

# DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

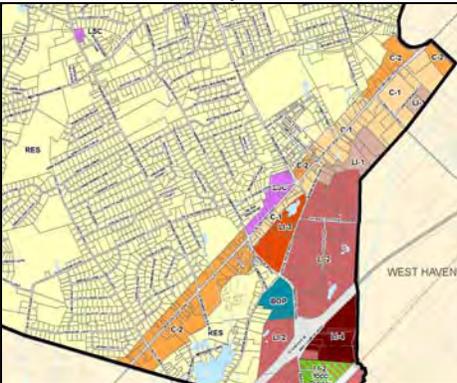
## Overview

Development themes addressed in the Plan of Conservation and Development include community structure, residential development, business development, institutional development and future growth.

Over time, properties in Orange will be developed and redeveloped. The form, location, and quality of development the takes place can have a significant impact on public health, safety, welfare, community character and spirit, and the overall quality of life. This booklet suggests strategies for guiding development in Orange in ways that balance public interests with private property rights.

*A key issue in the Plan is determining how to guide future development in Orange ...*

Community Structure



Residential Development



Business Development



Institutional Development





# COMMUNITY STRUCTURE

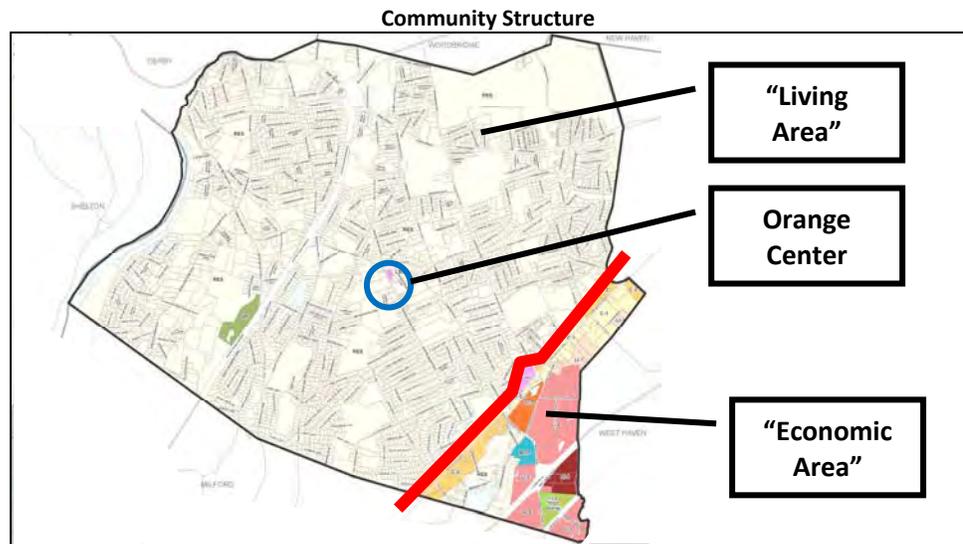
*Community structure is an important guide for land use regulations and decisions...*

## Continue Orange’s Historic Structure

Community structure (how land uses are organized in Orange) is an important consideration in the Plan because it sets the stage for many other planning discussions.

For many years, Orange’s overall land use philosophy has involved the establishment of a “living area” in the northern parts of Orange and an “economic area” in the southern parts of the community. This overall philosophy has remained intact for many years and has guided the overall development of the community. It has resulted in stable and attractive residential neighborhoods separated from business areas which provide jobs, goods and services, and tax base and support the community.

The Plan recommends that this overall philosophy and structure be continued.



Continue Orange’s Historic Structure		
Suggested Policies	Leader	Partners
1. Continue Orange’s historic structure.		

## Use Structure Elements To Enhance Character

Elements of structure can contribute to community character since people react positively to areas which have a strong “sense of place” or where they feel they comprehend how a place is organized.

Orange should try to preserve and enhance the following elements of structure which can enhance character:

Element	Description
<b>Nodes / Villages</b>	Identifiable focal points or places with distinctive characteristics (such as Orange Center).
<b>Clusters / Campus</b>	Identifiable areas (such as Yale West and UNH) identifiable by use, location, character, or style.
<b>Greenbelts</b>	Greenways, trails, streambelts and other linear elements that provide overall context to the community.
<b>Gateways</b>	Places providing a sense of entry or arrival.

On the other hand, Orange should try to avoid or minimize the following elements of structure which can detract from character:

Element	Description
<b>Strip Development Patterns</b>	Linear areas with automobile-oriented development patterns, especially commercial.
<b>Sprawl Development Patterns</b>	Large areas with little variation in style or character.

Use Structure Elements To Enhance Character		
Suggested Policies	Leader	Partners
1. Encourage elements that enhance community character (nodes, clusters, campuses, greenbelts, gateways, scenic resources, and scenic roads).		
2. Discourage elements that detract from community character (strip development, sprawl development, and "characterless" roads").		
3. Maintain effective buffers / transitions between different land uses.		

## Maintain The Ambience Of Orange Center

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Orange Center is the historic focal point of the community. It contains the Congregational Church, the Town Green, the Town Hall, a school, the library, and a small business area. It is where community parades are held.

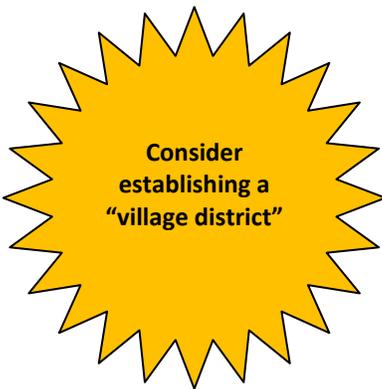
In terms of land use intensity, Orange Center is more of a “hamlet” than a village or a town center. However, this rural ambience reflects the agricultural heritage of the community and is integral to the overall character of the area. This distinctive character, landscape and historic value should be maintained.

One tool which is available to help preserve the character of this area is a “village district” as authorized by Section 8-2j of the Connecticut General Statutes. A “village district” allows the Town Plan and Zoning Commission to have greater control over the design of future development in this area and to regulate:

- the design and placement of buildings,
- the maintenance of public views,
- the design, paving materials and placement of public roadways, and
- other elements that the Commission deems appropriate to maintain and protect the character of the village district.

The Commission should consider establishing a “village district” in the Orange Center area. Since part of this area is within the local historic district, the Commission could:

- defer to the Historic District Commission on properties within the local historic, and
- refer applications to the Historic District Commission outside of the local historic district.



<b>Maintain The Ambience Of Orange Center</b>		
<b>Suggested Policies</b>	<b>Leader</b>	<b>Partners</b>
1. Maintain the overall ambience of Orange Center as a rural hamlet and a focal point for many civic activities.		
2. Ensure that any new development is of high quality and consistent with the character of Orange Center in terms of building design, site layout, signs, and lighting.		
<b>Suggested Initial Tasks</b>	<b>Leader</b>	<b>Partners</b>
3. Consider establishment of a “village district” overlay zone in the Orange Center area in order to be able to protect the overall character of this area.		

Orange Center



Business Area

Mary L. Tracy School

Town Hall

Congregational Church

Library

"Town Green"

Town Green



Community Parade





# HOUSING & RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

*Housing issues for consideration include:*

- *Protecting existing neighborhoods,*
- *Guiding future development, and*
- *Addressing future housing needs.*

## Overview

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Housing and residential development are important issues in the Plan. Approximately 80 percent of Orange is zoned for residential purposes and residents are committed to preserving and enhancing the character of residential neighborhoods.

During preparation of this Plan, the following issues were identified as potential key issues:

- Protecting existing neighborhoods
- Encourage conservation design of subdivisions
- Supporting the housing needs of an aging population
- Diversifying the housing portfolio

**Single Family**



**Multi-Family  
(Silverbrook)**



**Age-Based  
(Fieldstone)**



**Congregate / Assisted  
(Maplewood)**



## Protect Residential Neighborhoods

Orange is primarily a residential community. Approximately 80 percent of all land in the community is zoned for residential purposes and there are more than 5,000 households that call Orange their home.

Over the years, Orange has maintained a policy of separating the “living area” from the “economic area” and this philosophy has helped to foster strong residential neighborhoods. Orange should continue this policy in order to maintain the quality, livability and character of the community.

The zoning regulations seem appropriate for protecting residential neighborhoods and managing development on individual parcels in terms of the uses permitted and the dimensional standards that apply.

Protect Residential Neighborhoods		
Suggested Policies	Leader	Partners
1. Continue to maintain the quality, livability and character of the community.		
2. Maintain regulations requiring effective buffers / transitions between residential and non-residential uses.		

Transition By Use



Transition By Planting



## Encourage Conservation Design Of Subdivisions

### Conventional Design

A parcel of land that is divided into residential lots with little or no open space

### Conservation Design

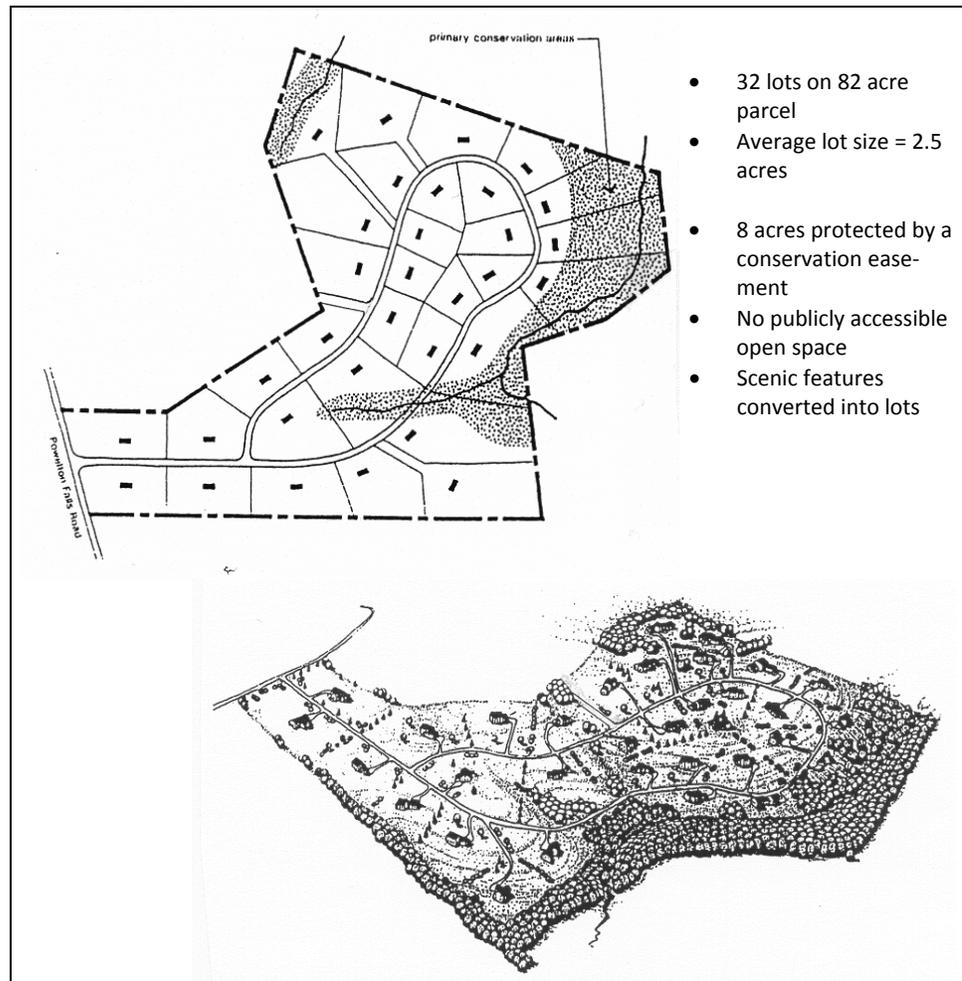
A parcel of land divided into roughly the same number of lots that are smaller in area than a conventional development and the remaining area is preserved or dedicated as open space.

Orange is not yet fully developed and there are some land parcels in Orange which could be subdivided into lots in the future. How this occurs could be important to preserving and enhancing the overall character of the community.

Orange may wish to consider encouraging “conservation design” of subdivisions (rather than “conventional design”) since a “conservation design” can help:

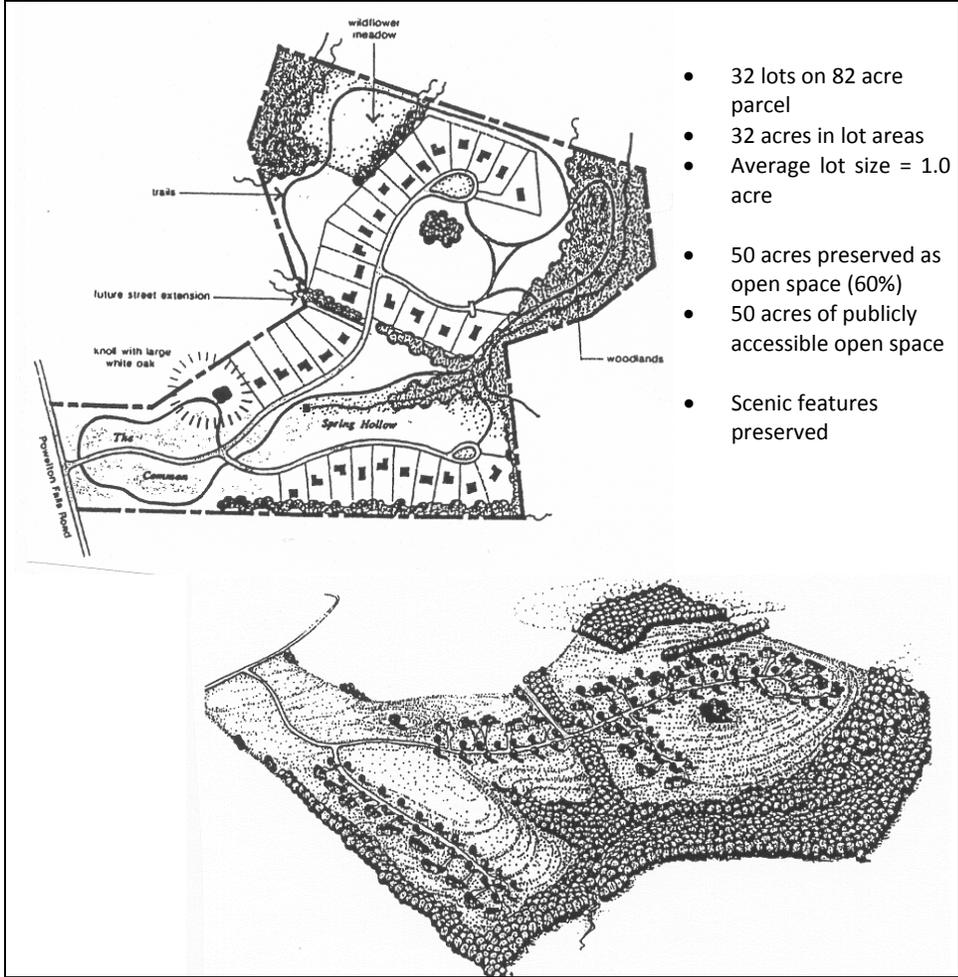
- Preserve more open space,
- Protect community character by retaining farm land, scenic views, scenic streetscapes, and
- Preserve important resource areas (wetlands, watercourses, steep slopes, existing trees, etc.) have been preserved.

Conventional Design Subdivision



The graphics on these pages illustrate how "conservation design" subdivisions are related better to the natural attributes of the land and characteristics of the community than "conventional design" development patterns:

**Conservation Design Subdivision**



Encourage Conservation Design Of Subdivisions		
Suggested Policies	Leader	Partners
1. Consider encouraging conservation design of future subdivisions as a way to help preserve open space and important features when development occurs		
Suggested Initial Tasks	Leader	Partners
2. Adopt a zoning regulation to permit conservation design subdivisions.		

## CASE STUDY

### Site Analysis Approach

The Town of East Granby adopted the following regulation to guide the site planning process. Rather than lay out lots first and then mitigate environmental impacts, it requires that important resources be identified first and then lots laid out.

1. Unless waived by the Town Planner, any application for a residential subdivision ... shall include the following materials prepared by a landscape architect, civil engineer, or surveyor licensed to practice in Connecticut:
  - a. a site inventory / analysis map as described below, and
  - b. an overall ... layout plan which responds to the site inventory / analysis map.
2. A pre-application meeting with Town Staff and the Commission is strongly encouraged.
3. If the Commission is not satisfied with the quality of the analysis submitted with the application, it may hire another landscape architect, civil engineer, or surveyor licensed to practice in Connecticut to prepare such analysis and charge the applicant for the cost of such services.
4. The site inventory / analysis map shall identify:
  - a. Primary Conservation Areas:
    - Wetlands, watercourses, and vernal pools,
    - steep slopes (15 percent or more), and
    - 100-year floodplain.
  - b. Secondary Conservation Areas ...:
    - areas within 50 feet of a wetland,
    - areas within 100 feet of a watercourse or a vernal pool,
    - 500-year floodplain,
    - Natural Diversity Database sites,
    - wildlife corridors, mature woodlands, notable individual trees (>18" DBH),
    - ridgelines, scenic views and vistas,
    - stone walls and /or farm hedgerows,
    - key resources identified in the Plan of Conservation and Development ...,
    - proposed open space areas, and
    - soils with moderate to high infiltrative capacities.
5. Areas of the site which are considered Primary Conservation Areas or Secondary Conservation Areas shall be considered for permanent protection which may include preservation as open space deeded to the Town, the ... Land Trust, or another conservation organization acceptable to the Commission.
6. Areas of the site which are not considered Primary Conservation Areas or Secondary Conservation Areas shall be considered potential development areas and lots, streets, trails, and other improvements may be sited in these areas.

## CASE STUDY

### Yield Determination

When laying out a conservation subdivision, communities have generally used one of the following methods to determine the number of lots which will be permitted:

- A design-based approach where a conceptual conventional subdivision is designed and tested (including septic testing) and the Commission authorizes the number of lots they believe are approvable for use in the conservation design.
- A mathematical approach where the zoning regulations are used to determine the maximum number of lots and the Commission then reviews and approves the feasibility of the conservation design based on this number of lots.

## CASE STUDY

### Environmentally-Friendly Site Planning

An appendix in the East Granby Subdivision Regulations encourages applicants to use the following site design process:

1. Obtain appropriate background information (topography, wetlands, etc.).
2. Create a base map of Primary and Secondary Conservation Areas.
3. Prepare plans for development of the site utilizing the following guidelines:
  - ***Avoiding impacts*** by protecting natural drainage systems, minimizing the extent of land clearing and disturbance of natural soils, preventing the compaction of natural soils, and preserving soils with infiltrative capacity.
  - ***Reducing impacts*** by maximizing the extent of pervious areas on the site, increasing the “time of concentration” of drainage systems, and utilizing low maintenance landscapes.
  - ***Managing impacts*** by using vegetated stormwater systems as close as possible to the source of the runoff, reducing the use of fertilizers and pesticides, and utilizing stormwater treatment systems to reduce pollutant loads and infiltrate runoff.
4. Utilize the following guidelines for site layout:
  - Have road and driveway alignments follow the existing contours to the maximum extent practical to minimize excessive cuts and fills,
  - Use vegetated road shoulders to accept and treat stormwater runoff as close to the paved surface as possible and reduce the size of drainage pipes
  - Layout site improvements (houses, driveways, etc.) in such a manner as to minimize site clearing, soil disturbance, and grading.
  - Preserve the infiltrative capacity of native soils by avoiding disturbing areas of the site where it is not necessary.

## Consider Ways To Help Address The Housing Needs Of An Aging Population

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Population projections indicate that Orange, like many other communities, will experience a marked rise in the number of older residents in the future. This is happening for two reasons:

- The overall life expectancy is increasing, and
- The “baby boom” generation (people born between about 1945 and 1965) is now reaching older age groups.

What this means is that a larger number of Orange households will be affected by the issues that often face older residents and this may require new programs or new ways of thinking.

While some residents will continue to live in their current residence, other people will seek housing options for:

- Health reasons – people may no longer be able to maintain their home (snow clearing, lawn mowing, leaf raking, etc.) or may experience a health change that affects their independence or mobility,
- Economic reasons – people may not have the financial resources to stay in their current home if their lifespan exceeds their income and savings,
- Lifestyle reasons – people may choose to relocate to housing which might offer common maintenance, lifestyle amenities (pool, golf, etc.), or other benefits, and/or
- Combination - a combination of reasons.

Cleaning Gutters



Universal Design



**Possible Policy Options For Addressing The  
Housing Needs Of An Aging Population**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Housing Options</b>	<b>Current Status</b>	<b>Possible Policy Options</b>
<b>Remain in Current Home</b>	1. Remain in current home and modify to meet needs.	Zoning regulations require setbacks and limit coverage and this could inhibit modifications to address changing needs.	By Special Permit, consider allowing modifications to homes to accommodate renovations for an aging population (handicapped ramps, caregiver services, first floor additions, energy efficiency, etc.)
	2. Remain in current home with no use of Town services.	No restrictions	Continue current policies
	3. Remain in current home with use of local senior programs.	No restrictions	Consider enhancing services and activities for senior citizens (meals-on-wheels, dial-a-ride, etc.)
	4. Remain in current home with elderly tax relief.	No restrictions	Consider enhancing elderly tax relief programs.
<b>Accessory Housing Units</b>	5. Remain in home with accessory unit for caretaker, caregiver, and/or income.	Accessory units permitted by Special Permit	Continue current policies
	6. Move in with family in their home or accessory unit.	Accessory units permitted by Special Permit	Continue current policies
<b>Multi-Family Housing</b>	7. Move to a market rate condominium or rental housing.	Only a modest number of units available in Orange (not permitted)	Consider allowing where consistent with soil types, terrain, infrastructure capacity, and overall community structure.
	8. Move to an age-restricted market-rate housing development.	Have existing development with 142 units (sale prices may not be affordable to typical Orange resident)	Consider allowing where consistent with soil types, terrain, infrastructure capacity, and overall community structure.
	9. Move to income-limited elderly housing development.	Have existing development with 45 units (has 8 year waiting period)	Consider ways of providing for more units to meet present and future community needs
<b>Institutional Facility With Services</b>	10. Move to facility providing some services: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• congregate living</li> <li>• assisted living</li> <li>• life care facility</li> <li>• nursing / convalescent home</li> </ul>	Have several facilities (Silverbrook, Maplewood, Orange Healthcare Center) but currently not permitted by regulations	Consider allowing such facilities in appropriate locations.

Consider the following:

- Silverbrook Estates (Red Cedar Road) provides 45 units of housing for persons of limited income and aged 62 and over. There is strong demand for units in the complex but the waiting list is estimated to be seven years. Even though Orange residents may need housing immediately, the wait period may mean that such housing is effectively unavailable.
- Fieldstone Village – (Grassy Hill Road at Route 34) -is a 142 unit community for persons aged 55 and over. The units are all market rate and the typical units are now selling for over \$400,000. While the design and amenities are attractive, the units are not affordable for a large number of Orange residents.
- There appear to be several “assisted living” facilities in Orange (such as “Maplewood” on Indian River Road at Prindle Hill and “Orange Healthcare” on Boston Post Road near Smith Farm Road) but additional facilities do not appear to be permitted by the regulations.

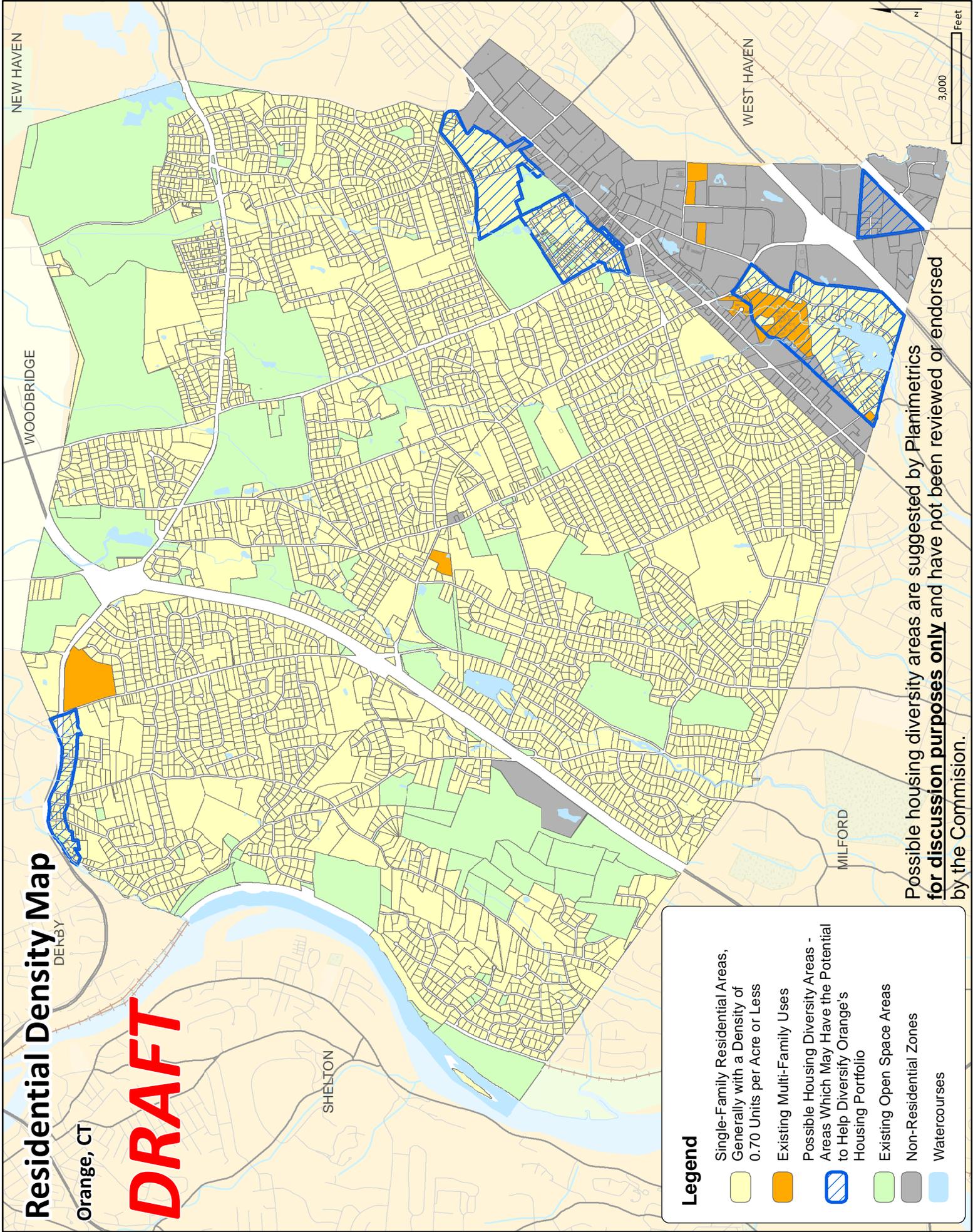
Orange may wish to explore housing alternatives for an aging population.

<b>Consider Ways To Help Address The Housing Needs Of An Aging Population</b>		
<b>Suggested Policies</b>	<b>Leader</b>	<b>Partners</b>
1. Consider allowing modifications to homes to accommodate renovations for an aging population.		
2. Consider enhancing services and activities for senior citizens (meals-on-wheels, dial-a-ride, etc.).		
3. Consider enhancing elderly tax relief programs.		
4. Maintain accessory apartment regulations.		
5. Consider allowing for multi-family development where consistent with soil types, terrain, infrastructure capacity, and overall community structure.		
6. Consider ways of providing for more income limited elderly housing units to meet present and future community needs.		
7. Clarify where and how residential facilities with services might be permitted.		

# Residential Density Map

Orange, CT

# DRAFT



Possible housing diversity areas are suggested by Planimetrics **for discussion purposes only** and have not been reviewed or endorsed by the Commission.

## Legend

- Single-Family Residential Areas, Generally with a Density of 0.70 Units per Acre or Less
- Existing Multi-Family Uses
- Possible Housing Diversity Areas - Areas Which May Have the Potential to Help Diversify Orange's Housing Portfolio
- Existing Open Space Areas
- Non-Residential Zones
- Watercourses

**Housing Needs**

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About 85 percent of the housing units in Orange are single-family, detached houses. While the “American dream” still includes a home on a good-sized private lot, such housing does not meet everyone’s needs.

The Plan recognizes that there is a need for diversification of housing types.

**Statutory Reference**

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“The Plan shall 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.”

“The Plan shall 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.”

CGS 8-23

**Consider Ways To Provide For Housing That Is More Affordable**

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The desirability of Orange has resulted in a housing stock that is becoming more expensive over time. While this may be perceived as beneficial to existing property owners, it is also resulting in the exclusion of people who have helped, or can help, Orange to be a more diverse community.

A lack of affordable housing can affect economic and social development of a community. Some young families may find it difficult to afford current Orange housing. Employees of Orange businesses and of the Town may find it difficult to afford to live in town. In other cases, reduction in income (retirement or job status changes) can make it difficult for people to afford to stay in Orange. Cultural and social diversity in the community is affected.

Orange residents have expressed an interest in finding ways to integrate more affordable housing into the existing fabric of the community to provide housing opportunities.

Providing for housing in Orange which is more affordable will allow us to:

- Address the housing needs of an aging population.
- Provide housing choices for existing residents so that they do not have to move elsewhere if their circumstances change.
- Offer more housing choices for younger people.
- Offer more housing choices for single people.
- Offer more housing choices for moderate income people who work in Orange.

**Avalon**



**Brookside**



There may also be some legal and practical reasons why Orange might want to consider diversifying its housing portfolio to include “affordable housing.” Without a diverse housing stock, Orange is subject to the “affordable housing appeals procedure.”

In 1989, Connecticut adopted the “Affordable Housing Appeals Procedure” (codified as Section 8-30g of the Connecticut General Statutes) which affects any municipality where less than ten percent of the housing stock is considered affordable (as defined in the statute). As of 2014, about 1.10 percent of the housing stock in Orange met the State criteria and so Orange is subject to the statute.

During this planning process, however, it was learned that some affordable housing units in Orange have not been included in the State database and so Orange may not be getting credit for units which have been created.

	# Units	# Affordable	Elderly
1. Silverbrook Phase 1 (Town Congregate Care) Red Cedar Road	45	45	45
2. Spruce Manor Peck Lane	32	8	32
3. Williamsburg Chase Silverbrook Road	22	6	0
4. Prindle Hill Terrace Indian River Road/Prindle Hill Road	40	8	40
5. Brookside South Lambert Road	15	4	0
6. Avalon Orange Prindle Hill Road	168	34	0
<b>Total number of units</b>	<b>322</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>117</b>

If Orange were to get credits for these units, it is possible that Orange would be eligible for a four-year moratorium as per CGS Section 8-30g(k).

If Orange is to be able to control its destiny and provide for development it feels is in character with its surroundings, then it should consider being proactive in terms of addressing affordable housing. It could help the community address housing needs in places and with designs it feels is appropriate.

**CGS 8-30g**

The following plain language is intended to provide an overview of the statutory provisions:

- When a developer proposes a “set-aside development”, the development is reviewed on the basis of its impact on the public health and safety rather than strict compliance with the local zoning regulations.
- Should a set-aside development be denied or be appealed, the development is presumed to be in the public interest and the “burden of proof” that it is not appropriate falls to the Planning and Zoning Commission and/or the person who appeals.
- If a set-aside development is approved with conditions which affect its affordability, the proponent may appeal and the “burden of proof” to defend the condition falls to the Planning and Zoning Commission.

Affordable housing appeals are heard by a special court and, since 1989, the majority of appeals have been decided in favor of the affordable housing developments.

Some basic approaches which Orange may wish to consider might include the following:

1. Consider whether there may be state and/or federal funding programs to allow Orange to create new affordable housing units in ways appropriate for the community (such as at Silverbrook).
2. Consider contributing or leasing Town-owned land as part of a partnership with a private developer to create affordable units.
3. Consider adopting one or more “inclusionary zoning” provisions which might require any development application or any applicant for a zoning permit to make provision for affordable housing by
  - Creating an affordable unit, or
  - Paying into a housing fund.
4. Consider adopting an “incentive housing zone” approach (CGS 8-13m) which might be more attractive to a developer than the “affordable housing appeals procedure” and which gives the Town more input into the regulations and the resulting development.
5. Consider modifying the accessory apartment regulations to require that such units be deed-restricted to rent at affordable prices (see CGS 8-30g(k)).
6. Consider adopting a local policy that any affordable unit in Orange shall be deed-restricted as affordable for a longer period (in perpetuity).
7. Consider adopting a model “Housing Affordability Plan” to be used in conjunction with any affordable housing development in Orange so that income qualification and occupancy changes are managed effectively.
8. Consider establishing a cooperative ownership program for income-eligible households (including existing elderly households) whereby the Town purchases and owns the land (leases back to the homebuyer for nominal fee) and affordability restrictions are filed on the land records.

<b>Consider Ways To Provide For Housing That Is More Affordable</b>		
<b>Suggested Policies</b>	<b>Leader</b>	<b>Partners</b>
1. Seek ways to provide for a more diverse housing stock.		
<b>Suggested Initial Tasks</b>	<b>Leader</b>	<b>Partners</b>
2. Consider whether there may be state and/or federal funding programs to allow Orange to create new affordable housing units in ways appropriate for the community.		
3. Consider contributing Town-owned land as part of a partnership with a private developer to create affordable units		
4. Consider adopting one or more “inclusionary zoning” provisions which might require any development application or any applicant for a zoning permit to make provision for affordable housing.		
5. Consider adopting an “incentive housing zone” approach (CGS 8-13m) which might be more attractive to a developer than the “affordable housing appeals procedure” and which gives the Town more input into the regulations and the resulting development.		
6. Consider modifying the accessory apartment regulations to require that such units be deed-restricted to rent at affordable prices (see CGS 8-30g(k)).		
7. Consider adopting a local policy that any affordable unit in Orange shall be deed-restricted as affordable for a longer period (in perpetuity).		
8. Consider adopting a model “Housing Affordability Plan” to be used in conjunction with any affordable housing development in Orange so that income qualification and occupancy changes are managed effectively.		
9. Consider establishing a cooperative ownership program for income-eligible households (including existing elderly households) whereby the Town purchases and owns the land (leases back to the homebuyer for nominal fee) and affordability restrictions are filed on the land records.		



# BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

## Overview

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In terms of the amount of business development, Orange has benefitted greatly from its location, transportation infrastructure, zoning, and the efforts of many people and organizations over the years. As a result:

- There are over 9,000 jobs in Orange according to the Connecticut Department of Labor,
- Orange residents have access to a wide variety of goods and services (there were over \$570 million dollars of retail sales in Orange in 2007), and
- About 21 percent of Orange’s tax base is made up of business uses and this helps support a variety of municipal services and programs.

The map on the facing page shows the configuration of the “economic area” in Orange. Orange has traditionally maintained a strong separation between the main business-zoned areas and the “living area” (residential zones) in the community.

In addition to these zones, there is a small “Local Shopping Center” (LSC) district in Orange Center and an “Office Park” (OP) district where the University of New Haven campus is located (former Hubbell corporate headquarters).

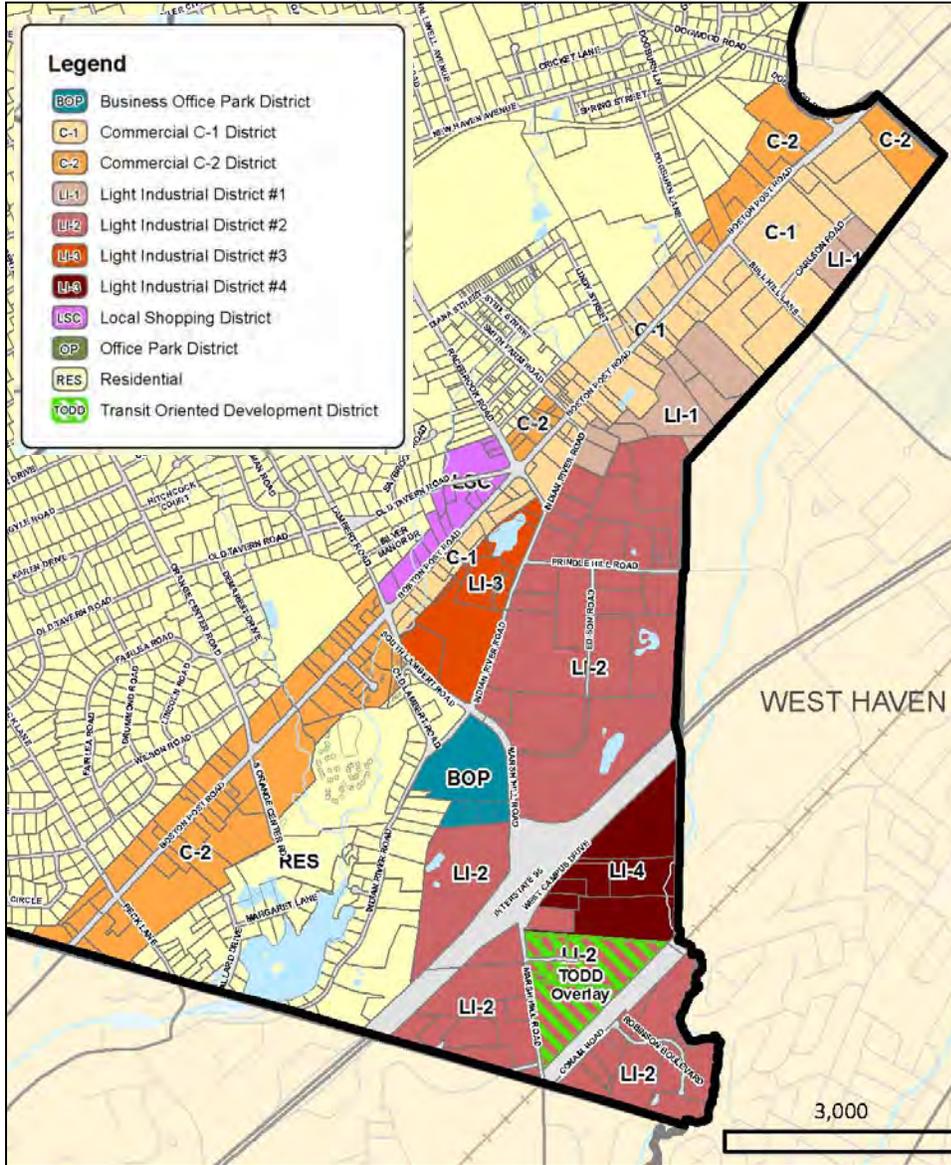
**PEZ Visitor Center**



**United Illuminating**



Existing Zoning In The "Economic Area"



LL Bean Store



Marriott Courtyard

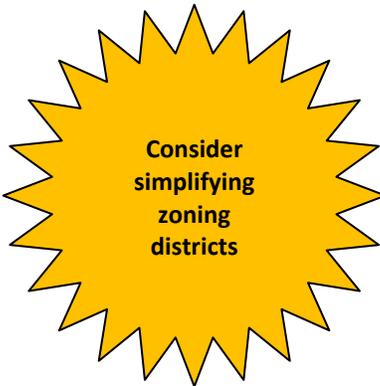


## Consider Simplifying The Business Zoning Approach

At the present time, Orange has ten business zones in the Zoning Regulations and nine business zoning districts on the zoning map. In many cases there are very subtle distinctions in permitted uses or dimensional standards between the zoning districts.

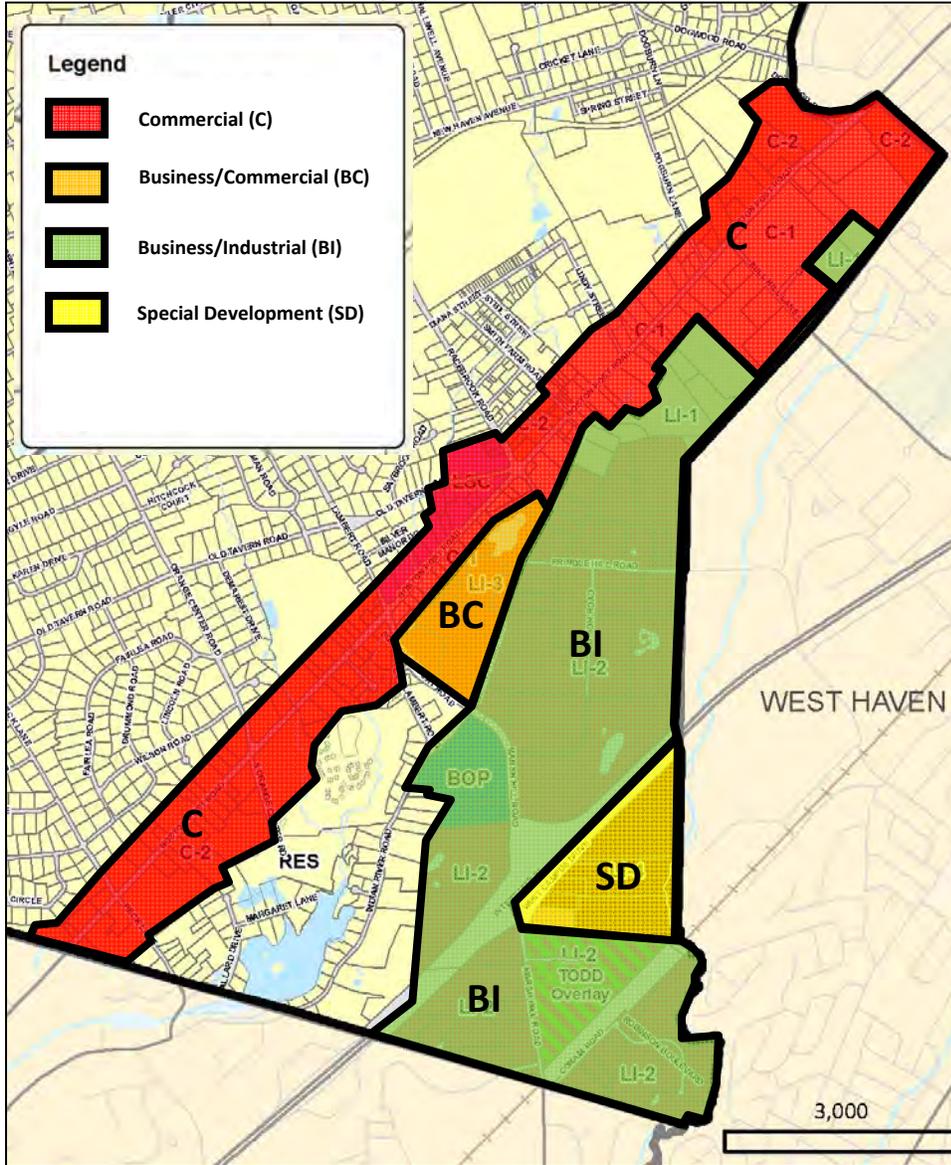
As part of this planning process, the Town Plan and Zoning Commission could review the different zoning districts and either affirm the current approach or consider an alternative zoning configuration. Simplifying the overall zoning scheme could remove impediments to business development.

**For discussion purposes**, the following approach might be considered:



1. **Neighborhood Business (NB)** - In Orange Center, consider renaming the Local Shopping Center (LSC) district to the Neighborhood Business (NB) district. The extent of the zone and the permitted uses would stay the same.
2. **Commercial (C)** - Along Route 1, consider merging the Commercial-1 (C-1), Commercial-2 (C-2), and Local Shopping Center (LSC) between Lambert Road and Racebrook Road together into a new zone called Commercial (C). The only distinctions between the C-1 and C-2 districts are as follows:
  - C-1 permits service stations and repair garages, C-2 does not (but both appear to permit gasoline sales by special permit),
  - C-1 permits contractor “shops” (plumbing, electrical, sheet metal, carpentry, etc.), C-2 does not, and
  - C-2 permits adult use establishments by special permit, C-1 does not
3. **Business-Industry (BI)** – Consider merging the Light Industrial-1 (LI-1), the Light Industrial-2 (LI-2), and the Business Office Park (BOP) together into a new zone called Business-Industrial (BI). The Commission should determine whether it feels the subtle use distinctions between these zones should be continued.
4. **Business-Commercial (BC)** – Consider renaming the Light Industrial 3 zone as Business Commercial (BC). This zone would continue to allow a mix of light industrial and commercial uses
5. **Special Development (SD)** – Consider merging the Light Industrial 4 and the Office Park districts into a Special Development (SD) district. These two zoning districts are for the Yale West Campus (LI-4) and the UNH Campus (OP). The uses and dimensional standards will be different for these two areas and this could be addressed in the regulation based on whether the use was east of I-95 or west of the Wilbur Cross Parkway.

Possible Zoning Approach In The "Economic Area"



**Consider Simplifying The Business Zoning Approach**

Suggested Initial Tasks	Leader	Partners
1. Review the current business zoning configuration to determine whether any changes are warranted.		
2. Consider incorporating purpose statements in each of the business zoning districts to help clarify their intent.		

## Continue To Promote Business Development

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Orange has been very fortunate in being able to attract the business development it has. In the future, Orange should continue to promote a vibrant economic base and continue to encourage well-planned development in the “economic area.”

While part of the past success relates to Orange’s location, transportation infrastructure and zoning, a lot of it has to do with the people who have helped make it happen. At the present time, the two main organizations that contribute to this effort include:

- The Orange Economic Development Corporation, and
- The Town’s Economic Development Commission.

The Orange Economic Development Corporation (OEDC) is a private, not-for-profit organization dedicated to fostering economic development in Orange. The OEDC works with the Town, realtors, State agencies and others to promote business development and encourage economic growth. The OEDC:

- helped push for the extension of Edison Road to connect from Marsh Hill Road to Prindle Hill Road and improve traffic circulation in this area,
- publishes a magazine (“Orange Life”) highlighting local businesses and activities which is delivered free to local households,
- sponsors local events to highlight local businesses,
- works to support existing businesses and attract new businesses.

The Town’s Economic Development Commission participates in many of these efforts and undertakes additional efforts to enhance the Town’s ability to attract retail, commercial, and industrial businesses including:

- a monthly electronic newsletter,
- an annual community and business exposition, and
- an annual broker’s tour.

These efforts should continue to be supported.

<b>Continue To Promote Business Development</b>		
<b>Suggested Policies</b>	<b>Leader</b>	<b>Partners</b>
1. Continue to promote a vibrant economic base in Orange.		
2. Continue to encourage well-planned development in the “economic area.”		
3. Continue to support the efforts of the Orange Economic Development Corporation and the Town’s Economic Development Commission.		

## Consider Promoting Redevelopment On Route 1

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Over the years, the character of Route 1 has changed:

- Front yard landscaping has been lost due to widening of the road to four and five lanes and with addition of turning lanes,
- Lower maintenance landscaping has, in some cases, turned into “no maintenance” landscaping
- Paved areas have deteriorated
- Some buildings (especially those on smaller lots) have not been upgraded.

At the present time, since there is a strong market for buildings along Route 1, it may not make financial sense for some property owners to renovate because they can get similar rents without investing any additional money in their property. In these kinds of situations, the overall character of the corridor and the community can suffer.

On the other hand, if there was a way to allow for additional floor space, property owners might then be inclined to renovate their properties because the additional floor space could increase their economic return. At the same time, it might be possible to get properties upgraded with more landscaping, renovated facades, and improved parking areas.

It may surprise some people to realize that it is parking requirements, not building coverage limits, which are the greatest limiter of development yield. In fact, in commercial areas, each square foot of building floor area can require one-and-a-half to two square feet of paved area.

**Ratio of Parking Area to Building Area**



Review of the parking requirements in the Orange Zoning Regulations suggests that it might be possible for Orange to reduce the parking standards for several use categories. These are the use categories which are most prevalent along Route 1:

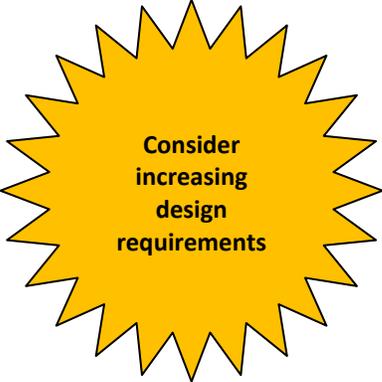
- Shopping centers (4.75 spaces per 1,000 SF)
- Retail stores (4.75 spaces per 1,000 SF)
- Restaurants (16 spaces per 1,000 SF of patron floor area)
- Offices (4 spaces per 1,000 SF)



Information from the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) and observation of parking areas along Route 1 suggest that the parking requirements in Orange may be requiring more spaces than are really needed. Even on the busiest shopping day of the year, Orange residents have observed that there is parking available at local stores.

At the same time as any change to the parking requirements, Orange could also upgrade local regulations to encourage or require the following:

- Front yard landscaping
- Parking lot landscaping (planted islands)
- Signage modifications (attached or detached)
- Lighting regulations
- Improved drainage (such as “low impact development”)



Orange could also consider establishing a “design review process” to enhance the overall design of Route 1 at the time of any redevelopment.

If Orange was to reduce the parking ratios for some of these uses and make some of the other regulation changes, it might create development opportunities for some properties along Route 1 and this could be a win-win situation:

Property Owners	Community
<p>More floor area                      More rental income                      Higher property value                      Enhanced character</p>	<p>Improved building facades                      More front yard landscaping                      More parking lot landscaping                      Improved pavement areas                      Low impact development (drainage)                      More tax base                      Enhanced character</p>

Before



After



Before



After



<b>Consider Promoting Redevelopment On Route 1</b>		
<b>Suggested Policies</b>	<b>Leader</b>	<b>Partners</b>
1. Promote redevelopment along Route 1.		
<b>Suggested Initial Tasks</b>	<b>Leader</b>	<b>Partners</b>
2. Consider reducing the parking requirements for certain uses.		
3. Consider modifying site development standards (landscaping, signage, drainage, lighting, etc.) to promote the enhancement of Route 1 should new development occur.		
4. Consider establishing a design review process to help guide the redevelopment of Route 1		

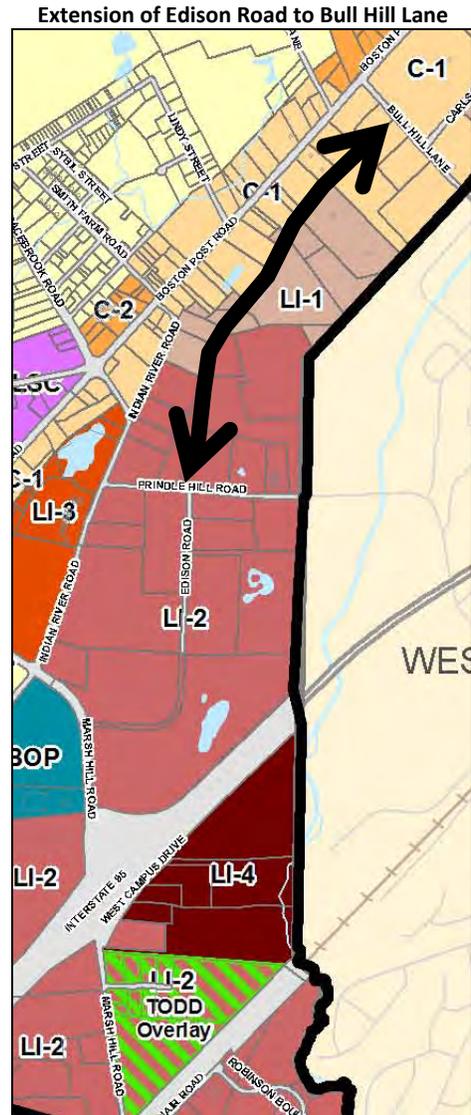
## Enhance Overall Traffic Circulation

With the completion of the Edison Road connection from Marsh Hill Road to Prindle Hill Road, Orange has made great progress in terms of enhancing traffic circulation in the “economic area.” This achievement has been recommended in Orange Plans since the mid-1960s and its benefits will become apparent.

Still, there are three additional traffic circulation improvements to be considered in the future:

- Seek to add additional turning lanes on Route 1,
- Access management (drive-way sharing, interconnected parking lots, and other approaches) on properties along Route 1, and
- Extension of Edison Road to Bull Hill Lane.

Portions of the eastern end of Route 1 have already been improved to include additional turning lanes. Although the Connecticut Department of Transportation does not currently have funding to continue this work, it should still be a priority.



Enhance Overall Traffic Circulation		
Suggested Policies	Leader	Partners
1. Continue to seek construction of additional turning lanes along Route 1.		
2. Continue to encourage or require driveway sharing, interconnected parking lots, and other access management approaches along Route 1.		
3. Seek to continue Edison Road to Bull Hill Lane.		

## Enhance Pedestrian Circulation

There is little doubt that Route 1 is not a hospitable place for a pedestrian. Yet, more and more people are interested in walking and Orange could start to make provisions for pedestrians in its business areas. This can include sidewalks or pedestrian walkways which will allow people to walk to destinations or for recreation in a safe way.

**Walking On The Shoulder**



**Walking In The Roadway**



Enhance Overall Pedestrian Circulation		
Suggested Policies	Leader	Partners
1. Seek ways to enhance pedestrian circulation in business areas.		

## Consider Managing Non-Conformities

There are several situations in Orange where there are non-conforming business uses in residential and business zones. Some communities have concluded that the approach of “eliminating non-conformities over time” has not proven particularly successful since such uses tend to persist and can deteriorate over time. As a result, some of these communities have adopted language allowing non-conforming uses and/or buildings to be modified over time (by Special Permit) provided that the Commission finds that such modification will make the use more compatible with the neighborhood and the community. The Commission may wish to discuss whether they have any interest in a similar approach in Orange.

Consider Managing Non-Conformities		
Suggested Policies	Leader	Partners
1. Consider whether to provide an opportunity to manage non-conforming uses.		



# INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

*Institutional development in Orange includes:*

- *Yale West*
- *UNH Business School*
- *Churches*
- *Schools*

## **Guide Institutional Development**

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A number of institutional facilities are located in Orange and indications are that the zoning regulations and development standards are effective in ensuring compatibility with their surroundings.

**Yale University - West Campus** – Yale University acquired the former Bayer Pharmaceutical complex in 2007 and is utilizing the campus as a multi-disciplinary education and research center. The 20 buildings and 1.6 million square feet at Yale West (most of the buildings are in West Haven) are being used for everything from cutting edge scientific projects to educational programs to storing ancient artifacts. A shuttle runs every hour connecting this campus to the main campus in New Haven and the Yale West campus will benefit from the proposed Orange rail station which will be nearby.

The Campus in the Light Industrial 4 (LI-4) zoning district and is the only area so zoned in Orange. The zoning regulations allow for the uses contemplated by Yale. Additional use changes could be contemplated in the future as the campus evolves.

**Yale West Campus**



**University of New Haven - Orange Campus** – The University of New Haven acquired the former Hubbell corporate headquarters complex in 2013 for use as a campus for some of its graduate programs. The 46-acre property currently has 70,000 square feet of floor space and additional space could be added in the future. The existing building overlooks a pond and is visible from the Wilbur Cross Parkway.

The Campus in the Office Park (OP) zoning district and is the only area so zoned in Orange. The zoning regulations allow for the uses located there and will support additional uses in the future. The floor area limitation (20%) and lot coverage limitation (30%) ensure that the campus will remain a lower intensity use due to its location within a residential district.

UNH - Orange Campus



**Churches And Other Institutional Uses** – At the present time, churches and other institutional uses are allowed in the Residence district if the Town Plan and Zoning Commission grants a Special Use Permit. The review criteria contained in the zoning regulations (sections 383-136 and 383-137) appear to provide adequate guidance to the Commission at this time.

Guide Institutional Development		
Suggested Policies	Leader	Partners
1. Continue to guide institutional development to enhance the community and its overall quality of life.		



# POSSIBLE NEW DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

*Orange also has some potential new development opportunities:*

- *Transit-oriented development*
- *Town center development*

## Encourage Transit-Oriented Development

For a number of years, the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CT-DOT) has been investigating the establishment of a commuter train station in Orange along the Metro-North New Haven line. The station would be located in the extreme southern end of Orange near the intersection of Salemme Lane and Marsh Hill Road.

The New Haven line provides daily rail service between New Haven and Grand Central Terminal in New York. A train station in Orange would make Metro-North rail service more convenient for Orange residents and provide ample parking (very near Exit 41 on Interstate 95) to support rail commuters from other communities. A lack of convenient parking has been one of the main challenges along the New Haven line for many years.

Overall there are anticipated to be benefits to the community from development of the train station:

- Convenience to residents,
- Convenience for employees of local businesses,
- Support of local enterprises (such as the Yale West campus)
- Attractive of future businesses,
- Generator of traffic which can help support local businesses

Concept Plan



At this time, the proposal being considered by CT-DOT involves private construction of the train station and a parking structure in conjunction with private development of commercial space and about 250 rental apartments. The State would lease the improvements for 40 years and then obtain ownership.

In 2009, a “zoning review study” prepared for the Town Plan and Zoning Commission recommended consideration of high density mixed use development in this location provided that such development was “firmly tied” to the construction of the railroad station. In 2010, the Commission adopted a Transit-Oriented Development District regulation (codified as Section 383-216 of the Zoning Regulations) and established a Transit-Oriented Development District Overlay zone which contained similar language.

Orange should continue to support development of a train station in Orange and promote transit-oriented development in and around the train station.

Rendering



<b>Encourage Transit-Oriented Development</b>		
<b>Suggested Policies</b>	<b>Leader</b>	<b>Partners</b>
1. Continue to support development of a train station in Orange.		
2. Continue to promote transit-oriented development in and around the train station.		

## Consider Town Center-Type Development

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While Orange Center has been the civic and governmental focal point in the community for many years, Orange does not really have a Town Center where people can walk around a pedestrian-friendly mixed-use area. As part of this planning process, the Town Plan and Zoning Commission may wish to consider whether they wish to encourage this type of development in the future.

One area which may have potential for consideration for redevelopment in this way is the area around the intersection of the Post Road in the Racebrook / Old Tavern / Indian River area. **Please note, this is not a specific recommendation for this area. Rather, it is intended to be an illustration of an alternative development approach which Orange may wish to consider.**

Consider the following:

1. This area is somewhat challenged at the moment because Racebrook Road is a main roadway connecting many Orange neighborhoods (and Woodbridge) to Route 1 and Interstate 95.
2. Traffic operations at the intersection with Route 1 are challenged by the fact that it is a “five-cornered” intersection because of Old Tavern Road coming in.
3. Some of the uses in this area are challenged by small lots and shallow lots with individual driveways and/or poor visibility.
4. The Indian River travels through this area but it is not particularly visible or accessible.
5. The transition between residential uses is handled by a planted buffer rather than by a natural transition such as a watercourse.

Route 1 View  
(looking NW)



Racebrook Road View  
(looking S)



Existing Conditions



Old Tavern Road View  
(looking SE)



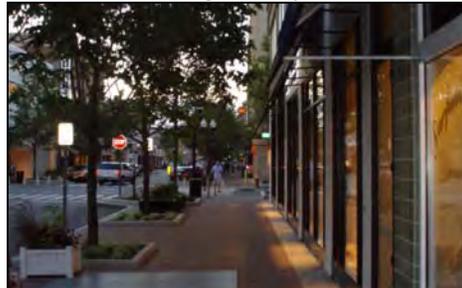
Route 1 View  
(looking NE)



An option to consider might be more like what is illustrated below:

1. Old Tavern Road is rerouted north to create a new intersection with Racebrook and continue further east as a new “Main Street.”
2. This new “Main Street” is intended to be a pedestrian friendly walking street with on-street parking, wide sidewalks, and active uses along the street (shop windows, restaurants, outdoor dining, etc.).
3. Additional parking areas are located to the rear of buildings.
4. A “riverwalk” is created along the Indian River.
5. Uses closer to Route 1 (south) would more likely be retail and office while uses to the north would more likely be residential apartments and/or condominiums.
6. This 48 acre area has about 430,000 SF of building coverage and between about 860,000 and 1,075,000 SF of floor area depending on whether the buildings are two- or two-and-a-half stories.
7. The overall yield of about 20,000 SF/acre is roughly double what is achieved in other zones along Route 1.

**Village Concept**



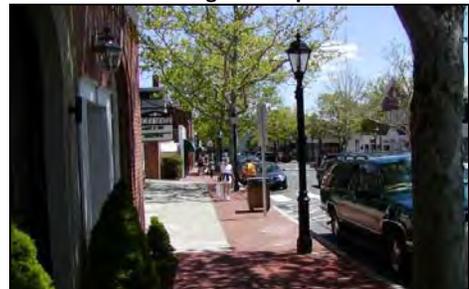
**Village Concept**



**Village Concept**



**Village Concept**



<b>Consider Town Center-Type Development</b>		
<b>Suggested Initial Tasks</b>	<b>Leader</b>	<b>Partners</b>
1. Consider whether the Commission might wish to suggest Town Center-type development in the POCD.		

**Illustrative Concept (For Discussion Purposes Only)**



*Fuss & O'Neill*

**Potential "Main Street" Cross Section**

