

# BOLTON

## 2015 Plan of Conservation and Development

Celebrating Our 300<sup>th</sup>  
Anniversary in 2020!

Effective November 26, 2015  
Updated & Effective August 10, 2022

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The cover photograph of Heritage Farm was taken by Richter and Cegan as part of their work on the Bolton Center Study. Used with permission.



October 2015

Dear Residents of Bolton,

Greetings! This document is the adopted 2015 Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) for Bolton. Following a public hearing on October 21, 2015, the POCD was adopted with an effective date of November 26, 2015.

The strategies outlined in the POCD are intended to guide the future conservation and development of Bolton. Our overall goal has been to maintain the high quality of life in Bolton and make our community an even better place in the future.

The strategies were developed over the past year or so and reflect input from Bolton residents, independent review and analysis, and careful deliberations by the members of the Planning and Zoning Commission.

With your help, we look forward to implementing the Plan!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Eric M. Luntta". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Eric M. Luntta, Chair  
Planning and Zoning Commission

## POCD TERMINOLOGY

Many sections of the Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) contain strategies, policies, and action steps. As used in the POCD:

- A “strategy” is a long-term goal or course of action for Bolton.
- A “policy” is a principle or course of action intended to help implement the strategy (a policy is an on-going activity that does not generally have an end date).
- An “action step” is a recommended task that helps implement the strategy (a task has an end date or specific result).

Strategy	→	<b>Maintain Existing Open Spaces</b>		Please see inside back cover for a legend of Leaders / Partners	
Policy	→	<b>Policies</b>	<b>Leader</b>	<b>Partners</b>	
		1. Convert managed open space into dedicated open space owned by the Town or the land trust by acquiring land or easements or development rights.	OSAP	BLT, CC	
Action Step	→	<b>Action Steps</b>			
		2. Continue to manage Bolton's open spaces in an ecologically sound manner for conservation, educational and recreational purposes.	OSAP	BLT, CC	

In the strategy tables in the POCD, each policy and action step also includes a “leader” and may include one or more “partners.” The “leader” is the entity considered most likely to bear responsibility for implementing the policy or completing the action step. Partners are other entities likely to be involved in implementation.

A legend for “leaders” and “partners” is presented below. For ease of reference, the legend may also be found on the inside back cover.

### Designations for Leaders and Partners in the Policies / Action Steps Tables

<b>BEC</b>	Bolton Energy Committee	<b>IWC</b>	Inland Wetlands Commission
<b>BHS</b>	Bolton Historical Society	<b>OSAP</b>	Open Space Acquisition / Pres.
<b>BLT</b>	Bolton Land Trust	<b>PIC</b>	Plan Implementation Comm. (NEW)
<b>BOE</b>	Board of Education	<b>PW</b>	Public Works
<b>BOF</b>	Board of Finance	<b>PZC</b>	Planning and Zoning Commission
<b>BOS</b>	Board of Selectmen	<b>REDC</b>	Regional Economic Dev. Council
<b>CC</b>	Conservation Commission	<b>Town</b>	Town Boards / Staff (under the general direction of the Board of Selectmen)
<b>EDC</b>	Economic Dev. Commission	<b>WPCA</b>	Water Pollution Control Authority
<b>HFC</b>	Bolton Heritage Farm Commission		

# INTRODUCTION

# 1

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## Overview

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A Plan of Conservation and Development is a document whose purpose is to establish a common vision for the future of a community and then identify policies that will help attain that vision. While its key purpose and function is to address the physical development of a community, it will often address issues related to economic and social development.

The goals and recommendations of the Plan are intended to reflect an overall consensus of what is considered desirable for Bolton and its residents in the future. It is envisioned that the Plan will be used to help:

- Preserve and protect things important to residents (conservation strategies),
- Guide future growth and change in ways the community wants (development strategies), and
- Identify facilities and services the community wants or needs in the future (infrastructure strategies).

A Plan of Conservation and Development is primarily an advisory document. It is intended to guide local boards and commissions and to provide a framework for consistent decision-making with regard to conservation and development activities in Bolton over the next decade or so.

While the statutory responsibility to adopt the Plan rests with the Planning and Zoning Commission, implementation will occur only with the diligent efforts of the residents and officials of the Town of Bolton. The Plan will be effective only if it is understood and supported by the people of Bolton and implemented by local boards and commissions.

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

**The Commission shall:**

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

**The Plan shall:**

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

**The Plan may:**

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

# CONDITIONS & TRENDS

# 2

## Overview

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This section of the POCD provides a general overview of conditions and trends affecting Bolton. It has been prepared as part of the process of formulating the 2015 Plan of Conservation and Development.

**Sunset View from Treat Farm**



## Sister Town

Bolton, Connecticut, and Bolton, England, have arranged to be “sister” towns.

Representatives of Bolton, England, recently stopped by Town Hall during a visit to Connecticut.

### Ceremonial Visit



## History of Bolton

The landscape of the area we now know as Bolton evolved over millions of years as a result of massive geologic forces.

Archeological finds indicate that Native Americans have lived in this area for about the last 10,000 years. Several major “trails” are believed to have travelled through the “notch” in what is now Bolton, and historians feel that the “notch” was the boundary between the Podunk territory to the west and the Mohegan territory to the east. The Indians called it Saqumsketuck, which means land or place at the hard rock.

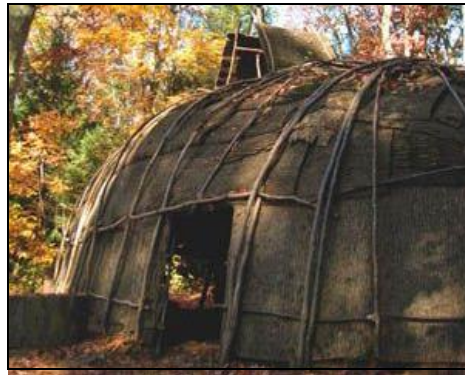
### European Settlement

Europeans “discovered” this part of the new world in 1614 when Dutch explorer Adriaen Block sailed into what is now called Long Island Sound. Competition between the Dutch and English for trade with Native Americans eventually led to the settlement of inland areas along the Connecticut River after 1633. Following the Pequot War of 1637, European settlement began to extend to other areas.

### Formation of a Town

Although land grants were made in this area in the late 1600s, actual permanent settlement did not occur until later. In 1720, fifteen family heads petitioned the General Assembly for permission to incorporate a town. The petition to incorporate a municipality was honored, and the area was named Bolton. The name is thought to have come from a connection to Bolton, Lancashire, England (now a “sister” town to Bolton).

### Recreation Of Native American Settlement



### Colonial-Era Structure





## Growth of the Community

After 1720, the area's economy was dominated by subsistence agriculture. The topography of the area supported the harnessing of water power for mills, which led to the development of a saw mill (for cutting the timber needed for buildings), a grist mill (for processing grains), and a fulling mill (where woolen cloth was processed).

Some reports indicate that Bolton had at least five brandy stills (hence, Brandy Street), hat shops, a cigar maker, and other businesses.

Bolton also benefitted from other natural resources – most notably a slate quarry where flagstones were mined for walkways, patios, interior flooring, headstones, facades and other types of construction. As early as 1820, the Bolton Quarry was sending flags of stone to Washington, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and New Orleans. Transport of this product became easier when the Hartford, Providence, and Fishkill Railroad came through in 1849.

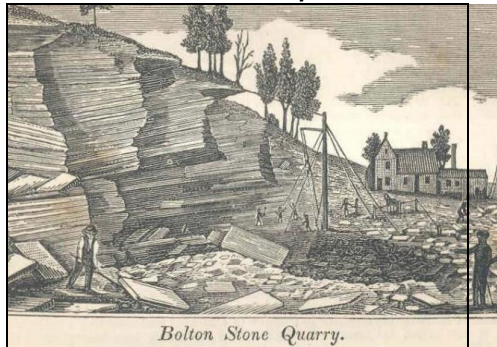
## Twentieth Century and Beyond

By 1910, Bolton's population (433 people) was at its lowest point since the first Census in 1756. Whatever the reason for this decline (agricultural efficiencies, employment elsewhere, etc.), the population subsequently grew steadily throughout the twentieth century.

Following World War II, Bolton experienced the same surge of growth that affected other communities across the nation. Construction of the Interstate Highway System and a cultural trend toward suburban living facilitated the development of once rural areas, and Bolton was no different. Former farms were subdivided and developed, and population quadrupled between 1940 and 1960.

By 2000, Bolton had grown to be a community of more than 5,000 people.

**Bolton Quarry**



**Drawing of Bolton Tavern**



## Rochambeau Encampment

During the Revolutionary War, Bolton played a supporting role as part of the joint French-American effort to defeat the British.

On behalf of the French government, Count Rochambeau brought a force of more than 5,000 French soldiers to help America in the war with England. The French forces landed in Rhode Island, travelled overland to New York and then south to Yorktown, where the combined French-American forces were able to defeat the British. This proved to be the last major battle of the Revolutionary War.

In June 1781, the travelling army and supplies (5,000 soldiers and 250 wagons and 1,000 oxen) camped in Bolton on the property now known as Bolton Heritage Farm (French Camp #5).

## **Commemoration of Rochambeau Encampment**



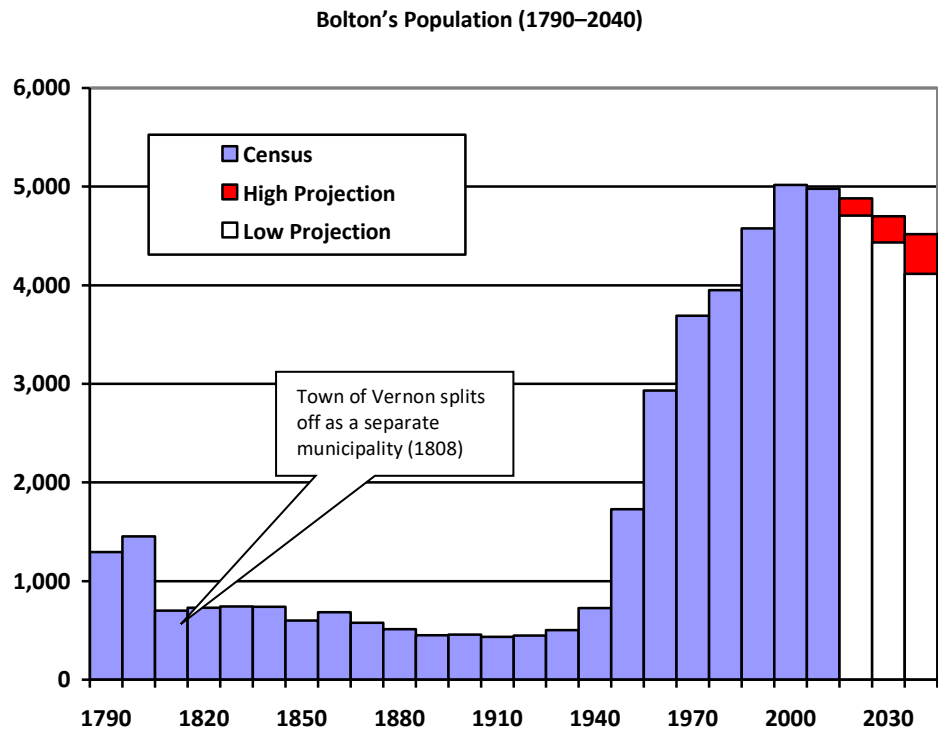
**Bolton's Population**

1790	1,293
1800	1,452
1810	700
1820	731
1830	744
1840	739
1850	600
1860	683
1870	576
1880	512
1890	452
1900	457
1910	433
1920	448
1930	504
1940	728
1950	1,729
1960	2,933
1970	3,691
1980	3,951
1990	4,575
2000	5,017
2010	4,980
2020	<i>4,707 - 4,882</i>
2030	<i>4,435 - 4,700</i>
2030	<i>4,116 - 4,518</i>

US Census data for 1820 to 2010. Projections are in italics. Low projections are based on Planimetrics cohort survival model. High projections are based on Connecticut State Data Center cohort survival model extrapolated to 2030.

**People of Bolton**

According to the United States Census, Bolton had 4,980 residents in 2010. This represents a decrease of 37 persons from the 5,017 persons reported in the 2000 Census. Due to the natural aging of the existing population and fewer young families moving to Bolton, Bolton's population is projected to decrease in the future *if recent trends continue*.



Bolton experienced "natural increase" (more births than deaths) in every decade from 1950 to 2000. In the first decade of this century, however, Bolton experienced a slight population decline due to fewer births and more out-migration than in-migration.

**Components of Population Change**

	1950s	1960s	1970s	1980s	1990s	2000s
<b>If the Census indicates the population changed this much in this decade ...</b>	<b>+1,204</b>	<b>+758</b>	<b>+260</b>	<b>+624</b>	<b>+442</b>	<b>(37)</b>
<b>And births and deaths accounted for this much of the change ...</b>	<b>+492</b>	<b>+362</b>	<b>+200</b>	<b>+325</b>	<b>+234</b>	<b>+85</b>
Births	632	582	425	571	522	399
Deaths	140	220	225	246	288	314
<b>Then this many people moved in (or out) of Bolton during the decade</b>	<b>+712</b>	<b>+396</b>	<b>+60</b>	<b>+299</b>	<b>+208</b>	<b>(122)</b>

US Census, Connecticut Health Department reports,

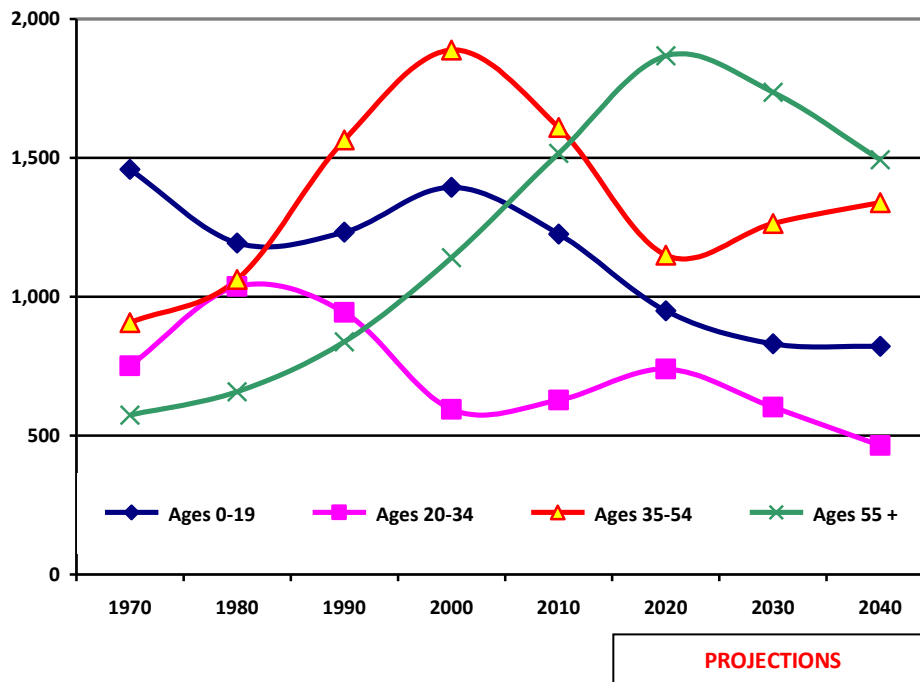
## Changing Age Composition

The age composition of Bolton is changing over time as a result of births, deaths, people moving in, and people moving out. Comparing the number of people in one age group in the Census to the number of people 10 years earlier reveals that, since at least 1970:

- Bolton has tended to attract family-age adults (ages 30 to 50) and their children (ages 0 to 15).
- Bolton has experienced net out-migration of children and young adults following high school and college (ages 15 to 30).
- Bolton has experienced net out-migration (even after considering deaths) of people age 50 and older.

If these trends continue, Bolton will have a smaller population in the future.

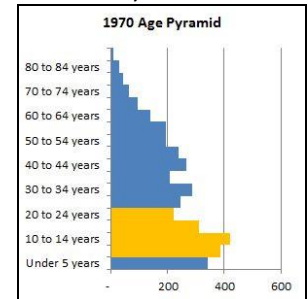
The most significant trend in Bolton is the projected increase in the number of older residents (age 55+) as life expectancy rises and "baby boomers" (people born from about 1945 to about 1965) enter these older age cohorts. A changing age composition can also result in changing demand for municipal services and housing types.



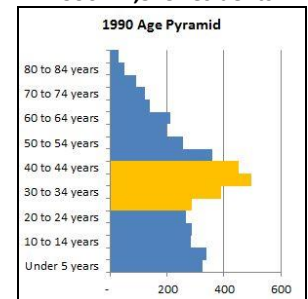
## Age Composition

The following "pyramids" show the number of people in 5-year age groups in different years. People born from 1945 to 1965 ("baby boomers") are highlighted in orange below.

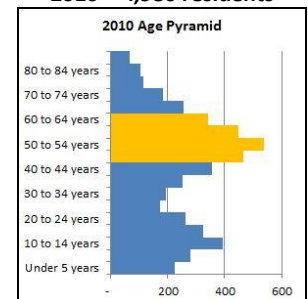
1970 = 3,691 residents



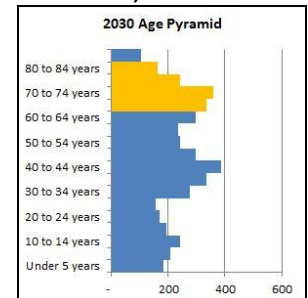
1990 = 4,575 residents



2010 = 4,980 residents



2030 = 4,700 residents



### Housing Units

1980	1,393
1990	1,704
2000	1,969
2010	2,015

US Census. Data for 1980 reflects number of occupied housing units.

### Median Sales Price - Nearby Communities

Glastonbury	\$345,000
<b>State</b>	<b>\$291,000</b>
<b>Bolton</b>	<b>\$235,000</b>
Coventry	\$225,000
Andover	\$216,500
Hebron	n/a
Vernon	n/a
Manchester	n/a

CERC (2011 data).

### Median Sales Price - Similar-Sized Communities

East Granby	\$272,500
Deep River	\$252,500
Preston	\$239,900
<b>Bolton</b>	<b>\$235,000</b>
Canterbury	\$192,000
Ashford	n/a
No. Stonington	n/a

CERC (2011 data).

### Affordable Housing Nearby Communities

Vernon	15.6%
Manchester	14.5%
<b>State</b>	<b>11.3%</b>
Coventry	5.9%
Glastonbury	5.5%
Andover	4.3%
Hebron	3.0%
<b>Bolton</b>	<b>1.3%</b>

CT Department of Housing (2014 data).

### Affordable Housing Similar-Sized Communities

Canterbury	7.6%
East Granby	5.1%
Ashford	4.4%
Preston	4.4%
Deep River	3.6%
<b>Bolton</b>	<b>1.3%</b>
No. Stonington	1.0%

CT Department of Housing (2014 data).

## Housing in Bolton

Bolton had about 2,015 housing units in 2010. During the 1980s and 1990s, Bolton added almost 29 housing units per year on average. From 2000 to 2010, Bolton added fewer than 5 housing units per year on average. This reflected the overall economy as well as changing housing preferences.

The housing stock in Bolton consists primarily of single-family detached homes. About 88 percent of all housing units in Bolton were categorized as single-family units in the 2010 Census, and about 12 percent of all housing units were categorized as multifamily units. The vast majority of homes in Bolton (83 percent) are owner-occupied.

While households once typically comprised three or more people, the aging of the population and other societal changes have resulted in an increase in the number of smaller households. In 2010, about 57 percent of all Bolton households consisted of one or two people.

A little over 1 percent of the housing units in Bolton are considered “affordable housing” (governmentally assisted housing, receiving financial assistance, or sale price restricted by deed). In 2013, according to the Connecticut Department of Housing, Bolton had:

- 0 governmentally assisted units,
- 23 households receiving financial assistance, and
- 0 deed-restricted housing units.

Since less than 10 percent of the housing stock meets the State definition of “affordable housing,” Bolton is subject to the Affordable Housing Appeals Procedure (codified as CGS Section 8-30g) where establishment of an affordable housing development need not conform to local zoning requirements.

Single-Family House



Single-Family House



## Economic Conditions in Bolton

A local economy is important because it:

- provides jobs for residents,
- ensures a range of goods and services is available for residents, and
- provides tax revenue to support local services.

Bolton is more of a residential community than a jobs center. Bolton exports workers to employment elsewhere in the region. Bolton's residents benefit from the town's proximity to major jobs centers, shopping facilities, and institutions of higher education.

	Jobs (2013)	Labor Force	Ratio
Glastonbury	16,505	18,606	89%
<b>State</b>	<b>1,640,223</b>	<b>1,859,934</b>	<b>88%</b>
Manchester	27,508	32,914	84%
Vernon	8,565	16,782	51%
<b>Bolton</b>	<b>1,261</b>	<b>2,879</b>	<b>44%</b>
Hebron	1,848	5,579	33%
Coventry	1,404	6,544	21%
Andover	336	1,990	17%

CERC, 2014.

Median household income is one way to gauge the size or strength of the local economy. According to data from the Connecticut Economic Resource Center (CERC), Bolton has a median household income well above the state average and comparable to nearby communities.

### Jobs in Bolton

<b>1960</b>	135
<b>1970</b>	508
<b>1980</b>	700
<b>1990</b>	1,130
<b>2000</b>	1,090
<b>2010</b>	1,183

CT Labor Department.

### Median Household Income - Nearby Communities

Hebron	\$114,286
Glastonbury	\$106,872
Andover	\$97,762
Coventry	\$92,308
<b>Bolton</b>	<b>\$87,885</b>
State	\$69,519
Manchester	\$63,656
Vernon	\$61,848

CERC (2012 data).

### Median Household Income - Similar-Sized Communities

<b>Bolton</b>	<b>\$87,885</b>
No. Stonington	\$81,434
Deep River	\$77,625
Preston	\$76,296
Ashford	\$75,242
East Granby	\$73,074
Canterbury	\$66,641

CERC (2012 data).

### Income in Bolton Over Time

	Median Household Income	Percent of State Median
<b>1980</b>	\$24,779	123%
<b>1990</b>	\$51,351	132%
<b>2000</b>	\$67,394	125%
<b>2010</b>	\$89,432	132%

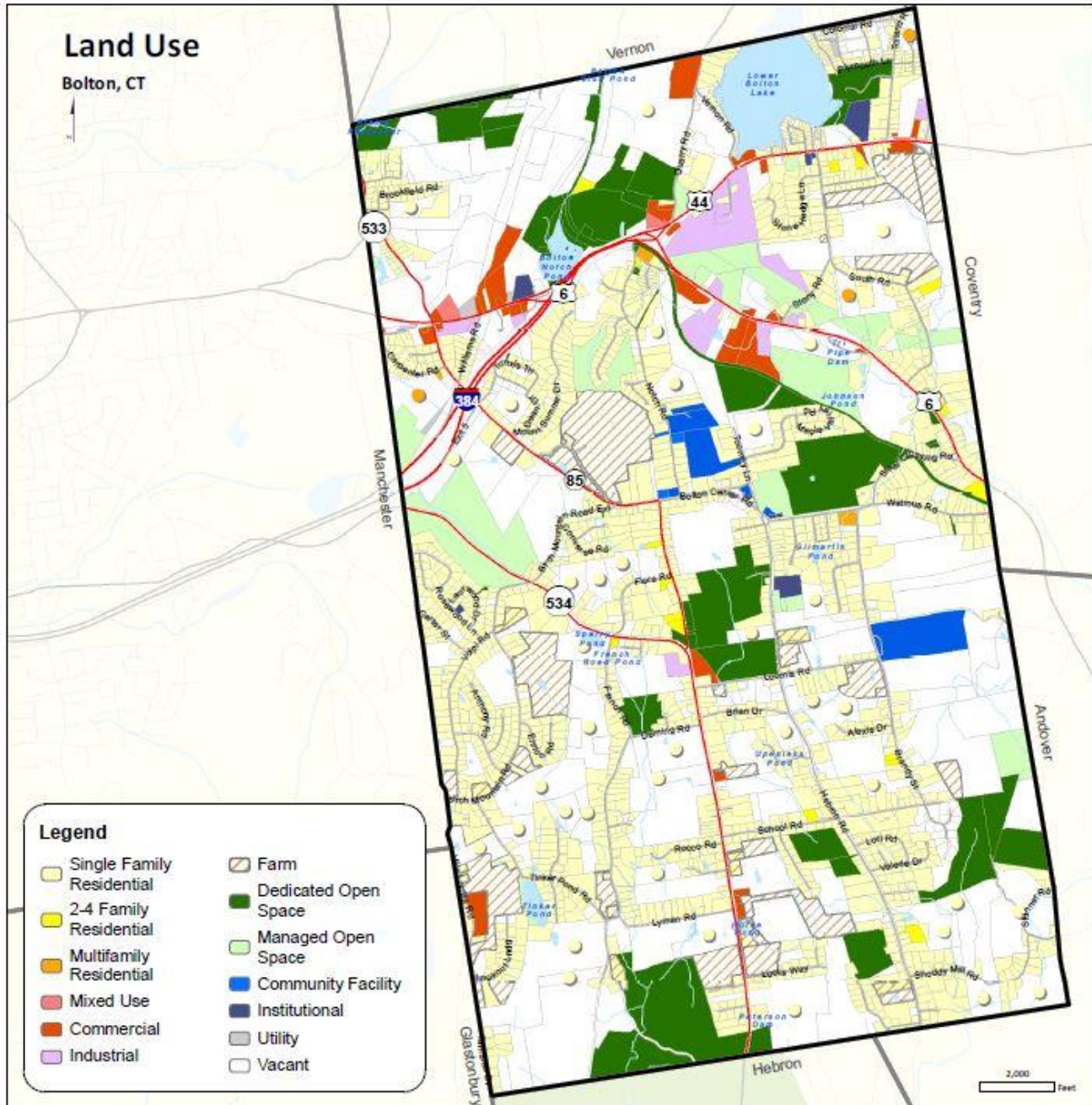
U.S. Census, American Community Survey.

## Land Use Map

The colored "dots" on the land use map mean that most of the parcel is vacant or undeveloped land. The color of the dot indicates the land use on the developed portion of the property.

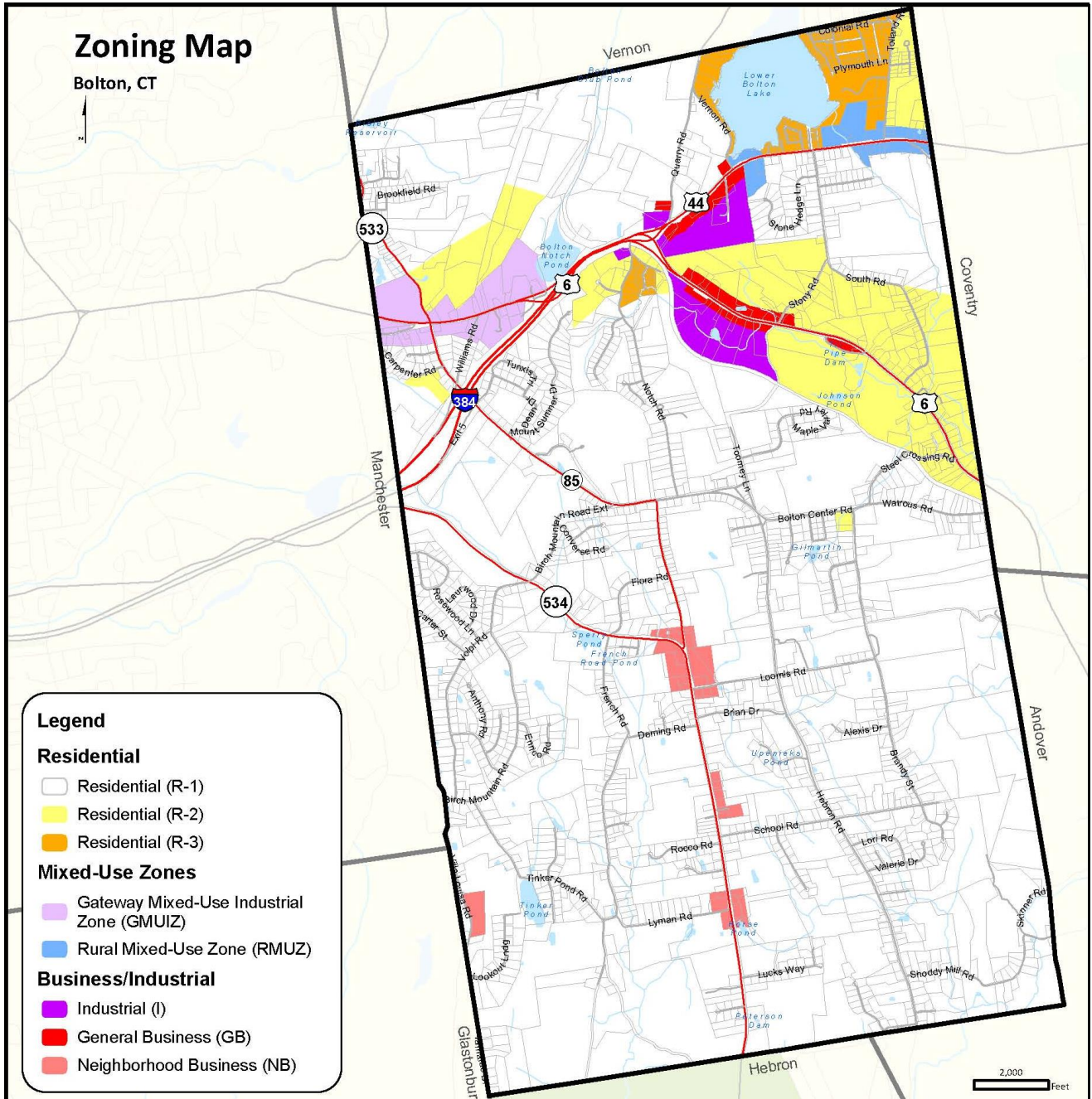
## Land Use in Bolton

Bolton has retained its rural character because most of its land area is farm, forest, or other undeveloped land. Even though Bolton contains over 2,000 housing units, most are located on side roads so that they are not apparent. Businesses are concentrated along Route 6 and Route 44, with some small businesses along Route 85 as well.



# Zoning in Bolton

Most of Bolton is zoned for single-family residential uses, although the R-1 and R-2 districts also allow for two-family homes on larger lots. The R-2 district also allows for multifamily development. Business, industrial, and mixed-use zones are located along Route 6 and Route 44, with some neighborhood business zones along Route 85.



**Equalized Net Grand List**

Equalized net grand lists are the estimated full market value of all taxable property in a municipality.

**Fiscal Overview**

Key fiscal indicators that reflect the circumstances affecting Bolton, nearby communities, and similar-sized communities are presented below.

Nearby Communities	Per Capita Equalized Net Grand List (2012)	Business Portion of Tax Base (2012)	Per Capita Tax Levy (2012)	Education Share of Budget (2012)
Glastonbury	\$166,217	13.1%	\$3,657	68%
<b>Bolton</b>	<b>\$128,252</b>	<b>5.3%</b>	<b>\$2,826</b>	<b>73%</b>
Andover	\$117,828	2.1%	\$2,361	83%
Hebron	\$115,581	2.9%	\$2,732	76%
Coventry	\$106,993	3.6%	\$2,130	71%
Manchester	\$97,381	23.7%	\$2,084	66%
Vernon	\$87,055	13.5%	\$1,964	61%

CERC, 2014.

Similar-Sized Communities	Per Capita Equalized Net Grand List (2012)	Business Portion of Tax Base (2012)	Per Capita Tax Levy (2012)	Education Share of Budget (2012)
East Granby	\$148,169	16.4%	\$3,011	75%
Deep River	\$147,728	9.0%	\$2,542	68%
No. Stonington	\$146,147	10.1%	\$2,395	70%
<b>Bolton</b>	<b>\$128,252</b>	<b>5.3%</b>	<b>\$2,826</b>	<b>73%</b>
Preston	\$117,411	4.9%	\$1,894	76%
Canterbury	\$98,071	4.0%	\$1,613	82%
Ashford	\$94,229	4.3%	\$2,063	80%

CERC, 2014.

Past studies of communities like Bolton have found that residential development typically requires more in service costs than it provides in tax revenue.



# PLANNING ISSUES

# 3

## Overview

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Early in the planning process, exercises were conducted to understand issues of concern to the community:

- A discussion of issues with the Planning and Zoning Commission,
- Input from members of other boards and commissions,
- Input from Town department heads,
- A public meeting to solicit input and listen to Bolton residents, and
- A telephone survey of Bolton households.

**Community Character**



**Business Development**



**Community Facilities**



**Natural Resources**



## “Prouds” and “Sorrrys”

At a public meeting early in the planning process, residents were asked to place a green dot on a map to identify things in Bolton they were proud of. On another map, they were asked to place a red dot to identify things in Bolton they were sorry about. Residents wrote their "prouds" and "sorrrys" on cards that were collected during the meeting.

“Prouds” Map



“Prouds” Themes

- **Open Space / Trails** – areas that contribute to the overall sense of ruralness and quality of life and provide areas people can enjoy
- **Community Character** – the overall sense of Bolton and some of the unique properties and places in the community
- **Community Facilities** – schools and other facilities and services that meet community needs

“Sorrrys” Map



“Sorrrys” Themes

- **Business Development** – the lack of business development, the approach to business development, and the character of business development
- **Community Facilities** – the use and/or condition of some facilities and services
- **Natural Resources** – conditions around Lower Bolton Lake and perceived threats to water quality

## “Planning Points”

People attending the public meeting were given 50 “planning points” to allocate among 12 boxes representing topics typically addressed as part of a Plan of Conservation and Development. Residents were asked to place the five planning point bills (one bill representing 20 points, two bills representing 10 points each, and two bills representing 5 points each) in the boxes to reflect topics they felt were important for Bolton to address as part of the planning process.

	20 points	10 points	5 points	Total Points
<b>Conservation Issues</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>390</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>890</b>
Natural Resources	120	110	35	265
Open Space	120	160	75	355
Agriculture / Farming	40	20	25	85
Community Character	20	100	65	185
<b>Development Issues</b>	<b>460</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>825</b>
Community Structure	120	70	35	225
Residential Development	0	10	5	15
Housing Diversity	20	10	10	40
Business Development	320	150	75	545
<b>Infrastructure Issues</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>545</b>
Community Facilities	80	110	60	250
Traffic and Circulation	20	40	10	70
Walking / Biking / Bus / Train	20	80	30	130
Water / Sewer / Utilities	20	50	25	95
<b>Totals</b>	<b>900</b>	<b>910</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>2,260</b>

“Prouds” / “Sorrys” Exercise



Planning Points Exercise





## Survey Results

As this Plan was being prepared, a telephone survey was conducted to learn about the issues important to Bolton residents. The survey was conducted by an independent polling firm and was administered to 100 randomly selected Bolton households. An on-line phone survey was also conducted, and the overall results broadly supported the findings of the telephone survey.

### Why Moved to Bolton

Participants in the telephone survey reported the following reasons why they moved to Bolton:

- Location (29%)
- Local amenities (27%)
- Overall reputation (16%)
- House choice (15%)
- Town character (11%)
- Family / born here (11%)
- Other (5%)

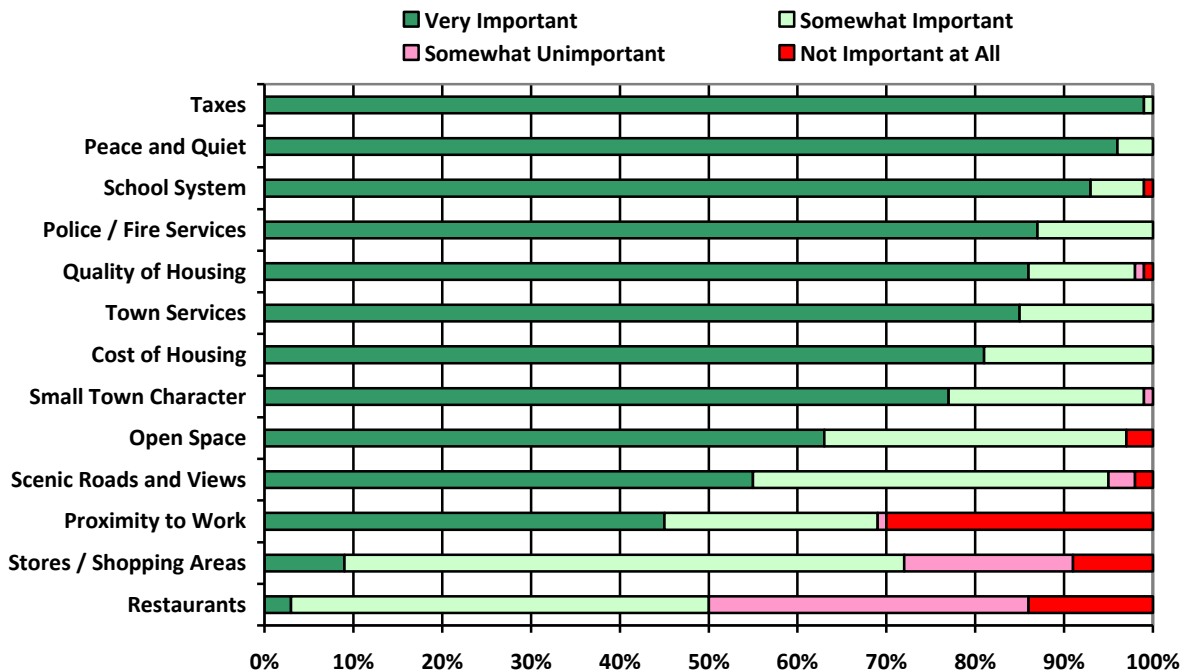
The results of the telephone survey are reported below. The margin of error for a sample size of 100 randomly selected households is approximately 8 percent, plus or minus. The complete results are on file at the Town Hall.

**Most Important Issue** – Participants in the telephone survey indicated the following as being the most important issue facing Bolton:

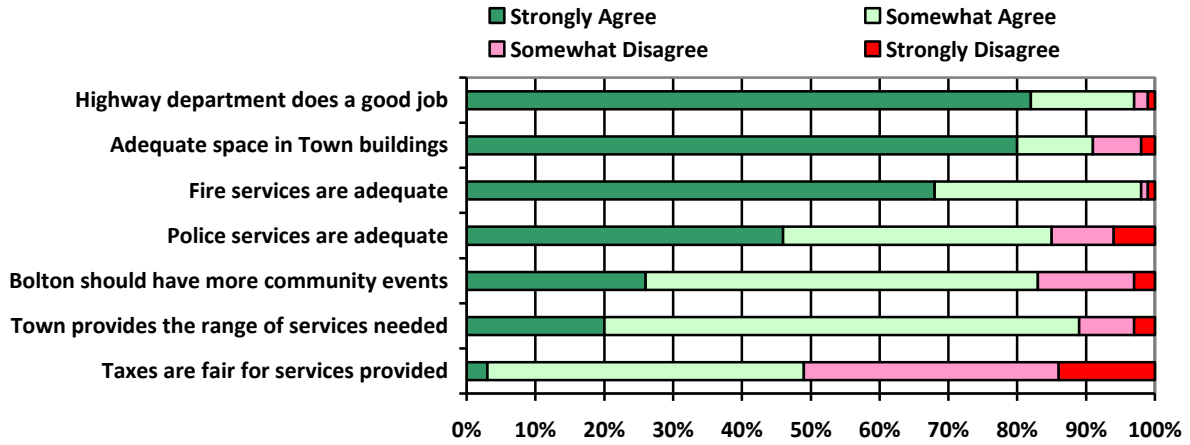
- Taxes / budget (49%)
- School system (28%)
- Lack of business / business development (6%)
- Other (17%)

**Quality Of Life** – When asked about what contributed most to their overall quality of life, participants in the telephone survey indicated the following:

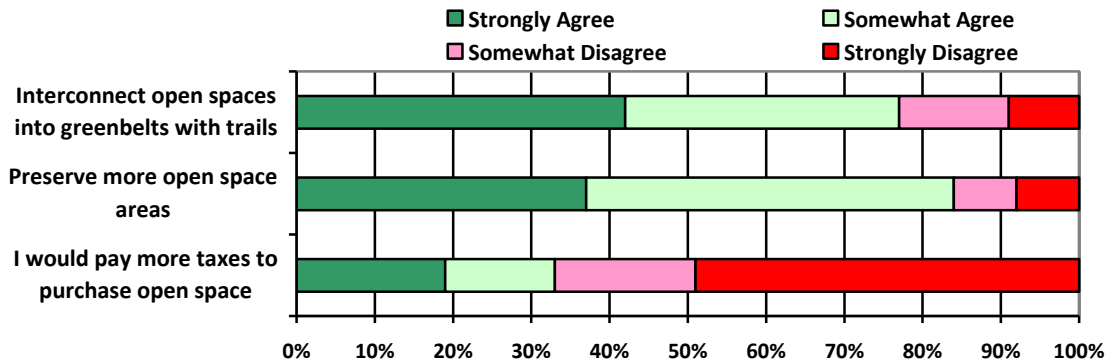
Factors Affecting Bolton’s Quality of Life



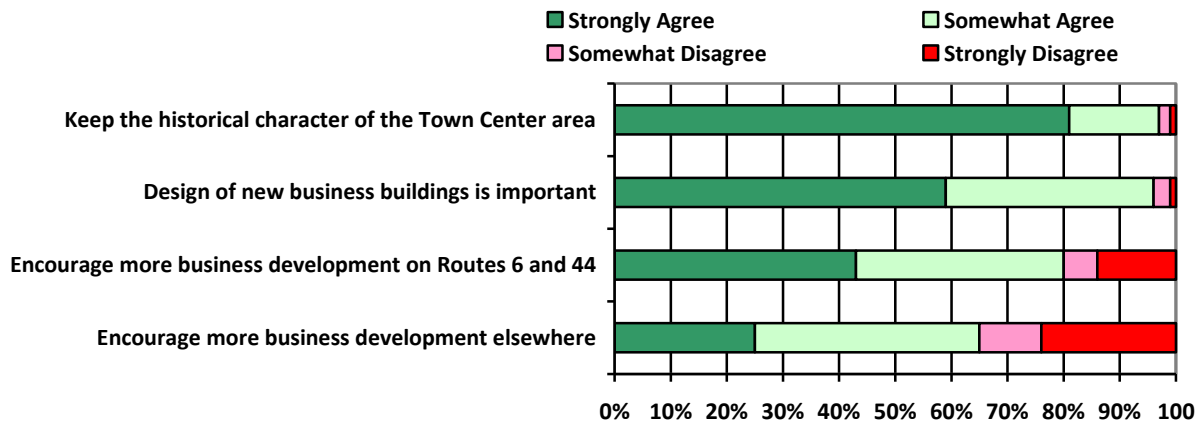
**Municipal Services** – Participants in the telephone survey indicated the following regarding municipal services:



**Open Space** – Survey participants indicated the following regarding open space:



**Development Issues** – Participants in the telephone survey indicated the following regarding development-related issues:



## Key Issues

---

Based on all of the exercises and surveys, the following themes emerged as being important issues for Bolton to consider as part of preparing the Plan of Conservation and Development.

### **CONSERVATION-RELATED ISSUES**

- Maintain Bolton's character
- Protect water quality and lakes
- Continue efforts to preserve open space / farms / scenic views
- Increase efforts to promote community engagement
- Seek to encourage volunteers / public participation

### **DEVELOPMENT-RELATED ISSUES**

- Promote business development / grow the tax base
  - Seek to simplify regulations
  - Seek to simplify approval processes
  - Review business zone locations / boundaries
- Create unique destinations to support business / economic growth
- Create a focal point in Bolton Center
- Continue to manage residential development
  - Increase housing diversity (seniors, affordable, etc.)
  - Continue to use / encourage "open space subdivisions"

### **INFRASTRUCTURE-RELATED ISSUES**

- Maintain / enhance the level of community facilities and services
- Determine which community facilities are needed and which can be recycled or reused for other purposes
- Encourage walking and biking

# CONSERVATION STRATEGIES

# 4

## Overview

---

The term “conservation” means things that Bolton wants to preserve or protect in the future. Conservation issues, which are important to Bolton residents, include the following:

- Natural resources
- Open space
- Community character
- Sustainability and resiliency

**Natural Resources**



**Open Space**



**Community Character**



**Sustainability / Resiliency**





# NATURAL RESOURCES

Conserving natural resources helps preserve environmental functions, enhance community character, and enhance the overall quality of life. Natural resources for consideration in the Plan include:

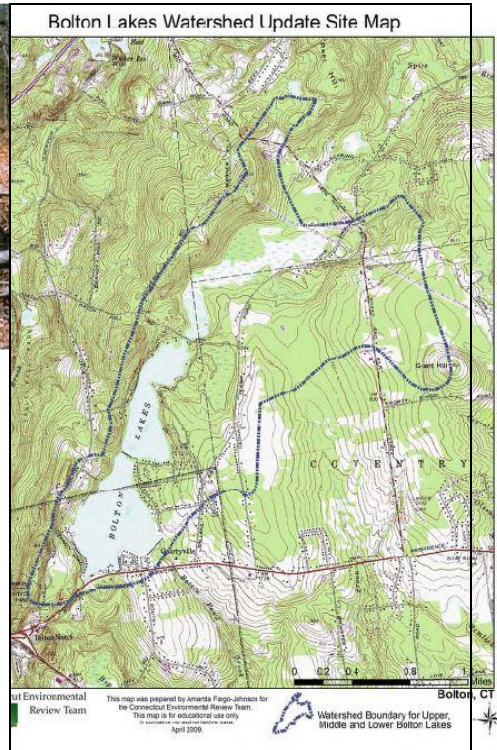
- Water resources (water quality, waterbodies, wetlands, etc.),
- Land resources (steep slopes, important soils, etc.),
- Air resources (air quality, dark skies, etc.),
- Biological resources (flora, fauna, etc.).

Bolton is situated in two major drainage basins – areas west of Route 85 generally drain to the Connecticut River, and areas east of Route 85 generally drain to the Thames River. Being situated at the headwaters of watercourses in two major drainage basins indicates that activities that occur in Bolton could have a widespread impact on other water resources in those drainage basins.

**Vernal Pool**



**Bolton Lakes Watershed**



**Eastern Box Turtle**





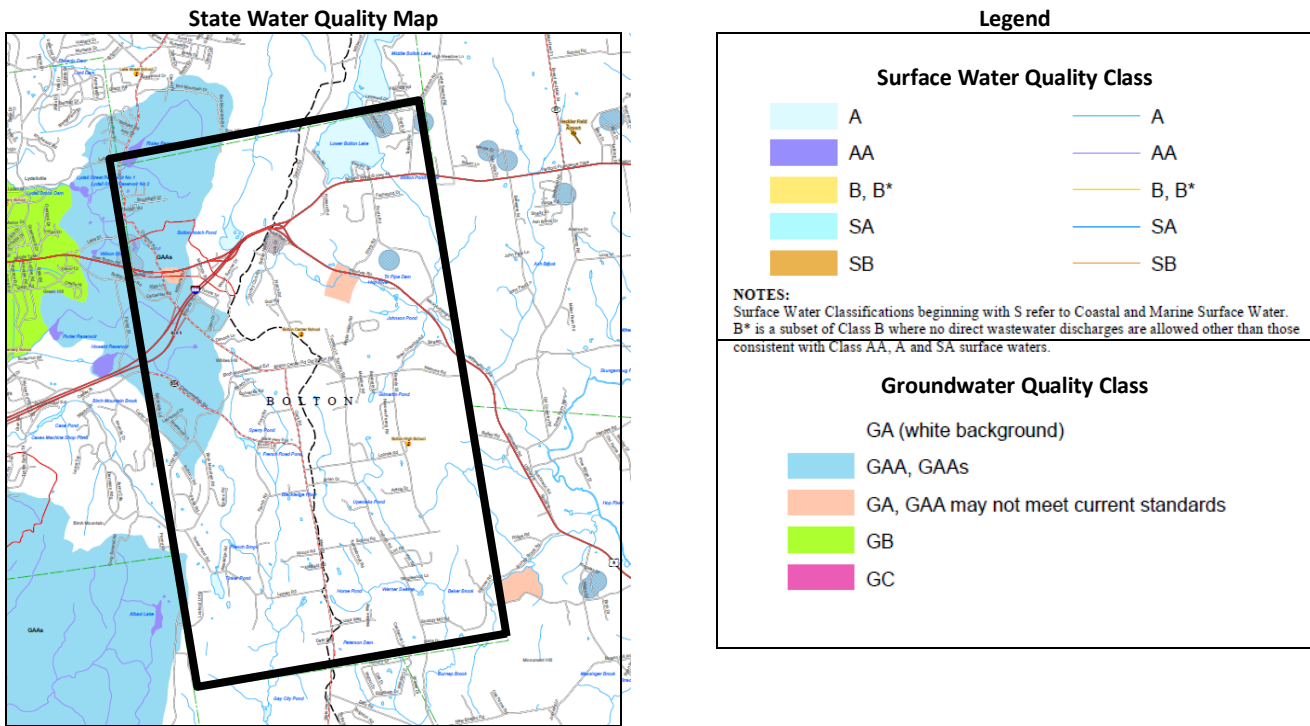
## Natural Resources Map

## Protect Water Resources

Protection of water quality is the most important natural resource issue in Bolton. In addition to ensuring that residents who obtain drinking water from wells on their property have a safe and secure water source, water quality is a key factor in overall environmental health.

Parts of northwest Bolton are in a public water supply watershed (groundwater quality class GAA as shown on the map below) and/or an aquifer protection area (a recharge area to a public water supply well).

Water quality is generally good town-wide, and maintaining that quality has been a long-standing goal of the community.



The major threat to water quality is activities and land uses that introduce pollutants into the environment. This threat is exacerbated by:

- Areas with inadequate septic systems (poorly maintained or operated),
- Drainage systems that discharge untreated water directly to watercourses, and
- Lifestyle patterns (residents might not always consider how human activity – such as the use of lawn fertilizers – affects water quality).

## CASE STUDY

# Water Quality Strategies

In 2004, Connecticut adopted a Stormwater Quality Manual as a planning tool and design guidance document for regulators and design professionals. The Bolton Zoning Regulations refer to this document in a generic way, and additional specificity is recommended.

For example, instead of pointing generically to all 11 sections (plus appendix) of the State manual, the Town zoning regulations might point specifically to Section 7, which provides standards for regulators and design professionals to work toward and by which the Town can determine whether a proposed development has accomplished as much as it could or should in addressing water quality or runoff control.

Section 7 offers standards (including specific equations) for determining compliance with:

- Pollutant reduction (water quality volume and water quality flow),
- Groundwater recharge and runoff volume (water recharge),
- Peak flow control (peak runoff attenuation, stream channel protection, conveyance protection, etc.).

**Stormwater Quality Manual**



**Rain Garden**



**Water Quality Protection**

For many years, water quality protection focused on eliminating “point” sources of pollution (such as industrial discharges).

With the progress that has been made in reducing or eliminating pollution from these sources, attention has now turned to “non-point” sources. These include storm drainage discharge, lawn fertilizer, septic systems, and agricultural runoff.

Watersheds in Bolton that are considered particularly sensitive include:

- Blackledge River,
- Railroad Brook,
- Hop River,
- Lower Bolton Lake,
- Indian Notch Pond, and
- Risley Reservoir.

In addition, several water supply facilities in Bolton are considered particularly sensitive:

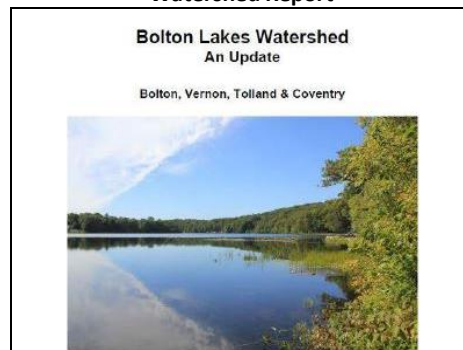
- the aquifer protection area for four supply wells in Manchester,
- Town of Manchester’s reservoir system,
- CT Water Company – Llynwood well system (near Bolton Lakes),
- Cook Drive Association well system (Bolton Notch area),
- Southridge Apartments well system (South Road at Stony Road), and
- Sunset Apartments well system (Sunset Lane near Tolland Road).

Bolton generally has good regulations in place to protect water resources. The Inland Wetland and Watercourse Regulations require a permit for most activities within 100 feet of any inland wetland or watercourse in the community. This requirement will help to preserve these important resources as well as maintain a vegetated buffer to the resource itself.

Since 2009, Bolton has had regulations to manage land use activities in the designated aquifer protection area. These regulations are administered by the Planning and Zoning Commission.

Since 2012, Bolton has had a zoning regulation addressing stormwater management (ZR Section 16A.2.1), and this regulation refers to the Connecticut Stormwater Quality Manual. Although the exact regulatory standards (and whether an application complies with the standards) are not clearly specified, this reference gives the Town the tools to encourage and/or require “low impact development” (LID) strategies.

**Watershed Report**



Eastern Connecticut  
Environmental Review Team Report

Eastern Connecticut  
Resource Conservation & Development Area Inc.

**Lower Bolton Lake**

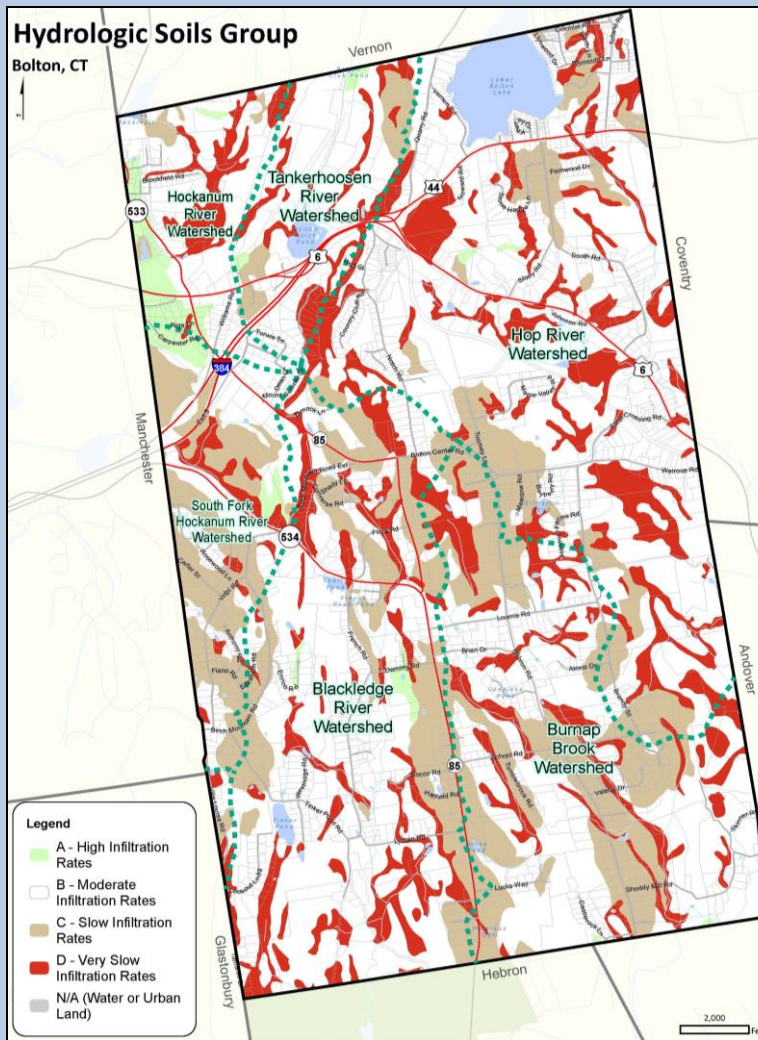


## CASE STUDY

### Infiltration Potential

A key stormwater drainage strategy for the future involves capturing and treating rainwater closer to where the raindrop falls. This is more environmentally friendly than accumulating a large volume of stormwater and trying to manage it.

The Natural Resource Conservation Service (a division of the United States Department of Agriculture) has categorized different soil types by their ability to accept groundwater recharge (hydrologic soil groups). Areas with higher infiltration rates are better able to treat runoff and recharge groundwater. Areas with higher infiltration rates are less likely to result in runoff and flooding. Information about infiltration capacity can be used to determine the amount of infiltration that a development would need to provide.



**Policies and Action Steps**

As described previously:

- A “strategy” (such as “Protect Water Resources”) is a long-term goal or course of action for Bolton.
- A “policy” is a principle or course of action intended to help implement the strategy (a policy is an on-going activity which does not generally have an end date).
- An “action step” is a recommended task that helps implement the strategy (a task has an end date or specific result).

The “leader” is the entity considered most likely to bear responsibility for implementing the policy or completing the action step. Partners are other entities likely to be involved in implementation.

For ease of reference, a legend for “leaders” and “partners” may be found on the inside back cover.

<b>Protect Water Resources</b>		
<b>Policies</b>	<b>Leader</b>	<b>Partners</b>
1. Protect water quality.	IWC	CC PZC
2. Manage stormwater runoff to maintain the water cycle and reduce the impacts of flooding.	IWC	PZC
3. Protect wetlands and watercourses.	IWC	CC PZC
4. Protect floodplain areas.	PZC	IWC CC
5. Educate homeowners about protecting water quality.	IWC	CC
6. Educate design professionals and homeowners about LID tools and techniques.	IWC	CC
7. Seek to restore natural edges (as opposed to “manicured” edges) to watercourses and waterbodies.	IWC	PZC CC
<b>Action Steps</b>		
8. Clarify the stormwater managements section of the zoning regulations to refer to the standards in Section 7 of the Connecticut Water Quality Manual.	PZC	
9. Adopt regulations to help protect water quality in the Lower Bolton Lake watershed (impervious coverage, lot coverage, floor-area ratio, docks, etc.).	PZC	CC WC
10. Investigate establishing a multi-town entity to monitor and manage water quality in all three Bolton lakes (Upper, Middle, Lower).	CC	BOS

**Blackledge River Headwaters**



**Notch Pond**



## Protect Other Important Natural Resources

While water resources may be the highest priority for conservation in Bolton, other natural resources in Bolton are also deserving of protection and conservation. The “Natural Resources Map” on page 21 identifies some of these resources:

- steep slopes, and
- unique or special habitat areas (Natural Diversity Database sites).

Protect Other Important Natural Resources		
Policies	Leader	Partners
1. Consider natural resource issues at the time of development.	PZC	IWC CC
2. Protect important natural resources such as steep slopes, sensitive habitats, and other natural diversity areas.	PZC	IWC CC
3. Discourage the introduction of invasive species, and seek to remove invasive species.	PZC	IWC CC
4. Coordinate resource protection activities with interest groups, adjacent communities, and regional organizations.	Town	CC PZC IWC
Action Steps		
5. Consider preparing a Natural Resources Inventory.	CC	IWC
6. Ensure that local application procedures require investigation of Natural Diversity Database sites as identified by CT-DEEP.	PZC	IWC

### Natural Diversity Database

The Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (CT-DEEP) maintains a Natural Diversity Database (NDDB) in order to help public agencies protect important resources.

NDDB areas represent known locations of:

- endangered species,
- threatened species,
- species of special concern, or
- significant natural communities.

It may also identify scenic areas and unique natural assets (waterfalls, caves, etc.).

The exact locations and species names are masked to protect sensitive species from collection and disturbance.

People proposing activities within designated NDDB areas should contact CT-DEEP so that planned activities can occur while the resource itself is protected.

Wood Turtle



Invasive Species





# OPEN SPACE

## **Open Space Goal**

The State of Connecticut has indicated that it desires to preserve 20 percent of the State as open space.

Bolton's overall goal is in line with State goals.

## **Open Space Objectives**

The following objectives form the basis of the Open Space Plan:

- Encourage the retention of open space to protect natural resources.
- Create links between preserved open spaces.
- Protect water quality.
- Protect scenic qualities.
- Protect wetlands.
- Protect cultural and historic resources.
- Encourage the retention of open space for ecologically sound agriculture, forest management, and recreation.
- Create a balance among land uses in Bolton.

Open space can help protect community character, enhance the quality of life for residents, conserve important natural resources, provide wildlife habitat, and provide fiscal and economic benefits.

During public meetings conducted as part of the process of preparing the 2015 Plan of Conservation and Development, residents spoke passionately about the character of the community and how the feeling of "open space" contributed to their overall perception of the community.

For the Plan of Conservation and Development, the term "open space" is used to refer to any land that is preserved or restricted to:

1. the conservation of natural or scenic resources;
2. parks, forests, wildlife preserves, nature reservations or sanctuaries, or other open spaces;
3. public recreation opportunities;
4. the preservation of historic sites;
5. connections between natural or manmade corridors ("greenways"); or
6. promoting the orderly development of the Town of Bolton.

This definition is suggested in order to distinguish between land that has been preserved or restricted in some way and land that is privately owned and may be developed at some time in the future.

On the Open Space map on page 31, some land is identified as "dedicated" open space, and some land is identified as "managed" open space (these terms are discussed in the sidebar on page 30).

The long-term goal in Bolton is to preserve more than 20 percent of the land area of the community as "preserved" or "dedicated" or "managed" open space. Such areas must be distinguished from land that is undeveloped today but might become developed in the future. To include such land in our count of "open space" is to be lulled into a false sense of achievement.

According to the Bolton Open Space Plan, about 12 percent of Bolton can be categorized as dedicated open space or managed open space.



## Maintain Existing Open Spaces

Bolton should seek to preserve the “managed” open spaces that exist in the community and seek to convert them to “dedicated” open spaces if an opportunity arises.

As an example of this, in 2015, the Town was in the process of accepting land from the State that was acquired for the realignment of Route 6. Some of the land will be used to create a regional greenway system (some might be used to support economic development as shown in the case study of “Bolton Crossroads” on page 59). Since it would then be owned by the Town, the land which becomes part of the regional greenway system would be considered “dedicated” open space.

Maintain Existing Open Spaces		
Policies	Leader	Partners
1. Convert managed open space into dedicated open space by acquiring land, easements, or development rights.	OSAP	BLT CC PZC
2. Continue to manage Bolton’s open spaces in an ecologically sound manner for conservation, education, and recreation purposes.	OSAP	BLT CC

Open Space Trail



Trail Tunnel



## Types of Open Space

In the Plan, "protected open space" is used to describe land that is expected to remain as open space in perpetuity because of a conservation easement or other restriction on its use. It typically allows for public use of the land.

Another term, "dedicated open space," is used to describe land that is expected to remain as open space in perpetuity since it is owned by a public or non-profit entity as open space. It typically also allows for public use of the land.

The term "managed open space" includes land that is owned or used for another purpose but provides the community with some open space benefits (examples of managed open space include land owned by a water company, land acquired by CT-DOT for future roadway construction, or land owned by a homeowners association). Since such land may not allow public use of the land or may be sold or developed in the future, it is not considered dedicated open space.

Finally, "perceived open space" is private land that is presently vacant or partially developed. While this land may appear to be "open space", nothing prevents this land from being sold or developed at some time in the future. This includes land presently assessed under the Public Act 490 program as farm or forest land.

## Continue to Preserve Open Space

Since 1983, Bolton has had an Open Space Plan and has been working to implement it. Over the years, the plan has included a map identifying "conservation priority" areas based on criteria such as existing open spaces, ecological and conservation resources, physical features, historic features, greenways, expansion of State and town open space lands and connecting links. The map has been updated as new information becomes available.

Some of the key recommendations in that Plan include the following:

1. Preserving 20 percent of Bolton as open space.
2. Encouraging the Planning and Zoning Commission, property owners/applicants, and others to use the Bolton Open Space Plan as a resource in identifying open space features (and parcels) that require special consideration in the planning process.
3. Focusing open space efforts in the following core areas:
  - Headwaters of the Blackledge River,
  - Bolton Notch area,
  - "Rochambeau Route,"
  - Hop River State Park Trail area.
4. Maintaining a "conservation priority" database that can be used to identify properties where conservation efforts can be focused.
5. In the event that entire properties cannot be preserved as open space, using the recommendations in the Open Space Plan and the areas identified on the "Natural Resources Map" in the Plan of Conservation and Development to identify the nature and location of desirable preservation areas.
6. Seeking to create a comprehensive greenway system that interconnects conservation, open space, and recreation areas and enables people to appreciate the unique amenities and assets in Bolton:
  - A Blackledge River corridor,
  - A Rail Trail corridor,
  - Extension of the bicycle path from Manchester to Coventry and other areas, and
  - Trail connections to Bolton Center.

Trail Tunnel at Route 384



Open Space



Open Space Map

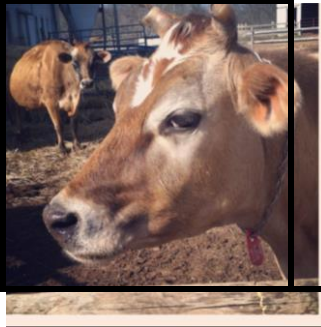
<b>Continue to Preserve Open Space</b>		
<b>Policies</b>	<b>Leader</b>	<b>Partners</b>
1. Preserve 20 percent of Bolton as open space.	OSAP	BLT CC PZC Town
2. Use the Open Space Plan to guide the preservation of open space in Bolton.	OSAP	BLT CC Town
3. Promote public use of, and access to, open space.	OSAP	BLT CC
4. Create a comprehensive greenway system that inter-connects areas.	OSAP	BLT CC Town
5. Work with the Bolton Land Trust and other organizations to preserve open space.	OSAP	PZC CC
6. Obtain open space (or a fee in lieu of open space) at the time of development of any subdivision.	PZC	OSAP BLT
7. Maintain the inventory of existing open space and desirable open space properties.	OSAP	BLT CC
<b>Action Steps</b>		
8. Extend the Charter Oak Greenway through Bolton from Manchester to Coventry.	Town	BLT CC OSAP
9. Make better trail connections to Bolton Center: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• from the Hop River Trail through the Heritage Farm,</li> <li>• along Toomey Road,</li> <li>• from Herrick Park, and</li> <li>• from the Charter Oak Greenway along Route 85.</li> </ul>	Town	BLT CC OSAP HFC
10. Consider acquiring land adjacent to existing open spaces in order to expand and enhance those open spaces.	BOS	BLT CC OSAP
11. Create and distribute maps to identify publicly accessible open space in Bolton.	Town	BLT CC OSAP
12. Update the definition of “open space” in the Zoning Regulations and other local programs to reflect the definition recommended in the POCD (page 28).	PZC	OSAP CC

## Enhance the Open Space Toolbox

In order to have the greatest success at preserving open space, Bolton needs to ensure the best tools are at its disposal. These include:

- regulatory tools (obtaining open space at the time of development),
- fiscal tools (setting aside funds for open space acquisitions), and
- management tools (such as working with other entities to preserve open space collaboratively).

Enhance the Open Space Toolbox		
Policies	Leader	Partners
1. Maintain the open space set-aside provisions in the Subdivision Regulations.	PZC	
2. Maintain the Open Space Acquisition and Preservation Fund, and deposit monies in the fund through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fees-in-lieu-of-open space,</li> <li>• Town Meeting / referenda as properties become available (reactive),</li> <li>• annual appropriations in the operating budget (proactive),</li> <li>• special appropriations in the capital budget (proactive), and/or</li> <li>• bonding in anticipation of future open space purchases (proactive).</li> </ul>	BOS	BOF PZC OSAP CC
3. Seek funding assistance from federal, state, and private organizations to preserve open space.	OSAP	BLT Town
4. Promote open space conservation development.	PZC	CC
5. Maintain the Open Space Acquisition and Preservation Committee.	BOS	
6. Encourage philanthropy for open space preservation.	BLT	OSAP
7. Maintain the Open Space Plan.	OSAP	BLT CC
Action Steps		
8. Investigate how to establish a “fast track” process for approving the acquisition of open space.	OSAP	BLT Town
9. Amend the open space section in the Subdivision Regulations to allow, as part of a subdivision, the dedication of open space land elsewhere in Bolton that the Town is particularly interested in.	PZC	



# FARMING

## Support Farms and Farming

Farming and agriculture are a part of Bolton’s history and economy and a key element of Bolton’s character. Agricultural activities play an important part in making communities livable and in building a sustainable future. Bolton should continue to preserve and support farms and farming in the community.

Support Farms and Farming		
Policies	Leader	Partners
1. Support existing farms and farmers.	Town	
2. Preserve farmland soils for future generations to farm.	Town	
3. Utilize the PA-490 farm assessment program.	Town	
Action Steps		
4. Review local regulations for ways to enhance agricultural viability – such as allowing “value added” activities (e.g., farm stores).	PZC	
5. Consider allowing roadside signage that raises awareness of working farms.	PZC	

Dairy Farm



Farm Store



Farm Map



# COMMUNITY CHARACTER

Community character is a core value of the community and an important element of the Plan. In the broadest sense, community character includes those features that contribute to the overall quality of life for residents by enhancing the quality of the overall physical environment.

## Maintain and Enhance Overall Character

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Bolton has a number of areas and resources that contribute to the character of the Town and enhance the overall quality of life. Bolton should seek to prevent changes that would negatively affect, and continue to undertake programs and projects that enhance, community character.

**Rural Character** – Residents see Bolton as a rural community and feel strongly about maintaining that overall ambience and character.

**Scenic Elements** – Bolton has a number of scenic areas and scenic views. Since Bolton sits at a regional watershed divide, it has incredible views to the east and west. Bolton may wish to consider adopting regulations to incorporate consideration of scenic views into local approvals. Bolton may also wish to consider designating certain roads as scenic roads and then protecting those roads from changes (such as widening, removal of stone walls, or tree cutting) that might affect their scenic characteristics.

Scenic View



Scenic Place

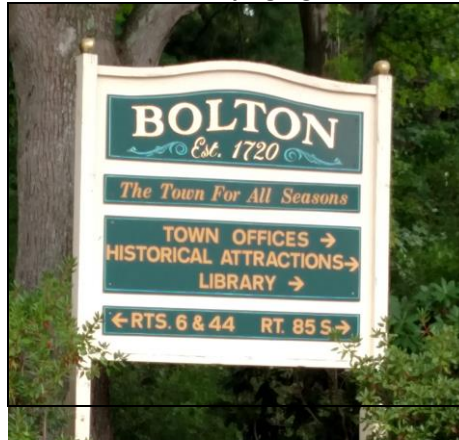




**Undeveloped Land** – Undeveloped land contributes to community character in Bolton. Some communities use the PA-490 assessment program to try to preserve undeveloped land for as long as possible. This program reduces the taxes on undeveloped land and allows people to keep the land for a longer period. Bolton already participates in the “farm” and “forest” elements of the program. Bolton may wish to consider also utilizing the “open space” element of PA-490 to extend this program to parcels smaller than 25 acres.

**Gateways** – Gateways are entry points to a community and provide an opportunity to define for residents and visitors that they have entered a special place. Bolton may wish to consider doing more in identifying and improving gateways.

Gateway Signage



**Other Character Elements**

Other elements related to community character might include:

- Signage (ZR Sec. 18)
- Lighting (ZR Sec. 3A.20)
- Noise
- Property maintenance

Maintain and Enhance Overall Character		
Policies	Leader	Partners
1. Maintain and enhance community character.	Town	
2. Retain a predominantly rural character.	Town	
3. Maintain scenic views and scenic areas.	PZC	
4. Establish and maintain gateway features that contribute to community character.	Town	
Action Steps		
5. Create an inventory of the Town’s scenic views so steps can be taken to preserve them in the future.	CC	
6. Adopt regulations to consider scenic areas and resources as part of any land use application.	PZC	
7. Consider adopting a scenic road ordinance (CGS Section 7-149a).	BOS	
8. Consider implementing the PA-490 “open space” program (CGS Section 12-107e).	BOS	Town

**National Register of Historic Places**

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**Areas**

- Bolton Green Historic District

**Places**

- 5<sup>th</sup> Camp of Rochambeau Infantry
- March Route of Rochambeau Army
- Jared Cone House (25 Hebron Road)
- Oliver White Tavern (2 Brandy Street)

**State Register of Historic Places**

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*Properties on the National Register are also automatically listed on the State Register of Historic Places.*

**Local Historic Districts**

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- (none)

**Protect Historic Resources**

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Bolton contains historic resources that contribute to the overall character of the community. In addition, several significant archeological sites dating to the times before European settlement have been identified in the area.

The most effective means of protecting historic resources include:

1. Responsible ownership or sensitive stewardship.
2. Local historic districts with regulatory boards.
3. Village districts overseen by a Planning and Zoning Commission.
4. Historic overlay / adaptive reuse provisions in zoning regulations.
5. Tax abatement programs.
6. Designation on the State or National Register of Historic Places.
7. Demolition delay ordinance.

<b>Protect Historic Resources</b>		
<b>Policies</b>	<b>Leader</b>	<b>Partners</b>
1. Identify historical and archeological resources.	BHS	Town
2. Promote sensitive ownership of historical and archeological resources (including the possibility of public-private partnerships).	BHS	Town
3. Promote educational programs so that people are sensitive to the value of historic and archeological resources.	BHS	Town
4. Encourage awareness of historic and archeological resources through the use of appropriate signage and displays.	BHS	Town
<b>Action Steps</b>		
5. Allow adaptive reuse of historic buildings when it: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• will aid in the preservation of the historic structure, and</li> <li>• is appropriate given the location of the site.</li> </ul>	PZC	
6. Modify local regulations to include a requirement for archeological investigation as part of any new development near Lower Bolton Lake or Bolton Notch.	PZC	

## Character Map

**“Village Districts”**

State statutes (CGS Section 8-2j) allow a zoning commission to establish a “village district” in areas of distinctive character, landscape, or historic value provided that such areas are specifically identified in the Plan of Conservation and Development.

Once a “village district” has been established, the Commission may regulate the appearance of new construction, substantial reconstruction, and rehabilitation of properties within such districts and in view from public roadways.

Such regulations require the Commission to appoint a village district consultant to assist in the review.

At the time this POCD was being prepared, the Commission was not inclined to establish a village district. The Commission will rely on the design guidelines for Bolton and the fact that most uses require a Special Permit application.

**Promote Architectural Character**

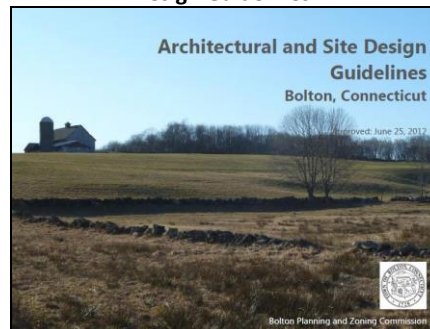
Building design and site design affect community character. Bolton residents have consistently stated that the design of new development, especially business development, is important to them, and the Plan strongly recommends that Bolton ensure that new development is consistent with the overall character of the community.

In 2012, Bolton adopted “Architectural and Site Design Guidelines” to help guide development other than single-family homes. As stated therein:

*... these Design Guidelines are not intended to constitute a rigid set of requirements, but rather to guide the design process for the applicant, the Commission, and the public. Where dimensional or other numeric criteria are provided, they shall nonetheless be deemed as advisory and not mandatory. Where these Guidelines conflict with the Zoning Regulations, the Regulations shall prevail. Where the Commission approves an application that is inconsistent with these Design Guidelines, such approval shall be deemed to be a waiver or modification of the Design Guidelines, whether or not expressly stated in such approval motion.*

Promote Architectural Character		
Policies	Leader	Partners
1. Promote architectural character and community design as part of new development.	PZC	Town
2. Use the “Architectural and Site Design Guidelines” to promote appropriate business design for Bolton.	PZC	Town
3. Encourage developments that contribute to and enhance a “sense of place” in Bolton.	PZC	Town

**Design Guidelines**



**Design Guidelines**



## Promote Community Spirit

Community spirit is another indispensable community element that contributes to the overall character of Bolton. Spirit is the feeling residents have about their community and how it projects to the outside world. Spirit is about community pride, positive impressions, and fostering positive actions and results within the community.

Promote Community Spirit		
Policies	Leader	Partners
1. Encourage community and civic activities that promote community engagement and enhance community spirit.	Town	
2. Maintain a community calendar to inform people of upcoming events.	Town	
3. Keep residents informed about community affairs (e.g., by using Community Access Television (CATV), email, the Town website, and other methods).	Town	
4. Encourage community volunteerism by recognizing local volunteers and developing programs to recruit new volunteers.	Town	
Action Steps		
5. Explore ways to improve communication between the Town and residents.	BOS	Town
6. Work with local organizations to develop new ways of involving community members in local activities.	Town	

### Other Spirit Elements

Other elements related to community spirit might include:

- Bolton schools and other local facilities
- Unique events or venues that attract people
- Positive recognition within the region resulting from local accomplishments
- Volunteers and organizations that help make Bolton a special place and help build community spirit
- Communications that help keep people involved in community issues and priorities
- Shared visions / goals that cause people to pull together for a common purpose

### Community Events

Local events that contribute to community spirit include:

- Bolton Summer Cross-Country Series
- Summer Concert Series
- Annual Bolton Farmer's Market And Tractor Display
- Bolton Heritage Weekend

School Sports



Scavenger Hunt at Heritage Farm





# SUSTAINABILITY & RESILIENCY

## Promote Sustainability

For the purposes of this Plan, “sustainability” refers to the philosophy of encouraging activities that allow present generations to meet their needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

**Energy** – Energy availability and cost are likely to be more significant issues in Bolton in the future. This has financial implications for all residents – whether in their daily lives or for supporting functions provided by the Town. The Town established an advisory Energy Committee in 2015 to promote clean power options, encourage the development of renewable energy in Bolton, and make recommendations for energy conservation.

**Water Consumption** – The United States has one of the highest rates of personal water consumption in the world (100 gallons of water per person per day for domestic purposes). Simple changes to some everyday activities can reduce most people’s domestic water use by 10 percent or more. Bolton should encourage water conservation.

**Waste Reduction / Recycling / Composting** – The overall waste stream is another area for investigation and education in Bolton. The Town should encourage reduction of the waste stream and promote recycling and composting.

Promote Sustainability		
Policies	Leader	Partners
1. Promote energy conservation / sustainability.	BEC	Town
2. Promote water conservation.	CC	Town
3. Promote waste reduction / recycling / composting.	CC	Town
4. Educate residents about sustainability concepts.	CC	Town
Action Steps		
5. Prepare and implement a Sustainability Plan.	Town	BEC CC

## Promote Resiliency

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For the purposes of this Plan, the term “resiliency” refers to the community’s ability to readily recover from sudden changes or adversity. For planning purposes, it can be useful to think of resiliency as consisting of three parts:

- Short Term – emergency preparedness and response related to small-scale and/or short-term events such as fires and car accidents,
- Medium Term – hazard identification and mitigation related to larger-scale and/or medium-term events such as flooding, ice storms, and hurricanes, and
- Long Term – Considerations that evolve over a much longer timeframe, such as climate change.

### Emergency Preparedness / Response (Short-Term)

The Bolton Fire Department is the primary agency for responding to fire, rescue, medical, and environmental calls in Bolton. They are supported by a Resident Trooper and by mutual-aid agreements with surrounding communities. The department regularly trains for the types of incidents likely to occur in Bolton.

The Town has an Emergency Management Director and an Emergency Operations Plan. As necessary, the Town has opened the Emergency Operations Center and the Emergency Shelter.

Bolton should continue to review and improve emergency preparedness and response plans (single events) in order to be able to respond to these events in the future.

### Hazard Reduction / Mitigation (Medium-Term)

Recent storm events (see sidebar) highlight the value of hazard identification, hazard mitigation, and hazard response planning.

Bolton participates with adjacent communities and the Capital Region Council of Governments on the preparation of a regional Pre-disaster Mitigation Strategy in order to identify and then reduce or eliminate risks to human life and property resulting from natural hazards.

Bolton should continue to review and improve hazard mitigation plans for recurring events such as hurricanes, flooding, and winter storms. Storm frequency and severity appear to be increasing, and this will result in stronger and more frequent flooding and more significant snowfalls or ice events.

### Recent Storms

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- Hurricane Irene (2011)
- October snowstorm and ice-storm (2011)
- Storm Sandy (2012)
- Winter storm Charlotte (2013)

## Evolution (Long-Term)

Longer term issues are also important to consider. There is some indication that the global climate may be changing and that average annual temperatures may be increasing. This is expected to result in more frequent and more severe storms.

Understanding long-term trends is challenging because the timeframe of climate change is longer than the time horizon of a Plan of Conservation and Development (ten years or so) and longer than the timeframe most people are prepared to consider. People may tend to see storms as an abnormal event rather than an indication of future conditions. For most people, an event 50 years out may be too ephemeral or distant to comprehend.

Still, Bolton should continue to assess the vulnerability of public and private infrastructure (e.g., utilities, transportation, structures) to climate change and increased frequency of extreme storms and develop adaptation strategies.

<b>Promote Resiliency</b>		
<b>Policies</b>	<b>Leader</b>	<b>Partners</b>
1. Regularly review and improve emergency preparedness and response.	Town	
2. Regularly review and improve hazard mitigation plans for recurring events, such as flooding.	Town	
3. Consider and discuss strategic options and responses to potential climate changes.	Town	
<b>Action Steps</b>		
4. Assess the vulnerability of infrastructure (e.g., utilities, transportation, structures) to climate change and increased frequency of extreme storms, and develop strategies.	Town	
5. Work with utility companies to balance tree trimming and community character with electrical reliability.	Town	



# DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

# 5

## Overview

The term “development” refers to how Bolton wants to guide growth and change. Development issues include the following:

- Overall community organization or structure,
- Business development patterns,
- Residential development patterns,
- Other development issues.

During public meetings held as part of the planning process, residents indicated that business development was an important issue for consideration in the 2015 Plan of Conservation and Development. Residents indicated this was mostly due to a desire to grow the tax base in order to reduce the tax burden on residential property owners.

**Bolton Center**



**Residential Development**

**Business Development**



**Future Development**





# COMMUNITY STRUCTURE

## Maintain Community Structure

In terms of community organization, Bolton’s overall structure consists of:

- a traditional colonial-era village center in Bolton Center,
- business/industrial areas located on Routes 6 and 44 on both sides of Bolton Notch, and
- some neighborhood business areas in other parts of the community.

With the exception of smaller lots being permitted around Lower Bolton Lake, the majority of areas in Bolton are zoned for residential lots of one acre or larger.

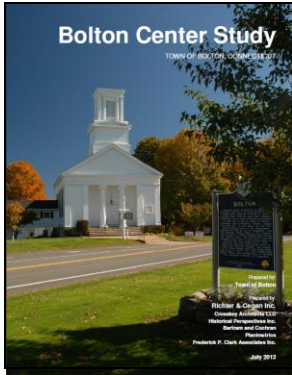
Community structure can have a meaningful impact on “sense of place” and community character. Bolton residents like the overall character of the community, with residential areas separated from commercial areas. This overall pattern should be maintained.

<b>Maintain Community Structure</b>		
<b>Policies</b>	<b>Leader</b>	<b>Partners</b>
1. Maintain the overall structure of Bolton with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a traditional colonial-era village center in Bolton Center, and</li> <li>• more-intensive development along state highways where infrastructure is available.</li> </ul>	PZC	Town
2. Maintain Bolton Center as a “priority funding area” in the State Conservation and Development Policies Plan.	Town	PZC
3. Consider recommending Route 44 and Route 6 as “priority funding areas” in the next State Plan.	Town	PZC

Community Structure Map

**Bolton Center Study**

So that its findings and recommendations will continue to be considered and implemented in the future, the Bolton Center Study is hereby incorporated into the Bolton Plan of Conservation and Development.



**Implement the Bolton Center Study**

With the assistance of a consulting team lead by Richter & Cegan, Bolton completed the Bolton Center Study in 2013 (see the case study on the facing page). The study identifies a number of initiatives that were supported by the community and will help enhance Bolton Center and the Heritage Farm.

Many people have expressed a desire for more of a community focal point in Bolton Center where organizations and groups in Bolton can get together to share experiences. However, about 74 percent of respondents in a survey did not support a corollary idea of adding businesses (coffee shop, post office, package store, etc.) in Bolton Center.

Some of the key recommendations from the study include:

- Maintaining Town Hall in Bolton Center and undertaking an expansion to meet community needs,
- Realigning Toomey Road and Bolton Center Road,
- Improving pedestrian connections and trails,
- Renovating / repurposing key buildings (Heritage Barn, Heritage Farmhouse, Stagecoach Tavern),
- Enhancing the community / educational value of the Heritage Farm
- Making improvements to the Library Green,
- Preserving open space and viewsheds.

Although the Commission was not inclined to establish a village district at the time this POCD was being prepared, Bolton Center is an area that meets the criteria outlined in Section 8-2j of the Connecticut General Statutes (an area with a distinctive character, landscape, and historical value).

Bolton should strive to implement the recommendations of the Bolton Center Study.

<b>Implement the Bolton Center Study</b>		
<b>Policies</b>	<b>Leader</b>	<b>Partners</b>
1. Implement the recommendations of the Bolton Center Study.	Town	

CASE STUDY

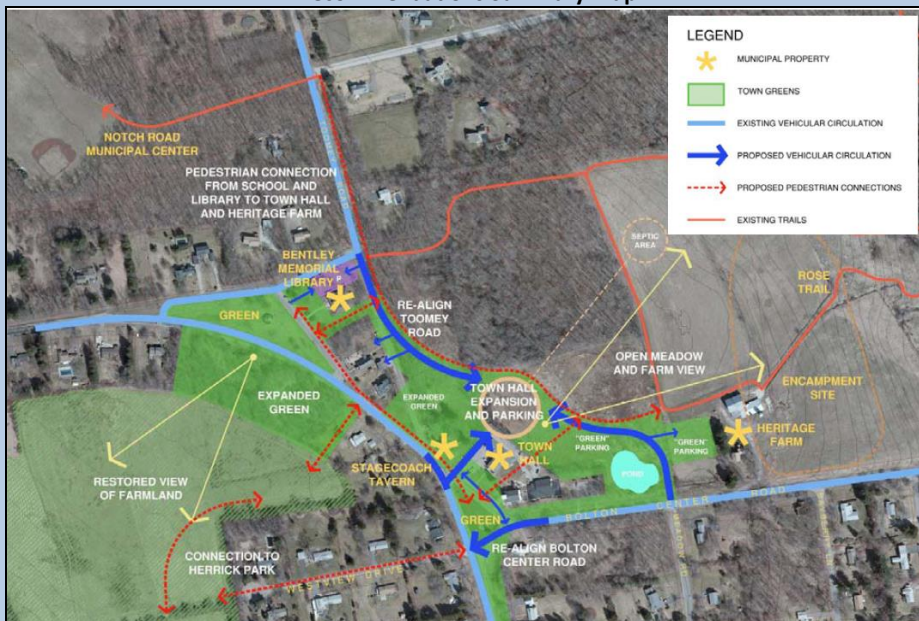
# Bolton Center Study

With money from the State of Connecticut, the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation funded a study in 2013 to develop strategies to revive cultural and/or historic assets in Bolton.

The study team, which was led by Richter & Cegan of Avon working with a local steering committee, recommended strategies to help maintain a vibrant town center. The overall vision for Bolton Center was:

*A vibrant town center that celebrates our rural heritage and serves as a hub of services and activities – municipal, cultural, historical, educational, and social that can be easily accessed on an interconnected system of roads and trails.*

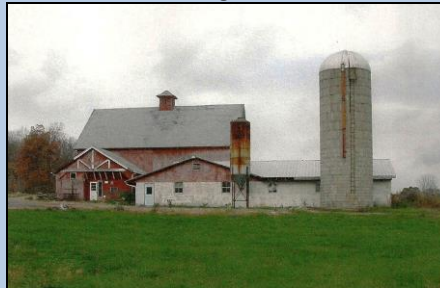
Recommendations Summary Map



Town Green And Church



Heritage Farm





# BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

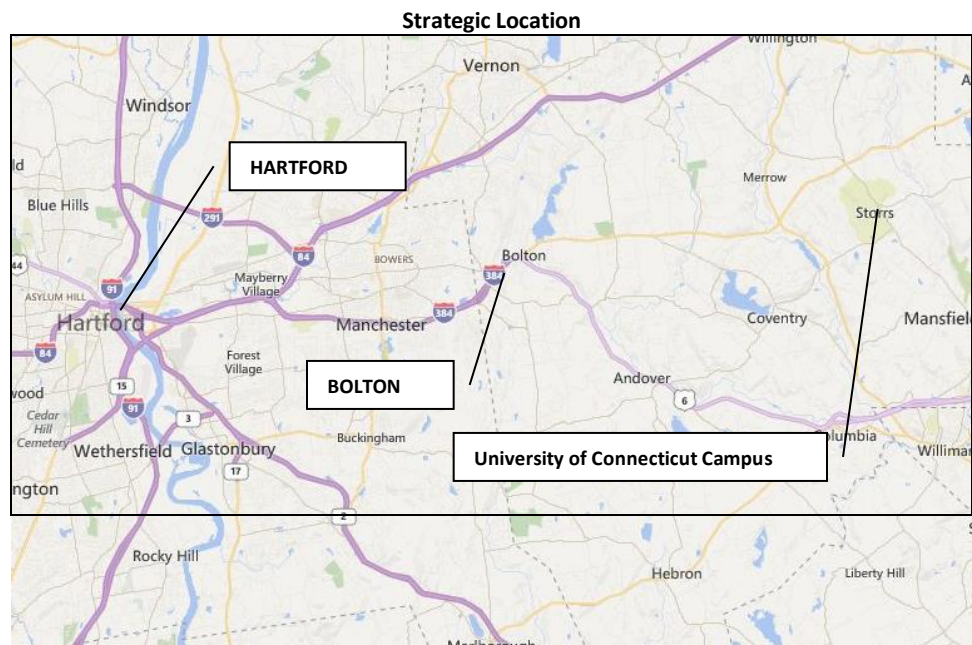
Business and economic development are important to Bolton. Eighty percent of the residents surveyed by phone agreed that business development needs to be encouraged on Route 6 and Route 44. In addition, business development received the most number of “planning points” at a public meeting held at the beginning of the process of updating the POCD.

Residents want additional business development in order to enhance the tax base, make goods and services available, and provide for local employment opportunities.

## Promote Business / Economic Development

Although Bolton has a modest population, it does have several opportunities it can use to its advantage, including:

- High traffic volumes on Route 6 and Route 44,
- Local amenities such as Lower Bolton Lake, the Hop River Recreational Trail, Rochambeau campsite / Heritage Farm, Bolton Ice Palace, Munson’s Chocolate, and other amenities,
- A location equidistant between Hartford and the University of Connecticut along a major travel route between these “anchors.”



## Buildout Analysis

### CASE STUDY

## Economic Development Potential

As Bolton attracts business development, the fiscal benefit for the community (through reduced taxes and/or expanded services) could be tremendous.

An analysis conducted during the planning process by a member of the Planning and Zoning Commission identified a number of vacant properties in areas zoned for business or industry. If these properties were developed to a typical extent (i.e., similar assessed value per acre as developed properties), this could result in the following:

- Vacant lots (2) zoned Industrial might add as much as \$5 million to the Grand List (20 or so developable acres at \$250,000 per acre for land, buildings, and other improvements).
- Vacant lots (10) zoned General Business might add as much as \$7 million to the Grand List (50 or so developable acres at \$140,000 per acre for land, buildings, and other improvements).
- Vacant lots (2) zoned Neighborhood Business might add \$1 million to the Grand List (7 or so developable acres at \$140,000 per acre for land, buildings, and other improvements).

The development of these properties could add as much as \$600,000 to the Town's revenue stream each year. Tax revenue could also be increased from expansion of existing business buildings.

For comparison purposes, the Grand List of taxable property was approximately \$430 million and the annual budget about \$20.3 million in 2015.

**New Business Development**



**Expansion of Existing Business**



**2014 Traffic Volumes**

According to 2014 data from CT-DOT, traffic volumes on the combined Route 6/44 roadway were about:

- 8,200 average daily trips (ADT) at the Manchester line,
- 9,000 ADT east of Williams Road, and
- 37,000 ADT on the section through Bolton Notch (coincident with Interstate 384).

Traffic volumes on the section of Route 44 east of Interstate 384 were about:

- 17,000 ADT at Quarry Road, and
- 15,900 ADT at the Coventry line.

Traffic volumes on the section of Route 6 east of Interstate 384 were about:

- 18,900 ADT near the Bolton Ice Palace, and
- 19,500 ADT at the Coventry line.

Bolton should expand efforts to retain existing businesses and attract new businesses.

In addition, Bolton should recognize that "economic development" encompasses more than just business development. Because they typically pay more in taxes than they require in services, economic development can include other forms of development such as:

- certain types of housing (e.g., housing for older residents which does not increase school enrollments),
- farms, and
- recreational venues.

<b>Promote Business / Economic Development</b>		
<b>Policies</b>	<b>Leader</b>	<b>Partners</b>
1. Promote business and economic development.	EDC	PZC BOS
2. Retain existing businesses and attract new businesses.	Town	EDC BOS
3. Recognize that nonbusiness land uses can also be economic development.	EDC	BOS PZC
<b>Action Steps</b>		
4. Utilize town staff, on a part-time basis, to carry out economic development initiatives identified by the BOS, the PZC, and the EDC.	EDC	BOS PZC
5. Increase staffing, expertise and knowledge in the area of economic development.	BOS	EDC
6. Examine ways to take advantage of Bolton’s favorable location midway between UCONN and Hartford.	EDC	Town



## Geocaching

Geocaching is an outdoor recreational activity, in which participants use a Global Positioning System (GPS) receiver or other techniques to hide and seek containers, called "caches".

A typical cache might consist of a waterproof container with a logbook, a pen or pencil, a stamp and inepad, and/or small trinkets for trading.

Adapted from *Wikipedia*

### CASE STUDY

## Economic Clusters

Studies of economic growth have found that business "clusters" (a geographic concentration of interconnected businesses, suppliers, and associated institutions in a particular field) can be very effective. Such clusters attract customers and suppliers due to the economic opportunities that exist.

Although a rural community, Bolton has some clusters that it may wish to take advantage of.

**Heritage / Character / Events** – Bolton has characteristics (rural character, scenic views, historic places) that other places do not. Bolton could seek to take advantage of the following:

- Renovating the barn at the Heritage Farm as an event facility for weddings, corporate meetings, seminars, etc. (as was done for the Fair Barn in Pinehurst, NC) with catering by local businesses,
- Historic reenactments at the Heritage Farm,
- Concerts at the Heritage Farm or Indian Notch Park (overlooking Lower Bolton Lake),
- Geocaching events or other activities.

**Recreation** – With the connection of the Charter Oak Greenway to the Hop River Trail, Bolton will be at the intersection of several major walking and cycling trails. Bolton could use this to highlight its recreational opportunities (in all seasons) and attract people who might visit local businesses.

**Unique Businesses (Munson's, Bolton Ice Palace)** – Bolton is home to a well-known chocolatier, an ice rink, and other businesses that provide an opportunity to promote Bolton as a unique destination.

Pinehurst Fair Barn



Pinehurst Fair Barn



## Implement Special Studies

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As summarized on the following pages, Bolton has completed a number of studies over the past decade or so related to promoting business and economic development in Bolton:

- Route 44 Strategic Plan / Market Potential (2008),
- Route 6 Corridor Master Plan (2010),
- Route 6 Corridor Transportation Study (2013).

The recommendations of those studies are hereby incorporated into this Plan of Conservation and Development.

The next step is to implement the recommendations from those studies.

<b>Implement Special Studies</b>		
<b>Policies</b>	<b>Leader</b>	<b>Partners</b>
1. Implement recommendations from the special studies of Route 44 and Route 6.	PZC	EDC BOS Town
<b>Action Steps</b>		
2. Form a working committee (with dedicated staff) including representatives from various land use boards to implement the Route 44 and Route 6 plans.	PZC	EDC BOS Town
3. Implement recommendations from the Route 44 Strategic Plan.	Town	EDC PZC BOS
4. Implement recommendations from the Route 6 Corridor Master Plan.	Town	EDC PZC BOS
5. Implement recommendations from the Route 6 Corridor Transportation Study.	Town	EDC PZC BOS

## CASE STUDY

# Route 44 Strategic Plan / Market Potential (2008)

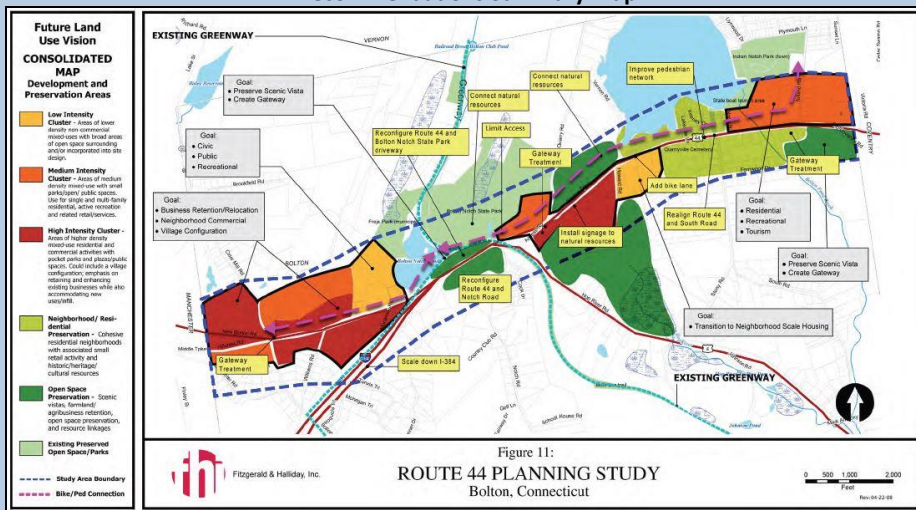
In 2008, a team of consultants led by Fitzgerald & Halliday (FHI) completed the “Strategic Corridor Plan” for Route 44 in Bolton. The plan indicates that “Route 44 will continue to be the focus of growth and development for Bolton.”

The goal of the study was to create a unique character defined by compact, pedestrian-friendly, mixed residential and business districts. The recent availability of sewers on Route 44 will enhance development prospects in the corridor.

The study also looked at the area’s market potential for business uses. Due to saturation of large-scale retailers within the region and retail opportunities for travelers available elsewhere, the market analysis suggested that the corridor might be able to support only a modest amount of business development (office and retail) that would serve some of the needs and desires of:

- Bolton residents,
- pass-through travelers (see sidebar on page 52), and
- visitors to the recreation and heritage assets within Bolton.

Recommendations Summary Map



## CASE STUDY

### Route 6 Corridor Master Plan (2010)

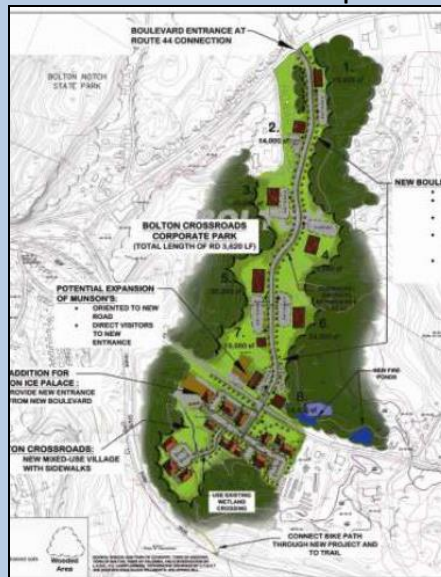
In 2010, the Regional Economic Development Council (REDC), an association of Bolton, Coventry, Andover, and Columbia, prepared a master plan for the Route 6 corridor with the assistance of LADA of Simsbury.

The REDC study provided a vision for future development in the Route 6 Hop River corridor that was developed through public involvement and consensus-building across the four participating towns. The study defined targeted areas for future development in the corridor and proposed a new Corridor Zone to promote growth in these areas while preserving the historic, scenic, and environmental resources of the corridor. The intent was to establish consistent zoning and design guidelines among the four towns and seek ways to share the costs and revenues of bringing the overall vision to reality.

The vision for Bolton Crossroads (see page 59) includes expansion of existing businesses, a mixed use village, and/or a corporate park. Preferred uses included banks, a pharmacy, candy manufacturing, recreation, restaurants, and a mix of offices and services in a village setting.

The study recommends the rezoning of the Route 6 corridor to focus development in designated areas and retain the rural and residential character of the corridor in other areas.

**Bolton Crossroads Concept**



**Bolton Crossroads Detail**



## CASE STUDY

# Route 6 Corridor Transportation Study (2013)

In 2013, the Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) in cooperation with the REDC undertook a study of the Route 6 corridor from Bolton to Columbia with the assistance of Clough Harbour Associates. The study looked at traffic operations along the entire Route 6 corridor and, in Bolton, recommended the reconfiguration of the Route 6 and Route 44 intersection. The study includes recommendations to improve vehicular access and safety:

- side road intersection improvements,
- access management improvements and policies,
- Route 6 East safety measures, and
- incident management considerations.

This study further evaluated a potential mixed use village area referred to as the Bolton Crossroads concept (see page 59), first identified in the 2010 REDC study. The recommendations are aimed at “taming” traffic speeds and providing safer travel conditions while making the area more attractive and accessible for development. Village elements in the Bolton Crossroads focus area could include:

- Village-scale mixed-use development and density,
- Parking provided on side or rear lots,
- Low-speed arterial design for Route 6 with speed-mitigation measures,
- Sidewalks and bike-safe shoulders along Route 6,
- Small networks of local streets to provide access between Route 6 and new developments.

Route 6/44 Reconfiguration



Bolton Crossroads Concept



## **Improve Business Regulations / Policies**

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To promote business development, Bolton should seek ways to reduce restrictions on such development, including simplifying regulations and streamlining the approval process, revisiting the location and extent of business zoning districts, and offering business incentives.

### **Simplify Regulations**

Bolton wishes to encourage business development, yet the standards and requirements in some of the business districts may create barriers. The Planning and Zoning Commission should consider whether current regulations are appropriate.

Consider the following:

- Practically all business uses in Bolton require a Special Permit which might deter businesses from applying.
- The listing of permitted uses is very detailed, possibly leading to a situation where a use does not fit into any listed category despite being essentially similar to other uses.
- The Site Plan standards in Section 16 of the Zoning Regulations are 35 pages long (three times longer than the Special Permit section) and create a number of situations where the regulations are not as “administrative” as they might be.

### **Revisit Business Zoning**

As of 2015, Bolton had an array of business zones and locations:

- General Business (GB) – 4 locations.
- Neighborhood Business (NB) – 4 locations.
- Industrial (I) – 4 locations.
- Gateway Mixed Use Industrial Zone (GMUIZ) – 1 location.
- Rural Mixed Use Zone (RMUZ) – 2 locations.

To ensure that Bolton has good zones in the best locations to attract business, the Commission should evaluate the number, location, and extent of the business, industrial, and mixed-use zones.

This review might also include ways to encourage the development of “Bolton Crossroads” as recommended in the Route 6 studies (see the Case Study on the facing page).

## CASE STUDY

### Bolton Crossroads

The Bolton Crossroads concept represents an opportunity to assemble and prepare land for business development near the junction of Routes 6, 44, and 384. Sewer infrastructure is being installed in the vicinity and may provide an opportunity to encourage appropriate development in this area.

As of 2015, the Town was in the process of accepting land in this area from the State of Connecticut (acquired as part of the Route 6 Expressway project). While the main focus of this land transfer is to create a regional greenway system, allocating some land to a roadway connection between Route 6 and 44 in this area may provide a great opportunity for Bolton to promote appropriate economic development in a strategic location.

Bolton Crossroads Concept



**Consider Business Incentives**

Further, Bolton may wish to consider whether or how it might offer incentives (or better incentives) for new business development, such as:

- Abating taxes (per CGS Section 12-65b) for certain types of real estate developments and/or manufacturing machinery and equipment,
- Abating building permit fees and/or other fees for certain types of development,
- Providing loans or grants for specific economic development improvements (such as extending infrastructure),
- Providing technical assistance to businesses and developers,
- Assembling properties to create unified development sites,
- Helping remediate contaminated properties.

<b>Improve Business Regulations / Policies</b>		
<b>Policies</b>	<b>Leader</b>	<b>Partners</b>
1. Seek ways to reduce restrictions on business development.	PZC	EDC
<b>Action Steps</b>		
2. Review business zone uses and standards in order to reduce restrictions on appropriate business development.	PZC	EDC
3. Revisit business development incentives to help attract appropriate business development.	BOS	EDC
4. Review the number of business zones as well as their locations and extent.	PZC	EDC

**Business Development**



**Business Development**





Business Development Map



# RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Bolton is a predominantly residential community and wishes to stay that way. As stated in the 2005 POCD, Bolton wants to maintain a low-density residential community with opportunities for senior and affordable housing.

## Review Residential Zoning Regulations

The Zoning Regulations and the Subdivision Regulations should be reviewed to ensure that Bolton will guide residential development in the ways that it wants.

### Zones and Uses

Bolton has three residential zones:

Zone	Minimum Lot Size	Permitted Uses
R-1	40,000 SF	Single Family on 40,000 SF (200' Frontage) Two-Family on 60,000 SF (300' Frontage)
R-2	40,000 SF	Single Family on 40,000 SF (200' Frontage) Two-Family on 60,000 SF (300' Frontage) Multifamily on 70,000 SF at 4 units/acre
R-3	22,500 SF	Single Family on 22,500 SF (150' Frontage)

As part of this planning process, the Planning and Zoning Commission discussed whether to continue allowing two-family buildings in the R-1 and R-2 zoning districts. The Commission felt that two-family development allowed for a different type of housing option within Bolton and this could help meet different housing needs.

The Commission also discussed whether the locations of the R-2 zoning district were areas where it wished to allow for multifamily development. Based on this discussion, the Plan recommends that the Commission revisit the locations of the R-2 district and consider limiting any multifamily residential development to the Route 44 corridor (i.e., eliminating the R-2 zoning in some or all areas). One exception to this strategy of limiting any multifamily development to the Route 44 corridor might be for small sites where housing for seniors (at lower density and served by septic) might be appropriate.

Residential Densities Map

## **Residential Development**

The 2005 POCD noted that in previous years, 169 residential lots had been created on 550 acres of land in Bolton (0.31 lots/acre).

If Bolton were to utilize a maximum density of 0.3 units per acre of developable land to determine the total number of units which could be created in a subdivision, this could:

- Help neutralize any difference between a conventional subdivision and an open space conservation development (OSCD) subdivision (per Section 7 of the Zoning Regulations).
- Help preserve open space, natural resources, scenic views, stone walls, and other features that contribute to community character in Bolton.
- Provide more flexibility to designers and developers when laying out a subdivision.

## **Bolton Lake Zoning**

Refer to pages 20-26 for additional discussion about protecting the water quality in Lower Bolton Lake. In particular, please refer to Action Step #9 on page 26 which recommends adopting regulations to help protect water quality in the Lower Bolton Lake watershed (impervious coverage, lot coverage, floor-area ratio, docks, etc.).

## **Development Standards**

As part of the planning process, the Commission discussed the minimum lot size requirement in Bolton and the possibility of establishing a “maximum density” regulation to manage residential growth. A maximum density regulation places a cap on the number of lots that can be developed on a parcel relative to the amount of “buildable land” (land that is not constrained by wetlands, watercourses, steep slopes, or floodplain) and then provides significant flexibility on how those lots might be configured.

While a maximum density regulation can help protect important resources, there was some concern that such a regulation might affect the economic return for landowners who might subdivide at some point in the future. As a result, the Commission decided to reserve the concept of a town-wide residential density regulation for possible future action.

## **Zoning Around Lower Bolton Lake**

Many people are concerned about protecting the water quality in Lower Bolton Lake. In order to protect water quality in the lake, Bolton should consider the following:

- Changing the standards in the R-3 district to limit future development that could not have occurred before the introduction of sewers and help protect water quality in the lake, such as establishing a maximum density regulation for the R-3 zoning district (such as 0.6 units per developable acre) in order to limit the total amount of development that could occur in the watershed in the future. This would not change the minimum lot size requirement (so no existing lots would become nonconforming) but it would require greater land area if people wished to create additional lots in the future.
- Extending the R-3 district to include all areas that drain to Lower Bolton Lake in order to help protect water quality in the lake (an alternative might be to adopt an overlay zone).

**Residential Development**



**Residential Development**



SOURCE: CTNLLS, INC.

## Multifamily Provisions

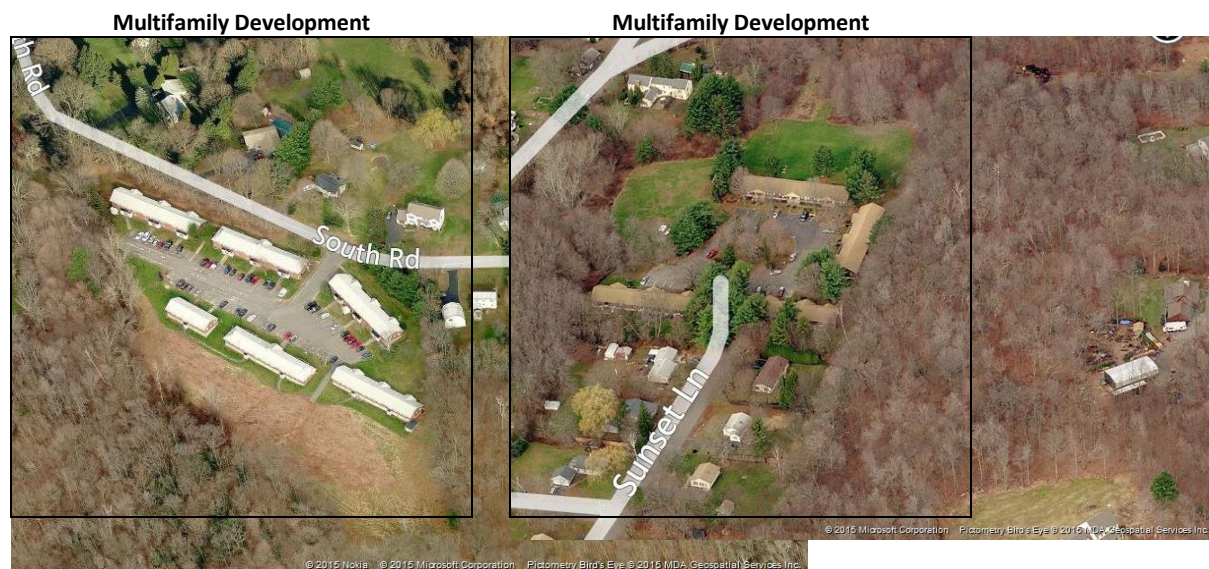
Bolton currently allows multifamily developments in a couple of ways:

- A “traditional” multiple-dwelling complex in accordance with Section 6A.14 of the Zoning Regulations:
  - Special Permit in the R-2 district only.
  - Density of about 4 units per acre.
  - Maximum development of 48 units.
  - Can allow up to 60 units for a senior housing development.
- As a variation of the open space conservation development (OSCD) approach in accordance with Section 7A.4 of the Zoning Regulations:
  - Special Permit in the R-1 or R-2 district only.
  - Density of about 6 units per acre.
  - Maximum development of 80 units.
  - Each building must contain 3-6 dwelling units.

As part of an overall regulatory review, Bolton may wish to evaluate these provisions to ensure they are appropriate.

Other tools that Bolton could use to guide future multifamily development (or a combination of single family, multifamily, and/or mixed use buildings) might include:

- A Planned Unit Development (PUD) approach whereby a defined regulation is adopted to allow a residential development that is master-planned, developed, operated, and maintained as a single entity, or
- A Planned Development District (PDD) approach whereby a process is set up in the regulations for the Commission to approve a site plan for a specific development through a zone change process.



<b>Review Residential Zoning Regulations</b>		
<b>Policies</b>	<b>Leader</b>	<b>Partners</b>
1. Review residential development policies and standards.	PZC	
<b>Action Steps</b>		
2. Review the location and extent of residential zoning districts.	PZC	
3. Review the uses and standards in the residential zones.	PZC	
4. Extend the R-3 zoning district to any area that drains to Lower Bolton Lake.	PZC	CC
5. Modify the standards for the R-3 zoning district in order to protect the water quality in Lower Bolton Lake.	PZC	CC
6. Establish a maximum density regulation for the R-3 zoning district in order to protect the water quality in Lower Bolton Lake.	PZC	CC
7. Review the provisions for multifamily development to ensure they reflect what the community wishes.	PZC	
8. If desired, implement other tools (such as a PUD or PDD) to guide future multifamily development.	PZC	

## **Address Housing Needs**

---

Development in many communities over the past 50 years or so has resulted in a housing “portfolio” that is dominated by single-family homes on individual lots. While this type of housing is attractive to many people, it is not the only type of housing that Bolton needs.

### **Housing For An Aging Population**

Over the next several decades, Bolton’s population is expected to contain an increasing number of older households due to:

- the aging of the “baby boom” (people born from 1945 to 1965), and
- the fact that people are living longer.

As people age, their household size gets smaller, and they may seek housing opportunities that are less expensive and/or involve less maintenance. While some people may choose to remain in their current home or a similar dwelling, there is likely to be increased interest in smaller housing units with maintenance provided or available, especially at appropriate price points.

Bolton should strive to provide opportunities for housing that is appropriate for the housing needs of older households.

### **Housing That Is More Affordable**

Many people are interested in housing that is less expensive and more affordable than many single family homes on individual lots. Younger persons and households may lack the resources to purchase a home or condominium and may seek affordable rental housing so they can save money to buy a home. Divorced or separated couples may prefer to remain in Bolton where their children go to school and seek less-expensive housing while they balance their finances. Families may have gone through some economic troubles in recent years and may need alternative housing choices to allow them to get back on their feet. Older households may become concerned they do not have adequate resources set aside given their life expectancy and may seek more affordable housing options.

Bolton should strive to provide opportunities for housing that is affordable for a diverse range of ages, incomes, and lifestyles.

## CASE STUDY

### Incentive Housing Zone Study

In 2012, a team led by Goderre Associates prepared a housing and economic growth report for Bolton. This report addressed the following issues:

- Revising the zoning in the Route 44 corridor to implement some of the recommendations from the 2008 FHI study (resulting in the establishment of the GMUIZ district and the RMUZ district), and
- Establishing an overlay zone to promote the creation of housing in Bolton that met State affordability guidelines.

An “Incentive Housing Overlay Zone” is intended to:

- Encourage a municipality to establish regulations to provide for housing that is deed-restricted to affordable levels.
- Locate such housing:
  - near transit facilities,
  - in an area of concentrated development, and/or
  - an area of existing, planned, or proposed infrastructure.

If a municipality adopts State-compliant regulations, they may be eligible for state incentive payments (if funded).

While the new Route 44 zones were adopted, the “Incentive Housing Overlay Zone” regulation had not been adopted as of 2015.

Recommendations Summary Map





## Possible Approaches to Address Housing Needs

In addition to construction of new housing units for an aging population or to provide housing options that are more affordable, accessory dwellings within or attached to existing homes may also help meet the housing needs or lifestyle needs of residents or their family members. At the present time, Bolton allows for accessory apartments. The PZC may wish to revisit the accessory apartment regulations to ensure their continued relevance:

- A number of communities allow the homeowner to live in the main unit or the accessory unit (Bolton allows the homeowner to live only in the main unit) [Subdivision Regulation Section 6A.3].
- Some communities require the unit to be deed-restricted as an affordable unit [CGS Section 8-30g (k)].

Several tools are available to help the Town accomplish its housing objectives:

- Section 8-2i of the Connecticut General Statutes allows any municipality to implement inclusionary zoning regulations, requirements, or conditions that promote the development of housing that is affordable to persons and families of low and moderate income.
- Section 8-13m *et seq.* of the Connecticut General Statutes allows communities to establish incentive housing zones to promote the development of housing that is affordable to persons and families of low and moderate income and encourages locations in areas:
  - near a transit station, including rapid transit, commuter rail, bus terminal, or ferry terminal,
  - of concentrated development, such as a commercial center, existing residential or commercial district, or village district established pursuant to CGS Section 8-2j, or
  - that is suitable for development as an incentive housing zone because of existing, planned, or proposed infrastructure; transportation access; underutilized facilities; or location.

The Town should consider using these approaches if, as, and where appropriate.

<b>Address Housing Needs</b>		
<b>Policies</b>	<b>Leader</b>	<b>Partners</b>
1. Provide for housing choices and options for an aging population.	PZC	Town
2. For people who choose to “age in place” in their current housing, consider maintaining or augmenting tax relief for seniors, dial-a-ride, meals-on-wheels, senior activities, and home health services.	BOS	
3. Provide opportunities for housing that is affordable for a diverse range of ages, incomes, and lifestyles.	PZC	BOS
4. Maintain accessory apartment regulations to help meet the housing needs or lifestyle needs of residents or their family members.	PZC	
5. Implement inclusionary zoning regulations, requirements, or conditions.	PZC	
<b>Action Steps</b>		
6. Investigate ways to help create housing for people age 65 and older.	Town	PZC
7. Investigate ways to create housing for persons and families with moderate incomes.	Town	PZC
8. Adopt incentive housing zone regulations and other approaches to help address housing needs.	PZC	

# INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGIES

# 6

## Overview

The term “infrastructure” refers to services and facilities Bolton might want to provide or encourage in order to:

- support conservation and development strategies,
- enhance the public health, safety and welfare, and
- promote the overall quality of life in Bolton.

Infrastructure issues might include the following:

- Community facilities and services.
- Transportation (vehicular, pedestrian, bicycle, transit, etc.).
- Utility infrastructure.

**Community Facilities**



**Vehicular Transportation**



**Other Transportation**



**Utilities**





# COMMUNITY FACILITIES

## Overview

Community facilities support functions such as education, public works, public safety, and recreation, all of which are important to maintaining the character and quality of life in a community.

The Plan of Conservation and Development does not get involved in the day-to-day operations of individual departments. Rather, the Plan seeks to identify potential community facility needs (buildings and sites) so that they can be anticipated and planned for. The Plan also serves as a useful guide for referrals of proposed municipal improvements from the Board of Selectmen for review by the Planning and Zoning Commission (as required by CGS Section 8-24).

**Town Hall**



**Bolton Center School**



**Fire Station**



**Bentley Memorial Library**



## Address Community Facility Needs

Bolton has a number of community facility needs. Some facility needs have been addressed since the last comprehensive assessment of community facilities in 2002 by Friar Associates, an architectural firm based in Farmington. In addition, some facilities have been repurposed to provide for desired services and facilities.

### Bolton Schools

The fact that Bolton, for a town of its size, has its own school system is a source of considerable local pride and a feature mentioned frequently by residents.

Function Facility	Situation
<b>General Government</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Town Hall</li> <li>Notch Rd Municipal Center</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Town Hall is undersized for current needs and lacks office, meeting, and storage space.</li> <li>Part of Notch Road is used for a senior center with another part housing some municipal departments.</li> <li>Parts of the Notch Road building are showing their age and should be considered for renovation, sale, or demolition.</li> </ul>
<b>Education</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bolton High School</li> <li>Bolton Center School</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High school was recently improved / expanded and appears to have adequate capacity for community needs during the planning period.</li> <li>Bolton Center School appears to have adequate capacity for community needs during the planning period.</li> </ul>
<b>Recreation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Herrick Park</li> <li>Indian Notch Park</li> <li>Other Facilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ball fields and other recreation improvements are being considered for Herrick Park and the High School.</li> <li>Town Beach at Indian Notch Park is adequate, but other facilities at the park should be evaluated.</li> <li>Continue to use town/school buildings for recreation programs.</li> </ul>
<b>Emergency Response</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bolton Fire Department</li> <li>Resident Trooper</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Firehouse appears adequate for community needs (fire response / emergency medical), and expansion room is available on site if needed.</li> <li>Maintaining adequate volunteer staffing is a priority.</li> <li>Use of a resident trooper is adequate for local needs.</li> </ul>
<b>Public Works</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Town Garage</li> <li>Building / Grounds</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Highway garage appears to need additional bays for vehicle maintenance and storage.</li> <li>Space for material storage, school bus storage, and transfer station may become constrained.</li> </ul>
<b>Library</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bentley Memorial Library</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Library has experienced constraints in terms of program space and basic services.</li> <li>Funding for expansion has not been supported by residents in the past.</li> </ul>
<b>Other</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Old Fire House</li> <li>Stagecoach Tavern</li> <li>Heritage Farm</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Old Fire House has been repurposed for community access television.</li> <li>Stagecoach Tavern is used for Resident Trooper.</li> <li>Heritage Farm building renovations are being proposed.</li> </ul>

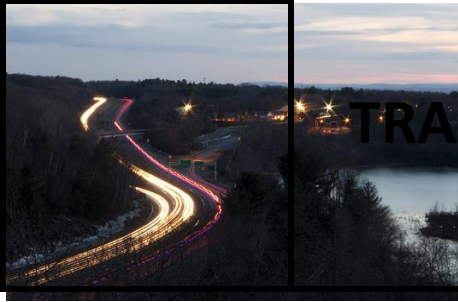
One of the challenges in Bolton related to maintaining and enhancing community facilities is allocating financial resources to these tasks. As in many smaller towns, there are a number of requests / demands for municipal funding and only so many dollars to go around.

Some municipal services and facilities (such as education and recreation) are considered more important by some residents and receive considerable financial attention as a result of the actions of well-organized groups. On the other hand, some other municipal services and facilities (such as public works or general government) can languish because the proponents are not well-organized or vocal and financial resources have been dedicated elsewhere.

In the future, it may be beneficial for Bolton to investigate ways to regionalize services if doing so will help meet local needs affordably.

<b>Address Community Facility Needs</b>		
<b>Policies</b>	<b>Leader</b>	<b>Partners</b>
1. Balance community facility “wants” with long-term community “needs.”	BOS	
2. Maintain existing community facilities.	BOS	Town
3. Seek to consolidate general government activities at one facility.	BOS	
4. Continue to support and improve the local education system.	BOE	
5. Continue to encourage volunteer participation, especially for emergency services.	Town	
6. Continue to monitor utilization / expansion needs at Bentley Memorial Library.	Town	
7. Monitor utilization at the Town Garage site in the event that reconfiguration is warranted.	BOS	PW
<b>Action Steps</b>		
8. Renovate / reuse the Heritage Farm buildings.	HFC	BOS
9. Investigate opportunities to add land area to the Town Garage site (or relocate activities elsewhere).	BOS	PW

CF Map



# TRANSPORTATION

## Overview

The road system in a community like Bolton is functionally important to the day-to-day life of community residents, visitors, and businesses as well as being an important component of its character and self-image.

This section of the Plan of Conservation and Development looks at the overall configuration of the vehicular transportation network and other transportation modes (pedestrian, bicycle, bus, rail, etc.).

Roadways



Roadways



Pedestrian



Bicycle





## Address Vehicular Transportation

Bolton has a good overall system of major roads providing access to and between all parts of the community. While topographical constraints result in some situations where these roadways are not optimally configured, the basic circulation needs of the community are met.

The major vehicular transportation issues in the future are likely to include:

- Addressing locations where unsafe or hazardous conditions may arise.
- Continuing to work with the CT-DOT to improve the configuration of the Route 384/6/44 interchange at Bolton Notch.
- Utilizing “access management” strategies on Routes 6 and 44 to minimize curb cuts and maximize interconnections between properties.
- Considering a reduction in paved width for new residential streets.
- Maintaining the pavement quality of Town roads.

**Proposed Reconfiguration of the Route 384/6/44 Interchange**



### Route 6 Expressway

For many years, the CT-DOT had been planning a Route 6 Expressway which would have extended from Route 384 at Bolton Notch to Willimantic. Multiple corridor alignments were studied and properties in Bolton had been acquired for the preferred alignment.

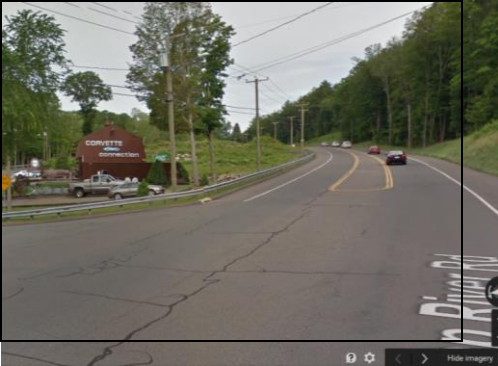
As of 2015:

- the CT-DOT has abandoned plans to construct the expressway and has devoted time and funds to improving the Route 6 corridor in Bolton.
- Bolton and CROG are discussing the funding of the Route 384/6/44 interchange as part of the regional transportation improvement program.

As of 2015, the Town was in the process of accepting land from the State that was acquired for the realignment of Route 6. Some of the land will be used to create a regional greenway system (some might be used to support economic development as shown in the case study of “Bolton Crossroads” on page 59).

<b>Address Vehicular Transportation</b>		
<b>Policies</b>	<b>Leader</b>	<b>Partners</b>
1. Continue to work with CRCOG and CT-DOT to address locations on State highways where unsafe or hazardous conditions exist.	Town	
2. Continue to address locations on local roads where unsafe or hazardous conditions may arise.	PW	
3. Utilize “access management” strategies on Routes 6 and 44 to minimize curb cuts and maximize interconnections between properties.	PZC	
4. Continue to maintain the pavement quality of Town roads.	PW	
<b>Action Steps</b>		
5. Continue to work with CRCOG and the CT-DOT to improve the configuration of the Route 384/6/44 interchange at Bolton Notch.	Town	
6. Consider allowing a reduction in paved width for new residential streets.	PZC	

**Route 6**



**Route 44**



Roadway Map

**Greenway Trails**

Bolton is fortunate to have the Hop River State Park Linear Trail which extends along a former rail route from the Vernon town line through a tunnel under Route 384 in Bolton Notch to the Andover town line and beyond, eventually extending to Willimantic. The Hop River State Park Trail is part of the East Coast Greenway – a planned trail that will eventually extend from Maine to Florida.

**Trail Recommendations**

In terms of future trails:

- the CT-DOT is planning on extending the Charter Oak Greenway Trail within the Route 384 / Route 44 right-of-way from Manchester to Coventry
- the Town is seeking to participate in the creation of a regional greenway system along the former Route 6 expressway corridor
- the Town is considering a greenway loop trail extending from the Hop River State Park Linear Trail through Bolton Center and over to the Charter Oak Greenway.

Please refer to the Open Space section (pages 28-33) and the recommendations on page 32 for more policies and action steps related to trails.

**Address Other Transportation Modes**

**Walking / Pedestrians / Bicycles** – The POCD strongly encourages and supports provision for walking and bicycles. While sidewalks may be appropriate only in business areas along Route 6 and Route 44, trails are appropriate everywhere.

As shown on the map on the facing page, bicycle travel is considered suitable on secondary State highways and on the greenway trails. Encouraging more pedestrian and bicycle use (and creating an overall system) is strongly encouraged since Bolton will be at a regional “crossroads” of bicycle and pedestrian trails, and this can encourage additional economic development.

**Transit** – The Bolton commuter parking lot is served by an express bus route between Hartford and Willimantic / Coventry with four inbound trips in the morning to Hartford and five outbound trips in the afternoon on weekdays only. A senior / disabled transportation program provides transportation on a scheduled and space-available basis for medical appointments, errands, and community events.

**Commuter Parking** – The commuter parking lot along Routes 6 / 44 near Bolton Notch Pond provides a valuable amenity for residents of Bolton and surrounding communities and should be maintained and expanded if needed.

Address Other Transportation		
Policies	Leader	Partners
1. Continue to encourage and support provision for walking and bicycles.	Town	
2. Become a part of any future bus services between Hartford and the University of Connecticut campus in Storrs.	BOS	Town
3. Evaluate options to improve municipal transit for commuters, senior citizens, and the disabled.	Town	
4. Retain / expand the commuter parking lot in Bolton.	Town	
Action Steps		
5. Pursue “bicycle-friendly” status.	Town	
6. Evaluate local roads and State highways for their potential for bicycle use.	Town	PW
7. Designate and delineate local routes for bicycles.	Town	PW

Other Transportation Map



# UTILITY INFRASTRUCTURE

The availability of utility infrastructure – water, sewer, electricity, and communications, for example – has a significant influence on overall public health, safety, welfare, and quality of life. Even though some of these utilities may be provided by private companies, their availability is important for residents, businesses, and visitors to Bolton.

The Plan of Conservation and Development looks at the availability of these utilities (both capacity and location) to ensure they are adequate for community needs.

**Sewer / Septic**



**Water / Well**



**Wired Utilities**



**Wireless Services**



## Address Utility Infrastructure Issues

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### Piped Utilities

**Sewage Disposal** – Most properties in Bolton rely on private septic systems for sewage disposal. When such systems are appropriately designed, installed, and maintained, they have proven to be adequate.

Due to smaller lots within the watershed of Lower Bolton Lake, sewers were recently installed in this area in order to protect public health and the water quality in the lake. These facilities collect sewage from properties in Bolton and Vernon and discharge to Manchester. The sewer line, which extends from Lower Bolton Lake to the Manchester town line along Route 44, has the potential to provide sewage service to the businesses and other uses located there. The sanitary sewers were installed primarily to protect the public health and welfare by eliminating potential sources of pollution.

The sewage facilities are managed by the Bolton Lakes Regional Water Pollution Control Authority. The permitted discharge of the system is 200,000 gallons per day and this is anticipated to be adequate for community needs (a number of users in the service area are not yet connected, so current usage figures are not informative).

All other areas of Bolton are considered “sewer avoidance areas” as of 2015, and any development proposed on any site should be in accordance with the State Health Code and respect the soil types, terrain, and natural capacity of the land to assimilate and treat septic waste.

Properties outside of the sewer service area are not currently allowed to connect to the sewers unless the water pollution control authority and all three municipalities in the regional approach (Bolton, Manchester, and Vernon) agree that a sewer connection is the only feasible means to correct a proven public health problem.

### Sewer Ordinance

The sewer ordinance provides for the following:

- “It is specifically the purpose of this Ordinance to further the policy of sewer avoidance, to the extent practical, within the Regional Watershed.”
- The Regional Sewerage System “is not intended, and shall not be allowed, to foster additional residential development.”
- “The sewer avoidance policy recognizes and affirms that future residential development should be limited and controlled by the natural ability of local soils to accommodate subsurface sewage disposal systems in accordance with current health and environmental laws and regulations.”
- The Regional Sewerage System “may, in certain appropriate locations, be used for residences existing as of the Effective Date and for the development of commercial or industrial uses in order to minimize the cost burden of the Regional Sewerage System to the Towns.”

*Bolton Sewer Ordinance*

**Water Supply (Domestic / Fire)** – Properties in Bolton rely on private wells for their water supply. The quantity and quality of water for domestic needs have been adequate, and there are no major issues. Still, the provision of water service along Route 44 is encouraged should the opportunity arise.

Bolton has adopted a program for underground cisterns and dry hydrants for fire protection. The Town is implementing a plan to locate such facilities throughout the community in strategic locations where this supplemental water will be available for fire suppression. The cisterns and dry hydrants will be maintained by the Town.

**Storm Drainage** – Storm drainage in Bolton is addressed by a combination of structural systems (such as catch basins and underground pipes) in areas of newer development and by more natural approaches (ditches and swales) in other areas. No major drainage problem areas have been identified.

In the future, it is anticipated that Bolton will do more to implement “low impact development” strategies where attention is paid to treating runoff to remove pollutants and infiltrating it into the ground as soon as possible.

**Natural Gas** – There is no natural gas service in Bolton today. The provision of natural gas service is encouraged should the opportunity arise, especially along Route 44.

### **Wired Utilities**

Electrical service, wired telephones, and cable television / internet are the main wired utilities. The reliability of these systems is an important consideration since they can be vulnerable to service interruptions from storm events and other disruptions since the wires are exposed.

While trimming tree branches is often considered the best way to enhance reliability, it can have significant impacts on community character and can actually harm the health and adaptability of the surrounding trees and forest. Bolton should continue to seek an appropriate balance between electrical reliability and community character / environmental health.

### **Wireless Utilities**

People are increasingly relying on wireless services for voice and data. Wireless services can also enhance public safety, since people can call for assistance from anywhere service is available. People are often concerned about wireless services because of the perceived visual impact of new towers.

Bolton should seek to balance the demand for wireless services and its public safety benefits with the visual and other impacts of new tower installations.



## Utility Map

<b>Address Utility Infrastructure Issues</b>		
<b>Policies</b>	<b>Leader</b>	<b>Partners</b>
1. Except as noted in the POCD, maintain most of Bolton as a sewer avoidance area where development utilizes on-site septic systems.	WPCA	
2. Within the sewer service area, limit future residential development based on the natural ability of the native soils to accommodate septic systems.	WPCA	
3. Continue to rely on on-site wells.	Town	
4. Encourage provision of public water service in the Route 44 corridor.	Town	
5. Encourage provision of natural gas service in Bolton, especially in the Route 44 corridor.	Town	
6. Continue to install cisterns and dry hydrants to meet fire suppression needs.	BOS	PZC PW
7. Continue to seek an appropriate balance between reliability of wired utilities and community character / environmental health.	Town	
8. Seek to balance the demand for wireless services and its public safety benefits with the visual and other impacts of new tower installations.	Town	
9. For wireless services, advocate for the least obtrusive location / installation.	BOS	PZC
10. Advocate for high-speed internet service and high-speed wireless service in Bolton.	BOS	EDC
<b>Action Steps</b>		
11. Pursue expansion of sewer capacity for economic development.	Town	

# FUTURE LAND USE PLAN



## Overview

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In this Chapter, the recommendations of the Plan have been combined to present an overall Future Land Use Plan for Bolton. The Future Land Use Plan is a reflection of the stated goals, policies, and recommendations of the Plan. In essence, the Future Land Use Plan is a statement of what the Bolton of tomorrow should look like.

**Residential**



**Business**



**Community Uses**



**Open Space**



## Future Land Use Plan

The following table describes the major categories reflected on the Future Land Use Plan map on the facing page:

### Conservation Areas

---

Natural Resources	Areas with significant environmental constraints (wetlands, watercourses, steep slopes, floodplains, etc.).
Open Space	Areas currently preserved and/or used for open space purposes.
Farms	Areas currently being farmed and where farming is desired in the future.

### Residential Areas

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Low Density Residential	Areas where environmental conditions (soil types, terrain, etc.) are thought to be suitable for residential densities of approximately one dwelling unit per acre or less, slightly higher for a two-family building (R-1 zone, R-2 zone).
Special Residential	Areas around Lower Bolton Lake where the desire is to limit future residential development in order to protect the water quality (R-3 zone).

### Business / Mixed Use Areas

---

Bolton Center	The historic and planned community focal point.
Business	Areas that have been, and are intended to be, developed with retail, personal service, office, and similar facilities.
Industrial	Areas that have been, and are intended to be, developed with office and industrial development and similar facilities.
Mixed-Use Zones	Areas that have been, and are intended to be, developed with mixed land uses in a pedestrian-friendly setting.
Possible Future Bolton Crossroads Development	An area where future economic development is contemplated to interconnect Route 6 and Route 44 (possibly resulting in the reconfiguration of the open space areas).

### Other Areas

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Community Facility / Institutional	Areas that have been developed or are intended to develop with community facilities and/or institutional uses.
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Future Land Use Plan

**State Plan Categories**

- ★ Regional Centers
- Water
- Protected Lands
- Local Historic Districts
- Village Priority Funding Area
- Balanced Priority Funding Area
- Undesignated Lands

**Priority Funding Areas**

- 1-2 Criteria
- 3-4 Criteria
- 5 Criteria

**Conservation Areas**

- 1-3 Conservation Factors
- 4-5 Conservation Factors
- 6-7 Conservation Factors

**Municipal Boundaries**

- Busway Stations
- Rail Stations
- Ferry
- Sea Ports
- Rail Lines
- Ferry Service

**Airports**

- Commercial Service
- General Aviation
- Reliever

**Primary Highways**

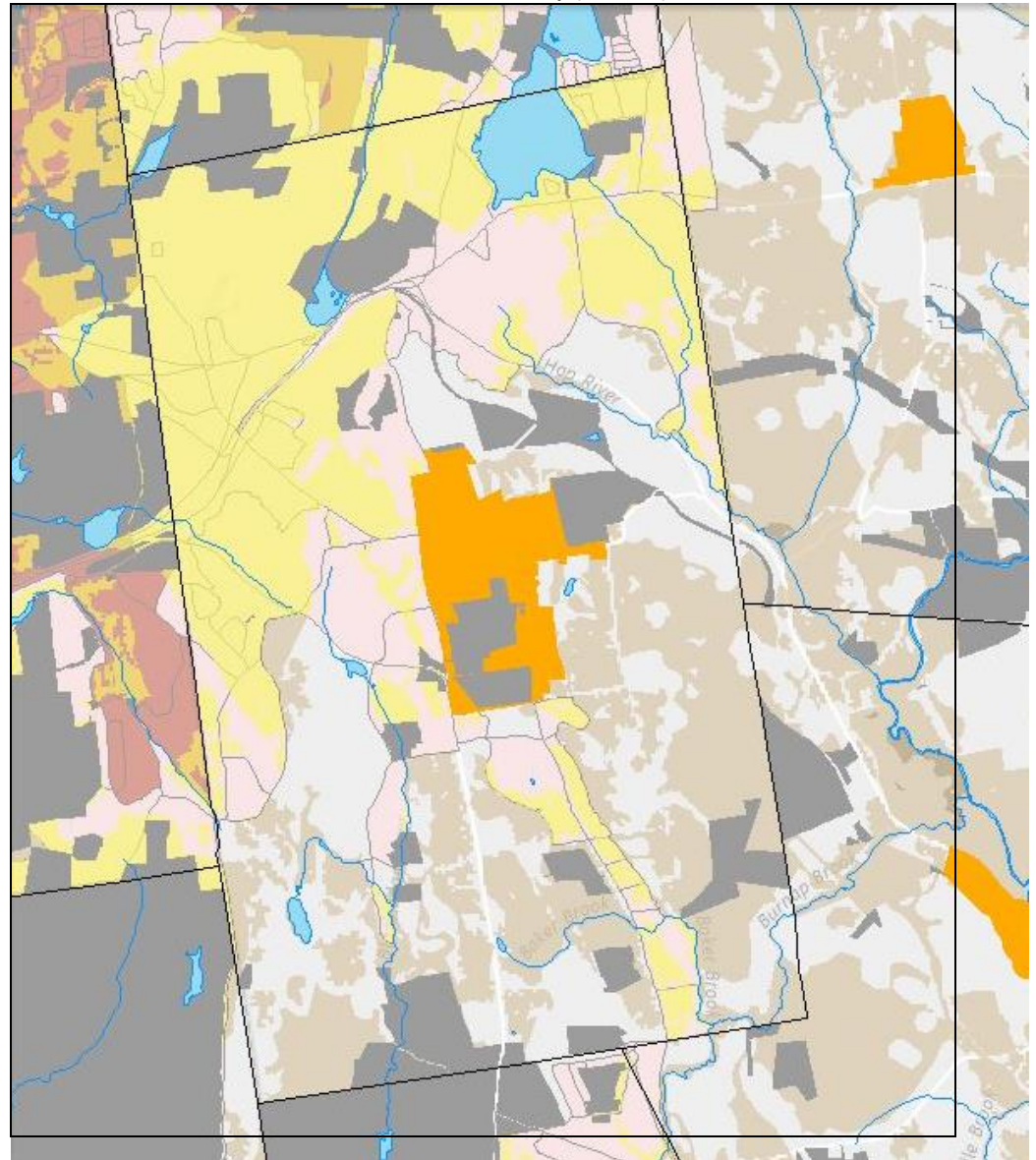
- Interstate
- U.S. Route
- State Route

**Plan Consistency**

In accordance with CGS Section 8-23, this POCD was compared with the 2013-18 State Conservation and Development Policies Plan and found to be generally consistent with that Plan and its Locational Guide Map.

For the next iteration of the State Conservation and Development Policies Plan, Bolton should advocate for “priority funding designation” for the Route 6 and Route 44 corridors as shown in the Regional Plan.

**State Locational Guide Map (2013-18)**



**Connecticut Conservation and Development Plan –  
State Growth Management Principles**

In accordance with CGS Section 8-23, the Plan of Conservation and Development has been evaluated for consistency with statewide growth management principles and found to be generally consistent with those principles.

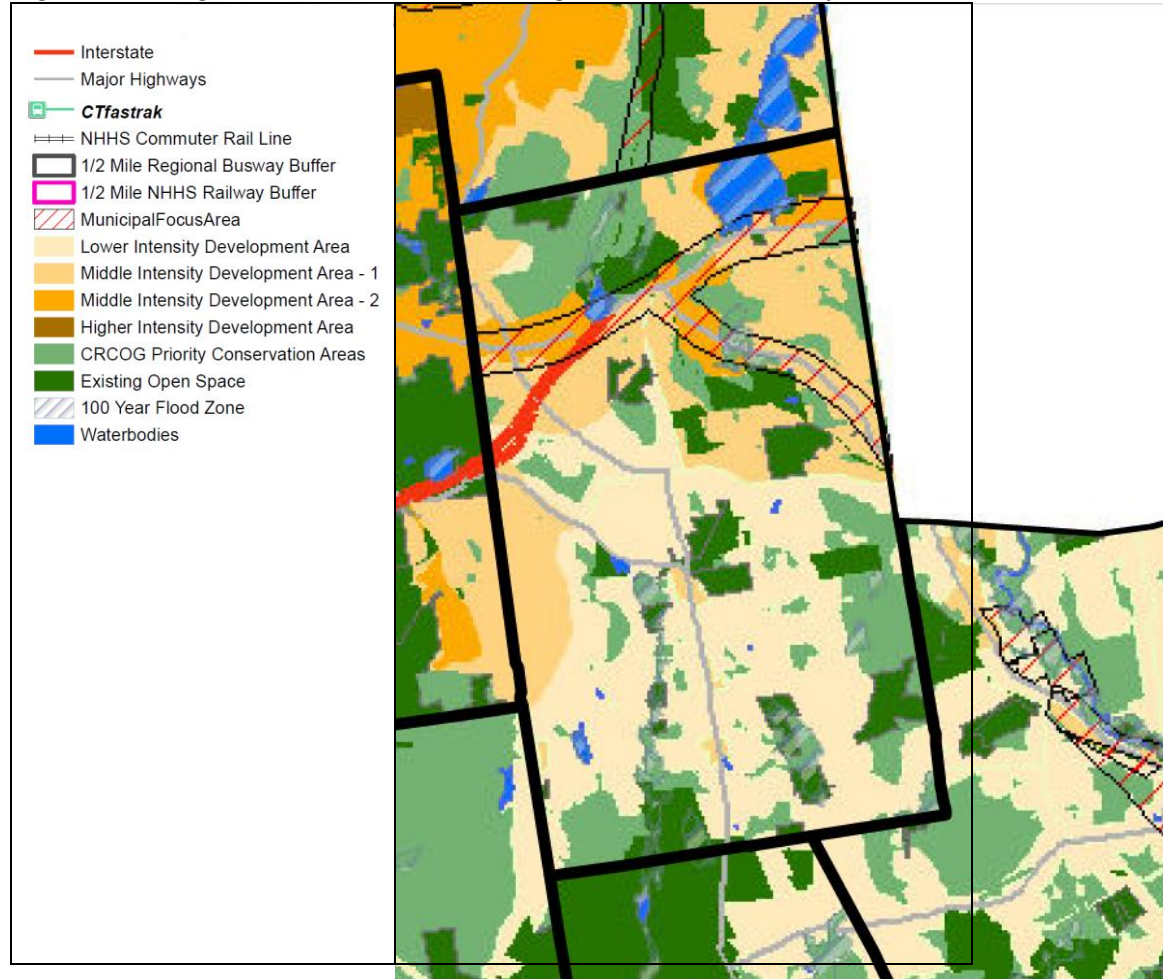
<p><b>Principle 1 – Redevelop and revitalize regional centers and areas of mixed-land uses with existing or planned physical infrastructure.</b></p>	<p><b>FINDING – Consistent</b></p> <p>Since Bolton is primarily a low-density community with limited infrastructure, The Plan recommends that development occur in accordance with soil types, terrain, and infrastructure capacity.</p>
<p><b>Principle 2 – Expand housing opportunities and design choices to accommodate a variety of household types and needs.</b></p>	<p><b>FINDING – Consistent</b></p> <p>The Plan recommends that Bolton seek to diversify its housing portfolio and address recognized housing needs – housing that is more affordable and housing for an aging population.</p>
<p><b>Principle 3 – Concentrate development around transportation nodes and along major transportation corridors to support the viability of transportation options and land reuse.</b></p>	<p><b>FINDING – Consistent</b></p> <p>The Plan continues with the overall framework of higher intensity development along the major highway corridors in Bolton (Route 44 and Route 6).</p>
<p><b>Principle 4 – Conserve and restore the natural environment, cultural and historical resources, and traditional rural lands.</b></p>	<p><b>FINDING – Consistent</b></p> <p>The Plan identifies the importance of protecting important community resources such as the natural environment, farm land, open spaces, and historic resources.</p>
<p><b>Principle 5 – Protect environmental assets critical to public health and safety.</b></p>	<p><b>FINDING – Consistent</b></p> <p>The Plan contains recommendations to protect environmental assets critical to public health and safety. In particular, the Plan stresses the importance of protecting water quality.</p>
<p><b>Principle 6 – Integrate planning across all levels of government to address issues on a local, regional, and statewide basis.</b></p>	<p><b>FINDING – Consistent</b></p> <p>The Plan is part of the process of integrating planning with other levels of government and with other agencies. The Plan will be used to coordinate efforts with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• adjacent communities,</li> <li>• regional organizations, and</li> <li>• state agencies.</li> </ul>

## Regional Plan Of Conservation and Development

In addition, this Plan was compared with the Regional Conservation and Development Plan adopted by the Capitol Region Council of Governments and found to be generally consistent with that Plan.

### Regional Plan Categories

### Regional Locational Guide Map





# IMPLEMENTATION

# 8

## Overview

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Implementation of recommendations is a key part of the planning process. In fact, it may be the most important part of the planning process. If strategies to make Bolton a better place are identified but not acted upon, the planning process will not have produced the changes desired by the community or realized the full potential of what the community could and should be.

The purpose of the planning process is not to produce a Plan but to identify positive changes that should be undertaken in Bolton in order to:

- meet community needs,
- preserve community character, and
- enhance the overall quality of life.

Implementation Committee



Groundbreaking



Ribbon Cutting



## Implementation Committee

Some communities have found that a Plan Implementation Committee (PIC) can be effective at coordinating implementation of the Plan.

The PIC includes representatives of various Town boards and commissions. The PIC meets quarterly to discuss ways to facilitate or accelerate Plan implementation, assess the status of specific recommendations, evaluate the priorities, and even suggest new implementation techniques.

Bolton may wish to consider establishing a Plan Implementation Committee to coordinate implementation of the Plan.

## Implement The Plan

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The Plan of Conservation and Development contains two types of recommendations:

- **Policies** – Policies are intended to guide local actions and be on-going strategies of the Town of Bolton. Policies are not discrete activities and do not lend themselves to measurement or recognition as being complete.
- **Action Steps** – Action steps are discrete activities that can be undertaken to accomplish Plan recommendations and policies. These can be measured and recognized as being complete. Over time, additional tasks will be identified by the Town of Bolton to help implement recommended policies.

The Plan of Conservation and Development is intended to be a working document used to implement policies and complete tasks. While some recommendations should (and will) be carried out in a relatively short period of time, others may be long-term in nature. Further, since some recommendations will involve additional study or a commitment of fiscal resources, their implementation will take place over several years or occur in stages.

Many of the policy recommendations in the Plan of Conservation and Development will be implemented by the Planning and Zoning Commission through zoning amendments, application reviews, and other means. Some policy recommendations will require the cooperation of other local boards and commissions such as the Board of Selectmen, Town Meeting, and similar agencies. However, if the Plan is to be successfully realized, the policy recommendations must serve as a guide to all residents, applicants, agencies, and individuals interested in the orderly growth of Bolton.

Many sections of the Plan also identify specific tasks or actions that can be itemized, scheduled, managed, and completed. Tasks and actions lend themselves to monitoring implementation and measuring progress although the tasks and actions may not be as important as a strategy or a policy. It is hoped that, over time, Bolton will continue to identify and undertake new tasks and actions to help implement the Plan.

This type of process (reviewing the Plan and adding new policies and tasks) will help the Plan (and Plan strategies) be relevant over a long timeframe.

<b>Implement The Plan</b>		
<b>Policies</b>	<b>Leader</b>	<b>Partners</b>
1. Implement the POCD.	PIC	PZC
2. Regularly review POCD strategies, policies, and tasks to ensure they are relevant to community needs.	PIC	PZC
3. Coordinate implementation efforts with programs and efforts of regional planning agencies and adjacent municipalities.	PIC	PZC
4. Use the POCD to guide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• granting of special permits,</li> <li>• zoning map or zoning text changes, and</li> <li>• statutory referrals from the Board of Selectmen (CGS 8-24) regarding municipal improvements.</li> </ul>	PZC	
5. Encourage the Board of Selectmen, Board of Finance, and other Town agencies to use the strategies, policies, and action steps in the POCD to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• guide decisions on the Operating Budget,</li> <li>• guide decisions on the Capital Budget,</li> <li>• guide preparation of the long-term Capital Improvements Program, and</li> <li>• program capital improvements on the basis of a priority system related to the needs of the community and integrated with the Plan.</li> </ul>	PIC	PZC BOS BOF BOE
<b>Action Steps</b>		
6. Establish a Plan Implementation Committee made up of representatives of various boards to prioritize, coordinate, and refine implementation of the Plan.	BOS Or PZC	
7. Prepare implementation tables to coordinate Plan implementation and help track responsibilities and priorities (who, what, when).	PIC	Town
8. Update Zoning Regulations to implement strategies, policies, and action steps in the Plan of Conservation and Development.	PZC	
9. Update Subdivision Regulations to implement strategies, policies, and action steps in the Plan of Conservation and Development.	PZC	

# 9

## CONCLUSION

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### Overview

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The Plan of Conservation and Development has been prepared to meet the challenges that will confront the Town of Bolton in the future. The Plan is intended 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 Plan 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, some circumstances will undoubtedly change, and some conditions may arise that will suggest it is time to reconsider some of the Plan 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 Bolton.

# GLOSSARY

**Access Management:** Providing and managing access to developed land while preserving the flow of traffic on the surrounding road system.

**ADT:** Average daily trips.

**Aquifer:** A geologic formation, group of formations, or part of a formation that contains sufficient saturated, permeable materials to yield significant quantities of water to wells and springs (CGS Section 22a-354h[6]).

**Aquifer Protection Area (APA):** An area delineated by a water utility company encompassing the groundwater recharge area for an active public drinking water supply well or for well fields serving more the 1,000 people that are set in stratified drift deposits.

**Arterial Road:** A roadway carrying large traffic volumes specifically for mobility, with limited or restricted service to local development.

**CERC:** Connecticut Economic Resource Center.

**CGS:** Connecticut General Statutes.

**Collector Road:** A street whose function is equally divided between mobility and access, linking local streets to arterials.

**CT-DEEP:** Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection.

**CRCOG:** Capitol Region Council of Governments – the regional planning agency that includes Bolton.

**CT-DOT:** Connecticut Department of Transportation.

**FEMA:** Federal Emergency Management Agency.

**Floodplain:** Land susceptible to being partially or completely inundated by water from any source.

**Floodplain Zone:** An area that has had a statistical probability of flooding calculated by FEMA, typically expressed as a recurrence interval (i.e., a 100-year floodplain is an area with a 1 percent chance of being flooded in any given year).

**Geographic Information System (GIS):** A combination of computer software, hardware, and data used to create maps and analyze and present data.

**Impervious Surface:** A surface (such as a road, driveway, parking lot, outdoor patio, or building footprint) that prevents or inhibits infiltration of water into the ground.

**Invasive Species:** Non-native plant or animals that exhibit an aggressive growth habit and can out-compete and displace native species.

**Local Road:** A road whose primary function is to provide access to a residence, business, or other abutting property.

**NDDB:** Natural Diversity Database.

**Non-Point Sources:** Diffuse sources of pollution (such as stormwater runoff) which occur over large areas or from multiple locations.

**Point Sources:** Fixed sources of pollution (such as an industrial facility wastewater outlet) which can be identified as occurring at a specific "source."

**REDC:** Route 6 Regional Economic Development Council.

**Watercourses:** Rivers, streams, brooks, waterways, lakes, ponds, marshes, swamps, bogs, and all other bodies of water.

**Wetlands:** Land, including submerged land, that consists of any of the soil types designated as poorly drained, very poorly drained, alluvial and floodplain by the National Cooperative Soils Survey of the Soil Conservation Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

## Planning & Zoning Commission

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Eric M. Luntta	<i>Chairman</i>
Jeffrey A. Scala	<i>Vice Chairman / Secretary</i>
James V. Cropley	
Arlene F. Fiano	
Thomas A. Manning	
Carl A. Preuss	
Adam J. Teller	
Christopher P. Davey	<i>Alternate</i>
Neal Kerr	<i>Alternate</i>
Nancy P. Silverstein	<i>Alternate</i>

## Project Support

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Patrice Carson, AICP	<i>Director of Community Development</i>
Sarah Benitez	<i>PZC/POCD Recording Secretary</i>
Linda MacDonald	

Glenn Chalder, AICP

Alfredo Herrera



### Acronyms for Leaders and Partners in the Policies / Action Steps Tables

<b>BEC</b>	Bolton Energy Committee	<b>IWC</b>	Inland Wetlands Commission
<b>BHS</b>	Bolton Historical Society	<b>OSAP</b>	Open Space Acquisition / Pres.
<b>BLT</b>	Bolton Land Trust	<b>PIC</b>	Plan Implementation Comm. (NEW)
<b>BOE</b>	Board of Education	<b>PW</b>	Public Works
<b>BOF</b>	Board of Finance	<b>PZC</b>	Planning and Zoning Commission
<b>BOS</b>	Board of Selectmen	<b>REDC</b>	Regional Economic Dev. Council
<b>CC</b>	Conservation Commission	<b>Town</b>	Town Boards / Staff (under the general direction of the Board of Selectmen)
<b>EDC</b>	Economic Dev. Commission	<b>WPCA</b>	Water Pollution Control Authority
<b>HFC</b>	Bolton Heritage Farm Commission		







# Affordable Housing Plan

**Town of Bolton, Connecticut**

**2022-2027**

**Prepared by: Nicholas Tatro**  
UConn MPP


*Adopted by the Bolton Board of Selectmen, May 3, 2022*

*Updated Plan of Conservation & Development by Bolton Planning & Zoning Commission, August 10, 2022*



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## Section 1

### Why Are We Making This Plan?

To further the goals outlined in the Bolton Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) and in response to the recently adopted Connecticut General Statute 8-30j which states, “At least once every five years, each municipality shall prepare or amend and adopt an affordable housing plan for the municipality,” the Town of Bolton has prepared this Affordable Housing Plan with the goal of increasing the availability of Affordable and attainable housing options in town. This plan was drafted with the intention of promoting housing that will meet the needs of residents both currently and in the future.

Public Act 17-170 outlines the requirements for the Affordable Housing Plan and the timeframe that municipalities have to meet for their affordable housing plan. Towns must adopt their first Plan by June 1, 2022. In addition, every five years, the affordable housing plan must be amended, or a new plan must be adopted. At a minimum, the statutory language requires that one goal of the plan should be to increase the number of affordable housing developments within the municipality.

***CT General Statutes, Chapter 126, Section 8-23 includes that Plans of Conservation and Development shall:***

- *[promote] expansion of housing opportunities and design choices to accommodate a variety of household types and needs.*
- *make provision for the development of housing opportunities, including opportunities for multifamily dwellings consistent with soil types, terrain and infrastructure capacity, for all residents of the municipality and the planning region in which the municipality is located...*
- *promote housing choice and economic diversity in housing, including housing for both low- and moderate-income households, and encourage the development of housing which will meet the housing needs identified in the state's consolidated plan for housing and community development...*

## Section 2

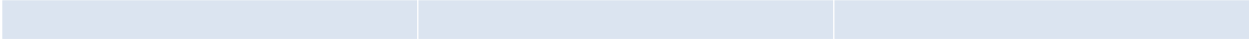
### History

Recognizing that access to reasonably priced housing was becoming difficult in many communities, in 1987 Governor William O’Neill established the Blue-Ribbon Housing Commission to study and review the housing situation in Connecticut. The Commission concluded that access to low-cost housing was too limited and, that there were too many barriers to access housing in many communities which was prohibiting many residents from having the opportunity to live in various communities based on the fact that the only type of housing available was single-family detached homes. The Commission further concluded that these barriers and development patterns were largely attributed to local zoning policies. Therefore, the Commission recommended that towns be given guidelines to help them update their zoning policies or that provisions be made to create specific circumstances by which specific housing developments would not be subject to these overly prohibitive policies if there was a reasonable justification for doing so.




In response, the 8-30g appeals process was created to provide a pathway for eligible Affordable housing which can demonstrate “just cause” to be developed only with the requirement that they demonstrate compliance with health and safety standards, but without the need to adhere to local zoning requirements. The phrase “just cause” refers to one of

Connecticut’s major housing goals, which is to allow for more inclusive housing options, especially for low to moderate income individuals due to the fact that economic exclusivity and discrimination has been a significant issue Statewide. For the purposes of this Plan, the term “Affordable housing”, as we will explore in greater detail in the next section, means housing that is deed restricted to cost 30% or less of 80% of the area’s median income. The appeals process



only applies to municipalities that do not have at least ten percent (10%) of their housing stock classified as Affordable. The 10% threshold is a statewide objective that all municipalities must try to reach in an effort to realize this goal of housing choice. Even following the implementations of the 8-30g appeals process the amount of affordable housing being created in Connecticut was not drastically impacted, especially in smaller towns where limited access to sewer and water, along with geographical barriers made development more difficult.

Because of this, the CT General Statutes were recently amended to include Section 8-30j to encourage Towns to take a more proactive role in the process. While 8-30g is mostly applicable to developers because it allows them to disregard zoning regulations, 8-30j requires all towns to prepare and adopt an Affordable Housing Plan. Once developed by the Town, these Plans are more likely to align with the goals of each community and to be supported by their Plan Of Conservation and Development. The requirement for each town to develop an Affordable Housing Plan provides a pathway, even for Towns that do not typically see immense development pressure to identify the most appropriate way to work towards the State's housing goals in the context of their community.



### Section 3

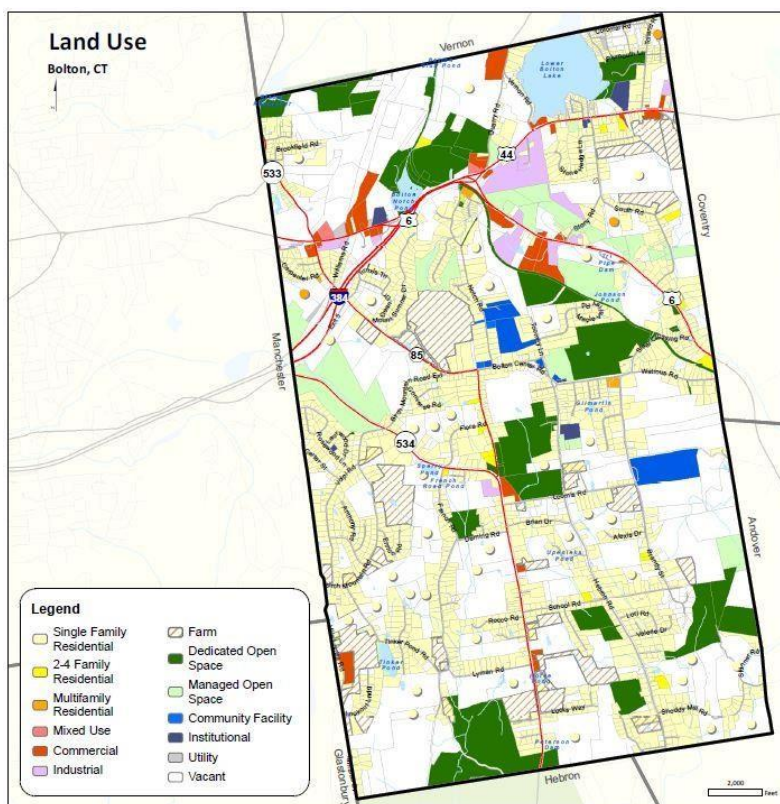
#### What Is Affordable Housing?

Many people have different ideas about affordable housing, what should qualify, and who should be eligible to live in these units. For the purposes of this plan, we will use the term as it is defined statutorily, which is a dwelling unit that has been deed restricted for a period of forty (40) years or more to not cost the person, family or household more than a specified amount. This limit, which is adjusted yearly, can be found by taking thirty percent (30%) of the eighty percent (80%) Area Median Income (AMI) as defined by HUD. For the specific language required to be included in these deed restrictions, please see 8-30g(6)

In Bolton, the area median income is \$104,300 as defined by HUD. The U.S. Low Income Limit AMI, however, is \$79,900. Because the Low Income Limit AMI is smaller, to calculate the maximum cost of affordable housing we must use the smaller value. The table below provides two examples specific to Bolton. These values can apply to either home purchase or rental rates, as long as they meet the requirement of being deed restricted. In the “State of Housing in Bolton” section of this Plan, we will see that the price limit is not the only factor that is limiting the availability of affordable housing in Bolton. A majority of rental properties and housing units fall below the monthly rate limits described in the table. The supply of these units, however, is limited. Also, a vast majority of the units are not deed restricted. Because they are not deed restricted, the rates are not locked in at the affordable value and the people eligible to rent the units are not just those that are low income who qualify for affordable housing.

	<b>2 Person Home</b>	<b>4 Person Home</b>
<b>80% Area Median Income</b>	\$63,950	\$79,900
<b>30% of 80% Area Median Income</b>	\$19,185	\$23,970
<b>Monthly Cost (not to exceed)</b>	\$1598.75	\$1997.50

Misconceptions about what an affordable housing unit or development actually looks like is also a significant barrier to the establishment of these units. Many people picture very large, high-density apartment complexes when they hear the term, but this is increasingly not the case. While housing developments which were built decades ago may have looked like this, many of these developments were built in high-density, urban environments. Even so, this style of buildings has been falling out of favor, even in city environments. Modern housing developments can be stylistically appealing and designed to match the context of where they are built, in the same way as a traditional commercial or residential development. Depending on the need in the area, an affordable housing unit can be anything ranging from single family units to a large multi-unit project. For a town like Bolton, the focus will likely be a smaller scale development which is driven by the Town's population and geographic location, as well as environmental factors such as the availability of suitable soils for well and septic, and any nearby wetlands, ledge, or other development constraints.



## Section 4

### State Of Housing In Bolton

Bolton is a small community with a slow growth rate and a population that is projected to be on the decline based on the Plan of Conservation and Development estimates. While Connecticut as a whole is made up of a large number of slow growth communities, Bolton is well below the average growth rate for the state and region. Since 2000, there has been a 2.6% decline in population. In comparison, Tolland County has had a population increase of 10.5% and Connecticut as a whole has had an increase of 4.8%. The projected population for Bolton by 2030 is 4,212, which is a decrease of 14.5% from the current value of 4,928. With an average household size on the decline, it is important to understand the current availability of housing stock so that Town can work to minimize future population loss should this decline be related to the availability (or lack of) of specific types of housing.

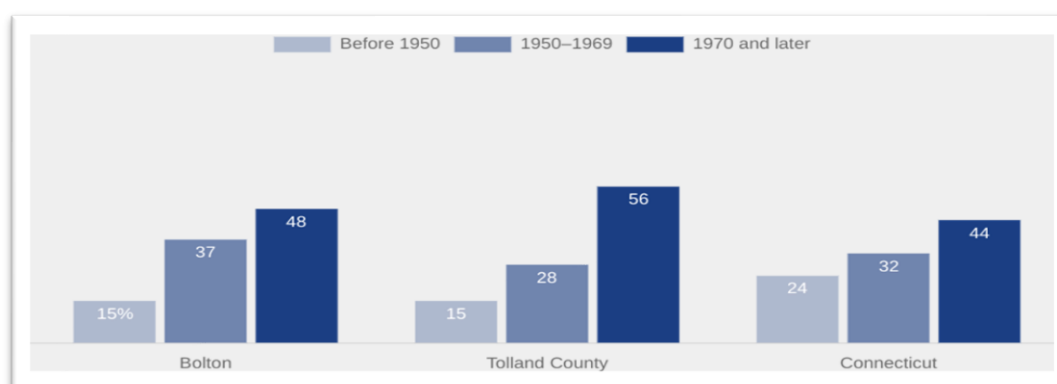
The number of building permits has also greatly declined since the boom of the 1990's and early 2000s. At its peak in 1999, 37 new housing units were built. Comparatively, in 2017 there were only a total of 3. Below is a graphic from the Partnership for Strong Communities which shows the number of new housing building permits issued in Bolton from 1990-2017. While that alone may not be something to worry about, a decline in new housing permits coupled with a declining population however, is cause for concern. Without new developments and with an aging and declining tax base, it may become increasingly difficult to maintain current services and programs or establish new initiatives with a stagnant tax base and declining population.



Source: [Annual Housing Permit Data, DECD](#)



To get a better sense of what slow growth really means when it comes to housing, it is important to first look at the age of the Town's housing stock. A total of fifty-two (52%) of Bolton's housing was built before 1970, which is approximately ten percent (10%) higher than the average for Tolland County. Connecticut as a whole has roughly fifty-six percent (56%) housing stock built before 1970. While an older housing stock may be reflective of a desire to maintain a rural and historical aesthetic, this also means that Bolton's growth has not kept pace with the growth of neighboring communities.



*Source: American Community Survey 2018, 5-year estimates, Table B25036*

While the number and age of Bolton's housing stock are vital to build our understanding of the Town, it is also important to get a sense of what types of housing Bolton has. While it is true that Connecticut also has a large portion of its housing built before 1970, it is also true that it has many larger multi-family units, which can help to better sustain a growing population. These larger units are not characteristic of Bolton, and therefore limits the Town's ability to attract or maintain residents. Creating more affordable housing will not only work towards the goal of the ten percent (10%) required by the state; it will also help Bolton sustain its population base. It can also help Bolton to grow in the coming years while providing diversified housing options.

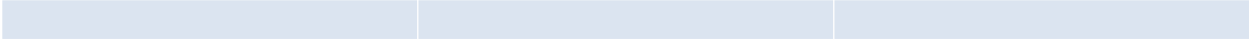
<i>Housing Units by Size</i>	<b>Bolton</b>	<b>Tolland County</b>	<b>Connecticut</b>
<b>Total</b>	1,932 100.0%	59,418 100.0%	1,512,305 100.0%
<b>1 unit, detached</b>	1,769 91.6%	41,234 69.4%	892,608 59.0%
<b>1 unit, attached</b>	24 1.2%	2,243 3.8%	80,684 5.3%
<b>2 units</b>	37 1.9%	2,224 3.7%	123,908 8.2%
<b>3 or 4 units</b>	10 0.5%	4,412 7.4%	130,948 8.7%
<b>5 to 9 units</b>	62 3.2%	3,756 6.3%	84,021 5.6%
<b>10 to 19 units</b>	0 0.0%	2,170 3.7%	57,153 3.8%
<b>20 to 49 units</b>	30 1.6%	1,185 2.0%	52,380 3.5%
<b>50 or more units</b>	0 0.0%	1,468 2.5%	78,492 5.2%
<b>Mobile home</b>	0 0.0%	715 1.2%	11,734 0.8%
<b>Boat, RV, van, etc.</b>	0 0.0%	11 0.0%	377 0.0%

Source: 2018 American Community Survey, 5-year estimates, Table B25024


Bolton currently only has 29 assisted housing units. Assisted Housing Units are defined in Connecticut as “housing which is receiving, or will receive, financial assistance under any governmental program for the construction or substantial rehabilitation of low- and moderate-income housing, and any housing occupied by persons receiving rental assistance under chapter 319uu or Section 1437f of Title 42 of the United States Code”. This accounts for only 1.4% of the housing supply. In comparison, Tolland County has 8% of the housing supply as assisted and Connecticut has 11.6% of its housing supply as assisted. Again, when we define Affordable housing, we are only interested in those units that are deed restricted to be affordable in the future as well. While it is true that market conditions may cause housing units to fall below this value, these “naturally occurring” units are not required to remain at an affordable rate. Because of this, they cannot be guaranteed for future affordability and therefore cannot be counted as meeting the affordable housing goal set by the State.

	<b>Bolton</b>	<b>Tolland County</b>	<b>Connecticut</b>
<b>Total Assisted</b>	29 (1.4%)	4,639 (8%)	172,277 (11.6%)
<b>CHFA/USDA Mortgages</b>	28	1,180	29,519
<b>Governmentally Assisted Units</b>	0	2,798	91,303
<b>Tenant Rental Assistance</b>	1	624	46,289
<b>Deed Restrictions</b>	0	37	5,166

Source: CT Department of Housing, 2019 Affordable Housing Appeals Listing



For reference, the current median rental rate for apartments in Bolton is \$970 (as of 2018). Most rental properties in Bolton fall below the affordable housing unit maximum rental cost however, the reason they do not qualify and cannot be counted toward the Town's ten percent goal is that these rental rates are not fixed. In a strong market, rental rates can rise year after year and can surpass the affordable housing cost limit. The fact that many of the existing housing units in Bolton are "naturally occurring" and fall below the Affordable threshold already is not insignificant. It tells us that at least for the time being, there are units in the community which can be rented at or below what would qualify as an Affordable housing unit. The fact that these units are not deed restricted and can be rented as market rate however does present a long-term concern as housing costs continue to increase. While the rental rates may not currently be an issue in terms of what is considered affordable by HUD, the supply of these units is not enough to satisfy the high demand for lower cost units. This is a problem that many Towns in Connecticut face, including Bolton.



## Section 5

### Who Benefits From Affordable Housing?

An increase in the number of affordable housing units not only benefits individuals looking to make Bolton their home but can also have a positive impact on Bolton's current residents. The most significant trend in Bolton's population is the projected increase in the number of residents above the age of 55. As life expectancy increases and the "baby boomer" generation (people born from about 1945 to 1965) enter these older age cohorts, a changing age composition will also result in changing demand for municipal services and housing types, (Bolton POCD, 2015, p. 7). Bolton's median age is 45, compared to that of Tolland County which is 36 and Connecticut which is 39. The percentage of residents above the age of 60 in Bolton is 26%. Bolton does not currently have many options for aging or senior residents. There is no senior housing and very few available units to buy or rent when considering downsizing. In the not-so-distant future, many of Bolton's seniors who wish to downsize to extract equity from their existing larger homes and move to a new type of housing that is lower cost, easier to maintain and better for accessibility will be forced to leave Bolton as these types of housing options currently are not available, particularly for those on fixed incomes. When they are unable to find these types of units locally, some may choose to stay in their current residence, this option is not possible for some people. Whether it be because of affordability or aging related health or mobility issues, maintaining their existing residence will not be possible for many.



If lower cost housing options were to exist in Bolton, many of these seniors would not be forced to make these decisions and leave Bolton. Affordable housing options can provide seniors with the ability to remain in their community and close to family, without the undue burden of a home

they cannot maintain or financially support. In 2021, the Planning and Zoning Commission implemented changes to the Town's Zoning Regulations to allow for an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) to be constructed on the same lot as a single-family home. With this new provision, it is possible for owners of single-family homes to rent these houses while they live on site in the ADU or, defray the cost of owning their home by renting the ADU to a tenant. While this will be an option for some, and these ADU's can, if the owner chooses be deed restricted to qualify as Affordable Housing, there are a number of situational factors that will prevent this alternative from being possible for many.

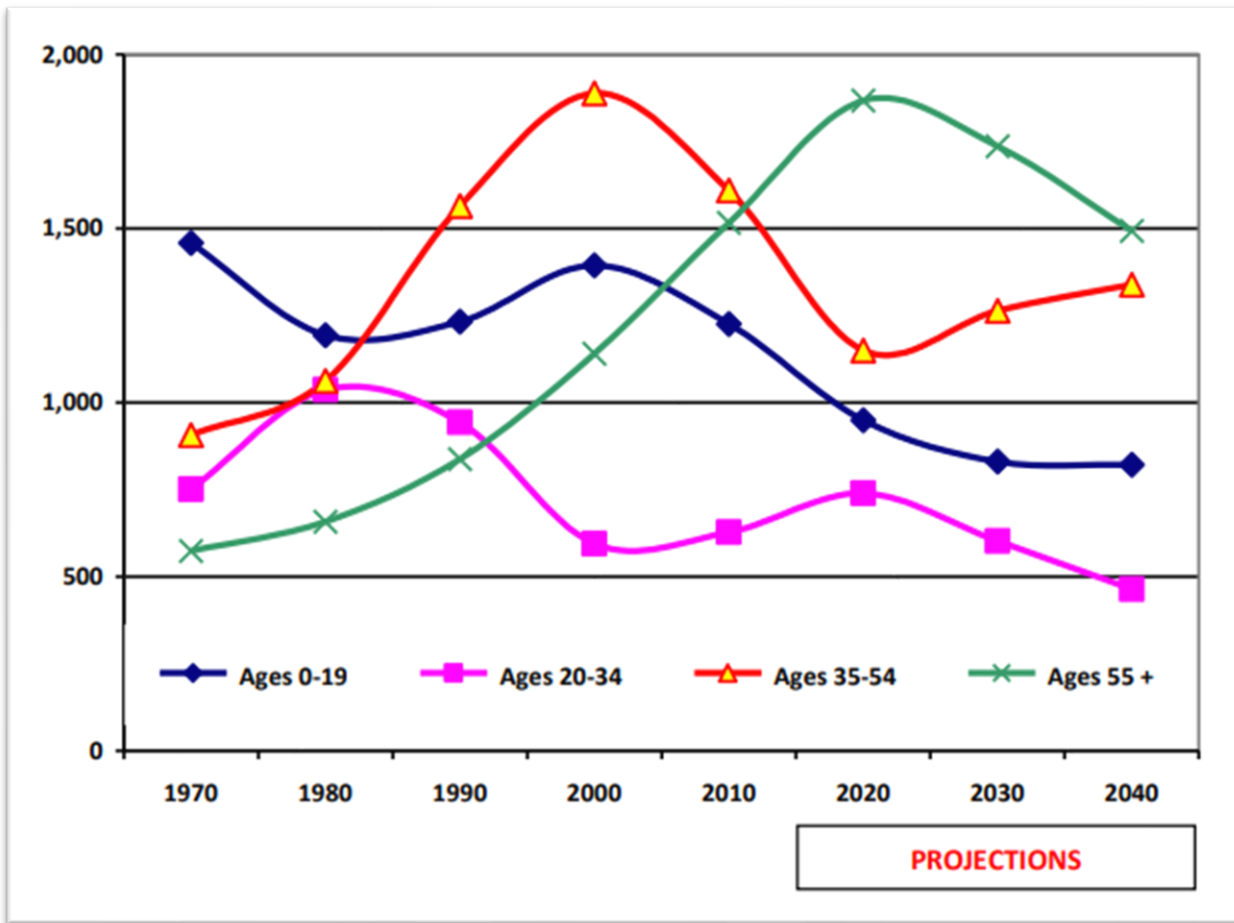


Besides seniors, affordable housing greatly benefits young professionals and children of residents. Very few people start with jobs that can pay for a mortgage while still having money to provide for necessities. Affordable housing lets people gain financial stability without having to sacrifice these important things. People who have lived their whole life in the Bolton community should not be forced out of the community because they do not make a lot of money. Also, young professionals who can provide for the future growth of the community should have a way to establish roots in the community to grow from. Having a high barrier of entry only hurts the future prospects of the town. Affordable single units or small multifamily units can attract young

professionals or allow residents to remain in their hometown. Affordable housing units do not have to be large complexes.

Besides these two major groups of residents, affordable housing can help people who are struggling for any number of other reasons. Currently, about a quarter (25.5%) of Bolton residents are cost burdened. Cost burdened means that a household spends more than 30% of their income on housing costs. This is the threshold where HUD says people “may have difficulty affording necessities such as food, clothing, transportation, and medical care.” Severely cost burdened is defined as spending 50% or more on housing costs, and 10% of households qualify as being severely cost burdened in Bolton. On the other hand only “A little over 1 percent of the housing units in Bolton are considered ‘affordable housing’ (governmentally assisted housing, receiving financial assistance, or sale price restricted by deed)” (Bolton POCD, 2015, p. 8). Neighbors living

in the Bolton community should not have to struggle to live and have their basic needs met. By taking initiative to create affordable housing opportunities, the Town of Bolton is looking to improve the lives of the residents who need it the most. Improving affordable options will make the community a better place.



(Bolton population projection from Bolton 2015 Plan of Conservation and Development)

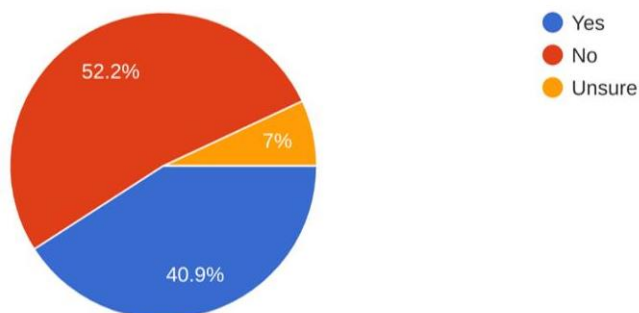
## Section 6

### Community Survey

To gain a better understand of how the Bolton community felt about a number of the topics discussed in this plan, a community survey was conducted. In an effort to reach as much of the community as possible, the survey was posted on the town's website, all the town social media channels, and sent out to the community via a Bolton Bulletin email. Paper copies were also made available. The following are some of the results of that survey:

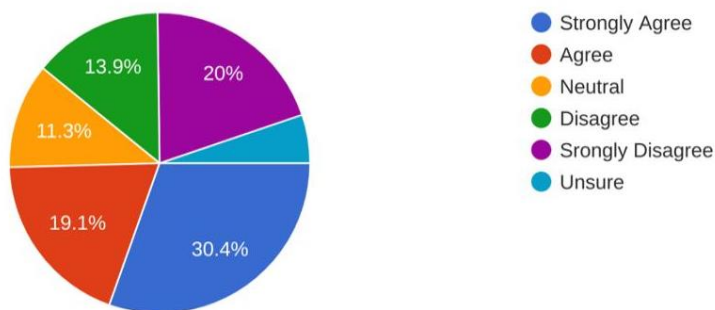
Do you think that the existing housing stock in Bolton is adequate to satisfy future resident's needs?

115 responses



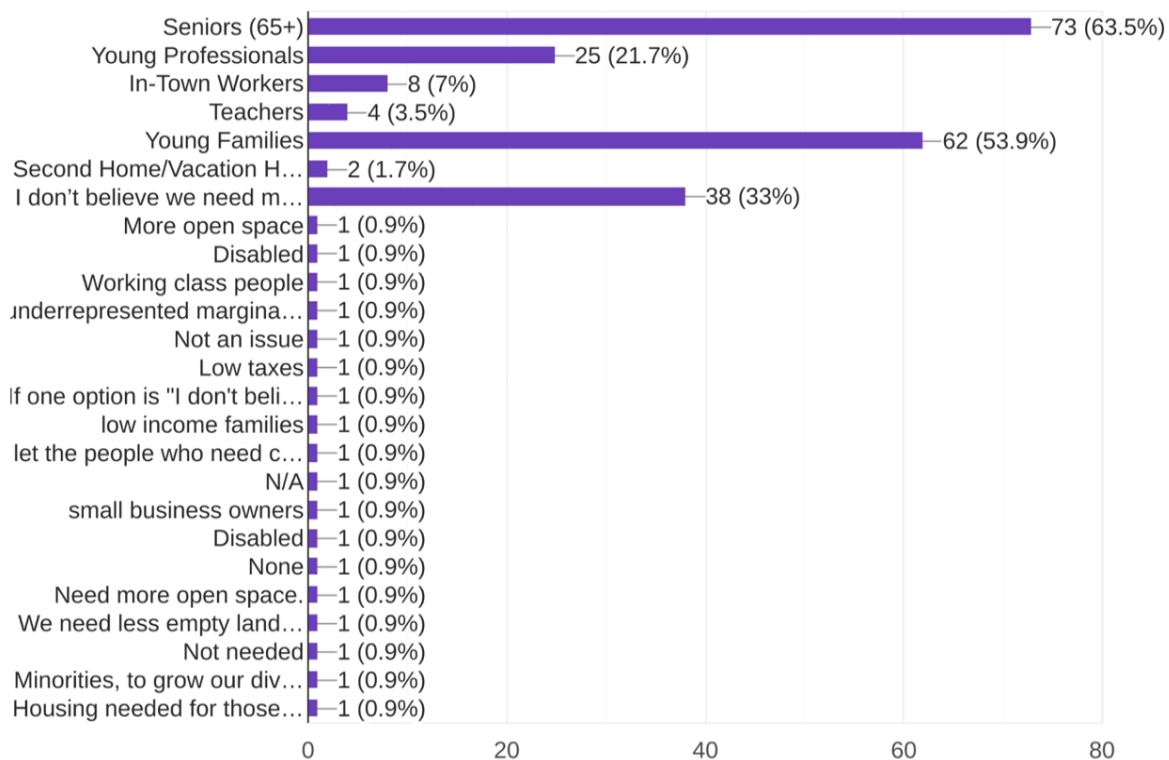
AFFORDABLE Housing is an important component of Bolton's longevity?

115 responses



### In Bolton, for whom do you think housing units are most needed? (Select top 2)

115 responses





## Section 7

### **Bolton's Future**

With an eye towards the future, Bolton should review multiple alternatives to increase its supply of affordable housing and meet the needs of its residents. As it stands, there are very few economic reasons for developers and landlords to build or establish units that are Affordable. Because of this, the town should consider encouraging the development of new Affordable housing through incentive programs, grants, zoning changes, or other economic means. There should especially be a focus on age-restricted housing, given the aging population and high community demand.

In addition to high economic costs, finding suitable locations is major barrier which impacts the amount of Affordable housing in Bolton. As a small town, Bolton has limited access to public sewer and water which makes higher-density housing developments more feasible. Because of this, the Town should work to identify locations which can support small-scale multi-family housing that is more feasible based upon Bolton's lack of infrastructure. While many parcels may look appealing based on their size and location, there are other environmental and zoning factors that limit these options. While environmental factors, for the most part, cannot be avoided, changes in zoning regulations can make some projects feasible that would not be possible otherwise. These zoning regulation recommendations are outlined in the table below. Bolton currently has multiple housing units which are naturally occurring and could qualify as Affordable if they were to be deed restricted. Because of this, the Town should incentivize owners to deed restrict these units as Affordable. Also, the Town should also work to educate first time and lower income home buyers about USDA and CHFA loans. These loans not only make home buying more attainable, but these loans also qualify each home to be counted towards Bolton's 10% Affordable housing goal.

The development of this Plan has involved an examination of many different factors, all of which directly relate to the diversity of Bolton's housing stock both currently and moving forward. While it is clear that there are a number of constraints which may limit the suitability of widespread higher-density developments, there are options that the Town can implement which can work to create housing that is appropriate in the context of Bolton. As the Town works to maintain all of the components of the community which the residents of Bolton have come to love, it is crucially important that making affirmative changes to housing policies and practices be considered so that the residents of Bolton today are able to continue to be Bolton residents tomorrow.

## Bolton Affordable Housing Plan Observations and Recommendations

	<b>Current Regulations</b>	<b>Observation</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>
<b>Multifamily housing</b>	<b>6A.14:</b> Multiple Dwelling Complexes (Traditional and for the Elderly) allowed only in R-2 zone by Special Permit	A special permit is required for almost all forms of multifamily housing in Bolton. This is a barrier to development and can discourage developers from building multiple-family housing.	The Town should consider allowing lower density multifamily housing (2-4 units) as of right in some of its residential zones, provided soil conditions can support it.
	<b>6A.15 &amp; 7A.4.</b> Open Space Conservation Development Multiple Dwelling Complex allowed in R-1 and R-2 zones by Special Permit		
<b>Accessory Dwelling Units</b>	<b>6A.3:</b> Allows 1 ADU as of right per single family detached house in all Residence Zones	In October of 2021, the Bolton Planning & Zoning Commission amended its Zoning Regulations Sections 2, 3, 6, 8, 9, and 11 to further encourage ADUs and in compliance with PA 21-29. ADUs are allowed in all zones and as they are no longer restricted to occupancy by related persons, they provide additional access to low-cost housing.	The Town should work to encourage these units to be deed restricted when possible and to educate the Community that this housing option now exists.
<b>Two-Family Dwellings</b>	<b>6A.2:</b> Allows Two-family dwelling units in R-1 and R-2 as of right	Two-family dwellings can help facilitate increased density and provide lower cost housing options to residents who would prefer to live in a more traditional housing type	The Town should evaluate current Zoning policies to determine if expanding the areas that Two-Family dwellings area allowed is appropriate
<b>Mixed Use</b>	<b>9B2.b:</b> allows for mixed use developments by Special Permit which includes a 20% affordable component in the GMUZ	If Bolton wants to prioritize seniors in its future housing development, allowing for age restricted housing as of right in multiple zones significantly expands opportunities for older residents.	The Town should consider expanding the zones that allow for elderly housing and further evaluate if these uses can be allowed without the need for Special Permit
	<b>8C.2.b:</b> allows for mixed use developments by Special Permit which includes a 20% affordable component in the RMUZ		
<b>Incentive Housing</b>	Bolton's Planning & Zoning Commission identified an area along Route 44 that could be eligible as an Incentive Housing Overlay Zone.	Incentive Housing Overlay Zones is a strong tool that encourage the establishment of Regulations to provide for housing that is deed restricted to Affordable levels.	The Town should review the proposed Incentive Housing Overlay Zone and determine if moving forward with its implementation is appropriate
<b>Elderly Housing</b>	<b>6A.13:</b> Allows Continuing Care Retirement Communities in all residential zones, and <b>6A.14:</b> Allows age-restricted multiple dwelling complexes by Special Permit in the R-2 Zone.	If Bolton wants to prioritize seniors in its future housing development, allowing for age restricted housing as of right in multiple zones significantly expands opportunities for older residents.	The Town should consider expanding the zones that allow for elderly housing and further evaluate if these uses can be allowed without the need for Special Permit.