

Source: International Festival of Arts and Ideas

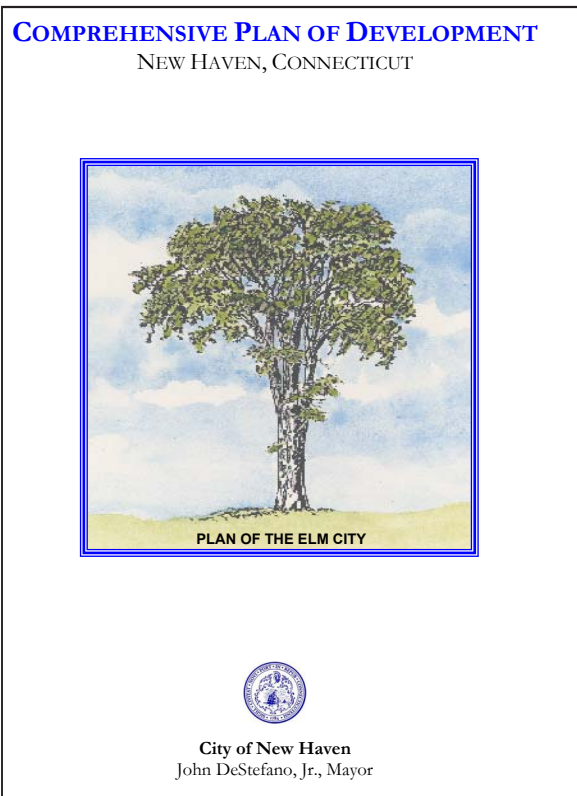
A. LEGAL STANDING

A Comprehensive Plan is a policy document regarding physical growth and development of the city; it is also called a Plan of Conservation and Development. This update of the 2003 Comprehensive Plan (“Plan”) of Development, titled *New Haven Vision 2025*, is prepared in accordance with (CGS) Section 8-19: Creation of planning commissions and Section 8-23: Preparation, amendment or adoption of plan of conservation and development. This duty is also codified within the City charter under Article VII, Section 3 L (3) (a) which states that “it shall be the duty of the City Plan Commission to prepare and recommend development plans for the improvement of the entire City or any portion thereof.”

The 2003 Plan has been updated in a manner consistent with CGS Section 8-23, which requires that Comprehensive Plans of all municipalities within the state be updated at least once every ten years. The plan update also takes into account recommendations outlined within the 2013-2018 State of Connecticut’s Plan of Conservation and Development pursuant to Section 16a-29 of CGS, and the South Central Connecticut Regional *Plan of Conservation and Development* (amended in July 2009) pursuant to Section 8-35a of CGS. The Plan shows the Commission’s most desirable use



Introduction



2003 Comprehensive Plan

of land within the City of New Haven for residential, recreational, commercial, industrial, conservation, and other purposes, and for the areas most desirable for increased population density in the city.

B. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PLANS

This plan supersedes and replaces the *Comprehensive Plan of Development for the City of New Haven* (2003), as amended. It takes into account various planning efforts conducted and policy documents prepared and adopted in recent years, and guides all sub-area planning in the city over the next decade. (See Appendix for chart on relationship to other plans.)

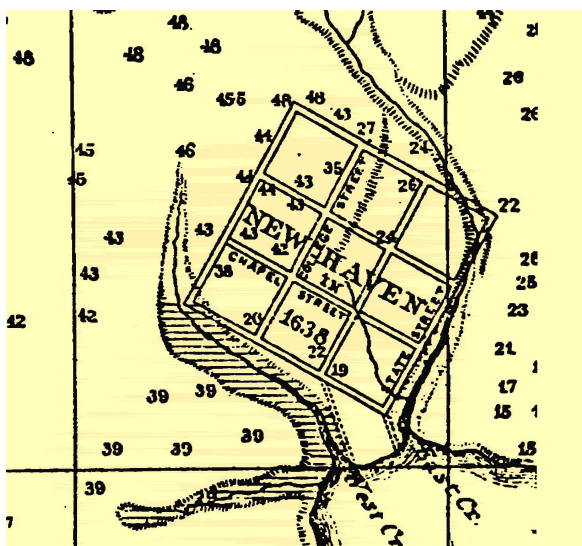
C. PROCESS FOR AMENDMENTS

Proposed amendments to this document shall be submitted to the City Plan Department for administrative processing. The Executive Director of the City Plan Department may submit an amendment on behalf of the Commission or on behalf of the City Plan Department. The Executive Director shall forward all proposed amendments to the City Plan Commission for consideration in accordance with state and local law and the Commission’s rules and regulations. The Executive Director may submit an analysis and advice on any proposed amendment.

Proposed amendments to the New Haven Zoning Ordinance, the New Haven Coastal Program, active and proposed redevelopment plans, active and proposed Municipal Development Plans, and all other development plans prepared or reviewed by the City Plan Commission shall be reviewed for their consistency with this document and forwarded to the appropriate body for adoption: the Board of Alders, the Redevelopment Agency, or the Development Commission.

D. PLANNING HISTORY

The City of New Haven is generally recognized as the first English-speaking colonial American city to adopt a physical plan. In 1639, Surveyor John Brockett laid out a grid of nine blocks, organized around a central common block. The so-called “**Nine Square Plan**” is an early example of the grid patterns later used in Philadelphia (1682), Detroit (1700), New Orleans (1718), and Savannah (1733). The New Haven Green, the original central block, is a National



Nine Square Plan

Introduction



Historic Landmark and the Nine Square Plan is recognized by the American Institute of Certified Planners as a National Historic Planning Landmark.

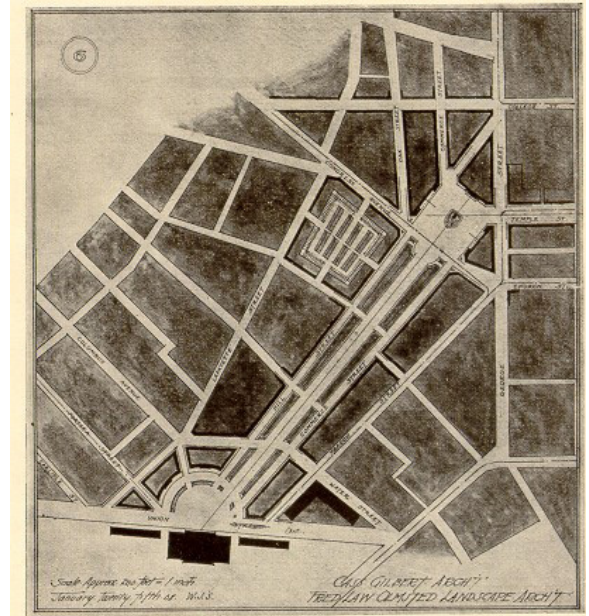
As the city developed, a series of roads radiated away from the nine squares to points north, east and west. In the colonial era, New Haven grew slowly with little expansion outside of the original squares. A map dated 1748 shows moderate expansion along Water Street and the harbor area, with rural and agriculture lands to the north.

During the colonial era, the New Haven Colony extended from the Housatonic River to the Hammonasset River and even briefly included a portion of the east end of Long Island. Soon after the Revolutionary War, New Haven reorganized as a city in 1784. The modern city boundary began to take shape as portions of the original town (including the present towns of Hamden, West Haven, East Haven, North Haven, and Woodbridge) were incorporated as separate municipalities.

The late 19th and early 20th century was a period of dramatic growth and industrialization for New Haven. In response, the City of New Haven began to formalize and codify its land use regulations and a parks commission was also established. A Board of Health and a Building Inspector's Office were established early in the century. As the City Beautiful movement swept the nation, the New Haven Civic Improvement Committee was formed in 1907. **Cass Gilbert and Frederick Law Olmsted prepared the first modern city plan** and presented it to the Committee in 1910. The plan was the City's first documented attempt to accommodate dramatic population growth and improve the quality of life in the city by advancing transportation, aesthetic, and environmental improvements.

In 1913, the State of Connecticut enabled, and the City of New Haven established, one of the nation's first City Plan Commissions. In 1925, the State enabled and the City later established zoning districts. These actions are the foundation for land use planning and the roles and responsibilities of the City Plan Commission to the present day.

In 1942, consultant **Maurice E.H. Rotival prepared a new comprehensive plan** for the City Plan Commission. The plan, coming at the start of World War II and additional industrial expansion in the City, advocated economic development east



Gilbert and Olmsted Plan, 1910



Rotival Plan, 1942



Introduction

toward the harbor and attractive residential development to the west of downtown. In addition, Rotival recommended extensive expansion of the transportation system, including an enhanced cross-town road system and port access up the Quinnipiac River. Perhaps Rotival's most important contribution to the city's planning history is his appreciation of New Haven as the central city of the region:

It is obvious that this role cannot be maintained or increased but by enhancing existing assets and re-establishing others which have completely disappeared like, for instance, the contact of the city with its natural waterfront.

The City's next comprehensive plan, the Short Approach Master Plan of 1953, was strategically focused on transportation issues. Short Approach identified a preferred location for the Interstate highway system (1956) and the redesign of present-day I-91, moving the line to the east side of Wooster Square. The Connecticut Turnpike (I-95 through the New Haven area) opened in 1958.

In 1957, Land Use, Thoroughfare and Community Facility Plans (later known collectively as the "Workable Program") replaced Short Approach as the City's comprehensive plan. The Workable Program was updated and revised periodically during the 1960s.

In many ways, the Workable Program coincided with a shift in land use planning from a comprehensive to a more project-specific approach. As federal and state funding sources mandated strategic project plans in target areas, a wave of Urban Renewal and Redevelopment (and later Municipal Development Plans) plans were prepared and approved by the City Plan Commission.

These plans, which were prepared by the New Haven Redevelopment Agency and/or the New Haven Development Commission, focused on strategic improvements in specific target areas. Redevelopment, in particular, has made a lasting impression on the city's physical environment and on the modern transportation system. During the tenure of then Mayor Richard Lee (1954-70), the City of New Haven was recognized nationally for its redevelopment efforts.

Introduction



The following are among the plans and studies prepared, some of which were also officially adopted in the later half of 20th century:

- 1955 Oak Street Redevelopment Plan
- 1958 Wooster Square Redevelopment and Renewal Plan
Long Wharf Redevelopment Plan
- 1959 Middle Ground Program (Newhallville, Dwight, Fair Haven and Hill)
- 1960 Dixwell Redevelopment and Renewal Plan
- 1963 Hill High School Redevelopment Plan
Dwight Renewal and Redevelopment Plan
Community Renewal Program (multiple years)
- 1966 Temple – George Redevelopment Plan
- 1968 State Street Redevelopment and Renewal Plan
Newhallville Redevelopment and Renewal Plan
- 1969 Fair Haven Redevelopment and Renewal Plan
- 1973 Hill Redevelopment and Renewal Plan
- 1975 Taft – Adams Housing Site Development Plan
- 1979 Orange Street Municipal Development Plan (MDP)
- 1980 Quinnipiac River Municipal Development Plan
- 1981 Science Park Municipal Development Plan
- 1987 Mill River Municipal Development Plan
- 1995 Downtown Municipal Development Plan
- 2002 *River Street Municipal Development Plan*
- 2003 *Comprehensive Plan of Development*
- 2004 *New Haven Air Toxics Inventory*
New Haven Climate Change Action Plan
Plan for Greenways & Cycling Systems
- 2005 *City of New Haven Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan*
- 2006 *New Haven Coastal Program*
- 2007 *Port of New Haven Strategic Land Use Plan*
Route 34 Municipal Development Plan
- 2008 New Haven Future Framework
New Haven Streetcar Assessment
Downtown Crossing Study (Route 34 East)
New Haven Union Station Transit Oriented Development Study



- 2010 Route 34 Incentive Housing Zone study
Complete Streets Design Manual
Whalley Avenue Corridor Study
Whalley Avenue Design Overlay District (New Haven Zoning Ordinance [NHZO])
- 2011 *New Haven Streetcar Preliminary Alignment and Implementation Plan*
City of New Haven Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan Update
- 2012 New Haven Sustainability Plan
- 2013 *City of New Haven Two-way Conversion*
- 2014 *Mill River District Plan*
Mobility Study
Hill to Downtown Community Plan

In addition to these plans, planning efforts have also focused on historic preservation, coastal management and community services. The Historic District Ordinance (part of the New Haven Zoning Ordinance) and the Historic District Commission were established in 1970. The city’s first local historic district, Wooster Square, was established the following year, followed by Quinnipiac (established in 1977) and City Point (established in 2001).

Community Services planning coincides with the federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. The Department of Housing and Urban Development administers CDBG and a number of other federal grant programs, including the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG), HOME Investments Partnership Program (HOME), and Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) programs. The City of New Haven as an “entitlement” prepares a Consolidated Plan every five years and a strategic plan every year.

E. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

This Plan Update document was prepared with extensive public input. A variety of approaches were used to involve residents, and elected/appointed officials at every step of the process such as: attending Community Management Team (CMT) meetings, conducting community listening sessions/workshops, and **soliciting input** through written feedback, emails, and conducting and electronic/paper copy survey. The public involvement component comprised of two phases:



Flyer soliciting public input



More than 900 city residents completed the community survey that informed the recommendations of this document.

Introduction



Phase 1 (December 2012 – December 2013) involved initial updates on trends and statistics and discussion of planning issues at all of the 12 Community Management Teams (CMTs) in the city, City planning boards/commissions, non-profit/civic associations (Elm City Cycling, New Haven Food Policy Council, Cedar Hills Merchants Association, Community Alliance for Research and Engagement [CARE], etc.), and Mayor’s Nights Out. Regular internal briefings were provided to the staff of the Livable City Initiative (LCI); Transportation, Traffic, and Parking Department (TTP); and the Economic Development Department.

A city-wide community preference survey was conducted to prioritize planning issues and arrive at a consensus on planning vision. It garnered **±920 responses from residents all across the city**. In addition, a community feedback form was also distributed at all meetings, which was completed and returned by some residents (See Appendix). The feedback gathered from Phase I outreach helped in framing the planning vision for the city for the next decade.

Phase 2 (May 2014 – September 2015) involved development of draft planning recommendations through **community listening sessions** (workshops) in some neighborhoods and through discussions at all 12 CMTs. City Plan staff also involved all department heads (e.g., Economic Development Administration; TTP; LCI; Engineering; Parks and Recreation; and Arts, Culture, and Tourism) during the draft plan document development stage and incorporated their feedback on plan recommendations.

Monthly updates on various planning topics were given at the City Plan Commission (CPC) meetings from December 2012 to June 2013 and from March 2015 to September 2015. Residents and other agencies sent written comments to the Department through the community feedback form or via email, which are included within the Appendices of this document. The Appendices also include details on all input received at all stages of the plan update process. One-on-one meetings were held with interested residents, advocacy groups, and Alders.

The CPC held three public hearings on June 17, July 15, and September 17, 2015 before approving the final draft of this document. A section of the City Plan Department’s web site has been dedicated to the plan update since 2012 and includes staff contact information, an electronic copy of the New Haven Data Book, copies of community presentations, meeting notes of



July 2014 Community Listening Session in Wooster Square



October 2014 Community Listening Session in Route 34 Area



March 2015 Community Listening Session in Westville

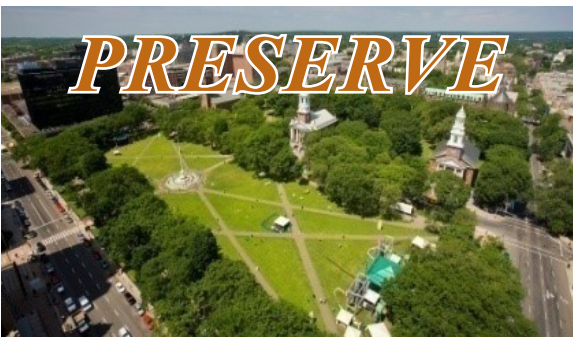


workshops conducted, survey questionnaire and results, maps, and the final draft of the entire document.

The Commission appreciates the contributions of residents as well as city department heads and the Board of Alders, who routinely contribute to the dialogue on land use matters. Based on the responses received from Phase 1 and Phase 2 outreach, there is a general consensus among residents on the following planning themes for the city for the next decade:



- ✓ ***BUILD***
- ❖ Housing suitable for all incomes and ages.
- ❖ Tax generating developments.
- ❖ Places for residents, jobs, and support services.



- ✓ ***CONNECT***
- ❖ Housing and transit.
- ❖ Housing, jobs, and support services.
- ❖ Jobs and residents.
- ❖ New Haven to Southern Connecticut and metro New York regions.



- ✓ ***PRESERVE***
 - ❖ Neighborhood character.
 - ❖ Historic character of the city.
 - ❖ Natural Environment.
- ✓ ***ADAPT***
 - ❖ To climate change events.
 - ❖ To anticipated sea level rise.
 - ❖ To inland and coastal flooding.
 - ❖ To extreme temperatures.
 - ❖ To changes in the local and national economy.

Introduction



- ✓ ***GROW***
- ❖ Skills of local workforce.
- ❖ Small business assistance.
- ❖ Public safety measures.
- ❖ Transit and non-motorized mobility options
- ❖ Image of the city as the “greatest small city in America!”



F. **GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

Planning recommendations for the next decade have been developed based on the following guiding principles derived from community input, as shown below.

LAND USE

- ❖ Capitalize on New Haven’s natural assets: the harbor, East and West Rock, and its three rivers.
- ❖ Build on New Haven’s excellent institutions of education, research, and health care.
- ❖ Encourage sustainable developments within the city by allowing a mix of land uses that, to the extent possible, rely on existing community facilities and infrastructure.
- ❖ Facilitate enhanced connections to transit, bike, and pedestrian walkways.
- ❖ Connect to support services, community facilities, open spaces, and recreational facilities.
- ❖ Promote **design compatibility** among a variety of land uses.
- ❖ Promote integration of food policies and planning into city’s land use activities.
- ❖ Increase density and transit-oriented development in central New Haven and along arterials.
- ❖ Encourage pipeless, low-impact developments that consume less energy and with no wastage of water.





HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING

- ❖ Promote **diverse housing stock** suitable for people of all ages and incomes.
- ❖ Increase homeownership rate.
- ❖ Improve housing affordability.
- ❖ Enhance quality of the housing stock.
- ❖ Preserve existing, historic housing stock.
- ❖ Encourage environmentally sustainable housing developments.
- ❖ Enhance physical and social connectivity within and among neighborhoods.

TRANSPORTATION

- ❖ Promote safe, efficient, reliable, and accessible public transit system throughout the city to connect residents to jobs, services, and their community.
- ❖ Consider placemaking as a strategy beyond traffic for transportation improvements.
- ❖ Adopt more progressive, multi-modal and context-based design principles.
- ❖ Advocate for faster and more efficient **regional transit** connections.
- ❖ Promote a more sustainable transportation system within the city and the region.
- ❖ Improve mobility for people of all ages and abilities.
- ❖ Increase pedestrian and bicycle connectivity for all i.e., from ages eight to eighty.
- ❖ Encourage employers to raise public awareness of Street Smarts, bike-to-work, transit, and available parking options within the city.
- ❖ Enhance public safety particularly for the city's most vulnerable users.
- ❖ Adopt multi-national Vision Zero policy, which aims to eliminate traffic fatalities
- ❖ Maximize the assets and infrastructure with respect to the availability of parking on city streets.





ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- ❖ Promote sustainable and balanced economic growth.
- ❖ Continue to promote business retention and attraction in the city.
- ❖ Support start up and small and minority-owned businesses.
- ❖ Enhance the skills of local workforce.
- ❖ Promote revitalization of the existing business corridors in the city, to the extent the market allows.
- ❖ Support private sector efforts to maintain positive trends of reduction in vacancy rates within Downtown commercial and office space.
- ❖ Promote the redevelopment of industrial areas of the city to retain and create jobs.
- ❖ Remediate brownfields and where appropriate, propose interim used for such sites.
- ❖ Continue improvements to infrastructure to promote economic development, such as roadway enhancements, coastal resiliency planning, and information technology implementation.
- ❖ Reinforce the city's position as a world-class destination for **arts, cultural, and entertainment** events.
- ❖ Continue to raise awareness of economic development and workforce development initiatives in the city.
- ❖ Continue efforts to integrate the economic development of Downtown with complementary development initiatives in the Medical Center and Long Wharf areas.
- ❖ Enhance New Haven's economic competitiveness within the region.
- ❖ Support the development and growth of New Haven core industries: education, medical, and research institutions.





ENVIRONMENT

- ❖ Improve air quality.
- ❖ Maintain drinking water quality.
- ❖ Remediate polluted sites.
- ❖ **Protect and preserve natural assets** and environmentally sensitive areas.
- ❖ Encourage increased positive use of city parks to enhance public health and to encourage community cohesion and environmental awareness.
- ❖ Encourage the creation of safe open space opportunities, community gardens, and urban farms.
- ❖ Protect floodplains from inappropriate development so as to prevent the loss of life or property due to flooding.
- ❖ Implement measures to correct existing flooding issues.
- ❖ Mitigate the impacts of sea level rise.
- ❖ Promote awareness and education regarding coastal flooding issues.
- ❖ Provide sustainable food options for all neighborhoods.
- ❖ Encourage energy conservation and greenhouse gas reduction.

Introduction



The subsequent chapters discuss specific recommendations for each planning topic that would help achieve the community vision of a.....

...sustainable, healthy, and vibrant city where:

- the neighborhoods are well connected and revitalized;*
- residents are adequately connected to jobs, transit, and support services;*
- small and minority-owned businesses are thriving;*
- the Downtown core continues to remain a vibrant regional business and cultural center;*
- the neighborhood business corridors are transformed into Main Streets;*
- local workforce is trained for 21st century jobs;*
- the city stabilizes its position as a regional growth center;*
- a continuous and inter-connected bike/pedestrian facilities system exists;*
- adequate housing, employment and recreational opportunities exist for all;*
- the parks serve as focal points for community interaction and are well connected with a system of trails and pedestrian network within the city and along the waterfront;*
- the city's wealth of natural, historic, and cultural resources are preserved and enhanced;*
- there is a high quality of built and natural environment;*
- public health and safety are prioritized in planning decisions;*
- residents are well prepared to deal with emergencies and natural disasters; and*
- the city is also recognized as a destination for families with children, and a hub for entrepreneurs.*



This page intentionally left blank.