An aerial photograph of Kent, Vermont, during autumn. The scene features a river on the left with a bridge crossing it. The town is nestled in a valley, surrounded by trees with vibrant orange, yellow, and red foliage. In the foreground, a green baseball field with a brown infield is visible. The background shows rolling hills under a clear sky.

KENT

2022-2032 Plan Of Conservation And Development

PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION



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Special thanks to the Housatonic Valley Association (HVA) for creating and maintaining almost all of the GIS data used in this POCD.

WELCOME!



November 2022

To Kent Residents,

This document is the 2022-2032 Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) for Kent, Connecticut.

The document was prepared by a POCD Subcommittee of the Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC). The process included:

- An on-line survey of Kent residents,
- Independent research and investigation by a planning consultant,
- Working meetings of the POCD Subcommittee where planning issues and potential strategies were discussed and refined,
- Preparation of a draft POCD,
- A community workshop meeting to get comments and feedback,
- Additional refinements to the POCD based on community input, and
- Endorsement by the POCD Subcommittee and the Planning and Zoning Commission.

Following a Public Hearing on November 10, the POCD was adopted with an effective date of December 31, 2022.

Thank you for your interest in the future of Kent!

Sincerely,

Planning and Zoning Commission

Terms Explained

The POCD contains two types of strategies. These are located at the end of each topical section of the POCD.

Policies are statements in **black text** suggesting ways that Kent should evaluate proposed activities or initiatives to implement the POCD. Note that policies may never be considered implemented since they are intended to be on-going.

Action steps are specific tasks in **red text** which can be taken to implement the POCD. Action steps can be considered implemented when complete.

Using The POCD

Implementation is the most important part of the planning process and a key focus in this POCD. Several elements of this POCD have been specifically configured to promote implementation:

1. **Action Steps Specifically Called Out** – Action steps (described in the sidebar) highlight the pro-active steps that should be taken to implement the POCD.
2. **Policies Listed** – Policies (described in the sidebar) have been listed and organized to facilitate their use by the Planning and Zoning Commission (and others) to evaluate potential actions in terms of POCD consistency, such as:
 - Zoning amendments (text or map changes).
 - Granting of Special Permits
 - Reviewing municipal improvements (as provided in CGS Section 8-24).
3. **Leaders / Partners Identified** – Each policy and action step in the POCD has a leader (and often one or more partners) identified. These are the entities most responsible for implementation of that policy or action step. Experience has shown that specifically identifying the responsible entity has a dramatic effect on implementation. A legend for acronyms used to identify leaders and partners is on the inside back cover.

The diagram shows a table with 10 rows of POCD items. Red arrows point from the table to three labels: 'Policies Listed' (pointing to row 1), 'Action Steps Called Out' (pointing to row 7), and 'Leaders / Partners Identified' (pointing to the 'Leader/Partner' column).

Item #	Description	Leader/Partner
1.	Continue efforts to increase the amount of protected open space in Kent in order to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Protect important natural resources and habitats, o Protect the health of the environment, o Protect and enhance community character, o Provide active and passive recreation opportunities, and o Enhance the quality of life of residents. 	CC RLT PCC
2.	Recognize the Conservation Commission as the lead Town agency for coordinating open space preservation efforts.	Town
3.	Establish a Land Acquisition Fund to receive fee-in-lieu-of-open space payments (and/or any municipal or other funds).	BOS BDF
4.	Support efforts to extend and link existing and new trails.	CC
5.	Continue to embrace the Appalachian Trail as complementary asset to Kent.	CC Town
6.	Seek to increase the number of access points in order to "un-landlock" the recreational user.	CC RLT
7.	Modify Section 3.8 of the Subdivision Regulations to require permission be made for preserving open space as part of every subdivision, either through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Dedication of land (on-site or elsewhere in Kent), or o Payment of a fee in lieu of open space. 	PCC
8.	Revisit the "open space" definitions in the Subdivision Regulations.	PCC
	Modify the Subdivision Regulations to include public access and trails as part of the open space reservation process.	PCC
10.	Continue to support the open space preservation efforts of the Kent Land Trust and other conservation organizations.	CC Town

Following a Public Hearing on November 10, the POCD was adopted with an effective date of December 31, 2022.

INTRODUCTION



1.1 Overview

This document is the 2022 Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) for Kent, Connecticut. This update of the 2012 POCD was prepared by the Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC) with input from Kent residents and from other local boards and commissions.

Based on this input, this Plan of Conservation and Development promulgates a vision for the future of Kent and strategies that will help attain that vision with regard to:

- Helping maintain and improve the community for future generations (sustainability);
- Protecting things important to the community (resources and assets),
- Guiding uses and activities in ways that will provide things the community wants or needs (places and uses), and
- Providing for things which will enhance the overall health and well-being of the community and the quality of life of its residents (infrastructure).

As part of the overall vision, it is important to state that Kent aspires to be a diverse and equitable community where everyone has opportunities to participate, be recognized and valued, and to continue the pursuit of happiness, regardless of race, gender, age, sexual identity, or other characteristic.

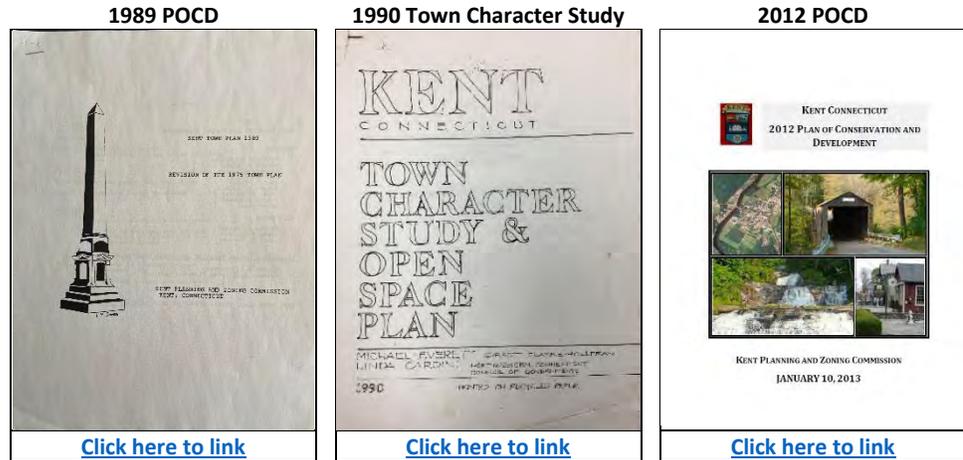
*If you don't
know where
you're going,
you'll wind up
somewhere else.*

**Yogi Berra,
Baseball Legend
Renowned Punster**



Prior Plans

Kent prepared and adopted plans in the past to address community issues and opportunities and this POCD is being prepared for the same reasons.



POCD Preparation Process

The preparation and adoption of a POCD is a responsibility of the Planning and Zoning Commission (as per Section 8-23 of the Connecticut General Statutes).

The POCD was prepared by the Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC) with assistance from a planning consultant. Due to COVID-related concerns, public participation occurred through an on-line survey and through virtual meetings throughout the planning process.

The process involved the following elements:

- Independent research / investigation by a planning consultant
- An on-line survey to help understand community concerns
- Preparation of briefing booklets covering key POCD topics based on the 2012 POCD and independent research / investigation
- Review / discussion of briefing booklets by the PZC to generate consensus on planning strategies for Kent's future
- Preparation of a first draft of a POCD
- Review / discussion of POCD first draft by the PZC
- Community meeting to get feedback on revised POCD draft
- Refinement of POCD by PZC based on community input
- Adoption of updated POCD

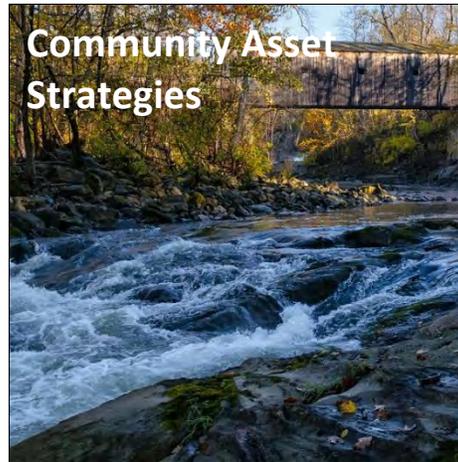
POCD Organization

Following this introduction (which includes a summary of conditions and trends affecting Kent and input from an on-line survey), the chapters of the POCD are organized around four main thematic elements used to present the goals and strategies for the future of Kent. Each element contains one or more related sub-sections addressing specific topics of importance to Kent.

Sections on plan consistency and implementation follow these four strategic elements.



The concept of sustainability is an over-arching theme in this POCD and the above icon will be used to highlight sustainability concepts in different parts of the POCD.



1.2 Conditions & Trends

This section of the POCD provides a general overview of conditions and trends affecting Kent at the time the 2022 POCD was being prepared.

History of Kent

The landform of the area we now know as Kent evolved over millions of years as a result of geologic forces. Native Americans are known to have inhabited this area for the past 10,000 years or so. European discovery and settlement of Connecticut by the English and Dutch began in the early 1600s starting along Long Island Sound and the Connecticut River.

As population grew in these early settlements, people moved further outward in order to have land to farm and to support their families. From the 1680s until the 1730s, the area we now know as Kent was the subject of ownership disputes between Native Americans, the Connecticut Colony, and the proprietors of Hartford and Windsor. After an understanding was reached, the area of Kent was subject to public auction in Windham County in 1738. To perfect their title to the land, a purchaser had to build at least a 324 square foot house (18 feet square), install a fence, and clear at least six acres of land within two years.

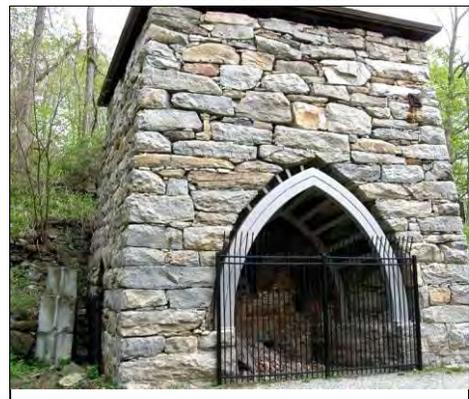
People came, the community was organized, and settlement by European immigrants began. Early settlers were generally subsistence farmers.

A sawmill, a gristmill, and a meetinghouse were established in the Flanders area. Due to the available waterpower, another sawmill and another grist mill were established in the East Kent area since the early community included what we recognize now as Kent and Warren.

With the advent of the iron ore industry in western Connecticut by the 1750s, a number of businesses were established in Kent to extract, refine, and transport raw materials and products to Poughkeepsie, Hartford, and other areas.

An iron furnace was built in Flanders and a dam was also created to supply waterpower. The Kent Furnace seen today was originally built in 1826.

Remnants Of Kent Furnace

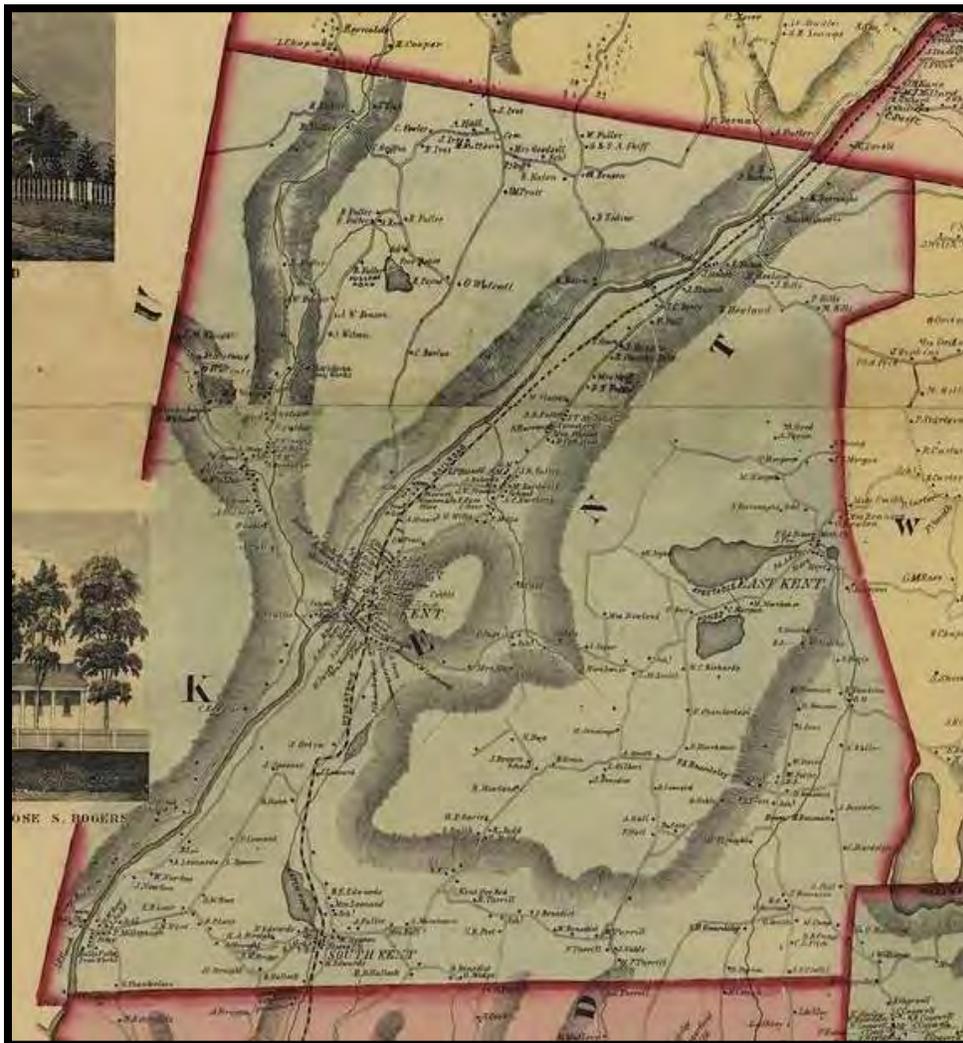


With these activities, roads and bridges became topics of greater interest. Crossing the Housatonic River was a challenge so, around 1760, Jacob and Isaac Bull established a crossing at the narrowest part of the river in the area we now know as Bulls Bridge. In 1776, a requirement was passed to assess all property owners for maintenance of public roads.

Current Day Bulls Bridge



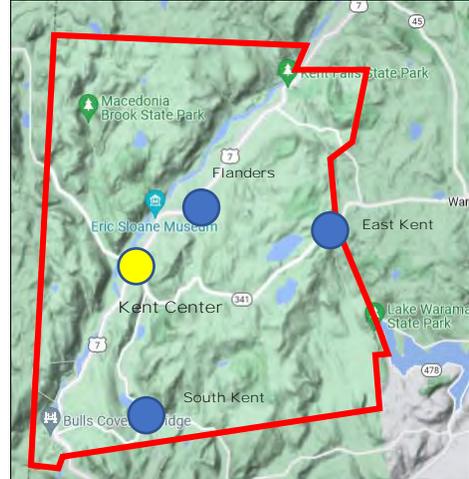
1859 Map



Town Centers

The earliest town centers were in:

- Flanders, where a roadway suitable for horse-drawn wagons and oxen came down from East Kent to the Housatonic River,
- East Kent, where some early mills were located, and
- South Kent near Iron Hill and the Bulls Bridge crossing where mining of iron ore was a major activity.



Over time, however, East Kent became redundant when other mills were established and other sources of power became available. Flanders was usurped when the railroad came through in 1842 and established the train station in the area we now know as Kent Center. South Kent receded in importance as the iron industry moved westward to Pennsylvania and elsewhere in the late 1800s.

With settlement in Kent Center, a water supply system and a sewage disposal system was created. While not compliant with current standards (reportedly, the sewer discharge was directly from a pipe to the river!), it was fairly unique to communities of Kent's size at the time and met the needs of the residents and businesses. A key reason why Kent has its compact and engaging village center today is because of the provision of water and sewer services years ago.

Private schools, now a key part of the overall fabric of the community, were established in more recent times:

- Kent School in 1906,
- South Kent School in 1923, and
- Marvelwood in 1956.

Kent Fire Department



Kent Library

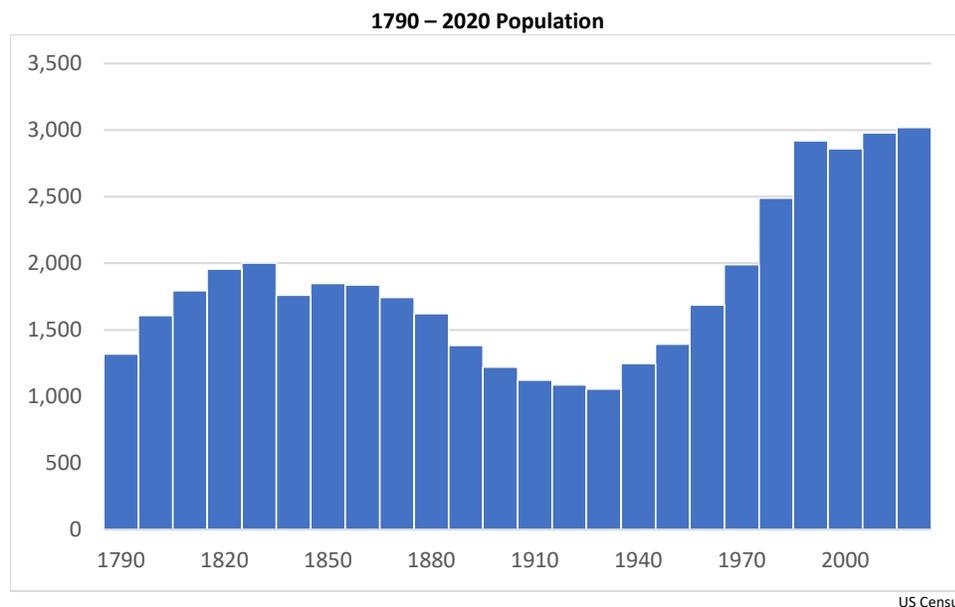


People Of Kent

Preliminary Census results indicate that Kent had 3,019 residents in 2020. This represents a modest increase of 40 residents since 2010.

It is important to note that boarding students at private schools in Kent (Kent School, South Kent School, Marvelwood) do not appear to be included in this total so the number of residents would be higher when school is in session. The 2012 POCD estimated that institutions, including private schools, add up to 1,300 people to the Town's population over the school year, approximately 750 people for seasonal facilities, and 6,000 to 7,000 attendees at 2-3 day events during summer months.

As can be seen from the table and chart, Kent's population has fluctuated over the years but it has been growing fairly steadily since the Census low of about 1,000 people in 1930. The fastest growth occurred between 1970 and 1990.



Kent's Population

1790	1,318
1800	1,607
1810	1,794
1820	1,956
1830	2,001
1840	1,759
1850	1,848
1860	1,835
1870	1,744
1880	1,622
1890	1,383
1900	1,220
1910	1,122
1920	1,086
1930	1,054
1940	1,245
1950	1,392
1960	1,686
1970	1,990
1980	2,487
1990	2,918
2000	2,858
2010	2,979
2020	3,019

US Census data for 1870 to 2020.

Projecting future population for Kent may be a challenge.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic which reached the United States in early 2020, a number of second homes in Kent (units kept for seasonal or occasional use) became the primary residence for their owners. It remains to be seen whether this will become a new baseline population for Kent or whether prior living patterns will resume.

Memorial Day Parade



Gilmore Girls Festival In Kent



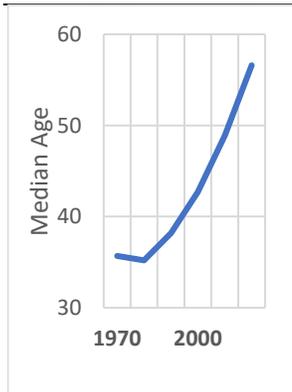
Kent's Median Age

1970	35.7
1980	35.2
1990	38.2
2000	42.7
2010	48.9
2020	56.6

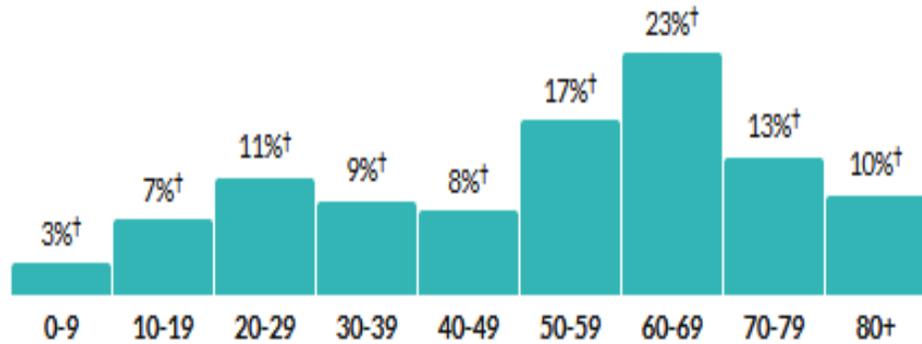
US Census, Planimetrics

The age composition of Kent has trended significantly older in recent years and almost half of the population is over age 60. This may be because baby boomers are living longer and aging in place in Kent, because younger people may struggle to afford housing in Kent, or a combination of factors. In terms of median age, Kent is one of the older towns in Connecticut and second oldest in Litchfield County with a median age of 56.6 (Sharon's median age is 57.8).

Graph Illustrating An Aging Community



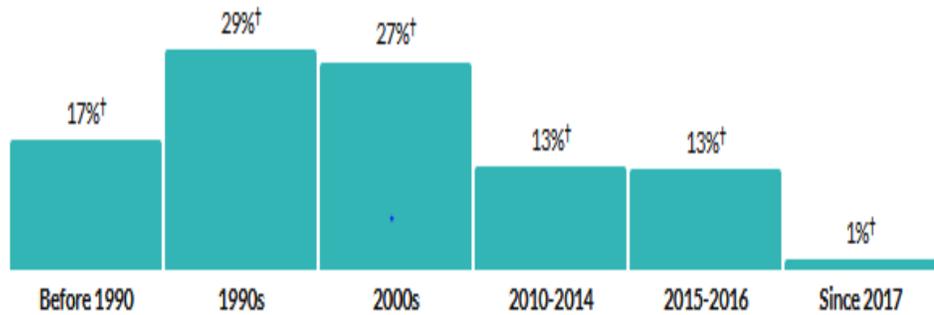
Kent's Population By Age Range (Percentage of Population)



American Community Survey 2020 (5-year average)

Census information suggests there is population turnover in Kent. About one-quarter of Kent residents in 2020 had moved to Kent since 2010.

Year Moved In (Percentage of Population)



American Community Survey 2020 (5-year average)

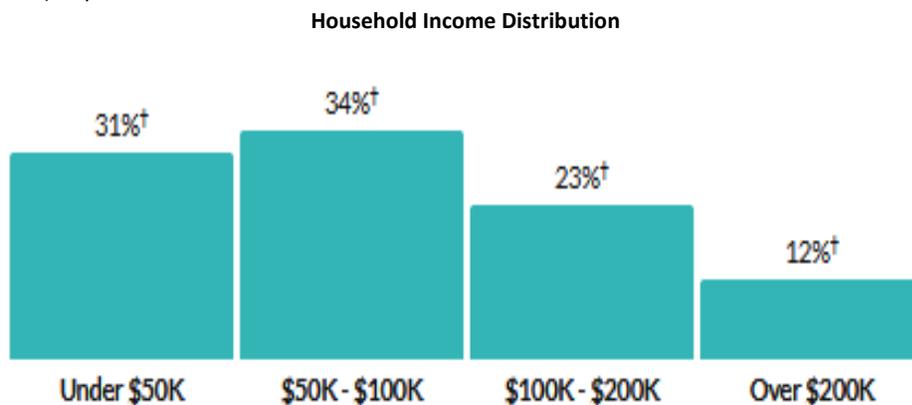
Economy Of Kent

A local economy is important in terms of:

- Providing for jobs and income for people,
- Ensuring a range of goods and services is available, and
- Providing tax revenue to support local services.

The Connecticut Department of Labor reports there were 167 establishments in Kent in 2020 providing employment (and income) to almost 1,100 people.

The American Community Survey estimates the median household income (half the households earn more and half the households earn less) in Kent in 2020 was \$77,344.



American Community Survey 2020 (5-year average)

The value of taxable property in a municipality is important because it supports municipal budgets and services provided within the community. The percent of the real estate tax base that is comprised of businesses is an important consideration to many people since business uses typically provide revenue but do not demand as much in services. This revenue is then available to provide services that primarily benefit residents of the community.

Median Household Income		Self-Employment Rate		Per Capita Grand List	
Washington	\$108,250	Cornwall	37%	Washington	\$477,258
Warren	\$104,375	Sherman	27%	Cornwall	\$406,689
Sherman	\$101,818	Sharon	24%	Warren	\$363,634
New Milford	\$89,969	Warren	24%	Sharon	\$358,034
Sharon	\$81,919	Kent	23%	Kent	\$309,200
Cornwall	\$80,000	Washington	18%	Sherman	\$280,746
Kent	\$78,125	New Milford	11%	New Milford	\$155,047

CERC, 2021

CERC, 2021

CERC, 2021

Jobs In Kent

1963	564
1970	630
1980	1,140
1990	1,150
2000	1,481
2010	1,058
2020	1,094

CT Labor Dept.

Number of Housing Units

1970	852
1980	1,017
1990	1,414
2000	1,463
2010	1,665
2020	1,687

1970 - 2020 Census.

Percent Units Occupied

1970	81%
1980	85%
1990	82%
2000	78%
2010	n/a
2020	76%

Historic - 1900 - 2010 Census.

Average Household Size

1980	2.63
1990	2.42
2000	2.43
2010	n/a
2020	2.35 est.

Historic - 1900 - 2010 Census.

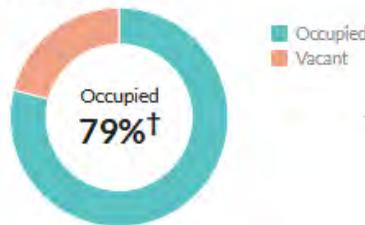
Housing In Kent

According to the preliminary Census results, Kent had about 1,687 housing units in 2020. From 2000 to 2010, Kent added an average of about 11 housing units per year.

There are two key housing trends in Kent. First, the percentage of units in Kent which are occupied has been decreasing. Almost a quarter of all housing units in Kent are kept for seasonal, occasional, or recreational use (second homes). Such homes provide net tax revenue but may not support local businesses or participate as volunteers in local organizations (including fire response). Second, even for the homes which are occupied, these homes have fewer residents in them than in years past.

While the number of housing units in Kent has risen by a factor of 1.98 since 1970 (i.e., almost doubled), the number of residents has only risen by a factor of 1.51 over the same time period.

Occupied vs. Vacant



Ownership of occupied units



American Community Survey 2020 (5-year average)

Housing affordability is an issue throughout Connecticut and communities are recognizing that community vitality, community diversity, and economic development can all be enhanced by having a housing portfolio which includes affordable units. Communities where less than 10 percent of the housing stock meets the State definition of affordable housing are subject to the Affordable Housing Appeals Procedure (see CGS Section 8-30g).

Median Sales Price	
Sherman	\$466,200
Cornwall	\$441,800
Washington	\$425,400
Warren	\$386,100
Sharon	\$374,100
Kent	\$360,700
New Milford	\$301,300

CERC, 2021

Median Rent	
Warren	\$2,138
Sherman	\$2,026
Washington	\$1,525
Kent	\$1,433
New Milford	\$1,256
Cornwall	\$968
Sharon	\$954

CERC, 2021

Percent Affordable Housing	
New Milford	4.54%
Cornwall	3.57%
Kent	3.96%
Washington	2.12%
Sharon	2.03%
Sherman	0.38%
Warren	0.12%

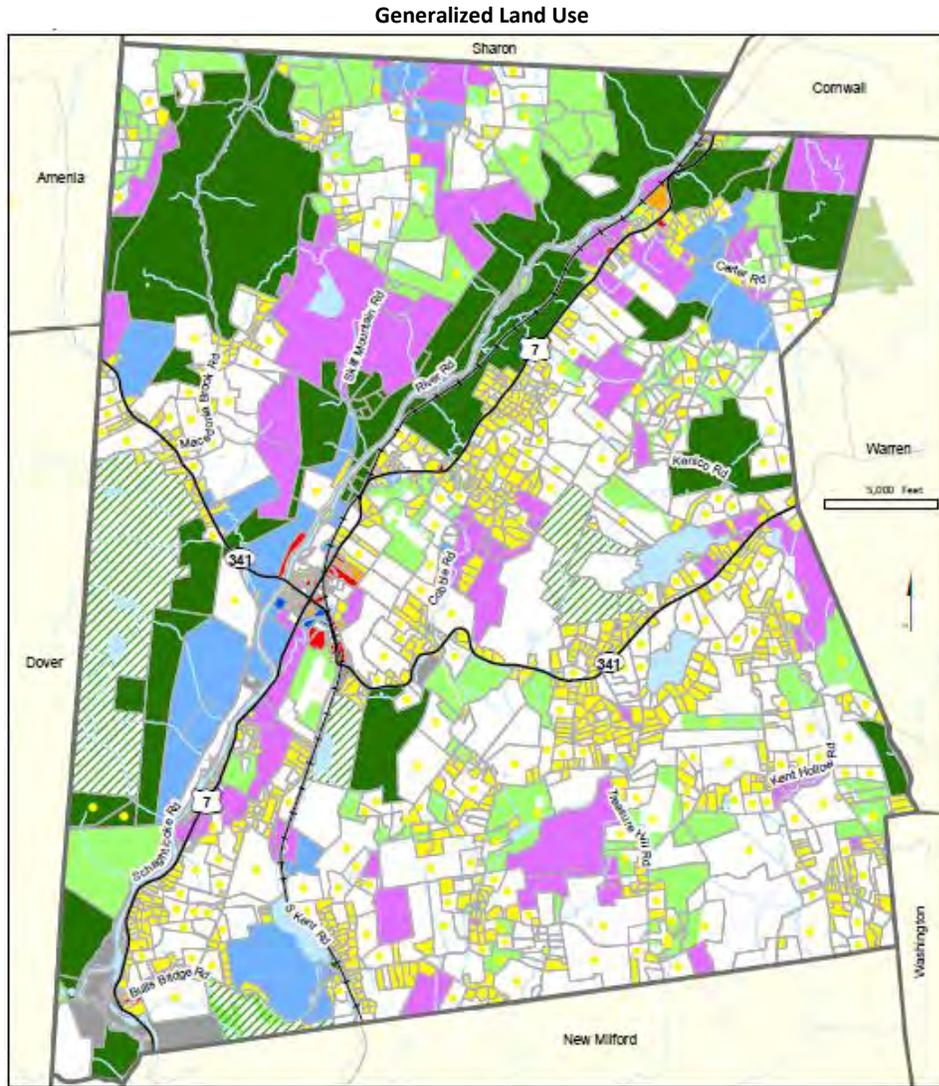
CERC, 2021

Land Use In Kent

According to digital mapping, Kent contains approximately 31,920 acres. The map image below shows the different types of land uses in different locations. The color legend is summarized in the sidebar.

Land Use Coloration

Yellow	Residential
Green / Purple	Open Space / Protected
Red	Business
Blue	Community Facility / Institution
Other	Varies
White	Land not committed to a specific use at this time (may include agriculture or forestry)



Residential	Protected Lands	Other	Vacant
Single-Family Residential	Federal/State/Town	Business	Vacant
2-4 Family/Multi-House	Easement	Club / Camp	
Multi-Family	Land Trust	Utility	
	Schaghticoke Reservation	Community Facility	
		Institutional	

[Click here](#)
to link to a higher resolution version of this map

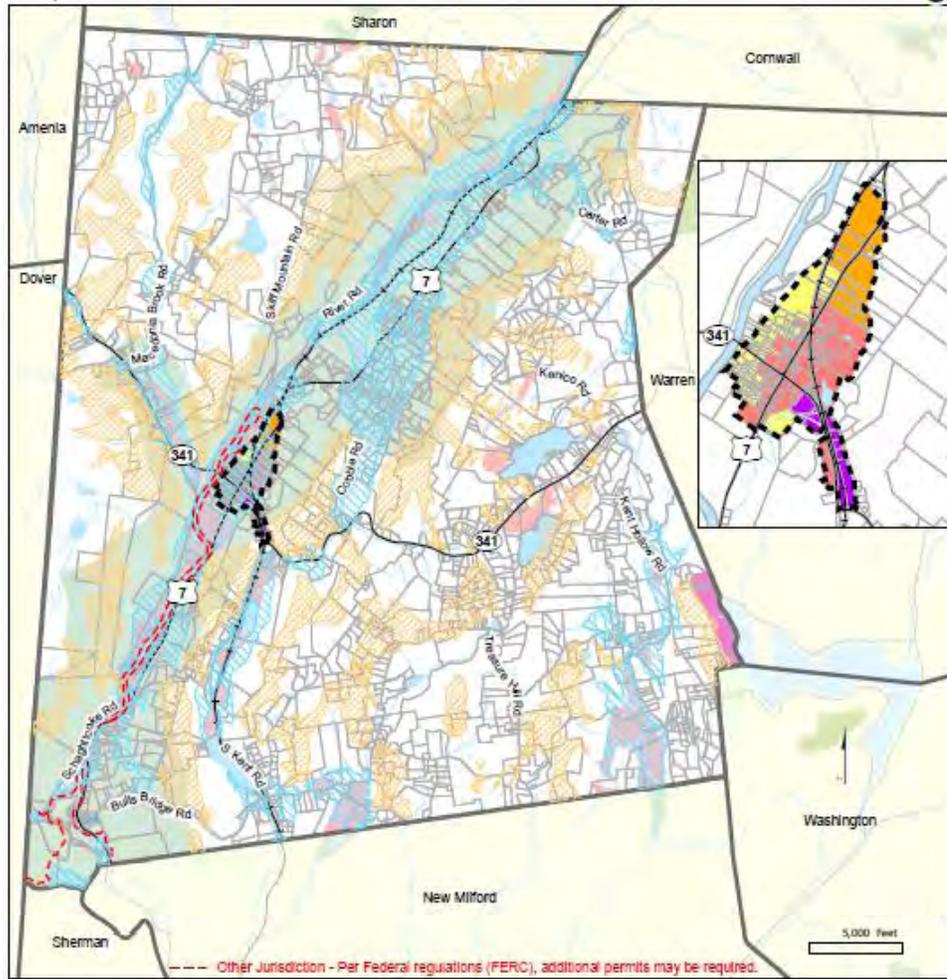
Zoning In Kent

The vast majority of land in Kent (99%) is zoned for residential purposes. Only about 118 acres is zoned for business or industrial purposes.

There are also five zoning districts which may overlay the other districts to protect sensitive resources (Housatonic River, Horizon-line areas, aquifers, floodplains, and Lake Waramaug.)

[Click here](#)
to link to the
official Zoning Map
for Kent

Generalized Zoning



- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <p>Residential</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Village Residential 1 (VR-1) Village Residential 2 (VR-2) Rural Residential 1 (RU-1) Rural Residential 2 - Birch Hill (RU-2) | <p>Business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Village Commercial (VC) Business Hamlet (BH) Industrial (I) | <p>Overlay Districts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kent Village (KVOD) Conservation Development (RU-1) Floodplain (FOD) Housatonic River (HROD) Horizon-Line Conservation (HCOO) Lake Waramaug (LWOD) Aquifer Protection (APOD) |
|--|---|--|

1.3 Community Issues & Concerns

As part of the process of updating the POCD, the Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC) conducted an on-line survey in order to better understand the issues of concern to Kent residents and property owners. Overall, 432 responses were received during a five-week period in the fall of 2021. A [booklet summarizing responses](#) is available at Town Hall and was posted on the Town website.

Quality Of Life - Overall, 87% of participants rated the quality of life in Kent as very good or excellent.

Factors Important In Decision To Live In Kent - 75% of participants indicated community character was very important in their decision to live in Kent. The top five factors included:

- Community character (reputation, appearance, feeling) [1.67 score]
- Housing type, value, etc. [1.20 score]
- Town amenities / services (rec. facilities, etc.) [1.05 score]
- With my parents, spouse, partner, etc. [0.86 score]
- (TIE) Education system / Housing affordability [0.84 score]

Prouds

When asked to list up to four things in Kent they were proud of, the top responses included:

- Feeling of Community
- Character
- Town Center
- Beauty
- Open Space

A summary of responses is on file at Town Hall

Sorrys

When asked to list up to four things in Kent they were sorry about, the top responses included:

- Businesses
- Recreation Services
- Town Center
- Roads / Traffic
- Affordability

A summary of responses is on file at Town Hall

Character



Town Center



Top 5 Goals - Importance

1. Protecting natural resources.
2. Preserving open space.
3. Having adequate utility services.
4. Addressing sustainability / resiliency.
5. Protecting cultural assets (historic resources, events).

Top 5 Goals - Performance

1. Preserving open space.
2. Protecting natural resources.
3. Protecting cultural assets (historic resources, events).
4. Providing quality education.
5. Enhancing community character.

The survey asked participants to indicate:

- How important possible Town goals are to them?
- How well they thought the Town is doing addressing these goals?

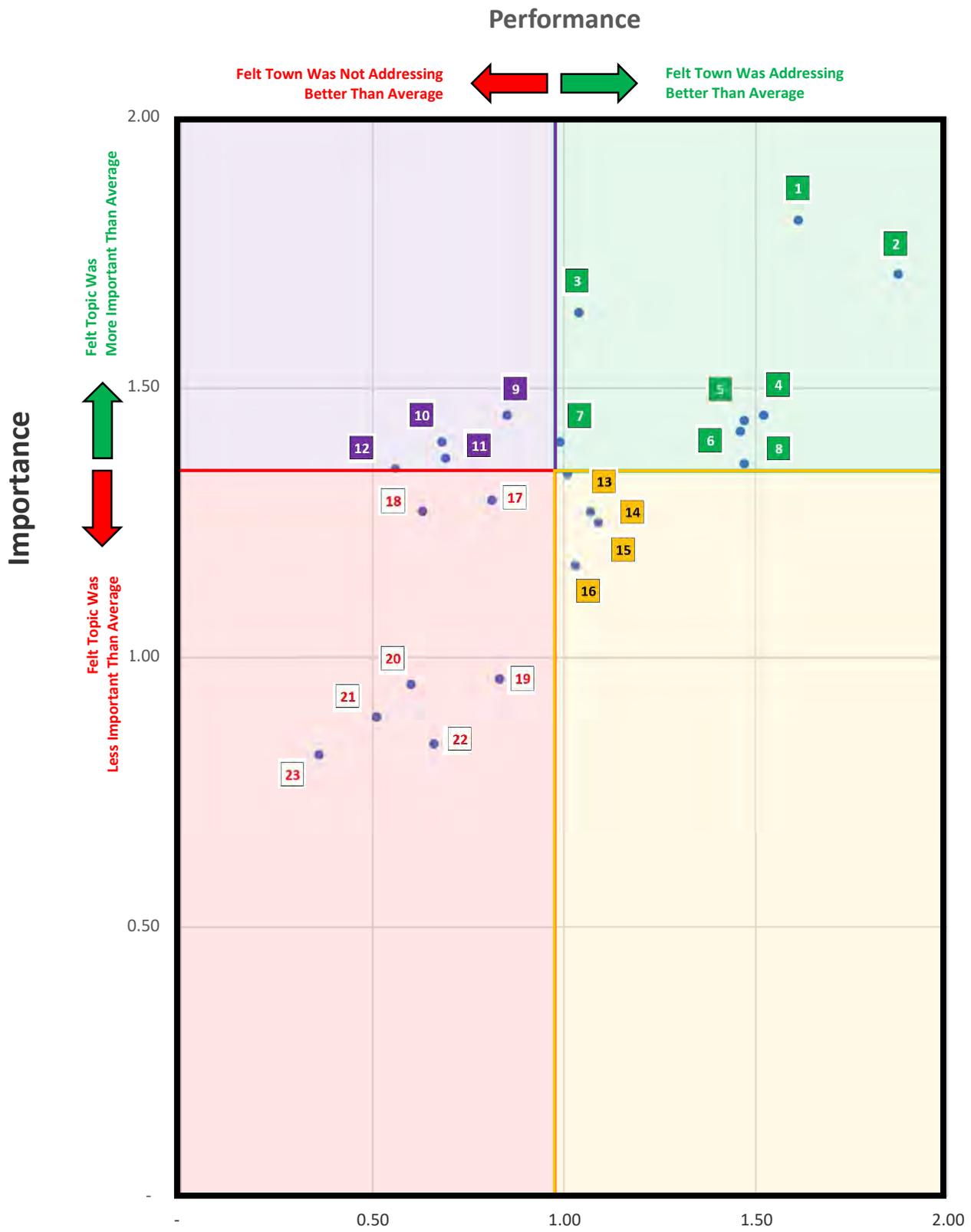
The results are summarized below and cross-tabbed in the graphic on the facing page.

	Higher Importance (> 1.35)	Higher Performance (> 0.99)	Importance	Performance
1.	Protecting Natural Resources		1.81	1.61
2.	Preserving Open Space		1.71	1.87
3.	Having Adequate Utility Services		1.64	1.04
4.	Protecting Cultural Assets (hist. resources, events)		1.45	1.52
5.	Providing Quality Education		1.44	1.47
6.	Maintaining / Enhancing the Town Center		1.42	1.46
7.	Promoting Agriculture		1.40	0.99
8.	Enhancing Community Character		1.36	1.47

	Higher Importance (> 1.35)	Lower Performance (< 0.99)	Importance	Performance
9.	Addressing Sustainability / Resiliency		1.45	0.85
10.	Addressing Climate Change		1.40	0.68
11.	Reducing Our Carbon Footprint		1.37	0.69
12.	Enabling / Improving Broadband Access		1.35	0.56

	Lower Importance (< 1.35)	Higher Performance (> 0.99)	Importance	Performance
13.	Guiding Residential Development		1.34	1.01
14.	Promoting Business/Economic Development		1.27	1.07
15.	Improving Community Services		1.25	1.09
16.	Improving Community Facilities		1.17	1.03

	Lower Importance (< 1.35)	Lower Performance (< 0.99)	Importance	Performance
17.	Improving Wireless Phone Service		1.29	0.81
18.	Promoting Pedestrian / Bicycle Options		1.27	0.63
19.	Expanding Housing Choices		0.96	0.83
20.	Addressing Vehicular Transportation		0.95	0.60
21.	Improving River Access		0.89	0.51
22.	Providing For Vehicle Charging Stations (public)		0.84	0.66
23.	Promoting Transit / Rail Options		0.82	0.36



Greatest Challenge Or Need

When asked what they see as the greatest challenge or need facing Kent in the next 10 to 20 years, the responses included:

1. Character / Development (72)
2. Affordability (33)
3. Age Composition (25)
4. Climate Change (17)
5. Economic Development (16)
6. Internet / Cell (12)
7. Fiscal (11)
8. Services / School(13)
9. Roads / Traffic (9)
10. Balance (8)
11. Town Center (5)
12. Housing (4)
13. Business (3)
14. Diversity (3)
15. Don't Know (2)
16. Other (32)

A summary of responses is on file at Town Hall

If Make One Thing Happen

When asked if they could make one thing happen to make Kent a better place in the future, the top responses included:

1. Facility / Service (51)
2. Town Center (48)
3. Internet / Cell Phone (24)
4. Character (15)
5. Housing (14)
6. Economic Development (12)
7. Transportation (12)
8. Fiscal (9)
9. Development (8)
10. Noise (7)
11. Diversity (4)
12. Don't Know (3)
13. Climate Change (2)
14. Other (49)

A summary of responses is on file at Town Hall

Character



Town Center



CONSERVATION - SUSTAINABILITY

Become a more sustainable and resilient community.



To date, strategic plans for Kent have not directly addressed issues of sustainability or resiliency. The 2022-32 POCD is the first to do so. While the POCD addresses these issues in a discrete chapter, it is intended that they be seen as over-arching concepts of the POCD.

For the POCD, sustainability and resiliency relate to:

1. Favoring approaches that are environmentally responsible, economically viable, and of social benefit
2. Being efficient and economical in how resources are utilized
3. Considering the long-term impacts of current actions
4. Being prepared to respond or adapt to changing conditions

It's not a question of whether we can be sustainable, but whether we choose to be.

Gary Lawrence
Sustainability Practitioner





This section of the POCD outlines strategies to help make Kent a more sustainable community in the future.

Climate Sustainability

In 2021, the Governor signed an executive order intended to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from State activities, fund resiliency projects, and address the impact of climate change on vulnerable populations.

In 2022:

- The Governor's signed an executive order calling for a 45% reduction below 2001 levels for greenhouse gas emissions, and
- Public Act 22-5 set a target for having a carbon-free electricity supply by 2040.

2.1 Enhance Sustainability

Become a more sustainable community.

For the POCD, sustainability is defined as an integrated planning approach designed to meet the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Climate Sustainability / Energy Sustainability / Clean Energy

Climate change has the potential to negatively impact the healthy environment and rural character of Kent – especially as the pace of climate change accelerates. Kent should actively participate in addressing this situation. Progressive towns and cities around the world are finding ways to decarbonize and Kent can, and should, join this effort.

1. Avoid activities that contribute to climate change (greenhouse gas emissions, use of fossil fuels, etc.).
2. To avoid the worst-case scenarios forecast by the scientific community, the Town of Kent should investigate regulations and programs that are carbon neutral or carbon negative:
 - a. Incentivize green power sources like solar, wind, hydro-electricity, and power-storage options,
 - b. Work to electrify as much of the utility infrastructure as possible by supporting a transition to electric appliances, heat pumps, gardening tools, and other non-fossil fuel-driven systems.
 - c. Ensure the growing number of electric cars, trucks, tractors, and other vehicles and equipment have charging stations, hydrogen fueling stations, and other technologies as they become available.
 - d. Encourage modern micro-grid energy which uses renewables as much as possible and work with other towns and energy providers to gently promote the expansion of zero-emission power sources and smart storage.
 - e. Consider how to encourage the creation of more energy-efficient homes and developments that result in smaller energy footprints by whatever means possible, up to and including smaller homes.
3. As other sustainability programs become available, Kent should make sure it is positioned to participate financially and logistically.

4. Manage the use of energy resources:
 - a. Reduce energy use and become more energy efficient.
 - b. Transition to sustainable clean energy.
 - c. Encourage increased use of renewable energy (solar, wind, etc.).
 - d. Promote greener buildings / vehicles through programs such as:
 - The C-PACE program to promote clean energy upgrades
 - The Transportation and Climate Initiative Program
 - e. Provide alternative energy approaches (fuel cell, micro-grids, etc.).
 - f. Provide for electric car charging stations.



Ecological Sustainability

5. Maintain and enhance environmental health (water quality, air quality, habitat diversity, etc.).
6. Minimize impacts on natural resources and manage the use thereof:
 - a. Use low-impact development (LID) strategies to address water quality and water quantity impacts associated with stormwater runoff.
 - b. Promote reduction of water use.
 - c. Reduce water waste / recycle water.
7. Reduce waste (including food waste) / Reduce use of plastic bags / Increase recycling.

Social Sustainability

8. Maintain and sustain a diverse mix of ages, cultures, and characteristics:
 - a. Attract, support, and retain younger people and families.
 - b. Meet the needs of the growing number of older residents.
 - c. Address social isolation experienced by elderly households.
9. Sustain cultural amenities and activities which enhance quality of life.

Economic Sustainability

10. Maintain and enhance economic health:
 - a. Places of employment.
 - b. Sources of goods and services.
 - c. Support for local businesses (including tourism and buy local).
 - d. Diversify the tax base.
11. Prudent use of resources and capital.
12. Addressing economic transformation (conversion from bricks and mortar to on-line retail, etc.).

The following pages highlight SustainableCT's "Sustainability Concepts In Action" and the "SustainableCT Action List."

Energy Sustainability

In residential zones, the Zoning Regulations allow solar panel installations on homes and small-scale wind energy systems.

- *The average home in the U.S. uses 10,400 kWh of electricity per year.*
- *About twenty 400-watt solar panels could generate enough energy to power the entire home.*
- *A wind turbine with a 5kW rated capacity can produce approximately 8,900 kWh of system output every year.*

Instead of relying on imported electricity, Kent residents and businesses could become more sustainable by:

- Installing solar panels
- Installing small-scale wind energy systems,
- Using electric vehicles and rechargeable tools and appliances (and neighborhood scale micro-grids) to store electricity.



Sustainable CT



Sustainable CT is an independent organization which has created a voluntary certification program to recognize Connecticut municipalities that make progress towards implementing sustainability initiatives.

SustainableCT maintains a master action list which communities can use to guide and document sustainability efforts. As of 2021, over half the communities in Connecticut were participating in this voluntary program and completing (and documenting) activities on the master action list to demonstrate their progress in this regard. Communities receive certification for completing actions listed on the master action list (which is updated over time).

Kent enrolled in the Sustainable CT program in April 2021.

It is anticipated that the Kent Sustainability Team (KST) will promote and coordinate local efforts to implement sustainability actions, including those identified by SustainableCT.

SustainableCT - Sustainability Concepts in Action

Concept 1: Land Use Pattern

Land use patterns are one of the most visible indicators of human impact, reflecting the physical, chemical, biological, social and economic factors of a community. Plans of Conservation & Development afford the opportunity to balance these factors and recommend actions to maintain or change current land uses or propose new future land uses as a means of achieving a community's intended vision.

This includes such concepts as:

- a. Creating appropriate buffers and transitions between land uses
- b. Accommodating shifting demographics and employment trends
- c. Protecting existing neighborhoods
- d. Making uses and densities consistent with infrastructure and community facilities
- e. Minimizing conflicts between land uses
- f. Encouraging flexible and innovative economic strategies to reduce the burden on infrastructure
- g. Promoting growth that integrates a diversity of lifestyles

Concept 2: Physical Development & Stewardship

Compatible development is planned and designed with careful regard for all resources, human and nonhuman, and for the character of the landscape. We are not separate from our ecosystem and natural resources, including land and water, should not be looked upon as conquests but as our partners--critical components of the intricate balance of nature. This is not to say we should avoid developing but should do so with thought to use, design, and intensity.

This includes such concepts as:

- a. Identifying and creating protective strategies for significant landforms and viewsheds
- b. Creating land use transitions to account for not only use but the form and scale of buildings
- c. Ensuring that development density considers transportation network, availability of transit, and active transportation linkages
- d. Directing more intense development to areas already disturbed or in need of revitalization or redevelopment
- e. Engaging in resource management planning of open space, greenbelts, and conservation easements
- f. Developing protection and creation strategies for pollinator habitat
- g. Incentivizing green building and sustainable site development
- h. Identifying suitable locations for large-scale solar arrays
- i. Conducting assessment of potential compatible renewable energy sites
- j. Inventorying, monitoring, and managing invasive species
- k. Identifying sensitive areas appropriate for context-driven site layout

SustainableCT - Sustainability Concepts in Action



Concept 3: Municipal Programs & Operations

Putting sustainability into practice involves actions at all scales of municipalities operations. Through the POCD process, a municipality can advance sustainability by adopting policies and prescribing actions that promote social, economic, and environmental well-being.

This includes such concepts as:

- a. Establishing framework for annual sustainability audits
- b. Considering emerging technologies for waste reduction and management
- c. Reducing hazardous waste, e-waste, and construction/demolition waste
- d. Managing watersheds and seasonal variations affecting water quality
- e. Practicing resiliency and preparedness
- f. Incorporating active transportation into road construction and maintenance
- g. Benchmarking purchasing of green products
- h. Creating public-private partnerships in pursuit of renewable energy
- i. Auditing energy use of buildings and public facilities
- j. Establishing process for green building and energy star benchmarks for renovations and new construction

Concept 4: Community Character and Livability

A community has its own sense of identity, established through a unique set of physical and social characteristics. Celebrating and preserving this character while improving physical conditions and promoting opportunities for all residents regardless of origins or income, provides cohesion and stability to a community while building resiliency to buffer dramatic swings in economic and sociopolitical conditions.

This includes such concepts as:

- a. Preserving neighborhoods; particularly those undergoing gentrification or displacement
- b. Preserving historic and cultural assets, scenic areas, and prominent viewsheds
- c. Establishing and improve connectivity via active transportation
- d. Providing parks and recreation facilities and programs to meet the diverse needs of the community
- e. Identifying programs and land use policies that provide community gardening and local food production
- f. Ensuring affordable housing options and diverse housing types
- g. Identifying environmental justice issues and establish actions and timelines for addressing them
- h. Conducting land use analyses to determine locations and density for a diversity of housing types, including affordable and "missing middle" housing



SustainableCT - Sustainability Concepts in Action

Concept 5: Economic Vitality and Resilience

A community that is prepared to deal with both positive and negative changes in its economic health by building reliance on and support for other local businesses provides a foundation for long-term business viability. POCD strategies should support local business owners and their employees.

- This includes such concepts as:
- a. Monitoring market conditions and consequences to land use and socioeconomic conditions
 - b. Providing programming and assistance for small or minority businesses
 - c. Creating business retention strategies for companies who employ residents or re-invest locally
 - d. Coordinating transportation investments with employment nodes to provide workforce support
 - e. Providing education and outreach to support green building and energy efficiency to reduce operational costs
 - f. Streamlining approvals for expansions or renovations that include green building, alternative energy, or other sustainable benchmarks
 - g. Supporting innovation, entrepreneurs, and a wide range of industries
 - h. Evaluating need and demand for transportation options, fiber optics, and amenities in support of business retention and attraction

Concept 6: Resilient Infrastructure

Disruption to infrastructure impacts everyone—businesses, households, and municipalities. One single event can translate into millions of dollars in direct costs alone and years of recovery. Pushing beyond mitigation and adaptation and incorporating pro-active planning analyses and avoidance strategies into POCDs would provide a foundation for strengthening a community's ability to withstand disruption, regardless of whether it is climate-related or not.

- This includes such concepts as:
- a. For coastal communities, upholding existing resiliency plans and determining priorities to be addressed through land use/zoning
 - b. Performing benchmark analyses for inland communities using pertinent coastal communities to identify necessary data needs, evaluations, and strategies
 - c. Allocating staff time for resiliency planning and annual planning sessions with emergency preparedness, engineering, water pollution control and private utilities
 - d. Incentivizing ecosystem-based resiliency solutions in public and private development projects
 - e. Incorporating client resiliency into the public procurement process for designing and building infrastructure
 - f. Exploring innovative financing instruments that incentivize resilient infrastructure



Overview Of SustainableCT Action List

Some of the following actions have been edited to fit into the space provided. A complete description of the SustainableCT themes and action steps can be found at:

<https://sustainablect.org/>

1. Inclusive and Equitable Community Impacts

- 1.1 Optimize for Equity / Participate in Equity Training
- 1.3 Develop and Adopt a Statement on Equity

2. Thriving Local Economies

- 2.1 Support Redevelopment of Brownfield Sites
- 2.3 Inventory and Promote Local Retail Options
- 2.4 Provide Resources and Supports to Local Businesses
- 2.5 Promote Sustainable Workforce Development

3. Well-Stewarded Land and Natural Resources

- 3.1 Provide Watershed Education / Create a Watershed Management Plan
- 3.3 Engage in Watershed Protection and Restoration
- 3.4 Develop an Open Space Plan
- 3.5 Create a Natural Resource and Wildlife Inventory
- 3.7 Provide Education on Water Conservation
- 3.8 Implement Low Impact Development
- 3.9 Manage Woodlands and Urban Forests
- 3.10 Facilitate Invasive Species Education and Management
- 3.13 Promote Dark Skies

4. Vibrant and Creative Cultural Ecosystems

- 4.1 Map Tourism and Cultural Assets / Support Arts and Creative Culture
- 4.3 Develop a Creative Placemaking Plan

5. Dynamic and Resilient Planning

- 5.1 Integrate Sustainability into Plan of Conservation and Development
- 5.2 Adapt Permitting Process to Promote Sustainable Development
- 5.3 Develop Agricultural-Friendly Practices
- 5.4 Assess Climate Vulnerability
- 5.5 Inventory and Assess Historic Resources

6. Clean and Diverse Transportation Systems and Choices

- 6.1 Implement Complete Streets
- 6.2 Promote Effective Parking Management
- 6.3 Encourage Smart Commuting
- 6.4 Support Zero Emission Vehicle Deployment
- 6.5 Promote Public Transit and Other Mobility Strategies
- 6.6 Manage Municipal Fleets



7. Renewable and Efficient Energy Infrastructure and Operations

- 7.1 Benchmark and Track Energy Use
- 7.2 Reduce Energy Use Across All Municipal Buildings
- 7.3 Achieve High Energy Performance for Individual Buildings
- 7.4 Increase Use of Renewable Energy in Municipal Buildings
- 7.5 Develop a Municipal Energy Plan
- 7.6 Install Efficient Exterior Lighting
- 7.7 Implement a Community Energy Campaign
- 7.8 Benchmark Energy and Water Use for Multifamily Housing

8. Inclusive Engagement, Communication and Education

- 8.1 Hold a Sustainability Event
- 8.2 Provide Effective Community Communications
- 8.3 Train Municipal Representatives
- 8.4 Support Community Match Fund Project and Civic Engagement
- 8.5 Collaborate with Other Municipalities

9. Strategic Materials Management

- 9.1 Report Materials Management Data and Reduce Waste
- 9.2 Implement Save Money and Reduce Trash (SMART) Program
- 9.3 Recycle Additional Materials and Compost Organics
- 9.4 Develop a Food Waste Prevention Campaign or Program

10. Optimal Health and Wellness Opportunities

- 10.1 Encourage Healthy and Sustainable Food Networks
- 10.2 Conduct Health Impact Assessments
- 10.3 Improve Air Quality in Public Spaces
- 10.4 Develop and Promote Community Growing Spaces

11. Healthy, Efficient and Diverse Housing

- 11.1 Design and Implement an Affordable Housing Plan
- 11.2 Grow Sustainable and Affordable Housing Options
- 11.3 Implement Policy for Sustainable, Diverse Housing Options

12. Effective, Compassionate Homelessness Prevention

- 12.1 Increase Public Awareness and Support for Efforts to End Homelessness
- 12.2 Strengthen Municipal Workforce Capacity to Address Homelessness
- 12.3 Collect and Share Homelessness Data
- 12.4 Provide or Mobilize Resources to Address Homelessness
- 12.5 Coordinate Municipal Services to Address Homelessness
- 12.6 Improve Outcomes for People Experiencing Homelessness

13. Innovative Strategies and Practices

- 13.1 Implement Your Own Sustainability Action

2.1 ENHANCE SUSTAINABILITY	Leader/ Partner
<p>Policies (strategies anticipated to continue over time) are identified by black text. <i>Action steps (specific tasks to implement the POCD) are identified by red italic text.</i></p>	
<p>1. Continue to educate residents and business owners about sustainability concepts.</p>	<p>KST CC</p>
<p>2. Participate in the SustainableCT program and similar programs.</p>	<p>KST CC</p>
<p>3. <i>Develop / implement strategies for Kent to become more sustainable:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>a. Climate / Energy (see page 20) including specific goals, benchmarks, and dates</i> <i>b. Ecological (see page 21)</i> <i>c. Social (see page 21)</i> <i>d. Economic (see page 21).</i> 	<p><i>KST CC</i></p>
<p>4. <i>Increase electric vehicle charging stations / capacity in the Town Center area (multiple more advanced and higher power/quicker charging Level 3 stations, if possible).</i></p>	<p><i>KST</i></p>
<p>5. <i>Modify the Zoning Regulations to allow electric vehicle charging stations in the Town Center with reduced setbacks (or zero setbacks).</i></p>	<p><i>PZC</i></p>
<p>6. <i>Investigate the potential benefits of establishing a fuel cell / microgrid energy system for the Town Center area.</i></p>	<p><i>KST</i></p>
<p>7. <i>Implement clean energy and best energy conservation practices for all municipal buildings, vehicles, and infrastructure including streetlights.</i></p>	<p><i>KST</i></p>
<p>8. Encourage residents and businesses to use clean energy technologies and energy conservation techniques.</p>	<p>KST CC</p>
<p>9. <i>Recommend ways to incentivize use of clean energy technologies and energy conservation techniques for residents and businesses.</i></p>	<p><i>KST CC</i></p>
<p>10. <i>Explore the implications of larger scale solar, wind, and energy storage options in terms of balancing sustainability benefits with possible impacts to open farms and fields, woodlands, horizon-line areas, and Kent's rural character.</i></p>	<p><i>PZC KST</i></p>





This section of the POCD recognizes resiliency as a key part of the overall concept of sustainability and encourages awareness, preparedness, and implementation of resilient practices.

2.2 Enhance Resiliency

Become a more resilient community.

For the POCD, resiliency relates to being able to absorb and/or recover from impactful events in an efficient and timely way. Impactful events can include:

- Environmental events such as hurricanes, winter storms, and flooding.
- Economic events such as recessions or structural shifts.
- Social trends such as a shift from interest in rural areas.

Resiliency includes the willingness and ability to adapt to long-term change as well as the capability to endure, respond to, and readily recover from sudden change or adversity. In the future, the concept of resiliency will also need to include adaptation to climate change (higher temperatures, more frequent and severe storm events, infrastructure capacity, stream channel erosion, habitat migration, etc.). More frequent and severe storms which overwhelm the infrastructure (such as storm drainage systems) installed in many parts of the community.

The elements of being a resilient community can include:

Avoidance	1. Identification / avoidance / risk reduction
Mitigation	2. Evaluating probability / risk scenarios 3. Evaluating approaches (protection / adaptation) 4. Balancing of cost / benefit
Response	5. Pre-event education / training 6. Pre-event response plans 7. Response

The Hazard Mitigation Plan adopted by the Town of Kent in 2022 identifies the major hazards (flooding, hurricanes and tropical storms, summer storms and tornadoes, winter storms, earthquakes, dam failure, wildfires) and strategies to reduce or eliminate risk to human life and property. The maps on the facing page (from the Hazard Mitigation Plan) clearly identify up-to-date natural hazard areas

This valuable document, prepared in conjunction with the Northwest Hills Council of Governments (NHCOG), should be utilized to avoid, mitigate, and respond to natural hazard events. In addition, the Hazard Mitigation Plan should be updated regularly.

Also, as part of resilience building, the Kent Sustainability Team (KST) participated in a community resilience building workshop facilitated by The Nature Conservancy. The report resulting from that workshop can be found on the Town’s website.



2.2 PROMOTE RESILIENCY	Leader/ Partner
<p>Policies (strategies anticipated to continue over time) are identified by black text. <i>Action steps (specific tasks to implement the POCD) are identified by red italic text.</i></p>	
1. Continue to identify, avoid, reduce, mitigate, and recover from impactful events.	Town
2. Continue to educate residents about resiliency.	KST CC
3. Continue to support and enhance emergency management capabilities in Kent and the region.	Town
4. <i>Implement the Hazard Mitigation Plan, as amended.</i>	Town
5. <i>Prepare and maintain an evacuation and shelter plan to deal with emergencies from natural hazards.</i>	Town
6. Maintain and improve approaches for preparing for and responding to impactful events including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Emergency shelter capacity / supplies b. Redundant energy supply c. Off-grid generation (including generators and fuel cells) especially in Kent Center d. Mobile cellular antennae / charging stations 	Town PW KVFD
7. Maintain Flood Plain standards consistent with the latest State and Federal (FEMA) requirements.	PZC
8. Participate in updating the regional Hazard Mitigation Plan in the future in order to address risks and obtain funding.	Town
9. Encourage land protection within natural hazard areas.	Town
10. Discourage development or redevelopment within natural hazard areas.	Town
11. Limit extension of existing facilities and services that would encourage development in areas vulnerable to natural hazards.	Town

Severe Winter Storms



Kent Ice Dam / Flooding



CONSERVATION – RESOURCES AND ASSETS

Continue to protect assets and resources important to the community.



Kent has long recognized the values associated with its environmental and community assets and has focused much attention on their preservation and conservation.

These efforts have maintained overall environmental health, contributed to community character, and enhanced the overall quality of life for residents and visitors. In the on-line survey:

1. 75% of survey participants identified community character as very important in their decision to live in Kent.
2. Participants indicated they were proud of the overall sense of community in Kent, the character/beauty of the community, the open space / natural resources, and the culture of Kent.
3. Among 23 topics for consideration, participants indicated the following in terms of importance / performance:

	Importance	Performance
Protecting natural resources	1 st	2 nd
Preserving open space	2 nd	1 st
Protecting cultural assets	4 th (tie)	3 rd
Promoting agriculture	9 th	12 th
Enhancing community character	11 th	5 th
Improving river access	21 st	22 nd

Conservation is a state of harmony between [people] and land.

Aldo Leopold
American conservationist

Incorporated For Reference

Additional information related to conservation-related strategies can be found in:

1. [The 1990 Town Character Study and Open Space Plan](#)
2. [The 2013 update to the Town Character Study and Open Space Plan](#)
3. [The 2009 Natural and Cultural Riches of Kent report](#)
4. [The 1998 Route 7 Scenic Corridor Master Plan](#)



This section of the POCD recommends strategies to protect important natural resources, especially water resources.

3.1 Protect Natural Resources

Continue to protect Kent’s natural resources.

As stated in the 2012 POCD, the fact that [natural] resources have been diligently protected and preserved over the years is the main reason for the healthy ecological system that exists in Kent and the retention of the physical characteristics treasured by residents.

For the purposes of the POCD, the term natural resources includes:

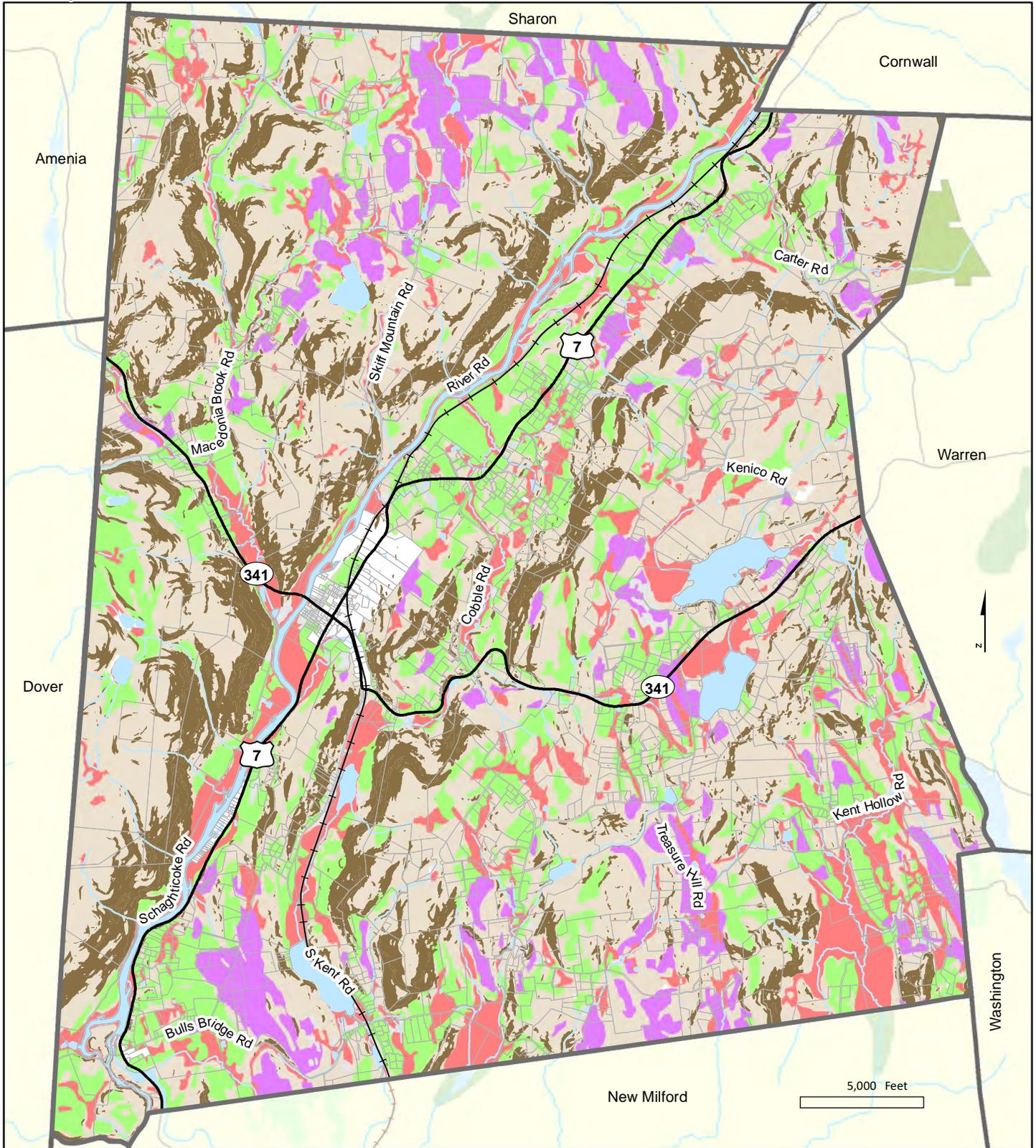
Category	Resource Examples
Land- Related	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landforms / terrain / steep slopes • Soil types
Water-Related	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water quality / quantity • Watercourses / waterbodies / inland wetland • Riparian buffers / setbacks • Groundwater / aquifers • Floodplains
Natural Diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flora • Fauna
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air quality

Land-Related Resources

Kent has had soil-based zoning for many years and this zoning approach regulates development intensity based on the soil characteristics while also considering landforms and steep slopes.

In addition, the Conservation Development Overlay District in the Zoning Regulations (which overlays the RU-1 zoning district) requires the use of a flexible development approach designed to give consideration to a variety of land-related and other important resources in these areas.

Overall, Kent has good provisions for protecting land-related resources and these provisions should remain in place for the future.



Zoning Class

- Class A - 2-acre minimum lot size
- Class B - 3-acre minimum lot size
- Class C - 5-acre minimum lot size
- Class D - Does not contribute to MLS
- Unknown / Variable

Water Resources

- Watercourse
- Waterbody

Other Resources

- Steep Slope (25+ %)
- 100 Year Flood Zone

Lake Waramaug

Lake Waramaug is an important asset located in the towns of Kent, Warren, and Washington.

Three organizations are involved in various efforts related to the lake:

- The Lake Waramaug Task force is a non-profit scientific and educational organization dedicated to maintaining and preserving the ecology and water quality of Lake Waramaug and its watershed.
- The Lake Waramaug Association is a membership organization, founded in 1917, whose mission is to preserve Lake Waramaug and its environs and to promote the safe, health and enjoyment of those who use the Lake.
- The Lake Waramaug Authority consists of town representatives from Washington, Warren and Kent regulating boat safety and water patrol.

Water-Related Resources

Protection of water resources generally (and water quality specifically) are key natural resource priorities in Kent due to the important role that water plays in environmental health, drinking water supply, habitat, recreation, and overall scenic value.

Kent has a number of water protections programs in place:

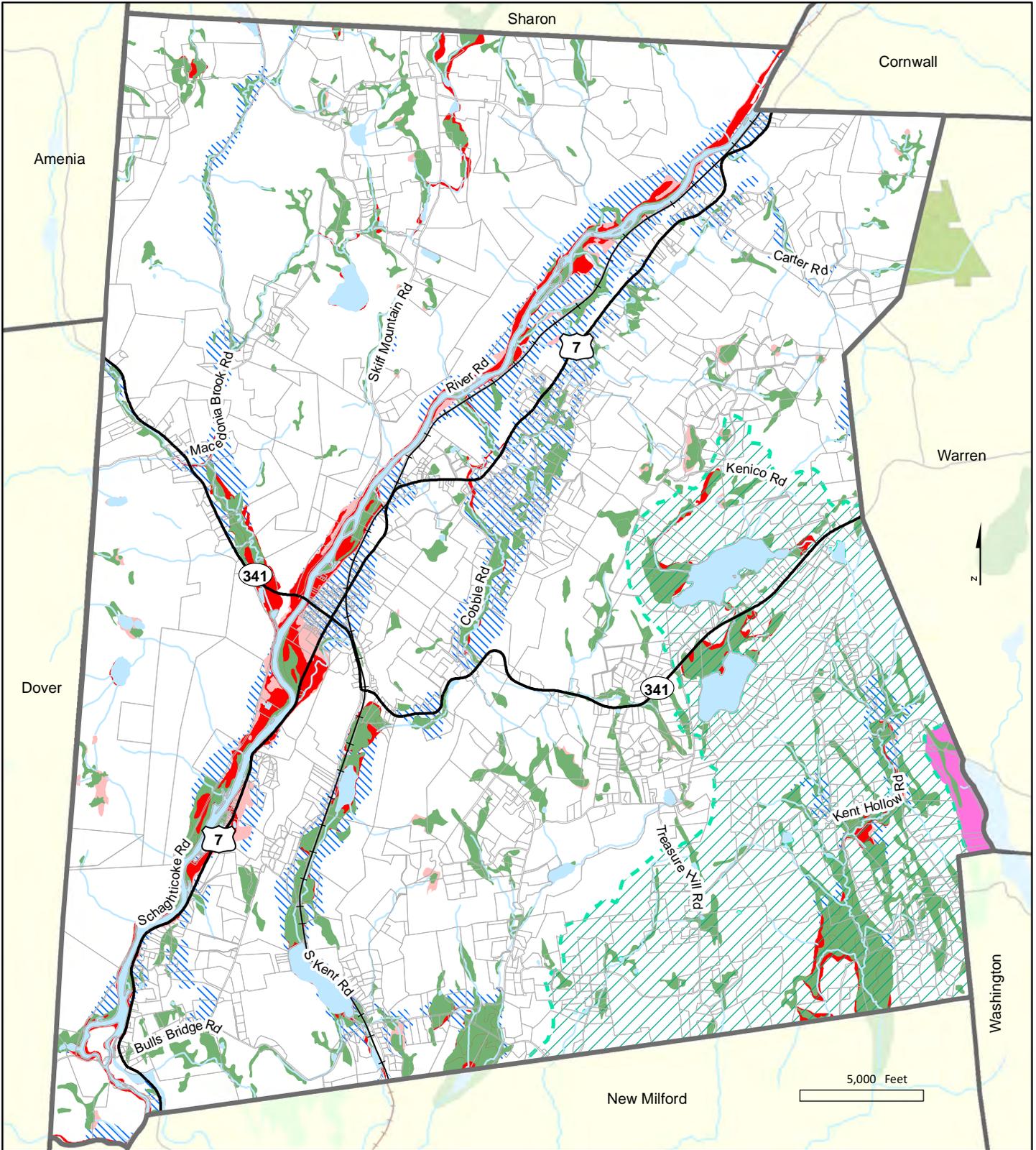
- The Inland Wetlands Commission regulates activities in and near watercourses and wetlands.
- The Conservation Commission considers water-related resources as part of their charge.
- The Planning and Zoning Commission has established overlay zones related to Housatonic River, Lake Waramaug, floodplains, and aquifer protection.
- The Planning and Zoning Commission has stormwater management regulations to manage the quality and quantity of stormwater runoff in accordance with the Connecticut DEEP Stormwater Quality Manual, also known as low impact development standards.
- The Zoning Regulations also contain standards for erosion and sediment control and certain earth moving activities.

At the time the POCD was being prepared, the process of designating the Housatonic River as a Wild and Scenic River due to its outstanding natural, cultural, and recreational values was nearing completion.

Over the next 10-20 years, it is anticipated Kent should continue to work on water related issues:

- Possible impacts from climate change (droughts, severe storm impacts, etc.)
- Water quality protection and improvement including:
 - Implementation of best practices for managing stormwater runoff
 - Monitoring of historic PCB contamination in the Housatonic River,
 - Eutrophication of local waterbodies (such as at Hatch Pond)
 - Invasive species (such as at Lake Waramaug)
- Maintaining and enhancing vegetative buffers (also called riparian buffers) along rivers and streams and around waterbodies
- Management of recreational and other activities which may adversely affect waterbodies and watercourses (such as land-based impacts at public access points along the Housatonic River and water-based impacts at Lake Waramaug)
- Addressing threats to ground water quality (such as underground fuel tanks or poorly maintained septic systems)

Kent has recognized the importance of water quality and quantity and should continue to work on these issues in the future.



Water Resources

- Water
- Wetlands

Floodplain

- 100 Year Flood Zone
- 500 Year Flood Zone

Other

- Surficial Aquifer Potential
- Lake Waramaug Watershed
- Public Water Supply Watershed Areas

Follow The Forest

In 2016, the Housatonic Valley Association created a Follow the Forest Initiative to protect and connect forest habitat throughout the Northeast. Their vision of a connected landscape extends far beyond the Housatonic watershed and encompasses lands stretching from the Hudson River to the forests of Canada.



Air-Related Resources

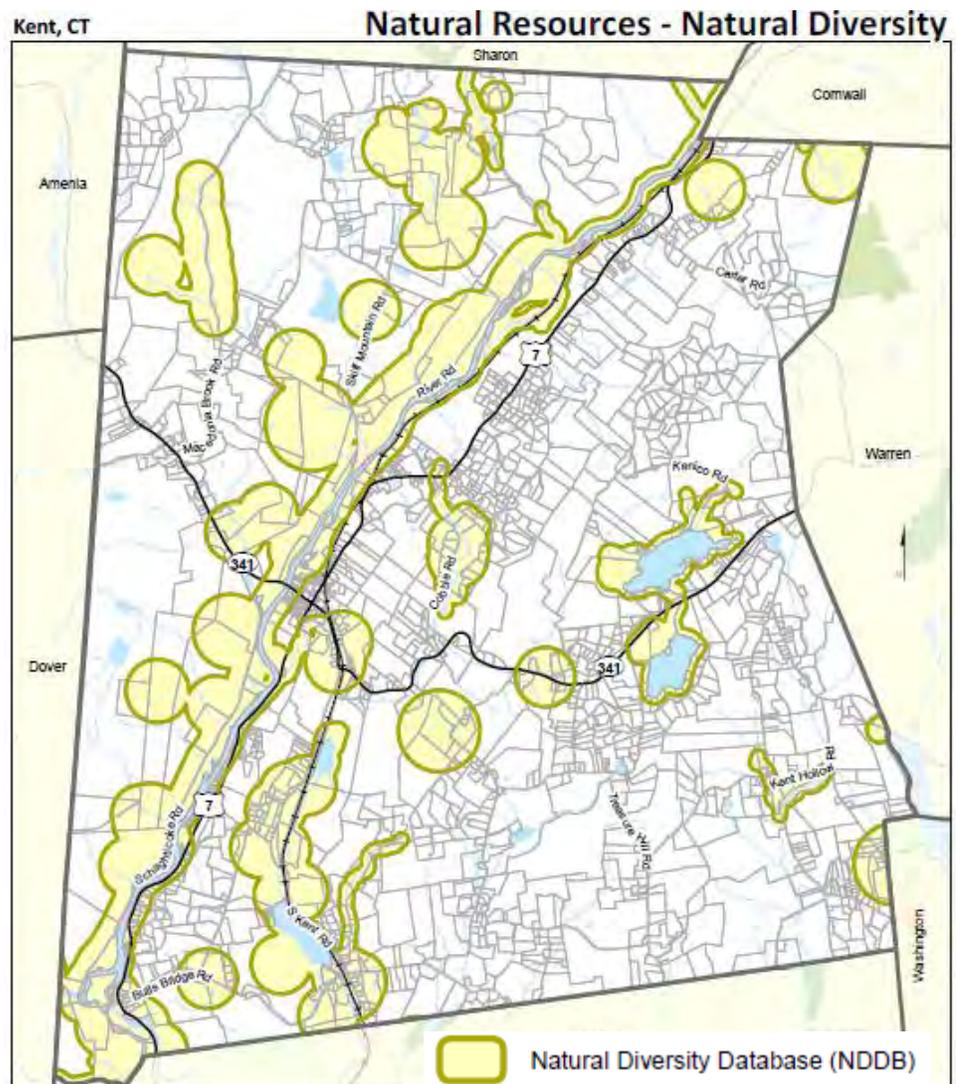
Air quality is typically regulated at the federal and state level since it tends to be regional and national in scope. Kent's air quality can be affected by land uses and other activities located to the west (upwind).

The Zoning Regulations do not allow outdoor wood-burning furnaces which can be considered an air quality issue in certain atmospheric conditions.

Natural Diversity Resources

Kent has demonstrated consideration for protection of natural diversity and habitat protection as part of conservation efforts. This includes:

- Zoning Regulation provisions requiring submission of information related to areas identified on the [Connecticut DEEP list of Natural Diversity Database sites](#) (list updated annually by CT DEEP),
- Prohibiting / discouraging the use of invasive species and encouraging / requiring the use of native species, and
- Forest management regulations administered by the Inland Wetlands Commission (Kent is one of only 20 Connecticut communities authorized by CGS 23-65k to regulate forest practices within its borders).



3.1 PROTECT NATURAL RESOURCES	Leader/ Partner
<p>Policies (strategies anticipated to continue over time) are identified by black text. <i>Action steps (specific tasks to implement the POCD) are identified by red italic text.</i></p>	
<p>1. Maintain and enhance programs to protect natural resources and adapt to climate change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Land- Related b. Water-Related (water resources, water quality, etc.) c. Natural Diversity (including high quality habitats) 	<p>CC IWC PZC</p>
<p>2. Continue to require the use of conservation development approaches in the rural residential area (RU-1) to help efforts to protect important natural resources and other resources.</p>	<p>PZC</p>
<p>3. <i>Review/revisit the Conservation Development approach in the Zoning Regulations (Section 5240) with regard to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. <i>The use of primary / secondary conservation area generally, and</i> b. <i>Incorporating core forest areas and/or potential forest corridors / greenways specifically.</i> 	<p>PZC</p>
<p>4. <i>Consider adding a checkbox to PZC application forms for the applicant to indicate whether the property is within an NDDB area as identified by DEEP.</i></p>	<p>PZC</p>
<p>5. Continue to work with public and private interests and regional conservation entities (including but not limited to Kent Land Trust, Lake Waramaug Authority, Housatonic Valley Association, Housatonic River Commission, FirstLight Power, Northwest Conservation District, etc.) to ensure that natural resources are appropriately protected and/or managed.</p>	<p>CC IWC</p>
<p>6. Continue to work with Warren and Washington and Lake Waramaug organizations to protect the watershed and the lake itself.</p>	<p>CC IWC PZC</p>



Land / Water / Natural Diversity Resources In Kent





This section of the POCD recommends resource management planning of open space and greenbelts.

Protected Open Space

Protected open space is the most meaningful to Kent.

Protected lands are likely to remain in their natural state forever (although some areas may include walking trails or minor improvements such as parking areas). This includes land owned by conservation-minded organizations but it might also include land preserved from development through conservation easements.

While unprotected lands look like open space, it may be developed or used for other purposes in the future. Unprotected open spaces (especially those the community cares about) should become the focus of future preservation efforts.

3.2 Preserve Open Space

Continue efforts to preserve more open space in Kent.

Open space is a key contributor to Kent’s overall character and its preservation and protection is important to Kent residents. Open space preservation helps:

- Protect important natural resources and habitats,
- Protect the health of the environment,
- Protect and enhance community character,
- Provide active and passive recreation opportunities, and
- Enhance the quality of life of residents.

For the purposes of the POCD, the term open space includes:

Category	Examples
Protected Open Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • United States of America (fee and/or easement) • State of Connecticut (fee and/or easement) • Town of Kent (fee and/or easement) • Kent Land Trust (fee and/or easement) • Sharon Land Trust • Town of Sharon • Northwest CT Land Conservancy (formerly Weantinogue) • Pond Mountain Trust
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservation easement on private lands
Unprotected Land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fish and Game Clubs • Golf Clubs • Farms
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undeveloped land / fields / forests

The Conservation Commission maintains an inventory of open space (for example, see the [“Natural and Cultural Riches of Kent”](#) report) and the Housatonic Valley Association has a digital database (and GIS map) of open space lands.

Kent is fortunate to have a significant amount of protected open space (about 12,785 acres). State properties, such as Macedonia Brook State Park and Kent Falls State Park, Federal land associated with the Appalachian Trail, Kent Land Trust holdings, and other public and private conservation holdings make up about 40% of the Town’s land area.

Overall. Local organizations have done a very good job preserving open space and these efforts should continue. In particular, it is anticipated that Kent will continue efforts to interconnect open space areas into an overall system in order to maximize the value of the protected lands it is able to preserve.

For Kent, desirable open space characteristics include:

Category	Examples
Key Character Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housatonic River / valley (part of the Housatonic Riverbelt Greenway recognized by the CT Greenways Council) Town Character Areas including scenic vistas
Environmental	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant ecological habitat protection Water supply resources / stratified drift aquifers Wetlands / streambelt corridors / riparian buffers
Connections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housatonic River access points Connecting open spaces and streambelts to create wildlife corridors and trail networks
Scenic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ridgelines and other scenic priorities Long scenic views and scenic areas Roadways with scenic features such as mature native vegetation and stonewalls
Recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing Town recreational opportunities (including integrating open space and recreation projects)
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant archeological sites High quality farmland Gateways to Kent Center

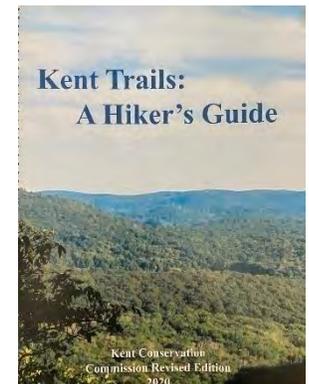
Organizations active in open space preservation in Kent have historically made use of the following tools:

Category	Examples
Philanthropy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encouraging donations of land Encouraging establishment of conservation easements
Grants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Obtaining grants from public agencies and private foundations
Partnering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with like-minded organizations (such as The Nature Conservancy) to acquire important open space areas
Regulatory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Obtaining open space as part of the land subdivision process (Section 3.8 of the Subdivision Regulations indicates that the Commission may require the set aside of up to 15% of the land area of the parcel being subdivided), Receiving a fee-in-lieu-of-open space payment as part of the land subdivision process (Section 3.8.6 of the Subdivision Regulations), Obtaining open space as part of the conservation development process contained in the Zoning Regulations

Appalachian Trail

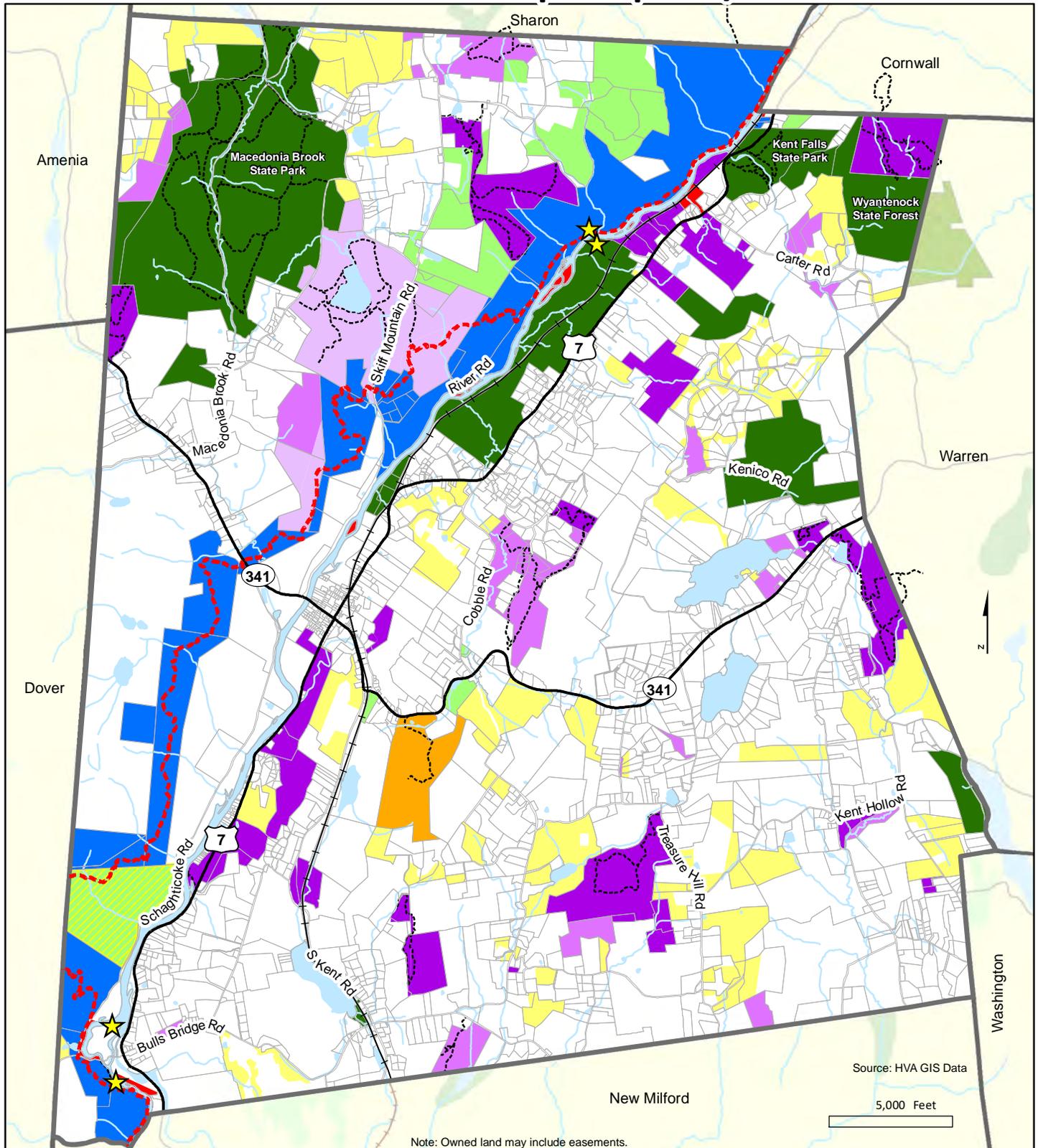


Trail Guide





3.2 PRESERVE OPEN SPACE	Leader/ Partner
<p>Policies (strategies anticipated to continue over time) are identified by black text. <i>Action steps (specific tasks to implement the POCD) are identified by red italic text.</i></p>	
<p>1. Continue efforts to increase the amount of protected open space in Kent in order to :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Protect important natural resources and habitats, ○ Protect the health of the environment, ○ Protect and enhance community character, ○ Provide active and passive recreation opportunities, and ○ Enhance the quality of life of residents. 	<p>CC KLT PZC</p>
<p>2. Recognize the Conservation Commission as the lead Town agency for coordinating open space preservation efforts.</p>	<p>Town</p>
<p><i>3. Establish a Land Acquisition Fund to receive fee-in-lieu-of-open space payments (and/or any municipal or other funds).</i></p>	<p>BOS BOF</p>
<p>4. Support efforts to extend and link existing and new trails and improve access to open space parcels, where appropriate.</p>	<p>CC</p>
<p>5. Continue to embrace the Appalachian Trail as complementary asset to Kent.</p>	<p>CC Town</p>
<p>6. Seek to create trails along the Housatonic River and to increase the number of access points in order to un-landlock the Housatonic River.</p>	<p>CC KLT</p>
<p><i>7. Modify Section 3.8 of the Subdivision Regulations to require provision be made for preserving open space as part of every subdivision, either through:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Dedication of land (on-site or elsewhere in Kent), or</i> ○ <i>Payment of a fee in lieu of open space.</i> 	<p>PZC</p>
<p><i>8. Revisit the open space definitions in the Subdivision Regulations.</i></p>	<p>PZC</p>
<p><i>9. Modify the Subdivision Regulations to include public access and trails as part of the open space reservation process.</i></p>	<p>PZC</p>
<p>10. Continue to support the open space preservation efforts of the Kent Land Trust and other conservation organizations.</p>	<p>CC Town</p>



Federal

- Federal Owned
- Federal Easement

Town

- Town Owned

State

- State Owned
- State Easement
- Schaghticoke Reservation

Other

- Kent Land Trust
- TNC, NCLC, Sharon LT
- Pond Mountain Trust
- Conservation Easement

Trails

- Appalachian Trail
- Other Trail
- River Access Point



Farms and Farming

...it is the open farm fields and the way of life that farming has imprinted here that give the community important aspects of its character and these make it a resource to cherish and protect in a changing economic environment.

From Natural and Cultural Riches of Kent

3.3 Promote Farms and Farming

Promote farms and farming in Kent.

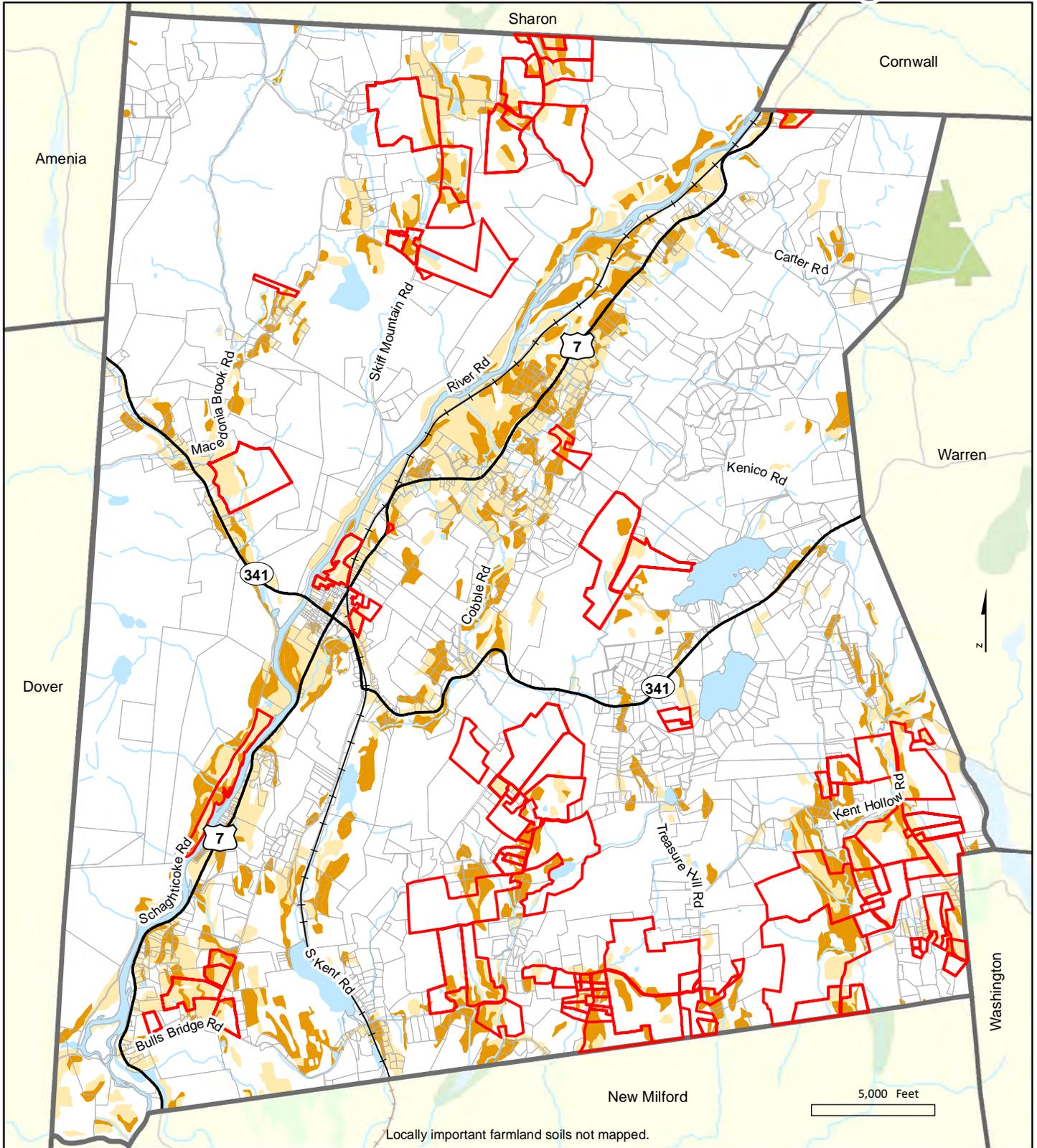
Kent has long been a farming community:

- Subsistence homesteads during the earliest days of Colonial settlement.
- Dairy farms and cultivation of tobacco and other crops for sale at markets throughout the region and beyond.
- Smaller farming activities in current times focusing on fresh local produce and specialty crops.

While the economic impact of farming has changed, Kent still retains many aspects of its agricultural roots - from historic fields and fences to barns and silos and other reminders of times gone by. Residents want to preserve and promote farms and farming in Kent in order to:

1. Contribute to the overall physical character of Kent,
2. Enhances the quality of life for residents and visitors, and
3. Support local farmers and their livelihood and farming’s contribution to the local economy.

3.3 PROMOTE FARMS AND FARMING	Leader/ Partner
Policies (strategies anticipated to continue over time) are identified by black text. <i>Action steps (specific tasks to implement the POCD) are identified by red italic text.</i>	
1. Continue to support and promote farms, farmers, and farming.	CC Town
2. Maintain a right to farm approach (as per CGS 19a-341) so that farming activities conducted in accordance with generally accepted agricultural practices are not discouraged or unduly restricted.	Town
3. Continue to support and promote agriculture including: a. buy-local promotional programs, and b. right to farm (CGS 19a-341).	Town
4. Maintain zoning regulations which allow for farm-related activities which will help support farms including farmworker housing.	PZC
5. Strive to preserve prime agricultural soils through open space acquisition and the conservation development approach.	CC PZC



Agricultural Resources

- Soils - Statewide Important Farmland
- Soils - Prime Farmland
- Parcels (Full or Partial) Receiving PA-490 Farm Assessment



This section of the POCD recommends strategies for:

- Sustaining Kent's vibrant and creative cultural ecosystem, and
- protecting historic and cultural assets

Town Character Areas

It is important to note that many of the Town Character Areas (see map on page 51) represent historically and culturally important landscapes.

3.4 Preserve And Promote Cultural Resources

Continue efforts to preserve and promote cultural resources in Kent.

Cultural resources are essentially resources associated with human activity or the built environment. This can include:

- indicators of past human activities, including artifacts, sites, structures, landscapes, and objects of importance.
- Current places of importance with regard to human society or activity.

Using this framework, Kent has many cultural resources (current, historic, and archeologic) which provide residents and visitors with enjoyable experiences and learning opportunities, contribute to the overall perception of Kent, enhance the quality of life of residents and visitors, and create economic benefits by attracting people to Kent and its businesses.

Archeologic Resources

Kent has an exceptional cultural history extending well before Colonial settlement. Native Americans had settlements here – seasonal and otherwise – due to the availability of water (such as the Housatonic River and other areas) which supported vegetation and attracted game. Archeologic resources can also include later periods when mills and other activities were established in Kent.

Kent has a number of areas where archeologic resources have been found and this points out that there are likely to be additional archeologic resources which have not yet been found. Kent should be aware of (and sensitive to) the presence of archeologic resources and consider ways to protect and preserve these resources in the future.



Historic Resources

Kent has a number of recognized historic resources:

Resource	Description
6. Flanders Historic District (NRHP = National Register of Historic Places)	A Federally approved designation recognizing an area's contribution to the history of the country. Mostly ceremonial although can affect projects using State or Federal funding.
7. Flanders Historic District (LHD = Local Historic District)	A local designation identifying an area where a certificate of appropriateness is required for any improvements visible from a public street.
8. Bull's Bridge NRHP	A one-lane covered bridge (c. 1842) at the site of a bridge dating from the 1760s (lore has it that George Washington crossed here)
9. Kent Iron Furnace NRHP	A granite blast furnace which produced pig iron from 1826 to 1892.
10. Captain Philo Beardsley House NRHP	An 18th-century saltbox with a remarkably well-preserved interior on Beardsley Road.
11. Eric Sloane Museum NRHP	A museum operated by the State Historic Preservation Office and featuring the studio and antique tool collections of Eric Sloane.
12. Soldiers Monument (SRHP = State Register of Historic Places)	A monument to the soldiers from Kent who fought in the Civil War.

Kent should continue to recognize and protect important historic resources.

Kent has the following ordinances in place to help protect historic resources:

- Ordinance 4-5 – Demolition Delay
- Ordinance 7-1 – Historic District Commission
- Ordinance 7-2 – Flanders Historic District

Bull's Bridge



Kent Iron Furnace



Other Historic Resources

The following list identifies some of the properties listed on the State Register of Historic Places:

- Connecticut Antique Machinery Museum / Connecticut Museum of Mining and Mineral Science
- Kent Historical Society Headquarters / Seven Hearths Museum / Swift House
- Kent Hollow School
- Skiff Mountain School
- Barnabas Hatch House
- Marble Valley Farm
- Skiff / Tobin Farm

Kent Presents

A wonderful example of the types of cultural activities which help enhance the overall quality of life in Kent include events hosted by Kent Presents.

From their website:

From 2015 through 2018, Kent Presents brought 250 luminaries to the Litchfield Hills in northwestern Connecticut to share ideas in virtually every field. This highly acclaimed ideas festival was a place for hundreds of guests to meet, mingle and dine with diplomats, artists, scientists, authors and more.

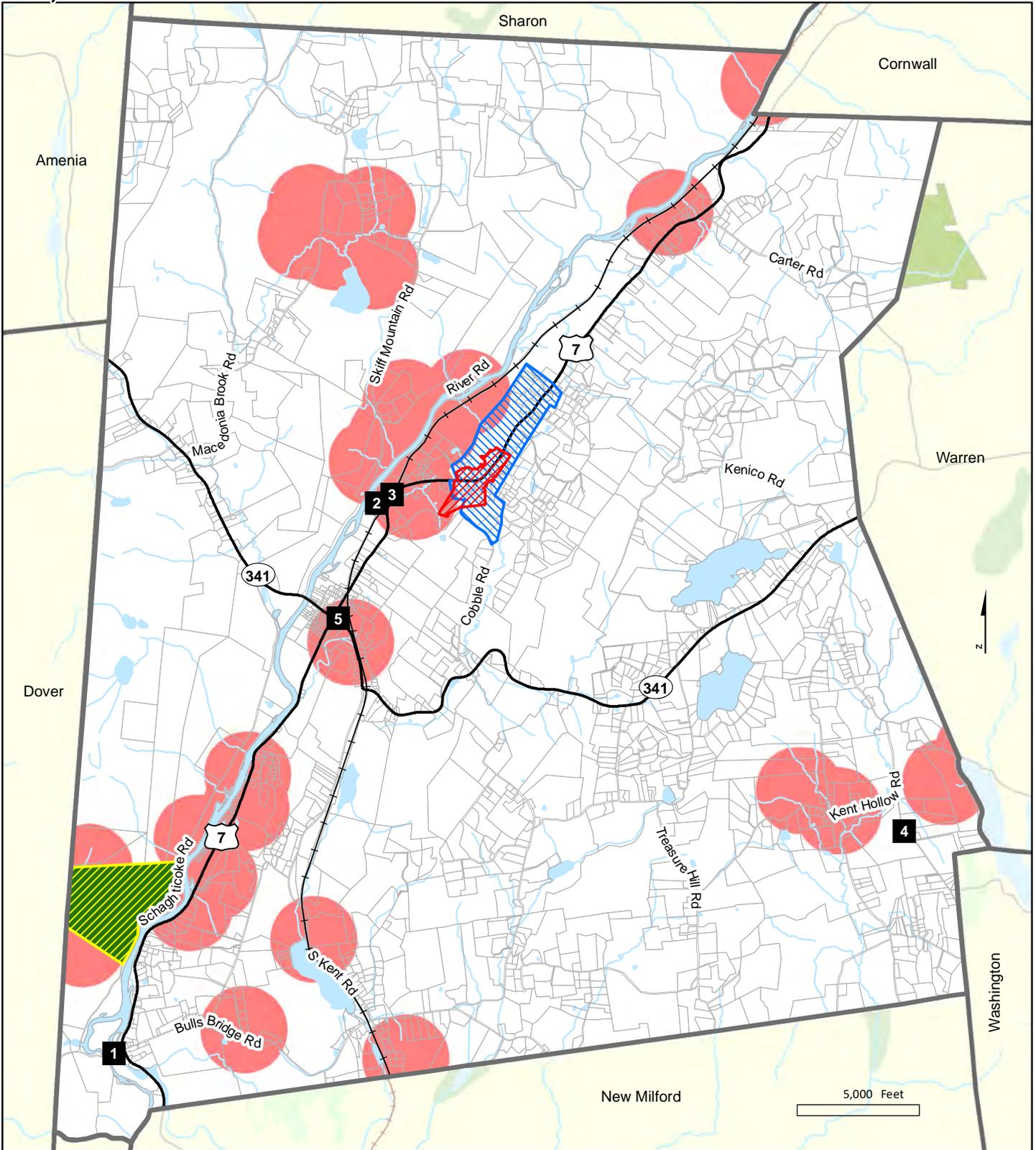
Ideas work best when shared.

Other Cultural Resources

For a community of about 3,000 residents, Kent is fortunate to have some additional significant cultural sites, institutions and opportunities including:

- Academic institutions
 - Kent School (private)
 - South Kent School (private)
 - Marvelwood School (private)
 - Kent Center School (public)
- The Kent Historical Society
- Kent Memorial Library
- Schaghticoke Reservation

3.4 PRESERVE AND PROMOTE CULTURAL RESOURCES		Leader/ Partner
Policies (strategies anticipated to continue over time) are identified by black text. <i>Action steps (specific tasks to implement the POCD) are identified by red italic text.</i>		
1. Continue to encourage and promote cultural resources in Kent: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and preserve archeologic resources. • Recognize and protect historic structures and sites. • Promote other cultural resources 	CC HDC KHS PZC Town	
2. <i>Add a checkbox to PZC application forms for the applicant to indicate whether the property is within 500 feet of a historic area or an archeological area identified in the POCD.</i>	<i>PZC</i>	
3. Continue to utilize the demolition delay ordinance to provide time and opportunity to preserve or document historic structures and resources that an owner may wish to remove.	Town	
4. As appropriate, encourage and support organizations (such as museums and historic sites) that promote tourism and provide local cultural opportunities.	Town	
5. Continue to work with private schools and other cultural organizations that contribute to the overall character and quality of life in Kent.	Town	



Places (NRHP/SRHP)

- 1** Bull's Bridge
- 2** Kent Iron Furnace
- 3** Eric Sloane Museum
- 4** Captain Philo Beardsley House
- 5** Soldiers Monument

Flanders Historic Districts Other Resources

-  Local
-  NRHP
-  Schaghticoke Reservation
-  Archeological Sensitivity



This section of the POCD recommends strategies for protecting significant landforms and viewsheds and other things that contribute to Kent's overall character.

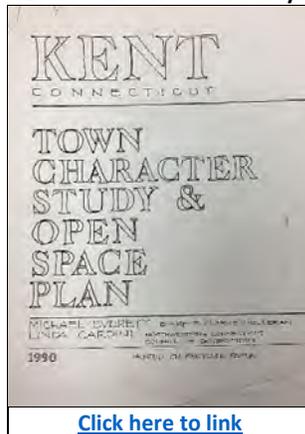
3.5 Maintain and Enhance Community Character

Continue to maintain and enhance community character.

Many factors contribute to what people see as the overall character of a community- appearance, ambience, sense of community, natural and cultural resources, people, businesses, services, and more. These factors are evident in Kent to residents and visitors and people often comment and remark on the character of Kent. Further, the on-line survey clearly showed that community character is important to Kent residents.

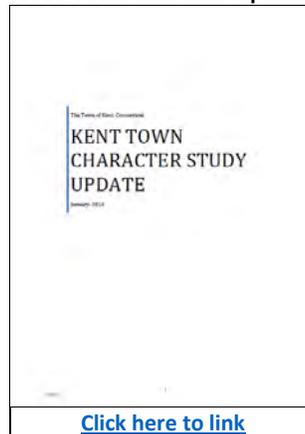
While Kent was certainly active in recognizing and protecting character before 1990, it was the original Town Character Study from that year which coalesced what people were thinking and feeling into a cohesive approach. That study (and other studies which have supplemented it over the years) are hereby recognized and incorporated into this POCD for reference purposes.

1990 Town Character Study



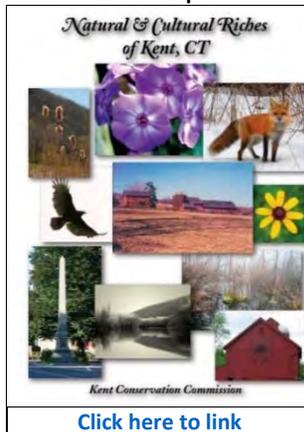
[Click here to link](#)

2013 Town Character Update



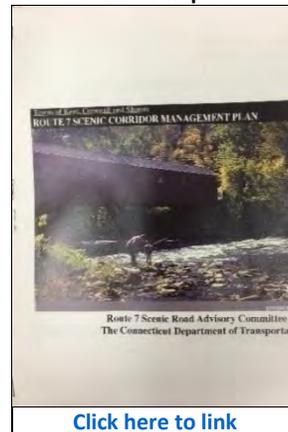
[Click here to link](#)

2009 Natural and Cultural Riches Report



[Click here to link](#)

Route 7 Scenic Corridor Report



[Click here to link](#)

It is important to note that the word character as used in the POCD is intended to capture and convey some of the things that people see and experience in Kent (listed alphabetically):

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Ambience | 9. Flavor |
| 2. Appearance | 10. Image |
| 3. Atmosphere | 11. Impression |
| 4. Aura | 12. Milieu |
| 5. Cachet | 13. Personality |
| 6. Complexion | 14. Prestige |
| 7. Distinctive nature | 15. Reputation |
| 8. Feeling | 16. Spirit |

The use of the word character is not intended to be used in a way to stop change from happening but instead to help guide local decision makers in understanding the things that make Kent special.

The POCD recommends that Kent continue to be cognizant of the things that contribute to community character and seek to maintain and enhance the overall character of the community **while accomplishing other community objectives.**

Town Character Areas

The 1990 Town Character Study described itself as follows:

This Town Character Study is an innovative exercise in 1) describing the cultural conditions that have shaped Kent and 2) outlining procedures which can retain rural character and historic identity in the face of persistent, incremental development pressure.

The 1990 Town Character Study identified a number of Town Character Areas and some new areas were added in the 2013 update. Since these areas are considered so important to the overall character of Kent, the listing is replicated in this POCD (see following pages). Additional information can be found by referring back to the earlier reports.

Kent Falls

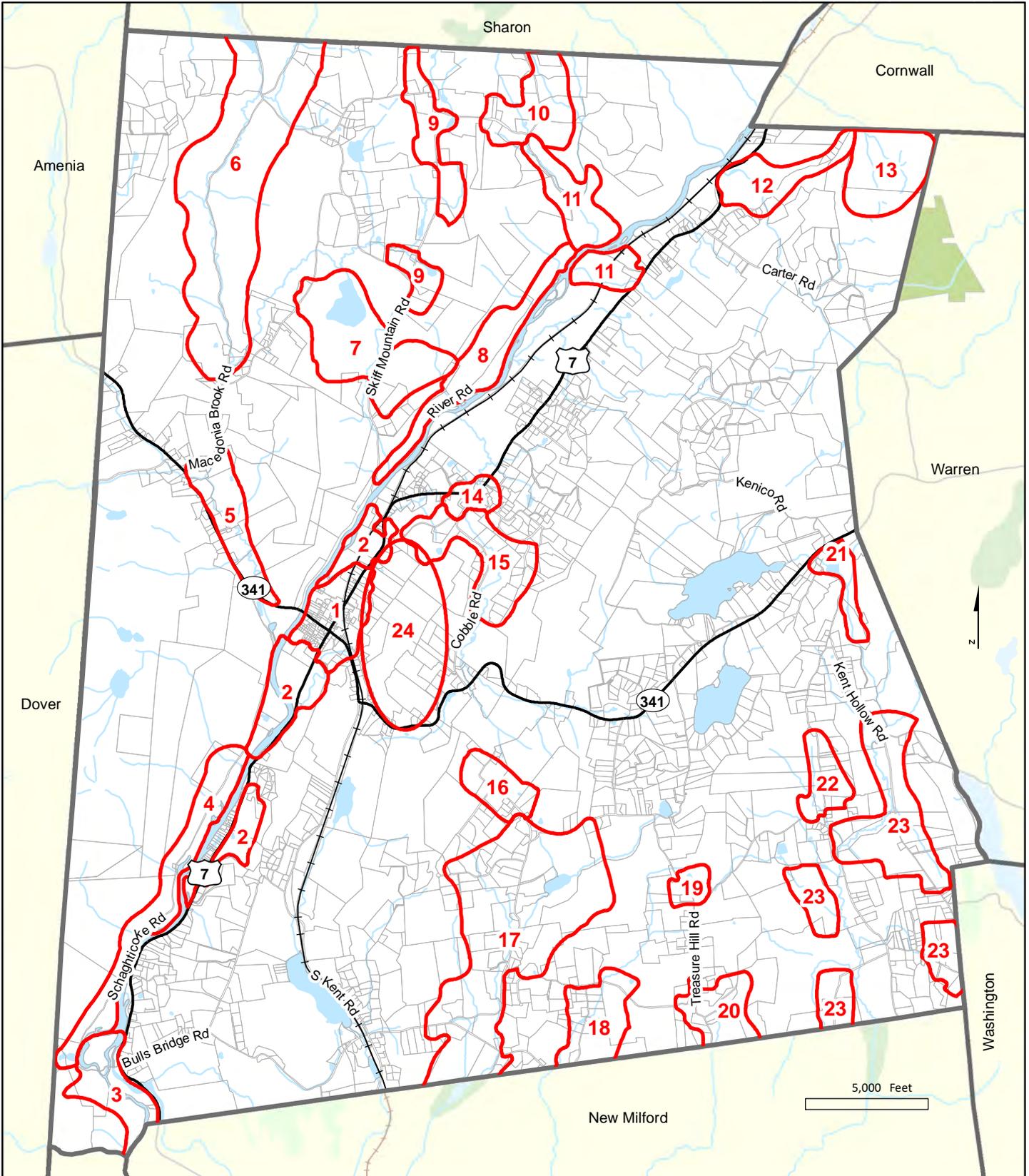


Lake Waramaug



Description of the Town Character Areas

Location / Designation	Summary
1. Kent Village	Kent's residential and commercial and cultural center
2. Housatonic Valley Meadows	Scenic, agricultural and village buffer areas
3. Bulls Bridge Hamlet Covered Bridge and Gorge:	Scenic area
4. Schaghticoke Rocks and Housatonic River Edge	Scenic area
5. Macedonia Brook Valley	Scenic area
6. Macedonia Brook State Park	Recreational area
7. Pond Mountain and Caleb's Peaks on Skiff Mountain	Scenic area
8. River Road/Appalachian Trail	Scenic route
9. Skiff Mountain Open Fields	Scenic panorama, agricultural and cultural area
10. Skiff Mountain Farms	Agricultural/open space area
11. North Kent Fields and River Crossing	Scenic and recreational area
12. Kent Falls and Overlook	Scenic area and panorama
13. Above Kent Falls	Panorama
14. Flanders	Cultural area
15. Cobble Brook Valley	Scenic and cultural area
16. Jennings Road Area	Scenic and cultural area
17. Geer Mountain Panorama	Scenic and cultural viewshed
18. Ore Hill Panorama	Cultural and scenic area
19. Upper Treasure Hill Area	Cultural and scenic area
20. Lower Treasure Hill Panorama	Cultural and scenic panorama
21. East Kent	Cultural area
22. Upper Kent Hollow Farm Area	Prime agricultural area
23. Kent Hollow Valley/West Aspetuck/Beardsley Road area	Prime agricultural area



 Character Area

See listing on prior page for names of character areas.

Scenic Roads

State Designated

- Route 7
- Route 478 (North Shore Road / Lake Waramaug Road)

Town Designated

- Cobble Lane
- Cobble Road
- Dugan Road
- Geer Mountain Road
- Kent Hollow Road (part)
- Skiff Mountain Rd (part)
- Treasure Hill Road
- Mud Pond Road

Scenic Resources

Scenic resources contribute to people’s perception of community character and there are a number of scenic resources in Kent. Being aware of scenic resources and identifying them in the POCD is an important step to preserving them.

Resource	Description
Scenic Places	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Town Center (including gateways) 2. Kent Falls 3. Lake Waramaug 4. Bulls Bridge / Bulls Bridge Gorge 5. Parks / Protected Open Spaces 6. Historic Resources
Scenic Corridors	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Housatonic River 8. Appalachian Trail / Local Trails
Areas With Special Scenic Resource Protections	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Housatonic River corridor 10. Horizon-Belt (ridgelines)
Scenic Roads (see Ordinance 17-7)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. (see sidebar and map on page 89)

Also note that scenic resources are a consideration in the RU-1 district (see map on page 14), the Kent Village Overlay District (see map on page 14), historic districts (see map on page 47), designation of character areas (see map on page 51), scenic roads (see map on page 89), and in other parts of Kent.

Building / Site Design

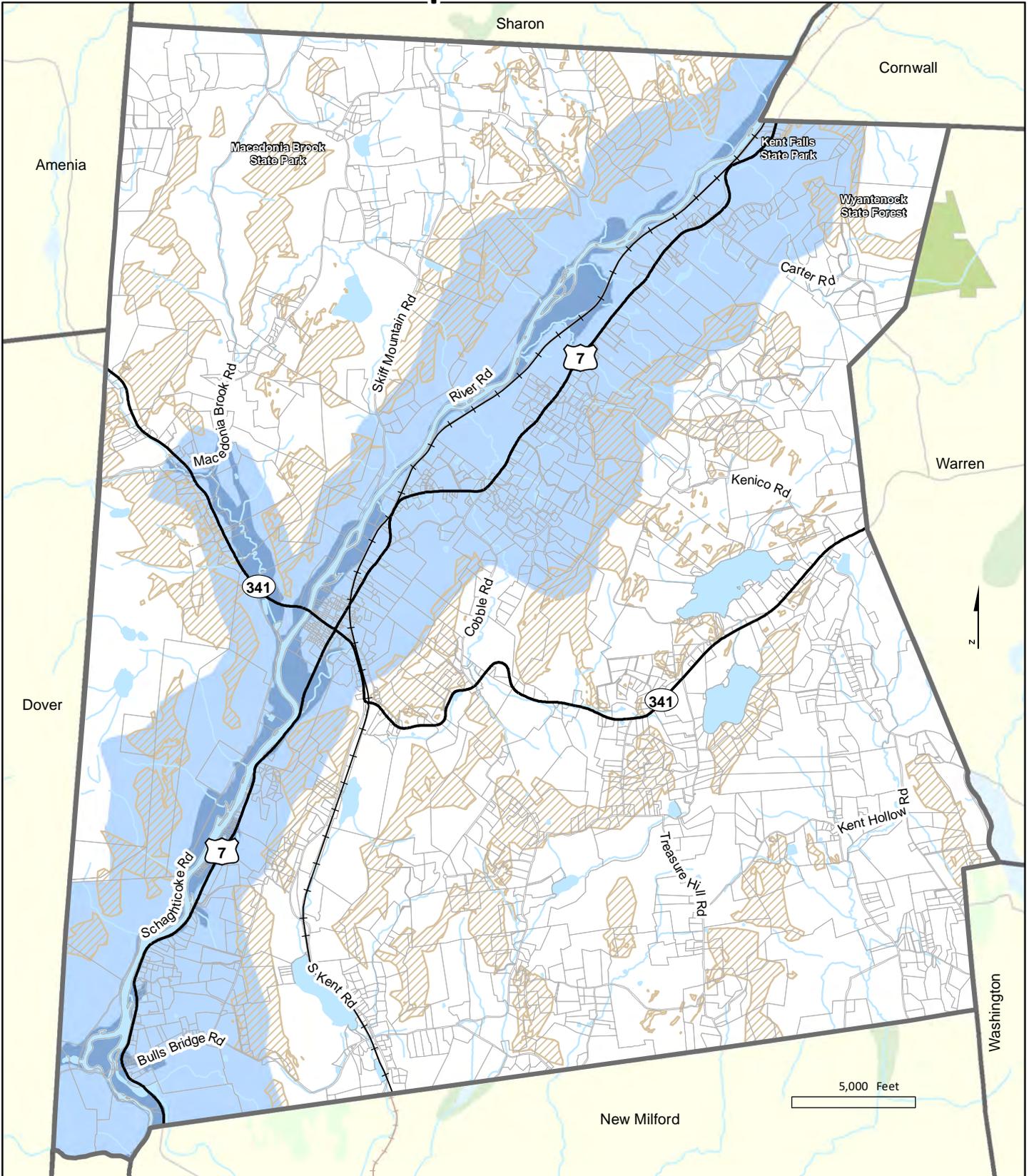
The design of buildings and sites can significantly affect the perception of community character. To address this, the Planning and Zoning Commission established a village district in the Town Center area and this is referred to as the Kent Village Overlay District (KVOD).

A village district is a special type of zoning district in Connecticut where a PZC can use a village district consultant to review the design of new buildings and sites and encourage or require designs which will enhance the overall character of the area.

While a local historic district was suggested for the Town Center area at one time, the POCD suggests that the village district’ provides similar guidance and controls but in a more flexible way.

While the cost of putting overhead utility lines underground may be considerable, the POCD recommends that utility lines in Kent Center be put underground whenever possible and that it be a long-term goal of the Town to eventually have all wired utility services underground in Kent Center.

Special Scenic Resource Protections



Housatonic River Overlay

- Inner Corridor
- Outer Corridor

Horizon-Line Overlay

- Horizon Belt Area

Also note that scenic resources are a consideration in the RU-1 district (see page 14), the Kent Village Overlay District (see page 14), historic districts (see page 47), designation of character areas (see page 51), scenic roads (see page 89), and in other parts of Kent.



3.5 CHARACTER RESOURCES	Leader/ Partner
<p>Policies (strategies anticipated to continue over time) are identified by black text. <i>Action steps (specific tasks to implement the POCD) are identified by red italic text.</i></p>	
<p>1. Seek to maintain and enhance the overall character of the community.</p>	<p>CC PZC</p>
<p>2. Continue efforts to protect important elements of identified Town character areas.</p>	<p>CC PZC</p>
<p><i>3. Add a checkbox to PZC application forms for the applicant to indicate whether the property is within a Town character area identified in the POCD.</i></p>	<p><i>PZC</i></p>
<p>4. Maintain the strong sensitivity to the value of scenic resources in Kent.</p>	<p>Town</p>
<p>5. Maintain and enforce regulations which help preserve the scenic integrity of the Town’s landscape: a. Conservation Development Overlay (ZR Section 5200) b. Horizon-line Conservation District (ZR Section 5700) c. Scenic Road Ordinance (Ordinance 17-7)</p>	<p>PZC Town</p>
<p><i>6. Consider whether to adopt a stone wall preservation ordinance.</i></p>	<p><i>CC</i> <i>Town</i></p>
<p>7. Continue efforts to protect, maintain, and enhance the primary entrances / gateways to Kent and the primary entrances to the Village Center.</p>	<p>CC Town</p>
<p><i>8. Review lighting regulations, especially with the continuing transition to LED lighting.</i></p>	<p><i>PZC</i></p>
<p>9. Continue to use the village district design review process (ZR Section 5100) for development and redevelopment in the Village Center to ensure visual continuity and compatibility throughout the entire Village Center area.</p>	<p>PZC</p>

3.6 Retain Undeveloped Land (PA-490)

Continue efforts to retain undeveloped land.

The amount of undeveloped land in a community can contribute to the overall perception of character. This is certainly true in Kent. However, there is much undeveloped land in Kent that is not protected (see the open space discussion) and could be developed in the future.

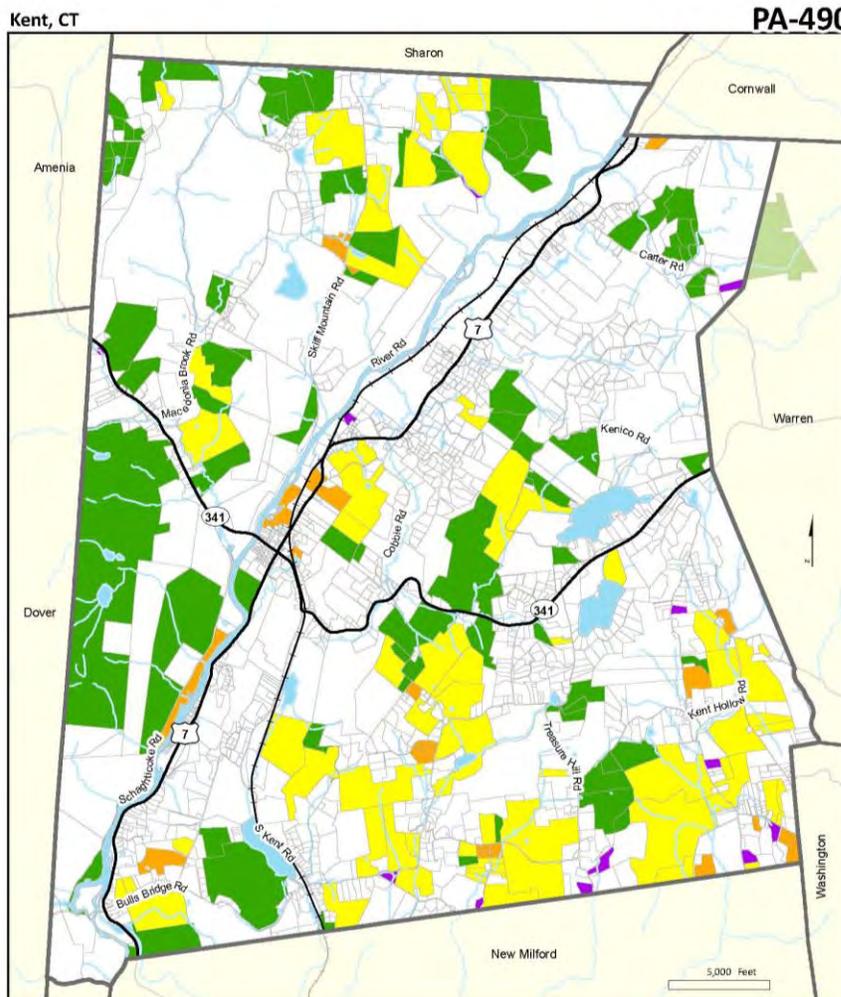
The PA-490 program (see sidebar) helps make undeveloped land less expensive to own and this helps enable landowners to keep undeveloped land in Kent and thus helps maintain community character. Kent should continue this program.



Public Act 490

In 1963, the Connecticut legislature enacted a use assessment program (referred to as Public Act 490) which provided an option for landowners to reduce their property assessment by enrolling in the program in one or more of three options:

- Farm – land used for farming or to support farming purposes (no minimum acreage)
- Forest – undeveloped forest land of 25 or more acres with an approved forest management plan
- Open space – a local option program where the criteria must be specified in the POCD and adopted by Town Meeting. (Kent adopted such a policy at a Town Meeting on December 1, 1989).



■ 490 Farm
 ■ 490 Forest
 ■ 490 Open Space
 ■ Multiple



The PA-490 program encourages the retention of undeveloped farmland, forests, and open spaces and this contributes to most of the conservation goals in the POCD. PA490 is an important tool for the town in conserving natural resources, open space, and encouraging the continued practice of agriculture on local, state and federally designated important farmland soils.

3.5 UNDEVELOPED LAND	Leader/ Partner
<p>Policies (strategies anticipated to continue over time) are identified by black text. <i>Action steps (specific tasks to implement the POCD) are identified by red italic text.</i></p>	
<p>10. Maintain the use assessment programs (known as the PA 490 programs) which makes undeveloped land less expensive to own and helps retain the scenic character of Kent.</p>	<p>Town</p>

Scenic View



DEVELOPMENT – PLACES AND USES

Guide development to make Kent an even stronger community.



A key element of the Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) is to identify strategies to guide future growth and change in Kent -- how the community is developed – to, among other things, promote the coordinated development of the municipality and the general welfare and prosperity of its people ... (CGS Section 8-23).

With regard to the overall POCD concept of sustainability and resiliency, it is important to note that adequate space has been provided outside of natural hazard areas for expected future growth in Kent.

Sustainable development is the pathway to the future we want for all.

Ban Ki-Moon
UN Secretary General

Village Center



Business / Economic Development



Residential Development



Housing Needs





4.1 Maintain / Enhance Kent Village Center

Maintain and enhance the Village Center as the heart and soul of Kent and continue to support it as a vibrant, mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly area.

This section of the POCD recommends uses and densities consistent with infrastructure and community facilities

Community Survey

In the community survey, when asked what one thing they would want to have happen in Kent, the Village Center was ranked #2 by participants.

Participants identified the Village Center as something in Kent they were proud of (3rd in ranking of topics).

Participants also identified the Village Center as something in Kent they were sorry about (3rd in ranking of topics).

For many residents and visitors, the Kent Village Center is recognized as the heart and soul of the community. In a relatively compact area, it contains many of the essentials of daily living for the surrounding area as well as most of the governmental, civic, cultural, and social facilities in the community.

For residents, the Village Center contains a local market, the post office, Town Hall, the elementary school, the library, several churches, specialty food shops, wine shops, vehicle fueling stations, and other important amenities. The public works facility is located in the Village Center as is the headquarters of the volunteer fire department. The Village Center also has a variety of residential uses from apartments and condominiums to single family homes and includes elderly housing and other types of affordable housing.

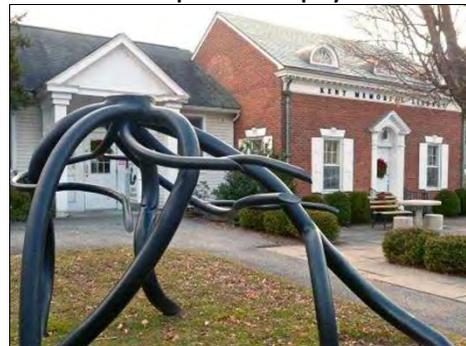
Further, as a result of the quintessential character of the Village Center, Kent attracts visitors from far and wide and causes people passing through on Route 7 to stop and linger for a while. Whether it be browsing through local shops or enjoying a meal or appreciating the various sculptures, the Village Center typically brings a smile to people's faces.

As a result, the Village Center is one of the economic engines in Kent and the region in terms of providing jobs for people, helping make goods and services available for residents and visitors, attracting tourists, and contributing net tax revenue to the community.

Re-Use Of Former Train Station



Sculpture On Display



Character / Village District Regulations

The overall appearance and ambience of the Village Center is an important asset. In order to maintain and enhance this asset, Kent established a village district regulation. A village district is a special type of zoning district in Connecticut (authorized by CGS Section 8-2j) where a community has special design review authority. This is codified in Section 5100 of the Zoning Regulations as the Kent Village Overlay District (KVOD). The establishment of an Architectural Review Board (ARB) as the village district consultant has helped ensure that the Village Center will retain its New England village character while accommodating economic activities.

Relevant Studies / Projects

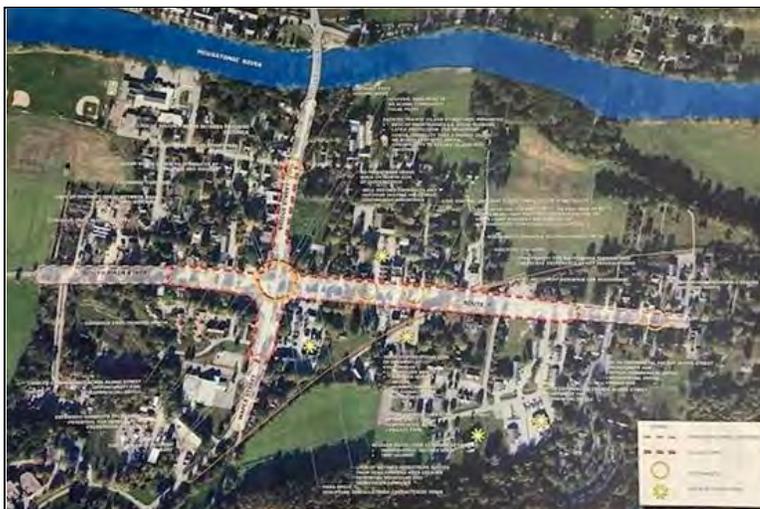
Over the years, there have been a number of studies and plans and projects which have looked at Kent's Village Center specifically or have included it as part of other work (see sidebar).

Streetscape Plan

Importantly, Kent is in the process of constructing a streetscape improvement project that has been over 10 years in the making. In total, approximately 11,000 feet of sidewalks will be replaced on parts of Route 7 and parts of Route 341.

From the original concept, the project attracted additional community support and eventually received three grants totaling over \$3 million:

- A Transportation Alternatives Program grant for \$2.35 million (CT-DOT),
- A Community Connectivity Grant for \$400,000 (CT-DOT), and
- A Main Street Investment Fund grant for \$500,000 (CT-DOH).



Village Center Studies

Some studies which have recognized the Village Center in a general way along with overall recognition of the importance of the Village Center to Kent's character:

- [Town Character Study and Open Space Plan \(1990\)](#)
- [Natural and Cultural Riches of Kent report \(2009\)](#)
- [Update To The Town Character Study and Open Space Plan \(2013\)](#)

Other studies and plans which have looked more closely at the Village Center:

- [Streetscape Improvement Plan \(ongoing\)](#)
- [Incentive Housing Zone Study \(2016\)](#)
- [Village Center Vitality Strategies \(2011\)](#)
- [Route 7 Scenic Corridor Master Plan \(1998\)](#)

Kent Welcome Center

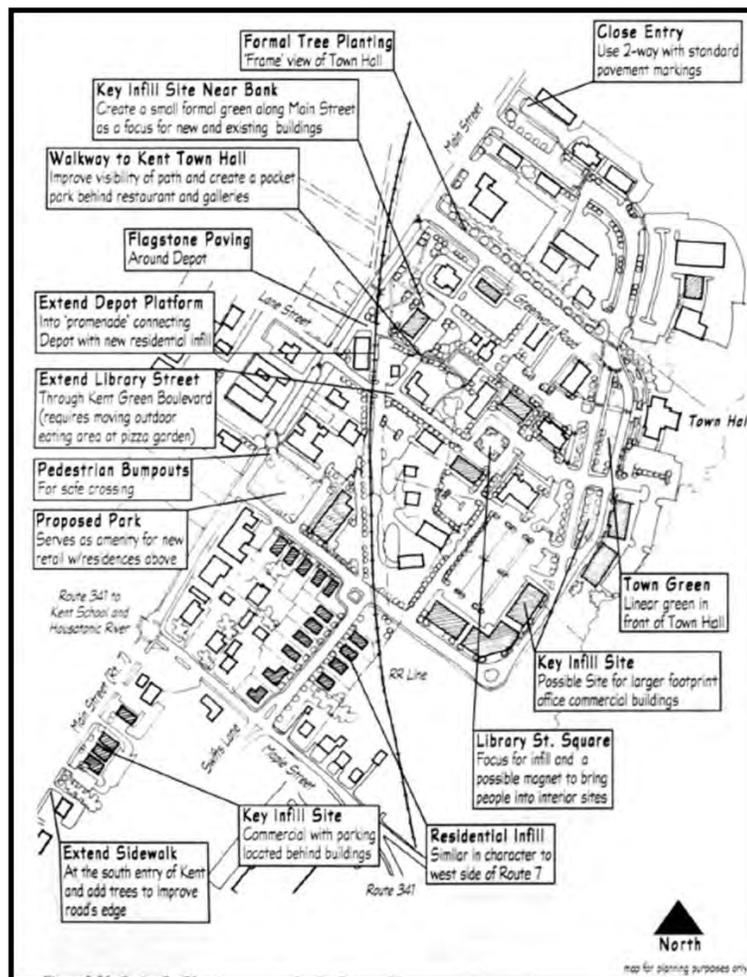
With a partnership among community members and a grant from the State, Kent was able to establish a Welcome Center in the Village Center in 2017 offering public bathrooms, showers for hikers on the Appalachian Trail, and a bulletin board and map for visitors.



1998 Route 7 Scenic Corridor Master Plan

In the late 1990s, the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CT-DOT) undertook a study of the Route 7 Corridor as part of the process of designating this highway as a State scenic road ([1998 Route 7 Scenic Corridor Master Plan](#)). As part of this study, some observations / recommendations were made with regard to Kent's Village Center:

- Guiding Development - Promoting possible development / redevelopment opportunities (business intensity, residential infill)
- Managing Roadway Access - More vehicular connections (Library Lane eastward to Kent Green area and Kent Green area southward to Route 341) while also reducing curb cuts where potentially problematic
- Importance of Pedestrianism - Improving pedestrian connectivity by extending sidewalks to outlying areas and improving pedestrian safety with pedestrian crosswalks and bumpouts
- Enhancing Appearance – Adding planting and streetscape amenities for visual impact and formalizing parks and green spaces



2016 Incentive Housing Study

In 2016, a special Town committee evaluated the potential for development (including residential development and affordable housing opportunities) within the Kent village area. The study looked at two areas within the Kent Village Center:

- The mixed-use area between Route 7 and the slope to the east, and
- The open field between Town Hall and Route 341.



[The study](#) concluded that the mixed use area could accommodate more development and intensity and that doing so would support the overall development of the village. Adequate utilities (water and sewer) and access are available to support additional growth.

The field area, which is undeveloped, was considered to have more potential for residential development (as opposed to business development) and such development would help provide housing options for the community and the residents will help support local businesses.

Additional recommendations were made with regard to establishing a through road connection to Route 341 and addressing overall drainage issues in this area.



SustainableCT recommends creation of creative place-making plans and this would be a good strategy for Kent's village center.

Village Center Principles And Concepts

Gateways / Approaches

1. Seek to preserve open spaces and scenic views at the four major approaches to the Village Center.
2. Consider installing gateway elements on approaches to the Village Center.

Wayfinding / Welcome Center

3. Building on the success of the Welcome Center, continue to facilitate the experience for visitors by adding wayfinding maps and signage at key locations elsewhere in the Village Center.
4. Install signage directing people to public parking available off Route 7.

Architectural / Site Design

5. Continue to use the Kent Village Overlay District (KVOD) provisions to review the design of development proposals to ensure they will maintain / enhance the overall character and function of the Village Center area.
6. Strive to organize future development in the Village Center around street designs and layouts that facilitate traffic, connect street grids, and eliminate existing dead-end drives wherever possible.

Permitted Uses

7. Encourage higher density residential development in around and near the Village Center to support local businesses, provide housing for workers, and increase the overall vitality of the Village Center area.
8. Continue to encourage mixed use buildings (ideally with business uses at ground level to promote pedestrian traffic and residential uses above), in the mixed-use overlay. Consider extending this mixed-use provision to other part of the Village Center, if considered appropriate.
9. Include country inn and bed and breakfast as permitted uses in addition to hotel / motel.

Vehicular Circulation

10. Investigate ways to accomplish lower speed limits in Kent Village.
11. Seek to add more crosswalks in Kent Village.
12. Seek ways to add driveway connections from Route 7 eastward across the railroad tracks to Kent Green.
13. Seek ways to interconnect the Village Center to Route 341 through the field east of the railroad tracks or from Route 341 northward by connecting through Kent Barns or other properties.



Pedestrian Circulation

14. Complete the streetscape project (85% of participants favored concrete sidewalks in a 2022 survey).
15. Maintain sidewalks and other pedestrian amenities in the best shape possible.
16. Consider extending sidewalks even further along Maple Avenue (Route 341) and/or Maple Avenue Extension to Segar Mountain Road.
17. Seek opportunities to connect the Village Center to the Housatonic River with a river overlook and, when feasible, a riverwalk extending northward along the river to (or towards) Flanders.
18. Continue to use Section 8400 of the Zoning Regulations which requires pedestrian improvements as part of new development in the Village Center.

Parking

19. Promote shared parking and access to reduce overall parking requirements in the Village Center.
20. Evaluate parking use and availability in the Village Center (in all seasons of the year) and identify future needs and alternative options, including right-sizing parking requirements for the mix of land uses in the Village Center.

Utility Infrastructure

21. Continue to investigate opportunities to bury overhead utility wires as part of new development / redevelopment in the Village Center

Implementation

22. Consider the potential of tax increment financing (allocating tax revenues anticipated from new development to fund up-front infrastructure improvements for that development and/or the community) to encourage and facilitate development (residential and/or business) in the Village Center.

Village Center Overall

Kent, CT

Conceptual
River Walk Trail(s)

Outer
Gateway

Inner
Gateway

Outer
Gateway

Inner
Gateway

**VILLAGE
CORE**

Inner
Gateway

Inner
Gateway

KLT Fields

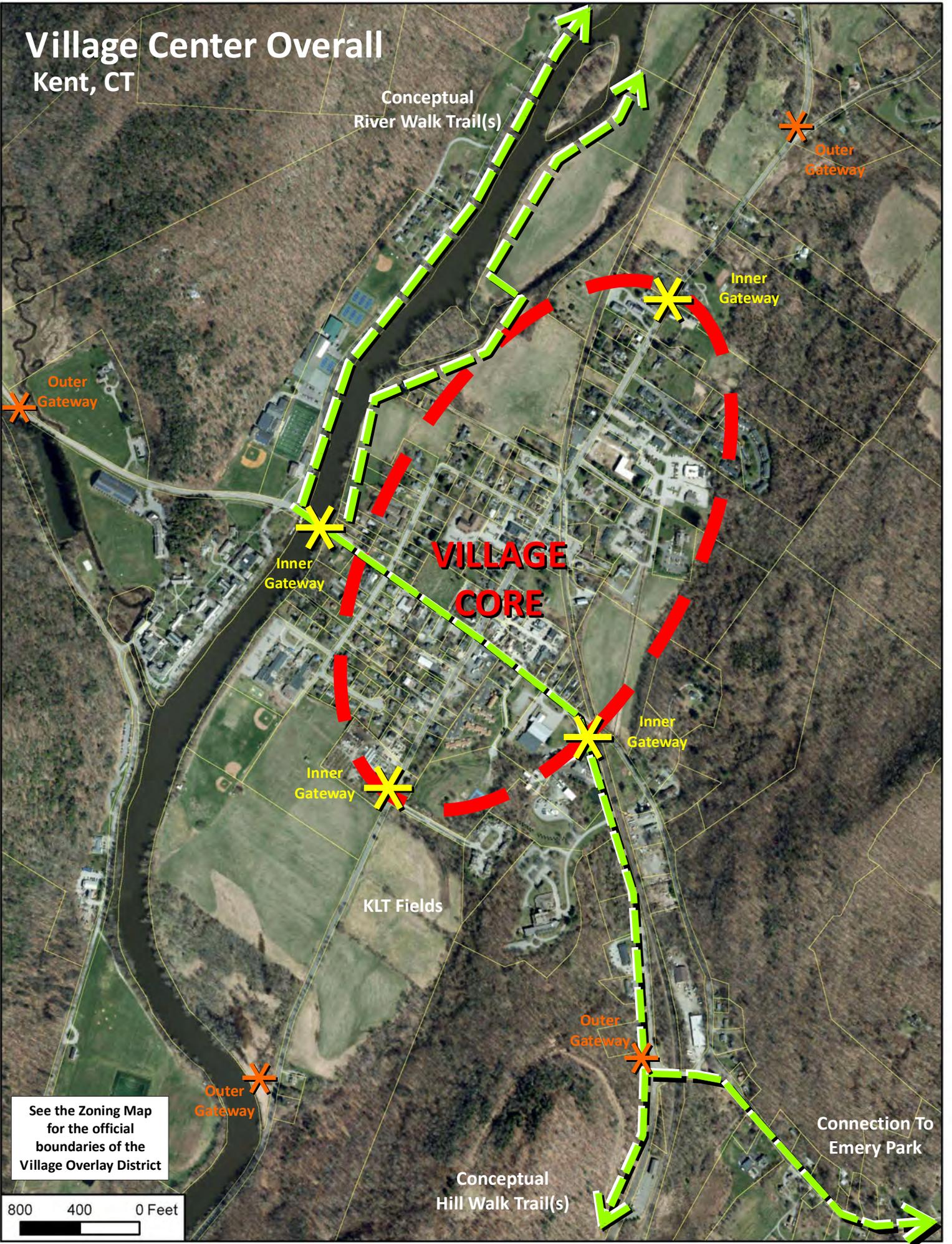
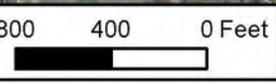
Outer
Gateway

Outer
Gateway

Connection To
Emery Park

Conceptual
Hill Walk Trail(s)

See the Zoning Map
for the official
boundaries of the
Village Overlay District



Village Center Detail

Kent, CT

Conceptual
River Walk Trail(s)

Inner
Gateway

Streetscape
Improvement
Area

MIXED USE / INFILL
OPPORTUNITY
AREAS

Inner
Gateway

Town Green
Opportunity
Area

HOUSING
OPPORTUNITY
AREA

One Or More Of
These Connections
From Route 341
Would Be Beneficial

Inner
Gateway

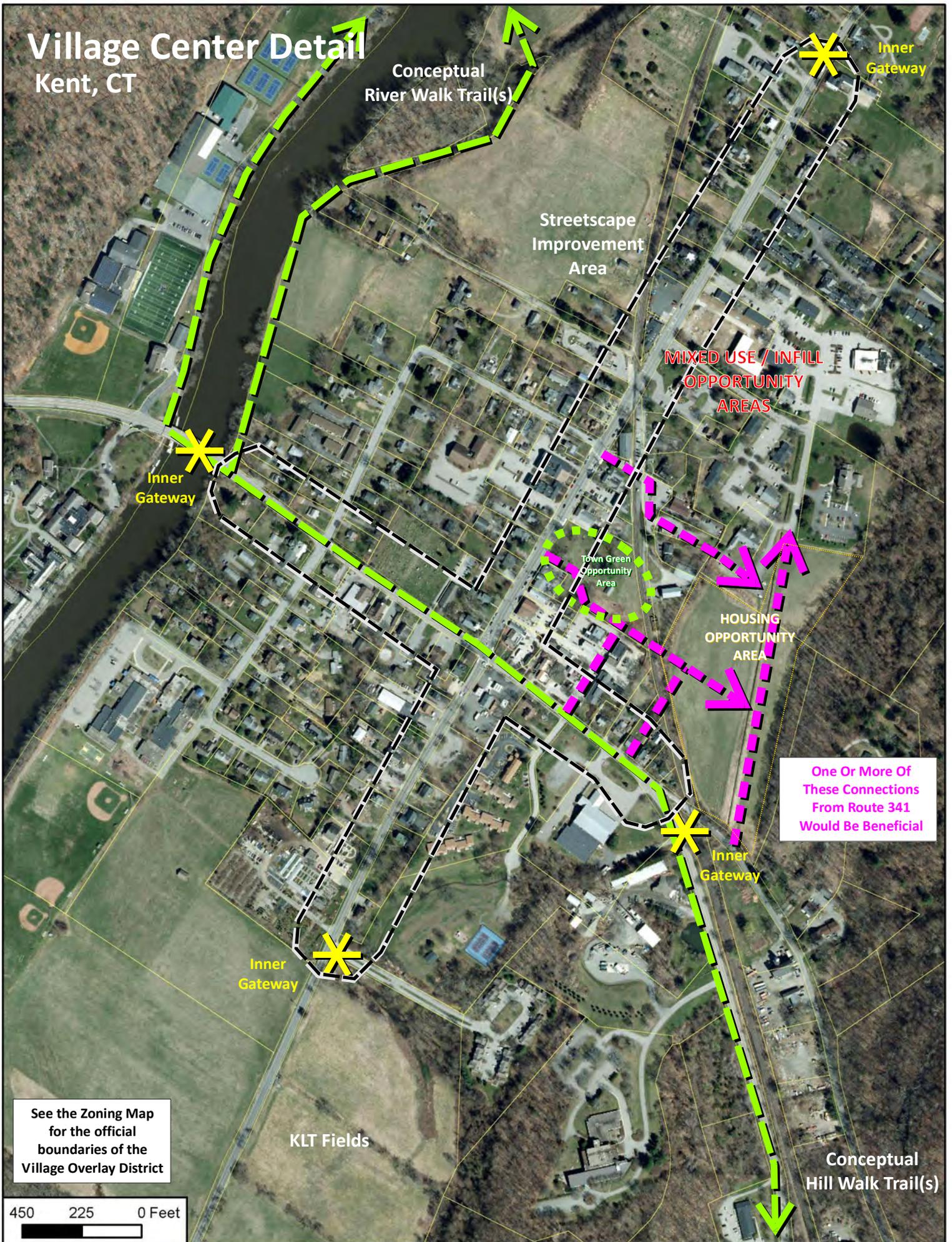
Inner
Gateway

KLT Fields

Conceptual
Hill Walk Trail(s)

See the Zoning Map
for the official
boundaries of the
Village Overlay District

450 225 0 Feet



Electric Vehicle Charging Stations



Interest has been expressed in providing or requiring electric vehicle charging stations in the Village Center (provide as community amenity or allow as private business or require as part of new development). The Federal Highway Administration recently designated Route 7 as an alternative fuel corridor and there is likely to be support for installing EV chargers in the future. An approach should be developed for Kent and the following parameters might be considered:

1 Level 3 charger =

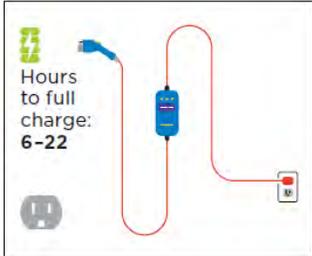
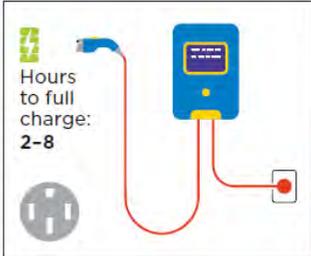
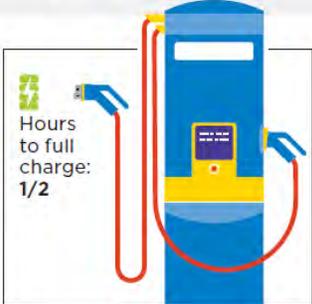
4 level 2 chargers =

16 level 1 chargers

1. Investigate what type(s) of electric vehicle charging stations to incorporate into the Village Center:
 - a. Level 1 (8+ hour charge @ 120V)
 - b. Level 2 (2+ hour charge @ 240V)
 - c. Level 3 (0.5 hour charge @ 480V) [connectors are not universally consistent yet - should charge for this to encourage turnover of spaces]
2. Identify location(s) for electric vehicle charging stations in the Village Center:
 - a. Spaces located wherever opportunities arise,
 - b. Spaces in each of the four quadrants of the Village Center for distribution of visitor traffic
 - c. Spaces in a central location for convenience of users
 - d. A combination of the above

CHOOSING THE RIGHT CHARGER: SPEED AND POWER

There are three current standards for EV charging stations, each with different charging speeds and different electrical infrastructure needs. That's why it's important to match the charger with the intended use.

 <p>Hours to full charge: 6-22</p>	 <p>Hours to full charge: 2-8</p>	 <p>Hours to full charge: 1/2</p>
<p>LEVEL 1 (120V): Essentially universal chargers, these use a standard outlet like those in a home. They are the simplest to use and don't require the installation of new electrical wiring. But they are the slowest charger type, giving cars two to five miles of range for every hour they're plugged in.</p>	<p>LEVEL 2 (240V): The most common public chargers, these use a higher voltage outlet. Most homes and commercial properties have 240V lines to the building, but installing a charger could require extra electric work on the premises. These chargers add 10 to 20 miles of range for every hour of charging.</p>	<p>DIRECT CURRENT/FAST CHARGING (480+V): By far the fastest—they recharge a car in 20-30 minutes—they also draw the most power. But not all EVs can use these and there are no universal standards for the charging ports, so one carmaker's chargers are often incompatible with other companies' cars.</p>

4.1 MAINTAIN / ENHANCE KENT VILLAGE CENTER	Leader/ Partner
<p>Policies (strategies anticipated to continue over time) are identified by black text. <i>Action steps (specific tasks to implement the POCD) are identified by red italic text.</i></p>	←
1. Continue efforts to maintain and enhance the physical appearance and economic vitality of Kent’s Village Center.	Town
2. Consider participating in the programs of the Connecticut Main Street Center.	Town
3. <i>Complete the streetscape improvement project.</i>	<i>Town</i>
4. Seek funding for a creative place-making plan for the village center.	Town KST
5. Continue to use the Kent Village Overlay District (KVOD) provisions to protect and enhance the distinctive character, landscape, and historic value that exists.	PZC
6. <i>Amend the Zoning Regulations to require that new development or re-development in the Village Center incorporate, as appropriate, Village Center Principles And Concepts contained in the POCD.</i>	<i>PZC</i>
7. <i>Revisit Zoning Regulations for the Village Center with regard to:</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. <i>Permitted uses (see page 62 in the POCD)</i> b. <i>Increasing building coverage / impervious coverage.</i> c. <i>Increasing residential density in the Village Housing Overlay Zone (especially if affordable units are provided).</i> d. <i>Whether the Village Housing Overlay and/or Mixed Use Overlay should be required rather than optional.</i> e. <i>right-sizing parking requirements for the mix of land uses in the Village Center</i> 	<i>PZC</i>
8. <i>Supplement directional and informational signage.</i>	<i>Town</i>
9. <i>Develop an approach to provide for electric vehicle charging stations in the Village Center (including any regulation changes).</i>	<i>Town PZC</i>
10. Because of the significance of sidewalks and pedestrian circulation in the Village Center area, continue the approach whereby the Department of Public Works takes care of the sidewalks in that area.	Town
11. Monitor long-range proposals to reinstate passenger rail service since such service may directly impact the operational aspects of roadways and pedestrian connections within the Village Center (and parking needs).	Town
12. Put utility lines in Kent Center underground whenever possible as part of a long-term goal to eventually have all wired utility services underground in Kent Center.	BOS PZC
13. <i>Initiate a program to plant street trees in Kent village on an on-going basis to enhance the area and replace trees before they die.</i>	<i>CC</i>





This section of the POCD promotes overall economic health by supporting local businesses that employ residents and/or re-invest locally.

Community Survey

In the community survey, when asked what one thing they would want to have happen in Kent, business and economic development was ranked #6 by participants.

Business and economic development was also ranked #5 by participants in terms of the greatest challenge facing Kent.

4.2 Guide Business / Economic Development

Guide business and economic development in Kent.

Sustainability and resilience are key concepts in this Plan of Conservation and Development and economic sustainability is part of that. Economic sustainability can include:

- Employment for local residents,
- Goods and services for residents, businesses, and visitors,
- Net tax revenue to support local services.

One of the issues affecting Kent is that some retail and service businesses are year-round (food, hardware, wine, gasoline, banking real estate, etc.) while other businesses are more seasonal in nature and may only operate (or thrive) for 8 months of the year.

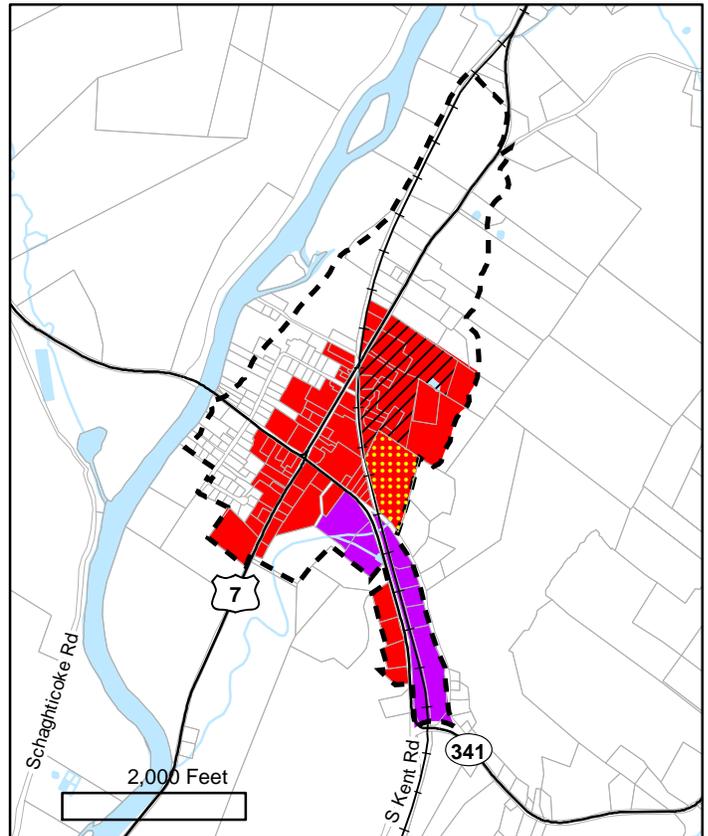
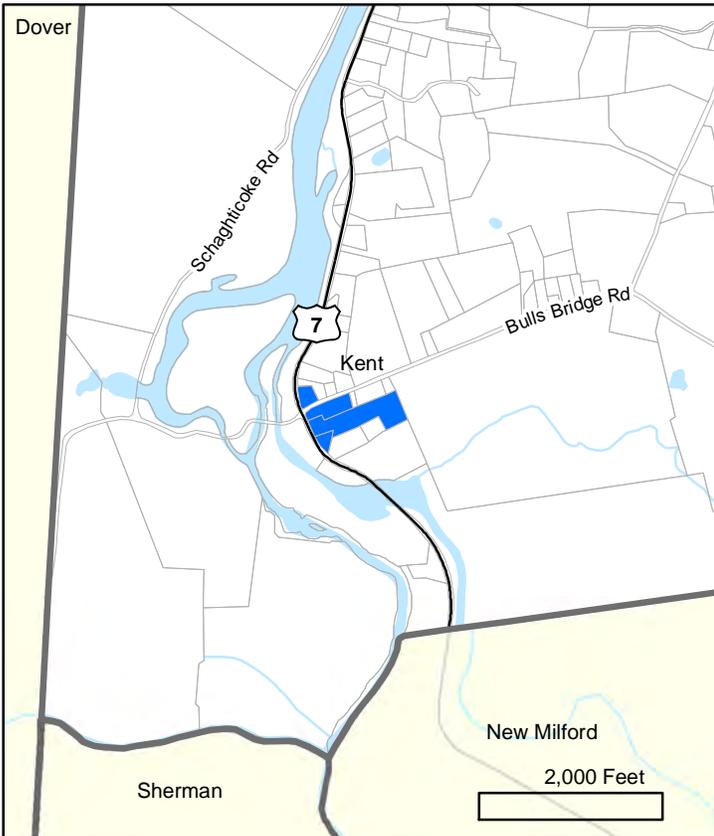
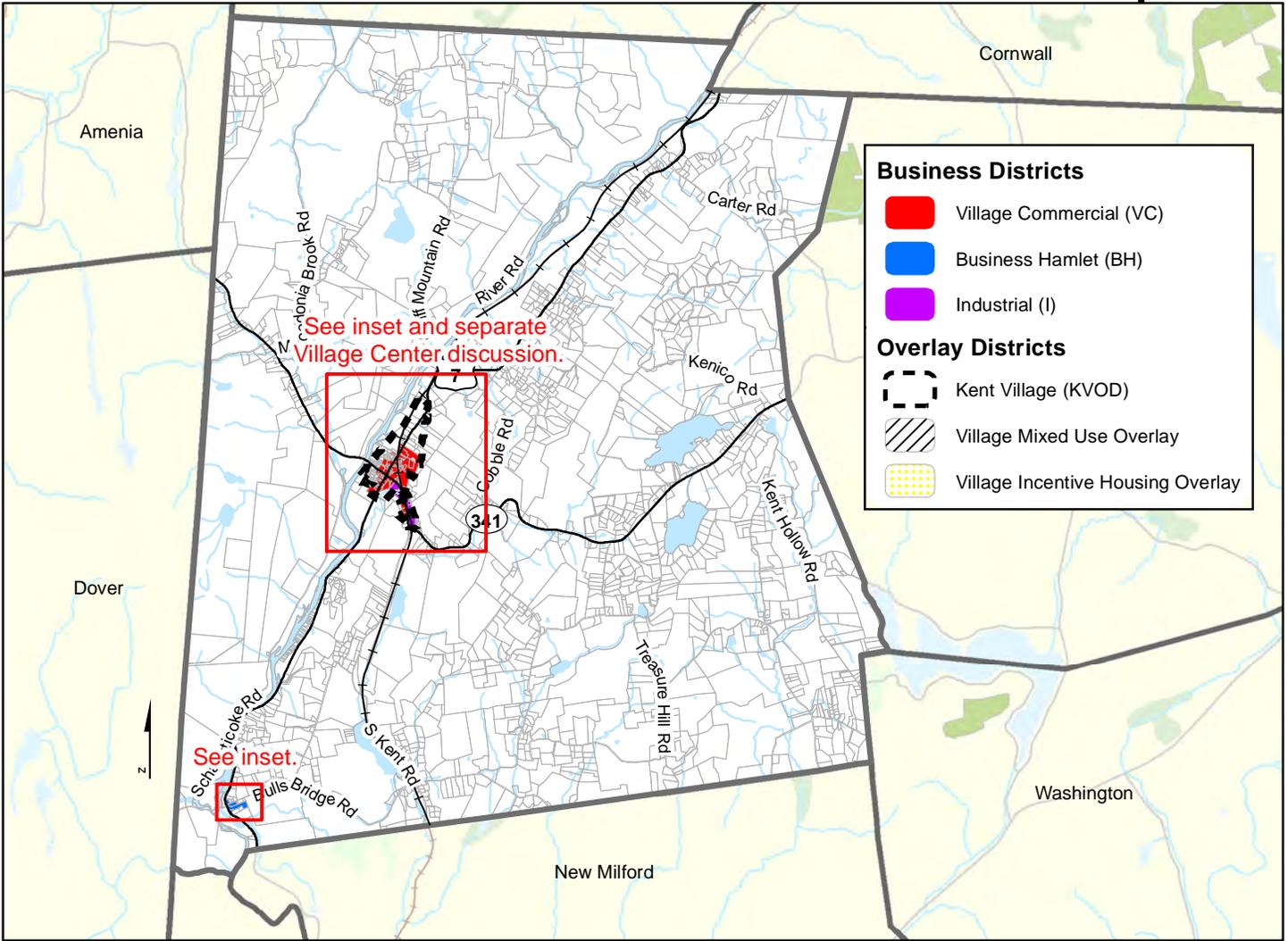
Promote Local Economic Development

Tourism / Visitation

Tourism contributes quite a bit to Kent’s economy whether it be weekend visitors, day trippers, passers-through, events associated with local private schools, or other events and activities. It would be hard for Kent to replace the tourism spending that occurs here.

Kent should continue to support tourism related activities and events both in town and in the region provided such activities are consistent with the capabilities of the community and any resources or assets affected (i.e., Kents Falls, Bulls Bridge, Housatonic River, etc.). This includes those who come to Kent for the recreational attributes, the cultural attributes, or the overall ambience.

Recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote water-based recreational opportunities (Kent Falls, Housatonic River, Lake Waramaug, Hatch Pond, Bulls Bridge, etc. consistent with the capabilities of the community and any resources or assets affected) • Promote open space-based recreational opportunities (hiking trails, nature walks, etc.) • Promote on-road and off-road bicycling activities.
Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with private schools and organizations (Sloane Museum, Kent Furnace, Historical Society, etc.)
Ambience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the Village Center businesses, etc.



Economic Development Support

The Kent Chamber of Commerce works to support local businesses in the community. The Chamber is primarily supported by business members (with a part-time staff person). Although the Kent community benefits from the efforts of the Chamber, there is no Town of Kent counterpart to the Chamber of Commerce.

To help support economic development (and related efforts) in and for Kent, the Town could:

- Establish an economic development commission, or
- Support the efforts of the Chamber of Commerce.

If the Town were to support the efforts of the Chamber, it could:

- Provide an official liaison to the Chamber of Commerce,
- Provide funding to the Chamber each year to support their efforts,
- Provide administrative support to the Chamber of Commerce, and/or
- Partner with a regional entity (such as the COG or other entity) to provide administrative support to the Chamber of Commerce.

Home-Based Businesses

While home-based work expanded during the COVID pandemic (when employers and employees gravitated to working from home), Kent also has had a robust contingent of the population that operates a home-based business.

The Zoning Regulations allow for different intensities of home-based businesses:

- A home office (allowed with no permit required),
- A minor home occupation which may include one employee and/or may involve customer visits to the premises (allowed by Zoning Permit), and
- A major home occupation for most any other home-based business activity (requires a Special Permit from the Commission).

These approaches seem to work well for Kent and should be continued. Modifications should be considered if appropriate.

Private Schools

Private schools in Kent (Kent School, South Kent School, Marvelwood School) make significant contributions to the local economy in terms of wages and salaries and the purchasing power of the institution itself as well as students and staff. While property tax revenue is not a major benefit to the Town, these other benefits to Kent's economy are still considerable.

Support Regional Economic Development Initiatives

All municipalities in northwest Connecticut support the appropriate economic development of the region. There are several entities and organizations working on this and Kent should support the efforts of:

- Northwest Hills Council of Governments
- Northwest Connecticut Economic Development Corporation

The five core focus areas of the CEDS are:

- Working to build a world class fiber-optic network and enhanced mobile network;
- Attracting young workers to fill available jobs and visitors to the region through tourism, arts, and culture initiatives;
- Fostering rural innovation and entrepreneurship in the region through a Rural Lab initiative;
- Supporting the region's farmers through the NWCT Regional Food Hub; and
- Promoting the region's strong advanced manufacturing and healthcare sectors by attracting and training the workforce they need.

Kent should continue to participate in regional economic development initiatives and other topics of mutual interest.

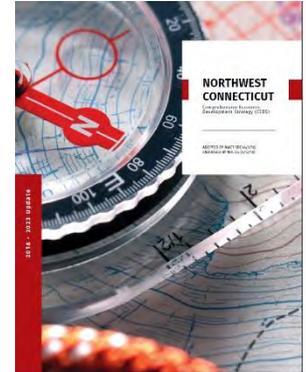
Continue To Avoid Strip Development

Kent has long held to the concept of avoiding strip development. Strip development is a term used to describe automobile-oriented linear development along roadways (typically commercial) often exhibiting single-story buildings, individual curb cuts for each property and limited connections to adjacent properties, lack of coordination with surrounding land uses, and limited accessibility for pedestrians.

This POCD continues the recommendation that Kent avoid strip development whether it be in the Village Center, along Route 7, or elsewhere.

Regional Initiatives

In 2018, the Northwest Connecticut Economic Development Corporation adopted a [Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy](#) (CEDS) to guide future economic development efforts in the region.



Review Zoning In The Industrial Area - Maple Street Extension

Kent has a small Industrial District which straddles Maple Street (Route 341) east of the Village Center. Properties are served by public water and public sewer and properties on Maple Street Extension about the rail line. The Zoning Regulations divide the zone into two parts:

- Industrial A areas between Maple Street Extension and the rail line, and
- Industrial B (Public Works facility and the Firehouse) with greater setbacks required and lesser coverage allowed.

Additional industrial development in the future could be accomplished / facilitated by one or more of the following options :

1. Remediating (by the owners) of any environmental issues impeding development of the former Berkshire Transformer property.
2. Extending the physical boundaries of the Industrial A zoning district to the east side of Maple Street Extension (zoned residential) although the development potential is limited due to steep slopes and residential uses.
3. Modifying the Zoning Regulations to:
 - a. Allow shallower setbacks from the rail line.
 - b. Allow more lot coverage (currently at 35%)
 - c. Allow buildings larger than 15,000 SF by Special Permit.

Kent should seek to ensure that future uses and improvements in the Industrial zone will complement Kent's New England character.



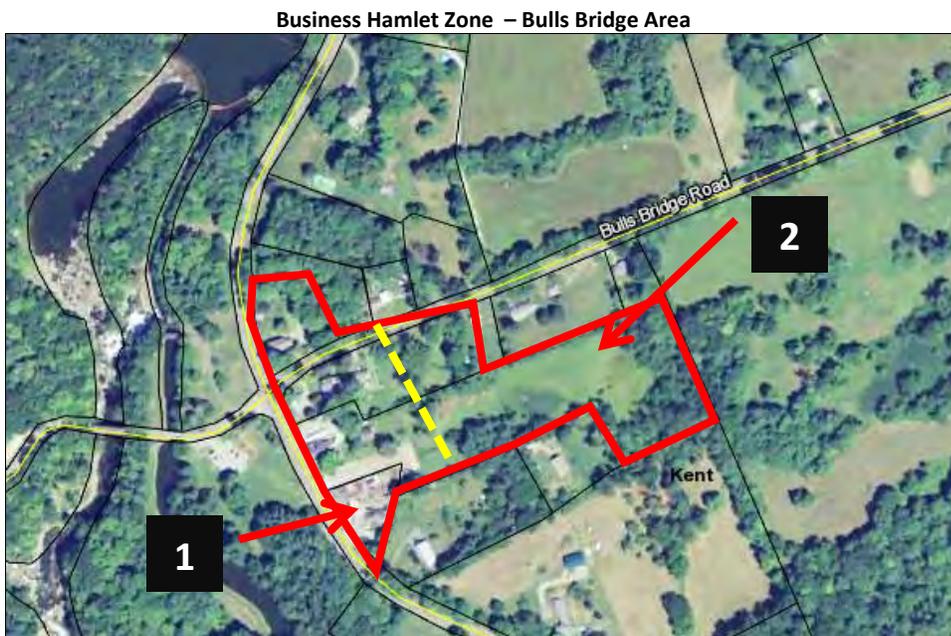
Review Zoning In The Bulls Bridge Business Area

There is also a small area zoned Business Hamlet (BH) in the Bulls Bridge area of Kent. The regulation allow one- or two-family residential uses (by Zoning Permit) and business uses by Special Permit.

For this area, the Commission should:

- Revisit the zoning boundaries since there appears to be conflicting information regarding the boundaries of the Business Hamlet district and then, once clarified, incorporate those boundaries on the Zoning Map through an inset map with property lines.
- Review the permitted uses to consider whether to allow for a hospitality use (such as a country inn-type lodging facility) by Special Permit, and/or allow an existing auto repair / gas station to be permitted in the BH zone (or allow the use to remain as a non-conforming use and subject to Section 9200 of the Zoning Regulations).
- Reducing the depth of the BH zone from Route 7 (#2 below) although greater depth could be appropriate for a country inn-type lodging facility, and/or

Kent should seek to ensure that future uses and improvements in the Business Hamlet zone will complement Kent's New England character.





4.2 GUIDE BUSINESS / ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	Leader/ Partner
<p>Policies (strategies anticipated to continue over time) are identified by black text. <i>Action steps (specific tasks to implement the POCD) are identified by red italic text.</i></p>	
<p>1. Overall - Continue to promote the economic sustainability of Kent.</p>	Town KST
<p>2. Tourism - Continue to support tourism related activities and events both in town and in the region.</p>	Town
<p>3. Continue to explore how to best support economic development in Kent.</p>	<i>BOS</i> Town
<p>4. Collaborate and cooperate with regional economic development activities and resources (grant applications, funding opportunities, brownfield remediation, etc.).</p>	<i>BOS</i> Town
<p>5. Home-Based Businesses – Continue to enable home-based businesses based on the potential impacts of different types of uses.</p>	PZC
<p>6. Private Schools – Continue to work with private schools to find ways to support / enhance the local economy.</p>	Town
<p>7. Regional Economic Development Initiatives - Continue to participate in regional economic development initiatives and other topics of mutual interest.</p>	Town CoC
<p>8. Character - Strive to ensure that future business and industrial uses and improvements complement Kent’s New England character and avoid strip development whether it be in the Village Center, along Route 7, or elsewhere.</p>	PZC ARB
<p>9. Industrial Zone – <i>Consider whether to modify the area / dimensional standards in the Zoning Regulations to enable more effective use of the Industrial A zone (especially narrow and shallow parcels).</i></p>	<i>PZC</i>
<p>10. Business Hamlet Zone –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>a. Review permitted uses in the Business Hamlet Zone (consider allowing for a country inn-type lodging facility by Special Permit),</i> <i>b. Review the boundaries of the Business Hamlet Zone (consider reducing the depth of the BH zone from Route 7), and/or</i> <i>c. Once the zoning boundaries are clarified, readopt the Zoning Map with an inset map with property lines for the BH district.</i> 	<i>PZC</i>

4.3 Guide Residential Development

Continue to guide residential development in Kent to provide for housing choices and options in accordance with soil types, terrain, and infrastructure capacity.



Social sustainability (people and community) includes the ability of people to find housing that meets their needs and their budget. Kent and all of Northwest Connecticut is aware of the changing age composition of communities due to housing prices and the particular impact on younger people, lower income households, and businesses. Residential development is important.

This section of the POCD recommends strategies to provide for healthy, efficient, and diverse housing options, including housing which will be affordable to low- and moderate-income households.

Kent is primarily a residential community and over 99% of the land in Kent is zoned residential and allows for a variety of uses:

District	Allowable Uses	Minimum Lot Size
Village Residential 1 (VR-1) 55 acres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1-family buildings 2-family buildings Multi-family (10 units/acre) 	10,000 SF
Village Residential 2 (VR-2) 51 acres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conservation Development (allowed) Accessory dwelling unit Boarding house 	30,000 SF
Rural Residential 1 (RU-1) 31,671 acres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1-family buildings 2-family buildings Conservation Development (<i>required</i>) Accessory dwelling unit Boarding house 	2-5 acres depending on soil type
Rural Residential 2 (RU-2) 25 acres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1-family buildings 2-family buildings Accessory dwelling unit 	1 acre

Community Survey

In the community survey, 77% of the participants identified housing (type, value, etc.) as important in their decision to live in Kent.

Housing affordability was ranked #2 by participants in terms of the greatest challenge facing Kent.

The VR-1 and VR-2 districts are in the Village Center and properties are generally served (or serviceable) by public water supply and public sewage disposal. The RU-2 district is in the Birch Court area south of the Village Center.

Most land in Kent is in the RU-1 zone and Kent has used a soil-based residential zoning approach in the RU-1 zone for many years. In this soil-based approach, the minimum lot size for each lot is dependent on the soil types on the parcel and ability of those soils to assimilate and treat septic waste and provide for a water supply well.

As part of the 2018 amendments, Kent also established a *mandatory* conservation development approach whereby the configuration of development parcels would require an environmental analysis of the identified resource types.

There are some multi-family developments in and near the Village Center which help provide some housing options and choices:

- Lane / Elizabeth Street apartments
- North Main Street condominiums
- Stuart Farms / Templeton Farms / South Common

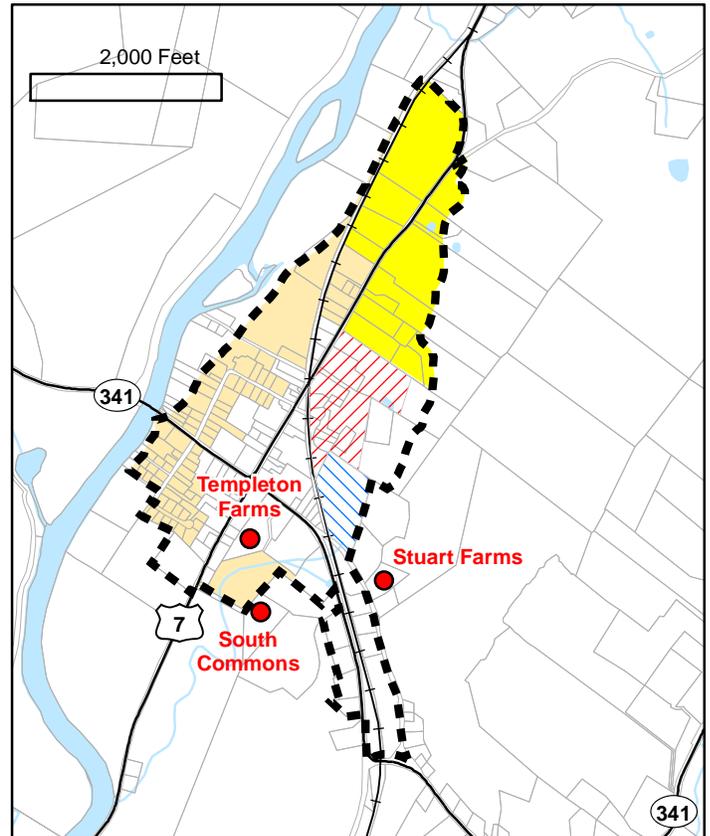
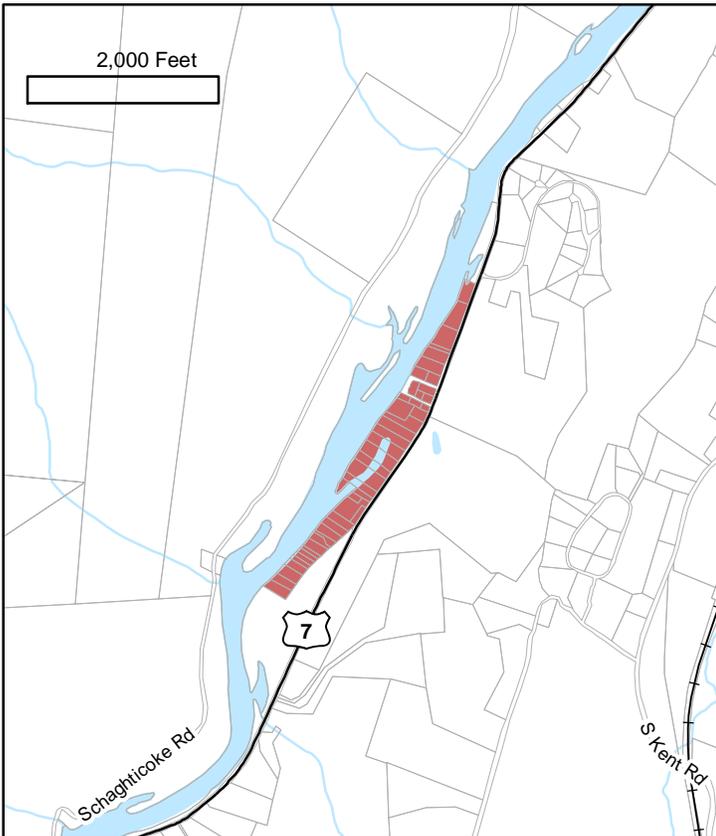
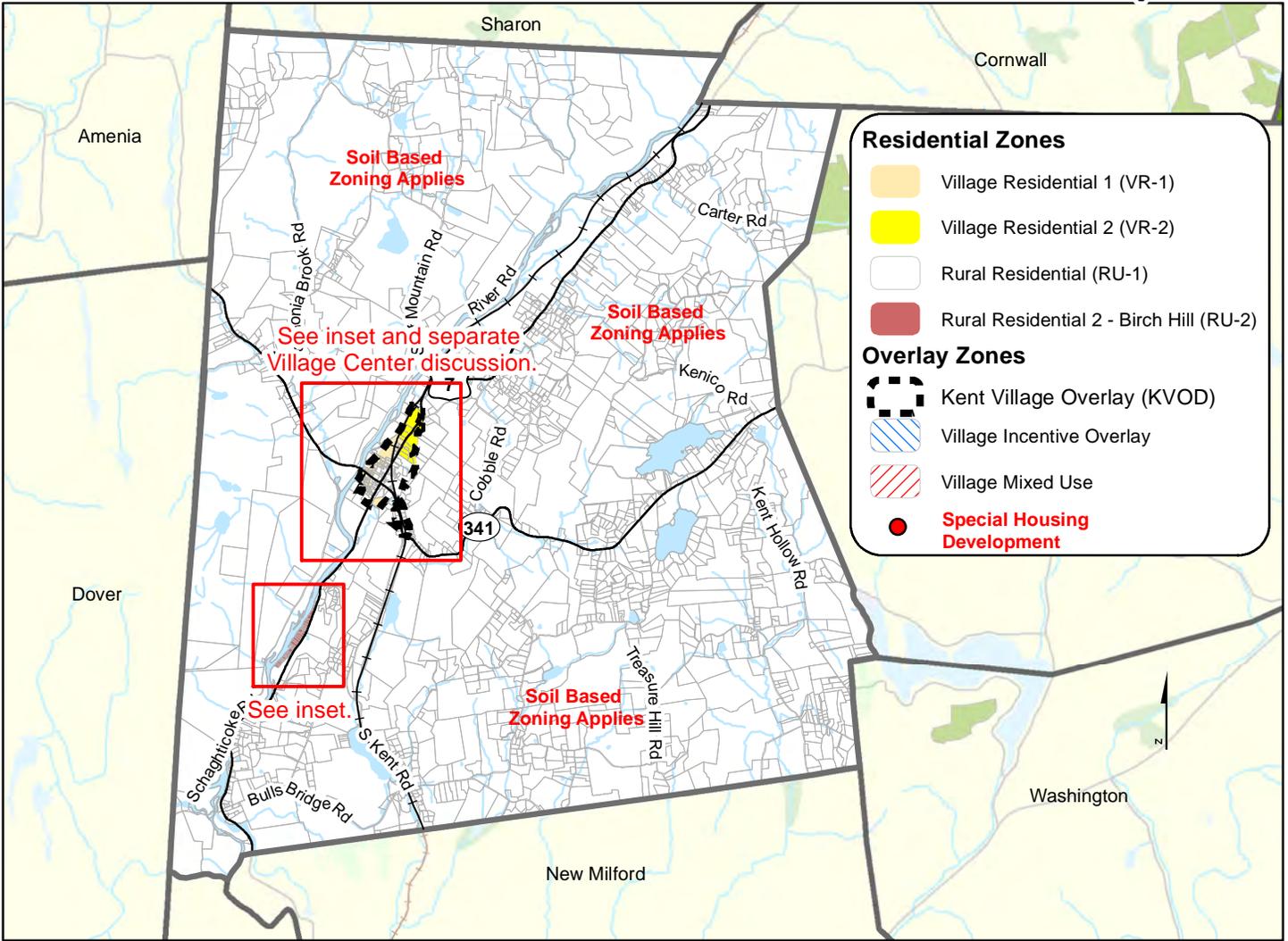
Private schools (Kent School, South Kent School, Marvelwood School) provide housing on their campuses for students, some staff, or both.

Accessory dwelling units (secondary dwelling spaces within or attached to a residence or in a detached structure) have been permitted in Kent for many years. Detached guest houses (with no kitchen) have also been permitted but these are not generally configured for long-term residential occupancy.

This overall approach has served Kent well over the years and this approach will continue *with the following notable exceptions* (see Section 6.6 following) to address identified housing needs for:

- An aging population, and
- Low- and moderate-income persons and families.





Impacts of Housing Costs

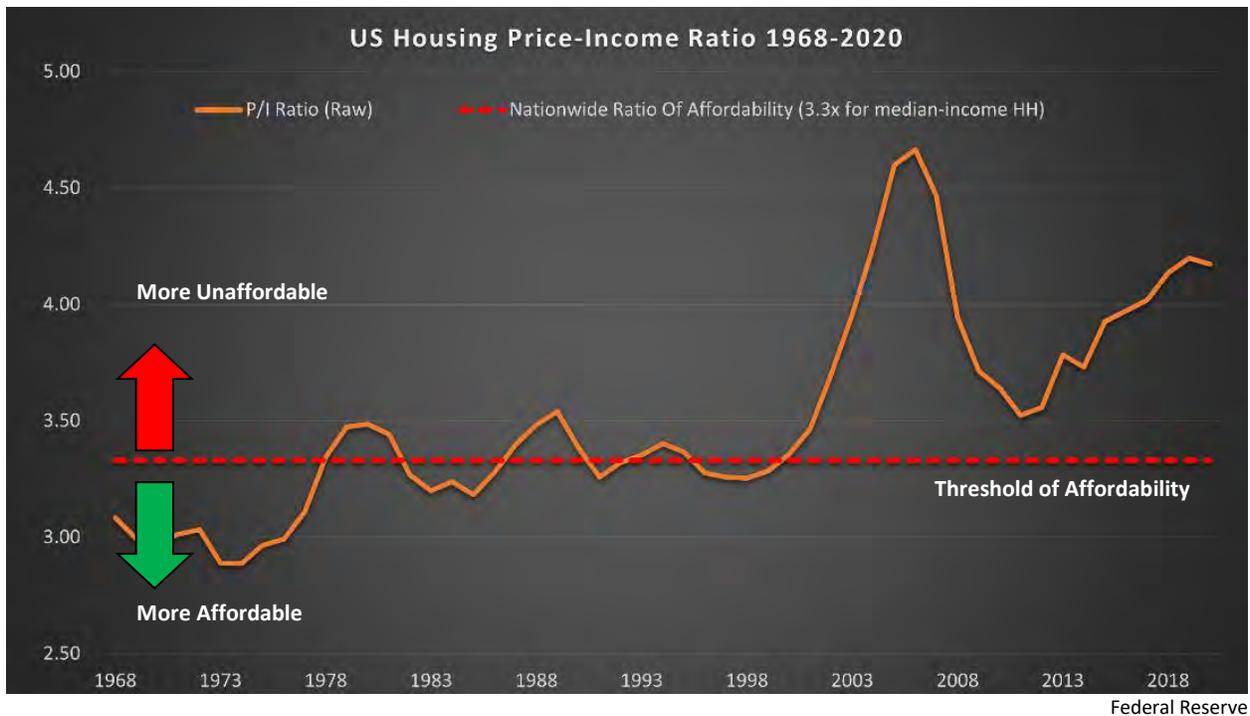
The high cost of housing precludes many from living in Kent, threatening the long term social and economic vitality of the community.

- Working families,
- Seniors on fixed incomes,
- Young people just starting out.

Expand Housing Diversity / Affordable Housing

There is a growing awareness that housing costs have grown far faster than incomes and so many people and households are finding it hard to find housing they can afford. This includes people who work in local businesses or schools, people who may have lived here for many years, people who grew up here and want to return, service workers who help people who live in Kent, and others.

In considering housing needs, it is important to recognize that housing has become less and less affordable over time. As shown by the following data, the median price house in America was about 3.0 times the median income in the early 1970s but this ratio grew to 3.33 times in the 1980s and 1990s and has increased to a ratio of 4.0 times (and even higher) during the 2006 sub-prime mortgage bubble and more recently with the COVID bump.



Kent has been working on this issue over the years (Kent Village Housing for the Elderly and Kent Affordable Housing, local non-profit organizations, have created about 60 affordable housing units in the community), yet the need for affordable housing continues to grow.

While this POCD was being prepared, Kent was also preparing a Housing Plan as required by CGS Section 8-30j. The key strategies from that Plan are summarized on the facing page. Since the Housing Plan is to be updated every five years (while the POCD is updated every ten years), the POCD references this Housing Plan (and future housing plans) as important companion documents aimed at addressing housing issues in Kent.

2022 Housing Plan - Strategy Summary

Strategies have been summarized below. [Click here to see the full Housing Plan.](#)

1. EXPAND AND PRESERVE DEDICATED AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN KENT

1. Consider donating, leasing, or selling Town owned properties to non-profit housing organizations to provide for dedicated affordable housing units.
2. Explore the feasibility of additional units at Templeton Farm and South Common, where the waiting lists are often years long.

2. SUPPORT AFFORDABLE HOMEBUYER OPTIONS

1. Increase awareness about CHFA and USDA programs that help with mortgages for income eligible homebuyers.
2. Increase awareness of down-payment assistance programs and first-time homebuyer education classes. Establish a town revolving loan fund for down payment assistance.
3. Explore partnership options between land trusts and Kent Affordable Housing to enhance opportunities to address conservation and housing objectives.

3. SUPPORT THE CREATION OF ACCESSORY APARTMENTS

1. Inform people about the option of creating an accessory apartment on their property and where they can get more information on this option.
2. Provide technical assistance to property owners considering building an accessory apartment and/or establish a subsidy fund for adding accessory apartments.
3. Amend the zoning regulations to allow one attached accessory apartment AND one detached (in accessory building or converted barn/garage) per property.
4. Look for ways to encourage residents to rent their accessory apartments longer-term (rather than AirBnB).

4. INCREASE THE DIVERSITY OF KENT'S HOUSING STOCK

1. Encourage development in the town's Village Housing Overlay Zone and Village Mixed Use Overlay Zone (including investing funds in a town road and/or expanding sewer system capacity as needed in these areas).
2. Publish a fact sheet on what housing options can be created under Kent's zoning regulations.
3. Consider zoning changes to promote more multifamily housing.

5. HELP MEET THE HOUSING NEEDS OF THOSE WHO WORK AND VOLUNTEER IN KENT

1. Meet with local organizations (larger employers, Kent Volunteer Fire Department, etc.) to learn about local housing needs and discuss ways to meet those needs (including partnering with the Town and/or Kent Affordable Housing).
2. Develop a database of housing developments in Kent and consider ways to let people know about housing opportunities as they arise.

6. SUPPORT PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

1. Schedule regular meetings of an implementation committee to report on progress.
2. Appoint/hire a town housing coordinator—volunteer or paid—to chair the meetings and assure progress.
3. Consider establishing a town affordable housing fund (like Salisbury, Washington, and other CT towns) to support the achievement of the goals and strategies in this plan.
4. Carry out activities (events, media, etc.) to increase awareness about the housing needs in Kent and how residents can help address these needs.

Housing Plan Strategies

Possible regulation changes suggested in 2022-27 affordable housing plan included the following:

- Eliminating the minimum lot size of one acre for multifamily housing;
- Reducing the lot area required per multifamily unit from 4,000;
- Raising or eliminating the 8 unit per building cap;
- Increasing lot area coverage beyond the current 25%
- Reducing the parking minimums from 2.5 spaces per unit.
- Allowing an additional accessory dwelling unit.



With regard to affordable housing and housing diversity, this change in focus and increase in emphasis compared to previous Plans of Conservation and Development is deliberate and is intended to enable and encourage housing options so that Kent’s housing portfolio can adapt to meet changing needs.

Kent has already adopted some regulatory provisions to help diversify the housing portfolio:

- Allowing for multi-family development in the Village Center area.
- Special regulations for town-sponsored affordable housing.
- Allowing for housing for farm workers.
- Established a Village Housing Overlay District and a Village Mixed Use Overlay District (both being optional on the part of the developer) to allow higher density residential development in and near the Village Center provided at least 20 percent of the units are deed-restricted as affordable housing for 30 years.

4.3 GUIDE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT	Leader/ Partner
Policies (strategies anticipated to continue over time) are identified by black text. <i>Action steps (specific tasks to implement the POCD) are identified by red italic text.</i>	
1. Continue allowing and encouraging higher density residential uses in the Village Center area where public water and public sewer are available.	PZC
2. <i>Consider whether to increase the density permitted in the Village Housing Overlay District if affordability restrictions are included.</i>	<i>PZC</i>
3. Continue using the soil-based lot size / conservation development approach in outlying areas.	PZC
4. <i>Review the regulations in the RU-1 zoning district with regard to:</i> <i>a. Allowing alternative types of residential development subject to the soil-based density limits,</i> <i>b. Allowing or requiring affordable units</i> <i>c. Preserving open space and other POCD objectives</i>	<i>PZC</i>
5. <i>Evaluate whether to modify regulatory provisions for accessory dwelling units based on local experience and State guidelines.</i>	<i>PZC</i>
6. <i>As appropriate, help implement the Housing Plan adopted by the Board of Selectmen.</i>	<i>PZC</i>

DEVELOPMENT - INFRASTRUCTURE

Seek to provide for infrastructure facilities and services important to the community.



For the purposes of the Plan of Conservation and Development, the term infrastructure refers to the facilities and systems that support the sustainable functionality of the community and includes:

- Community facilities and services,
- Roadway circulation (vehicles),
- Pedestrian, bicycle, transit, and
- Utility infrastructure.

Infrastructure creates the form of a [community]

Paul Goldberger
American writer / educator

Community Facilities / Services



Vehicular Transportation



Pedestrianism / Accessibility



Utility Infrastructure





5.1 Enhance Community Facilities & Services

Provide appropriate community facilities and services to meet community needs and maintain and enhance the overall quality of life in Kent.

This section of the POCD recommends strategies to provide community facilities and programs to meet the diverse needs of the community.

Community Survey

In the community survey, when asked what one thing they would want to have happen in Kent, community services and facilities were ranked #1 by participants.

When asked to identify things in Kent they were proud of, participants identified community services and facilities #12.

When asked to identify things in Kent they were sorry about, participants identified recreation services and facilities #2.

Participants also identified the Village Center as something in Kent they were sorry about (3rd in ranking of topics).

Community services (such as education, public works, public safety, and recreation) contribute significantly to Kent’s character and quality of life. For the purposes of the POCD, community facilities are considered to include municipal buildings and other facilities which are used to provide services to residents.

The map on the facing page shows the location of existing community facilities and tables on the following pages provide a macro-level overview of community facility needs and issues in Kent (grouped by function):

General Government (black)

1. Town Hall

Public Safety (light red)

2. Fire Headquarters
3. EMS Headquarters
4. Resident Trooper
5. Emergency Operations Center

Public Works (yellow)

6. Public Works Garage
7. Transfer Station
8. Wastewater Treatment Facility

Note – Public water supply by a private company (Aquarion)

Education / Schools (dark blue)

9. Kent Center School (PK-8)

Parks / Recreation (green)

10. Emery Park
11. Kent Common Park
12. Kent Center School Fields (leased from Kent School)

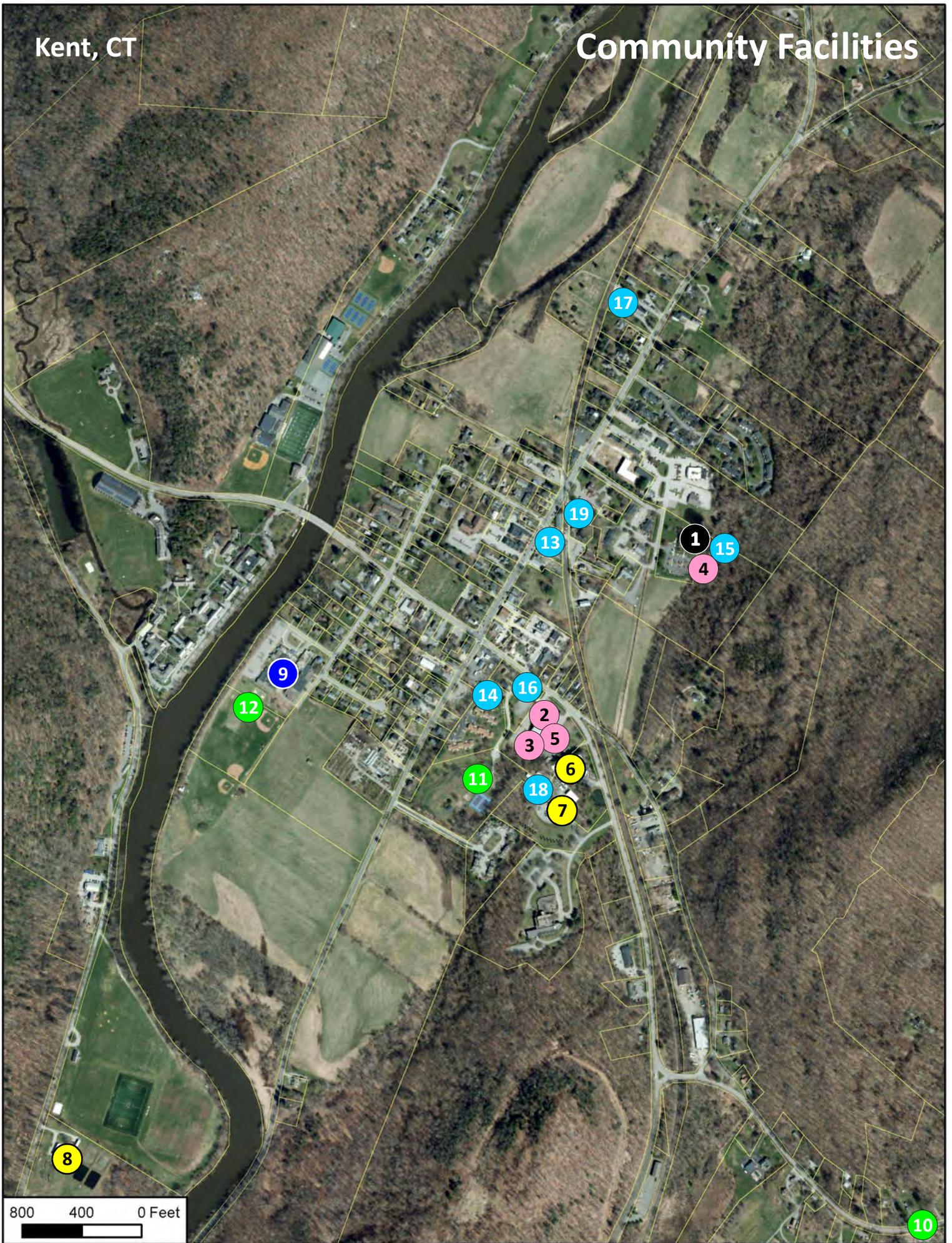
Note – Access to the Housatonic River is desired in northern Kent (such as from North Kent Road)

Other (medium blue)

13. Kent Memorial Library
14. Senior Center
15. Social Services
16. Swift House
17. Community House
18. Animal Shelter
19. Welcome Center

Kent, CT

Community Facilities



800 400 0 Feet

10

Legend

 Not expected to be adequate for community needs to 2035

 Some issues to be considered through 2035

 Expected to be adequate for community needs to 2035

GENERAL GOVERNMENT	Assessment
 Town Hall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has some space constraints (such as storage) • Room on-site to expand to rear (such as new meeting room with storage basement and converting existing meeting room to offices)

PUBLIC SAFETY	Assessment
 Fire Department (building also houses Emergency Operations Center)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equipment based in Village Center • Staffed by volunteers (recruitment can be a challenge) • Town offers tax abatement to volunteers and contributes funds for fire protection and regional dispatch) • Have a system of fire ponds / water supply • Have mutual aid arrangements with other towns • Facilities expected to be adequate • May need to supplement staffing to enhance response
 Emergency Medical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equipment based in Village Center (share with Fire) • Services provided by a non-government entity • Town contributes funds for EMS staffing / paramedic/ regional dispatch • Facilities expected to be adequate for needs • May need to supplement staffing to enhance response
 Police Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town utilizes Resident State Trooper program (service contract) and State Police based in Litchfield • Evaluate staffing / level of service desired

PUBLIC WORKS	Assessment
 Public Works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public works facility based in Village Center (animal shelter and solid waste / recycling on same site) • Existing building(s) and site are used intensively • Space challenges exist (equipment, stockpiles, etc.)
 Solid Waste / Recycling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transfer station located at PW facility • Need for a long-term sustainable materials / solid waste plan identified by First Selectman
 Wastewater Treatment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Utility infrastructure section of the POCD

EDUCATION	Assessment
 Kent Center School (K-8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overseen by Kent Board of Education • An enrollment drop of 25% from 2010-19 rebounded during COVID (permanence is unknown) • Existing building expected to have adequate capacity • Recreation / play fields leased from Kent School
 Regional High School (9-12)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students from Kent attend Housatonic Valley Regional High School in Canaan / Falls Village • Overseen by Region 1 School District serving Cornwall, Canaan, Kent, North Canaan, Salisbury, Sharon

PARKS / RECREATION	Assessment
 Parks / Recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Main facilities for Town recreation programs include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emery Park (seasonal swimming, playground, picnic areas, passive recreation) Kent Common Park (tennis courts, playground, picnic pavilions, passive recreation) Kent Community House (recreation classes) Kent Center School (softball, baseball, soccer) Opportunities for passive recreation are available at open space parcels (State land, Kent Land Trust, etc.) Survey indicated concern over these services / facilities The Park and Recreation Commission continues to work on preparing a Parks Master Plan and organizing and coordinating youth recreational programs.
 River Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of river access has been a concern for some time Location(s) / design(s) should be finalized

Legend

-  Not expected to be adequate for community needs to 2035
-  Some issues to be considered through 2035
-  Expected to be adequate for community needs to 2035

OTHER FACILITIES	Assessment
 Kent Memorial Library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Library is a private association that receives financial assistance from the Town. Staff / services meet community needs Facility functions have outgrown the building. Plans are underway to expand / relocate the Library to provide adequate space for its services. Fund raising / grant seeking underway Village center location is optimal (library is an anchor)
 Senior Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Senior Center located at Templeton Farm senior housing Monitor the utilization of facility space to anticipate and address the needs of the growing elderly population Enhance senior programming to meet needs
 Social Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Office space at Town Hall Food bank storage at Community House Needs have been growing with changing age composition / economic issues / pandemic Monitor the utilization of facility space to anticipate and address the social service needs of the community Enhance social services to meet needs
 Swift House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Task Force working on building improvements Upgraded facility could meet additional community needs, now and in the future
 Community House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Used for meetings and civic, social, and other events although activity level slowed during Covid Facility expected to be adequate for community needs
 Welcome Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opened in 2017 Expected to meet needs
 Animal Shelter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has no outside runs and constrains PW site but no alternatives apparent

Regional Collaboration

Kent provides municipal services as desired by residents and/or as called for by Town Ordinances and State Statutes. In the future, it may make sense for some municipal services to be provided more efficiently or cost-effectively through partnerships (staff, equipment, space, etc.) with nearby towns or regional organizations.

Volunteer Participation / Recruitment

Community needs go beyond infrastructure and programs. Residents, businesses, and Town management all rely on a high level of volunteer commitment and participation in community activities and government.

Kents needs to continue to nurture and promote volunteer participation in all facets of local government.

Fire / EMS Headquarters



Public Works



Kent Center School



Kent Memorial Library





5.1 ENHANCE COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES	Leader/ Partner
<p>Policies (strategies anticipated to continue over time) are identified by black text. <i>Action steps (specific tasks to implement the POCD) are identified by red italic text.</i></p>	
<p>1. Continue to maintain and manage community facilities and services to maximize their utility and to meet community needs in an efficient and cost-effective way.</p>	Town
<p>2. Anticipate future facility / service needs: a. As outlined in the POCD b. Based on changing age demographics</p>	BOS
<p>3. Continue to monitor staffing of emergency services in order to meet future community needs.</p>	BOS KVFD EMS
<p>4. Continue to monitor space utilization for the Senior Center and Social Services.</p>	Town
<p><i>5. Investigate ways to relieve space constraints at the public works facility.</i></p>	<i>PW BOS</i>
<p><i>6. Complete the Parks and Recreation Master Plan</i></p>	<i>PRC</i>
<p>7. Seek to extend current arrangements for the recreation fields adjacent to Kent Center School or acquire the land.</p>	PRC BOS
<p>8. Work with the Kent Library Association to improve / expand the Kent Memorial Library, consistent with the goals for the Village Center.</p>	BOS
<p>9. Continue to seek opportunities for regional collaboration in the provision of municipal services.</p>	BOS
<p>10. Continue to nurture and promote volunteer participation in all facets of local government.</p>	BOS

Swift House



Volunteers





This section of the POCD promotes a roadway system that safely and efficiently enables the community to meet its mobility needs.

Scenic Travel Route

Kent has many scenic roadways and has been referenced as part of several scenic routes. Key elements of these routes include:

- Kent Village
- Kent Falls State Park
- Housatonic River
- St. John's Ledges
- Bull's Bridge
- Macedonia Brook State Park
- Sloane-Stanley Museum
- Lake Waramaug State Park
- Appalachian Trail!

5.2 Manage Roadway Circulation

Provide a safe and efficient vehicular transportation network that meets the needs of the community.

Since the roadway system in Kent is essential in the day-to-day life of the community, it is important that the roadway system be operated in ways that continue to meet community needs, efficiently and cost effectively, into the future.

In terms of state/regional circulation, roads in Kent have been categorized by the Connecticut Department of Transportation (DOT) as shown on the map on the facing page. Some other roads are important locally:

- Carter Road
- Cobble Road
- River Road / Skiff Mountain Road / West Woods Road
- Kent Hollow Road

Overall, the roadway system in Kent provides adequate circulation to meet community needs given land use patterns, open space reservations, topography, and other considerations. No roadway connections are specifically recommended in the POCD except those discussed in the Village Center section of the POCD to create additional interconnections to help improve circulation in this area and the health and vitality of the Village Center.

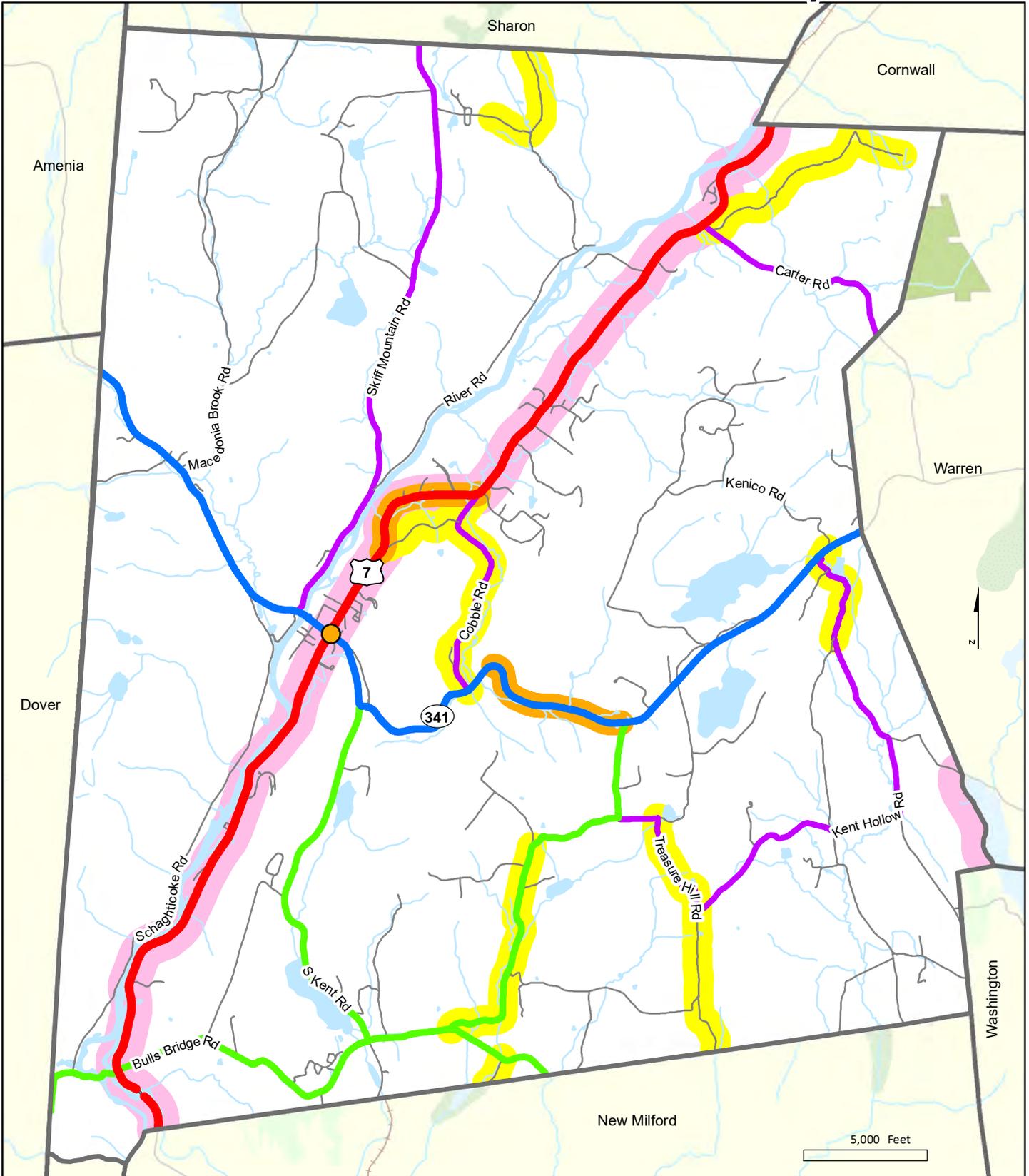
State Highways

The DOT oversees the operation and maintenance of approximately 24 miles of State highways in Kent. Route 7 is a key north-south route in western Connecticut and has the highest traffic volumes (including truck traffic).

In the future, it is important that any improvements on any State highway in Kent be done in consideration of the scenic characteristics of Kent and find an appropriate balance between capacity, safety, and overall character. The streetscape project in the Village Center worked to try and find this balance.

The [Regional Transportation Safety Plan](#) prepared by NHCOC identified some high accident areas on State roadways in Kent:

- The extended hillside curve on Route 341 (speed, guiderail condition)
- A section of Route 7 between Cobble Lane and Cobble Road (speed, narrow roadway, restricted sight line, guide rail condition), and
- The intersection of Route 7 / 341 in the Village Center (configuration due to monument, pedestrian traffic).



Road Classification

- State – Minor Arterial
- State – Major Collector
- State – Minor Collector
- Roads of Local Importance
- Local Road

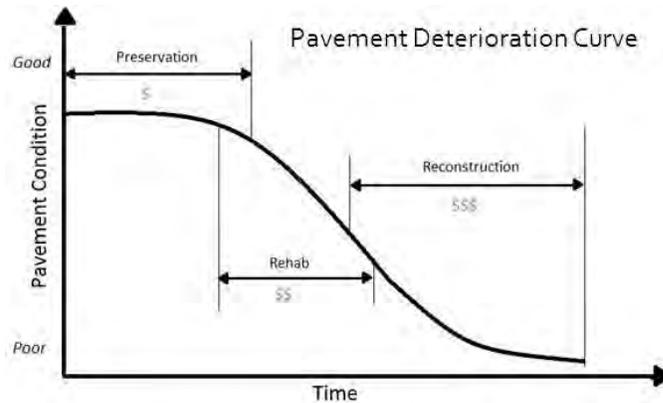
Other Roadway Categories

- State Designated Scenic Road
- Town Designated Scenic Road
- Areas Exhibiting Higher Accident Potential

Town Roads

The approximately 73 miles of Town roadways are maintained by the Department of Public Works (DPW). Subject to funding availability, the DPW works to maintain local roadways (including associated drainage, bridges, etc.) as efficiently and economically as possible while striking an appropriate balance between roadway safety / capacity and the overall character of the roadway.

Paved Roads (53 miles) - Pavement has a useful life and studies over the years have shown that it can be most cost-effective to make minor expenditures (such as crack sealing and chip sealing) up front that will help avoid major expenditures (such as refurbishment or reconstruction) later. Kent should adequately fund a long-term pavement management program designed to minimize costs in the long term.



Unpaved Roads (15 miles) - Kent also has some unpaved roadways (dirt roads) which are regraded roughly twice per year. Dirt roads need more regular maintenance due to erosion and rutting but regrading is less expensive than repaving.

5.2 MANAGE ROADWAY CIRCULATION	Leader/ Partner
<p>Policies (strategies anticipated to continue over time) are identified by black text. <i>Action steps (specific tasks to implement the POCD) are identified by red italic text.</i></p>	
<p>1. Continue to work with CTDOT and NHCOCG to address capacity and safety issues along State roadways.</p>	<p>Town NHCOG DOT</p>
<p>2. Balance State roadway improvements with Kent’s character.</p>	<p>BOS DOT</p>
<p>3. Continue to address safety and capacity issues on Town roadways.</p>	<p>PW</p>
<p>4. Utilize pavement management techniques on Town roads to reduce long-term maintenance costs.</p>	<p>PW</p>

5.3 Enhance Pedestrian / Bicycle / Transit

Promote and support pedestrian, bicycle, transit, and other forms of transportation.



Pedestrian Circulation / Facilities

There are several types of pedestrian facilities in Kent and POCD recommendations vary by the type of facility and/or location:

Area	Approach
Public Sidewalks In The Village Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally required • Includes crosswalks, handicap ramps, and streetscape amenities (benches, etc.) • Currently being upgraded as part of the streetscape project (85% of participants favored concrete sidewalks in a 2022 survey) • Maintenance (snow clearing, etc.) performed by Department of Public Works • An overall goal is to maintain and enhance accessibility for pedestrians and for mobility-impaired people (and for an aging population in general) • See additional discussion in the Village Center element of the POCD
Private Sidewalks In The Village Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally required as part of private development in accordance with Section 8400 of the Zoning Regulations • Generally maintained by private property owners
Private Sidewalks Outside The Village Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May be provided as part of private development (including private schools) • Generally maintained by private property owners
Pedestrian Trails Throughout Kent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kent has a variety of off-road trails for passive recreation ranging from the multi-state Appalachian Trail to trail networks within individual open space areas (maps available here) • Typically provided / maintained by open space organizations such as Kent Land Trust, State of Connecticut, Appalachian Trail Club, and other organizations • As stated in the Open Space element of the POCD, there is a desire to promote greater connectivity of trails to enhance the overall network in Kent and the region

This section of the POCD recommends strategies to implement Complete Streets and promote public transit and other mobility strategies.

Complete Streets

The term complete streets refers to an approach for enhancing the overall transportation network. While roadways were once treated as an area *exclusively* for vehicles, communities are now using existing road rights-of-way to enable safe, convenient and comfortable travel and access for users of all ages and abilities regardless of their mode of transportation.

Kent may wish to consider adopting a complete streets policy. Doing so would show a commitment to improving non-vehicular transportation within the community and taking advantage of the transportation network already in place (existing roadways) to make provision for a wider variety of transportation modes than just focusing on vehicles.

Housatonic Bike Trail

Some years ago, a local resident promoted the concept of a bicycle trail along the Housatonic River and nearby areas:

- South Kent
- Bulls Bridge
- Shagticoke Road
- River Road

Reinvigorating these efforts would result in a tremendous amenity for Kent and for the region.

Another option may be to look at establishing a trail (bicycle and pedestrian) along the rail line between Kent and Cornwall. A 2022 legislative change regarding railroad liability may provide new possibilities for this location.

Bicycle Route Markings

A consistent system for marking the characteristics of a bicycle route (similar to the system used for ski trails) could be very helpful.



Beginner



Intermediate



Expert

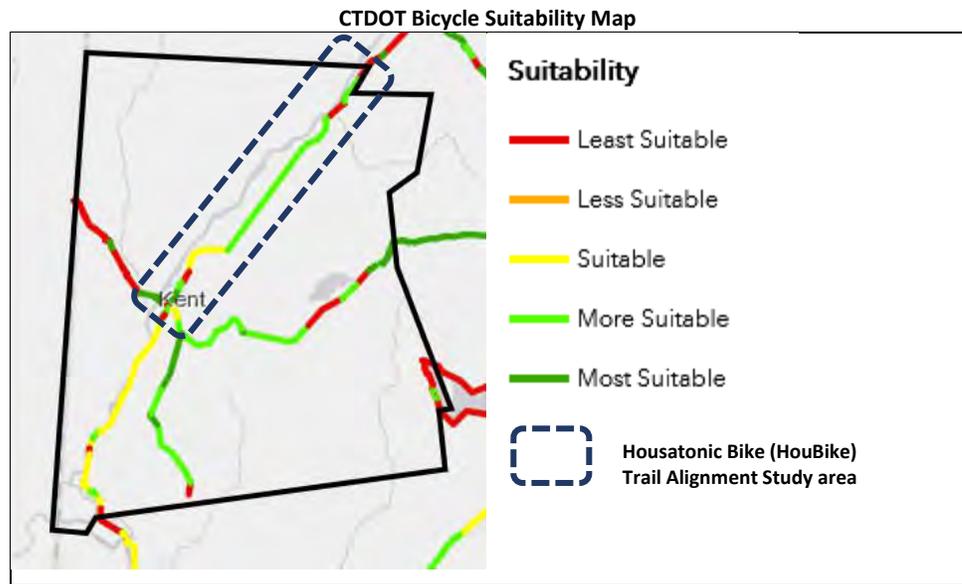


Expert Only

Bicycle Circulation / Facilities

On-road bicycle usage and interest is increasing in Kent and elsewhere. The Regional Transportation Plan noted that northwest Connecticut can be a destination for on-road recreational bicycling *enthusiasts* but less so for casual bicyclists since some roads may be narrow, steep, have constricted shoulders, and/or fast-moving traffic. Key issues identified in the regional plan include:

- Inconsistent roadway shoulders suitable and safe for bicycling (including clearing of sand and other maintenance issues), and
- Lack of wayfinding signage.

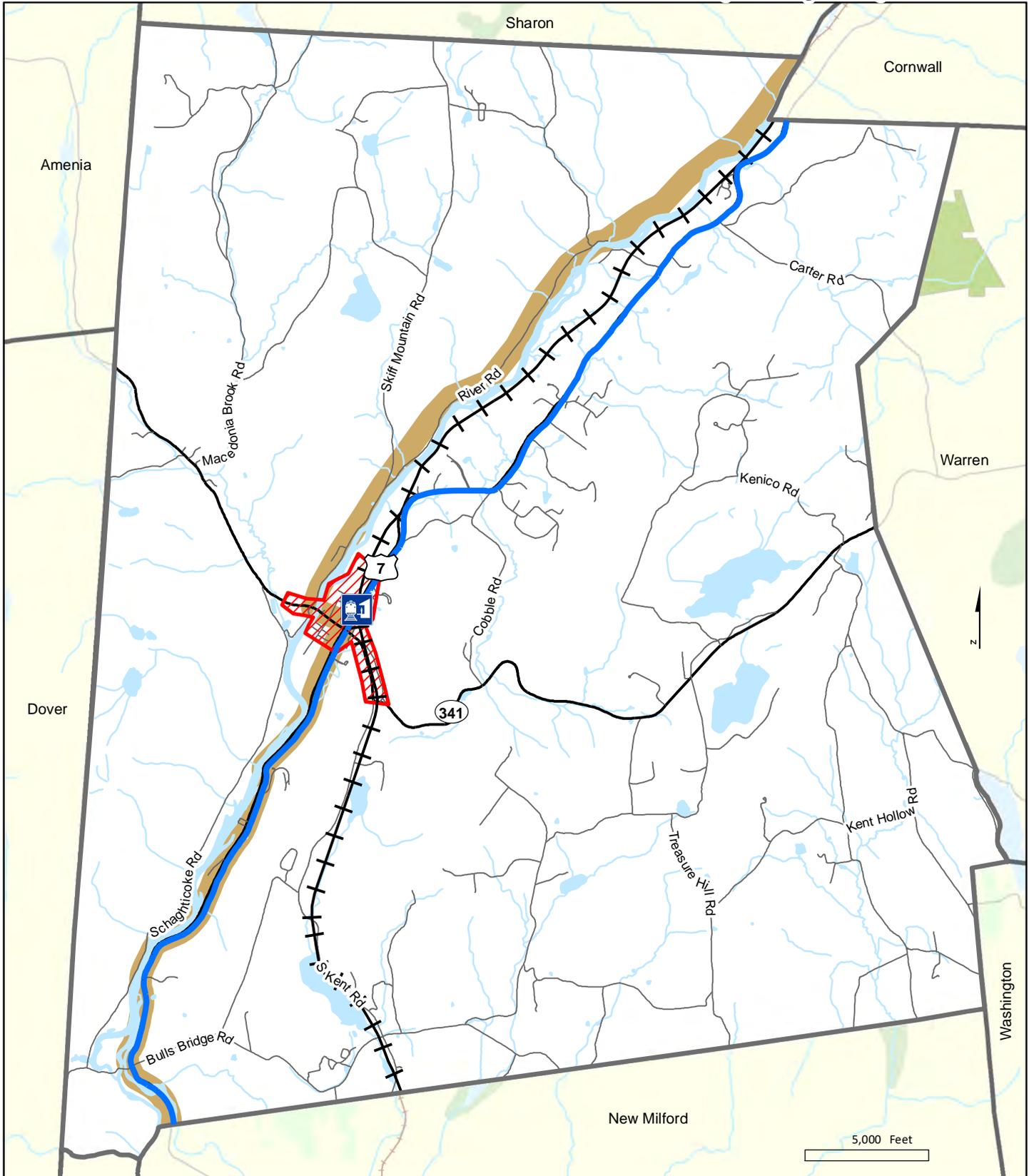


The POCD encourages safe and comfortable bicycle-riding environments and encourages bicycle use (on-road and off-road) as an important recreation activity.

Transit Services / Facilities

Scheduled Bus Services – Due to low population density and ridership, scheduled bus transit is limited in the smaller communities in northwestern Connecticut. This creates challenges for people who need or would benefit from such services. The Regional Transportation Plan noted that stakeholders advocated for more service, more flexible service, better coordination of services among providers, and better communication about available services.

Para-Transit – The Northwest Connecticut Transit District does provide dial-a-ride service for eligible elderly / disabled persons on a reservation basis on certain days of the week. The door-to-door service can help meet some of the needs of the eligible population. In Kent, local residents are sometimes able to assist others who need transportation assistance however there has been some loss of volunteers due to COVID.



-  Possible Future Train Station
-  State-Identified Bicycle Network
-  Railroad
-  Conceptual Bike Trail (CTDOT)
-  Sidewalk Priority Area

On Demand Services

Kent should be open to the idea of supporting on-demand transportation services (such as Uber, Lyft, taxis, etc.) that provide services for people who do not have or do not use their own vehicles. Such services can help meet the needs of a variety of people.

One example of this is people who may travel to and from Kent on the Metro North – Harlem rail line in New York State. Travelers may experience challenges getting to and from the Wassaic Station or the Harlem Valley-Wingdale station and on-demand services help address that last mile situation. Such on-demand services can also help when passenger rail service to Kent is re-established at some time in the future.

Future Station Location

The historic location of the train station may interfere with current traffic volumes on Route 7. A location to the south of Maple Street Extension may not be within walking distance.

More optimal locations may be north of the Route 7 rail crossing or between the current station and Route 341.

The Zoning Regulations already contain a Transportation Overlay District to set the stage for train service.

Rail – There has been a rail line in Kent since the 1800s (Danbury to Canaan and on to Pittsfield, Massachusetts) although passenger service ceased in 1971. Since 1983, the line has only been used for freight service by the Housatonic Railroad Company. The concept of re-establishing passenger service on the line continues to be studied in both Connecticut and Massachusetts. Passenger rail service could complement Kent’s efforts to encourage economic activity (tourism) but could also impact village character, commerce, and traffic flow due to increased train traffic. The Town should continue to monitor the possible re-establishment of passenger rail service to maximize the benefits and mitigate any impacts.

5.3 ENHANCE PEDESTRIAN / BICYCLE / TRANSIT	Leader/ Partner
<p>Policies (strategies anticipated to continue over time) are identified by black text. <i>Action steps (specific tasks to implement the POCD) are identified by red italic text.</i></p>	
<p><i>1. Complete Streets - Consider adopting a complete streets policy.</i></p>	<p>BOS PW</p>
<p>2. Pedestrian Circulation / Facilities -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Continue to provide / maintain public sidewalks in the village center and implement pedestrian circulation strategies contained in the Village Center element of the POCD b. Continue to require private sidewalks in the village center c. Continue to promote pedestrian trails throughout Kent for passive recreation. d. Continue to promote greater connectivity of trails to enhance the overall network in Kent and the region 	<p>Town PW PRC</p>
<p>3. Bicycle Circulation -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Continue to encourage safe, convenient, comfortable, and secure bicycle-riding environments (on-road and off-road). b. Consider bicycle circulation when maintaining roads (such as cleaning of sand from shoulders) c. On a regional basis, promote the creation of route maps (and wayfinding signage) for on-road and/or off-road bicycle routes to facilitate bicycle use. d. Continue to seek opportunities to create / enhance the Housatonic Bike (HouBike) Trail off of Route 7. 	<p>Town PW PRC NHCOG DOT</p>
<p>4. Transit Services -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Continue to advocate for improvements to dial-a-ride in Kent for people who need such services. b. Explore options (inter-municipal, regional, etc.) to ensure that Kent residents have adequate medical transportation. 	<p>Town NHCOG DOT</p>
<p>5. Rail Service / Facilities -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Continue to monitor the possible re-establishment of passenger rail service to maximize the benefits to Kent and mitigate any impacts. 	<p>Town</p>

5.4 Address Utility Infrastructure

Seek to guide utility infrastructure so that adequate services are available to meet community needs.

In the POCD, utility infrastructure refers to services such as water supply, sewage disposal, overall storm drainage, electricity, wired communications (telephone and cable), and wireless communications.

Water Supply

Water supply for properties in the Village Center area is provided by Aquarion Water Company (Kent System). Water is harvested from two groundwater wells and available information suggests that water usage (83,000 gallons / day) is well below the safe yield of the water supply system (near 400,000 gallons / day). Reports show that water quality meets relevant standards.

In outlying areas, properties obtain water supply from individual wells. Any localized water quality or quantity issues are addressed by individual property owners.

Sewage Treatment

Sewage treatment for properties in the Village Center area (including Kent School) is provided by a treatment facility, located on Schaghticoke Road, operated by the Kent Water Pollution Control Authority (Sewer Commission). Kent is one of a handful of municipal systems in Connecticut that is allowed to discharge treated effluent to ground rather than to a watercourse. Since the treatment facility is permitted for up to an average of 142,000 gallons / day and current flow rates average about 75,000 gallons / day, the facility is expected to have adequate capacity to meet community needs through 2035.

However, some components of the treatment facility are nearing the end of their design life and so upgrades are being evaluated (related to treatment rather than plant capacity). This evaluation (and review by the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection) may trigger further improvements.

In the future, conversion to a river discharge approach may be necessary if State or Federal regulations change or if the plant capacity needs to be expanded. Since this could turn out to be an expensive conversion, Kent should strive to carefully manage sewage capacity with this in mind.



This section of the POCD promotes infrastructure systems that enable the community to meet their needs.

Community Survey

In the community survey, adequate utility services were ranked #3 in terms of importance to residents and ranked #9 in terms of results.

Inflow and infiltration of non-sewer water into the sewer collection pipes continues to be monitored and addressed. There have been some operational issues resulting from extreme flooding events in the Housatonic River and so floodproofing is expected to be part of the system upgrade.

In outlying areas of Kent, most individual properties are responsible for installing a septic system in compliance with the State Health Code. This approach serves the needs of these properties. A handful of properties have community septic systems (septic systems which serve more than one building – such as Brookwoods Condominiums and Saddle Ridge Farms). The Health District and the Sewer Commission monitor these facilities to ensure they function correctly. Should a community septic system fail, the Town may end up being a party to any program to remediate a failing community system.

As required by CGS Section 8-23, the map on the facing page identifies different types of sewer service areas:

- Existing Sewer Service Area – areas where public sewer service generally exists at the present time.
- Potential Future Sewer Service Area– areas where sewer service may be investigated and/or provided for economic development purposes .
- Planned Sewer Avoidance Area – areas not identified above where properties are expected to rely on on-site septic systems.

Storm Drainage

Storm drainage is becoming more visible as an infrastructure issue due to concerns related to water quantity (more intense runoff) and water quality resulting from stormwater runoff. The state and federal governments are establishing new municipal requirements for stormwater runoff (called MS-4 regulations).

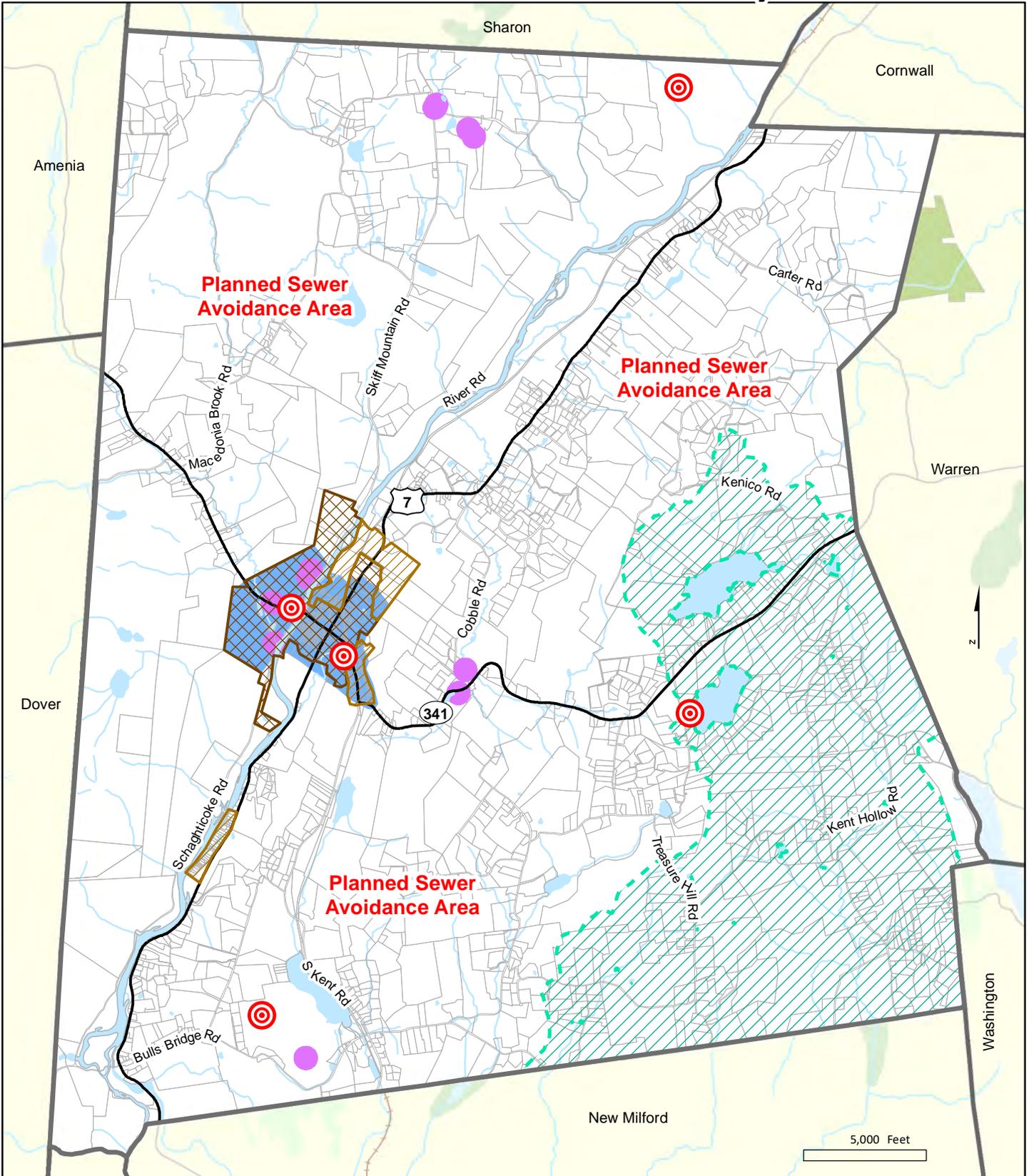
Kent enacted Section 8700 of the Zoning Regulations to incorporate low impact development (LID) requirements to:

- Capture stormwater as close as possible to where the raindrop falls,
- Clean it as much as possible using vegetation and other means, and
- Infiltrate as much rainfall as possible back into the ground.

The Subdivision Regulations should also be upgraded to incorporate LID requirements.

The Department of Public Works is using LID techniques as part of its drainage improvements on Town roads and properties.

These approaches are expected to serve the Town well.



- | | | |
|--|--|--|
|  Public Water Service Area |  Existing Public Sewer Service Area |  Cell Tower |
|  Public Water Supply Watershed Areas |  Possible Future Sewer Service Area | |
|  Area of Contribution to Public Supply Well | | |

Community Survey

In the community survey, internet and cell phone service was mentioned as #6 in terms of greatest challenge facing Kent and #3 in terms of making one thing happen.

Electricity

Electrical service in Kent is provided by Eversource. Over the years, Eversource has worked to improve the reliability of its distribution service through equipment upgrades, tree trimming, and other approaches. Major storms and other events can still cause service disruptions and residents mentioned this in the survey. Some properties have installed solar, wind, and/or other localized generation and this is increasing but is not yet widespread. The POCD sections on Sustainability, Resiliency, Character, and Kent Center contain additional recommendations on electrical service.

Overall, adequate electrical power is expected to be available in the future to meet the needs of local users.

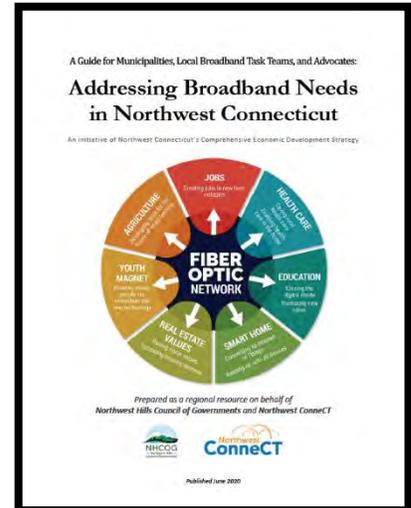
Wired Communications

Wired communication services (land-line telephone and cable communication) in Kent are provided by Charter/Spectrum. Most people obtain telephone, internet, and cable television service through bundled service offerings.

While it is true that most, if not all, Kent households have access to wired communications, the real issue is that the quality of that access is well behind what is needed.

A 2020 report entitled "[Addressing Broadband Needs in Northwest Connecticut](#)" prepared as a regional resource on behalf of Northwest Hills Council of Governments and Northwest ConneCT identified a few of the region's key broadband challenges:

- The current broadband network, designed for cable television, is approximately 40 years old.
- The capacity of the system is inadequate for current needs and this deficiency will only get worse over time.
- In order to maintain competitiveness and regional resiliency, the region needs a competitive broadband infrastructure.



BEING PROACTIVE - It is a key POCD objective to promote high speed / high capacity broadband service for all parts of the community and the region. The Town should continue to work with providers to find ways to upgrade and improve the wired communications network in Kent.

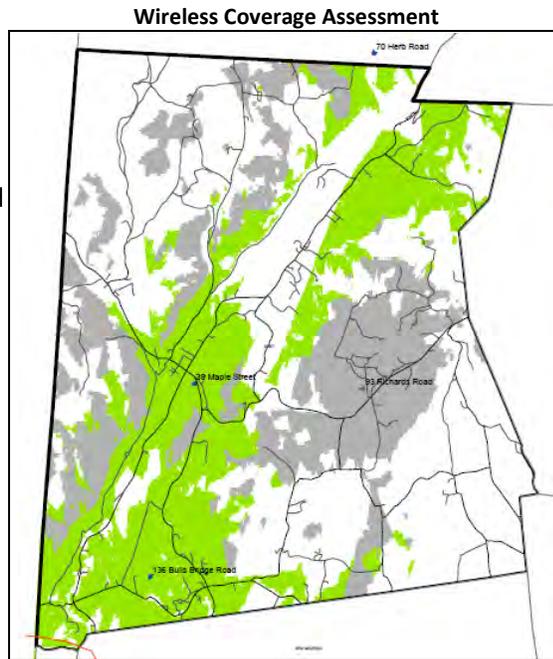
Address Wireless Infrastructure

Most people use mobile phones and other wireless devices (some people are relying exclusively on them) and the capacity of the wireless system in Kent is an important consideration to the overall quality of life for residents and visitors.

Residents and town officials have expressed concerns about gaps in wireless coverage.

A wireless coverage assessment obtained from the Connecticut Siting Council shows that there is reasonable coverage from existing towers (green areas) along much of the Route 7 corridor and in South Kent and that there will be some improvements (gray areas) upon completion of a new tower on Richards Road.

The Town should continue to work with providers to fill coverage gaps in ways that have minimal impact on character (e.g., placing antenna on existing tall structures, careful placement to minimize impacts, etc.).



The following two pages outline some potential telecommunication principles for Kent. These principles can be used to communicate Town preferences and desires to telecommunication providers, the Connecticut Siting Council, the Planning and Zoning Commission, and others who may be interested.

Overall, Kent would like to support the improvement of wireless coverage throughout the community using the least visually obtrusive means possible. This can include stealth technologies.

BEING PROACTIVE - It is a key POCD objective to promote better wireless coverage in Kent. The Town should work with providers (or a private engineer) to identify possible locations to best address service needs and desires while minimizing impacts on sensitive viewsheds.

Community Survey

In the community survey, internet and cell phone service was mentioned as #6 in terms of greatest challenge facing Kent and #3 in terms of making one thing happen.

Possible Telecommunications Policy

Statement of Purpose

The Town of Kent recognizes that wireless communication services are an important part of the daily lives of many people. The Town wishes to allow for the availability of adequate wireless communications service in Kent while striving to find the least obtrusive means of having such services available.

Basic Program

The following policy preferences are intended to provide guidance to wireless telecommunications providers, the Connecticut Siting Council (which regulates the siting of new towers), and the Planning and Zoning Commission in terms of the siting of new wireless telecommunications facilities.

The Town of Kent intends to carefully review applications for wireless telecommunications facilities (whether to the Connecticut Siting Council or the Planning and Zoning Commission) that may affect the community or its residents.

When the Town is notified (as required) of a pending application to the Siting Council for a wireless telecommunications tower, it is the intent of the Town to schedule a public informational meeting where the wireless telecommunications provider can explain the need for and the impact of the proposed wireless telecommunications tower. Based on the input received at this meeting and other information collected, the Town will prepare and provide testimony to the Siting Council for use during the permitting process.

Possible Tower Options

**Stealth Installation
(Monopole Flagpole)**



**Stealth Installation
(Coniferous Tree)**



**Stealth Installation
(Barn Silo)**



Possible Policy Concepts – Siting Principles

General Siting Preferences

The Town of Kent seeks to encourage or require the siting of wireless telecommunications facilities in ways that will:

1. Allow for permitting of locations which are the least visually obtrusive.
2. Be consistent with the Plan of Conservation and Development.
3. Protect the Town's visual quality and minimize adverse visual impacts through proper design, siting, and screening.
4. Safeguard the community and minimize potential damage to adjacent properties.
5. Minimize the number of towers, especially ground-mounted towers.
6. Discourage co-location if that will result in adverse visual impacts.
7. Provide for the orderly removal of abandoned antennas and towers.

Specific Siting Preferences For Towers

Location -

- Towers should be located to serve areas lacking adequate wireless telecommunication service identified by the Connecticut Siting Council.
- Applications should evaluate suitable locations already identified by the Town, including Town-owned sites, and larger properties which can allow for more effective screening.
- Parties wishing to locate towers within Kent should fly a balloon from the proposed location so that visual impacts may be evaluated from various locations.

Protection of Important Resources -

- The location should not adversely affect the integrity of environmentally sensitive areas including unique wildlife habitats, wetlands, historic, and archaeological resources.
- A location within or adjacent to any officially designated historic areas including any resource on the National Register of Historic Places should be avoided.
- There should be no detrimental impact to any scenic area, scenic vista, designated scenic road, ridgeline, or significant geologic or natural features within Kent, especially those noted in the Plan of Conservation and Development.

Design Considerations -

- The use of stealth technologies should be employed whenever possible.
- To protect public safety, tower locations should include an adequate fall zone that, in general, will not extend beyond the property nor include any residential structures.
- Signage and lighting should not be permitted unless it is clearly stated as part of any application and authorized for public safety as part of any approval.
- Site development of telecommunications facilities should minimize impervious surfaces, avoid soil erosion and runoff problems, maintain natural buffers, provide for security, and provide for safe access.



5.4 ADDRESS UTILITY INFRASTRUCTURE	Leader/ Partner
<p>Policies (strategies anticipated to continue over time) are identified by black text. <i>Action steps (specific tasks to implement the POCD) are identified by red italic text.</i></p>	
<p>1. Water Supply – Continue to ensure that local properties have access to a safe and adequate water supply.</p>	TAHD AWC
<p>2. Sewage Treatment –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Continue to ensure that local properties have a safe and sanitary sewage treatment system. b. Support continued maintenance and improvement of the sewage treatment system. c. Continue to monitor sewage usage and capacity in relation to permitted discharge capacity. d. Continue to maintain sewer avoidance areas in other parts of Kent. 	WPCA TAHD PZC
<p>3. Storm Drainage – Continue to implement low impact development (LID) techniques to manage the quality and quantity of stormwater runoff.</p>	PW CC IWC PZC
<p>4. Storm Drainage – <i>Amend the Subdivision Regulations to include LID provisions</i></p>	<i>PZC</i>
<p>5. Electricity –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Continue to encourage Eversource to improve the reliability of the electrical distribution system in Kent. b. Balance tree trimming for electrical reliability with overall character. c. Continue to seek opportunities to bury wired utilities in the Village Center area. 	Town PW PZC
<p>6. Wired Communications – Work with service providers and other communities in the region to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Improve the speed and capacity of wired communication services, and b. Promote high speed / high capacity broadband service for all parts of the community and the region. 	Town
<p>7. Wireless Infrastructure – Work with telecommunication providers and the Connecticut Siting Council to provide for wireless services to fill local coverage gaps and meet local needs in the least visually intrusive manner possible.</p>	Town
<p>8. <i>Work with wireless communication providers (or a private engineer) to identify possible locations to best address service needs and desires while minimizing impacts on sensitive viewsheds.</i></p>	<i>Town</i>

CONCLUSION

Implement the POCD



The POCD has been prepared to meet the challenges that will confront the Town of Kent in the future. It is meant to serve as a guide to be followed in order to enhance the Town's quality of life, the overall economy, and community character.

The POCD is also intended to be flexible enough to allow adjustments that achieve specific goals and objectives while maintaining the integrity of the long-term goals of the community. Still, the most important step of the planning process is implementation of the Plan's strategies, policies, and action steps.

During the next few years, some of the goals will be achieved, circumstances will undoubtedly change, and conditions may arise that will suggest that it is time to reconsider some of the POCD strategies, policies, and action steps. Such situations are to be expected. Programs that help achieve community consensus, establish community goals, and promote community welfare will all turn out to be positive steps in the history of Kent.

[Progress requires] a compelling vision, a comprehensive plan, relentless implementation, and talented people working together.

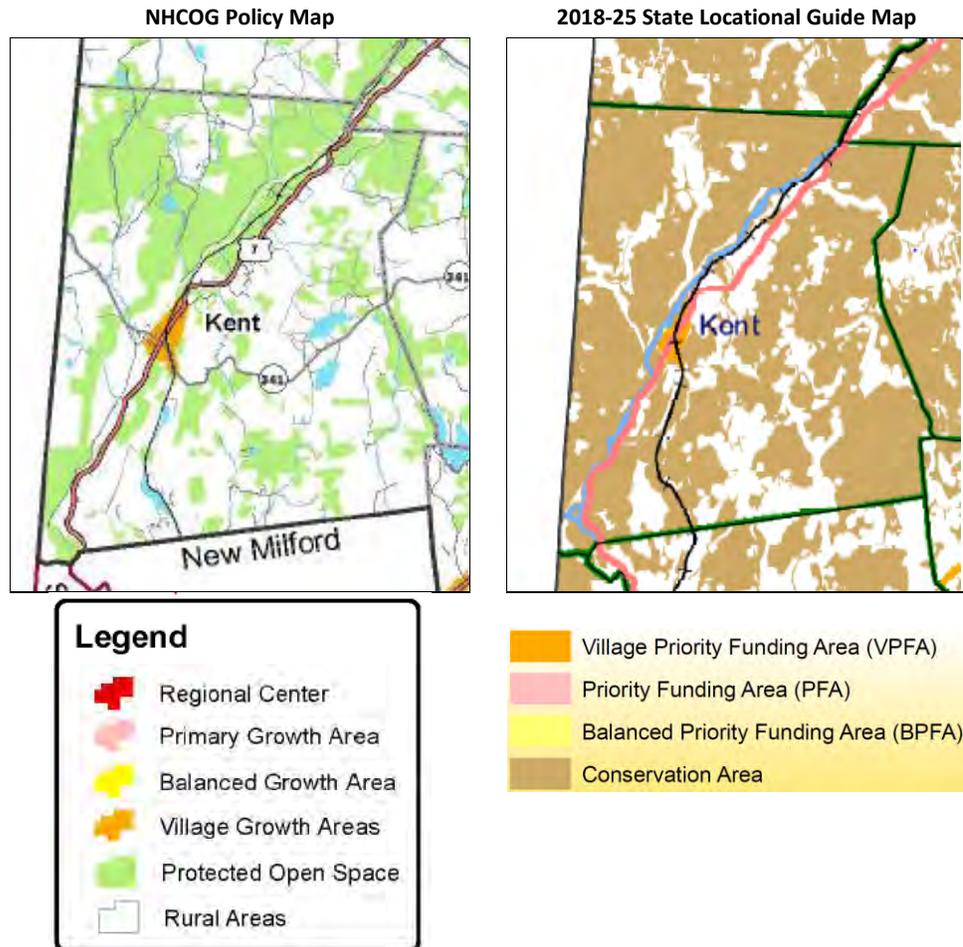
Alan Mullaly
American Businessman

6.1 Consistency

Consistency With State and Regional Plans

In accordance with Section 8-23 of the Connecticut General Statutes, the POCD has been evaluated for consistency and found to be generally consistent with:

- the 2017-27 Regional Plan of Conservation and Development prepared by the Northwest Hills Council of Governments (NHCOG).
- the Locational Guide Map in the 2018-2025 State Conservation and Development Policies Plan (approved by the Legislature in 2022).



Consistency With State Growth Principles

In accordance with Section 8-23 of the Connecticut General Statutes, the Plan of Conservation and Development was found to be consistent with statewide growth management principles.

Principle	Findings
1. Redevelop and revitalize regional centers and areas of mixed land uses with existing or planned physical infrastructure.	CONSISTENT – Although Kent is not a regional center, the POCD promotes mixed use, pedestrian-friendly development in Kent Center.
2. Expand housing opportunities and design choices to accommodate a variety of household types and needs.	CONSISTENT - The POCD promotes strategies to help provide for housing options that are more affordable and to address the housing needs of an aging population.
3. Concentrate development around transportation nodes and along major transportation corridors to support the viability of transportation options and land reuse.	CONSISTENT - The POCD promotes mixed use, pedestrian-friendly development in Kent Town Center (an area with possible future passenger rail service).
4. Conserve and restore the natural environment, cultural and historical resources, and traditional rural lands.	CONSISTENT - The POCD contains specific strategies to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote sustainability / resiliency • Protect natural resources, • Preserve open space, and • Protect historic and scenic resources.
5. Protect environmental assets critical to public health and safety.	CONSISTENT - The POCD contains recommendations to protect water quality (both surface and ground), preserve floodplain areas, minimize runoff, and other similar strategies.
6. Integrate planning across all levels of government to address issues on a local, regional, and statewide basis.	CONSISTENT - The POCD has been used, and will be used, to coordinate efforts with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjacent communities, • Regional organizations, and • State agencies.

6.2 Implementation

Implementation of strategies is the most important part of the POCD process. Implementation takes place when POCD strategies are put into action and evaluated.

To that end, the POCD has been set up to promote implementation in a couple of ways. First, the strategies in each section of the POCD have used color coded fonts to distinguish between policies and actions steps:

- Policies (**black text**) are statements used to guide decisions. Typically, policies are on-going, do not lend themselves to being categorized as implemented (which implies something is finished), and do not lend themselves to target completion dates.
- Action steps (*red italic text*) are specific pro-active actions or tasks which will accomplish a desired outcome. Since policies are discrete tasks, their implementation can typically be prioritized, scheduled, measured, monitored, completed, and evaluated. To help promote implementation, action steps are called out in each policy chapter of the POCD in order to promote implementation actions.

Second, each policy and action step in the POCD has a leader and many have partners. These are the entities most responsible for advocating for the policy / action step and/or for implementation of that policy or action step. Often, the leader may need or want to coordinate with and/or obtain assistance from others (partners). A legend (on the outside back cover) is used to explain the acronyms used.



PZC To Promote POCD Implementation - The Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC) has at least three roles in POCD implementation:

- Applying relevant POCD policies to Planning and Zoning Commission decisions.
- Pro-actively initiating and completing the action steps assigned to the PZC.
- Encouraging other organizations and entities (public and private) to apply POCD policies and complete action steps in order to accomplish POCD objectives.

The PZC anticipates that it will, on a regular basis, schedule round table meetings with other Town boards and agencies and with other organizations to promote POCD implementation. Such meetings (perhaps 1-2 per year) will provide opportunities to coordinate implementation efforts and find ways to partner to accomplish key priorities.

Assistance From Others - Of course, implementation will be greatly enhanced by assistance from Kent residents and officials. Having a pro-active process to engage the community in helping implement the POCD will help ensure it is influential in guiding future actions of the Town.

To set the stage for this cooperation in implementation, a simple first step can be giving members of key Town boards and commissions a copy of the adopted POCD (and, in the future, new members of those boards when they are seated).

Town Budgeting - When Kent invests in projects and programs which are closely aligned with the policies and action items identified in the POCD, the community moves closer to achieving its overall goals and objectives. This includes new programs and initiatives as well as maintaining the facilities Kent already has.

Annual Operating Budget - The annual operating budget guides municipal spending and so it is an important indicator of municipal priorities. Incorporating POCD recommendations in the operating budget and adequately funding them will certainly help to implement POCD recommendations.

Capital Budget / Capital Improvement Programming - Capital projects tend to be long-term investments in the future of a community. When these capital investments help accomplish recommendations in the POCD, the community benefits in a number of ways.

8-24 Review

Section 8-24 of the Connecticut General Statutes requires that municipal improvements (as defined in the statute) be referred to the Planning and Zoning Commission for a report before any local action is taken.

The Commission should strive to ensure that the referral occurs and that spending on municipal improvements reflects the priorities and recommendations of the POCD.

6.2 IMPLEMENTATION	Leader/ Partner
<p>Policies (strategies anticipated to continue over time) are identified by black text. <i>Action steps (specific tasks to implement the POCD) are identified by red italic text.</i></p>	
1. Implement the policies and action steps identified in the POCD.	Town PZC
<p>2. <i>Set up a pro-active process to implement the POCD in order to help ensure it is influential in guiding future actions of the Town.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. <i>Give members of key Town boards and commissions a copy of the adopted POCD (and, in the future, new members of those boards when they are seated).</i> b. <i>Set aside specific meetings to review POCD implementation</i> c. <i>Consider establishing a Plan Implementation Committee (PIC) with representatives of various Town boards and commissions to review the policies and action steps in the POCD and refine priorities based on local issues, funding opportunities, and/or other criteria.</i> d. <i>Consider preparing and utilizing a spreadsheet of policies and action steps with the ability to sort by leader, partner, etc.</i> 	<i>PZC</i>
3. <i>Consider adopting a fees ordinance (CGS 8-1c) which would allow land use agencies to retain professional assistance on complex applications at the applicant's expense.</i>	<i>BOS</i>
4. <i>Update the Zoning Regulations to reflect polices and action steps in the POCD.</i>	<i>PZC</i>
5. <i>Update the Subdivision Regulations to reflect best practices in land development.</i>	<i>PZC</i>
6. Utilize the POCD policies and action steps when conducting CGS 8-24 reviews.	PZC
7. Encourage consideration of the POCD when crafting the operating budget and the capital improvement budget.	<i>PZC BOS BOF</i>

6.3 Future Steps

During the next few years, it is envisioned that action steps in the POCD will be implemented as opportunities arise and circumstances permit. Completion of action steps is the most effective way to accomplish POCD recommendations.

Over the course of time, it is also envisioned that the strategies and policies in the POCD will be applied and used to guide decision making in Kent.

While circumstances will undoubtedly change, programs that help achieve community consensus, establish community goals, and promote community welfare will all turn out to be positive steps in the history of Kent.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



Special thanks to residents, business owners, and others who participated in the survey, attended meetings, and helped create this POCD for Kent.

POCD Subcommittee

Matthew Winter *Chair*
Karen Casey
Marc Weingarten
Adam Manes

Planning and Zoning Commission

Wes Wyrick *Chair*
Adam Manes *Vice Chair*
Marc Weingarten *Secretary / Treasurer*
David Birnbaum
Karen Casey
Darrell Cherniske
Alice Hicks

Richard Chavka *Alternate*
Anne McAndrew *Alternate*
Matthew Winter *Alternate*

Guidance / Assistance

Tai Kern *Land Use Administrator (from 9/22)*
Donna Hayes, CZEO *Land Use Administrator (to 9/22)*
Glenn Chalder, AICP *Planimetrics, Inc.*

Legend Of Leaders / Partners

These acronyms are used in the POCD to identify organizations thought likely to be involved in implementation of the polices and action steps

AWC	Aquarion Water Company	KHS	Kent Historical Society
BOF	Board of Finance	KST	Kent Sustainability Team
BOS	Board of Selectmen	KVFD	Kent Volunteer Fire Department
CC	Conservation Commission	NHCOG	Northwest Hills Council of Governments
CoC	Chamber of Commerce	PRC	Park And Recreations Commission
DOT	CT Department of Transportation	PW	Public Works
EMS	Emergency Medical Services	PZC	Planning and Zoning Commission
HDC	Historic District Commission	Town	Town boards, commissions, agencies, departments, and Staff
IWC	Inland Wetlands Commission	TAHD	Torrington Area Health District
		WPCA	Water Pollution Control Authority

