

**HAMDEN  
PLAN OF CONSERVATION  
AND  
DEVELOPMENT**

**Adopted: July 6, 2004  
Effective: September 1, 2004**

## **Acknowledgements**

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Mayor Carl A. Amento

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| Regional Water Authority                    | Solid Waste and Recycling Commission |
| Clean and Green Commission                  |                                      |

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|   |   |
|---|---|
| Dunbar Hill Civic Association                 | Sleeping Giant Neighborhood Association |
| East Side Civic Association                   | Spring Glen Civic Association           |
| Greater Hamden Plains/Wintergreen Association | Whitneyville Civic Association          |
| North Edgehill Association                    | Westwoods Neighborhood Association      |

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### APPENDIX

#### A. List of POCD Memoranda

# I. INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

## A. HAMDEN HISTORY

Hamden is a community composed of nearly 57,000 people living in 23,000 housing units located throughout the 33.1 square miles of the Town. 28,000 Hamden residents work in Hamden or the region. Hamden has 1,400 businesses which employ nearly 20,000 non-farm workers from Hamden and the region.

Hamden, as part of the New Haven Colony, was first settled by Europeans in the 1640's. Hamden received permission from the Connecticut General Assembly to incorporate as a town in 1786.

Eli Whitney established the Whitney Armory at Lake Whitney in 1798. In the following years, Eli Whitney became famous as the pioneer of interchangeable parts which made mass production possible. Today, the Eli Whitney Museum at the entrance to Hamden from New Haven brings alive Hamden's past legacy of innovation to the school children of today.

In 1860, Eli Whitney, Jr. built a dam on Lake Whitney establishing the first reservoir for the newly created New Haven Water Company. Plans are currently under way to replace the Lake Whitney Water Treatment Facility, which went off-line in August 1991, with a new treatment plant and re-establish Lake Whitney as an active water supply source.



Hamden Town Hall

Through 1920, Hamden was a mostly rural community of less than 20,000 population.

The present Memorial Town Hall was dedicated in 1924 to the local war dead up through World War I.

The main roads in Hamden in the early 1900's were Whitney Avenue and Dixwell Avenue extending out from the City of New Haven.

Farming was the main industry of the day. Hamden High School was built among the apple orchards on Dixwell Avenue in the 1930's.

The nineteen forties saw the World War II mobilization effort. War munitions were manufactured at the High Standard plant in Highwood and guns were tested by Olin at the Powder Farm in

Whitneyville. The Wilbur Cross Parkway was extended through Hamden in 1948-49.

By 1950, the population of Hamden had grown to 30,000.

In 1955, the Hamden Plaza, the first regional shopping center in the State of Connecticut opened on Dixwell Avenue.

By 1960, the population of Hamden had grown to more than 40,000.

The Town prepared its first formal Plan of Development in 1964. The Hamden Town Charter was revised in 1965. The Representative Town Meeting – Board of Selectmen form of government was replaced by a Mayor – Legislative Council form of government.

In the 1960's, Interstate 91 was built along the eastern border of Hamden allowing better access to Hartford and Boston.

Four new elementary schools were built to accommodate the baby boom children: Wintergreen, Ridge Hill, Shepard Glen, and West Woods.

By 1970, the population of Hamden was almost 50,000.

During the 1970's, Hamden residents were divided over a proposal to build a new regional shopping center on 137 acres off Evergreen Avenue. Over the ensuing years, several alternative proposals were put forward culminating in the approval in 1989 of the Town Walk residential complex off Evergreen Avenue. Now completed, it includes single family, multi-family residential units and an elderly care facility.

The 1970's saw an increase of more than twenty percent in the housing units in Hamden resulting from the smaller households and changing living patterns in the Town.

The opening of the Mount Carmel connector to I-91 late in the 1970's hastened housing development in the West Woods area in Hamden.

The Town invested in infrastructure improvements which led to the development of the Sherman Valley Industrial Area.

Overall population growth was slow between 1970 and 1980 despite the twenty percent increase in housing units. In 1980, Hamden's population stood at almost 51,000.

The Center of Town underwent a transformation as the Hamden Center office complex was developed in the early 1980's. The Town assisted in this project with land acquisition, sidewalks, street lighting improvements and the development of the mini-park opposite Freedom Park.

The 1964 Plan of Development was replaced with the 1981 Plan of Development. The 1967 Zoning Regulations were replaced with the 1982 Zoning Regulations.

The new Miller Library/Cultural Center was opened in 1980.

During the 1980's and 90's as well as the early 21<sup>st</sup> century, major planning issues debated included: the reuse of the former Sleeping Giant Junior High School with its ultimate conversion for age restricted residential condominiums and office space; the development of the Hamden Industrial Park which is now fully occupied; the proposed expansion of the sanitary landfill on State Street which was defeated; the need for a new police/fire headquarters facility and where to build it; the need to renovate the 1924 Town Hall facility; the reuse of the former water reservoir at Lake Wintergreen which is now part of West Rock Ridge State Park; the reuse of the former Farmington Canal and railroad right of way which is now the successful Farmington Canal Greenway; what to do with the underutilized commercial use site in Spring Glen on the east side of Whitney Avenue at Haverford Street and how to preserve and clean up contamination on the Olin Powder Farm property between Leeder Hill Drive, Putnam Avenue and Treadwell Street which continues as an issue today.

The status of the 1935 Hamden High School facility was debated resulting in a major demolition and addition project in 1997 to create a modern facility while retaining the original historically significant building.

The portion of Dixwell Avenue known as the "Magic Mile" was the subject of much community discussion. A proposal for a major regional mall was rejected with ultimate construction of Super Stop and Shop and related retail in the early 1990's. Major turnovers occurred in retailers with Steinbeck's, Bradlees and Caldors being replaced by Bon Ton, Wal-Mart and Kohls.

Major improvements in the 1990's were made to the public school facilities including the construction of new Helen Street and Church Street schools, authorization to build a new Spring Glen School, renovations to Bear Path School and the Wintergreen School to

create a magnet school and varying levels of improvements to other elementary schools.

The town office facility issue was addressed with the purchase and renovation of a building to establish a new Government Center at Dixwell and Evergreen Avenues.

Open space acquisitions continued throughout the 1980's, 90's and into the 21<sup>st</sup> century at the state and local level. These acquisitions included expansion of West Rock Ridge Park, Brooksvale Park, Naugatuck State Forest and the Farmington Canal Trail.

While this plan was under development, the Town addressed the issue of the need for improvement or replacement of the Middle School. The decision was made to place the school within a portion of Meadowbrook with enhancement of the balance of the site as a town center green and park. Issues related to the remediation of environmental contamination at the existing middle school site continue to be addressed by the responsible parties.

The issue of continued residential growth particularly in the northern part of Town has remained a constant throughout the last 2 decades.

## **B. WHAT IS A PLAN OF CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT?**

Chapter 126, Section 8-23, of the Connecticut General Statutes requires that a planning and zoning commission "*prepare, adopt and amend a plan of conservation and development for the municipality*". The purpose of a Plan of Conservation and Development is to record the best thinking of the Town as to its future growth and to give direction to both public and private development. The Plan should encompass a long-term vision of the community but also offer guidance for short-term decision making.

***Plan of Conservation  
and Development has  
a ten year focus***

While future oriented, a Plan of Conservation and Development reflects the goals and objectives of a community at a point in time, changes in economic conditions, lifestyles, goals and objectives of a community. In recognition of this, the State statutes require that the Plan be updated at least every 10 years.

## **C. PLAN UPDATE PROCESS**

In early 2001, the Town began the process of reviewing and updating its 1990 Plan of Conservation and Development adopted in 1991. Over the past two years the Planning and Zoning Commission has received several individual plan elements that covered various topics

ranging from natural resources to economic development. Each of these plan elements provided background information, conditions maps, an analysis of trends and conditions since the completion of the 1990 Plan, and goals and recommendations for future actions. These documents were posted on the Town website for citizen review and comment. Because of the extent of the information provided, these plan elements serve as technical background for the contents of this Plan. These elements are on file in the Planning and Zoning office as well as Miller Library.

The Plan Elements prepared as part of the Plan Update Process are:

- GIS Mapping Phase (June 2001)
- Natural Resources Inventory (November 2001)
- Land Use Element (February 2002)
- Demographic Overview (February 2002)
- Hamden Town Center: Strategy for the Future (May 2002)
- Housing Element (October 2002)
- Parks Recreation, & Open Space (October 2002)
- Community Facilities and Infrastructure (February 2003)
- Transportation & Circulation (February 2003)
- Dixwell-Whitney Corridor Component (February 2003)
- Economic Development (February 2003)
- Generalized Land Use Plan (March 2003)

The key components of the Plan of Conservation and Development are the guiding Vision Statement, Goals and Objectives, the Generalized Land Use Plan and the Action Agenda which details implementation steps.

The Vision Statement was part of the 1990 Plan and remains relevant today. Community goals and objectives were established as a means to present clear and concise direction to guide future development and redevelopment. These goals and objectives reflect past Town plans, information compiled from planning and existing condition analyses; reports and study elements presented during the Plan of Conservation and Development Update process; existing land use patterns; future projections and community input. These goals and objectives will serve to guide Hamden's development and conservation activities over the next ten years and beyond.

The Plan of Conservation and Development and its associated Generalized Land Use Plan serve to guide the Town's future conservation and development efforts as an advisory or policy-guidance document. Key to the successful implementation of the Plan is the creation of Zoning and Subdivision Regulations, design

guidelines and/or implementation techniques which explicitly outline and enforce the “future visions” described in the Plan.

#### **D. VISION STATEMENT**

From its humble beginning as part of the New Haven Colony in 1638 and later incorporation as a town in 1786 with a population of some 1,400 “souls”, Hamden has grown to become home to nearly 57,000 residents. Over this span of some 365 years, one characteristic has endured: its neighborhoods. Many of these date back to its earliest beginning and others have formed around the intersections of main roads or shopping areas. These neighborhood communities still characterize the town and attract residents from the surrounding New Haven metropolitan area. They offer residents a mixture of housing types as well as shops, open spaces, schools and a sense of history. The preservation and enhancement of these neighborhoods is vital to preserving the quality of life in Hamden.

The town now stands at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century at a critical juncture in its long history. Hamden’s land area is nearing “build out”; the town is fast approaching having no land on which to expand. Many parcels are already being redeveloped. Hamden has a rich and varied resource base that contributes to its high quality of life, but it also has shortcomings, especially in the area of employment opportunities, non-residential tax base and a lack of focus along its major corridors. Concentrating appropriate mixed-use development in the Town Center area can help reinforce its role as the focal point for the Town.

The guiding principles for community growth in the next decade are:

- Robust neighborhoods served by nearby commercial districts
- Preservation and access to the natural environment
- Economic vitality
- A vibrant livable Town Center
- Transportation that serves the community



## **II. THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT**

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

Understanding the existing land use patterns of the Town is an important component to the Plan of Conservation and Development. Knowledge of where specific types of uses are located, particularly on a parcel basis, can help local officials identify areas that may have potential for economic development or open space protection. This section describes the existing land use composition of Hamden. In addition, an analysis that assesses the Town's capacity to accommodate new residential and non-residential development is also provided.

### **B. LAND USE PATTERNS**

The Town of Hamden has a total area of approximately 21,000 acres or 33 square miles. This area includes a variety of land uses including industrial, commercial, residential, institutional, and open space. As stated in the 1990 Plan of Conservation and Development, the town was historically a rural agricultural community. Because of the Town's proximity to New Haven and the transportation corridors of the Wilbur Cross Parkway and Interstate 91, Hamden has become more heavily developed through the years.

Increased residential development in the 1970's had a great affect on the overall land use fabric of the town. Up until this time, much of the residential growth had occurred in the southern tier of the Town. However, this pattern began to change in the decades following the 1970's as the opening of the Mount Carmel Connector to I-91 hastened housing development in northern Hamden.

Today, the Town continues to grow and contains a diverse mix of residential, commercial and industrial land uses. Hamden has become an attractive town to live, in part because the Town offers both suburban and rural living with convenient access to jobs, shopping and transportation. The Town's primary commercial areas are located along the upper Whitney Avenue corridor (north of the Wilbur Cross Parkway) and the upper and lower Dixwell Avenue corridor. The most notable recent commercial activity has taken place along the upper Dixwell Avenue corridor around Hamden Plaza. This area is experiencing both turnover in retail uses and new business moving into the community. Smaller, neighborhood based retail areas can also be found in the Spring Glen and Whitneyville neighborhoods. Industrial uses are primarily found along State

Street, lower Dixwell Avenue (Columbus Street), and Sherman Avenue.

### **Land Use Inventory**

In order to accurately assess the composition and distribution of the Town's land use categories, a digital base map was prepared for the Town in conjunction with this plan. Using the digital base map, it was possible to attach property records from the assessor's database to corresponding parcels on the map. Using this technique, the current land use of each parcel was inventoried and categorized as depicted on the "*Existing Land Use Map*".

***Hamden is primarily a residential community with 55% of its land developed***

Hamden is primarily a residential community with 55% of its land developed. Table 1 displays the total acreage of each land use subcategory found within the Town. The top three land use categories are Single Family Residential at 31.3%, Open Space at 23.5%, and Vacant Land at 12.6%. In total, approximately 55% of the land in Hamden is in a developed category, while 45% is categorized as Open Land and Vacant Land. Within the Open Land category, the open space subcategory represents land protected from future development. At 23.5% of the Town's land area it exceeds the State's goal of 20% for open space. For a town of Hamden's size and maturity a relatively small percentage of land (5.4%) is in commercial or industrial use. Because commercial and industrial uses are located adjacent to the Town's main arterial roadways, the Town appears to be much more commercially developed than, in fact, it is.

For the purposes of this Plan of Conservation and Development update, the following definition of mixed-use development is recognized: A single building containing more than one type of land use, typically a mix of residential and commercial use, or a single development on a parcel containing more than one building and use, where the different types of land uses are in close proximity, planned as a unified complimentary whole, and functionally integrated into the use of shared vehicular and pedestrian access and parking areas.

**Table 1  
Existing Land Use: 2002**

| <b>Category</b>                                | <b>Number of<br/>Parcels</b> | <b>Area in Acres</b> | <b>% of Total</b> |
|--|------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Residential</b>                             | <b>14,592</b>                | <b>7,459</b>         | <b>35.3%</b>      |
| Single Family                                  | 13,408                       | 6,608                | 31.3%             |
| Two, Three or Four Family                      | 1,055                        | 207                  | 1.0%              |
| 5+ Family                                      | 78                           | 285                  | 1.4%              |
| Condominiums                                   | 51                           | 359                  | 1.7%              |
| <b>Commercial</b>                              | <b>530</b>                   | <b>539</b>           | <b>2.6%</b>       |
| Retail Sales/Service                           | 178                          | 267                  | 1.3%              |
| Auto Sales/Service                             | 95                           | 57                   | 0.3%              |
| Office   | 101                          | 101                  | 0.5%              |
| Professional/Financial Services                | 9                            | 6                    | 0.0%              |
| Medical or Nursing Home                        | 24                           | 60                   | 0.3%              |
| Mixed Commercial/Residential                   | 116                          | 36                   | 0.2%              |
| Other Commercial                               | 7                            | 12                   | 0.1%              |
| <b>Industrial</b>                              | <b>204</b>                   | <b>606</b>           | <b>2.9%</b>       |
| Manufacturing                                  | 59                           | 157                  | 0.7%              |
| Wholesale/Distribution/Heavy Commercial        | 123                          | 218                  | 1.0%              |
| Extraction                                     | 4                            | 40                   | 0.2%              |
| Public Utility (electric, telephone, TV/radio) | 18                           | 191                  | 0.9%              |
| <b>Institutional</b>                           | <b>316</b>                   | <b>1,397</b>         | <b>6.6%</b>       |
| Town Facility & Other Town Owned Land*         | 98                           | 415                  | 2.0%              |
| State/Federal Owned Land                       | 55                           | 268                  | 1.3%              |
| Private Institution                            | 163                          | 714                  | 3.4%              |
| <b>Open Land Use</b>                           | <b>248</b>                   | <b>6,807</b>         | <b>32.3%</b>      |
| Open Space**                                   | 135                          | 4,959                | 23.5%             |
| Cemeteries                                     | 12                           | 64                   | 0.3%              |
| Agriculture                                    | 64                           | 702                  | 3.3%              |
| Watershed (RWA Owned Land)                     | 37                           | 1,082                | 5.1%              |
| <b>Vacant Land</b>                             | <b>839</b>                   | <b>2,663</b>         | <b>12.6%</b>      |
| <b>Transportation</b>                          | <b>48</b>                    | <b>1,638</b>         | <b>7.7%</b>       |
| Roads, Parking and Railroads***                | 48                           | 1,638                | 7.7%              |
| <b>TOTAL ACREAGE: Town of Hamden</b>           |                              | <b>21,109</b>        | <b>100.0%</b>     |

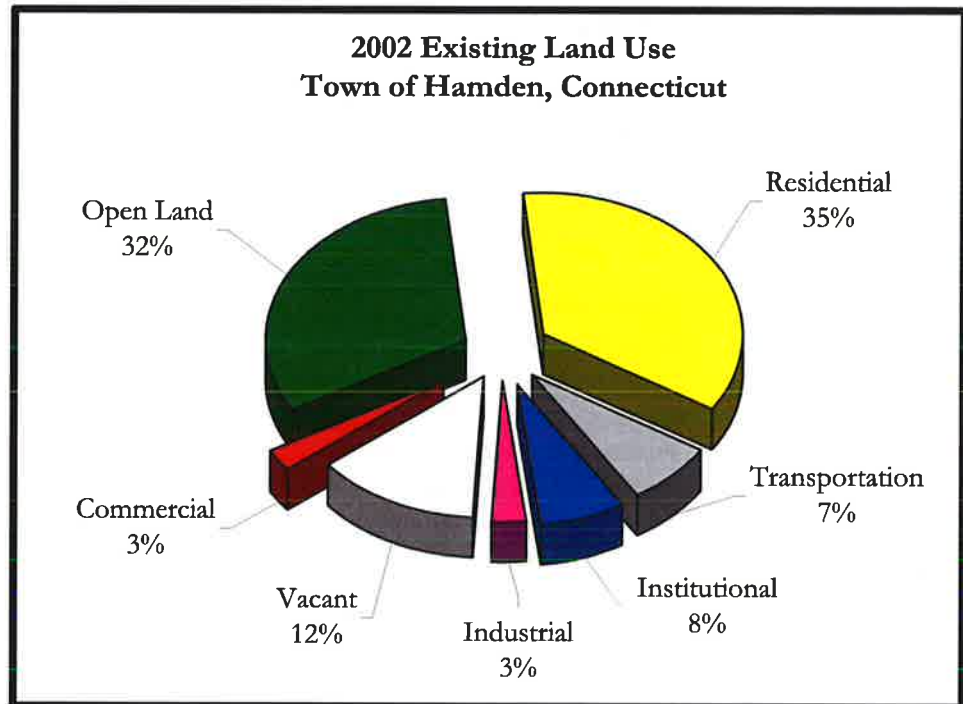
\*Includes town facilities (public schools, police station, fire station, public works, etc.) as well as other town owned property not otherwise classified

\*\*Includes town owned parks & recreation areas, state owned parks & recreation areas, golf courses, flood control areas, state owned development rights and wildlife areas.

\*\*\*Estimated road area

Source: Town of Hamden Assessors Department 2001, Compiled by HMA, Inc.

The figure below illustrates the use of land within Hamden by major land use category.



The figure above shows that Hamden is primarily a residential community consisting of a diverse mix of single family and multi-family residential uses. As evidenced by recent trends, the Town's population is growing. It is reasonable to expect that residential land use will continue to be the primary land use in Town. In addition, it is also reasonable to expect that residential land uses will expand in the coming years in order to accommodate expected growth. Most expansion of residential uses in Town will most likely occur on the remaining residentially zoned vacant land as well as infill development. Therefore, it is helpful for planning purposes to understand how much development can be accommodated on the remaining vacant land in Town. To accomplish this task, a development potential analysis was conducted and is described in the following section.

### C. ANALYSIS OF DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY

Balancing the demands for housing or new commercial and industrial development with the physical constraints of the landscape and existing regulatory controls can prove to be a significant challenge. Factors such as availability of the necessary public facilities, adequacy of road and utility infrastructure and protection of valuable natural resources need to be considered. Understanding where the

developable land is located within the Town and how much development can be accommodated based on existing regulatory controls and physical constraints of the landscape is the first step in establishing a development plan for the future.

An analysis was conducted of vacant or undeveloped residential and non-residential zoned land for its physical capacity to support new or expanded growth. This growth is expressed in terms of potential dwelling units for vacant land areas zoned for residential use and total acreage for land areas zoned for non-residential use. For the purposes of this analysis, agricultural land uses that were not deed restricted to remain open land were included as potentially developable land.

### **Land Analysis**

As indicated in Table 1, 12.6% of the Town is classified as Vacant Land. An additional 3.3% is classified as agricultural and is included in the development potential analysis. Visualizing the distribution of these vacant and agricultural parcels is important in order to gain an understanding of *where* future development can be accommodated. By combining the zoning boundaries with the vacant and agricultural land through overlays, a detailed understanding can be gained on what type of development can be produced under existing regulations. The map titled "*Vacant & Agricultural Land by Zoning District*" illustrates the relationship between existing zoning and the remaining vacant & agricultural parcels in Town.

### **Residential Development Capacity**

To calculate the development capacity of residentially zoned land, each parcel was assessed as to its capacity to accommodate new development based on the presence of development constraints. For the purposes of this analysis, development constraints are defined as wetlands, steep slopes of 15% or more, and 100-year floodplains. Areas that contain development constraints were subtracted out from the gross land area, yielding a net developable area. For those parcels large enough to be subdivided (greater than three times the minimum lot size as defined by zoning), an additional deduction of 20% of the total parcel size was factored in to account for potentially required internal roadways. Finally, the minimum lot size of the underlying zone was applied to the remaining net developable land yielding an approximation of potential residential dwelling units. The results of this analysis are summarized in Table 2.

**Table 2  
Residential Development Potential**

| Zone            | Gross Vacant & Agricultural Land (acres) | Net Buildable Land (Acres) | Estimated Potential Dwelling Units |
|-----------------|--|----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| R-1             | 543                                      | 262                        | 128                                |
| R-2             | 1,620                                    | 985                        | 965                                |
| R-3             | 444                                      | 169                        | 332                                |
| R-4             | 310                                      | 167                        | 635                                |
| R-5             | 14                                       | 13                         | 74                                 |
| CDD             | 329                                      | 30                         | 600                                |
| <b>Subtotal</b> | <b>3,260</b>                             | <b>1,626</b>               | <b>2,450</b>                       |

*The residential development potential analysis concluded that approximately 2,450 additional dwelling units could be built within the Town's residential zones under existing zoning. This potential represents an approximate 10.9% increase over the 23,464 existing dwelling units enumerated during the 2000 Census.*

The results of the residential development potential analysis illustrates that based on existing zoning approximately 2,450 additional dwelling units could be built within the Town's residential zones. This figure represents an approximate 10.4% increase over the 23,464 existing dwelling units calculated during the 2000 census.

88% of all potential dwelling units are found north of the Wilbur Cross Parkway. While this is not surprising in that the vast majority of the vacant or agricultural land is located in these Census tracts, it illustrates that this region of Town can expect the greatest amount of future residential development. This observation is particularly true for Census Tract 1659 that contains almost 50% of all the potential dwelling units calculated as part of this analysis.

It is important to note that the potential dwelling units are speculative because the factors that permit land to be developed change. One important factor is the possibility of the Town changing regulations on the development of land. Also land can be purchased for open space. In summary, the development potential totals given here are theoretical and subject to change.

**Non-Residential Development Capacity:**

When describing non-residential development capacity, the distribution of the remaining vacant land within these zones is an important factor in town-wide planning. In Hamden, it becomes increasingly important due to the limited amount of developable vacant land zoned for non-residential use remaining. Therefore, for purposes of this Plan of Conservation and Development Update, non-residential development capacity is evaluated by the distribution of the remaining vacant parcels zoned for non-residential use. This distribution is illustrated on the map titled "Vacant Land Zoned for Non-Residential Use" and is tabulated in Table 3.

**Table 3  
Non-Residential Development Potential**

| <b>Zone</b>     | <b>Gross Vacant Land<br/>(acres)</b> | <b>Net Buildable Land<br/>(Acres)</b> |
|-----------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| B-1             | 0                                    | 0                                     |
| B-2             | 12                                   | 4                                     |
| M-1             | 93                                   | 39                                    |
| CDD-1           | 318                                  | 56                                    |
| CDD-2           | 11                                   | 5                                     |
| CDD-3           | 0                                    | 0                                     |
| CDD-4           | 0                                    | 0                                     |
| <b>Subtotal</b> | <b>434</b>                           | <b>104</b>                            |

***Regulatory flexibility  
is needed to promote  
reinvestment in  
existing business sites.***

The distribution of non-residentially zoned vacant land is clustered in the industrial zones along Sherman Avenue, State Street and Lower Dixwell Avenue. These non-residential zones have certain locational attributes that made for viable business locations that supported their initial development. Studies have shown that the life cycle of commercial buildings continues to shrink with 25 to 40 years a current range. As buildings become obsolete they need to be adapted to new uses or replaced by contemporary structures. The locational attributes of easy access and infrastructure remain important to the continued viability of non-residential zones in Hamden. The remaining vacant land in these zones will play a role in reshaping parcels to accommodate expansions of existing business or the creation of new development sites. It is in the Town's interest to remain flexible in its regulations so that the ever changing building forms required by business can be accommodated while respecting neighborhood values.





# III. HAMDEN TODAY: DEMOGRAPHICS

## A. INTRODUCTION

The understanding of demographic and socio-economic trends, characteristics and forecasts is crucial to the Plan of Conservation and Development process. This information provides the background by which future changes and development within a municipality can be anticipated and planned for. This section of the Plan provides key demographic characteristics and trends for Hamden and the surrounding region.

## B. POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

*Hamden has experienced population growth each decade for the past 100 years*

As shown in Table 4 and the figure below, Hamden has experienced population growth every decade for the past 100 years. The Town experienced its greatest percentage growth between the 1920 and 1930 Census, more than doubling its population from 8,611 to 19,020. Hamden experienced its greatest numerical growth of 11,341 people between the 1950 and 1960 Censuses. Population growth during the 1950's corresponds with the national trend of migration from central cities to surrounding suburbs following World War II and the trend toward larger family sizes and the baby boom. The town grew by an additional 20.2% during the 1960's. During the 1970's and 1980's minimal growth of less than 5% per decade occurred. According to 2000 Census figures, growth occurred at a slightly higher pace of 8.5% between 1990 and 2000 resulting in a population of 56,913.

**Table 4  
Population Change: 1900 to 2000  
Hamden, CT**

| Census | Population | % Change |
|--------|------------|----------|
| 1900   | 4,662      |          |
| 1920   | 8,611      |          |
| 1930   | 19,020     | 120.9    |
| 1940   | 23,373     | 22.9     |
| 1950   | 29,715     | 27.1     |
| 1960   | 41,056     | 38.2     |
| 1970   | 49,357     | 20.2     |
| 1980   | 51,070     | 3.5      |
| 1990   | 52,434     | 2.7      |
| 2000   | 56,913     | 8.5      |

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

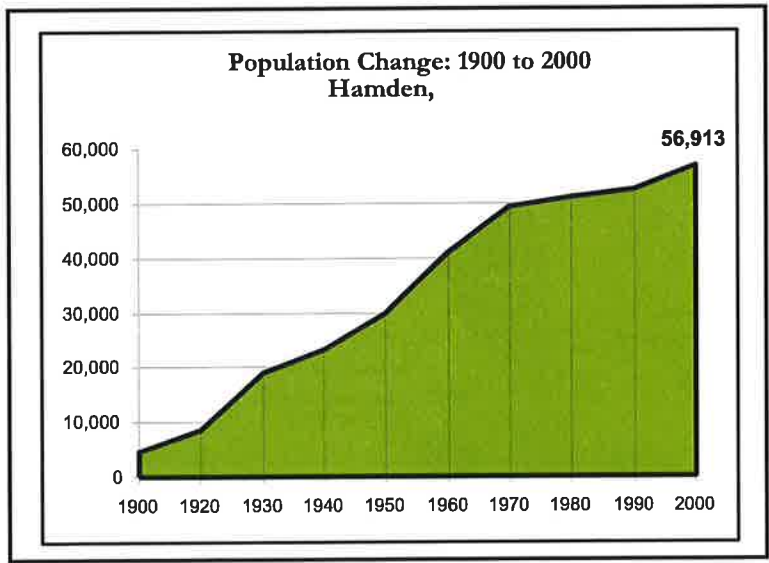
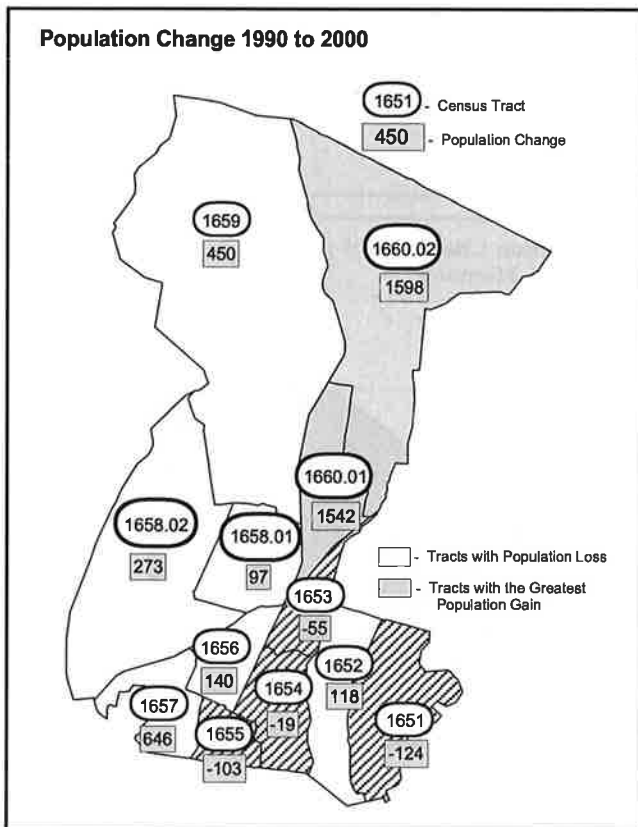


Table 5 compares population change of the Town with the adjacent communities of Bethany, Cheshire, New Haven, North Haven and Wallingford. Regional growth and migration trends are evident as the suburbanization of Hamden's adjoining communities occur and the central city loses population.

**Table 5**  
**Comparison of Population Change: 1950 to 2000**  
**Hamden and Surrounding Communities**

|                  | 1950 Census | 1960 Census | 1970 Census | 1980 Census | 1990 Census | 2000 Census | %Change 50 - 00 | %Change 90 - 00 |
|------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| <b>HAMDEN</b>    | 29,715      | 41,056      | 49,357      | 51,071      | 52,434      | 56,913      | 91.5            | 8.5             |
| Bethany          | 1,318       | 2,384       | 3,857       | 4,330       | 4,608       | 5,040       | 282.4           | 9.4             |
| Cheshire         | 6,295       | 13,383      | 19,051      | 21,788      | 25,684      | 28,543      | 353.4           | 11.1            |
| New Haven        | 164,443     | 152,048     | 137,707     | 126,109     | 130,474     | 123,626     | -24.8           | -5.5            |
| North Haven      | 9,444       | 15,935      | 22,194      | 22,080      | 22,247      | 23,035      | 143.9           | 3.5             |
| Wallingford      | 16,976      | 29,920      | 35,714      | 37,274      | 40,822      | 43,026      | 153.5           | 5.4             |
| New Haven County | 545,784     | 660,315     | 744,948     | 761,337     | 804,219     | 824,008     | 51.0            | 2.5             |

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census



Population change between the 1990 Census and the 2000 Census by census tract is shown on the adjoining map. Four (4) of the Town's twelve (12) Census Tracts lost population and are located in the southern portion of the Town. The two tracts with the greatest population growth, both numerically and as a percentage, are Tract 1660.01, which gained 1,542 people, and Tract 1660.02, which gained 1,598 people. These two tracts comprise the northeastern quadrant of the Town. Tract 1660.01 includes Town Walk and related development while Tract 1660.02 encompasses the northeastern part of Town around Sleeping Giant and Quinnipiac University. Tract 1660.02 experienced a 1,358 person growth in college-related group quarter population between 1990 and 2000. This growth accounted for almost all of its overall population growth.

### C. POPULATION PROJECTIONS

In October 2001 the State of Connecticut Department of Transportation prepared Population Projections for each planning region and municipality in the State. Their projections were based upon early release Census 2000 data. According to ConnDOT's projections Hamden will experience a nine percent (9%) increase between the 2000 Census and 2025. Over the 25 year period, ConnDOT estimates that the Town will experience a population gain of 5,157 people. These population projections will serve as the growth rate for this Plan.

**Table 6**  
**Projected Change: 2000 to 2025**  
**Hamden, CT**

| Year | Population | % Change |
|------|------------|----------|
| 2000 | 56,913     | -        |
| 2010 | 58,800     | 0.17%    |
| 2020 | 60,970     | 0.20%    |
| 2025 | 62,070     | 0.10%    |

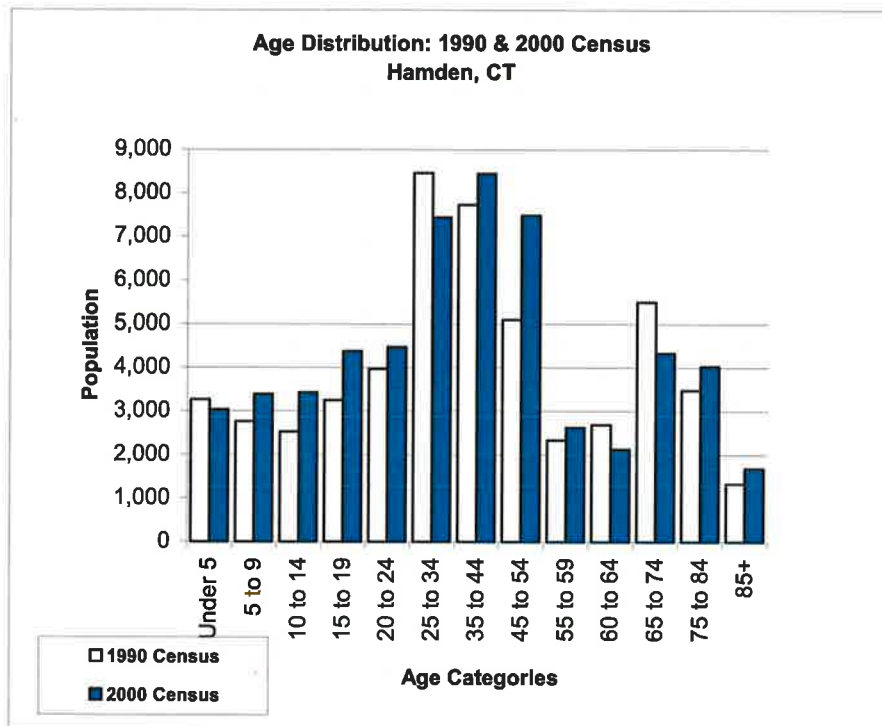
Source: CT Department of Transportation, Oct. 2001

### D. AGE CHARACTERISTICS

Similar to most communities in the State, Hamden's population aged between the 1990 and the 2000 Census. Nearly 40% of the Town's population is currently in the 25 to 34, 35 to 44 and 45 to 54 year age cohorts. Although between the 1990 and the 2000 Census the Town experienced a loss in persons between the ages of 25 and 34 it still remains one of Hamden's most populous age categories. The increase of population in the 45 to 54 years of age category offset the decline in the 25 to 34 years of age category.

Pre-School aged population declined slightly. The elementary and middle school aged population (ages 5 to 14) increased by more than 1,500 children. High school aged population also grew. From a planning perspective, these increases in school-aged population impact school enrollment, park and recreation facility planning and youth services planning.

Population between 60 to 74 years of age declined while population over 75 years of age increased. Changes in population over 65 years of age impact planning for senior facilities and senior support services.

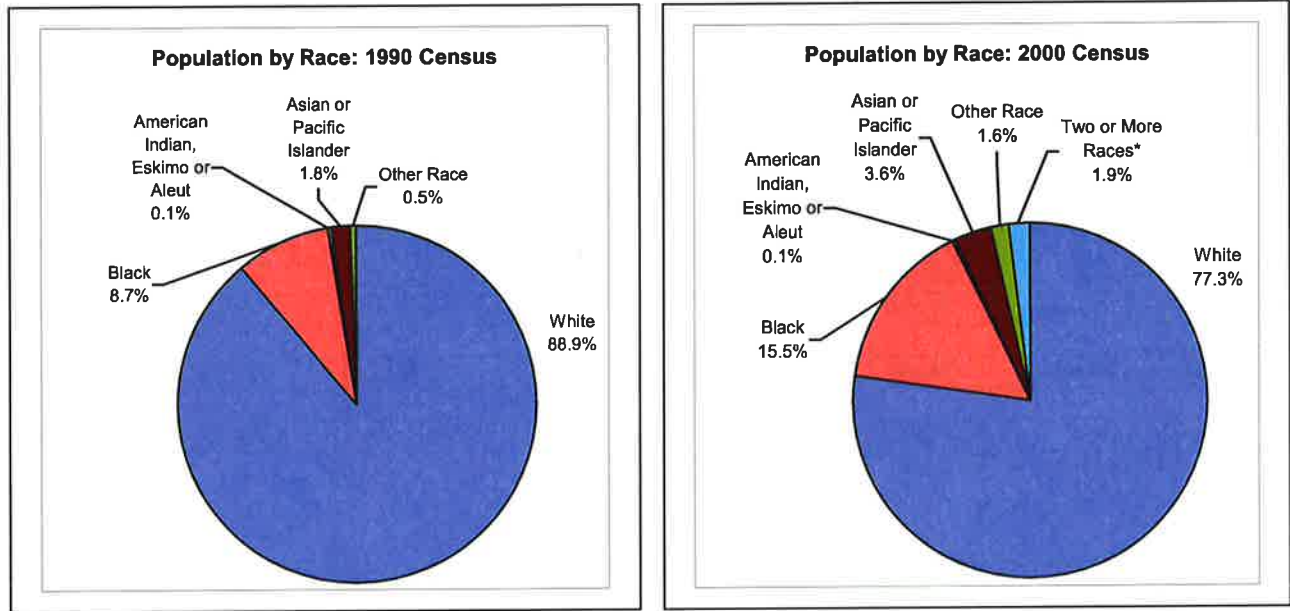


Hamden’s Median Age in 2000 (37.7) was slightly higher than the State’s and the County’s but lower than all of the adjacent communities in the region with the exception of New Haven. Hamden’s percentage of persons under 18 was lower than the State, the County and the surrounding municipalities. Although its elderly population percentage declined between 1990 and 2000, it was still higher than most of the surrounding municipalities except North Haven, the county and the State.

The Town has a relatively low median age in spite that it has a somewhat high percentage of elderly individuals can be attributed to a number of things including an increasing college age population and housing choice for middle-aged persons. The tendency for older residents to remain in their homes and other housing alternatives for the elderly explains the Town’s higher percentage of elderly persons.

## E. RACIAL & ETHNIC CHARACTERISTICS

The racial and ethnic characteristics of Hamden's population changed between the 1990 and 2000 Census as shown in the charts below.



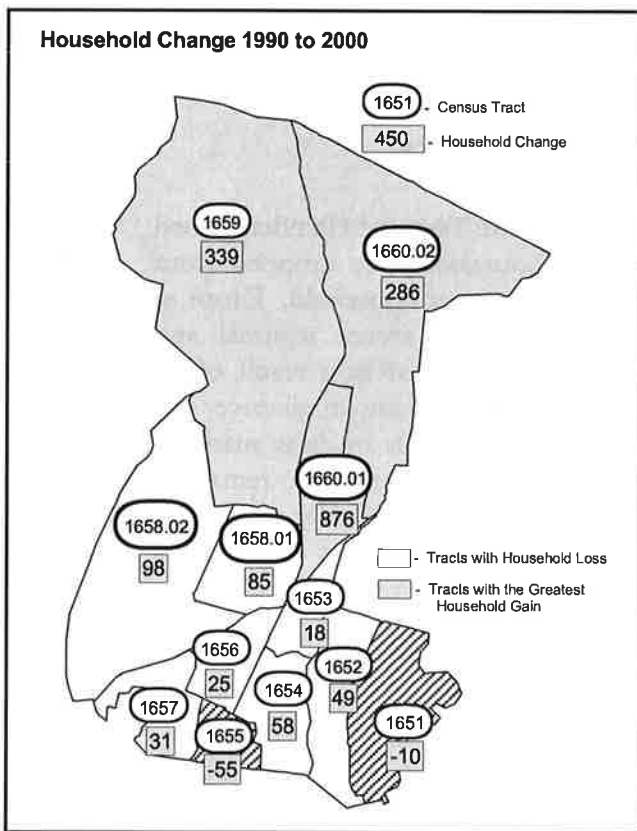
## F. HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS

Between the 1990 and the 2000 Census the Town of Hamden gained 1,767 households (8.5%). Average household size dropped from 2.43 persons per household to 2.35 persons per household. Drops in average household size are consistent with recent regional and national trends. Household sizes have decreased as a result of an increase in single person households, an increase in divorce and separations, the tendency for young professionals to delay marriage and families, and an increase in the number of elderly who remain in their own homes as opposed to residing with family. Average household size in Hamden is lower than all of its neighboring communities, New Haven County and the State.

**Table 7**  
**Trends in Households & Household Sizes: 1990 to 2000**  
**Hamden and Surrounding Communities**

|                  | Population in Households 1990 Census | Households 1990 Census | Average Household Size 1990 | Population in Households 2000 Census | Households 2000 Census | Average Household Size 2000 |
|------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>HAMDEN</b>    | 50,254                               | 20,641                 | 2.43                        | 52,711                               | 22,408                 | 2.35                        |
| Bethany          | 4,608                                | 1,552                  | 2.97                        | 5,040                                | 1,755                  | 2.87                        |
| Cheshire         | 23,536                               | 8,340                  | 2.82                        | 25,373                               | 9,349                  | 2.71                        |
| New Haven        | 118,129                              | 48,986                 | 2.41                        | 113,027                              | 47,094                 | 2.40                        |
| North Haven      | 22,074                               | 7,983                  | 2.77                        | 22,822                               | 8,597                  | 2.65                        |
| Wallingford      | 39,860                               | 15,167                 | 2.63                        | 42,153                               | 16,697                 | 2.52                        |
| New Haven County | 778,494                              | 304,730                | 2.55                        | 796,334                              | 319,040                | 2.50                        |
| Connecticut      | 3,185,949                            | 1,230,479              | 2.59                        | 3,297,626                            | 1,301,670              | 2.53                        |

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census



As depicted on the map to the left, all of Hamden's census tracts experienced an increase in its number of households with the exception of Tract 1651 and Tract 1655. Tracts 1659, 1660.01 and 1660.02 experienced the greatest increase in households. Of these, Tract 1660.01 posted the greatest gain of 876 households. This gain can be attributed to the development of Hamden Hills and its associated developments.

According to 2000 Census figures, of the 2,408 households in Hamden, 62.6% are family households containing one or more related individuals and 37.4% are non-family households. As shown in the table below, 5,994 family households in Hamden are family households with children under the age of 18. Of these 5,994 family households with children, 4,504 or 75.1% are married couple families; 1,243 or 20.7% are single mother families; and it can be assumed that the remaining 247 or 4.1% are single father families or children living with other family members besides their parents.

Non-family households comprised 37.4% of all households in the Town according to the 2000 Census. Non-family households include individuals living alone or households which contain one or more non-related individuals. They do not include people living in group quarter situations such as nursing homes, group homes, dormitories or other similar shared housing accommodations. Of the 8,381 non-family households enumerated by the 2000 Census, 6,970 were householders living alone or single person households. These single person households comprised 31.1% of the Town's total households. Elderly individuals living alone made up 3,056 of the 6,970 single person households. The number of single person elderly households, especially those living in private market housing, is an important figure because many of these households will vacate their homes due to health or age-related reasons. Oftentimes, this turnover of units becomes an important resource for new families and households moving to a community.

**Table 8**  
**Households by Household Type: 2000**  
**Hamden, CT**

| Household Type                                | Number of Households | % of Households |
|---|----------------------|-----------------|
| Family Household                              | 14,027               | 62.6            |
| With Own Children Under 18                    | 5,994                | 26.7            |
| Married Couple Family                         | 10,806               | 48.2            |
| With Own Children Under 18                    | 4,504                | 20.1            |
| Female Householder, no husband present        | 2,522                | 11.3            |
| With Own Children Under 18                    | 1,243                | 5.5             |
| Non-Family Household                          | 8,381                | 37.4            |
| Householder Living Alone                      | 6,970                | 31.1            |
| Householder 65 years and over                 | 3,056                | 13.6            |
| Households with individuals under 18          | 6,461                | 28.8            |
| Households with individuals 65 years and over | 6,923                | 30.9            |
| Total Households                              | 22,408               |                 |

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

## **G. DEMOGRAPHIC FINDINGS & IMPLICATIONS**

In terms of planning for the next 10 years and beyond, several population, housing and employment trends in Hamden have future implications. These include:

- The Town recorded a greater population increase between 1990 and 2000, than it did between the previous two census periods – 1970 to 1980 and 1980 to 1990. Much of this new growth in population can be attributed to growth associated with Quinnipiac University and the Town's multi-family residential growth. Hamden Hills, Town Walk and expansion of elderly housing complexes were the most notable residential developments. Single family development in the northern portion of the Town also contributed to population growth at a more limited scale.
- Elementary, middle school and high school aged populations increased between the two census periods. The increase in the numbers and concentrations of the school-aged population is now being felt in the school system although a stabilized cohort is forecast for the Plan period.
- The population between 60 and 74 years of age declined while the population over 75 years of age increased since 1990. This increase in the older age cohorts of the elderly population has planning implications for senior facilities and support services as well as for potential supportive housing needs.
- Hamden's increasing college-aged population and increasing population attracted to apartment and multi-family living affects the Town's median age as compared to the region. In many communities with younger median ages the median is affected by persons under 18 years of age. In Hamden, the larger pool of college-aged and middle-aged professionals keeps the Town's median age relatively young even though it has a somewhat high percentage of persons over 65.
- Average household size in Hamden is lower than all of its neighboring communities, New Haven County and the State. Smaller household sizes can be attributed to housing choice in the Town. Smaller household sizes can be attributed to increases in single person households, increases in divorces and separations, concentrations of young professional households which have a tendency to delay marriage or families and large numbers of elderly who chose to live on their own. The variety of housing in the Town makes it possible for smaller households, single person households and/or the elderly to remain in Hamden.



- In 1991 and 1993 the Town posted the greatest gain in new housing permits authorized in the State of Connecticut. In 1998 the Town ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> in terms of new housing unit authorizations.

Growth in housing units provides housing choice, which is important to promote economic development, and also adds to the Town's tax base as well as increases the disposable income available in the Town. However, new growth also brings increased demand for municipal services. The balance between development, resource and service needs, and location of new growth is a key part of long-range planning.



## IV. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

### A. INTRODUCTION

The overall quality of life in a community is largely determined by the quality, quantity and distribution of its cultural and natural resources. The protection of Hamden's natural resources is an important component to the Plan of Conservation and Development. This is because the protection of natural resources helps preserve the Town's community character, preserves essential natural systems, and improves the quality of life for all of Hamden's residents. The following narrative briefly describes the significant natural resources that comprise Hamden's natural landscape.

### B. WATERSHEDS

Multitudes of waterways are located within the Town of Hamden including the Mill, Quinnipiac and West rivers. These waterways are fed by a network of tributaries and are best defined by the watersheds that supply them. The river, streams, lakes, ponds, wetlands and floodplains are the components of the watershed that contain the attributes to support a variety of plant and animal life, attenuate flood conditions, and provide the residents of the region with potable drinking water. Managing these watersheds in a sustainable manner is critical to ensure that the attributes they contain and the benefits they provide will be around for years to come.

Of the six subregional watersheds within the town, four drain over 97% of the town's land area: the Mill River, Quinnipiac River, Wintergreen Brook, and Willow Brook. These watershed areas are illustrated on the map titled "*Subregional Watersheds*". The following provides a general description of these four watersheds:

#### ***Mill River Watershed***

The Mill River Watershed is the largest watershed in town, draining approximately 48% of the town's total land area. Originating in Cheshire, the Mill River slices through the town in a southerly direction, flowing through Lake Whitney Reservoir and ultimately into Long Island Sounds at the confluence with the Quinnipiac River. Development in the Hamden portion of the watershed is most dense in the lower reaches and decreases as you move north. According to the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Surface Water Classification System, water quality along the majority of the Mill River has been classified suitable for



Whitney Reservoir Complex  
Mill River Watershed

swimming, other recreational purposes, agricultural uses and good for fish and wildlife habitat and maintains good aesthetic value. The 100-year floodplain, as defined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), exists along the entire length of the river and most of its tributaries and is primarily narrowly defined to the watercourse with limited exceptions. A portion of the Mill River Watershed, upstream from Lake Whitney, is classified by the State as a public water supply watershed.



**Whitney Reservoir Waterfall  
Mill River Watershed**

### ***Quinnipiac River Watershed***

The Quinnipiac River, originating just north of Hamlin Pond in Plainville, borders the Town of Hamden in the northeast section of town in the vicinity of Mount Carmel Avenue and again in the southeast section of town in the vicinity of State Street. Approximately 10% of Hamden's land area is encompassed by this watershed. Development is very dense in the lower portion of the watershed around the State Street area; however, the upper portion, around the Sleeping Giant is largely undeveloped. This watershed contains portions of two important open space areas, the Quinnipiac River Marsh Wildlife Area, and the Sleeping Giant State Park. The water quality of the Quinnipiac is classified as having limited suitability for certain fish and wildlife and recreational boating. While this segment maintains good aesthetic value, it may not be suitable for swimming. The FEMA 100-year floodplain is broadly defined along the Quinnipiac Marsh area and extends past the railroad tracks that run to the east of State Street.

### ***Wintergreen Brook Watershed***

The Wintergreen Brook Watershed drains approximately 25% of the town's total land area. Originating in Hamden at the Wintergreen Brook Dam, the brook flows under the shadow of the West Rock Ridge and drains the southwest corner of town on its way to Long Island Sound. Development is the densest along the lower stretches of the Farm Brook and Belden Brook tributaries, while the main stem of the Wintergreen Brook flows through largely undeveloped land and protected open space. Due to the relatively low density of development in the watershed, particularly in the upper reaches, the DEP has classified the water quality in the Wintergreen Brook as having uniformly excellent character and is suitable for all water uses. The FEMA 100-year floodplain is narrowly defined along the watercourse with limited exceptions.

### ***Willow Brook Watershed***

The Willow Brook Watershed drains approximately 14% of the town's total land area. Originating in Cheshire just north of the Hamden town line, the Willow Brook flows in a southeasterly direction to its confluence with the Mill River. Development in the watershed is primarily low-density residential development and

consequently the water quality of the brook is very good. The FEMA 100-year floodplain is somewhat broadly defined, especially on the east side of Brooksvale Avenue where the floodplain combines with a significant wetland complex. This area contains a considerable amount of protected open space in that both the Naugatuck State Forest and the town-owned Brooksvale Park are located within the watershed. The Willow Brook Watershed is classified by the State as a public water supply watershed.



**REMAINS OF TRAPROCK MINE**  
Sleeping Giant State Park



**WETLAND COMPLEX**  
at Lake Wintergreen

### **C. SOILS**

The soil covering the landscape in Hamden is a complex matrix of varying slope, depth, texture, permeability and fertility. According to the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) Detailed Soil Survey, the soil in Hamden is made up of 51 different soil classifications. While each individual classification has unique characteristics, there are particular attributes of certain soil classifications that are of particular interest due to their environmental sensitivity. These include wetland and steep slope soils.

### **WETLAND SOILS**

Wetlands in Connecticut are defined by soil type. Those soils that are classified by the NRCS as Poorly Drained, Very Poorly Drained, Alluvial / Floodplain or any combination of these are by definition classified as a wetland and protected under the town's inland wetland regulations.

Wetlands are important for a variety of reasons including:

- Wetlands are among the most biologically productive natural ecosystems in the world;
- Wetlands provide habitat that is critical to a variety of plant and animal species, including threatened and endangered species;
- Wetlands often function like natural sponges, storing water (floodwater or surface water) and slowly releasing it thus reducing the likelihood of flood damage to personal property or agriculture by controlling the rate and volume of runoff;

- Wetlands help improve water quality by intercepting surface runoff and removing or retaining its nutrients, processing organic wastes and reducing sediment before it reaches open water;
- Wetlands provide outdoor recreational opportunities (i.e., wildlife viewing/ photography, nature study).

Unique wetland types are those found on alluvial and floodplain soils. Due to the excessive permeability of the soil, these areas are very susceptible to rapid infiltration of pollutants. Pollution infiltration can have devastating effects on groundwater drinking supplies. In addition, these areas are dense with nutrient-rich sediments, which produce some of the most productive farmlands.

### ***Tidal Wetlands***

Another unique wetland type is the tidal marsh. The Quinnipiac River Marsh, located just east of State Street on the Hamden-North Haven border, is owned largely by the State of Connecticut as a Wildlife Area and is an example of a type of tidal wetland marsh known as a brackish marsh. Brackish marshes are influenced by both salt and fresh water. The technical difference between a salt and brackish marsh is in salinity content. A saltwater marsh typically has a salinity content that reaches 35 parts per thousand (ppt) with vegetation dominated by short grasses such as cord grass and rush.<sup>1</sup> Brackish marshes typically have a salinity content that drops below 18 ppt and there is an increasing presence of tall grasses and reeds such as Bull Rush and Cattail. The location of these wetland soils and the other inland wetland soil types are illustrated on the Natural Resource Protection Plan as preservation areas.

### **STEEP SLOPE SOILS**

Areas of steep slopes are important to identify primarily due to their effect on development. While the stability of a slope is dependant on many variables including vegetative cover and the underlying geology, as a general rule it can be expected that slopes greater than 15% pose significant constraints to development due to the difficulty building foundations and siting septic systems. In addition, these areas pose additional hazards such as increased erosion, surface runoff, siltation and flooding. Therefore, identifying areas of steep slopes is an important component to the natural resource inventory. The areas of steep slopes in Hamden are illustrated on the Natural Resource Protection Plan as conservation areas.

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<sup>1</sup> Jim Gibbons, University of Connecticut, Cooperative Extension System, Natural Resource Areas To Be Considered When Preparing Natural Resource Inventories And Open Space Plans, 1999.



## D. AQUIFERS

Hamden is comprised of two types of aquifers: bedrock-till formations and stratified drift formations. Bedrock-till aquifers, found throughout town, are comprised of many different rock types (including till) and can yield as much as 10 gallons of water per minute. Stratified drift aquifers, in contrast, are comprised of layered deposits of sand, gravel, silt and clay and are located primarily in river and stream beds. Stratified drift aquifers can yield millions of gallons per day wherever deep saturated deposits of porous materials are found. These high yield conditions have the capacity to be developed into municipal water supplies. In Hamden, the Sleeping Giant and Mount Carmel well fields are examples of stratified drift wells that have been developed into active water supply.

### *Aquifer Protection Areas*

Many aquifers across the state are threatened by contamination due to potentially contaminating land uses. To address this problem, Connecticut has established the Aquifer Protection Program (C.G.S. § 22a-354a et. sec.). The purpose of this program is to identify critical water supply areas and to protect them from pollution by managing land use. To satisfy their statutory requirement, the DEP, in conjunction with the local/regional water authorities, have identified over 120 Aquifer Protection Areas (APA) across the State, one of which is located in Hamden.

APAs must meet the criterion of containing a public water supply well that is located in stratified drift and services more than 1000 people. DEP is in the process of drafting regulations that would limit the types of land uses that could be sited in the “protection area,” which coincides with the well recharge area of the aquifer. Rather than waiting for the state regulations to be handed down, Hamden has taken a proactive approach and has adopted local zoning regulations limiting the type of development allowed over the Mill River aquifer.<sup>2</sup>

The protection areas have been delineated by the local/regional water authorities and submitted to the DEP for review. The distribution of the APA and the public water supply wells in Hamden are illustrated on the Natural Resource Protection Plan.

## E. WILDLIFE HABITAT AND LISTED SPECIES

At first glance, Hamden may not seem like the kind of place that would have abundant diversity of plant and animal life. Based on the population density of the town alone, it would appear to those

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<sup>2</sup> Hamden Zoning Regulations §VI-I (600)

unfamiliar with Hamden that the town is primarily a developed suburban town. While this description may fit some parts of town, other parts support a wide variety of plant and animal habitats. The combination of varied topography, forested tracts, abundant rivers, streams, lakes, ponds, and wetlands provides exceptional habitat for a variety of plants and animals. The following describes some of the specialized habitats that warrant special attention:

### ***Talus, Ledge & Rock Outcropping***

Talus slopes generally form underneath ledge or rock outcropping from the fragments of rock that dislodge from these geologic formations. The small crevices between the rocks provide refuge for a variety of animals. In addition, crevices between the rock tend to create a cooler environment which, combined with the rich soils found in these areas, can provide favorable growing conditions for a variety of plant species.



**ROCK OUTCROPPINGS**  
Sleeping Giant State Park

Good examples of this habitat type include the trap rock ridges in Hamden. Portions of the Sleeping Giant, particularly the west and southwest aspect of the ridge, as well as West Rock Ridge both contain talus, ledge and rock outcrop habitats. These areas are illustrated on the Natural Resource Protection Plan as conservation areas.

Smaller rock outcrops, though locally important, were not specifically identified. These areas are too numerous to mention and are prevalent in town, particularly in northern Hamden where the topographic relief is the greatest. These areas should be considered as unique and avoided as development proposals are presented.

### ***Endangered, Threatened, and Special Concern Species***

In Connecticut, the protection of unique biological communities is held to a high standard. In support of this, the Connecticut DEP has inventoried sites across the state that contain habitats of endangered, threatened, and special concern species. These habitat areas are perceived as unique and receive special protection status from the state. The state has identified these sites in a special survey called The Connecticut Natural Diversity Database, which is a centralized inventory of these unique habitat locations and represents the findings of years worth of biological surveys.

The Natural Diversity Database breaks down the sites into the following taxonomic groups: mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, fish, invertebrates and plants. Within these groups, the species are



further categorized as being endangered, threatened, or special concern

The location of sites within the town identified by the Connecticut Natural Diversity Database are illustrated on the Natural Resource Protection Plan as unique habitat areas.. In addition to generalizing the exact location of these sites, the category in which the sites are located has also been removed. This is to further ensure the protection of these unique resources.



**MILL RIVER RIPARIAN CORRIDOR**  
Sleeping Giant State Park

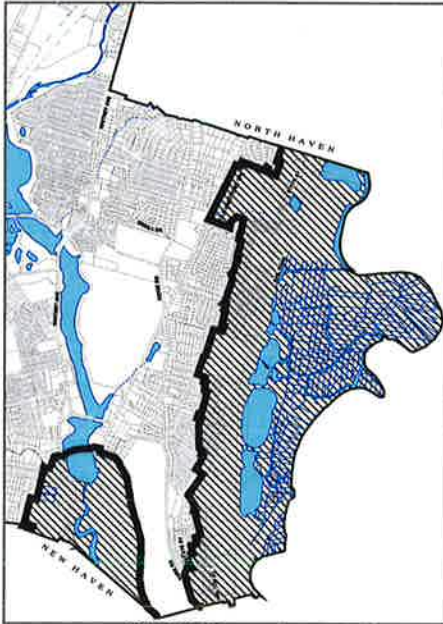
### ***Riparian Corridors***

Riparian corridors, or riparian buffers, are undisturbed, naturally vegetated areas contiguous with and parallel to rivers and streams. The benefits of riparian buffers are well documented. Riparian buffers protect our water resources by improving water quality through filtering pollutants and sediments, stabilizing stream banks and river beds, and improving wildlife habitat by providing travel corridors and improving aquatic habitat.

The recommended buffer width of riparian corridors varies depending on what the goal of the buffer is. There is not one generic buffer width that will keep the water clean, stabilize the bank, protect fish and wildlife habitat, and satisfy human demands on the land. The minimum acceptable width is one that provides acceptable levels of all needed benefits at an acceptable cost. The basic buffer recommendation is 50 feet from the top of the bank. However; you gain more benefits with every additional foot. Riparian corridors are illustrated on the Natural Resource Protection Plan as conservation areas.

## **F. COASTAL AREA MANAGEMENT (CAM)**

Coastal waters are defined as the waters of Long Island Sound and its harbors, embayments, tidal rivers, streams and creeks, which contain a salinity concentration of at least five hundred parts per million under the low flow stream conditions. Coastal waters are further divided into nearshore waters, offshore waters and estuarine embayments. The Town of Hamden is included in the Coastal Area Management (CAM) boundary because of the proximity of estuarine embayments located along the Quinnipiac and Mill Rivers. Estuarine embayments are defined by the DEP as protected coastal bodies of water with an open connection to the sea in which saline water is measurably diluted by fresh water including tidal rivers, bays, lagoons, and coves. In Hamden, the CAM boundary as delineated by the



(CAM) Boundary

DEP includes the land area around the Quinnipiac River and the surrounding marsh complex as well as the land area around the Mill River up to the Lake Whitney Dam. These areas are illustrated on the map titled Coastal Area Management Boundary.

The Connecticut Coastal Management Act<sup>3</sup> requires “coastal site plan reviews” for certain site plans, plans and applications for activities or projects located fully or partially within the coastal boundary. The Town of Hamden addresses this requirement in Section 850 Coastal Site Plan of the Hamden Zoning Regulations. The stated purpose these regulations are to assure that development within the Coastal Area is accomplished in a manner which is consistent with the goals and policies of the Connecticut Coastal Management Act and with the goals and policies of the Town of Hamden Planning and Zoning Commission. This process helps ensure the protection of this unique natural resource.

## G. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

**GOAL: Promote The Conservation And Preservation Of Natural Resources As Part Of Future Development Activity.**

### OBJECTIVES:

- Protect water quality by preserving: watercourses, Wetlands, and land within aquifer protection area.
- Review existing development regulations and standards to determine where requirements for reducing impervious surfaces can be incorporated or enhanced.
- Protect flood prone areas in the Town through the use of flood plain protection measures and regulations of new development.
- Consider establishing a 50 foot or greater non-disturbance buffer from all inland wetlands and water courses in Wetland Regulations.
- Conserve steep slopes, talus, ledge and rock outcroppings and unique habitat areas.
- Consider conducting a vernal pool inventory and incorporate the protection of these unique natural resource features into the Plan of Conservation and Development.
- Continue implementation of coastal site plan review as required by the Hamden Zoning Regulations for all areas within the Coastal Zone Boundary.

<sup>3</sup> Connecticut General Statutes Sec. 22a-90 through 22a-112, as amended.

## V. PARKS, RECREATION & OPEN SPACE

### A. INTRODUCTION

The strength of Hamden's community character lies in its stable residential neighborhoods and the abundance of parks and recreational facilities that serve these neighborhoods. In addition, the natural "passive" open spaces add to the character of the Town and provide a resource where people can connect with the natural landscape. The benefits of parks and open space are multifaceted in that they provide opportunities for social interaction and healthful activities, preserve natural features and environments, and enhance community character, positively affecting property values and the marketability of the community.

*Hamden's park and open space network is a key amenity that acts as community gathering places, foster social interaction in an attractive environment and on another level can benefit property values and the marketability of a community.*

Recreation activity in Hamden has evolved over the years to the point where organized sports and formal recreation programs are the focus of adolescent active recreation. The increasingly high participation and longer length and variety of sport seasons require dedicated facilities, an important consideration when creating capital improvement plans for the community. In addition, providing opportunities for informal recreation (i.e. walking, jogging, skating, biking) is important to meet the growing needs of the community. Greenways or linear trails, such as the Farmington Canal Greenway, provide this opportunity. When properly planned, greenways can link existing parks and open space areas together with neighborhoods and community facilities (i.e. schools, libraries) to provide an interconnected network that is accessible from residential areas.

Hamden's park and open space network is a key amenity that acts as community gathering places, foster social interaction in an attractive environment and on another level can benefit property values and the marketability of a community. As consistently demonstrated in the real estate market, people are willing to pay more money for a home in close proximity to parks and open space than a similar home that does not offer this amenity.<sup>4</sup>

The park and open space resources found in Hamden are generally in fair condition with some facilities in need of improvement. The Town's parks and open space resources are distributed in such a way that there exists a concentration of active recreation facilities in the southern half of town and a concentration of passive open space in the northern half of town. This somewhat unbalanced distribution is primarily due to the development patterns in the Town where higher density residential uses are more common in the southern half of

<sup>4</sup> Crompton, John L., Parks and Economic Development, American Planning Association, Planning Advisory Service Report Number 502, November 2001.

Hamden, which results in a higher demand for neighborhood parks, schools and other active recreation facilities. As residential development continues to expand into northern Hamden, it is reasonable to expect that the demand for recreation facilities will increase in this area.

The existing inventory of parks and open space can be considered one of Hamden's greatest asset as they provide green space that helps break up the suburban development patterns (particularly in southern Hamden) and provides recreational opportunities to the surrounding neighborhoods. However, the degree to which park facilities meet contemporary needs is ever an issue because community recreation needs continually evolve over time. While the existing parks and open space inventory provides a wide array of recreational opportunities, there is potential for improvement to meet the changing needs of the community.

## **B. EXISTING PARKS AND OPEN SPACE**

Open space land is often described as land used for agriculture, parks, natural areas, forests, camping, fishing, wetland preservation, wildlife habitat, reservoirs, hunting, golfing, boating, swimming, snowmobiling, historic and scenic preservation. Based on this description of open space, the map titled "*Existing Parks and Open Space*" is included to illustrate active and passive recreation and open space areas as of 2002. The active recreation facilities consist of parks, playgrounds, ball fields and schoolyards, while passive areas include State Forest and Parks, greenways, agricultural land, flood control property and other open space areas. Cemeteries are also included in the inventory as passive open space areas.

In addition to State and Town owned property, the "*Existing Parks and Open Space*" map shows lands held for conservation by the Hamden Land Conservation Trust and the South Central Regional Water Authority. These lands, given the missions of their owners, are likely to remain as open space and continue to support the recreation, conservation and preservation objectives as set forth in this plan.

Hamden is fortunate to host the Farmington Canal Greenway, one of the longest and most popular greenways in the State. To date, the Farmington Canal Greenway bisects the Town of Hamden in a north-south direction from the Cheshire town line to Connolly Parkway. Within the town, the greenway consists of approximately 7.3 miles of paved trail and is a popular recreational resource for the Town and surrounding communities. Plans are in place to extend the





A number of pedestrians enjoy the recreational opportunities provided by the Farmington Canal Trail in town.

greenway approximately 2.3 miles along the existing railroad right-of-way to the Hamden/New Haven border.

Other trail systems in Hamden include the Regicides Trail, Quinnipiac Trail, and the network of very popular hiking trails within the Sleeping Giant State Park and the Town owned Brooksvale Park. As illustrated on the “*Existing Parks and Open Space*” map, the Regicides Trail, part of the State Blue Blazed Trail system, is located within West Rock Ridge State Park and winds its way along the parks traprock ridges until its intersection with the Quinnipiac Trail, another of the State’s Blue Blazed trails. The Quinnipiac Trail traverses the Sleeping Giant and Mount Sanford along its route to Quinnipiac River State Park in North Haven. The Sleeping Giant State Park hosts 11 different color-coded trails within the parks 1,500 acres and Brooksvale Park hosts 8 different trails for hikers. While these existing trail systems provide excellent recreational opportunities to the Town

residents, expansion of these trail systems through connections to neighborhoods, community facilities, and parks will improve accessibility to the system and enhance the quality of life in the Town.



The playground offers a wide-range of equipment.

The 2002 inventory of recreation and open space totals approximately 6,177 acres or 29% of the Town’s total land area. The land included in the inventory is summarized in Table 10 and is categorized based on whether it is primarily used for active or passive recreation. Active recreational facilities are defined as areas that accommodate organized sporting activities such as baseball, basketball, soccer or tennis. These facilities may also provide playscapes for younger children. For the purposes of this inventory, active recreational facilities have been further categorized by whether they are associated with a school facility. Passive recreational facilities are areas that provide low impact recreation such as hiking or picnicking with minimal development or improvements. If improvements have been made they typically include little more than park benches or picnic areas. Some areas included in this inventory function as natural conservation areas (i.e. water company land) and are generally left as natural, undeveloped open space. The detailed Parks, Recreation and Open Space Report prepared as part of the Plan of Conservation and Development update process contains a complete description, status and recommendation for each park in the system.

**Table 9**  
Parks and Open Space Inventory  
Town of Hamden, 2002

| Active Open Space                                 |              | Passive Open Space                        |               |
|---|--------------|---|---------------|
| <i>Public Ownership</i>                           |              | <i>Public Ownership</i>                   |               |
|   | <i>Acres</i> |   | <i>Acres</i>  |
| Bassett Park Complex <sup>(1)</sup>               | 43.4         | <b>Town of Hamden</b>                     |               |
| Brooksvale Park                                   | 211.4        | Freedom Park East                         | 0.1           |
| DeNicola Park                                     | 5.3          | Freedom Park West                         | 0.1           |
| Farmington Canal Trail                            | 57 +/-       | Skiff St. Ext. Open Space                 | 14.6          |
| Hamden Plains Park                                | 7.4          | Meadowbrook South                         | 17.6          |
| Legion Field                                      | 7.8          | Whitney Ave. Park                         | 1.9           |
| Mill Rock Park                                    | 2.9          | 220 Gilbert Avenue (Former DOT)           | 7.6           |
| Moretti Field                                     | 3.7          | <b>City of New Haven</b>                  |               |
| Pine Rock Park                                    | 11           | East Rock Park                            | 254.8         |
| Rochford Field                                    | 4.8          | Edgerton Park                             | 17.3          |
| Saint Ann's Park                                  | 4.9          | <b>State of Connecticut</b>               |               |
| Sebec Park  | 1.8          | Agricultural Experiment Station           | 57.1          |
| <b>Subtotal</b>                                   | <b>361.4</b> | Agricultural Development Rights           | 80.5          |
| <i>Public School <sup>(2)</sup></i>               |              | Farm Brook Flood Control                  | 203.5         |
| Alice Peck School                                 | 6            | Naugatuck State Forest                    | 551.1         |
| Bear Path School                                  | 5            | Sleeping Giant State Park <sup>(6)</sup>  | 1583.8        |
| Church Street School                              | 0.5          | Quinnipiac Marsh Wildlife Area            | 277.3         |
| Dunbar Hill School                                | 5            | West Rock Ridge State Park <sup>(6)</sup> | 958.9         |
| Helen Street School                               | 1            | <b>Subtotal</b>                           | <b>4026.2</b> |
| Ridge Hill School                                 | 3.5          | <i>Private Ownership</i>                  |               |
| Shepherd Glen School                              | 4            | Hamden Land Trust                         | 15.7          |
| Spring Glen School <sup>(3)</sup>                 | 0            | Hamden Fish and Game                      | 85.6          |
| West Woods School                                 | 8            | Paradise Park                             | 10.5          |
| Wintergreen Magnet School                         | 5.5          | South Central Regional Water Authority    | 1082.7        |
| Hamden Middle School                              | 11.5         | <b>Subtotal</b>                           | <b>1194.5</b> |
| Hamden High School <sup>(4)</sup>                 | 13           | <i>Cemeteries</i>                         |               |
| Eli Whitney Voc. Tech. High School <sup>(5)</sup> | 7.5          | Beaverdale Cemetery                       | 20.8          |
| <b>Subtotal</b>                                   | <b>70.5</b>  | Beth El Keser Israel Cemetery             | 1.9           |
| <i>Golf Courses</i>                               |              | Central Cemetery                          | 10.5          |
| Laural View                                       | 156.6        | Hamden Plains Cemetery                    | 14.4          |
| Meadowbrook                                       | 62.9         | Mount Carmel Cemetery                     | 3.2           |
| New Haven CC (private)                            | 133.3        | Saint Mary's Cemetery                     | 7.3           |
| Sleeping Giant (private)                          | 50.4         | State Street Cemetery                     | 1.5           |
| <b>Subtotal</b>                                   | <b>403.2</b> | Temple Beth Sholom Cemetery               | 0.7           |
| <i>Private Ownership</i>                          |              | West Woods Cemetery                       | 0.3           |
| Hamden Hall Fields                                | 20           | Whitneyville Cemetery                     | 3.9           |
| WELI Fields                                       | 2.8          | <b>Subtotal</b>                           | <b>64.5</b>   |
| YMCA Camp   | 34           |   |               |
| <b>Subtotal</b>                                   | <b>56.8</b>  |   |               |
| <b>ACTIVE TOTAL</b>                               | <b>891.9</b> | <b>PASSIVE TOTAL</b>                      | <b>5285.2</b> |
| <b>GRAND TOTAL 6177.1 ACRES</b>                   |              |   |               |

Source: Town of Hamden, Parks and Recreation Department; HMA Field Survey

<sup>(1)</sup> Includes Town owned land on south side of Waite Street

<sup>(4)</sup> Currently under renovation

<sup>(2)</sup> Acreage represents area used for recreation purposes only

<sup>(5)</sup> Playing fields leased from Voc. Tech

<sup>(3)</sup> Glendower Park will be replaced due to new school construction

<sup>(6)</sup> Includes State owned land surrounding park

## C. FUTURE OPEN SPACE SYSTEM

The Town of Hamden is fortunate to have an existing park and open space system that is diverse in the types of uses accommodated. In looking to the future, it will be important to maintain parks and open spaces that are adequate in extent, strategic in location and equitable in distribution in order to meet the unique active and passive needs of the Town's population. The future of existing parks and open space will depend in part on the efficient use of the existing facilities as well as the maintenance and rehabilitation of facilities requiring improvements.

### Criteria For Future Open Space Acquisitions

An important component of the open space plan is identifying locations to focus open space protection efforts. In Hamden, the Natural Resource and Open Space Commission has the advisory role of recommending guidelines for the acquisition of open space. The 1990 Plan of Development identified as policy recommendation that land be acquired as open space only if the site is unique and has significant benefits to the Town. This policy is prudent in that it recommends that open space be protected only if it enhances the overall open space network, not just because it is available for sale. In order to become proactive in implementing this policy, it is necessary to develop criteria from which to identify whether a site is unique or provides significant benefit to the Town. The following is a list of objectives that can be utilized in focusing future open space protection efforts:

*Adopting criteria to focus open space protection efforts is recommended*

- Links existing parks and open spaces together to form interconnected greenways
- Preserves natural drainage areas including waterways and surrounding wetlands and floodplains
- Protects existing and potential public drinking water supplies, including groundwater supplies.
- Protects unique and significant natural features including critical or threatened habitats
- Preserves agricultural land

Locations within the Town of Hamden that meet the above criteria are summarized below and illustrated on the map titled "*Proposed Parks and Open Space Plan*":

#### 1. Linkage and Expansion of Existing Open Space (Greenways):

While the current Town parks and recreation facilities offer residents numerous opportunities for active and passive recreation, Hamden

should look towards the future by identifying and prioritizing potential expansion of these existing open spaces, while also looking to create linkages that provide desirable connections amongst them. The Farmington Canal Trail has the potential to serve as a central artery within the Town's open space network. The trail currently offers almost 7.5 miles of paved trail within Hamden alone and is being extended to the New Haven city line in the coming years. In the north end of town the trail provides direct access to Brooksvale Park and Naugatuck State Forest, which have been identified by the Natural Resource and Open Space Commission as priority areas for focusing open space protection efforts.

The Farmington Canal Trail also connects users of the trail to open spaces such as The Sleeping Giant State Park. The existing connection requires users to exit the canal trail at the Mount Carmel Avenue intersection and walk a short distance to hiking trails along the Mill River. An alternative connection between these two popular open space areas could be established across water company land, which parallels the Mill River and Willow Brook. This connection could be more passive in nature by providing a walking trail only and not a paved multi-use trail. Access across water company land would need to be approved in order to make this connection viable. Other possible connections to the Farmington Canal include a spur around the Meadowbrook property eventually connecting to the Hamden Public Library. This would create a desirable pedestrian access to the library and to the civic activities occurring at Meadowbrook.

While the Canal Trail offers great potential for future extensions and linkages that do not yet exist, other areas in Town may also have the potential for expansion. One such example is protecting the 100-acre Olin Power Farm property located between Putnam Avenue and Treadwell Street. This site, also known as Pine Swamp, is adjacent to the proposed extension of the Farmington Canal Greenway and contains numerous ponds, hills and walking trails. Protection of the site would provide access to passive open space to the residents of southern Hamden. The site has a history of environmental problems and would therefore require an environmental assessment and possibly remediation before any protection measures are initiated.

The Blue Trail System, which consists of 700 miles of hiking trails runs through northern Hamden mostly on private land. Maintaining the continuity of this trail in Hamden, as an important natural and recreational resource, is an important objective.

Another area of potential expansion includes improving public access to the Quinnipiac River, which would call for acquiring easements to the waterway. The current development patterns along State Street



create a physical barrier between the river and the surrounding neighborhood, eliminating access to the river. These impediments could be overcome as brownfield redevelopment efforts move forward and opportunities are created to revive parcels along State Street. In addition, the Town should consider securing an access point to the Quinnipiac River along State Street and expanding the open space holdings in this area.

## **2. Watershed Protection:**

A multitude of waterways are located within the Town of Hamden including the Mill, and Quinnipiac Rivers. The protection of land directly adjacent to the Town's watercourses including surrounding wetlands and floodplains should be a continued focus of the Town open space plan. Continued implementation of the Town's wetland and floodplain regulations to ensure that the watercourses are properly buffered from development and storm water runoff is recommended. In addition, protection or acquisition of parcels adjacent to watercourses susceptible to flooding or parcels that contain a high natural resource value will help preserve the Town's riparian habitats and water quality.

## **3. Regional Water Authority Owned Property:**

The acquisition of South Central Regional Water Authority property should be considered a priority if these lands become available. The Town should evaluate these properties based on the criteria outlined herein for purchase or donation into the town's open space network.

## **4. Unique Habitat Protection**

The protection of those portions of Hamden that are identified as unique habitat areas and potential riparian corridors would help ensure that those species that depend on these areas are not threatened by intense development or incompatible land uses.

## **5. Agricultural Land Protection**

The preservation of the remaining farmland in Hamden would help retain a sense of rural character in the Town. To assist municipalities in the preservation of farmland, the Connecticut Department of Agriculture has established a joint State-Town Farmland Preservation Program as a means to limit the conversion of prime farmlands to nonagricultural uses. This program allows to the State to acquire development rights to agricultural land jointly with any municipality in which prime farmland is located. Hindinger's Farm located on Dunbar Hill Road is an example of how active farmland can be successfully protected under this program. However, this program is rarely instituted in the south-central area of the State. In order for farmland preservation to continue to be successful in Hamden, it will have to be part of a locally led effort. The Town has an opportunity

to take the lead in preserving farmland in the town and establish a municipal farmland preservation program that identifies and protects farms that benefit the towns overall community character.

#### D. IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES

*Because it is difficult to predict when property will become available for incorporation into the open space inventory, the Town must be prepared to respond quickly when property comes available, particularly property that has been identified as a priority open space parcel*

Because it is difficult to predict when property will become available for incorporation into the open space inventory, the Town must be prepared to respond quickly when property comes available, particularly property that has been identified as a priority open space parcel. The Town of Hamden has an opportunity during the development process to modify regulatory controls to protect natural features or to establish open space. Examples of regulatory tools include the following:

- **Inland Wetland Regulations**
- **Zoning Regulations**— Special district zones, overlays and site plan design within sensitive natural resource areas.
- **Subdivision Regulations** - Open space dedication requirements and/or in lieu fees.

Non-regulatory tools used to protect open space usually involve some type of ownership status. The following are examples of some of the more common techniques:

- **Fee Simple Purchase** – Involves the outright purchase of land.
- **Easement** – A partial interest in property is conveyed by the landowner to the Town or a non-profit such as a land trust with specific restrictions on land development or access privileges.
- **Land Trust** – Private, non-profit organizations that acquire land for recreation or conservation.

The Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection's Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Grant Program (CGS § 7-131d to 7-131k) provides financial assistance to municipalities or non-profit land conservation organizations to acquire land for open space. This grant program provides matching grants to communities like Hamden for up to 65% of the properties fair market value. The Town of Hamden has a unique opportunity to continue to leverage its status as a DEP designated "Targeted Investment Community" in its application to this grant program to acquire open space.

## **E. PARKS AND OPEN SPACE POLICY, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

**GOAL:** Improve and protect the quality of life in the Town by encouraging the improved use, maintenance and rehabilitation of the park and open space system to ensure they are adequate in extent, strategic in location and equitable in distribution in order to meet the unique active and passive needs of the Town's population.

### **OBJECTIVES:**

- Continue the efficient utilization of existing parks and recreation facilities, including extended hours and creative scheduling.
- Strengthen the existing cooperative relationship between Parks and Recreation and the School Board to maximize the use of all municipal recreational resources to the benefit of Hamden's residents.
- Wherever possible, existing parks and open space should be linked together to form interconnected greenways.
- Encourage greenways linking neighborhoods and employment areas to existing open space areas as a focus for recreational activity.
- Neighborhood parcels for open space/recreation should be acquired in neighborhoods presently lacking such facilities.
- Maximize appropriate accessibility to open space resources.
- The town should establish a fund for open space acquisition.
- Provide zoning protection for open space resources and zoning incentives for adjacent properly scaled economic development.
- Market Hamden's comprehensive open space system and recreation programs as a major quality of life amenity.
- Implement recommendations made as part of the Town's 5-year Facility Improvement Plan to improve Town owned park facilities throughout the Town.
- The lowland areas of Meadowbrook will retain their open space designation but be more fully utilized for active and passive recreation, including playing fields and the development of a Town Center Park.
- Following an amendment to the 1990 Plan of Development, the upland area of Meadowbrook is being developed for a public educational facility that takes advantage of its natural setting. Town owned land south of Meadowbrook formerly zoned for commercial and industrial uses has been added to the lowland open space designation.
- Undertake design and engineering for the Town Center Park.
- Conserve important natural resources.

- Wherever possible, partner with groups such as the Hamden Land Trust to acquire open space.
- Initiate discussions with Amtrak on methods to provide public access to the Quinnipiac River.

## VI. COMMUNITY FACILITIES & INFRASTRUCTURE

### A. INTRODUCTION

An important component of Hamden's Plan of Conservation and Development is reviewing the distribution, availability, condition and capacity of the Town's community facilities and municipal infrastructure to meet the current and projected needs of the Town. This section presents an overview of the current inventory of Hamden's community facilities and municipal infrastructure and identifies proposed facility and infrastructure improvements needed to accommodate forecasted residential and non-residential growth or to resolve existing infrastructure problems and problem areas.

### B. COMMUNITY FACILITIES & INFRASTRUCTURE

#### Public Water Supply

The South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority (RWA) provides public water supply for the Town of Hamden. According to the RWA's most current Water Supply Plan, there are approximately 51,315 service connections serving approximately 90% of the Town's population. Projections suggest that the percent population served should increase through the year 2010 to 92.64%. The map titled "*Public Water Supply System*" illustrates the RWA existing public water supply service area for the Town.



Lake Whitney Reservoir

Public water supply for Hamden residents comes from one of three sources: Lake Gaillard, located in North Branford; Hamden Wells, located in Northern Hamden; and to a small extent the West River, located in Woodbridge.

The RWA's water supply infrastructure within the Town of Hamden includes 215 miles of main water lines, 972 hydrants, 6 storage tanks, 3 pumping facilities, 3 well field treatment facilities<sup>5</sup> and 1 reservoir<sup>6</sup>. The RWA is constructing 2 additional pumping facilities to increase water supply into the northern portion of their service area. In addition, plans are currently under way to replace the Lake Whitney Water Treatment Facility, which went off-line in August 1991, with a new treatment plant and re-establish Lake

<sup>5</sup> Lake Whitney treatment facility is currently under construction

<sup>6</sup> Lake Whitney reservoir is currently inactive

Whitney as an active water supply source by 2004. The RWA anticipates withdrawals from Lake Whitney will average 9 million gallons per day (mgd) over the estimated 40-year service life of the facility<sup>7</sup>.

As of 2001, the Town's average daily demand for public water was 6.32 mgd<sup>8</sup>. Projections made by the RWA suggest that demand will decrease slightly by 2010 to 6.22 mgd. The RWA indicates that this decrease in demand is primarily due to conservation measures.

In addition, the RWA conducts watershed/aquifer inspections, site plan reviews, 24 hour spill response, environmental education, and the operation of Hazwaste Central.

An important consideration for a public water supply system is source protection. The RWA owns the land adjacent to its water sources and thereby closely controls land use activities in these areas.

One aquifer protection area within the Town has been mapped by the State RWA and approved by DEP. This aquifer protection area is located along the Mill River in northern Hamden. The Town Zoning Regulations state that any development activity within the primary and secondary recharge areas of the Mill River Aquifer requires a special permit. Specific non-permitted uses are defined and include uses that pose a unique threat to groundwater resources.

### Sanitary Sewer System

The Town of Hamden maintains an extensive, but aging, sanitary sewer system that currently serves most of the developed areas in Hamden. As illustrated on the map titled "*Sanitary Sewer System*", approximately 75% of the Town is sewered. Only a small percentage of single-family homes use individual septic systems for wastewater disposal and most of these are located north of West Woods Road.

The Hamden Water Pollution Control Authority is responsible for the operation and maintenance of Hamden sewer system as well as the sewer use billing for Hamden residents. The Town of Hamden's 159 miles of sanitary sewer piping consists of gravity sewers, 8 pump stations, forced mains and inverted siphons, all of which convey domestic, commercial, and industrial sewage to the City of New Haven wastewater treatment plant located on the east shore of New Haven Harbor.<sup>9</sup> The Town pays the City of New Haven contractual

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<sup>7</sup> Upper Lake Whitney Management Study, January 2002

<sup>8</sup> Table 7-4, Summary of Town Population Projections, RWA Water Supply Plan, 2001.

<sup>9</sup> Town of Hamden, Phase II Sewer System Evaluation, Milone & MacBroom, 2002

fees for sewage treatment based on percentage of usage, which in 2000 amounted to 27.59% of plant capacity.



East Shore Water Pollution Treatment Facility

In general, Hamden's sanitary sewer system does not suffer from capacity limitations nor is it projected to in the foreseeable future. The need for sewer expansion into currently unsewered areas is limited and no extensions are deemed immediately necessary.<sup>10</sup> However, an aging infrastructure and decreased maintenance funding have allowed problems to accumulate including extraneous flows of infiltration and inflow, disjointed pipes, sags in grade, cracked pipe, root penetration and capacity and operational problems with the Town's eight pump stations.

As of September 2002, the Town has completed Phase II sewer evaluation of the State Street study area and has completed a draft evaluation of the Lower Shepard Brook and Upper Thorpe Drive sewersheds. Over the next few years, it is expected that the Town will be working towards implementing the recommended improvements and repairs developed as part of the Phase II study. In addition, the Town will continue to pursue its sewer avoidance policy in areas not currently being served by the system in northern and western Hamden except to resolve public health issues.

### Storm Sewer System

As a largely developed community, Hamden has an extensive storm water sewer system in place. However, the storm water sewer system has not been comprehensively assessed and therefore problem areas have not been formally identified. With increasing State and Federal mandates for local storm water management and water quality improvement regulations, Hamden and other municipalities across Connecticut will soon be required to comply with new Federal storm water management regulations.

As early as 2004, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will require all regulated municipalities to comply with the Federal Storm Water Phase II regulations. These regulations require municipalities to implement a storm water management program as a means to control polluted runoff from entering the local waterways. This program is intended to reduce the discharge of pollutants to the

***The Town should limit the extent of impervious surfaces required and use "best management practices" to control run-off.***

<sup>10</sup> See 7 *Infra*



maximum extent possible<sup>11</sup>, protect water quality, and satisfy the appropriate water quality requirements of the Clean Water Act.

The Town has begun to prepare for these impending regulations by developing a GIS-based computer application designed to inventory and track activities subject to the Phase II regulations. The Town continues to be proactive in implementing a storm water management program so as to comply with impending Federal Phase II regulations and to protect the water quality of Hamden's watercourses. The Town should also review the subdivision, zoning and public improvement standards that relate to stormwater run-off with the goal of limiting the extent of impervious surfaces required and establishing "best management practices" to control run-off and minimize impact on natural and manmade drainage systems.



**Wallingford Resource Recovery Facility**

### **Solid Waste Disposal**

The Town contracts its solid waste disposal services with the Connecticut Resources Recovery Authority (CRRA), which participates within the Wallingford Resources Recovery System. Waste collection is the responsibility of the Town, which has hired a private contractor to perform this service for all Hamden residents. Solid waste is disposed of at the Wallingford Resource Recovery Facility, which consists of a mass-burn solid waste, resource recovery, electric generation facility

located in the Town of Wallingford. The Wallingford facility provides waste disposal for five communities in the region including Cheshire, Meriden, North Haven and Wallingford.

Under Hamden's existing contract, the Town may dispose of up to 36,000 tons of waste per year at the Wallingford Resource Recovery Facility. During 2001, the Town disposed of approximately 32,000 tons of waste, approximately 10% under its contracted quota. While the amount of waste generated by the Town varies from year to year, it is not expected that the Town will exceed its quota before the end of its contract, which expires in 2010.

The Town retains a private contractor to provide curbside recycling for residents who reside in single-family homes or apartments and condominiums of six or fewer units. State Law and town regulations require all residents to recycle glass, food/beverage containers, metal food/beverage containers, newspapers, corrugated cardboard, leaves, scrap metal, and waste motor oil. Due to these recycling

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<sup>11</sup> As defined by the Federal Environmental Protection Agency



requirements, property owners must provide recycling services for all other Hamden residents not serviced by the Town.

The Town operates a small recycling center and transfer facility at the former landfill on Wintergreen Avenue. This facility handles bulk waste, recyclables and yard waste for Town residents.



Hamden Recycling Center and Transfer Station

The South Central Regional Water Authority (RWA) organizes the management of household hazardous waste for the Town and the region it serves.

The Town's management of solid waste, through its service contract with the CRRA is an efficient and cost effective means to provide this municipal service. However, the Town is vulnerable to shifts in economy and technology that may affect the costs that the CRRA will face, and inevitably pass on to the towns they service through the rate they

charge for their tipping fees.

### **Flood Control**

The Town of Hamden has participated in flood control programs of the state and federal governments.

In the Corene Drive, Cooper Lane and Schupp Road area, CT Department of Environmental Protection maintains a flood control works.

The Town built a flood control device on the Pardee Bank watershed in the early 1980's.

Currently, plans are progressing to further address this watershed. The Legislative Council has approved design monies for this project.

The Town participates in the FEMA Natural Flood Insurance Program. In 2003, the Town obtained recertification of its program.

### **Town Roads, Sidewalks and Bridges**

The road system of Hamden consists of 242.9 miles of paved roadway of which 26.5 miles are maintained by the State of Connecticut and 216.4 miles are a local responsibility. Refer to the "Town Road System" map which follows this page. With over 200 miles of local roads to maintain, the Town should reconsider developing a formal pavement evaluation that grades the condition of each road

and recommends a capital improvement and pavement management program for the future.

Hamden has over 150 miles of sidewalks in place. Subdivision Regulations require sidewalks to be provided in all developments unless a waiver is granted. Sidewalks connect neighborhoods and have gained importance as an element of the informal recreation system wherein, walking, jogging and biking are key activities. In addition, sidewalks provide safe connections to the Town's formal greenway trail from many neighborhoods.

For a town with a population over 56,000 residents, Hamden has an extensive network of roadways and bridges at the federal, state, and local levels. Currently the Town is responsible for 61 bridges on local roadways. The Town Engineering department maintains a GIS database, which tracks detailed information about each bridge including bridge rating, type of construction, last inspection date, year built, etc.

The Town is beginning the design for a replacement of the Mill River Bridge on Skiff Street. Replacement of this bridge also provides an opportunity to remedy a flooding hazard on this section of the Mill River.

While Hamden does not have a formal Sidewalk Program, the Engineering Department does respond to complaints about dangerous sidewalks or claims. Sidewalks are inspected and determined to be either the owner's responsibility or placed on the Town Sidewalk List. The Sidewalk List identifies those sidewalks, curbs, driveways, walkup and walkout locations that are related to damages from Town plows, Town tree roots, etc. The Engineering Department also maintains a list of proposed handicapped ramps, which are included in this list. The Engineering Department provides the inspection for required improvements and keeps records. In the past, the Sidewalk List bid and the extent of improvements was dependent upon available funding. The Public Works Department is currently making the sidewalk improvements.

### **Public Library System**

The Hamden Public Library System provides residents with educational, recreational and reference services from one central library and two smaller branch libraries. Currently there are 19,956 registered borrowers of which 14,334 are adults and 5,622 are children. The Miller Memorial Library, located at 2901 Dixwell Avenue serves as the central library. Branch locations include Louise A. Brundage Community Library, located at 91 Circular Avenue and the Whitneyville Branch, located at 125 Carleton Street.



**Miller Memorial Library**

Hamden’s first public library opened in 1901 and consisted of 89 books. Today, the library system includes a collection of over 175,000 books or magazines and over 16,000 videos, recordings and computer disks<sup>12</sup>. The library system offers internet access for the public and several electronic databases including online access to the catalogs of over 200 libraries within the State. The library system also provides a variety of educational programs for residents of all ages as well as museum passes, which offer discount admission to many popular Connecticut attractions.

As the central library in the system, the Miller Memorial Library has the largest circulation at 399,747. The business resource center, reference area, an activity center, as well as the Hamden Senior Center and space for public meetings are all located at the Miller Library.

**Table 10**  
 Location and Circulation of Hamden Public Libraries  
 Town of Hamden, 2002

| Branch                               | Location            | Circulation    |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------|----------------|
| Miller Memorial Library              | 2901 Dixwell Avenue | 399,747        |
| Louise A. Brundage Community Library | 91 Circular Avenue  | 27,762         |
| Whitneyville Library                 | 125 Carleton Street | 19,027         |
| <b>Total Circulation</b>             |                     | <b>446,536</b> |

Source: Town of Hamden Public Library, 2002

<sup>12</sup> As of June 30, 2002, Source: Hamden Public Library

Some discussion on an expansion to the library has occurred. Establishment of a committee to explore future facility needs is appropriate.

### **Public School System**

The Hamden public school system consists of nine elementary schools, one K-8 interdistrict magnet school, one middle school and one high school. The facilities are listed below and located on the “*Community Facilities*” map. Since 1990, the Hamden Board of Education has undertaken six major school construction, renovation, expansion and improvement projects. Major improvements have included the new Church Street School that opened in 1990; the new Helen Street School that opened in 1992; renovation of and addition to the Dunbar Hill School in 1996; renovation of and addition to Hamden High School in 1997; renovation and addition to Wintergreen Inter-district Magnet School in 1998; and the new High School Athletic Complex in 2002. In addition, Bear Path Elementary is undergoing a total renovation, to be completed November 2003, and Spring Glen Elementary School is being replaced with a new building scheduled for completion in September 2003. The Middle School is recently programmed for replacement.

In 1997 the Board of Education completed an elementary school redistricting which included an analysis to determine the feasibility and practicality of using Wintergreen School as a tenth traditional elementary school in the district. It was determined that the Town would continue to use nine elementary schools and that Wintergreen School would be utilized as an inter-district elementary magnet school.



**Wintergreen Magnet School**

Current public school enrollment is 6,322 pupils. This figure does not include more than 700 Hamden students attending charter and

magnet schools both in and out of district nor does it include out-placed special education students. Elementary enrollment (PK-6) is 3,218, middle school enrollment (7-8) is 1,018 and high school enrollment (9-12) is 2,097. Total school enrollment is about 1,000 pupils higher today than it was in 1990. In the last half of the 1990s elementary school enrollment declined slightly while middle school and high school enrollment increased.

**Table 11**  
**Hamden Public School Enrollment and Pupil Station Capacity**  
**Hamden, Connecticut**

| School                                | Location             | Grades Served | Pupil Station Capacity* | 2002-2003 Enrollment** |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------|---------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| Alice Peck School                     | 35 Hillfield Road    | K-6           | 350                     | 259                    |
| Bear Path School                      | 10 Kirk Road         | K-6           | 495 <sup>a</sup>        | 299                    |
| Church Street School                  | 95 Church Street     | PK-6          | 500                     | 464                    |
| Dunbar Hill School                    | 315 Lane Street      | K-6           | 400                     | 372                    |
| Helen Street School                   | 285 Helen Street     | K-6           | 435                     | 356                    |
| Ridge Hill School                     | 120 Carew Road       | K-6           | 500                     | 335                    |
| Shepherd Glen School                  | 1 Skiff Street Ext.  | K-6           | 480                     | 318                    |
| Spring Glen School                    | 1908 Whitney Avenue  | K-6           | 450 <sup>b</sup>        | 333                    |
| West Woods School                     | 350 West Todd Street | K-6           | 550                     | 471                    |
| Hamden Middle School                  | 550 Newhall Street   | 7-8           | 1,050 <sup>c</sup>      | 1,018                  |
| Hamden High School                    | 2040 Dixwell Avenue  | 9-12          | 1,850                   | 2,097                  |
| <b>Total Public School Enrollment</b> |                      |               | <b>7,060</b>            | <b>6,322***</b>        |

Source: Hamden Public Schools

Notes:

- \* Based upon analysis of Pupil Station Capacity undertaken as part of Redistricting Analysis, December 1996 and current updates by Hamden Public School Administration
- \*\* Based upon October 1, 2002 pupil counts
- \*\*\* Does not include 729 Hamden students attending charter and magnet schools both in and out of district nor does it include out-placed special education students. Hamden residents attending private or parochial schools are also not included in this figure.
- a with renovation and addition (due to open November 2003)
- b with completion of new building (due to open September 2003)
- c includes use of Newhall Building by 200 7<sup>th</sup> Grade students and 850 at HMS

**Table 12**  
**Historical Enrollment: 1990/91 to 2002/03**  
**Hamden, Connecticut**

|               | 90/91        | 91/92        | 92/93        | 93/94        | 94/95        | 95/96        | 96/97        | 97/98        | 98/99        | 99/00        | 00/01        | 01/02        | 02/03         |
|---------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| Elementary    | 3,200        | 3,394        | 3,558        | 3,701        | 3,813        | 3,858        | 3,900        | 3,802        | 3,576        | 3,482        | 3,433        | 3,349        | 3,207         |
| Middle School | 681          | 713          | 779          | 815          | 854          | 865          | 927          | 1,008        | 1,104        | 978          | 975          | 971          | 1,018         |
| High School   | 1,490        | 1,520        | 1,485        | 1,497        | 1,506        | 1,544        | 1,557        | 1,634        | 1,707        | 1,720        | 1,877        | 1,986        | 2,097         |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>5,371</b> | <b>5,627</b> | <b>5,822</b> | <b>6,013</b> | <b>6,173</b> | <b>6,267</b> | <b>6,384</b> | <b>6,444</b> | <b>6,387</b> | <b>6,180</b> | <b>6,285</b> | <b>6,306</b> | <b>6,322*</b> |

Source: Hamden Public Schools

Notes:

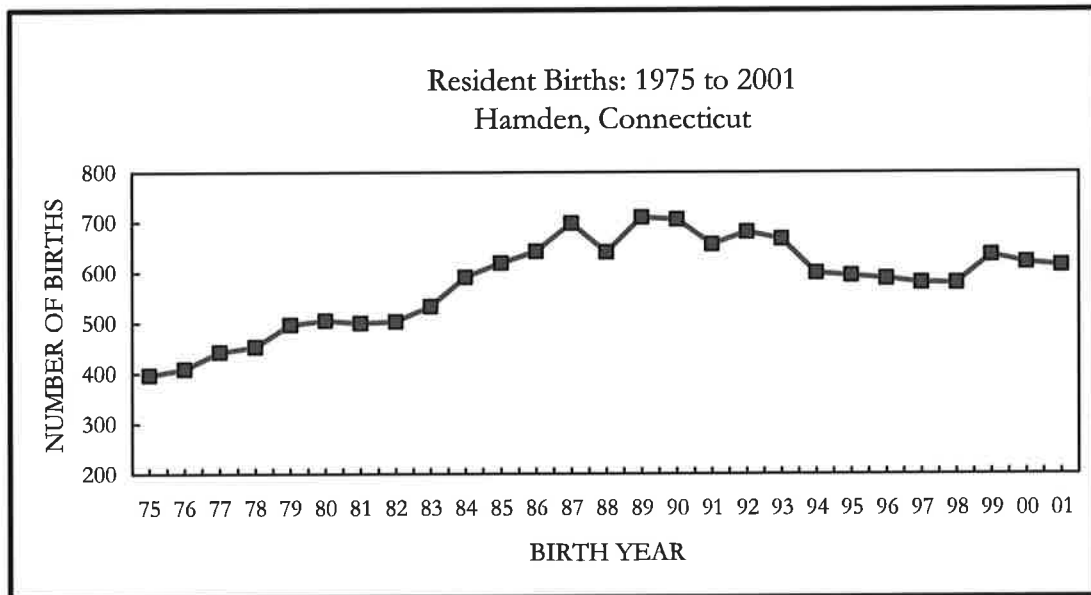
- \* Does not include 729 Hamden students attending charter and magnet schools both in and out of district nor does it include out-placed special education students. Hamden residents attending private or parochial schools are also not included in this figure.



The design capacity of the town’s non-magnet school facilities is 7,060. When considering school capacity, the terms optimal or operational capacities are often utilized. These terms reflect the fact that students and class sizes do not come in equal increments. For school facility usage and planning purposes, approximately 85 percent of total pupil station capacity is utilized to estimate optimal capacity, recognizing that Hamden’s elementary schools feature either “traditional” or open space classrooms which can affect space utilization. This allows for more efficient operation and provision of school programs.

**Birth Trends and Projections**

Birth trends and projections are used to plan for school enrollment. As depicted below, resident births in the Town reached their peak in the late 1980s and early 1990s with a record high of 710 births in 1989 and 706 births in 1990. Children born in these birth years are now middle-school-aged students and will be entering the high school grades. Resident births declined somewhat between 1991 and 1998 but have again surpassed 600 births a year since 1999. As these youngsters progress through the public educational system there will be peaks and valleys of enrollment reflecting the variation in the number of births.



### Future Enrollment Projections

Future enrollment projections prepared by the Connecticut State Department of Education show a gradual decline in overall enrollment over the next several years. The table below shows the projected enrollment in comparison with historical trends.

**Table 13**  
Projected Enrollment & Historical Trends  
Hamden, Connecticut

| Year      | Elementary School | Middle School | High School | Total Enrollment |
|-----------|-------------------|---------------|-------------|------------------|
| 1990/91   | 3,200             | 681           | 1,490       | 5,371            |
| 1991/92   | 3,394             | 713           | 1,520       | 5,627            |
| 1992/93   | 3,558             | 779           | 1,485       | 5,822            |
| 1993/94   | 3,701             | 815           | 1,497       | 6,013            |
| 1994/95   | 3,813             | 854           | 1,506       | 6,173            |
| 1995/96   | 3,858             | 865           | 1,544       | 6,267            |
| 1996/97   | 3,900             | 927           | 1,557       | 6,384            |
| 1997/98   | 3,802             | 1,008         | 1,634       | 6,444            |
| 1998/99   | 3,576             | 1,104         | 1,707       | 6,387            |
| 1999/00   | 3,482             | 978           | 1,720       | 6,180            |
| 2000/01   | 3,433             | 975           | 1,877       | 6,285            |
| 2001/02   | 3,349             | 971           | 1,986       | 6,306            |
| 2002/03   | 3,207             | 1,018         | 2,097       | 6,322*           |
| 2007/08** | 3,166             | 907           | 2,011       | 6,272***         |

Notes:

\* Does not include 729 Hamden students attending charter and magnet schools both in and out of district nor does it include out-placed special education students. Hamden residents attending private or parochial schools are also not included in this figure.

\*\* Projected by State of Connecticut Department of Education

\*\*\* Includes a projected 44 PK & SE students

Town residents are served by elementary and secondary parochial and private schools and have access to several magnet and charter schools. Currently almost 1,000 Hamden pupils attend local private, parochial, magnet or charter schools. The degree to which these non-public schools expand or contract or the degree to which economic conditions drive household educational choices in the future will have a direct impact on the Town's public school system. The construction of a new middle school and future school facility improvements may also affect parental choice in sending their children to either public or private school and thereby impact enrollment trends.



## Future Public School Facility Plans and Considerations

In 1999 the school district and the town applied for a school construction grant to renovate and expand the existing Hamden Middle School. In the Fall of 2000, following environmental testing for the planned renovation, it was determined that renovation of the existing Middle School was not feasible due to the presence of contaminants in the soil contiguous to the Middle School. Since 2000, the Board of Education and the Town have been working to identify a site for a new Middle School.



**Existing Hamden Middle School**

In late 2002, a site in the Town Center at Meadowbrook was chosen and legislatively approved as the site for the new Middle School. The Town and the Hamden Board of Education are currently finalizing plans for a new Middle School to accommodate 1,100 students.



**Spring Glen School Under Construction**

The Spring Glen Elementary School Expansion project is currently underway. Upon completion the expanded facility will have the capacity to accommodate 450 pupils.

To accommodate potential future elementary school needs, an Early Childhood Learning Center, which would house pre-kindergarten and Kindergarten students from the entire town in one facility, could help relieve space demand at the existing elementary schools. Such a configuration would make it possible to allow more students to attend full-day kindergarten and could also allow for more pre-kindergarten programming.

Hamden has loosely followed a neighborhood model for its elementary schools. The closure of obsolete school buildings in southern Hamden has removed the neighborhood elementary school from Whitneyville and Highwood neighborhoods. These neighborhoods feel the school closures have lessened the community life of these areas. Future public school facility planning should include the neighborhood impacts of these significant public investments.

## Non-Public School Elementary and Secondary School Facilities

Hamden has several non-public elementary and secondary schools within its municipal boundaries. These schools provide educational choice for Hamden residents as well as residents throughout the Greater New Haven region.

**Table 14**  
**Non-Public School Facilities**  
**Hamden, Connecticut**

| School   | Location               | Grades Served |
|--|------------------------|---------------|
| <b>Charter, Magnet &amp; Technical Schools</b> |                        |               |
| Highville Mustard Seed Charter School          | 130 Leeder Hill Drive  | PK-8          |
| Wintergreen Interdistrict Magnet*              | 670 Wintergreen Avenue | K-8           |
| Hyde Leadership School                         | 306 Circular Avenue    | 9-12          |
| Eli Whitney Vocational-Technical School        | 71 Jones Road          | 9-12          |
| <b>Private &amp; Parochial Schools</b>         |                        |               |
| Hamden Hall Country Day                        | 1108 Whitney Avenue    | PK-12         |
| Harris and Tucker                              | 43 Jones Road          | PK-7          |
| Sacred Heart Academy                           | 265 Benham Street      | 9-12          |
| St. Rita                                       | 1601 Whitney Avenue    | PK-8          |
| St. Stephen                                    | 418 Ridge Road         | PK-8          |
| Westwoods Christian Academy                    | 2105 State Street      | K-12          |

\* 422 Hamden residents attend Wintergreen. The remaining are from New Haven, Woodbridge & Wallingford.

**Police Protection**

The Hamden Police Department is responsible for the enforcement of all laws, ordinances and regulations governing the criminal and motor vehicle codes and the protection of all citizens. In addition, the Department is responsible for manning and supervising the Central Communications Divisions for all police, fire and medical requests for service to the public. Some of the services provided by the Department include resident fingerprinting, narcotics education for school aged children and crime prevention activity, such as assisting in block watches and home security surveys. The Department includes a staff of 156 individuals, of which 107 are sworn officers, 24 civilian employees and 25 school crossing guards.



**Hamden Police Department Headquarters**

The current police headquarters is located in two separate buildings on Dixwell Avenue, next to Memorial Town Hall. The Town also has two police substations; one on Dixwell Avenue near the New Haven Border, and one on Whitney Avenue, across from the Sleeping Giant Golf Course. At this time the existing police headquarters cannot meet the current demands of the Department. The Town is currently undergoing a site selection process for the construction of a new police headquarters to replace the existing facility. This new facility will provide a modern, efficient building to meet police requirements well into the future.

### **Fire Protection**



**Hamden Fire Department - Dixwell Avenue Station**

Fire protection services are provided by the Hamden Fire Department, which is made up of 101 career firefighters aided by over 50 volunteers. The Town has seven fire stations and 23 pieces of motorized equipment of which six are used for special emergencies. The location of the fire stations are illustrated on the Community Facilities map. Additional services provided by the Department include Emergency Medical Service with two fire rescue vehicles providing full time paramedic service to the Town residents.

The existing Department headquarters is located on Johnson Road in northern Hamden. Currently the Town is in a site selection process for the construction of a new fire headquarters to replace the existing facility and to replace the Circular Avenue Station #2. The Hamden Fire Department also identified the need to refurbish Ride Road Station #3 and West Woods Station #9 along with equipment replacement.

### **Public Housing**

The Hamden Housing Authority and the Hamden Elderly Services Department address the supportive housing/service needs of the elderly, frail elderly and disabled. The Housing Authority also manages the federally funded Section 8 Rent Subsidy Program for the Town.<sup>13</sup> Currently, all of the two hundred twenty (220) rental units managed by the Housing Authority are occupied by elderly and disabled individuals. Since disabled applicants qualify for elderly housing, and since the Authority anticipates an increase of approximately 60% of the waiting list for elderly housing to be comprised of young disabled applicants, it appears there will not be

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<sup>13</sup> The Hamden Housing Authority also manages the Section 8 program for the Town of Wallingford



enough elderly housing available to meet the demands of the population. The Housing Authority will investigate the creation of additional units for the elderly and disabled. At a minimum, the Housing Authority will seek resources with which it can offer a wider range of support services to its clients.



**Hamden Village Elderly Housing**

### **Senior Citizen Centers**

Within the Town of Hamden, the Elderly Services Department functions as the central resource center for information on programs, activities and services for elderly residents. In addition, the department oversees the operation of the Miller Senior Center, a multi-purpose facility located within the Miller Memorial Library as well as the Senior Transportation Program and the Elderly Outreach Office.

The role of senior centers has been changing over the years. In the past, centers were primarily social and recreation centers. While it still serves this function, the Hamden Senior Center has also become a base for the provision of social services to senior citizens.

### **Community Centers**

Hamden maintains two community centers: the M. L. Keefe Community Center, located at 11 Pine Street, and the Newhall Community Center, located at 11 Pine Street next to the Hamden Middle School. The M. L. Keefe Community Center, was established by the Town in 1975 to “provide comprehensive neighborhood services for Hamden residents of all ages in the framework of an intergenerational multi-purpose community center”<sup>14</sup> This community center provides a meeting place for a variety of public programs and activities. Other Satellite offices located at the Center include elderly outreach services, Healthy Start free medical insurance program, and Women, Infants & Children Hospital of Saint

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<sup>14</sup> Keefe Community Center Brochure, 2002.

Raphael's food supplement program. Community services offered at the M. L. Keefe Community Center include:

- ◆ Adult Education
- ◆ Community Development
- ◆ Food and Fuel Bank
- ◆ Job Resource Center
- ◆ City Welfare
- ◆ Family Discovery Center
- ◆ Child Care
- ◆ Special Needs & Youth Services

The Keefe Center is the primary facility used to provide community services and the facility is too small to meet the growing needs of the community.

The Newhall Community Center is primarily used for the Hamden Boxing Program. Due to space constraints at the existing middle school, a large portion of the Center is currently being used for middle school classrooms.

### **Public Works Garage**

The Town's public works department currently operates out of two facilities: the public works garage, located at 1125 Shepard Avenue, and the Vo-Ed garage, located at 1255 Shepard Avenue. From these two facilities Public Works stores, maintains, services and repairs the municipal vehicles for the Town. These sites contain a central fuel depot, as well as storage for plows, sand spreaders, sand and salt storage and other equipment. Periodic review of operations to insure best management practices are employed and the most efficient use of facilities being achieved are on-going functions.



**Hamden Public Works Department**

### **General Government Facilities**

General government administration is conducted at the new Hamden Government Center, located at 2750 Dixwell Avenue. Relocation of Town offices to this facility in 2001 has resolved most of the space deficiencies Town departments have endured in the past. The

building has additional space currently rented that allows for space needs in the future.



**Hamden Town Hall**

The Town Hall stills houses a few municipal departments including the Town Clerk and Tax Assessor's offices. These departments are expected to relocate to the new Government Center in the near future. The Hamden Legislative Council and other Town Commissions are expected to continue conducting meetings in the existing Council Chambers. The Town Hall building has historic value and is listed on the State Historic Register. Therefore, it is reasonable to expect this building will remain an important part of the inventory of Town facilities, although its exact future use is undefined at this time. The Hamden Town Center memorandum discusses reuse options for this important civic building.



**Hamden Government Center**

## **C. COMMUNITY FACILITIES & INFRASTRUCTURE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

The Town of Hamden prides itself in offering a full range of municipal services. Public and non-profit community facilities provide for the convenience, health and welfare of residents and constitute a significant component of the Town's quality of life. Maintaining an adequate array of community facilities in good condition to meet changing needs is an important aspect of local government.

**GOAL#1 Provide a safe and efficient sanitary sewer system capable of handling anticipated development in areas presently served by the sanitary sewer systems.**

### **OBJECTIVES:**

- Design engineering solutions to sanitary sewer system deficiencies.
- Plan for the renovation/replacement of pumping stations and add new ones as necessary.
- Utilize the results of the town wide sewer study in considering changes to the zoning regulations.
- Continue to zone land in non-sewered areas in accordance with the sewer avoidance guidelines of the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).
- Continue to cooperate and support the efforts of Quinnipiac Valley Health District and the DEP to ensure the health and welfare of Hamden Residents.
- Continue the sewer avoidance policy of the Town.

**GOAL#2 To ensure the protection of both surface water quality and underground aquifer water quality.**

### **OBJECTIVES:**

- Review and revise surface and groundwater protection standards in the general review of zoning regulations.
- Establish open space easement requirements along streambelts and watercourses in the zoning regulations.

**GOAL#3 Provide a safe and efficient storm water system capable of handling current and anticipated development.**

### **OBJECTIVES:**

- Review, update and implement a town wide storm drainage plan.
- Repair/replace catch basins and culverts as needed.
- Implement regular storm drain cleaning plan.

- Review and revise storm water drainage provisions in the zoning regulations to require “best practice” methods be utilized in site design.
- Develop subdivision, zoning and public improvement standards which consider stormwater runoff, limit the extent of impervious surfaces and control run-off as development review criteria to minimize impact on natural and manmade drainage systems.
- Review existing development regulations and standards to determine where requirements for impervious surfaces can be reduced or eliminated.

**GOAL#4 Ensure the efficient use of resources in carrying out the work of the town, reducing waste and recycling wherever possible.**

**OBJECTIVE:**

- Develop a plan to reduce unnecessary municipal waste generation.

**GOAL#5 Promote recycling by Hamden Citizens.**

**OBJECTIVE:**

- Institute State mandated trash recycling programs.

**GOAL#6 Provide safe, convenient and efficient facilities for town services.**

**OBJECTIVES:**

- Develop a new fire station to move the fire equipment presently located in the Town Hall building to a less congested, centrally located site.
- Plan a modernization of the 1924 Town Hall, which restores its historical integrity.
- Begin acquiring property along the south side of School Street, west of Whitney Avenue for access to the adjoining municipal site.
- Continue the branch library system and examine opportunities to better geographically serve the Town according to the population distribution (ie. Satellite facilities in other municipal buildings, etc.)
- A comprehensive analysis of the service and facility needs of the Town should be conducted.
- Prioritize the siting of new community facilities and services in close proximity to existing commercial and residential areas.
- Adopt the LEEDS (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) building design principles whenever feasible and possible for future Town building projects to ensure developing high-performance, sustainable buildings.



**GOAL#7 Provide a safe, attractive and well-maintained system of public roadways.**

**OBJECTIVES:**

- Undertake a program of installation and maintenance of street trees and landscaping treatment particularly along arterial and collector streets. Where public right-of-width inhibits tree planting, enlist abutting property owner permission to plant street trees.
- Major rehabilitation work on streets with structural base problems should be undertaken simultaneously with a program of annually sealing streets in good condition to postpone future costly repairs.
- Establish street lines where they do not exist.
- Undertake a study of the 12.7 miles of paper streets to determine their status and possible inclusion in the roadway system.



## VII. HISTORIC RESOURCES

### A. INVENTORY

Often, connection to the past is as important to a community as its vision for the future. Hamden's history is uniquely tied to its geography and topography; its colonial history; its role in the industrial revolution associated with Eli Whitney's endeavors; the canal line; its proximity between New Haven and Hartford; and eventually its locale in regards to modern modes of transportation.

There are sixteen (16) places listed on the National Register of Historic Places. They are as follows:

**Table 15**  
**National Register of Historic Places Listings**  
**Hamden, Connecticut**

| Resource Name                                       | Address/Description  | Year Listed |
|---|--|-------------|
| George Atwater House                                | 1845 State Street  | 1992        |
| Atwater—Linton House                                | 1804 State Street  | 1992        |
| Jonathan Dickerman II House                         | 105 Mount Carmel Avenue  | 1982        |
| East Rock Park                                      | Roughly bounded by State St., Davis St., Livingston St., Park Dr., Mitchell Dr. and Whitney Ave. | 1997        |
| Edgerton Park                                       | 840 Whitney Avenue (also in New Haven)   | 1988        |
| Farmington Canal Lock No. 13                        | Brooksvale Avenue  | 1982        |
| Farmington Canal - New Haven & Northampton Canal    | Roughly from Suffield in Hartford County to New Haven in New Haven County                        | 1985        |
| Hamden Bank & Trust Building                        | 1 Circular Avenue  | 1990        |
| Hamden High School                                  | 2040 Dixwell Avenue  | 1994        |
| Hamden Memorial Town Hall                           | 2372 Whitney Avenue  | 2001        |
| Alphonso Johnson House                              | 1 Gilbert Avenue   | 1992        |
| Mount Carmel Congregational Church and Parish House | 3280 and 3284 Whitney Avenue, 195 Sherman Avenue   | 1991        |
| Pistol Factory Dwelling                             | 1322 Whitney Avenue  | 1991        |
| Sleeping Giant Tower                                | 200 Mount Carmel Avenue at Mount Carmel Summit Sleeping Giant State Park                         | 1986        |
| Orrin Todd House                                    | 3369 Whitney Avenue  | 1991        |
| Eli Whitney Gun Factory                             | 915-940 Whitney Avenue   | 1974        |
| Whitneyville Congregational Church                  | 1247-1253 Whitney Avenue   | 1995        |

Source: National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places

In addition to the places listed on the National Register of Historic Places there are also several places not listed on the National Register but listed on the Connecticut State Register of Historic Places. The following places are located on the State Register of Historic Places:

**Table 16**  
**Connecticut State Register of Historic Places Listings**  
**Hamden, Connecticut**

| Resource Name              | Address/Description                           |
|----------------------------|---|
| Jared Bassett House        | 2389 Dixwell Avenue                           |
| Amasa Bradley House        | 4490 Whitney Avenue                           |
| Capt. Amasa Bradley House  | 4016 Whitney Avenue                           |
| Horace Bradley House       | 4004 Whitney Avenue                           |
| Sterling Bradley House     | 3997 Whitney Avenue                           |
| Simeon Bristol House       | 4066 Whitney Avenue                           |
| Charles Brockett House     | 3711 Whitney Avenue                           |
| Alfred Dickerman House     | 3307 Whitney Avenue                           |
| Allen Dickerman House      |   |
| Jonathan Dickerman House   | 3217 Whitney Avenue                           |
| Ives & Grannis Co. Factory | 2 Broadway                                    |
| Grace Episcopal Church     | 2925 Dixwell Avenue                           |
| Justice Humiston House     |   |
| Elam Ives House            | 95 Ives Street                                |
| Red School House           |   |
| Nathaniel Sherman House    |   |
| Rectory School Barn        | Moved to Meadowbrook site from Whitney Avenue |

Source: Connecticut Historical Commission

The Connecticut Historical Commission also lists the Ivesville Historic District on the State Register of Historic Places. This district was rejected as a local historic district. The focus of the district is the nineteenth century business and industrial complex centered on Ives Street and on Mill River north to the Clark's Pond area. According to the description of the area described in the Historic District description the area contains approximately 60 buildings not including detached garages, outbuildings etc.. Structures on Broadway, Ives Street, New Road, Whitney Avenue and Woodruff Street collectively represent a small mid-19<sup>th</sup> century industrial village.

The Hamden Historical Society maintains a listing and inventory of near 500 structures of local significance spanning more than two centuries of Hamden architectural history. Detailed architectural information on the structures in the local inventory is recorded on

Historical Resources Inventory sheets provided by the State of Connecticut Historical Commission.

The Town inventory of historic structures has been entered into a GIS database as illustrated on the "*Historic Resources Map*" which follows. To avoid losing additional Town history, this inventory of historic resources should be consulted as part of future development and redevelopment efforts in order to identify potential impacts on such resources and the potential for preservation or need for mitigating actions.

## **B. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

**GOAL** Recognize, preserve and promote the historic and cultural resources of Hamden.

### **OBJECTIVES:**

- Preserve historic buildings through promoting adaptive reuse and use of historic tax credits.
- Reference the Town inventory of historic structures as part of a development permitting and redevelopment planning in order to identify the potential for preservation or need for mitigating actions.
- Encourage the organization of interested persons and groups to focus on the documentation and preservation of Hamden's historic resources such as designation of historic districts.
- Convene a committee to explore a mechanism for the Town to receive and store significant architectural artifacts from the demolition of older structures and reuse of these building elements into buildings where appropriate.
- Support educational activities that highlight Hamden's historic neighborhoods.



## VIII. HOUSING

### A. INTRODUCTION

As one of the principal land uses within a community, housing and housing-related issues affect all residents. The form, layout, condition, and cost of housing available within a community are key to the quality of life for that community. The Town's current housing status will be examined in this section to determine what housing needs exist and to formulate courses of action to address those needs in the coming decade.

The General Statutes for the State of Connecticut Section 8-23 set standards for a municipal Plan of Conservation and Development. The Statute reads, "Such plan shall make provision for the development of housing opportunities, including opportunities for multi-family dwellings, consistent with soil types, terrain, and infrastructure capacity. Such plan shall also promote housing choice and economic diversity in housing, including housing for both low and moderate-income households." In addition to assessing housing needs, it is the intention of this section to put forth strategies to meet the housing needs of all of Hamden's residents.

### B. EXISTING HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS & DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

#### Existing Housing Characteristics

The 2000 Census recorded 23,464 housing units. Ninety-five and one-half percent (95.5%) of the housing units were occupied leaving a 4.5% vacancy rate. Of the total 22,408 occupied housing units 67.2% were owner-occupied and the remaining 32.8% were renter occupied units. According to Census counts, 1,056 housing units were vacant. The largest number of these vacant units were rental units, 466 or 44.1%.



Single Family, Still Hill



Spring Glen Neighborhood

**Table 17**  
**Housing Units and Occupancy Characteristics: 2000**

|  | <b>Number of Housing Units</b> | <b>% of Housing Units</b> |
|--|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Total Housing Units</b>                   | <b>23,464</b>                  |                           |
| Occupied Housing Units                       | 22,408                         | 95.5                      |
| Vacant Housing Units                         | 1,056                          | 4.5                       |
| <b>Occupied Housing Units</b>                | <b>22,408</b>                  |                           |
| Owner-Occupied Housing Units                 | 15,069                         | 67.2                      |
| Renter-Occupied Housing Units                | 7,339                          | 32.8                      |
| <b>Vacant Housing Units</b>                  | <b>1,056</b>                   |                           |
| For Rent                                     | 466                            | 44.1                      |
| For Sale Only                                | 143                            | 13.5                      |
| Rented or Sold, not occupied                 | 108                            | 10.2                      |
| For Seasonal, Recreational or Occasional Use | 125                            | 11.8                      |
| Other Vacant                                 | 214                            | 20.3                      |

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Hamden has a higher number of rental units than adjoining towns with the exception of New Haven. This can be attributed to a number of factors including the presence of Quinnipiac and Southern Connecticut Universities, the construction and market appeal of the Town Walk and Hamden Hills complexes, the Mix Avenue area and an increase in elderly housing complexes.



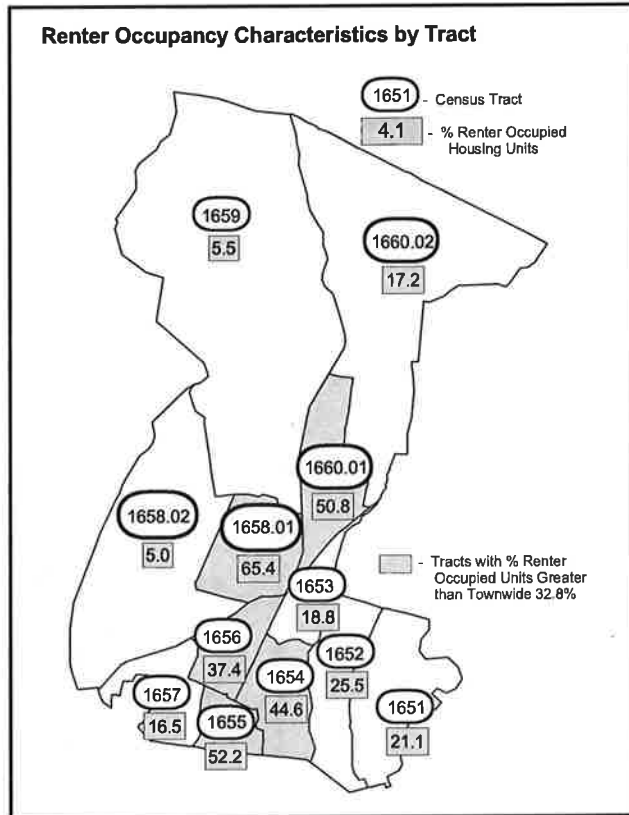
**Avalon Walk**



**Mix Avenue**

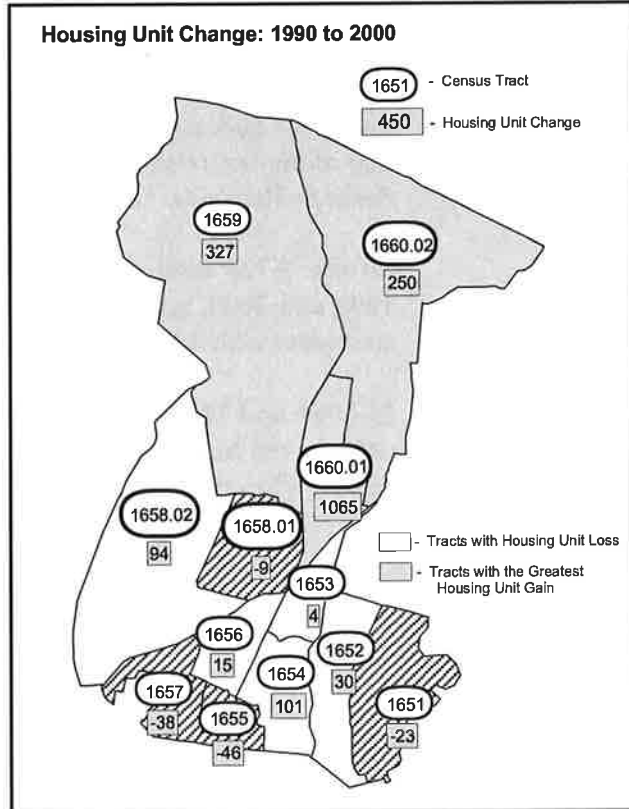


According to the 2000 Census, 67.2% of the Town's occupied housing units were owner occupied. Within Hamden there are several areas which have greater concentrations of rental occupied housing units. Census Tracts 1654 and 1655 along the Town's southern boundary; Tract 1658.01 which includes the Mix Avenue area; and Census Tract 1660.01 which includes Hamden Hills, Aspen Glen and Avalon Walk have the highest concentration of renter-occupied housing. In some areas of the Town, especially in the northern and westernmost census tracts, owner-occupied housing is most predominant. The map to the right highlights the areas of the Town with the highest concentrations of renter occupied housing.

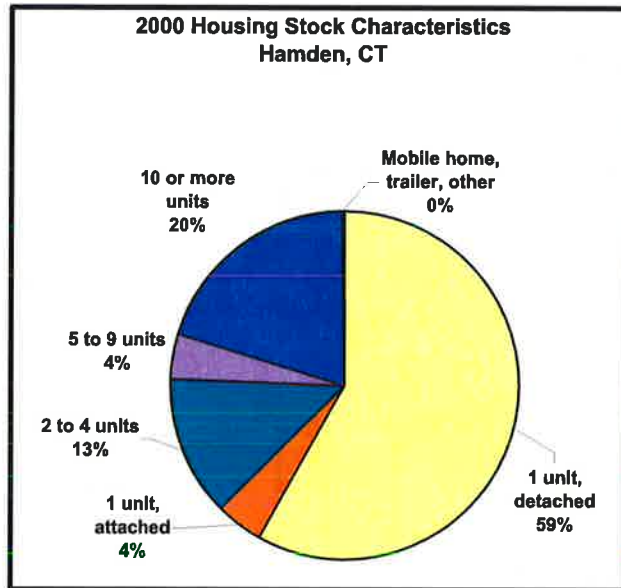


### Development Trends

Between the 1990 and 2000 Censuses the Town gained 1,726 housing units, a 7.9% increase. As shown in the map to the right, four (4) of the Town's Census Tracts lost small numbers of housing units during the 1990s. These tracts are located in southern Hamden. Losses in individual Census Tracts were offset by gains in others over the decade. Census Tract 1660.01 posted the greatest gain of 1,065 new housing units as a result of development in the Hamden Hills/Town Walk area. Construction in the Town's two northern Census Tracts, Tract 1659 and Tract 1660.02, also accounted for a significant portion the Town's overall gain



Hamden's current housing stock of 23,464, consists of 59% single family detached housing; 41% single family attached (generally condominium) housing; 24% multi-family housing (5 units or more); 13% two, three and four family housing and less than 1% mobile home or other.



The oldest and most dense housing in Hamden is concentrated in the southern and central neighborhoods in the Town. Neighborhoods to the north and along the western border are the least dense. Zones that allow for residential use are illustrated on the map titled "*Land Zoned for Residential Use*".

Of the 1,726 housing unit gain experienced by the Town between 1990 and 2000, more than one-half of the units were in multi-family structures with 10 or more units.

In 1991 and 1993 the Town posted the greatest net gain of housing units in the State. In 1998 it ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> in the State, and in 2000 in ranked 4<sup>th</sup> in the State for housing unit growth.

**Table 18**  
**Housing Units & Construction Activity Authorized: 1990 to 2000**  
**Town of Hamden**

| Year          | Total Housing Units Authorized | 1 Unit Detached | 1 Unit Attached | 2 Units    | 3 & 4 Units | 5 Units or More | Rank in State by Net Gain |
|---------------|--------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------|-------------|-----------------|---------------------------|
| 1990          | 87                             | 52              | 17              | 6          | 6           | 6               | 20 <sup>th</sup>          |
| 1991          | 507                            | 62              | 4               | 2          | 3           | 436             | 1 <sup>st</sup>           |
| 1992          | 125                            | 69              | 0               | 0          | 0           | 56              | 14 <sup>th</sup>          |
| 1993          | 429                            | 76              | 8               | 0          | 0           | 345             | 1 <sup>st</sup>           |
| 1994          | 81                             | 67              | 0               | 0          | 0           | 14              | 36 <sup>th</sup>          |
| 1995          | 89                             | 74              | 0               | 0          | 0           | 15              | 23 <sup>rd</sup>          |
| 1996          | NR                             | NR              | NR              | NR         | NR          | NR              | na                        |
| 1997          | 75                             | 51              | *               | 0          | 0           | 24              | 45 <sup>th</sup>          |
| 1998          | 458                            | 62              | *               | 0          | 0           | 396             | 3 <sup>rd</sup>           |
| 1999          | 203                            | 107             | *               | 0          | 0           | 96              | 8 <sup>th</sup>           |
| 2000          | 208                            | 146             | *               | 0          | 0           | 62              | 4 <sup>th</sup>           |
| <b>Totals</b> | <b>2,262**</b>                 | <b>766**</b>    | <b>29**</b>     | <b>8**</b> | <b>9**</b>  | <b>1,450**</b>  |                           |

Source: State of Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development, "Connecticut Housing Production and Permit Authorized Construction Report".

Note: NR – data Not Reported

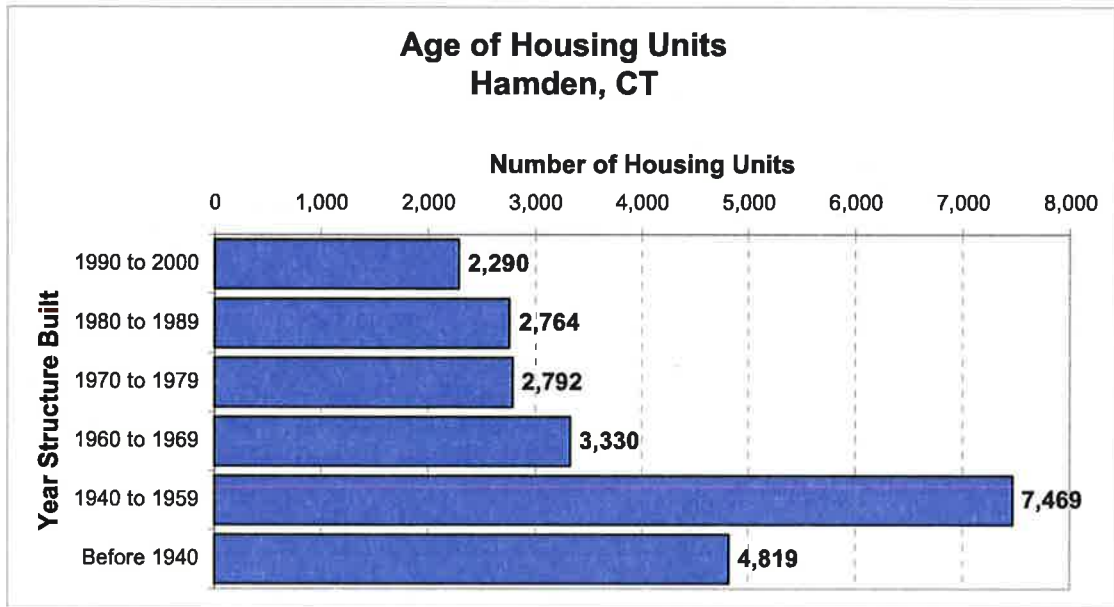
\* - single-family attached units are no longer a category for reporting

\*\* - total figures do not include numbers for 1996



**High Ridge**

An indicator of housing condition and housing variety in a community is the age of the housing stock. The age of housing stock generally affects both aesthetic appeal as well as the availability of a variety of housing types. As shown in the chart below Hamden experienced its most dramatic housing growth during the post-war 1940s and 1950s. Over 30% of the Town's housing stock was produced during the post-war decades. Pre-1940s housing comprises just over 20% of the Town's housing stock. Housing produced during the 1960s accounts for 3,330 units or just over 14% of the housing stock. Housing units produced during the 1970s and 1980s is similar at 2,792 (11.9%) and 2,764 (11.8%) housing units respectively. Less than 10% of the Town's total housing stock was built over the last decade.



### Residential Development Potential

An analysis was conducted assessing the residential development potential for the Town. This analysis reviewed vacant and undeveloped residential and non-residential zoned land for its physical capacity to support new or expanded growth. Potential growth was expressed in terms of potential dwelling units for vacant land areas zoned for residential use. For the purposes of this analysis, agricultural land uses that are not deed-restricted to remain open land are included as potentially developable land.

New residential development typically occurs in one of two ways, either by the development of vacant land through subdivision or by infill development. Whereas both types of residential development can be expected to occur in town, the greatest number of new dwelling units can be expected in zones where vacant land is still available for subdivision.

**Table 19  
Residential Development Potential**

| <b>Zone</b>     | <b>Gross Vacant &amp; Agricultural Land (acres)</b> | <b>Net Buildable Land (Acres)</b> | <b>Estimated Potential Dwelling Units</b> |
|-----------------|---|-----------------------------------|---|
| R-1             | 543   | 262                               | 128                                       |
| R-2             | 1,620   | 985                               | 965                                       |
| R-3             | 444   | 169                               | 332                                       |
| R-4             | 310   | 167                               | 635                                       |
| R-5             | 14  | 13                                | 74  |
| CDD             | 329   | 30                                | 600                                       |
| <b>Subtotal</b> | <b>3,260</b>  | <b>1,626</b>                      | <b>2,450</b>                              |

The results of the residential development potential analysis illustrated that based on existing zoning approximately 2,450 additional dwelling units could be built within the Town’s residential zones. This figure represents an approximate 10.4% increase over the 23,464 existing dwelling units enumerated by the 2000 census.

Because northern Hamden contains the vast majority of the vacant or agricultural land, this region of Town can expect the greatest amount of future residential development. This observation is particularly true for Census Tract 1659 that contains almost 50% of all the potential dwelling units calculated as part of this analysis.

**Infill Development Potential**

Infill development is the process of developing vacant or underutilized parcels within existing urban or suburban areas that are already largely developed. Successful infill development projects focus on filling in the gaps with a mix of housing types (as well as other land uses) at densities and design standards that are consistent with the fabric of the surrounding neighborhood. Attention to the character of surrounding development is an important component for ensuring that new development fits within the context of the existing neighborhood.

To help infill development blend with the scale and appearance of its surroundings innovative approaches to infill development should be

***Successful infill development focuses on filling in the gaps with a mix of housing types as well as other land uses at densities and design standards that are consistent with the fabric of the surrounding neighborhoods. Attention to the character of surrounding development is an important component for ensuring that new development fits within the existing neighborhood context.***

considered. Such consideration should take into account the following when in-fill projects are proposed:

- The building design should fit the scale and character of the surrounding neighborhood.
- The depth of the front yard should be similar to that of adjoining lots to preserve spatial character and vegetation along the street.
- The building mass, side yards and rear yards should respect and relate to those of adjacent lots.
- New buildings should not have a detrimental impact on their immediate neighbors in terms of loss of privacy, sunlight or view.
- Existing trees of a designated dimension should be plotted on the site plan. The preservation of significant existing trees and vegetation in keeping with their surroundings should be encouraged.
- The design of the building should de-emphasize the height of the structure in relation adjoining properties.

### **Affordability of Housing**

The issue of housing affordability is complex and defies simple solutions. The cost of housing is the result of a variety of factors including, but not limited to, the demand for a specific location, availability of buildable land, and labor and material costs. Other factors, such as the age and quality of the existing housing stock as well as the introduction of new product to the market greatly affect the cost of housing. Other factors independent of housing cost including interest rates, job growth, and local economic conditions all work together to influence the cost and availability of housing. Most of these factors are beyond the control of local governments.

The State of Connecticut requires that the issue of affordable housing be addressed in each community's Plan of Conservation and Development. Development over the years in Hamden has resulted in a variety of different housing types and densities. Such variety has resulted in housing choice at various price points. The town's housing stock includes 2, 3 and 4 family homes, a variety of rental housing choices, multi-family ownership options, senior housing and single family housing ranging from modest post-war Capes and

ranches to more modern country estates. Current zoning regulations are flexible in terms of providing a wide range of allowable densities and housing types. As previously highlighted, the Town has authorized more than 1,450 units of multi-family housing since 1990.

The Town of Hamden directly addresses the issue of affordable housing needs locally through the local Housing Authority and through the programs and efforts outlined in its “Consolidated Plan for Housing and Community Development Programs: 2000 to 2004”.

As part of its Consolidated Planning process the Town established general housing priorities on the creation of more affordable housing stock, primarily through the rehabilitation of existing housing; reduction of cost burden to low- and moderate-income households through the Housing Authority’s rental assistance program; increasing homeownership opportunities; and support of local Community Development Corporations (such as the Highville Mustard Seed Community Development Corporation), and non-profit and for-profit developers creating affordable housing for families and individuals identified as having a critical housing need.

The most recent data from the State Department of Economic and Community Development Affordable Housing Appeals Program puts the number of affordable housing units in Hamden in 2002 at 2,074. This is 8.84% of the estimated number of housing units in the Town. This level is very close to the State target of 10% but does not exempt the Town from the affordable housing appeals procedure. Affordable housing is distributed as follows:

|  |                |
|--|----------------|
| Number of Governmentally Assisted Units: | 1,472 units    |
| Number of CHFA/FMHA Mortgages            | 600 units      |
| Deed Restricted                          | <u>2 units</u> |
| TOTAL                                    | 2,074 units    |

The availability of a significant number of rental units, supportive housing developments and programs offered by the Town’s Community Development Department and the Hamden Housing Authority contribute to the provision of decent, safe and affordable housing. Given the diversity of the housing stock in tenure, size, and price, Hamden is well positioned to meet the housing needs of a diverse group of residents in the coming decade.

With over 7,300 renter-occupied units Hamden’s median rent in 2000 was \$794. This rent level is on par with the adjacent suburban communities. The recent construction of market rate multi-family in Hamden is reflected in the higher percentage of units renting for more than \$1,000 a month.



## Multi-Family Housing

Of the approximately 23,464 housing units in Hamden, 24.2% are multi-family units (buildings with 5 or more units) and an additional 13.1% of the inventory is in 2 to 4 unit structures. As mentioned earlier, this is a relatively high percentage when compared to other suburban communities of similar size. Most of Hamden's larger multi-family complexes are located along and off the Whitney Avenue and Dixwell Avenue corridors. The Mix Avenue and the Town Walk area developments represent the town's largest clusters of multi-family development. As to be expected, most of the 2 to 4 unit structures are located in the Town's southernmost neighborhoods nearest to the City of New Haven along Dixwell Avenue and State Street.



Avalon Walk Development

## Elderly Housing

Housing for the elderly is a critical concern for most communities. As the population of a town ages, it is important that a community provide alternative living arrangements from single-family detached homes to multi-unit communities as options for seniors. This gives the elderly population opportunities to continue to reside in the community where they have spent the majority of their years and not be forced out by escalating housing prices. Housing product for the elderly spans a broad range of types and supporting services. From housing designed to promote mobility e.g., one-level, grab bars, ramps, etc., to provision of medical and support of daily living functions, there are many variations of housing product. The main distinguishing characteristics of the housing types are the level of medical assistance and the extent of communal facilities provided.



Commons at Mill River

The Hamden Housing Authority and the Hamden Elderly Services Department address the supportive housing/service needs of the elderly, frail elderly and disabled. Currently, all of the two hundred twenty (220) rental units managed by the Housing Authority are occupied by elderly and disabled individuals. The Housing Authority is investigating the creation of additional units for the elderly and disabled.



Hamden has elderly housing options in a variety of configurations to address the lifestyle and medical care needs of a wide spectrum of elderly residents. With several new developments and expansions occurring in the Hamden elderly housing market in the past decade, future demand will depend upon market conditions, the economy and similar outside forces which cannot be predicted.

Managed Residential Communities which provide Assisted Living Services or other services for persons age 55 or older are permitted in the R-1, R-2, R-3, R-4, R-5, B-2, CDD-1, CDD-2, CDD-3 and CDD-4 Districts subject to special permit and site plan approval.

### **C. HOUSING ISSUES, TRENDS AND IMPLICATIONS**

In terms of planning for the next 10 years and beyond, several housing issues and trends in Hamden have future implications. These include:

- The Town recorded a greater population increase between 1990 and 2000, than it did between the previous two census periods – 1970 to 1980 and 1980 to 1990. Much of this new growth in population can be attributed to growth associated with Quinnipiac University and the Town's multi-family residential growth. Hamden Hills, Aspen Glen and Avalon Walk and expansion of elderly housing complexes were the most notable residential developments. Single-family development in the northern portion of the Town also contributed to population growth at a more limited scale.
- Average household size in Hamden is lower than all of its neighboring communities, New Haven County and the State. Smaller household sizes can be attributed to housing choice in the Town. Smaller household sizes can be attributed to increases in single person households increases in divorces and separations, concentrations of young professional households and large numbers of elderly who chose to live on their own. The variety of housing in the Town makes it possible for smaller households, single person households and/or the elderly to remain in Hamden.
- According to the 2000 Census, 67.2% of Hamden's housing stock is owner-occupied and 32.8% is renter occupied. The 32.8% rental occupancy rate mirrors both the State of Connecticut's and New Haven County's rental occupancy rates.
- Hamden has more rental housing than its neighboring communities with the exception of New Haven.

- Hamden's higher rental occupancy rate can be attributed to a number of factors including the presence of Quinnipiac and Southern Connecticut Universities, the construction and market appeal of the Town Walk and Hamden Hills complexes, the Mix Avenue area and an increase in elderly housing complexes.
- Between the 1990 and 2000 Censuses the Town gained 1,726 housing units. More than one-half of the units were in multi-family structures with 10 or more units (978 new units were counted in structures of 10 or more units by the Census).
- Traditional detached single-family homes increased by 686 units between 1990 and 2000.
- Most of the vacant and agricultural land zoned for residential use is currently zoned R-2 and is located in the Town's northwestern quadrant.
- The residential development potential analysis, prepared as part of the Land Use Element, estimates that 2,450 new dwelling units can be accommodated under current zoning.
- As available residential land becomes more scarce infill development and further subdivision of existing home lots will likely emerge making the regulation of infill development and redevelopment crucial.
- Natural resource conservation and the preservation of open space will likely emerge as a major issue in residential development as the last remaining areas of vacant land are considered for residential development.
- Affordable housing opportunities for elderly individuals seeking independent housing options may be needed to meet future needs of the Town's aging population. Much of the multi-family housing developed over the past two decades has been high-end rental or supportive/assisted elderly housing.
- Given the diversity of the housing stock in tenure, type, size and price Hamden is well positioned to meet the housing needs of a wide variety of residents in the coming decade.

## **D. HOUSING GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

Unlike many of its suburban neighbors, the Town of Hamden has a diverse housing stock that can meet the housing needs of a wide variety of household types. Maintaining and expanding this diversity over the next decade will be crucial in helping the Town retain its unique, varied and cosmopolitan citizenry. In addition, the quality of life in Hamden is one of the primary reasons that the Town is viewed as an attractive place to live and raise a family. Maintaining this high quality of life through intelligent residential development that meets a variety of housing needs while protecting and enhancing the fabric, character and cohesiveness of existing neighborhoods will be an important consideration as Hamden moves through the next decade.

### **GOAL#1 Support and foster programs that maintain housing stock and enhance and preserve the fabric of existing neighborhoods**

#### **OBJECTIVES:**

- A variety of housing types (with respect to both lot size and homes versus apartments) should be available to reflect the needs and desires of all Hamden residents.
- Conservation and rehabilitation of existing housing should be promoted wherever possible.
- Support programs that assist homeowners in rehabilitating and maintaining their homes.
- Meet the needs of current residents through the provision of housing stock that allows for upward mobility and the retention of younger households.
- Promote historic preservation and housing stock variety by preserving and adapting historic buildings for residential uses.

### **GOAL#2 Ensure that all residential areas and developments are attractive and well-maintained places to live for Hamden's residents.**

#### **OBJECTIVES:**

- Review and update the Town's blight regulations to ensure that the latest techniques are being used and that the existing regulations are effectively reducing blight in the Town.
- Implement a tree planting program along residential streets.
- Review the Town's zoning regulations to determine the overall effectiveness of the regulations in mitigating land use conflicts between residential and commercial/industrial uses, paying particular attention to setbacks and buffer areas. These

regulations should be updated as necessary to provide maximum effectiveness.

- Encourage the development of neighborhood center streetscape improvement plans and support the equitable distribution of resources to all neighborhoods in the Town.

**GOAL#3 Increase the percentage of owner-occupied housing within the Town.**

**OBJECTIVES:**

- Develop homeownership programs to increase the percentage of owner occupancy.
- Support homeownership programs that assist renters in becoming first time homebuyers.

**GOAL#4 Promote an array of housing typologies and infill developments as a means of diversifying the housing stock and meeting the needs of niche housing markets.**

**OBJECTIVES:**

- Develop upscale/luxury single-family housing and townhouse/rental units in an effort to attract new residents and businesses.
- Develop low-density empty-nester housing.
- Explore alternative housing options for seniors to encourage their continued residence in the Town.
- Develop an infill strategy for the Town with new housing and neighborhood commercial centers and other support services which will stabilize neighborhoods.
- Develop guidelines that promote infill residential development in a manner consistent with the scale and character of surrounding neighborhoods.
- Focus on the need for affordable housing for the elderly during the 2004 update to the Town's Consolidated Plan for Housing and Community Development.

## IX. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### A. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this section is to describe the existing conditions and characteristics of Hamden's economy relative to the regional and State economies, discuss the changes in the Town's economic base since the preparation of the previous Plan of Development, describe Hamden's future economic development potentials and provide a discussion of economic development issues, recommended goals and suggested strategies to achieve identified goals.

### B. THE ECONOMIES OF CONNECTICUT, THE REGION AND HAMDEN

Since the completion of Hamden's last Plan of Conservation and Development, the economies of the State of Connecticut, the Greater New Haven region and the Town itself have changed noticeably. Around 1993, the regional and state economies reached their nadir and subsequently rode a rapidly growing and improving national economic climate into a period of substantial prosperity at the end of the decade. The Hamden economy withstood the recession of the early 1990s fairly well, and grew modestly during the rest of the decade. With a return to a recessionary period in the economic cycle following the attacks of September 11, 2001, Hamden is now poised to position itself effectively to capture future economic growth as the region and state begin to move into a more positive economic climate.

#### **Connecticut, New Haven Labor Market Area and Hamden Economies**

During the past ten years, the Connecticut economy has provided most residents with a high economic standard of living, enabled by one of the highest per capita income levels in the United States.

#### ***Labor Force***

On the state-wide level, the low rate of population growth, combined with the aging of Connecticut's population, resulted in a labor force which declined in size between 1993 and 2002. However, the significant increase in the population growth of the New Haven Labor Market Area led to a small increase in the Area's labor force. The resident labor force of Hamden increased by 2.7% (774 persons) between 1993 and November of 2002.

#### ***Journey to Work***

The Town of Hamden's workforce is predominantly locally-based, with 78% of identified workers over the age of 16 employed in the

New Haven-Meriden Metropolitan Statistical Area. Nearly 8,300 Hamden workers are employed in Meriden and New Haven, and only 6,002 workers have jobs outside of the local MSA.

**Employment**

| <b>Table 20</b>                  |                            |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|
|                                  | <b># of Hamden Workers</b> |
| Workers Age 16+                  | 27,242                     |
| Working In New Haven-Meriden MSA | 21,240 (78.0%)             |
| Central City                     | 8,271 (30.4%)              |
| Remainder of MSA                 | 12,969 (47.6%)             |
| Outside of New Haven-Meriden MSA | 6,002 (22.0%)              |
| Different MSA                    | 5,857 (21.5%)              |
| Outside Any MSA                  | 145 ( 0.5%)                |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000.

The Town of Hamden has continued to see a small but positive growth in the number of employed persons in its labor force, and only a very small percentage drop in the number of jobs in town.

**C. HAMDEN’S ECONOMIC BASE**

**Existing Characteristics of Hamden’s Employment Base**

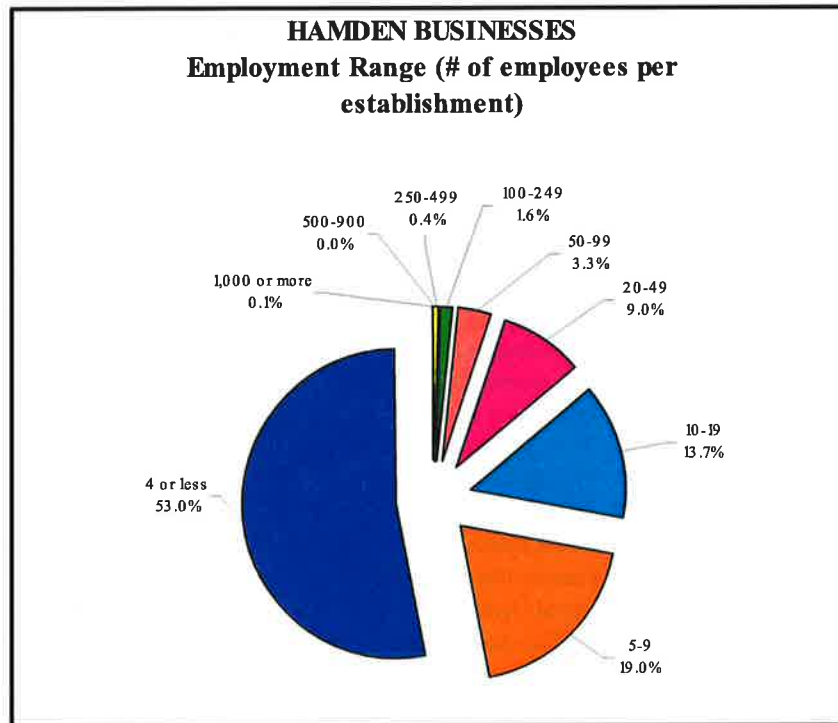
Economic activity within Hamden is influenced by the demands for goods and services generated by residents, businesses and government activities within and beyond town borders. Hamden’s economy is influenced by the economic health of several surrounding economic regions, including all of New Haven County, the New York metropolitan area, the Waterbury region and the Hartford region. Economic activity in Hamden and these regions are in turn linked to and influenced by the conditions of the national and world economies.



Dixwell Ave./Putnam Ave.

The size and composition of a town’s employment base over time are indicators of a community’s economic health. Hamden’s economy contains over 1,400 businesses that provide a broad variety of goods and services, employing nearly 20,000 people. The following chart describes the composition of Hamden businesses by size of employment.

While Hamden has several “marquis” businesses that employ several hundred persons each, over 72% of Hamden’s businesses employ fewer than 10 people.



Source: 2000 County Business Patterns

### Changing Characteristics of Hamden’s Employment Base

Between 1993 and 2001, the economy of Hamden experienced minor fluctuations in employment levels. From 1993 to 1995, employment levels in Hamden declined by 610 jobs (3.2%). Most of this decline in employment was concentrated in the construction, manufacturing and FIRE (financial, insurance and real estate) sectors. Between 1995 and 2000, Hamden’s employment base expanded by 1,460 jobs (8%).



Medical Offices, Whitney Ave.

Overall, the employment base of Hamden grew by a modest 4.3% between 1993 and 2001. However, this somewhat slow rate of growth is largely attributable to the loss of jobs in the FIRE sector, which saw its employment base shrink from 2,090 jobs in 1993 to 1,210 jobs in 2001, a decrease of over 42%. Employment in the other sectors of Hamden’s economy grew by a combined 1,700 jobs between 1993 and 2001, representing a 10.1% increase.



**Table 21**

**HAMDEN'S TOP EMPLOYERS**

2003

| <u>Employer</u>                                 | <u>Address</u>      | <u>Number of Employees</u> |
|---|---------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Town of Hamden - Board of Education          | Putnam Avenue       | 1,106                      |
| 2. Quinnipiac University                        | Mount Carmel Avenue | 793                        |
| 3. Town of Hamden - Municipal Government        | Dixwell Avenue      | 495                        |
| 4. Arden House                                  | Mix Avenue          | 390                        |
| 5. Shaw's Supermarket                           | Dixwell Avenue      | 300                        |
| 6. Host America Corporation                     | Broadway            | 230                        |
| 7. Stop & Shop Supermarkets                     | Dixwell Avenue      | 210                        |
| t8. USCO Logistics                              | Whitney Avenue      | 200                        |
| t8. Whitney Center Rehab Services               | Leeder Hill Drive   | 200                        |
| 10. Children's Center                           | Whitney Avenue      | 180                        |
| 11. United Illuminating                         | Skiff Street        | 170                        |
| 12. Hamden Health Care Center                   | Sherman Avenue      | 165                        |
| 13. United Healthcare                           | Whitney Avenue      | 160                        |
| 14. XL Care Agencies of CT                      | Dixwell Avenue      | 150                        |
| 15. HID Corporation                             | State Street        | 139                        |
| 16. Ed-Mor Electric                             | State Street        | 125                        |
| t17. Connecticut Dept. of Children and Families | Hartford Turnpike   | 120                        |
| t17. Visiting Nurses Association                | Sherman Avenue      | 120                        |
| 19. Porcelen SPECRAIL                           | Welton Street       | 110                        |

Source: Dunn & Bradstreet's Regional Business Directory, 2003; Business New Haven; Town of Hamden



Porcelen SPECRAIL, Welton St.

By comparison, employment in Connecticut during the same period grew by 10%, as described in Table 25 and employment in the seventeen town New Haven Labor Market Area, which includes Hamden, grew by 8.8%. The top employers in Hamden are listed in Table 21.



Industrial space, Sherman Ave.

### Hamden's Resident Labor Force

In 2001, the labor force generated by Hamden residents numbered 29,770 people. This compares to approximately 19,680 persons employed within Hamden. In 2001, Hamden's resident labor force exceeded the number of jobs located in Town by 51.3%. Hamden's resident labor force represented 10.6% of the total labor force in the New Haven Labor Market Area in 2001.

| <b>Town</b> | <b>1999 Est. Pop.</b> | <b>Commercial/Industrial<br/>% of Grand List</b> | <b>Commercial/Industrial<br/>Zones as % of Town Land</b> |
|-------------|-----------------------|--|--|
| HAMDEN      | 53,174                | 15.8%  | 11.2%  |
| Wallingford | 41,100                | 24.2%  | 20.5%  |
| North Haven | 22,282                | 26.5%  | 27.9%  |

Source: State of Connecticut, Department of Economic and Community Development; Department of Public Health.

As the above table clearly illustrates, both Wallingford and North Haven have significantly higher percentages of their grand lists comprised of commercial and industrial uses than Hamden (which, in turn, reduces the percentage of tax burden borne by residential property owners). Although Hamden has significant retail development along Dixwell Avenue, several sizable and successful industrial areas, and numerous medical offices in Hamden Center, the Town is still an overwhelmingly residential community. While Wallingford and North Haven also have significant residential development, commercial and industrial uses as a percentage account for more land use in these towns than in Hamden. This fact results in more jobs being located in these communities. With such a large differential between Hamden and these two neighboring towns in the percentage of each town zoned for industrial and commercial use, Hamden is at a distinct disadvantage in terms of land and building inventory for economic development.

**D. RECENT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TRENDS IN HAMDEN**



Applebee's, Dixwell Ave.



Burt Processing, Sherman Ave.

**Commercial, Service & Industrial Uses**

Commercial, service and industrial land uses experienced moderate increases during the past decade.

Economic development in Hamden over the past five years has not been limited to retail and service uses. The industrial sector of Hamden's economy has also seen numerous examples of physical growth. The Hamden Business Park is filled to capacity, due in part to the expansion of several existing firms such as EcoAir, International Provisions and Electronic Specialties. The lower State Street area has been a site of industrial growth in Hamden, spurred by the expansion of EZ Form Cable on Welton Street and the expansion of Porcelen SPECRAIL into a renovated 78,000 square foot facility. Along Sherman Avenue in central Hamden, the Amphenol Corporation has expanded with a new 33,000 square foot building addition, and Burt Processing Equipment has recently constructed 15,000 square feet of additional space on Overlook Drive.

**Economic Development During the Past Five Years**

**Table 23**  
**Selected Economic Development Building Activity**  
**1997 - 2002**

| <b>Building Type</b> | <b>New Construction</b>     | <b>Renovations and Conversions</b> | <b>Totals</b>    |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------|
|                      | <b>Sq. Ft. (% of Total)</b> | <b>Sq. Ft. (% of Total)</b>        |                  |
| Service              | 145,900 (41.3%)             | 69,754 (9.2%)                      | 215,654 (19.4%)  |
| Retail / Trade       | 72,500 (20.5%)              | 329,100 (43.5%)                    | 401,600 (36.2%)  |
| Mixed Use            | 0 (0.0%)                    | 165,000 (21.8%)                    | 165,000 (14.9%)  |
| Manufacturing        | 94,107 (26.6%)              | 128,458 (17.0%)                    | 222,565 (20.1%)  |
| Medical              | 41,000 (11.6%)              | 64,000 (8.5%)                      | 105,000 (9.5%)   |
| <b>TOTALS</b>        | <b>353,507</b>              | <b>756,312</b>                     | <b>1,109,819</b> |

Source: Town of Hamden, Department of Economic Development.



Kohl's, Dixwell Ave.

Perhaps the best indicator of the strength of Hamden's economy, over 1.1 million square feet of commercial new construction and commercial renovations and conversions has occurred in the Town during the past five years. This total square footage includes a diverse distribution of commercial space, with 36.2% of the square footage represent by retail development, over 20% in industrial and manufacturing development and 19.4% in the service sector. Mixed use and medical space also comprised significant square footage.

## E. FUTURE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL



Bed Bath & Beyond/CVS Pharmacy, Dixwell Ave.

### Market Potentials

As Table 24 illustrates, there is a significant vacancy rate in both Class A and Class B office space in the Greater New Haven market. For Class A space, the vacancy rate is significantly higher in the suburbs than in the central business district, a trend that is common throughout the United States at the present time. The recent national and regional economic downturn and the addition of 450,000 square feet of Class A space in the New Haven suburbs has created a significant oversupply of office space in the Greater New Haven market area. While some additional office space in Hamden would help the

Town's economic development, there is likely not enough demand to justify the construction of large amounts of Class A office space in the current economic climate. However, Class B and C office space will continue to play an important role in the transition of residential structures and parcels into professional and small business offices along Whitney and Dixwell Avenue corridors. The conversions that have occurred over the past decade have been largely positive in appearance, function and in expanding the business base of the Town.

|         | Total Sq. Ft. | Vacant Sq. Ft. | Vacancy Rate | Net Absorption (sq. ft.) |
|---------|---------------|----------------|--------------|--------------------------|
| Class A | 10,700,000    | 1,750,000      | 16.36%       | 425,000                  |
| CBD     | 4,900,000     | 550,000        | 11.22%       | -25,000                  |
| Suburbs | 5,800,000     | 1,200,000      | 20.69%       | 450,000                  |
| Class B | 4,000,000     | 750,000        | 18.75%       | 0                        |
| CBD     | 1,700,000     | 350,000        | 20.59%       | 50,000                   |
| Suburbs | 2,300,000     | 400,000        | 17.39%       | -50,000                  |

Source: Society of Industrial and Office Realtors, 2003 Comparative Statistics of Industrial & Office Real Estate Markets: New Haven, CT market area.  
CBD – Central Business District.

|                           | Total Sq. Ft. | Vacant Sq. Ft. | Vacancy Rate         | Net Absorption (sq. ft.) |
|---------------------------|---------------|----------------|----------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>New Haven</b>          | 2,342,480     | 147,120        | 6.28%                | -169,548                 |
| <b>Suburbs</b>            | 39,280,000    | 1,740,000      | 4.43%                | 1,431,155                |
| <b>Vacancy Indicators</b> |               |                |                      |                          |
| < 5,000 sq. ft.           |               |                | Substantial Shortage |                          |
| 5,000-19,999 sq. ft.      |               |                | Moderate Shortage    |                          |
| 20,000-39,999 sq. ft.     |               |                | Substantial Shortage |                          |
| 40,000-59,999 sq. ft.     |               |                | Substantial Shortage |                          |
| 60,000-99,999 sq. ft.     |               |                | Moderate Oversupply  |                          |
| 100,000-250,000 sq. ft.   |               |                | Balanced Market      |                          |
| > 250,000 sq. ft.         |               |                | Moderate Shortage    |                          |
| High Tech / R & D         |               |                | Moderate Shortage    |                          |

Source: Society of Industrial and Office Realtors, 2003 Comparative Statistics of Industrial & Office Real Estate Markets: New Haven, CT market area.

In contrast to the regional office space market, the greater New Haven industrial space market is very strong. A low vacancy rate, particularly in the suburbs, is driving demand for industrial space upwards, even with the addition of over 1.4 million square feet of space in New Haven's suburbs. Moderate to substantial shortages of industrial space under 60,000 square feet, over 250,000 square feet, and high tech / R & D space are evident. The only sector of the industrial space market where there is a moderate oversupply of



space is in the 60,000 to 100,000 square feet range. A particularly advantageous economic development strategy for Hamden would be to try to capture some of this demand by continuing to develop small- to moderate-sized industrial buildings and high-tech facilities.

### **Economic Development that is Local Population Dependant**

One of the several factors affecting market support for future economic development activity in Hamden is the growth in the Town's population and that of surrounding communities. Hamden's population is projected to experience continued growth during the next 10 years. Economic development activity generated by the demands for goods and services from the local population are the most likely to grow during the next ten years. Portions of this demand will manifest itself in the form of population serving businesses located in office and retail space:

**Office Space:** The demand for local population serving office space uses will continue, especially office space associated with the health care industry. These types of uses can be satisfied in multiple tenant buildings hosting a variety of office space users or in multiple tenant office buildings with a single focus, such as a medical office building.

**Retail Space:** The demand for retail services serving the local population is expected to grow to meet the needs of Hamden's expanding population base. Most of this demand will likely be accommodated in the expansion of existing free-standing retail stores and shopping centers, although a limited amount of the demand may be met in the development of new retail complexes.

### **Industrial and Service Based Economic Development**

Industrial and service businesses generate 55% of the total jobs located in Hamden.



Sherman Avenue – Industrial Space

**Manufacturing Space:** Manufacturing employment comprises about 15% of the total jobs in Connecticut and has been on the decline for many years; a decline which is projected by the CT DOL to continue through their 2008 forecast period. The manufacturing sector of Hamden's economy continues to employ roughly 13% of the total jobs in Town, and will likely remain a stable and important element of Hamden's economy. For certain manufacturers, Hamden continues to have the locational

advantages of access to major markets. In addition to directly contributing to Hamden's employment base, the manufacturing sector also generates the need for goods and services essential to the manufacturing process, representing the potential for further contributions to the Town's overall economic base.

***Service Business Space:*** The service sector was the fastest growing sector of Hamden's economy between 1993 and 2001, adding 2,100 jobs, which represents a 34% increase. A portion of this sector provides services to Hamden's local population. Hamden has experienced a demand for building space to house service sector businesses. In recent years, satisfying the demand for this type of space has been realized through a combination of the rehabilitation of existing buildings and the construction of new buildings. Typically, this type of use does not require highway visibility, but does require ready access to the area's highway system. This type of business provides services to other businesses and provides mostly non-retail services to the general population.

### **Corporate Office Space Development**

The Town of Hamden has always had a limited amount of corporate office space; however, over the past decade, the amount of corporate office space has been further reduced. Two office buildings along Whitney Avenue between Skiff Street and the Merritt Parkway had contained offices for IBM and Southern New England Telephone;



**Dexsil, Hamden Business Park**

these buildings have now been converted into medical office space. Another office building on Skiff Street near Whitney Avenue had been occupied by Nationwide Insurance. This building now houses the Whitney High School East facility, a subset of the Area Cooperative Educational Services (ACES) program. In addition to these losses of corporate office space use, no substantial new corporate office space has been constructed in Hamden over the past decade, and much of the existing office space in the center of Hamden is occupied by medical uses.

The future demand for corporate office space in Hamden is likely limited. With a population of only 56,000, Hamden is constrained in the amount of corporate office space that the local population can generate on its own. The Town is also too far from both New York City and Boston to capitalize on the "back office" real estate market, and is further hampered by being located next to New Haven, which already has a substantial portion of the area's corporate office space.

Finally, Hamden's ability to supply additional new corporate office space is constricted by the built-out nature of the Town, which makes it difficult to assemble a large acreage site which could be developed as a corporate campus.

### Changes Affecting Future Economic Development Capacity



Detroit Steel Facility, State St.

Several economic development designations have the potential to affect the future economic development capacity of the Town of Hamden. First, the creation of the State Street Municipal Plan District along the Hamden-New Haven town line targets this area of Hamden for a commercial and industrial revitalization effort. Second, the designation by the State of Connecticut of a Railroad Depot Zone (one of only three such zones in Connecticut) along Dixwell Avenue opens the door for tax incentives for manufacturing-type businesses. Finally, the potential designation of a Highwood

Municipal Development Plan (MDP) study area and the designation of the Highwood Enterprise Zone (EZ) would provide new opportunities for reinvestment along lower Dixwell Avenue and the surrounding residential neighborhoods. In addition, the proposed redevelopment of the Johnson property in the Highwood section also has the potential to generate addition development capacity in this part of Hamden. Efforts such as these are particular important in a town such as Hamden, where a relative small amount of land is zoned for commercial and industrial uses.

***The Town should continually focus on stimulating recycling of existing industrial and commercial properties to create inventory, remediation of brownfields and attracting high value uses who can sustain the higher costs of adapting properties to new uses***

There are, however, several structural limitations to future economic development in the Town of Hamden. First, Hamden is largely a built-out community; there is little in the way of vacant undeveloped land in the Town which is zoned for commercial or industrial use. Second, there is little existing building inventory in Hamden that is ready for immediate tenant occupancy, particularly for office or industrial use. This fact retards business recruitment since it is difficult to find vacant, ready-to-occupy space for potential new businesses. As a result, the Town of Hamden and potential new businesses are nearly always compelled to use other options such as adaptive reuse of existing buildings or brownfield remediation, options which generally take a considerable amount of time to go from concept to completion. For businesses looking for a quick relocation process, these options may often require too much time and effort to be attractive.



To meet these challenges, the Town should continually focus on stimulating recycling of existing industrial and commercial properties to create inventory, remediation of brownfields and attracting high value uses who can sustain the higher costs of adapting properties to new uses. Hamden has strong locational advantages in the region but requires commercial inventory to take advantage of this attribute.

In addition, zoning regulations should be reviewed in order to expedite the time that is needed for a change of use in a commercial/industrial property. While the environment and adjacent properties should be protected, many uses which require special permit and/or site plan approval should be permitted as of right administratively. This will save a small business money and time which will allow greater investment in the property and business itself.

For the purposes of this Plan of Conservation and Development update, the following definition of mixed-use development is recognized: A single building containing more than one type of land use, typically a mix of residential and commercial use, or a single development on a parcel containing more than one building and use, where the different types of land uses are in close proximity, planned as a unified complimentary whole, and functionally integrated into the use of shared vehicular and pedestrian access and parking areas.

## **F. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

**GOAL #1 Turn vacant industrial land into tax-generating properties. Remediate brownfield sites and circulate them back into the private market for reinvestment.**

### **OBJECTIVES:**

- Continue a comprehensive brownfields identification and redevelopment program. Such a program should include a brownfields assessment component to determine potentially developable properties and an environmental assessment of contaminants on these sites. From these initial determinations, a comprehensive development strategy can be created.
- Increase funding for brownfield remediation projects at the Town level.
- Develop a reuse plan for the former Tire Pond Property located off State Street, which incorporates all available information from the State DEP settlement and recognizes the potential recreational use of the area.

**GOAL #2 Coordinate design and access management for infill development along commercial corridors. Ensure that quality development occurs in these areas.**

### **OBJECTIVES:**

- Insist upon high-quality site plans for new development within existing commercial corridors, including buildings that relate well to the street, substantial landscaping, and physical design that complements surrounding neighborhoods and development forms.
- Create and implement an effective access management scheme that limits the number and size of site driveways to a number and size that enables vehicles to safely enter and exit a site without unduly impacting the traffic patterns or pedestrian accessibility of the corridor areas.
- Reevaluate and update urban design regulations within the zoning ordinance, such as sign regulations, parking regulations and dimensional requirements, and create language that fosters and advances the high-quality physical design of commercial development which Hamden desires.

**GOAL #3 Develop significant vacant or underutilized properties, such as the Johnson property and other adjacent blighted properties, the Hamden Middle School, the 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue warehouse site along Skiff Street, and the Fluid Control building on Skiff Street into substantial economic assets for the Town.**

**OBJECTIVE:**

- Create and implement comprehensive redevelopment plans for key parcels, in consultation with area residents and other stakeholders.

**GOAL #4 Control development along Whitney Avenue from Dixwell Avenue to Mount Carmel Avenue so that development that does occur will not negatively impact the surrounding residential neighborhoods. Evaluate the creation of a village center which serves the needs of Quinnipiac University in a self-contained development.**

**OBJECTIVES:**

- Create a mixed use “village center” development in the area of the Whitney Avenue/Mount Carmel Avenue intersection that combines housing with retail and office space to serve the Quinnipiac University community.
- Discourage the development of automobile-oriented establishments, such as fast-food restaurants and auto repair facilities, and encourage mixed use developments that better relate to Whitney Avenue and the surrounding residential areas.
- Use economic development as a tool for creating a pedestrian-friendly environment along Whitney Avenue by situating buildings and uses close to the front property lines and complementing future developments with a coherent and comprehensive streetscape design program.

**GOAL #5 Support efforts to retain existing businesses, especially small businesses, in Hamden. Assist local businesses in their efforts to grow and expand.**

**OBJECTIVES:**

- Continue a revolving small business loan program to fund small business purchases of fixed assets, renovations, and property improvements for up to \$50,000.
- Continue a technical assistance program that assists small businesses in developing business plans and provides guidance in accounting, marketing and development.

- Continue a comprehensive economic development incentive program to attract new businesses to Hamden and stimulate the expansion of existing businesses.
- Expand the acquisition development fund that provides funding for miscellaneous soft costs associated with site assemblage, land acquisition and redevelopment.
- Simplify zoning requirements in regard to site plans and special permits for change of use.

**GOAL #6 Improve the technical capacity of the Town to provide assistance to local businesses. Continue to examine development patterns in Hamden and areas of potential redevelopment for viability as commercial districts.**

**OBJECTIVES:**

- Implement a professional marketing and communications plan for the Town.
- Create a town database of available properties and physical resources.
- Improve the Hamden Economic Development web site by adding interactive and streaming data features, accessible databases, and information that is more frequently updated.
- Conduct commercial and industrial needs assessment studies for each neighborhood in Hamden to determine where economic development would be best situated.
- Continue to evaluate economic plans for the Town every three years for continued applicability.

**GOAL #7 Present an attractive and inviting physical environment for businesses and their employees. Highlight the fact that Hamden is a physically appealing place to do business.**

**OBJECTIVES:**

- Install entryway and exit signage at the Hamden Business Park.
- Install identification signage at key points throughout Hamden.
- Continue the streetscape improvement program in the Highwood and State Street NRZ Business Districts with new sidewalks and curbs and improved landscaping and street amenities.
- Examine the need for streetscape improvements in other commercial areas of the Town.
- Review existing applicable regulations, such as signage and landscaping requirements, to gauge their impact on the physical design and appearance of Hamden's economic generation areas. Make appropriate changes to these regulations where necessary.

- Strengthen the Town's blight enforcement program with various financial and regulatory tools to provide the impetus for property maintenance and rehabilitation.

**GOAL #8 Update zoning regulations to reflect the policies/goals/objectives outlined in the Plan of Conservation and Development.**

**OBJECTIVE:**

- Consider zoning regulation revisions that implement the policies/goals/objectives outlined in the Plan of Conservation and Development. In such a review, recognize that a limited amount of developable, non-residentially zoned land remains in the Town of Hamden and therefore revisions may need to be considered that encourage continued growth of the Towns non-residential tax base while protecting the Towns residential neighborhoods and preserving the community character.

## X. HAMDEN TOWN CENTER

### A. INTRODUCTION

A commonly asked question in Hamden and its environs is “Where is Downtown Hamden?”. Answers to this question vary greatly depending on who is giving the answer and how the question is asked. The poor soul is the person who asks, “Where is Main Street?” and is sent on a journey to one of the more rural parts of town ending up completely lost or frustrated. Another person might send you to the “Magic Mile” thinking you are in search of a downtown shopping experience. Another person might send you to Memorial Town Hall, the Government Center or the intersection of Whitney and Dixwell thinking you are in search of the seat of government. The last person might simply reply, “There is no Downtown Hamden”.



To varying degrees all of these responses are correct depending on the person’s perspective, knowledge of Hamden and number of years as a resident. However, the more one learns about Hamden Town Center today and its potential for the future, the more defined becomes the perception that Hamden does have a downtown. Hamden Town Center has changed over the years, but in many ways it has stayed the same. Many of the changes have been in response to changing market conditions, consumer shopping patterns as well as shifts in the regional economy and development patterns. This section provides background information about Hamden Town Center and presents a strategy for the future which is based on market reality and achievable within the context of established development patterns.

### B. HAMDEN TOWN CENTER TODAY

Hamden Town Center is defined as the intersection of Dixwell Avenue and Whitney Avenue, and its surrounding area. The area encompasses a substantial open space property owned by the Town of Hamden, which includes the Meadowbrook Golf Course. Hamden Town Center is a mixed-use area, which is comprised of many retail, restaurant, office, personal service and municipal uses. It has a substantial residential population as well. The “*Hamden Town Center-Existing Building Use*” map shows the Hamden Town Center area and existing building use.

Hamden Town Center contains a number of public use areas. Most notably is Memorial Town Hall including the fire station at the northwest corner of the Dixwell Avenue and Whitney Avenue intersection and the adjacent Hamden Police Station. Miller Memorial Library and Senior Center and Meadowbrook Golf Course

are located just west of Town Hall on the south side of Dixwell Avenue. The Hamden Government Center is situated on the north side of Dixwell Avenue, and is just west of Evergreen Avenue.

Hamden Town Center has the architectural character of a historic New England town in the form of Memorial Town Hall and the adjacent police buildings. Unfortunately, that character begins to dissipate as one travels away from the center. The balance of the area is characterized by a mixture of building types, signage and undistinguished landscaping. However, Memorial Town Hall, Freedom Park and the landscaped plaza at the southeast corner of the Whitney/Dixwell intersection provide a solid base to build upon.

The residential areas found in Hamden Town Center are in relatively sound condition. The housing types range from single-family homes to mid-rise apartment buildings. The residential areas and abutting neighborhoods are invaluable to the commercial potential and street life of the area.

### C. LAND USE AND BUILDING AREA

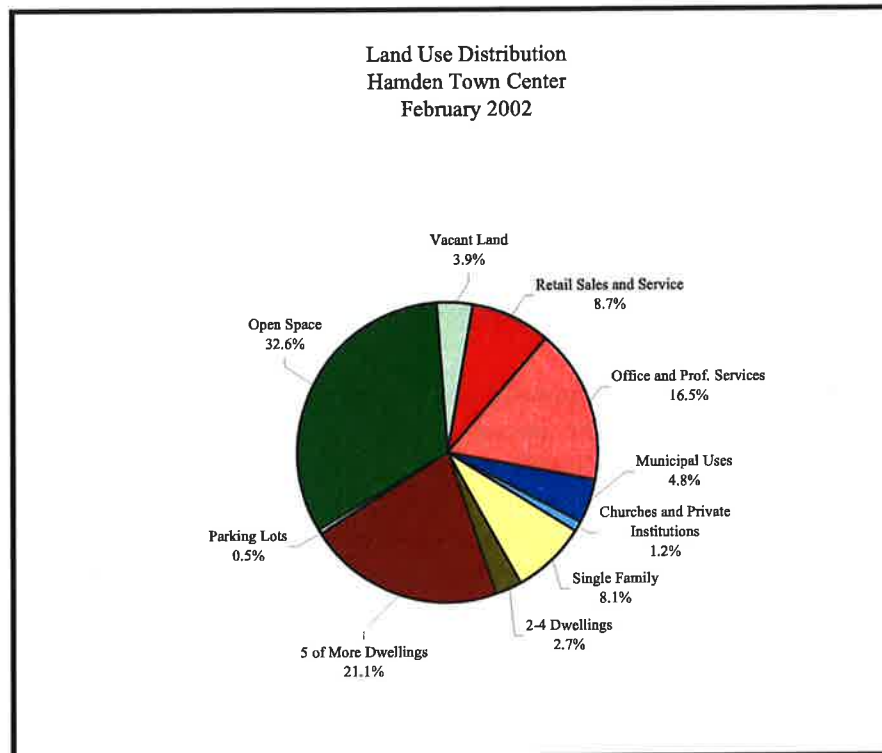
There are 248 acres of land in the Hamden Town Center including the Approach areas. The land use distribution, including residential use, can be seen in the chart below. The largest category is open space with 80.8 acres or 32.6%. This is due to the Meadowbrook Golf Course and the surrounding open land. Residences with five or more dwelling units occupy 52.3 acres or 21.1%. Office and professional services is the third largest category regarding land use. This correlates with it being the largest category for non-residential ground floor building use.



**Hamden Center Office Building**



**Meadowbrook**



Source: Hamden Assessment Data; Compiled by HMA

Development in Hamden Town Center as of February 2002 consists of 2,072,534 square feet of gross building area. Of that total, 1,206,261 square feet or 58% is non-residential space, while 866,273 square feet or 42% is residential space. The non-residential space located on the ground floor is 673,704 square feet, and upper floor area consists of 532,557 square feet.

Forty-one percent of the non-residential ground floor building space is comprised of office and professional services that, when combined with municipal uses, defines Hamden Town Center less as a shopping district and more as an office and professional center. This characterization is especially true regarding the medical office distribution. Of the total 275,836 square feet of ground floor office and professional services space, 139,277 or 54% is medical office building space. The presence of Town Hall and the Hamden Government Center focuses the function of Hamden Town Center as more of a professional center and less of a shopping district, since the Town's key government services are located in this area. Hamden Town Center's mixed-use character makes the district unique in the Town with the necessary characteristics to function as a town center.

#### D. TYPES OF COMMERCIAL USE

There are 54 retail and service establishments in Hamden Town Center occupying 122,017 square feet of building space.



Hardware/home improvement constitutes the greatest amount of retail space with 29,910 square feet of space or 24.5% of all retail ground floor space with restaurants second with 24,878 square feet..

In terms of the number of establishments, hair establishments occupy 12 of the 54 businesses.

#### **E. OFFICE AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICES**

As previously stated, office and professional services make up the greatest use of non-residential ground floor business space. Large office buildings are interspersed throughout the town center. These buildings, used for either medical or general office purposes, dominate Hamden Town Center. Office and professional uses occupy 51 establishments in Hamden Center for a total of 275,836 square feet in ground floor space. Within this total, 139,277 square feet or 50.5% of the space is occupied by medical uses. This is dominant use in the Center.

#### **F. RESIDENTIAL USE**

There are 894 dwelling units in Hamden Town Center containing a total of 866,273 square feet of living space. Eighty-five percent of these units are apartments, condominiums, and co-ops, which comprise 81.2% of the living space. The existence of a significant residential and student population in the town center can be important from a retail marketing viewpoint, as well as contributing to the activity level of the area.

#### **G. PARKING ANALYSIS**

A review of Hamden Town Center parking within the vicinity of the Dixwell/Whitney intersection was conducted to develop an inventory of parking spaces. A total of 2,168 parking spaces exist and 264 of these spaces are in the northwest quadrant; 612 are in the northeast quadrant; 601 are in the southwest quadrant; and 691 are in the southeast quadrant of the Town Center.

At first glance, it appears that there are numerous available spaces in Hamden Town Center. However, many of these spaces are inefficient and uncoordinated throughout the Center. This makes it difficult for daytime visitors to park for a brief eating or shopping excursion. There is also very poor signage directing people to parking facilities. A serious problem exists in that only 41 of the spaces are marked as available to the public (municipal lot behind the Brownstone Restaurant).

## H. TRAFFIC CIRCULATION

A common topic of discussion concerning Hamden Town Center is traffic congestion and suggestions regarding how to address this issue. The focus of this discussion is the Whitney/Dixwell intersection and its approaches. Due to the number of vehicles which pass through this intersection on a daily basis, this perception of traffic congestion impacts the Town in general as well as destinations within Hamden Town Center. At first glance, one would assume that increased congestion has resulted from increased traffic volumes. However, when one compares Average Daily Volumes (ADT) between 1980 and 2000, the volumes have not increased consistently for all four segments of the intersection as shown in Table 26.

|                                      | <u>1980</u> | <u>2000</u> | %               |
|--------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------|
|                                      |             |             | <b>Increase</b> |
| Whitney Avenue South of Intersection | 14,300      | 16,800      | 17%             |
| Whitney Avenue North of Intersection | 15,500      | 18,900      | 22%             |
| Dixwell Avenue East of Intersection  | 18,000      | 18,700      | 4%              |
| Dixwell Avenue West of Intersection  | 12,400      | 15,700      | 27%             |

Source: CONNDOT

Interestingly, a comparison of ADT's between 1990 and 2000 shows much less increase and, in fact, there were declines in volume in three of the four 4 segments. Table 27 shows the volume comparison between 1990 and 2000.

|                                      | <u>1990</u> | <u>2000</u> | %               |
|--------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------|
|                                      |             |             | <b>Increase</b> |
| Whitney Avenue South of Intersection | 15,700      | 16,800      | 7%              |
| Whitney Avenue North of Intersection | 19,800      | 18,900      | -4.5%           |
| Dixwell Avenue East of Intersection  | 20,000      | 18,700      | -6.5%           |
| Dixwell Avenue West of Intersection  | 18,400      | 15,700      | -14.7%          |

Source: CONNDOT

Based upon anecdotal evidence and traffic observations, it is difficult to imagine that volumes in the study area have actually decreased. Rather, motorists might be using alternate routes to bypass the intersection during times of peak congestion. In fact, each of the segments which have reduced volumes have such bypass opportunities. Vehicles traveling southbound on the northern Whitney Avenue segment can use Colonial Drive and School Street to connect with Dixwell Avenue westbound via Evergreen Avenue. Vehicles eastbound on the western segment Dixwell Avenue can use Evergreen Avenue to go northbound. Vehicles westbound on the eastern segment of Dixwell Avenue can use Washington Avenue to go northbound.

The only segment that experienced an increase in volume between 1990 and 2000 is the southern segment of Whitney Avenue, which has no bypass option. This segment is the one which generally backs up from the intersection of Dixwell Avenue and Whitney Avenue for the greatest distance. The backup can be particularly long for the left turn lane. This is caused both by vehicles westbound on Dixwell Avenue as well as vehicles turning into driveways on the west side of Whitney Avenue. This left turn movement is also a problem on the northern segment of Whitney Avenue particularly between School Street and Colonial Drive.

Other conditions that impact vehicular movement are the bus stops (particularly by Town Hall, combined with the turning movement from School Street), the frequently-used pedestrian crossing signal at the intersection, and heavy truck traffic with tight turning radii which can cause delays while the truck is waiting for a clear lane to make the turn.

A product of traffic congestion is an increase in the incidence of traffic accidents. CONNDOT's report entitled Suggested List of Surveillance Sites (SLOSS) lists the three highest accident locations as the Whitney/Dixwell intersection, the School/Whitney intersection and the segment of Whitney Avenue between School Street and Colonial Avenue. These accident levels reflect many of the conditions discussed above.

## **I. PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION**

One of the characteristics of a town center or downtown is the presence of significant pedestrian traffic, as well as a sidewalk system to accommodate pedestrians. Hamden Town Center has both of these characteristics. There is probably not another location in Hamden of equal pedestrian traffic. This pedestrian traffic is created

by people who live and work in the area, as well as people visiting destinations such as the library/senior center and Memorial Town Hall.

The recently completed section of the Farmington Canal Trail between Hamden Hills Drive and Connolly Parkway provides the opportunity for a large-scale pedestrian circulation system serving Hamden Town Center. Such a system could connect the trail with the Center through Meadowbrook with connections to the library/senior center, Government Center and the balance of the Center. This connection could also accommodate bicycles for people visiting the library.

## **J. MARKET TRENDS BRING CHANGE**

Since 1980, Hamden Center and its approaches have not experienced major new construction, but have seen significant adaptive re-use of existing structures and a change in tenancy. Hamden Center, which was the most dramatic physical change in the area with its construction in the early 1980s, is an example of a change in tenancy. Originally constructed for occupancy by IBM as a primary tenant, it is now occupied by various tenants. The former IBM and SNET buildings in the Whitney Avenue approach area have been converted from corporate use to major medical facilities. The former Sleeping Giant Middle School is now age restricted residential condominiums. The vacant Centerville School is now the Miller Library/Senior Center. One former bank branch (Webster Bank) is now a jewelry store and a second (Fleet Bank) is vacant. A former office building is now the Government Center. The Holiday/Bally's Health Spa has been converted to a daycare center. Finally, many smaller spaces in Hamden Center have been changed from retail uses to personal service uses, such as nail salons, hair salons and personal fitness establishments.

It is interesting to note that even with all these changes, there are very few vacancies in Hamden Town Center. The most prominent vacancies are in larger spaces built for a particular use such as Fleet Bank and until recently Webster Bank. The smaller spaces have generally changed occupancy but remained occupied due to low entry barriers (low tenant improvement costs and rent). The two buildings which required major retro-fit (IBM and SNET) have strong market support. The former Sleeping Giant Middle School is a perfect example of larger market trends impacting a particular property. The project failed in the late 1980s / early 1990s with the severe real estate recession in Connecticut, but has succeeded with the strong recovery of this same market.

## **K. STRENGTHS**

One might ask how we can develop a strategy for Hamden Town Center if everything is determined by the broader market trends discussed above. The answer is to build upon Hamden Town Center's strengths, change weaknesses to opportunities and implement public policies which support the Center.

The strengths of Hamden Town Center include:

- Superior regional access from I-91 and the Wilbur Cross Parkway and local access from Whitney Avenue and Dixwell Avenue.
- Concentration of medical office space which has a strong market and generates high levels of visitation as well as employees.
- Good infrastructure of service establishments including restaurants, take-out food service and convenience shopping.
- Concentration of residential uses within the Center as well as within walking distance.
- Concentration of municipal uses including the Government Center, police and fire and the library/senior center.
- Several architectural/historically significant structures, as well as public spaces ranging in size from Freedom Park to Meadowbrook.
- Strong pedestrian linkages.

## **L. WEAKNESSES TO OPPORTUNITIES**

- Increase the amount of public parking and improve the signage directing people to all parking.
- Improve the operation of the Whitney/Dixwell intersection.
- Improve signage from I-91 and the Wilbur Cross Parkway directing people to Hamden Town Center.
- Improve linkages between Hamden Town Center and surrounding areas.
- Re-use of Memorial Town Hall in a market responsive and positive manner.
- Identify re-use for larger parcels in Center with potential re-development.
- Include impact on the Center in the site selection process for the police and fire facilities.

## M. HAMDEN TOWN CENTER STRATEGY

The strategy for the future of Hamden Town Center has the following actions as its foundation:

- Undertake detailed traffic studies to design geometric improvements to the Whitney/Dixwell intersection and other intersections in the vicinity. Possible improvements include extending the right turn lane on the eastern segment of Dixwell Avenue to Washington Street for a combined through/right turn lane. This would be coordinated with the removal of all parking on the north side of Dixwell Avenue between Whitney and Old Dixwell.
- Relocate the bus stop on Dixwell Avenue to new stop off School Street and create a right turn lane from Whitney Avenue to Dixwell Avenue. Relocate the bus stop on Whitney Avenue to new School Street stop or further south on Whitney Avenue.
- Re-configure the area currently occupied by Memorial Town Hall, fire station and police station in conjunction with the police/fire site selection process. All structures with the exception of Memorial Town Hall would be demolished. A new fire station could be constructed on the western portion of the parcel. It would be a drive-through station with the return driveway at the western most point. The balance of the site could be used for parking and site landscaping. This would allow the removal of all on-street parking on Dixwell Avenue to implement the traffic improvements discussed above.
- The police station would most logically be located at another location due to its space needs. This would allow phasing of the project with demolition of the police station to accommodate the new fire station after the new police station is constructed or create additional public parking. In the interim, the former parks and recreation / traffic department garage should be demolished to provide more parking.
- The Memorial Town Hall would be renovated to accommodate the Legislative Council chambers. The current Council Chambers would be re-configured to restore the stage. This new room could be used for town organizations as well as rented for conference space. Other first floor space would be re-configured for smaller conference rooms. This conference facility concept is supported by Hamden Town Center's regional access and lack of such facilities in Hamden. Catering could be provided by restaurants which currently

surround Town Hall, and the expanded parking would support this use. Upon completion of a new fire station, the current fire station with its fire safe construction and ventilation would be well-adapted to an arts and crafts facility including kilns, pottery wheels and other media which is drawn to such space. This would either be a Town facility or leased to a private operator. The overall intent of the re-use of Memorial Town Hall would be to return the level of activity previously generated by Town Hall activities to support surrounding businesses while creating a situation where the facility is financially self-sustaining to the greatest possible extent.

- There is one area within Hamden Town Center which has the greatest potential for a change of use with a major impact. This is the area between Worth Avenue, Whitney Avenue and the Miller Library. While there is no suggestion that the current uses have not been and continue to be valued members of the Hamden business community and Hamden as a whole, market support for some of the uses in this area has been generally declining. The size and location of this area combined with market trends requires consideration of this area as part of the strategy for Hamden Town Center.

In terms of re-use of this area, a use that would be tax base positive and would not unduly impact traffic congestion would be best. One possible use that could meet these criteria would be a hotel. This location benefits from regional access to the Wilbur Cross Parkway and I-91. It would also support various activities at Quinnipiac University which generates a demand for hotel rooms as well as providing Hamden residents with quality accommodations for friends and relatives from out of town. Lastly, the traffic peaks would not coincide with the current peak hours at the Whitney/Dixwell intersection.

- A second area with major implications for the future of the Hamden Town Center is the Meadowbrook parcel. This site is to accommodate a new middle school and Town Green Park. As part of the design of the school and surrounding amenities, strong emphasis is being placed on creating a public open space/gathering spot in keeping with the town green concept for the site. There should be strong pedestrian linkages with the balance of the area as well as the Farmington Canal Trail.

## N. IMPLEMENTATION

The Hamden Town Center Strategy For the Future is a long-range vision which will be implemented over an extended time period. This implementation will require a public/private partnership inclusive of capital investment, regulatory changes and organizational initiatives. The public capital investments will include activities with townwide impact as well as direct impact on the Town Center. The regulatory and organizational actions will be more directly targeted to the specifics of the Town Center.

**Capital Investment** – Capital investment required to achieve the vision for Hamden Town Center includes public investment in Town facilities and infrastructure. The facility investment includes:

- Demolition of the current police complex and construction of a new facility outside of the Town Center.
- Possible construction of a new fire station and central fire services complex on the western portion of the cleared site.
- Renovation of Memorial Town Hall as a multi-purpose facility including town meeting space, conference center and a cultural center.
- Construction of off-street parking to serve the Memorial Town Hall and general public parking needs.
- Expansion of the Senior Center in conjunction with the re-design of Meadowbrook Park.

The infrastructure investment includes:

- Widening of Dixwell Avenue between Washington Avenue and the Town parking lot to provide an additional travel lane aligned with removal of parking on Dixwell Avenue between the Whitney Avenue intersection and Old Dixwell Avenue.
- Relocation of the bus stops to alleviate traffic congestion.
- Streetscape improvements between the fire complex/Memorial Town Hall and the Government Center. This would include a widening of sidewalks and design improvements on Old Dixwell Avenue.
- Installation of a traffic signal at the intersection of the Miller Library driveway, Dixwell Avenue and Old Dixwell Avenue. This would be an activated signal for pedestrians as well as vehicles.
- Consolidation of the parking areas between Dixwell Avenue and School Street through cooperative agreements between the Town and property owners. Capital improvements to the consolidated



parking area would be a Town expenditure with participation by the property owners.

The private capital investment includes:

- Investment in building renovation and adaptive re-use ranging from signage/façade improvements to substantial renovation of interior space to accommodate new occupancy. An example of substantial renovation was the Harstan's Jewelers re-use of the former Webster Bank site. Another buildings appropriate for such treatment is the former Fleet Bank.
- The most significant private investment opportunity in Hamden Town Center is the area west of Whitney Avenue and south of Dixwell Avenue. The re-use of this area has the potential to address a variety of issues including rear lot access to properties fronting Whitney Avenue and occupancy by uses which support other businesses in both Hamden Town Center and townwide. The most favorable use to meet these objectives would be a hotel. While such a development would be privately funded, the Town could assist with infrastructure improvements. In addition, the Town could work in partnership with the State of Connecticut to provide appropriate incentives.

**Regulatory Changes** – The primary regulatory change needed to implement the strategy for Hamden Town Center is a change in the zoning regulations for the area. The area is currently zoned primarily CDD4A and CDD4B with some R-4 and R-5 zoning covering the residential portions of the area.

While the current zoning regulations appear to be generally supportive of the strategy for Hamden Town Center, creation of a design district regulation would be beneficial. These recommended changes are as follows:

- Change the B-2 district between School Street and Colonial Drive and Day Spring Street, with the exception of the parcel at the northeast corner of School Street, to an expanded design district.
- Remove stand alone multi-family development and veterinary hospitals as special permit uses. Consider requiring mixed-use development.
- Allow the use of shared parking calculations for mixed-use developments rather than the number of spaces for each use as required in the parking section of the regulations.
- Expand the use of incentive development provisions to include the instances when a property owner reduces the number of points of egress and access on Whitney or Dixwell Avenues.

- The adoption of specific design criteria with which site plans must conform in order to improve the quality of design and strengthen the cohesiveness of Hamden Town Center from a visual and physical connection perspective.

**Organizational Actions** – There are several ways that new organizational approaches can assist in the implementation of the strategy for Hamden Town Center. Recommended approaches include:

- Creation of a Hamden Town Center Property Owner and Business Association. This could be either an independent group or an affiliation with the Chamber. This group will work cooperatively with the Town in the nurturing of public/private partnerships, management and marketing of the Town Center.
- Designation of an agency in accordance with Chapter 132 of the Connecticut General Statutes for the purposes of adoption and implementation of a Municipal Development Plan. The adoption of such a plan would permit site assembly as well as the use of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) to finance public infrastructure improvements.
- Designate a responsible body for the operation of the Memorial Town Hall multi-use facility recommended as part of the strategy.

## **O. CONCLUSION**

In the Introduction, the statement was made that Hamden does have a downtown. The future is bright for Hamden Town Center if the challenges of the present and future can be met by a public/private partnership to bring appropriate resources to the area. Hamden Town Center contains many resources which can be enhanced by additional capital and human investment. The strategy discussed herein will provide the blueprint for success.



## **XI. DIXWELL-WHITNEY AVENUE CORRIDOR**

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

In many ways, the Dixwell-Whitney Corridor forms the main trunk of Hamden as one thinks of the growth and ultimate shape of a tree. Historically, the earliest areas of settlement and commerce were within this corridor. Whitney Avenue provided the route connecting Hamden with New Haven and communities to the north. Over time, the villages of Whitneyville, Spring Glen, Centerville and Mt. Carmel were settled and eventually connected as the town grew. Dixwell Avenue served a similar function with growth out from New Haven mostly in the 20<sup>th</sup> century while Whitney Avenue developed in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In the 1950's, Dixwell Avenue was the location of one of the first retail shopping strips or so called "Magic Miles" in the country, displaying the early waves of suburban commercial growth. The Sears store was the first store built by that company outside of a traditional city location.

Today, the main trunk aspects of these corridors continue not only as areas of primary commercial activity in the town, but also as the two major north-south routes for vehicular traffic. This function has increased as the northern portions of Hamden have experienced residential growth. Most recently, two development areas which are accessed by these corridors – Quinnipiac University and Hamden Hills have had a variety of impacts. At the same time, the area of Dixwell Avenue south of the Wilbur Cross Parkway has undergone changes in land use which continue today and will into the future.

The historical and future role of the Dixwell-Whitney Corridor and areas served by this corridor is a key component of the Plan of Conservation and Development. All aspects of the community (economic development, housing, transportation, open space and municipal facilities) are found in this corridor. Decisions concerning these issues will continue to define Hamden well into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. For this reason, this Plan component should be one of the core ingredients of the Plan.

### **B. CURRENT CONDITIONS**

#### **Delineation Of Sub-Areas**

The Dixwell/Whitney Corridor can effectively be divided into four main parts: south, central (including the Town Center), north and Whitney Avenue south of the Parkway. The southern part is Dixwell Avenue from the New Haven/Hamden town line to the Wilbur Cross Parkway (Areas 1,2 on map). The central part of the Corridor

is from the Wilbur Cross Parkway on the south and runs through the Town Center to the intersection with Whitney Avenue (Area 3 and Town Center on map). The northern section runs from the northern boundary of the Town Center on Whitney Avenue to the Cheshire/Hamden town line. In addition, there are three distinct areas of Whitney Avenue south of the Town Center depicted as Area 7 on the map. These include part of Skiff Street, as well as the Spring Glen and Whitneyville neighborhood centers. These three sections of the corridor have their own distinct features.



Walgreens – Chimney Square

### Southern Portion

This area of the corridor between the Hamden/New Haven town line and the Parkway is dominated by small businesses and does not contain many residential parcels. The primary land use is a wide variety of retail sales and services. Auto sales and services have a large influence on the make-up of this particular portion of the corridor. There are three substantial developments in this part of the Town. The first of these is the Hamden Business Park. The Business Park represents

forty percent of the land in Area 1. This business park is well maintained with large lots and is a contrast to the rest of Area 1 of the corridor, which is comprised of smaller lots. The area to the south of the Business Park is the location of the Hamden Middle School. The second landmark in this part of the corridor is the concentration of retail activity in the Putnam Avenue area. This area, traditionally known as the “Bank Section”, is home to Chimney Square and the Putnam Place Center with Stop and Shop as the major tenant. The third major development area is the Parkway Plaza which has long been characterized by the vacant, boarded-up Pathmark Supermarket. This center has been a visual and economic blight within the corridor for many years.



Vacant Discount Furniture

Development potential for this part of the Town is based primarily on the vacant buildings and underutilized sites. There were three vacant buildings in addition to Pathmark that stand out in this area. The Johnson Building was the largest and most obvious and was demolished by the Town in January 2003. Farther north there are the vacant Discount Furniture building and the NFM building (previously proposed for

a Rite-Aid store). Not only do these three sites and buildings represent an under utilization of the land, but they are also a major eyesore that detract from the entire area. The area to the east of Dixwell Avenue between Mather Street and Treadwell Street which is proposed for a bio-science office park is currently an eyesore in its partial demolition condition.

### Central Portion

This portion includes the area from the Parkway north through Hamden Center and includes the Magic Mile. This area has very few, if any, vacancies and very little change in use can be expected. However, the recent entry of stores such as Kohl's and Wal-Mart has improved the area both visually and economically. In terms of

development potential, there are very few, if any, vacant buildings and completely vacant parcels in this part of the corridor. There has been recent in-fill development with new establishments including Burger King, Brooks Pharmacy and Bed Bath & Beyond. In addition, an old gas station in front of the Plaza has been demolished and the "Car Graveyard" is being restored. The change of tenants and infill development in this area is reflective of national trends in retailing; stronger companies survive and the weaker disappear. This is a trend that has been witnessed over the last 50

years since the "Magic Mile" emerged from the apple orchards adjacent to Dixwell Avenue. A constant presence in this area has been Hamden High School. Of course, the school itself has changed with the times by way of a major renovation over the last 5 years.



Brooks Pharmacy

The portion of Skiff Street in this area near the intersection with Dixwell Avenue contains several vacant buildings. There is a large factory that is vacant off Skiff Street. It is not visible from the street, but is visible from the Canal Line as well as the Wilbur Cross Parkway. There is also another vacant building on Skiff Street behind Town Fair Tire that is vacant and can be seen from the street. This building used to be the 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue discount store. These two properties represent a major opportunity for new investment in this area. To the north of the Magic Mile one moves into the Hamden Center area of Town. While this area has been



Vacant 7<sup>th</sup> Ave. Building



the subject of a separate report (See Hamden Center Plan – May, 2002), the Magic Mile segment of the corridor and Hamden Center function together in a variety of ways to form the heart of Hamden. These functions include:

- Access to the Magic Mile from I-91 is through the Center. Access to the Wilbur Cross Parkway is available at both ends of the area.
- The green belt formed by the Mill River is the eastern boundary of both areas as it feeds into Lake Whitney. In addition to this green belt, substantial open space exists in the area in the form of Meadowbrook and the Hamden Hall athletic fields.
- There is a significant public facility presence in the area including Memorial Town Hall, the Central Fire Station, the Police Station, Miller Library and Senior Center, Hamden Government Center and Hamden High School.
- The recently expanded Farmington Canal Trail provides a pedestrian/bicycle opportunity for movement through the area with the potential for a loop connection to the Miller Library/Senior Center.
- The major concentrations of higher density housing in Hamden are located within a one mile radius of the center of the area. This includes Whitney Avenue, Washington Avenue, Meadowbrook, Hamden Housing Authority Senior Housing, Hamden Hills and Mix Avenue.
- There are major retail destinations within the “Magic Mile” which have both a community wide and multi-community market area.

This combination of land uses, public facilities and open space is unique to Hamden. It is also the economic and tax base center of the Town.



Former Eckblade Site

### North Of The Center

Once one passes through the Town Center, the corridor transitions in terms of design, density and use. Areas 4, 5 and 6 include a distance of 4.98 miles from the Town Center to the Cheshire line. This compares to a 3.21 mile distance from the Town Center to the New Haven line.

Area 4 is the section of Whitney Avenue between Colonial Drive and the Mount Carmel Connector (Rte. 40). This area contains some well known business establishments such as the

Glenwood, Whitney Donut, Rainbow Cleaners and Keating Motors. In addition, the Mount Carmel Branch of the U.S. Postal Service is located in this area. Within the last two years, Friendly's and Ekblade Motors, well-known establishments in this area have closed. It is interesting to note that these establishments had a larger market draw than the mostly convenience-oriented establishments in the area. The closing of these establishments might have been the result of corporate decisions rather than location-specific issues. As one moves through this area between the Washington Avenue intersection and the Mount Carmel connector, the impact of the conversion of former residential structures to office use is most apparent. Closer to the connector, there is a mix of non-residential structures including Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church, New Haven Savings Bank and the Whitney Manor Convalescent Home.

Area 5 contains the historic Mount Carmel Center with the fire station, Housing Authority Congregate Housing and the historic properties on Ives Street. The cemetery at the corner of Evergreen Avenue and Whitney Avenue is another landmark in the area. The intersection with Sherman Avenue is characterized by an active convenience retail center containing Dunkin Donuts, Amity Wine &

Liquor and Krauzer's. With the exception of some dwelling units primarily occupied by Quinnipiac students, Area 5 has lost all residential properties fronting on Whitney Avenue either to conversion or demolition for new development. However, the strength of the area as a residential location has been proven by the success of the new development between the Connector and Ives Street. The most northern portion of Area 5 includes access to Quinnipiac University and Sleeping Giant State Park via Mount Carmel Avenue as well as uses related to Quinnipiac including its off-site

parking lot. The area on the west side of Whitney Avenue at the Mount Carmel Avenue intersection contains a mix of retail uses with both convenience and regional shopping establishments. Talbot's is a national retailer with a regional market, and People's Bank has both a convenience and community-wide market. The Day's Inn has a market related to Quinnipiac as well as a transient lodging market.

Area 6 north of the Mt. Carmel/West Woods/Whitney intersection becomes more rural with the eastern side of the corridor dominated by three major parcels – Sleeping Giant Park, Sleeping Giant Golf Course and the Regional Water Authority holdings around Clarke's Pond. The Mill River as it parallels Whitney Avenue creates a narrow



Talbot's Shopping Center



development strip south of Tuttle Avenue. The west side of the corridor has a narrowly defined strip between the Farmington Canal Trail and Whitney Avenue. There are also several wetland areas as well as a west-to-east power line easement in the area. In general, this is a sensitive environmental area and should be treated as such.

### **Whitney Avenue South Of Hamden Center**

The other portion of the Dixwell/Whitney Corridor is the area of Whitney Avenue from the Wilbur Cross Parkway to the New Haven line. This area contains the oldest developed portions of the Town including the village clusters of Whitneyville and Spring Glen. The third cluster of activity is the Skiff Street/Whitney Avenue intersection area extending west along Skiff Street.



**Spring Glen**



**Whitneyville**

The Whitneyville and Spring Glen areas grew as a result of early suburbanization from New Haven from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century through the 1930s. This pre-Depression/World War II era saw such growth in inner ring suburbs throughout the country. As was the case along Whitney Avenue, much of this growth was supported by public transit in the form of trolleys, buses and trains. The small residential lot development around these village centers was the sub-division activity of its day. New Haven remained the primary source of employment with northern Hamden more of an agrarian economy. The form and size of the Whitneyville and Spring Glen business areas have remained constant as primarily service and convenience commercial areas. While Spring Glen and Country Club Pharmacies have been replaced by Walgreens and restaurants come and go, many long time uses such as Spring Glen Hardware, Whitneyville Market, Whitneyville Church, St. Rita's Church and the Whitneyville Post Office continue in these areas. These neighborhoods are walkable, traditional neighborhoods with established limits of commercial areas. There has been some conversion of residential properties to office use in years past, but there has been little if any such conversions in recent years.

The Skiff Street/Whitney Avenue area presents a different picture in terms of change and land uses. The Spring Glen School marks the dividing line between the Spring Glen residential area and the commercial uses to the north. Over the last 20 years, major land use changes have occurred in the area closest to the intersection. A



ACES

multi-story office building was built next to Glen Terrace Garden Shop. Two of the four corners of the intersection have changed with a widening of the southeast corner resulting in the removal of two businesses and the provision of a garden area. The gas station site on the northwest corner after many years as a vacant building, now is occupied by Krauzer's convenience store. As one moves away from the intersection to the north on Whitney Avenue, the changes have been dramatic. The former SNET building has been converted to a medical center, as has the former IBM building.

This shift from corporate use to medical use has been a trend throughout the region. This shift away from corporate use has taken another direction on Skiff Street with the former Nationwide Insurance building converted to educational use as part of the expansion of ACES. Further to the west on Skiff Street, the former United Illuminating facility has been demolished and Hamden Hall has expanded its athletic fields. This has created an educational/open space cluster for most of the south side of Skiff Street between Whitney Avenue and the Parkway bridge. The north side of Skiff Street is a restaurant cluster with IHOP, Sorrentos (relocated from a site at the southeast corner of Skiff and Whitney) and Dante's (relocated from a Whitney Avenue site across from the Glenwood). The other commercial property on the north side is Partyka Chevrolet, a more regional business.

### **Vacant Land and Buildings**

As discussed earlier, there is a very limited amount of vacant land or buildings within the corridor with 26 buildings containing 480,000 square feet and 32 vacant parcels containing 82.6 acres. Not surprisingly, the greatest amount of vacant building space is in Areas 1, 2 and 3, with the greatest amount of vacant land in Area 6. It should be noted that much of the vacant land is environmentally valuable and should not be considered available for development. The vacant building space in Areas 1, 2 and 3 is dominated by the Pathmark Center, Johnson building site, Discount Furniture building and former NFM manufacturing building. An analysis of vacant

building square footage by zoning district has also been completed. The CCD-1 zone has 89% of such building space. This is the dominant zone along the corridor from the New Haven line to Hamden Town Center. This zone provides the most flexibility in terms of a mix of land uses as well as intensity of development since many uses are only allowed subject to a special permit.

### **Number Of Business Establishments**

A clear indication of the economic importance of the Dixwell-Whitney Corridor to the Town is the 706 business establishments as well as 22 institutional and 15 governmental uses in the area presently.

Consistent with other conditions such as small lots and older development, the area of the corridor south of the Wilbur Cross Parkway contains the greatest number of establishments (228). The Town Center is second at 108 establishments. While the Magic Mile area has 86 establishments, this includes many large stores resulting in the highest amount of square footage of any area. Area 6 in the northern part of Town has the smallest number of establishments, while covering the longest segment of the corridor. The Skiff Street, Spring Glen and Whitneyville segments have 62 establishments with most in the latter two locations. This is a good indication of the continued strength of these village centers as commercial areas with a focus on convenience shopping and dining. There has been some shift in the Spring Glen area from convenience shopping to specialty shopping in the form of antique shops.

### **C. RECENT INITIATIVES AND CHANGES**

Over the last 10 years, there have been numerous public and private initiatives which have changed the face of the Dixwell/Whitney Corridor. These have included direct investments, enforcement of regulations, economic incentives and programmatic initiatives.

In addition to these activities, there have been numerous investments in upgrading individual properties for retail, service and residential use. There has also been some expansion of residential multi-family developments with frontage on Whitney Avenue, particularly north of the Town Center. Not directly fronting the corridor, but within its sphere of influence in terms of convenience as well as physical access, there has been substantial investment in new residential development at Hamden Hills and along Mix Avenue.

The importance of this public and private investment is two fold.

- Private investment to date has helped the Town tax base and created an environment conducive to additional investment.
- Public investment has improved facilities and services for the public as well as established an infrastructure framework for future investment.

The Town has further strengthened this framework by the establishment of several investment districts and supportive tax incentive programs and neighborhood revitalization zones (NRZ). The attached *"Targeted Incentive Areas"* map shows the location of these districts.

### **Highwood and State Street Planning Initiatives**

Neighborhood Revitalization Zones (NRZ) have been designated for the Highwood and State Street neighborhoods for the common goal of improving and preserving the neighborhood through collaborative efforts of the residents and public and private stakeholders. In order to identify issues and develop recommendations, strategic plans have been prepared for these two NRZ areas. While the goal of the two plans is similar the objectives are quite different due to the unique issues facing these two neighborhoods and the differing land use patterns that have developed over the years.

The strategic plan for the Highwood NRZ, which an update was completed in 1999, establishes objectives and design guidelines to direct future growth in the neighborhoods commercial district of Dixwell Avenue and surrounding residential area. The plans focus is on reversing the declining trend in quality of life issues by improving the neighborhoods visual appearance and facilitating the development of locally owned businesses. By building on neighborhood assets and establishing working partnerships between the Town, businesses and residents, the plan puts forward recommendations that are intended to revitalize the neighborhood and reestablish Highwood as an attractive gateway into the Town.

The strategic plan for the State Street NRZ, which an update was also completed in 1999, establishes objectives that are designed to combine the elements of the neighborhoods diverse land use pattern, which include residential, commercial and industrial uses into a cohesive neighborhood scale development pattern that is attractive and pedestrian friendly. The plans focus is on the State Street neighborhood being a gateway into the Town and therefore is vital to Hamden's overall economic wellbeing. The plan defines the issues and makes appropriate recommendations for the following themes: history, beautification, environment, economic development, public and youth services and public safety.

Within the State Street NRZ, the Town recently commissioned a Municipal Development Plan (MDP) specifically targeted at the State Street Corridor. This special planning study was completed in 2002 and comprehensively addresses the issues of economic diversity and appropriate land uses with associated public improvements. The goal of the MDP is to complete public improvements and activities that will encourage private redevelopment and reinvestment. The goals are structured around a phased implementation strategy with the first phase selected based on their immediate effect on improving the areas image and generating private developer interest. The State Street MDP and NRZ Strategic Plan work together to provide a framework of recommendations that are designed to bring vitality back to the State Street corridor and surrounding neighborhood.

It is important to note that this Plan of Conservation and Development recognizes the goals, objectives and recommendations identified in the Highwood and State Street NRZ Strategic Plans as well as the State Street Municipal Development Plan and recommends that when considering development proposals within these areas of Town that the goals, objectives and recommendations stated in the aforementioned plans be referred to and incorporated where ever possible and appropriate.

#### **D. ISSUES FACING THE TOWN**

Just as there are differences in existing conditions in each of the segments of the Dixwell-Whitney Corridor, there are differences in issues to be addressed. The importance of the corridor in the overall future of Hamden makes attention to these issues a primary component of the Plan of Conservation and Development. The initiatives of the last ten years were listed on a geographic basis moving south to north, and the following list of issues to be addressed are presented respective of this geographic basis:

- The re-use of the Johnson Building property will have a major impact on the Highwood neighborhood. The decision must be made if this site is to be developed to provide services including retail development or to create employment opportunities and tax base growth.
  
- The future of Hamden Middle School is an important issue not only for the Town as a whole, but this area of Town. The decision to build a new school at a different location raises the immediacy of the community's discussion on the re-use of the existing school and adjacent property. A recent announcement

by the Regional Water Authority as to its position on remediation of the site to a non-residential standard could form a framework for future planning. The location of this site adjacent to the Hamden Business Park and the SNET facility combined with the RWA remediation plan would support an industrial/office/retail re-use plan. Such a plan should assure protection and improvement of the adjacent residential neighborhood. The Town should undertake a thorough study of the available reuse options for this site.

- The area surrounding the Mather Street/Dixwell Avenue Intersection is another major issue area. There are four underutilized properties which have a large impact in terms of current blighting influence and future potential. There are the former cement pipe manufacturing complex between Mather and Treadwell, the former manufacturing facility on the corner of Mather and Dixwell, the school bus storage lot on the north side of Mather and the adjacent Parkway Plaza which at one time contained the Rickles and Pathmark anchor stores. Furthermore, this area is adjacent to the water resources owned by the Regional Water Authority which are environmentally sensitive areas. There is an approved plan for a bio-science office park on the cement pipe manufacturing site, the factory site was previously proposed for a Rite-Aid, and there have been discussions of a major retail tenant for the Parkway Plaza site. In addition, there has been recent discussion of constructing a new police station on the bus storage site. The issue in this area is how all these re-use initiatives can be planned in a coordinated framework to create the best design for economic value, public facility benefits, and protection and enhancement of the adjacent natural resource.
- The Magic Mile section is mostly developed. However, there will continue to be infill development opportunities, particularly on the east side of Dixwell Avenue as market forces drive private investment. The three remaining large parcels upon which recent development has not occurred are occupied by automotive uses (two auto dealers and one auto body shop). If market forces result in re-use plans for these site, there should be guidelines in place for such re-use. The issue is to assure that such guidelines encourage coordinated design and access management as well as quality development.
- The area currently occupied by the vacant 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue warehouse and the manufacturing facility visible from the Wilbur Cross Parkway presents a significant reuse opportunity that would

impact both the Magic Mile and Skiff Street areas. This area is also a key to the cohesive planning of the area from the Town Center to the Parkway as a larger Hamden Center. The recent extension of the Farmington Canal Trail runs through this area, already providing a pedestrian and bicycle link. This area abuts the Meadowbrook Golf Course and Town-owned parcel to the south of the golf course proposed for open space. This is a valuable development area from an economic standpoint, but also provides a wonderful transition area. Site development should emphasize quality in all regards. The issue is to provide for coordinated planning of this area to achieve multiple objectives for a high standard of excellence through a public/private partnership.

- The Town Center is the subject of a separate section of the Plan. However, the role of the Town Center in the corridor, as the location of Town government facilities and the linkage between the southern and northern areas of the corridor, makes this area an important consideration for the overall structure of future development within the corridor. Expansion of a true Center of Town to include the Magic Mile, open space preservation and linkages, and the reasonable movement of traffic, will be important in creating a cohesive corridor development strategy and solidifying the Town Center as a key corridor gateway location. Crafting of design guidelines to add to the zoning regulations for this area is the type of development control which should be pursued. The issue is to achieve this gateway role in the context of sensitive, cohesive planning and design.
- The area north of the Town Center to the Mt. Carmel Connector has been, and continues to be in transition. This transition includes loss of regional retailers (Ekblade and Friendly's) with a movement toward more convenience retail, as well as conversion of residential to other uses and infill residential development. The issue is to control conversions and infill development to minimize adverse impact on adjacent residential neighborhoods and to manage traffic through proper access management techniques and design. Mixed use, building orientation to the street line, and landscaped buffers adjoining residential properties are key elements for site reuse.
- The area between the Mount Carmel Connector and Mount Carmel Avenue is still generally residential in use on the east side with non-residential use more prevalent on the west side. This area is also experiencing pressure for conversion from residential



use to non-residential use as well as in-fill housing development. This housing pressure is stronger in this area due to the market being created directly and indirectly by Quinnipiac University. The issue in this area is to control residential conversions which result in additional traffic and direct impact on neighbors, as well as addressing the housing needs of Quinnipiac University in an effective Town/University partnership.

- The area in the vicinity of the Whitney Avenue/West Woods Road intersection presents opportunities for the future. Presently, this area contains a mix of retail uses, the Farmington Canal Trail and the Days Inn. In addition, it is a heavy traffic intersection currently scheduled for improvement. The Talbot's store, which is the main retailer in the area, has little if any market connection to Quinnipiac and its student body. As discussed above, the issue related to Quinnipiac tends to be housing-related. In addition, there is no real retail/service center to meet the market needs of the student body. The issue for this area is how it can be planned with a vision which creates a village center to serve Quinnipiac and the adjacent West Woods area while addressing some of the residential issues discussed above. There is also need to protect the natural resource of the Mill River in this area. A mixed-use village with a realigned intersection, reconfigured greenway trail with open space, and a housing and retail cluster which creates the village center node is one option for this area.
  
- The area north of the Mount Carmel Avenue/West Woods Road village focus should be retained as the lowest density segment of the corridor with the highest level of natural resource protection. The Mill River and surrounding wetlands in this area is part of the watershed which drains through the center of Town. A limitation in the increase of impervious surfaces should be a primary goal in this area. The issue is to preserve this area as a low density, resource protection area.
  
- The area south of the Parkway on Whitney Avenue is a valuable ingredient of the community fabric of Hamden. The Skiff Street area has emerged as an important regional educational cluster with the expansion of ACES and the Hamden Hall playing fields. These playing fields have also expanded the green space along the Mill River green belt. Both the Spring Glen and Whitneyville village centers provide strength to the surrounding residential neighborhoods. The integrity of these areas must be preserved. In addition, the natural resource of the Mill River, its tributaries



and the Lake Whitney system must be protected. The conversion of residential properties on Whitney Avenue to non-residential use or multiple units should be limited to specific sections with consideration given to a change in regulation which eliminates this activity. The issue facing this area is to modify existing zoning regulations to support continued traditional development with some possible modification within the context of extensive neighborhood participation.

## **E. DIXWELL-WHITNEY AVENUE CORRIDOR GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

The purpose of a Plan of Conservation and Development is to establish a road map for the next ten years and beyond to address various community issues. These issues include land use, transportation, economic development, open space, community facilities, housing and natural resources as primary community concerns. As the geographic and development center of Hamden, as well as the location of important natural resources, a plan for the Dixwell/Whitney Corridor should address all of these issues. For purposes of presentation and community dialogue, goals and objectives are organized by area as was the description of existing conditions and issues. However, it is important to remember that taken in total the goals and objectives represent a coordinated and comprehensive plan for the corridor as well as the Town as a whole.

The “*Corridor Recommendations*” maps summarize the goals and objectives.

**GOAL #1 Revitalize the lower Dixwell Avenue portion of the corridor through design controls, mixed-use infill development and encouragement of retail growth and expansion.**

### **OBJECTIVES:**

- The area containing the Johnson Building parcel, the Business Park and the SNET property is within a CCD-1 zoning district. This district permits a mix of uses either by right or special permit depending on the specific use. The adjacent Hamden Middle School site is zoned R-4 which is a one-family zone with a 10,000 square foot lot requirement. Some non-residential uses are allowed by a special permit including office buildings. However, the range of uses permitted is not as extensive as the CDD-1 zone. If the current site is remediated to non-residential standards, this area should be re-zoned to a modified CDD-1 zone. The modification should strengthen the design requirements to address building bulk, layout and design issues. Most importantly, there should be extensive buffer and landscaping requirements to integrate with the surrounding residential areas. This is particularly important for the properties on Morse and Newhall Streets.
- The Daddio parcel is currently a CDD-1 zone which abuts the business park. There are no existing residential uses adjacent. Modifications to site plan requirements should be adopted which results in this parcel being developed within the context of the

“Bank Section” environment. For example, joint access should be required in order to address traffic movement and safety concerns. There should also be pedestrian linkages between the parcel and adjacent Chimney Square in order to encourage one stop parking. The potential to link with an extension of the Farmington Canal Trail and access to Olin Powder Farm should be considered in all site development plans.

- The area between Treadwell Street and the Wilbur Cross Parkway occupied by the proposed bio-science office park, vacant factory at the corner of Mather Street, bus storage area and Parkway Plaza should be planned as one area. The office park has an approved site plan. The balance of the area will be subject to future applications. The applications should be reviewed with the context of a coordinated traffic, access and site development plan. For example, if the bus storage site is chosen for a police station, the site development plan should be coordinated with any proposed revitalization of the Parkway Plaza in terms of parking and access. Protection of the natural resources of the RWA Lake Whitney system as well as residential development on Mather Street should be important design considerations.
- The west side of Dixwell Avenue as well as selected portions of the east side will continue to be the locations for a variety of small businesses. The area is primarily a B-2 zone. While the uses permitted in the B-2 zone provide the range appropriate for this area, the minimum lot size of 5,000 square feet, 50 foot lot width and 30% lot coverage can create some limitations requiring a variance for improvement. The regulations should be reviewed to address this issue as well as the issue of off-street parking, outdoor display of products and access management. The signage regulations should also be reviewed to encourage a design theme. Consideration should be given to the creation of a new district to replace the B-2 zone with a zone specific to the characteristics of the area.

**GOAL #2 Strengthen the Magic Mile area of Dixwell Avenue through high-quality infill development, effective traffic management and the coordinated development of vacant or underutilized properties.**

**OBJECTIVES:**

- The Magic Mile area will continue in the established land use pattern. Focus in the area should be on integration of new infill development with existing development in terms of both access management and coordinated site planning. Connection between properties should be encouraged. The parking requirements should be reviewed in order to reduce paved parking areas and

increase landscaping. The recently constructed Burger King is an example of what appears to be excess parking and paved areas. Visual and pedestrian connections with the Farmington Canal Line should be encouraged. Similarly connections between the residential properties to the west of the corridor should be encouraged with recognition of the grade differences.

- The area at the intersection of Skiff Street and Dixwell Avenue offers an opportunity for quality development. This site currently occupied by vacant industrial/warehouse properties is a CDD-1 zone. This area should be considered for a new zone which provides for a mix of uses appropriate for the location and site conditions. The area is bisected by the Farmington Canal Trail which provides the opportunity for unique pedestrian linkages as well as traditional vehicular access. This area also is a transition point between the Magic Mile and the open space at Meadowbrook as well as the Town Center uses.

**GOAL #3 Create a true Town Center that ties the corridor together through a comprehensive planning approach.**

**OBJECTIVE:**

- The entire area between the Parkway and the Whitney/Dixwell intersection should be strengthened as the center of Hamden. The drawing on the next page presents this concept.

**GOAL #4 Control development along Whitney Avenue north of the Town Center to the connector through access management, protection of adjacent residential neighborhoods from development along Whitney Avenue, and strict design guidelines.**

**OBJECTIVE:**

- The area north of the Town Center to the Mount Carmel Connector is a combination of B-2, B-1, and R-4 zoning. The B-2 and B-1 areas include the section between School Street and the Washington Avenue intersection. The focus in this area should be an access management and protection of adjacent residential areas. The R-4 area north to the Mount Carmel Connector has similar issues of access management and protection of adjacent residential areas. This area is impacted by two other issues, conversion of residential properties to office use and infill multi-family residential. This residential use is a special permit use at a density of 4,500sq ft per dwelling unit. This density should be reduced with proper buffers adjacent to single family areas. The office use is also special permit with a 20% lot coverage limit. While there is a prohibition against parking in yards there should

be stronger requirements for buffer treatment within these yards adjacent to single family properties.

**GOAL #5 Protect the suburban-rural residential neighborhoods north of the connector by reducing special permit residential densities and consolidating multi-family residential and retail/office uses into a “village center” format.**

**OBJECTIVES:**

- North of the Connector to the Mount Carmel Avenue/West Woods Road intersection the area is generally a B-1 district to Evergreen Avenue on the west side and R-4 for the balance with the exception of a B-2 zone between Sherman Avenue and West Woods Road. This area has similar issues to the lower portion related to access management for the B-1 area and infill development for the R-4 area. There should be a lowering of residential densities for special permit multi-family.
- The area surrounding the West Woods Road/Whitney Avenue intersection provides the opportunity to address several issues. This area is currently zoned B-2. Due to its proximity to Quinnipiac University as well as a convenience retail area for northern Hamden, this area should be designated as a special “Village Development District.” This district would permit a mix of uses including residential use which is well designed and includes incorporation of the Farmington Canal Line as an attribute. This area should encourage pedestrian linkages via the trail as well as connections to Quinnipiac University. Housing in this area could address some student housing issues related to Quinnipiac University.
- Quinnipiac University has undergone a period of substantial growth in its student body and facilities over the past decade. The institution now exceeds 8,000 students, faculty and staff at its northern Hamden campus. Impacts of this recent growth and near term expansion create the need for establishing a forum wherein the University and Town can discuss and frame broad plans for growth over the next decade outside of the permitting process.

**GOAL #6 From the West Woods Road/Whitney Avenue intersection, to the Cheshire town line, protection of natural resources should be the paramount concern.**

**OBJECTIVE:**

- North of The West Woods Road/Whitney Avenue intersection, future land use should focus on low density development, no

extension of non-residential uses and natural resource protection. Protection of the Mill River should be key to this strategy.

**GOAL #7 Maintain the Spring Glen and Whitneyville neighborhood centers along Whitney Avenue as relatively dense areas which support a variety of uses and housing types, with particular consideration and concern for infill development and residential conversions.**

**OBJECTIVE:**

- The Spring Glen and Whitneyville Centers are CDD-3 zoning districts within which the uses and densities permitted are consistent with the protection of these areas as neighborhood, village-based retail/service centers. No physical expansion should be permitted with the possible exception of a section of Putnam Avenue. This extension should be considered only if it can consolidate parcels and eliminate curb cuts for better traffic movement at the intersection. The second issue relates to infill development and residential conversions in the R-4 zone along the balance of Whitney Avenue. While these are special permit uses, such special permits should be limited to parcels where the lot size is adequate for required parking, access and buffering from adjacent residential properties.



## XII. TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION

### A. INTRODUCTION

To ensure that the Town of Hamden can continue to grow and prosper, it is essential that a safe, efficient, and economically viable transportation system be provided. This system, comprised of a surface transportation network of streets, walkways, greenways, bikeways and mass transit must provide for both inter-town and intra-town travel movements.

The importance of the Dixwell/Whitney Avenue Corridor in terms of both transportation and development requires that this transportation and circulation element be addressed in conjunction with the Dixwell/Whitney Corridor Component of the Hamden Plan of Conservation and Development.

### B. EXISTING CONDITIONS

The roadway system within Hamden has, in many ways, been influenced by the close proximity of the City of New Haven, the presence of the Wilbur Cross Parkway and the historical utilization of the Route 5 and Route 10 transportation corridors.

Hamden's roadway system is comprised of a series of interconnected corridors with varying levels of roadway functional classification. Hamden is served by 242.9 miles of public roads, ninety percent of which are Town roads (216.4 miles) and the balance (26.5 miles) are State roads.

#### **Functional Classification of Roadways by the Town of Hamden**

Roadways are classified based on traffic volumes, accessibility and function. The Town of Hamden has identified five different levels of roadway classifications: Principal Arterial- Expressway, Principal Arterial, Minor Arterial, Collector and Local Road. In some cases, the actual classification of a road may change along its length or may operate differently than its assigned functional classification.

The highest functional roadway classification in Hamden is Principal Arterial- Expressway. This classification of roadway provides limited-access, multi-lane, high volume, high capacity facilities intended to provide for and accommodate high speed travel, over long distances with relatively few points of access to the local street system. Within Hamden, the Wilbur Cross Parkway and the Route 40 Expressway Connector receive this classification.



The next order of roadway classification is Principal Arterial- Other. This roadway type connects major development and activity centers within Hamden to each other as well as to activity centers in other towns and to accessible expressways. These types of roads are typically designed for higher speeds and greater traffic carrying capacity, with enhanced horizontal and vertical geometry. To maintain the road's thru-traffic carrying capacity and higher design speeds, this road type would ideally provide a more restrictive level of access control to adjacent land uses than do other Town roads. Principal Arterials within Hamden include: Whitney Avenue; Dixwell Avenue; Skiff Street/Skiff Street Extension; Arch Street to Fitch Street; and Fitch Street to the New Haven town line. It should also be noted that each of these arterial roadways, with the exception of Skiff Street, also serve residential properties fronting on the arterials. In these instances, arterial streets also function as local streets.

Minor Arterials are ranked next within the hierarchy of roadway classifications. This type of roadway connects principal arterials and augments the traffic carrying capabilities of the entire roadway system. It also provides for a greater degree of access to abutting land uses and typically does not provide the same level of mobility of the higher classifications. There are 35 streets in Hamden classified as Minor Arterials.

The next classification of roadways, Collector Streets, provides a higher degree of access to abutting land uses and a somewhat diminished level of through mobility than the higher classifications. There are 46 streets in Hamden classified as Collector Streets.

Local Roadways, the final classification of roadways, includes all remaining streets. This classification contains a high percentage of street mileage, with roads that provide the highest level of access to abutting land uses and the lowest level of through mobility.

Classification Inconsistencies: There are a number of inconsistencies between the functional classification of roads as assigned by the Town of Hamden and those assigned by the Connecticut Department of Transportation (ConnDOT). These inconsistencies are important for the Town to address because the functional classification used by ConnDOT can affect transportation planning policies, the programming of road improvements and eligibility for ConnDOT and Federal transportation improvement monies.

Hamden has been and remains one of Connecticut's faster growing communities. For this reason, ConnDOT's functional classification may not accurately reflect the current status of use and condition of Hamden's roads. The Town is encouraged to enlist the assistance of the South Central Region

Council of Governments (SCRCOG) to pursue adjustments to ConnDOT's functional classification and bring them more in line with current conditions.

The attached "*Local Functional Road Classifications*" map references the classification of roadways as assigned by the Town of Hamden. This map should be used in future discussions on this subject with SCRCOG and ConnDOT.

### **Overview of Changes in Travel Patterns Between 1991 – 2000**

Since the preparation of the 1991 Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD), travel patterns and traffic volumes on the State roads serving Hamden have by and large remained fairly stable. Table 28 identifies historical count data for segments of State roads in Hamden in 1991 and 2000.

A review of the following table indicates that there is no overall town-wide upward or downward trend in traffic volumes on State roads in Hamden. In some instances, certain segments of the same highway corridor experienced differing traffic volume characteristics. For instance, most of the Dixwell Avenue portion of Route 10 reported slight declines in traffic volumes during the past ten years, while the Whitney Avenue portion of Route 10 reported slight increases. During the same reporting period, the portion of Whitney Avenue south of Dixwell Avenue reported decreases in traffic volumes.

The most notable traffic volume increases, in terms of numbers of additional vehicles, occurred at the following locations: Dixwell Avenue at the North Haven town line (an increase of 2,900 vehicles per day), Whitney Avenue at Route 40 (an increase of 2,400 vehicles per day), Whitney Avenue south of Mount Carmel Avenue, (an increase of 1,800 vehicles per day) and Mount Carmel Avenue, (an increase of 1,400 vehicles per day).

The most notable traffic volume decreases, in terms of numbers of vehicles, occurred at the following locations: Dixwell Avenue just north of Mather Street (a decrease of 3,500 vehicles per day), Dixwell Avenue south of Skiff Street (a decrease of 2,900 vehicles per day), and Dixwell Avenue south of the southbound ramp to the Wilbur Cross Parkway, (a decrease of 2,600 vehicles per day).

**Table 28  
Traffic Volume Trends On  
Hamden's State Roads**

| Roadway Link                                      | Average Daily Traffic |        | Percent Change |
|---|-----------------------|--------|----------------|
|   | 1990                  | 2000   |                |
| <b>Route 10 (Whitney Ave. &amp; Dixwell Ave.)</b> |                       |        |                |
| At Cheshire Town Line                             | 17,800                | 17,900 | 0.6%           |
| North of West Woods Road                          | 20,100                | 21,200 | 5.5%           |
| South of Mount Carmel Avenue (SR 453)             | 23,500                | 25,300 | 7.7%           |
| North of Route 22                                 | 26,800                | 27,000 | 0.7%           |
| South of Route 22 and SB Ramp to Route 40         | 18,400                | 20,800 | 13.0%          |
| South of Route 40 Northbound Off Ramp             | 13,300                | 14,500 | 9.0%           |
| North of Forest Street                            | 14,400                | 16,000 | 11.1%          |
| Dixwell Avenue West of Whitney Avenue             | 17,900                | 17,700 | -1.1%          |
| South of Sanford Street                           | 17,700                | 19,100 | 7.9%           |
| South of Skiff Street                             | 27,200                | 24,300 | -10.7%         |
| South of Connolly Parkway                         | 28,800                | 29,500 | 2.4%           |
| South of Wilbur Cross South Bound Ramp            | 33,000                | 30,400 | -7.9%          |
| North of Dewey Street                             | 34,900                | 33,600 | -3.7%          |
| North of Circular                                 | 20,500                | 20,800 | 1.5%           |
| South of Putnam                                   | 28,700                | 26,000 | -9.4%          |
| North of Morse                                    | 22,700                | 21,600 | -4.8%          |
| <b>Average Growth Rate for Route 10</b>           |                       |        | <b>0.0%</b>    |
| <b>Route 5 (State Street)</b>                     |                       |        |                |
| South of Edmond Street                            | 8,800                 | 8,700  | -1.1%          |
| South of Ridge Road                               | 11,600                | 12,800 | 10.3%          |
| At New Haven Town Line                            | 8,700                 | 9,000  | 3.4%           |
| <b>Average Growth Rate for Route 5</b>            |                       |        | <b>4.8%</b>    |
| <b>Route 707 (Whitney Ave. south)</b>             |                       |        |                |
| South of Route 10 (Dixwell Ave.)                  | 19,800                | 18,900 | -4.5%          |
| South of Wilbur Cross Interchange                 | 18,400                | 17,400 | -5.4%          |
| North of Mather Street                            | 17,200                | 13,700 | -20.3%         |
| South of Treadwell Street                         | 20,100                | 19,800 | -1.5%          |
| North of Armory Street                            | 19,700                | 17,700 | -10.2%         |
| <b>Average Growth Rate for Route 707</b>          |                       |        | <b>-8.1%</b>   |
| <b>Other State Routes</b>                         |                       |        |                |
| SR 453- (Mount Carmel Ave.)                       | 4,600                 | 6,000  | 30.4%          |
| Route 22- (Ives Street)                           | 4,200                 | 4,800  | 14.3%          |
| SR 717- Dixwell Ave. at North Haven Border        | 17,800                | 20,700 | 16.3%          |
| Source: ConnDOT Cartographic/Transportation Data  |                       |        |                |

## **Traffic Accident Analysis**

The Suggested List of Surveillance Study Sites (SLOSS) is prepared by the Connecticut Department of Transportation (ConnDOT) to identify high hazard highway locations based on traffic accident history. ConnDOT identifies and classifies high accident locations by assigning a value to each location based on the type of incident, accident frequency, the type of roadway, and average daily traffic. Highway segments placed on the SLOSS are candidates for detailed review to determine if measures should be undertaken to mitigate geometric or roadway environmental problems that could be contributing to the above normal accident history.

The most recent reporting period (1997-1999), placed 29 Hamden locations on the SLOSS. Five of these listings, rank in State's top 100 locations, with the intersection of Whitney Avenue (Route 10) and the Route 40 Connector ranked #2 out of the 1,503 statewide SLOSS locations.

The intersections in the Town Center Area along Dixwell Avenue and Whitney Avenue create the worst traffic bottleneck in Hamden. The resulting traffic congestion and accidents affect local traffic and thru regional traffic, as well as the many businesses and institutions located within the Town Center area. There are eight SLOSS locations within 1800 feet of the intersection of Dixwell and Whitney Avenues. The operations of the identified problem intersections affect one another and improvements should be addressed in a comprehensive manner.

## **Traffic Control Devices**

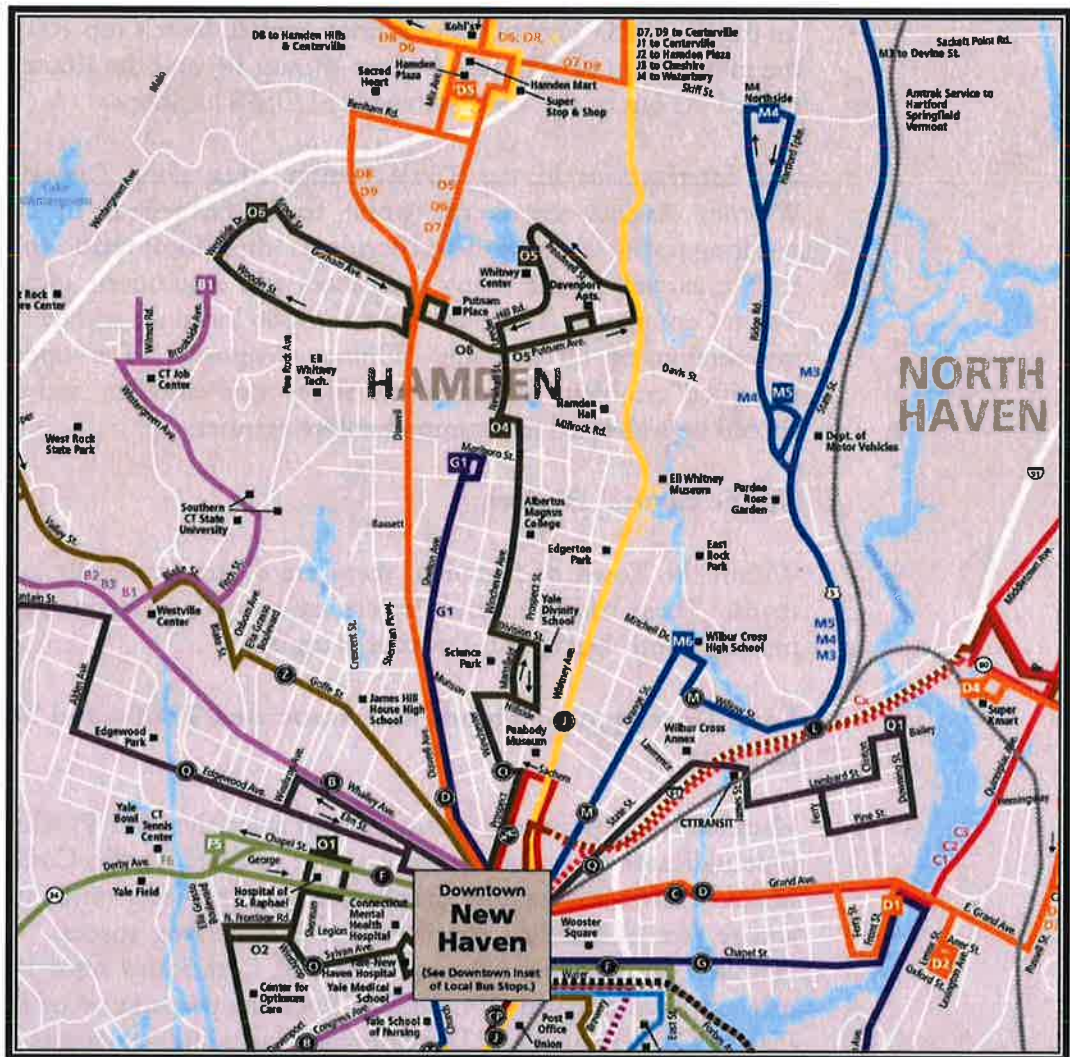
Within the Town of Hamden, there are 47 traffic signals located on State roads. These traffic control devices are owned, maintained and have signal phasing controlled by the Town of Hamden.

## **Land Development Trends and Associated Traffic and Transportation Impacts**

Hamden has experienced steady growth since the 1991 POCD was adopted. One indicator of growth is the issuance of State Traffic Commission (STC) Major Traffic Generator Certificates (e.g. projects with 100,000+ gross square feet of building space and/or 200 parking spaces). There are 31 Hamden projects that have received STC Certificates since 1981. Nineteen projects have received STC permits since the preparation of Hamden's 1991 Plan of Conservation and Development, including 10 permits associated with Quinnipiac University expansion projects and 7 permits associated with projects located along Dixwell Avenue.

## Transit Network

CTTransit provides public bus transit service in Hamden, as summarized in Table 29 and graphically represented in the following CTTransit Bus Route Map. The twelve bus routes summarized above connect Hamden to the public transit bus system serving the greater New Haven area as well as to Cheshire and Waterbury. Bus Routes D5, D7, J1, J2, J3, J4, M5 offer Saturday service and Sunday service is provided on Routes D5, D7, J1 and J2. The frequency of service varies between bus routes, with the Dixwell Avenue line offering the most frequent service (20 minute headways during peak commuter hours). Bus route and schedule information is posted on the CTTransit web site at [www.cttransit.com](http://www.cttransit.com).





**Table 29**  
**BUS ROUTES SERVING HAMDEN**

| Bus Route | Description                                |
|-----------|--|
| D5        | Dixwell Avenue to Hamden Plaza             |
| D6        | Dixwell Ave, Hamden Hills/Centerville      |
| D7        | Dixwell Avenue, Centerville                |
| D8        | Hamden Hills/Centerville via Circular Ave. |
| D9        | Dixwell Ave, Centerville via Circular Ave. |
| D10       | Dixwell Avenue, Putnam Place               |
| J1        | Whitney Avenue, Centerville                |
| J2        | Whitney Avenue, Hamden Plaza               |
| J3        | Whitney Avenue to Cheshire                 |
| J4        | Whitney Avenue, to Waterbury               |
| M4        | State Street                               |
| M5        | State Street, Davis Street, Ridge Road     |



**Farmington Canal Greenway**

### **Farmington Canal Greenway**

Hamden is host to a major segment of the Farmington Canal Greenway, one of Connecticut’s most successful multi-use trails serving multiple communities. In fact, the Hamden portion of the Farmington Greenway is the longest uninterrupted such trail in Connecticut. The greenway trail provides enhanced opportunities for walking, bicycling and rollerblading in a safe, convenient and enjoyable setting. The Greenway connects Hamden with the Town of Cheshire to the north and is proposed to be extended into Downtown New Haven, with connections to New Haven Harbor.

An important consideration for the users of the Greenway and its neighbors is the availability of parking at selected access points along the trail. Many of the users of the Farmington Canal Greenway do not live within walking distance of the trail and therefore a need exists for sufficient parking particularly in the northern section of Hamden. Parking that overflows from existing parking lots onto adjacent streets can lead to safety issues and represents an intrusion into adjacent residential neighborhoods.

## **South Central Regional Council of Governments (SCRCOG) - Transportation Initiatives**

The SCRCOG is responsible for regional transportation planning activities and for the programming of area transportation projects that will receive federal transportation monies. A review of SCRCOG's Regional Plan of Development, Transportation Plan for the Year 2020, and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) reveals several transportation recommendations that affect Hamden during the next ten years. SCRCOG's Transportation Plan for the Year 2020 calls for significant improvements to Route 10 (Whitney Avenue) including widening and/or intersection improvements to Whitney Avenue between Washington Avenue and the Cheshire town line.

SCRCOG's Regional Plan of Development calls for infill development along State Street, Whitney Avenue and Dixwell Avenue to reinforce the Region's central transportation corridors. The Plan also recommends the continued development of the Farmington Canal Greenway in Hamden to the New Haven city line. The SCRCOG TIP has programmed \$750,000 for right-of-way acquisition work in federal fiscal year 2003 for this project. The SCRCOG TIP has also programmed \$1,308,000 for the improvement of the Shepard Avenue approach to Whitney Avenue, with construction scheduled for FY-2003; \$1,100,000 is programmed to replace the Waite Street bridge over Lake Whitney; \$2,521,000 is programmed for the improvement of the Whitney Avenue intersection with Mount Carmel Avenue, with construction scheduled for FY-2005; and \$289,000 is programmed for the improvement of the intersection of Route 10 (Whitney Avenue) and the Route 40 (Mount Carmel Connector) Expressway. During the next 10 years, many of Hamden's proposed transportation projects will be evaluated by the SCRCOG for TIP funding eligibility and prioritization.



## C. TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The following identifies a comprehensive program of roadway improvements recommended to mitigate traffic congestion, improve traffic circulation, improve vehicular and pedestrian safety, calm traffic flows in commercial districts and residential neighborhoods and encourage multi-modal travel.

### **GOAL #1 Improvements to the Route 10 Corridor, Hamden's primary north-south arterial spine.**

#### **OBJECTIVES:**

- Brooksvale Avenue: Consider improvements to the intersection of Brooksvale Avenue with Whitney Avenue that address the location of the telephone pole within the intersection.
- Shepard Avenue: The Shepard Avenue approach to Whitney Avenue is programmed for improvements to address road alignment issues and to provide a deceleration lane for Route 10 southbound traffic approaching Shepard Avenue.
- Tuttle Avenue: Consider installing a traffic signal at Tuttle Avenue to address poor northbound sightlines from Tuttle and to begin the "platooning" of southbound traffic on Route 10.
- West Woods Road and Mt. Carmel Avenue: Implement proposed improvements to this intersection that provide dedicated left turn lanes from Whitney Avenue to Mt. Carmel Avenue and West Woods Road; two dedicated left turn lanes from Mt. Carmel Avenue to Whitney Avenue; and a dedicated right turn lane from Whitney Avenue to Mt. Carmel Avenue that includes a pedestrian island.
- Sherman Avenue: Provide a dedicated northbound left turn lane into Sherman Avenue from Whitney Avenue. This will facilitate traffic flows to Quinnipiac University athletic facilities proposed to be developed off of Sherman Avenue.
- Ives Street and Dickerman Street: Implement a proposal to develop dedicated left turn lanes on Whitney Avenue into Ives Street and Dickerman Street and an improvement of the northbound intersection turning radius from Whitney Avenue to Ives Street.
- Route 40 Expressway: Consider the elimination of the two lane northbound off ramp and direct all Route 40 westbound traffic straight to a signalized intersection with Whitney Avenue. At this intersection, provide two right turn lanes and one left turn lane from Route 40 onto Whitney Avenue.

- Whitney Avenue/Dixwell Avenue and Whitney Avenue/School Street Intersection: These two closely spaced intersections are the major traffic bottleneck in Hamden. Improve the flow of traffic through this intersection.
- The Town continue its efforts with ConnDOT to negotiate a design solution that will add capacity to The Whitney Avenue -Dixwell Avenue intersection in a manner that enhances the Town Center area.
- Hamden Town Center: Pursue streetscape and pedestrian improvements to facilitate and enhance the interconnection of public facilities, the proposed town green, the Farmington Canal Greenway, retail and office uses and adjacent residential neighborhoods. Improvements should incorporate public transportation resources in an attractive and efficient manner.
- Access to the Miller Memorial Library and Senior Center: Provide a new traffic signal on Dixwell Avenue to provide for safe vehicular and pedestrian access to the Miller Memorial Library and Senior Center complex. This signal should be located at the easterly driveway of the complex and align with the eastbound leg of Old Dixwell Avenue, directing all vehicular and pedestrian traffic to these facilities through a single, signalized driveway and pedestrian crossing.
- Railroad Overpass Over Dixwell Avenue: This former railroad overpass should be removed and replaced with a pedestrian bridge serving the Farmington Canal Greenway, with horizontal clearance over Dixwell Avenue sufficient to permit a four lane cross section and sidewalks, with room for future roadway expansion.
- Benham Street: Ensure that adequate intersection capacity continues to be available to satisfy the northbound turning movements from Benham Street to Dixwell Avenue during the morning rush hour. Consider the possibility of realigning Benham Street to match-up with the future access created to serve the retail reuse on the east side of Dixwell Avenue, providing two left turn lanes from Benham Street onto Dixwell Avenue.
- Mather Street: Examine the intersection of Mather Street and Dixwell Avenue to ensure the provision of appropriate turning lanes and signalization.
- Haig Street: Haig Street will provide access to the proposed Bio-Science Campus, if it is developed. This business park has approvals for 1,000,000 square feet of office and laboratory space. Access to this proposed facility from Dixwell Avenue will need to be improved to accommodate the additional traffic demands. Consideration should be given to installing a bi-directional left turn center lane on Dixwell Avenue, along with the removal of on-street parking in the vicinity of this intersection.

- Putnam Avenue: The intersection with Dixwell Avenue should be examined for possible improvements and traffic calming measures should be explored for the residential portions of Putnam Avenue.

**GOAL #2 Improvements to Morse and Goodrich Streets.**

**OBJECTIVE:**

- Morse Street and Goodrich Street are a pair of one way couplets that connect Dixwell Avenue with Prospect Street. Consideration should be given to restoring two way traffic on these streets as part of overall neighborhood planning for this area.

**GOAL #3 Improvements to Lower Whitney Avenue (State Route 707).**

**OBJECTIVE:**

- Whitney Avenue, south of the intersection with Dixwell Avenue, functions as a major arterial road, as a collector road and as a street providing local access to a variety of retail businesses and residential neighborhoods. It is recommended that a new center lane on lower Whitney Avenue be considered to facilitate left turns from Whitney Avenue into Putnam Avenue and Lake Street.
- Examine the circulation patterns of Lake Road from Whitney Avenue to Davis Street. Consider reopening the Lake Road access from Davis Street, but only as far as the parking lot serving the commercial uses on Whitney Avenue. The purpose of this would be to redirect vehicular access to the existing apartment complex away from Whitney Avenue/Lake Road intersection to the Davis Street/Lake Road intersection.

**GOAL #4 Improvements to Eastern Dixwell Avenue (State Route 717).**

**OBJECTIVE:**

- Dixwell Avenue, east of Whitney Avenue, has experienced a significant increase in traffic volume during the past ten years. This section of Dixwell Avenue has a four lane cross section until it reaches the Wilbur Cross Parkway overpass, which is two lanes wide. This overpass was not reconstructed as a part of the most recent improvements to the Parkway. Consider rebuilding this overpass to permit the continuation of a four lane cross section on Dixwell Avenue to the North Haven town line.

#### **GOAL #5 Improvements to Ridge Rd.-State St. (Route 5).**

##### **OBJECTIVES:**

- All southbound thru traffic on Ridge Road should exit directly onto State Street (Route 5). However, the current operation of the traffic signals in this area encourages some Ridge Road traffic to continue south on Park Road to State Street. Consideration should be given to creating two independent signal systems for the two traffic lights on lower Ridge Road to better facilitate the southbound flow of traffic on Ridge Road to State Street.

#### **GOAL #6 Improvements to Skiff Street.**

##### **OBJECTIVE:**

- Skiff Street is Hamden's most heavily traveled east-west street. Consideration should be given to rebuilding the Skiff Street bridges over the Mill River and Wilbur Cross Parkway to facilitate four lanes of thru traffic between Dixwell and Whitney Avenues. The Town is beginning the design for a replacement of the Mill River bridge which will also provide an opportunity to eliminate a flooding hazard on the Mill River and the reconstruction of the bridge over the Wilbur Cross Parkway would also provide an opportunity to eliminate the at-grade crossing of the Farmington Canal Greenway Trail across Skiff Street.
- The Town should request ConnDOT's consideration of a change in the status of the State's functional classification, from its current designation of local street, to either collector street or arterial street status to improve potential funding opportunities.

#### **GOAL #7 Improvements to Middle School Access Road.**

##### **OBJECTIVE:**

- Previous POCD's have included a proposal to extend Worth Avenue westward to connect with Dixwell Avenue in the vicinity of Evergreen Avenue. This connection was proposed to provide an alternative north-south route that would function as a by-pass of the congested intersection of Dixwell and Whitney Avenues. A component of that concept is a proposal to connect Worth Avenue to an access road serving Hamden's proposed new Middle School. This access road is not recommended as a connector to Dixwell Avenue.
- As a policy of this updated Plan of Conservation and Development, the Worth Avenue access to the new middle school shall be designated as a limited access connector for buses and emergency vehicles only.

**GOAL #8 Improvements to North-South Access/ Connectivity West of Shepard Avenue.**

**OBJECTIVE:**

- Previous Hamden POCD's have discussed north-south access issues for areas of western Hamden. Recommendations have included the interconnection of the several Paradise Avenue road segments and the interconnection of the Denslow Hill Road segments, as well as the continuation of Alda Drive to Four Rod Road. The need for improved north-south access west of Shepard Avenue should be further considered, with the involvement of the affected neighborhoods. This future analysis should include an examination of potential solutions to improved north-south connectivity, including a review of past proposals, which should either be addressed with implementation plans or dismissed as unworkable.

**GOAL #9 Improvements to Gaylord Mountain Road.**

**OBJECTIVE:**

- Gaylord Mountain Road is a narrow country lane. Within Hamden, Gaylord Mountain Road functions as a local street and a collector road. Any improvements made to this road should contribute to preserving the rural and low density suburban character of this area of Hamden. It may be useful to explore traffic calming measures to retain the rural characteristics of this country road, as traffic volumes increase.

**GOAL #10 Improvements to Farmington Canal Greenway.**

**OBJECTIVE:**

- Municipal efforts should be continued to complete the greenway trail to New Haven and enable eventual pedestrian and bicycle connectivity to Downtown New Haven and the New Haven waterfront.

**GOAL #11 Traffic Calming Improvements.**

**OBJECTIVES:**

- Consider the implementation of traffic calming techniques to reduce the adverse impact of vehicular traffic on residential neighborhoods when traffic volume and speed warrant. It is recommended that Hamden develop an ongoing neighborhood traffic calming program that assures communication, the development of consensus and the rational allocation of available resources.
- Where appropriate, consider the creation of center-landscaped medians along Hamden's minor arterial and collector roadways. Medians provide aesthetic benefits and shelter for pedestrians as well as a traffic calming

affect. All designs should be compatible with existing traffic signal networks in place.

**GOAL #12 Access Management Improvements and Curb Cut Controls**

**OBJECTIVE:**

- Ongoing access management planning and implementation are important tools for promoting traffic safety and maintaining the “carrying capacity” of Hamden’s arterial streets. Techniques such as combining driveways and/or restricting turning movements should be evaluated as opportunities arise. In addition, access management should be supported by land use recommendations contained in the Dixwell-Whitney Component of the POCD.

**GOAL #13 Multi-Modal Transportation Connectivity Improvements.**

**OBJECTIVES:**

- Continued infill development along Dixwell Avenue, Whitney Avenue and State Street could lead to a greater utilization of public transportation. Pedestrian shelters and amenities should be incorporated into all new designs and maintained to ensure optimum efficiency and attractiveness to the transit user.
- The Town is encouraged to support regional efforts to implement commuter rail passenger service between New Haven and Hartford. Consideration should be given to the eventual location of a train station within the State Street/Route 5 corridor in Hamden or North Haven to provide an alternative commuter transportation resource for the many people employed within this business area.

**GOAL #14: Improvements for Quinnipiac University Rock Top Campus.**

**OBJECTIVE:** Develop a circulation plan for the street network in and adjacent to the Quinnipiac University Rocky Top Campus. Such a plan should focus on protecting the surrounding residential neighborhoods from traffic impacts associated with campus activity and ensure that the traffic circulation is kept within the property controlled by Quinnipiac University. In addition, any future consideration of a West Woods Road access to the Rocky Top campus should only be permitted as an extension of Kimberly Road.

## **XIII. GENERALIZED LAND USE**

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

The Generalized Land Use Plan illustrates the proposed pattern of conservation and development for the Town. It recommends the most appropriate location and relationship of major land uses, including proposals for residential development; commercial development; business districts; industrial development; community facilities such as open space areas, civic uses and institutional uses; and special design districts, conservation areas and neighborhood districts. The Generalized Land Use Plan is both a narrative and graphic presentation of the Town's vision for the future. The "*Generalized Land Use Plan*" map, which follows this page, provides a broad-based illustration of desired development patterns. It is based largely upon existing land use and development patterns, environmental and natural features, physical features, current zoning, planning analysis and the desires and vision of citizens and community stakeholders as expressed at public workshops and meetings held throughout the plan development process.

Due to the generalized nature of the Generalized Land Use Plan there may be individual parcels within an area with a land use different from the Plan's land use designation. As described above, the purpose of the Generalized Land Use Plan is to illustrate broad proposed patterns and relationships of uses.

### **B. HAMDEN'S GENERALIZED LAND USE PLAN**

As a community approaching build-out, the majority of Hamden's land not designated as open space or containing environmentally sensitive areas has already been developed. However, development of the remaining vacant land, infill development at selected nodes along Hamden's corridors and the redevelopment of brownfield sites in the future can significantly impact the Town. In order to support and protect the quality of life envisioned as part of the Town's future a balance between development, the conservation of open space and natural resources, and the preservation of the Town's historical and cultural resources is necessary. Protection of environmentally sensitive areas and the conservation of open space have been a major focus in the development of this plan update.

At the same time, it is recognized that investment and development is necessary to address tax base issues and the economic well-being of the Town and its residents. A balance between conservation, preservation and development is a primary focus for future land use issues in the Town.

The achievement of a balance between conservation, preservation and development will be achieved by adhering to broad policies as well as specific goals and objectives. These policies, goals and objectives must guide the Town's development and revitalization over the next ten years and beyond.

## **1. MAJOR PLAN GOALS**

The overarching goals of this Plan of Conservation and Development are the preservation of the Town's sound housing stock and stable neighborhoods; the regulation of in-fill development in keeping with the character and scale of surrounding neighborhoods and development; the preservation and enhancement of the Town's open space and recreation areas; the creation of linkages between open space, community facilities and residential neighborhoods; the rejuvenation of the Town Center and commercial corridors; the promotion of economic development to attract and retain businesses; the promotion of future development efforts which provide new housing, recreation, business and employment opportunities; and the support of quality of life improvements.

The development of an updated Plan of Conservation and Development and its accompanying Generalized Land Use Plan serves to guide the Town's future development as an advisory or policy setting document. Key to successful future development is the creation of zoning and subdivision regulations, design guidelines and implementation techniques which explicitly outline and enforce the vision for the Town as set forth in the Plan's vision statement. As the Town moves forward in achieving this vision, implementation techniques such as mixed-use developments should be encouraged where appropriate. This concept has been incorporated into the Land Use Plan's Design Districts, which defines "mixed-use" as the following:

A single building containing more than one type of land use, typically a mix of residential and commercial use, or a single development on a parcel containing more than one building and use, where the different types of land uses are in close proximity, planned as a unified complementary whole, and functionally integrated into the use of shared vehicular and pedestrian access and parking areas.

The Generalized Land Use Plan contains a variety of land use categories which address location, density and current conditions. These categories and their general locations are described in more detail in the following sections. It should be noted that there will be individual parcels that have a land use different than the category on the map. This is unavoidable in a highly built-out town with small parcels. The intent of the Generalized Land Use Plan is to present desirable land use patterns to guide future change. Existing land uses are not affected by the map.



## **2. RESIDENTIAL LAND USE CATEGORIES**

### **Low Density Residential**

Areas having a single family residential density of .5-1 unit per acre. These areas are generally located within the Town's northern and western sections adjacent to Cheshire, Bethany and Woodbridge, and have been developing primarily since 1980. The majority of this land area is currently zoned R-1 and R-2. The majority of the Town's remaining developable residential land is located within this land use category. As appropriate, where such land is developed on or adjacent to open space areas or natural resource areas, conservation design principles which incorporate open space and natural resource preservation as part of development should be followed.

### **Medium Density Residential**

Areas having a single family residential density of 2-4 units per acre. These areas generally follow the central corridor of the Town east and west of Shepard Avenue which developed primarily in the 1960's and 70's. Most of this land is currently zoned R-3. Little vacant, developable land is available for future development within this land use category. In-fill development should be sensitive to neighborhood character and patterns, and provide open space or community facilities linkages.

### **Medium-High Density Residential**

Areas having a residential density of 5-7 units per acre. These land use areas generally recognize existing residential development patterns. This land use category can be found generally south of the Wilbur Cross Parkway and adjacent to the Evergreen Avenue corridor. This area was developed from the 1920's through the 1970's. Much of this land is currently zoned R-5. Very little land is available for new development within this land use category.

### **High Density Residential**

Areas having a residential density of 10-20 units per acre. This category recognizes the density of existing apartment development within the Mix Avenue and Hamden Hills areas of town. New residential development at this density currently requires a Special Permit under zoning and is a likely component of in-fill initiatives at selected nodes.

## **3. NON-RESIDENTIAL LAND USE CATEGORIES**

### **Corridor Design District Areas**

This land use category encompasses the corridors of the town along Dixwell, Whitney and State Street. The purpose of this land use category is to promote the development of a mix of uses ranging from housing to commercial, office, and service uses which will bring vitality to the

Town's corridor areas. The provision of linkages, both physical in terms of pedestrian, transit and vehicular linkages and functional in terms of shared usage and uses which complement future development should be encouraged in these areas.

Each area design district is to be structured to reflect the unique character of its built and natural environment. Regulations need to be crafted for each area that protect adjoining residential areas while enhancing the character and vitality of each district. Design districts are recommended for the following districts:

- Upper Whitney Conservation District
- Sleeping Giant District
- Mount Carmel Commercial District
- Whitney Avenue Commercial District
- Town Center District
- Regional District
- Dixwell District
- Highwood Village District
- Skiff/Whitney District
- Spring Glen Village District
- Whitneyville Village District
- State Street Village District

Several of these design districts are intended to revitalize and enhance existing neighborhoods. Refer to the "*Corridor Design District Areas*" map on the next page for the location of the districts.

#### **Upper Whitney Conservation District**

This area of the Town bisects the most undeveloped area with a substantial amount of protected open space and watershed land. The policy for this area should be to prohibit non-residential development with a focus on continued natural resource protection as the northern gateway into Hamden.

#### **Sleeping Giant District**

This area has experienced significant development pressure as well as traffic volume increases primarily due to Quinnipiac University growth and the through traffic accessing the Route 40 Connector. This has resulted in continued in-fill strip development, residential conversions to other uses and residential in-fill. This type of development has further exacerbated the traffic conditions by increasing curb cuts with dangerous left turns. The policy for this area should be to encourage cluster development to reduce or at least discourage strip development. A prime location for such cluster development is the area surrounding the intersection of Whitney Avenue and Mount Carmel Avenue. This intersection is proposed to be re-aligned and improved. The area behind the Days Inn should be developed as a mixed-use residential/retail/service area to serve the Quinnipiac community and others in the surrounding area. The Farmington Canal Trail should be integrated into this design.

### **Mount Carmel District**

This area has been most impacted by the conversion of residential properties to office and service uses with minor retail. There has also been proposals for in-fill residential development. Overall, the quality of these conversions has been good, including signage. The policy for this area should be to continue to require a high standard of design, limit additional curb cuts when possible and reduce density of in-fill residential development to be compatible with adjacent residential neighborhoods.

### **Town Center District**

See Section X.

### **Regional District**

This area includes what has been known as the Magic Mile. The policy for this area should be one of stringent site plan review for in-fill uses to assure design quality. Where possible, parking areas should be reduced in size and located to the rear of buildings. The northern portion of the area contains three significant vacant buildings: CAMCO; 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue Warehouse and Fluid Controls. These parcels are also transition areas between the Town Center including Meadowbrook Park to the north and the natural resource/open space areas of the Mill River Corridor to the east. These sites are logical mixed-use development areas to accommodate quality retail, service and residential uses within high design level developments. The Farmington Canal Trail should also be an integral part of this design.

### **Dixwell District**

The future development of this area will have the greatest impact on the Town due to the amount of vacant and/or underutilized land in the area. This includes the former Pathmark site, the former Plasticrete site and the substantial open space within the Lake Whitney Water Authority land and the Olin Powder Farm. In addition, many small businesses line Dixwell Avenue in this area providing employment as well as goods and services for Hamden residents. The policy for this area should be development of the two major sites to physically and economically improve the area including attracting more customers to the existing small businesses. The Lake Whitney and Olin Powder Farm properties should be protected as a natural resource as well as integrated into the development of the major parcels. Unlike the past, these areas should not serve as the “back yard” of development in the Dixwell Corridor but should provide two “front yards”. The Farmington Canal Trail can serve as a linkage in this design and land use policy.

### **Highwood Village District**

This area is one of the oldest sections of Hamden from the Bank Section to the Town line. There is a rich heritage that continues in the area today

through businesses small and large as well as adjacent residential areas. This was always a “walk to” neighborhood. The policy for the future should be to re-capture this village environment. The Johnson Building site provides the opportunity for a village scale development. With the remediation of the Middle School site, the potential exists for cultural and recreational use of a portion of the school with potential expansion of the Hamden Industrial Park to make the Johnson parcel a connecting piece with Dixwell Avenue.

#### **Skiff/Whitney District**

This area has experienced dramatic changes over the last 10 years. ACES has grown substantially including occupancy of the former Nationwide Insurance office. United Illuminating has been replaced by the expansion of the Hamden Hall playing fields. As this plan is being written, a new Spring Glen School is under construction. Food oriented establishments including Krauzers, IHOP, Sorrento’s and Dante’s form a cluster at the northwest corner of Skiff and Whitney. Lastly, a somewhat ignored but ecologically important Mill River flows through the area. The future policy for this area should be support for the emerging educational and open space clusters. Protection and enhancement of the Mill River should be part of this policy. Any additional high traffic generating uses should be discouraged in this area.

#### **Spring Glen District**

The Spring Glen business district has traditionally been the location of retail and service establishments serving the adjacent residential neighborhood. The religious institutions within the district and immediately to the north have further strengthened this village environment. Recently, the retail spaces on the west side of Whitney Avenue have been experiencing a high rate of turnover with a gradual shift to antique stores and personal services. The small shopping center occupied by Walgreens and Fleet Bank has experienced turnovers and vacancies. This parcel is the dominant property in Spring Glen with a large unattractive paved parking area and a newer developed grass portion in the northeast corner. The policy for the Spring Glen District should be to encourage redesign of this property to both improve its appearance and add to the economic vitality of the area. A well designed mixed residential commercial development would best achieve this objective.

#### **Whitneyville Village District**

Like Spring Glen, this area has served as the village center for the Whitneyville neighborhood. The mix of religious institutions, retail and service establishments has remained somewhat stable. Whitneyville Market is the last neighborhood scale market in Hamden. There are two uses which are not neighborhood based which generate activity – The Whitneyville Branch of the Post Office and the Hamden Board of

Education Central Office. Whitneyville has experienced some high density residential development over the past 25 years including the conversion of the Whitney Theatre to mixed residential/retail use, residential development on the former Brock Hall Dairy site and further to the north near Servoss Street, there has been residential development as well as conversion of the former Larsen College site to an assisted living complex.

The future policy for this area should be to protect adjacent residential development from encroachment by higher density housing and other uses. The area currently occupied by the Post Office, Board of Education offices and library should be studied for possible long term residential use. This could support neighborhood businesses to keep their services available to the neighborhood. The design should include open space open to the public. Any future design should address traffic movements including the Putnam/Whitney intersection.

#### **State Street Village District**

The Town has taken aggressive actions in this area by remediation of two brownfield sites – Detroit Steel and the new home of Porcelen SECRAIL. These actions have improved not only the economic environment but also the residential environment. However, the influences of the Department of Motor Vehicles as well as the future location of the DOT Transit Garage to the north are significant in this area. The policy for this area must be continued attention given to reinvestment and a mitigation of any potential negative impacts created by the DMV and DOT Transit Garage uses. The vision for this area is to combine the elements of the neighborhoods diverse land use pattern, which include residential, commercial and industrial uses into a cohesive neighborhood scale development pattern that is attractive and pedestrian friendly.

#### **General Industrial District**

This area encompasses the State Street and Sherman Avenue areas and reflects their current usage. These areas are currently zoned M-1 which is the Town's only industrial zoning classification. This designation reflects the current manufacturing usage of the land and serves to guide future usage of these areas as appropriate.

#### **Leeder Hill Design District**

This designation includes the Leeder Hill area which has been developed for a mix of light manufacturing, fabrication, distribution, residential and educational uses. This area is adjacent to the Olin Powder Farm which is proposed as a major open space area in Town.

### **Community Facility**

This classification includes town facilities such as schools, senior centers and other municipal facilities; state and federal lands, and major educational institutions.

### **Town Green District**

This classification encompasses Meadowbrook and anticipates the development of a public educational facility on the upland area, creation of a town center park, and fuller utilization for both active and passive recreation areas. The Town Green District Ordinance permanently protects the Town Center Park as open space.

### **Existing Open Space**

The Open Space areas represent the existing network of open space and recreation areas in the Town. Existing parks and open space include publicly and privately owned active and passive recreation and open space areas. Active recreational uses such as parks, playgrounds, golf courses and ball fields and passive areas including greenways, Town owned floodplains and flood control properties, and open space areas are designated as Open Space Areas on the Generalized Land Use Plan.

### **Desirable Open Space/Other Community Use**

This designation includes areas that would contribute to the Town's open space network and resources. These areas include the recommended preservation of existing agricultural uses that provide a link to the Town's agricultural heritage, environmentally sensitive areas, areas with significant natural resources and parcels that have the capacity to provide linkages to or between existing open space and recreation areas or community facilities.

### **Watercourse Focus Areas**

Within these areas, development along waterways should be regulated to ensure the protection of groundwater and surface water resources in addition to and in conjunction with protection provided through the Inland Wetland Regulations. As opportunities arise, efforts should be undertaken to provide open space corridors and/or linkages to existing open space areas. Designation of a property within these Watercourse Focus Areas does not indicate an intent to acquire or to provide public access on private property as part of a greenway. A variety of approaches to natural resource protection and open space enhancement should be used to meet overall conservation goals. It should be further noted that the underlying land use designation determines the use of the property. Inclusion in a Watercourse Focus Area provides guidance to municipal boards and agencies in the review of proposals for properties within these areas in order to achieve the natural resource protection goals of the Plan of Conservation and Development.

### **Aquifer Protection Areas**

This designation identifies critical water supply areas requiring protection from pollution by managing land use. The DEP is in the process of drafting regulations that would limit the types of land uses that could be sited in a protection area that coincides with a well recharge area of an aquifer. The Town of Hamden has taken a proactive approach and has adopted zoning regulations limiting the type of development allowed over the Mill River aquifer. This designation mirrors the Town's zoning designation.

### **C. LAND USE POLICIES**

The 1990 Plan contained the following general land use policies which remain appropriate:

- Land Uses should be consistent with the unique characteristics of the land, ie., topography, soils, wetlands, aquifers, etc.
- Land Uses should be compatible with the primary goal of protection of the integrity of residential neighborhoods.
- Land Uses should minimize traffic congestion. Whenever possible the traffic flow level of service (LOS) should maintain LOS C standard.
- Land Uses should not create situations whereby environmental quality standards for air and water quality and noise pollution, or storm water runoff are degraded.
- Land Uses along the Whitney Avenue/Mill River corridor which are high traffic generators should not be allowed. These include supermarkets, fast food restaurants, convenience markets and service stations.
- Land Uses should promote the attainment of Hamden's Vision Statement.
- Land Uses should be compatible with the sewer avoidance policy of the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection.
- Land Uses should be compatible with the protection of natural resources including coastal resources and historical resources.
- Land Uses should be compatible with the goal of beautifying Hamden and maintaining its natural beauty.
- Development proposals exceeding 100,000 square feet of commercial, industrial or retail use, should be subject to intensive analysis in terms of their economic, social, physical and environmental impact on the health, welfare and safety of the community.





## XIV. ACTION AGENDA

In order to implement the various recommendations contained in this Plan of Conservation and Development, the following Action Agenda is proposed. The Action Agenda identifies goals, objectives, recommendations and actions; the lead agencies proposed for implementation; and the priority for implementation during the timeframe of this Plan.

The lead agency is the agency, which by the nature of its mission and authority, is the logical party to spearhead the implementation of a particular proposal. Many proposals will of course involve multiple agencies. The nature of activity required of a lead agency will vary depending on the type of recommendation. Some activities involve budget commitments and capital expenses and some require advocacy and promotion and others call for administrative action.

Priorities are classified as short term (1-3 years), mid-term (4-6 years) and long-term (7-10 years). Many of the short-term items may already be scheduled into the Town's Capital Improvement Program or may be activities and policies that are in place and need to be continued. Some short-term recommendations may have evolved as part of the planning process and need to be inserted into the Capital Improvement Program.

Mid-term and Long-term priorities are activities which are considered important, but placed "down the road" in recognition of the fact that limited resources are available both in terms of time and money to implement the plan. Mid-term and long-term capital projects may also require some intermediate planning and design activity before project implementation can take place.

The implementation schedule is presented in the form of a "To Do" list. This form will make it easy for the Planning and Zoning Commission to review and report on implementation progress as a component of their annual report. It also allows for convenient updating of the list as items are completed, priorities change or new items are proposed to be added.

## Action Agenda

|   | Lead Agency | PRIORITY |                           |                         |                           |
|---|-------------|----------|---------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
|   |             | On-Going | Short Term<br>(1-3 Years) | Mid Term<br>(4-6 Years) | Long Term<br>(7-10 Years) |
| <b>GOAL #1: Promote the conservation and preservation of natural resources as part of future development activity.</b>  |             |          |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>Actions:</b>   |             |          |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Protect water quality through the protection of the Town's watercourses wetlands and land within aquifer protection areas.   | IWC/NROSC   | ★        |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Review existing development regulations and standards to determine where requirements for impervious surfaces can be reduced or eliminated.  | P&Z         |          | ★                         |                         |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Protect flood prone areas in the Town through the use of flood plain protection measures and regulation of new development.  | P&Z         | ★        |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Consider establishing a 50 foot or greater non-disturbance buffer from all inland wetlands and water courses in Wetland Regulations  | IWC         |          | ★                         |                         |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Conserve steep slopes, talus, ledge and rock outcroppings and unique habitat areas.  | P&Z         |          | ★                         |                         |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Conduct a vernal pool inventory and consider protection of these unique natural resource features.   | NROSC       |          | ★                         |                         |                           |
| <b>GOAL #2: Encourage the use, maintenance and rehabilitation of Hamden's extensive open space / recreation system – individual parks, river and brook greenways, individual and group recreation opportunities as a key quality of life asset.</b> |             |          |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>Actions:</b>   |             |          |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Continue the efficient utilization of existing parks and recreation facilities, including extended hours and creative scheduling.  | Parks       | ★        |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Strengthen the existing cooperative relationship between Parks and Recreation and the School Board to maximize the use of all municipal recreational resources to the benefit of Hamden's residents.                                 | Parks/BOE   | ★        |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Encourage greenways linking neighborhoods and employment areas to existing parks and open space areas as a focus for recreational activity.  | P&Z         | ★        |                           |                         |                           |

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|  | Lead Agency   | PRIORITY |                        |                      |                        |
|--|---------------|----------|------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|
|  |               | On-Going | Short Term (1-3 Years) | Mid Term (4-6 Years) | Long Term (7-10 Years) |
| <b>Action:</b> Parcels for open space/recreation should be acquired in neighborhoods presently lacking such facilities.  | Mayor/Council |          |                        | ★                    |                        |
| <b>Action:</b> Maximize appropriate accessibility to open space resources.   | Parks         |          |                        | ★                    |                        |
| <b>Action:</b> The town should establish a fund for open space acquisition.  | Mayor/Council | ★        |                        |                      |                        |
| <b>Action:</b> Market Hamden's comprehensive open space system and recreation programs as a major quality of life amenity.   | EDC           | ★        |                        |                      |                        |
| <b>Action:</b> Undertake the design and engineering for the Town Center Park.  | Mayor/Council |          | ★                      |                      |                        |
| <b>Action:</b> Implement Town's 5-year Facility Improvement Plan to improve Town owned park facilities. This Plan should be reviewed on an annual basis and revised if necessary to reflect the changing needs of the community. | Council       | ★        |                        |                      |                        |
| <b>Action:</b> Partner with the Hamden Land Trust in open space acquisition.   | NROSC         | ★        |                        |                      |                        |
| <b>Action:</b> The Town should identify appropriate measures it can take to preserve the Blue Blazed Hiking Trail System as it traverses northern Hamden.  | NROSC         | ★        |                        |                      |                        |
| <b><i>GOAL #3: Provide a safe and efficient sanitary sewer system capable of handling anticipated development in areas presently served by the sanitary sewer systems.</i></b>   |               |          |                        |                      |                        |
| <b>Actions:</b>  |               |          |                        |                      |                        |
| <b>Action:</b> Plan for the renovation/replacement of pumping stations and add new ones as necessary.  | DPW           |          |                        | ★                    |                        |
| <b>Action:</b> Utilize the results of the town wide sewer study in considering changes to the zoning regulations.  | P&Z           |          |                        | ★                    |                        |
| <b>Action:</b> Continue to zone land in non-sewered areas in accordance with the sewer avoidance guidelines of the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).   | P&Z           | ★        |                        |                      |                        |

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|  | Lead Agency | PRIORITY |                           |                         |                           |
|--|-------------|----------|---------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
|  |             | On-Going | Short Term<br>(1-3 Years) | Mid Term<br>(4-6 Years) | Long Term<br>(7-10 Years) |
| <b>GOAL #4: Ensure the protection of both surface water quality and underground aquifer water quality.</b>   |             |          |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>Actions:</b>  |             |          |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Review and revise surface and groundwater protection standards during the general review of the zoning regulations.                                       | P&Z         |          | ★                         |                         |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Establish open space easement requirements along streambelts and watercourses in the zoning regulations.  | P&Z         |          | ★                         |                         |                           |
| <b>GOAL #5: Provide a safe and efficient storm water system capable of handling current and anticipated development.</b>   |             |          |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>Actions:</b>  |             |          |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Review, update and implement a town wide storm drainage plan.   | DPW         |          | ★                         |                         |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Implement a regular storm drain cleaning plan.  | DPW         | ★        |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Review and revise storm water drainage provisions in the zoning regulations to require “best management practice” methods be utilized in site design.     | P&Z         |          | ★                         |                         |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Continue Sewer Avoidance Policy of the Town.  | WPCA/P&Z    | ★        |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Review existing development regulations and standards to determine where requirements for impervious surfaces can be reduced or eliminated.               | P&Z         |          | ★                         |                         |                           |
| <b>GOAL #6: Ensure the efficient use of resources in carrying out the work of the Town, reducing waste, recycling wherever possible.</b>                                 |             |          |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>Actions:</b>  |             |          |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Develop a plan to reduce unnecessary municipal waste generation.  | DPW         | ★        |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Convene a Council study committee on the future operation of the transfer station and the management of the municipal waste stream and recycling program. | Council     |          | ★                         |                         |                           |

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|  | Lead Agency   | PRIORITY |                           |                         |                           |
|--|---------------|----------|---------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
|  |               | On-Going | Short Term<br>(1-3 Years) | Mid Term<br>(4-6 Years) | Long Term<br>(7-10 Years) |
| <b>GOAL #7: Provide safe, convenient and efficient facilities for town services.</b>   |               |          |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>Actions:</b>  |               |          |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Develop a new fire station to move the fire equipment presently located in the Town Hall building to a modern, centrally located site.  | HFD           |          | ★                         |                         |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Plan a modernization of the 1924 Town Hall which restores its historical integrity.   | Mayor/Council |          | ★                         |                         |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Begin acquiring property along the south side of School Street, west of Whitney Avenue for access to the adjoining municipal site.  | Mayor/Council |          | ★                         |                         |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Continue the branch library system and examine opportunities to better geographically serve the Town according to the population distribution.  | Library       | ★        |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Adopt the LEEDS (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) building design principles whenever feasible and possible for future Town building projects to ensure developing high-performance, sustainable buildings.   | Mayor/Council | ★        |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>GOAL #8: Provide a safe, attractive and well-maintained system of public roadways.</b>  |               |          |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>Actions:</b>  |               |          |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Undertake a program of installation and maintenance of street trees and landscaping treatment particularly along arterial and collector streets. Where public right-of-width inhibits tree planting, enlist abutting property owner permission to plant street trees. | DPW           | ★        |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Major rehabilitation work on streets with structural base problems should be undertaken simultaneously with a program of annually sealing streets in good condition to postpone future costly repairs.  | DPW           | ★        |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Establish street lines where they do not exist.   | DPW           | ★        |                           |                         |                           |

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|   | Lead Agency | PRIORITY |                           |                         |                           |
|---|-------------|----------|---------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
|   |             | On-Going | Short Term<br>(1-3 Years) | Mid Term<br>(4-6 Years) | Long Term<br>(7-10 Years) |
| <b>Action:</b> Study the 12.7 miles of paper streets to determine status and possible inclusion in the roadway system.  | DPW         |          | ★                         |                         |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Develop a circulation plan for the street network in and adjacent to the Quinnipiac University Rocky Top Campus. Such a plan should focus on protecting the surrounding residential neighborhoods from traffic impacts associated with campus activity and ensure that the traffic circulation is kept within the property controlled by Quinnipiac University. In addition, any future consideration of a West Woods Road access to the Rocky Top campus should only be permitted as an extension of Kimberly Road. | P&Z         |          | ★                         |                         |                           |
| <b>GOAL #9: Support and foster programs that maintain the housing stock and enhance and preserve the fabric of existing neighborhoods.</b>  |             |          |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>Actions:</b>   |             |          |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Promote a varied housing stock to reflect the needs and desires of all Hamden residents.   | P&Z         | ★        |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Promote conservation and rehabilitation of existing housing wherever possible.   | EDC/P&Z     | ★        |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Support programs that assist homeowners in rehabilitating and maintaining their homes.   | CD          | ★        |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Promote historic preservation and housing stock variety by preserving and adapting historic buildings for residential uses. Protect Town landmarks.  | P&Z/PD      | ★        |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Reference the Town inventory of historic structures as part of future development and redevelopment planning in order to identify the potential for preservation or need for mitigating actions.   | P&Z/PD      | ★        |                           |                         |                           |

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|   | Lead Agency           | PRIORITY |                        |                      |                        |
|---|-----------------------|----------|------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|
|   |                       | On-Going | Short Term (1-3 Years) | Mid Term (4-6 Years) | Long Term (7-10 Years) |
| <b>GOAL #10: Ensure that all residential areas and developments are attractive and well-maintained places to live for Hamden's residents.</b>   |                       |          |                        |                      |                        |
| <b>Actions:</b>   |                       |          |                        |                      |                        |
| Action: Review and update the Town's blight regulations to ensure that the latest techniques are being used and that the existing regulations are effectively reducing blight in the Town.  | PD/Permits & Building |          | ★                      |                      |                        |
| <b>Action:</b> Review the Town's zoning regulations to determine their effectiveness in mitigating land use conflicts between residential and commercial/industrial uses, particularly to setbacks and buffer areas. Update as necessary. | P&Z                   |          | ★                      |                      |                        |
| <b>Action:</b> Encourage the development of neighborhood center streetscape improvement plans and support the equitable distribution of resources to all neighborhoods in the Town.   | P&Z/Council           | ★        |                        |                      |                        |
| <b>GOAL #11: Increase the percentage of owner-occupied housing within the Town.</b>   |                       |          |                        |                      |                        |
| <b>Actions:</b>   |                       |          |                        |                      |                        |
| <b>Action:</b> Develop homeownership programs to increase the percentage of owner occupancy.  | CD                    |          |                        | ★                    |                        |
| <b>Action:</b> Support homeownership programs that assist renters in becoming first time homebuyers.  | Council               | ★        |                        |                      |                        |
| <b>GOAL #12: Promote an array of housing typologies and infill developments as a means of diversifying the housing stock and meeting the needs of niche housing markets.</b>  |                       |          |                        |                      |                        |
| <b>Actions:</b>   |                       |          |                        |                      |                        |
| <b>Action:</b> Develop upscale/luxury single-family housing and townhouse/rental units in an effort to attract new residents and businesses.  | EDC                   |          |                        |                      | ★                      |
| <b>Action:</b> Explore alternative housing options for seniors to encourage their continued residence in the Town.  | P&Z/EDC               |          |                        | ★                    |                        |

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|   | Lead Agency   | PRIORITY |                        |                      |                        |
|---|---------------|----------|------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|
|   |               | On-Going | Short Term (1-3 Years) | Mid Term (4-6 Years) | Long Term (7-10 Years) |
| <b>Action:</b> Develop guidelines that promote infill residential development in a manner consistent with the scale and character of surrounding neighborhoods.   | P&Z           |          | ★                      |                      |                        |
| <b>GOAL #13: Turn vacant industrial land into tax-generating properties. Remediate brownfield sites and circulate them back into the private market for reinvestment.</b>   |               |          |                        |                      |                        |
| <b>Actions:</b>   |               |          |                        |                      |                        |
| <b>Action:</b> Continue a comprehensive brownfields identification and redevelopment program.   | EDC           | ★        |                        |                      |                        |
| <b>Action:</b> Increase funding for brownfield remediation projects at the Town level.  | Mayor/Council | ★        |                        |                      |                        |
| <b>Action:</b> Develop a reuse plan for the former Tire Pond Property located off State Street, which incorporates all available information from the State DEP settlement and recognizes the potential recreational use of the area.   | EDC           |          |                        | ★                    |                        |
| <b>GOAL #14: Coordinate design and access management for infill development along commercial corridors. Ensure that quality development occurs in these areas.</b>  |               |          |                        |                      |                        |
| <b>Actions:</b>   |               |          |                        |                      |                        |
| <b>Action:</b> Insist upon high-quality site plans for new development within existing commercial corridors, including buildings that relate well to the street, substantial landscaping, and physical design that compliments surrounding neighborhoods and development forms. | P&Z/EDC       | ★        |                        |                      |                        |
| <b>Action:</b> Create and implement an effective access management scheme that limits the number and size of site driveways.  | P&Z/PD        |          | ★                      |                      |                        |
| <b>Action:</b> Reevaluate and update urban design regulations within the zoning ordinance, such as sign regulations, parking regulations and dimensional requirements, and add standards that fosters high-quality physical design.   | P&Z           |          | ★                      |                      |                        |

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|   | Lead Agency | PRIORITY |                           |                         |                           |
|---|-------------|----------|---------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
|   |             | On-Going | Short Term<br>(1-3 Years) | Mid Term<br>(4-6 Years) | Long Term<br>(7-10 Years) |
| <b>GOAL #15: Develop significant vacant or underutilized properties into substantial economic assets for the Town.</b>  |             |          |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>Actions:</b>   |             |          |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Create and implement comprehensive redevelopment plans for key parcels, particularly the Middle School site, in consultation with area residents and other stakeholders.   | EDC         | ★        |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>GOAL #16: Control development along Whitney Avenue from Dixwell Avenue to Mount Carmel Avenue in a manner that respects surrounding residential neighborhoods.</b>   |             |          |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>Actions:</b>   |             |          |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Create a mixed use “village center” in the area of the Whitney Avenue/Mount Carmel Avenue intersection that combines housing with retail and office space to serve the Quinnipiac University community.                                      | P&Z/EDC     |          |                           |                         | ★                         |
| <b>Action:</b> Discourage the development of automobile-oriented establishments, such as fast-food restaurants and auto repair facilities, and encourage mixed use developments that better relate to Whitney Avenue and the surrounding residential areas. | P&Z/EDC     | ★        |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Create a pedestrian-friendly environment along Whitney Avenue by situating buildings and uses close to the front property lines and undertake a comprehensive streetscape design program.  | PD          |          |                           | ★                       |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Establish a forum wherein the Town and Quinnipiac University can discuss and frame broad plans for growth over the next decade outside of the permitting process.  | P&Z         |          | ★                         |                         |                           |
| <b>GOAL #17: Support efforts to retain exiting businesses, especially small businesses, in Hamden. Assist local businesses in their efforts to grow and expand.</b>   |             |          |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>Actions:</b>   |             |          |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Continue a revolving small business loan program to fund small business purchases of fixed assets, renovations, and property improvements for up to \$50,000.  | EDC         | ★        |                           |                         |                           |

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|   | Lead Agency   | PRIORITY |                           |                         |                           |
|---|---------------|----------|---------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
|   |               | On-Going | Short Term<br>(1-3 Years) | Mid Term<br>(4-6 Years) | Long Term<br>(7-10 Years) |
| <b>Action:</b> Continue a comprehensive economic development incentive and technical assistance program to attract new businesses to Hamden and stimulate the expansion of existing businesses.   | EDC           | ★        |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Expand the acquisition development fund that provides funding for miscellaneous soft costs associated with site assemblage, land acquisition and redevelopment.  | Mayor/Council |          | ★                         |                         |                           |
| <b>GOAL #18: Improve the technical capacity of the Town to provide assistance to local businesses. Continue to examine development patterns in Hamden to identify areas of potential redevelopment for viability as commercial districts.</b> |               |          |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>Actions:</b>   |               |          |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Implement a professional marketing and communications plan for the Town.   | EDC           |          |                           | ★                       |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Create a town database of available properties and physical resources.   | EDC           |          | ★                         |                         |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Improve the Hamden Economic Development web site by adding interactive and streaming data features, accessible databases, and information that is more frequently updated.   | EDC           |          | ★                         |                         |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Conduct commercial and industrial needs assessment studies for each neighborhood in Hamden to determine where economic development would be best situated.   | EDC           |          |                           | ★                       |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Continue to evaluate economic plans for the Town every three years for continued applicability.  | EDC           | ★        |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>GOAL #19: Present an attractive and inviting physical environment for businesses and their employees. Highlight Hamden as a physically appealing place to do business.</b>   |               |          |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>Actions:</b>   |               |          |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Install entryway and exit signage at the Hamden Business Park and identification signage at key points throughout Hamden.  | EDC           |          |                           | ★                       |                           |

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|---|---------------|----------|------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|
|   |               | On-Going | Short Term (1-3 Years) | Mid Term (4-6 Years) | Long Term (7-10 Years) |
| <b>Action:</b> Continue the streetscape improvement program in the Highwood and State Street NRZ Business Districts with new sidewalks and curbs and improved landscaping and street amenities. | EDC           |          | ★                      |                      |                        |
| <b>Action:</b> Plant trees which are disease resistant and hardy to street injury between sidewalks and the street and in other public pathways.  | DPW           | ★        |                        |                      |                        |
| <b>Action:</b> Incorporate into the zoning regulations a list of trees which have been identified by the Clean and Green Commission as street-hardy. Update the list of trees every five years. | P&Z           |          | ★                      |                      |                        |
| <b>Action:</b> Address a plan to maintain traffic islands already approved by the P&Z and limit growth of these islands until all current islands are adequately landscaped and maintained.     | P&Z/DPW       | ★        |                        |                      |                        |
| <b>Action:</b> Establish a tree farm/nursery at Brooksvale Park to begin growing trees for streetscape use.   | DPW           |          |                        |                      | ★                      |
| <b>Action:</b> Establish a tree farm which would raise specimen trees for lumber, which could support the maintenance of Town landscaping.  | DPW           |          |                        |                      | ★                      |
| <b>Action:</b> Regulate “news” or flyer boxes on sidewalks to encourage maintenance of the boxes.   | Council       |          |                        | ★                    |                        |
| <b>GOAL #20: Implement the Hamden Town Center Strategy. Promote public/private partnerships, capital investment, regulatory changes and organizational initiatives.</b>                         |               |          |                        |                      |                        |
| <b>Actions:</b>   |               |          |                        |                      |                        |
| <b>Action:</b> Demolish the current police complex and construct a new facility outside of the Town Center  | Mayor/Council |          | ★                      |                      |                        |

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|  | Lead Agency   | PRIORITY |                           |                         |                           |
|--|---------------|----------|---------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
|  |               | On-Going | Short Term<br>(1-3 Years) | Mid Term<br>(4-6 Years) | Long Term<br>(7-10 Years) |
| <b>Action:</b> Consider constructing a new fire station and central fire services complex on the western portion of the Town Hall site.                | Mayor/Council |          | ★                         |                         |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Renovate Memorial Town Hall as a multi-purpose facility including legislative chamber.  | Mayor/Council |          |                           | ★                       |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Construct off-street parking to serve the fire complex, Memorial Town Hall, and general public parking needs.                           | Mayor/Council |          |                           | ★                       |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Widen Dixwell Avenue between Washington Avenue and the Town parking lot to provide an additional travel lane.                           | CTDOT/DPW     |          | ★                         |                         |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Relocate bus stops to alleviate traffic congestion.   | CTDOT         |          | ★                         |                         |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Undertake streetscape improvements between the fire complex/Memorial Town Hall and the Government Center.                               | DPW           |          |                           | ★                       |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Install a traffic signal at the intersection of the Miller Library driveway, Dixwell Avenue and Old Dixwell Avenue.                     | CTDOT         |          |                           | ★                       |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Consolidate parking areas between Dixwell Avenue and School Street through cooperative agreements between the Town and property owners. | EDC           |          |                           | ★                       |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Promote investment in building renovation and adaptive re-use.  | EDC           | ★        |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Promote significant private investment in the area west of Whitney Avenue and south of Dixwell Avenue.                                  | EDC           |          |                           |                         | ★                         |
| <b>Action:</b> Revise current zoning regulations to be supportive of the strategy for Hamden Town Center.  | P&Z           |          | ★                         |                         |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Explore organizational approaches to assist in the implementation of the strategy for Hamden Town Center.                               | EDC           |          |                           | ★                       |                           |

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|  | Lead Agency | PRIORITY |                           |                         |                           |
|--|-------------|----------|---------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
|  |             | On-Going | Short Term<br>(1-3 Years) | Mid Term<br>(4-6 Years) | Long Term<br>(7-10 Years) |
| <b>GOAL #21: Revitalize the lower Dixwell Avenue portion of the corridor through design controls, mixed-use infill development and encouragement of retail growth and expansion.</b>   |             |          |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>Actions:</b>  |             |          |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Modify zoning regulations to strengthen design requirements to address building bulk, layout, design issues, pedestrian linkages, traffic movement, buffer and landscaping requirements, and to integrate new development with the surrounding residential areas. | P&Z         |          | ★                         |                         |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Plan the reuse of the area between Treadwell Street and the Wilbur Cross Parkway as one area.   | PD/P&Z      |          |                           | ★                       |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Consider the creation of a new district to replace the B-2 zone with a zone specific to the characteristics of the area.  | P&Z         |          | ★                         |                         |                           |
| <b>GOAL #22: Strengthen the Magic Mile area of Dixwell Avenue through high-quality infill development, effective traffic management and the coordinated development of vacant or underutilized properties.</b>   |             |          |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>Actions:</b>  |             |          |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Review zoning regulations to focus on integration of infill development, reduction of paved parking areas and increased landscaping and visual and pedestrian connections with the Farmington Canal Greenway.   | P&Z         |          | ★                         |                         |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> The area at the intersection of Skiff Street and Dixwell Avenue should be considered for a new zone which provides for a mix of uses appropriate for the location and site conditions.  | P&Z         |          | ★                         |                         |                           |

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|  | Lead Agency | PRIORITY |                           |                         |                           |
|--|-------------|----------|---------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
|  |             | On-Going | Short Term<br>(1-3 Years) | Mid Term<br>(4-6 Years) | Long Term<br>(7-10 Years) |
| <b>GOAL #23: Control development along Whitney Avenue north of the Town Center to the connector through access management, protection of adjacent residential neighborhoods and strict design guidelines.</b>  |             |          |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>Actions:</b>  |             |          |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Review zoning regulations for adequacy to promote access management and protect adjacent residential areas. Review permitted residential density and buffer requirements adjacent to single family areas.   | P&Z         |          | ★                         |                         |                           |
| <b>GOAL #24: Protect the suburban-rural residential neighborhoods north of the connector by reducing special permit residential densities and consolidating multi-family residential and retail/office uses into a “village center” format.</b>  |             |          |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>Actions:</b>  |             |          |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Review zoning regulations for adequacy to guide access management and infill development. Consider lowering residential densities for special permit multi-family.  | P&Z         |          | ★                         |                         |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Consider designating the West Woods Road/Whitney Avenue area as a special “Village Development District”.   | P&Z         |          | ★                         |                         |                           |
| <b>GOAL #25: From the West Woods Road/Whitney Avenue intersection, to the Cheshire town line, protection of natural resources should be the paramount concern.</b>   |             |          |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>Actions:</b>  |             |          |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Review zoning regulations for the area north of the West Woods Road/Whitney Avenue intersection to ensure future land use focuses on low density development, no extension of non-residential uses and natural resource protection. Protection of the Mill River should be key. | P&Z         |          | ★                         |                         |                           |

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|  | Lead Agency   | PRIORITY |                           |                         |                           |
|--|---------------|----------|---------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
|  |               | On-Going | Short Term<br>(1-3 Years) | Mid Term<br>(4-6 Years) | Long Term<br>(7-10 Years) |
| <b>GOAL #26: Maintain the Spring Glen and Whitneyville neighborhood centers along Whitney Avenue as relatively dense areas which support a variety of uses and housing types, with particular consideration and concern for infill development and residential conversions.</b>  |               |          |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>Actions:</b>  |               |          |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Review zoning regulations for Spring Glen and Whitneyville Centers to ensure uses and densities permitted are consistent with the protection of these areas as neighborhood, village-based retail/service centers.  | P&Z           |          | ★                         |                         |                           |
| <b>GOAL #27: Maintain an efficient transportation system which meets the needs of community residents, while respecting existing patterns of land use development in the Town. Maximize the use of the existing roadway network to support employment centers and improve the aesthetics of its principal streets.</b>                             |               |          |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>Actions:</b>  |               |          |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Evaluate development requests against the capacity of the existing and future thoroughfare systems based on the transportation component of the Plan of Conservation and Development. Provide for updates of this plan as needed  | P&Z           | ★        |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Continue to strengthen intra-regional accessibility through the public transit system.  | SCRCOG        | ★        |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Work with the State Department of Transportation to upgrade the Route 10 corridor.  | CTDOT/TA      |          |                           | ★                       |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Prioritize the roadway improvements contained in the Plan of Conservation and Development and submit to SCRCOG.   | Mayor/Council | ★        |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>GOAL #28: Provide general roadway improvements and implement transportation strategies as development and reinvestment of existing properties occurs. Such improvements should serve to mitigate and calm traffic flow; improve traffic circulation, parking, and vehicular and pedestrian safety and encourage multi-modal transportation.</b> |               |          |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>Actions:</b>  |               |          |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Evaluate traffic calming techniques to reduce the adverse impact of vehicular traffic on residential neighborhoods.   | TA            |          | ★                         |                         |                           |

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|  | Lead Agency | PRIORITY |                           |                         |                           |
|--|-------------|----------|---------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
|  |             | On-Going | Short Term<br>(1-3 Years) | Mid Term<br>(4-6 Years) | Long Term<br>(7-10 Years) |
| <b>Action:</b> Plan for the interconnection of highway, greenway, pedestrian and bus transit resources for improved inter and intra town access.   | TA/PD       | ★        |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Support regional efforts to implement commuter rail passenger service between New Haven and Hartford including the eventual location of a train station within the State Street/Route 5 corridor in Hamden or North Haven.  | Council     | ★        |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>GOAL #29: Update zoning regulations to reflect the policies/goals/objectives outlined in the Plan of Conservation and Development.</b>  |             |          |                           |                         |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Consider zoning regulation revisions that implement the policies/goals/objectives outlined in the Plan of Conservation and Development. In such a review, recognize that a limited amount of developable, non-residentially zoned land remains in the Town and therefore revisions may need to be considered that encourage continued growth of the Towns non-residential tax base while protecting the Towns residential neighborhoods and preserving the community character. | P&Z         |          | ★                         |                         |                           |
| <b>Action:</b> Consider developing architectural standards to be incorporated into the site plan review process that are in character with the surrounding neighborhood development patterns and require consideration of the following “new urbanism” elements of design: building scale & placement relative to the street, architectural form (including fences & porches) & materials, density, parking location, & mixed use requirements.  | P&Z         |          | ★                         |                         |                           |

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## APPENDIX A

### PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT MEMORANDA ON FILE IN THE TOWN PLANNING OFFICE, GOVERNMENT CENTER

| <u>MEMORANDUM</u> | <u>TITLE</u>  | <u>DATE</u> |
|-------------------|---|-------------|
| 1.                | Purpose of the Plan of Conservation and Development | 4/2001      |
| 2.                | Natural Resource Inventory                          | 11/2001     |
| 3.                | Demographic Overview                                | 2/2002      |
| 4.                | Land Use Element                                    | 2/2002      |
| 5.                | Hamden Town Center                                  | 5/2002      |
| 6.                | Housing Element                                     | 10/2002     |
| 7.                | Parks, Recreation & Open Space                      | 10/2002     |
| 8.                | Community Facilities & Infrastructure               | 12/2002     |
| 9.                | Transportation and Circulation                      | 1/2003      |
| 10.               | Dixwell-Whitney Avenue Corridor Study               | 1/2003      |
| 11.               | Economic Development                                | 2/2003      |

