal Considerations In Orange

Expenditures - Expenditures are the major component of the municipal fiscal equation and the 2013-14 annual budgets in Orange is approximately \$61 million. Education is the highest category of expenditures (\$39.9 million). In terms of overall spending, Orange spends more on a per capita basis than surrounding towns with the exception of Woodbridge.

Revenue - Most revenue in Orange comes from the property tax because Orange receives less intergovernmental revenue (state aid) than other nearby communities. In fact, Orange has the highest percentage of revenue from the property tax compared to surrounding communities.

Tax Base - On a per capita basis, Orange has a stronger tax base than many other communities. Since about 20 percent of the local tax base consists of non-residential property (commercial, business, and public utility), this helps reduce the tax burden on residential property owners.



COMMUNITY ISSUES & CONCERNS

3

Overview

A variety of methods were used as part of the planning process for Orange in order to identify issues and concerns important to the community. These exercises included:

- discussions among members of the Town Plan and Zoning Commission,
- surveys of and interviews with members of other boards and commissions,
- Surveys of and interviews with Town department heads, and
- a public meeting devoted to hearing from Orange residents.

“There is no power for change greater than a community discovering what it cares about.”

Margaret Wheatley
Writer

TPZ Discussion



Local Boards



Public Meeting Exercises



Public Meeting Discussion



“Prouds”

At an initial public meeting, residents were asked to think of things in Orange they were proud of. The three most common categories of responses included:

- Community character / spirit – things related to the overall appearance or ambience of the community or that contribute to people’s sense of what Orange means to them
- Community facilities – this included the school system, parks, recreation facilities, the library and other facilities and services that people feel contributed to their overall quality of life
- Open space – this included the overall concept of open space as well as specific open space areas

Conservation-Related Considerations

As part of these discussions, the following were identified as things people wanted to protect and preserve in Orange.

Topic	Consideration
Natural Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town is doing a good job protecting natural resources • Drainage issues are of increasing concern • Low impact development approaches to address drainage are definitely a consideration
Open Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preservation of open space is important to residents • Town should continue to be aggressive at preserving open space • Carefully manage the open spaces we have preserved • Orange should clarify “allowed uses” of each parcel preserved to manage expectations
Community Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preservation of character is important • Preserving character includes preserving open space / farms • People like the way Orange has developed • Orange has developed a reputation as a great place to raise a family (good schools, good recreation programs, reasonable taxes, good government) • Orange should try to preserve undeveloped land
Agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents still want to preserve farmland and farm uses

Development-Related Considerations

As part of these discussions, the following were identified as things people want to consider in terms of guiding future growth or change in Orange.

Topic	Consideration
Overall Approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents support the approach of residential areas to the north and economic areas to the south Residents want to keep this basic structure and overall balance People want development to enhance the overall quality of life TPZ wants to protect Route 34 in its present state as a rural highway
Residential Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents want to continue to protect residential neighborhoods Getting open space as part of any residential development is important to residents The time is coming for Orange to consider future housing needs and provide for housing options Residents may want to provide for housing diversity (especially for older residents)
Business Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents appreciate the strong tax base and access to goods and services Many people feel the appearance and function of commercial areas needs attention Residents want to upgrade Boston Post Road design and landscaping People feel better development should be promoted along the Post Road Desire has been expressed to create areas with a “sense of place”
Institutional Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents feel that having Yale University and the University of West Haven is an asset People would like to encourage a mutually beneficial relationship-
Special Places	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents may be interested in creating pedestrian-oriented, mixed use activity areas The community is interested in encouraging and supporting establishment of a train station

“Sorrys”

At an initial public meeting, residents were asked to think of things in Orange they were sorry about. The three most common categories of responses included:

- Business development – people attending the meeting indicated they were irritated that Orange did not have a major supermarket and that the overall character of Route 1 was not something they were comfortable with
- Residential development – people attending the meeting expressed irritation in the lack of housing options for senior citizens and some other housing issues
- Transportation – people attending the meeting expressed frustration over traffic and congestion on major roads as well as the lack of sidewalks

“Planning Points”

At an initial public meeting, residents were asked to prioritize the topics that might be included in a POCD. The rankings and the number of points received are presented below:

Community Character	275
Open Space	245
Community Facilities	215
Natural Resources	195
Business Development	165
Water/ Sewer / Utilities	125
Traffic and Circulation	120
Walking / Biking / Bus / Train	100
Community Structure	100
Residential Development	80
Housing Diversity	80
Special Resources	70

Infrastructure-Related Considerations

As part of these discussions, the following were identified as things people want to encourage or address as part of supporting the future conservation and development of Orange.

Topic	Consideration
Community Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community facilities support the overall quality of life and are a huge attraction to families Maintenance of community facilities we have is important Renovate High Plains Community Center making it a Cultural Center
Vehicular Circulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addressing traffic patterns on the Post Road is important as it is a problem area People want to have the Post Road operate as efficiently as possible Some residential areas are suffering from through traffic and easing traffic impacts is key People try various routes to get from the Derby to Orange, West Haven, and Milford
Pedestrian / Bicycle Circulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many people feel that enhancing pedestrian and bicycle opportunities would be great Some residents support sidewalks / walking paths / bikeways in appropriate areas
Bus / Train Circulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The community is interested in encouraging and supporting establishment of a train station
Utility Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> People want drainage issues addressed Residents wish certain utilities were available residential neighborhoods (public water, natural gas, and possibly sewers)