

2025-2030 State of Connecticut DRAFT Conservation and Development Policies Plan

November 13, 2024



CONNECTICUT
Policy and Management

Today's Agenda

Planning Process Recap

Feedback on March 2024 Draft Plan

Revisions for Final Draft

Next Steps

Planning Process Thus Far

November 2022



- Reviewed existing C&D Plan with state agencies – strengths and deficiencies
- Followed recommendations of the Committee on CT's Development and Future (CCDF)
- Engaged with Continuing Committee three times: planning initiation, Sept. 1, 2023 draft update, draft for public comment
- Reviewed agency plans and programs, developed consensus on new framework
- Sought input from public on new framework
- Developed draft C&D Plan for public comment
- Discussed draft with COGs, municipalities, public stake holders and agencies

November 2024

- Made revisions based on input

Feedback on Draft C&D Plan

- Conducted 18 meetings to review and gather input – agencies, COGs, public
- Received written comments from 15 COG, municipal, public stakeholders, and 6 state agencies
 - Generally positive feedback on new framework
 - Concerns that the draft is too conservation focused and concerns that it is too development focused
 - Some agency concern over implementation requirements

Revisions for Final Draft

- New section on Planning Process
- Revisions to targets within the Visions – primarily clarifications and additions
- Minor revisions to Policies and Implementation Measures
- Refined methodology for Locational Guide Map

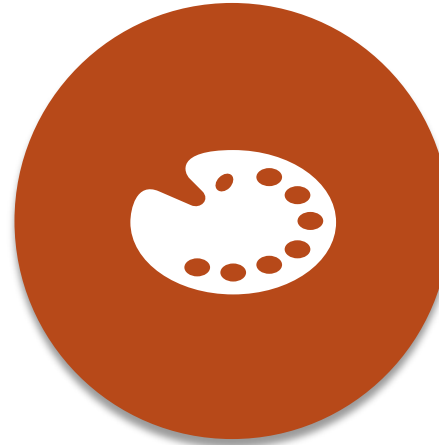
Guiding Principles



SUSTAINABLE



**EQUITABLE
+
JUST**



VIBRANT



RESILIENT

Visions

Thriving Economy

Housing for Current and Future Residents

Stewardship of Resources

Healthy People and Places

Connected and Inclusive Communities

Vision Elements

STEWARDSHIP OF RESOURCES

Connecticut's natural, cultural, and historic resources will be carefully and responsibly used and managed to bolster their ability to withstand disruptions and ensure their long-term quality and viability



Targets

To accomplish this Vision, state agencies will direct plans, programs, and investments towards:

- Advancing meaningful and equitable strategies to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change across all sectors
- Planning for and investing in the resilience of critical infrastructure, including transportation, communications, water, wastewater, and energy assets
- Planning for and adapting to the effects of sea level rise
- Protecting and enhancing the connectivity of natural lands and open spaces
- Preserving and protecting farmland and farm operations and investing in climate-smart agricultural production and practices
- Promoting adaptive reuse, infill development, and redevelopment of underutilized sites as strategies to protect and conserve land
- Continuing to preserve historically, culturally, and architecturally significant sites, structures, landscapes, buildings, and objects, especially those related to traditionally underrepresented groups
- Facilitating the transition towards a fossil fuel-free energy system while enhancing efficiency, resilience, and equity
- Protecting and enhancing biodiversity
- Managing the built environment and restoring, enhancing, and protecting natural assets to improve water quality
- Preserve, protect, and restore riparian corridors

Current Strengths

- 110 state parks and 32 state forests^{xxxix} and more than 500,000 acres of land conserved by the state and its partners^{xxx}
- More than 45,000 acres of preserved farmland, maintaining agriculture as a vital part of Connecticut's economy^{xxxi}
- Efforts to protect and restore Long Island Sound as an important habitat and major contributor to the regional economy^{xxxii}
- More than 52,000 properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places, 63 National Historic Landmarks, and more than 75,000 properties listed on the State Register of Historic Places^{xxxiii}
- Development of critical energy infrastructure, expanded renewable energy programs, and residential and commercial investments in energy efficiency^{xxxiv}

Current Challenges

- A global climate crisis caused by an increase in the concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, leading to higher temperatures, changing precipitation patterns, increased probability of drought, more frequent and intense storms, and a loss of air and water quality^{xxxv}
- Long Island Sound is expected to rise 20 inches higher than the national tidal datum by 2050, leaving the 61% of Connecticut's residents who live in the coastal area, as well critical infrastructure and sensitive habitats, vulnerable to increased erosion and higher frequency of flooding^{xxxvi,xxxvii}
- The sixth mass extinction crisis may lead to the decline and loss of many of Connecticut's species, especially the ~600 listed as Endangered, Threatened, or Special Concern^{xxxviii,xxxix}
- Loss, conversion, and/or fragmentation of working and conservation lands^{xl}
- Ensuring that the benefits of stewardship efforts are shared equally among Connecticut's residents, with particular focus on underserved and vulnerable communities.

Appendix B – Plans and Programs

APPENDIX A: Ongoing Initiatives and Resources

Thriving Economy

Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD)

- [Economic Action Plan](#) – outlines strategies for “driving inclusive growth” in Connecticut
- [Office of Brownfield Remediation and Development \(OBRD\)](#) – provides technical and financial assistance for brownfield redevelopment including mixed use, residential, commercial, industrial, retail, and open space uses
- [Connecticut Office of the Arts Strategic Plan 2022-27](#) – informs the Connecticut Office of the Arts as they work to “enhance, support, and empower the Arts for every resident”
- [Connecticut Office of Tourism FY23 Strategic Plan](#) – presents strategies to position Connecticut as a tourism destination and increase awareness of tourism assets
- [Connecticut’s Manufacturing Strategic Plan](#) – aims to develop Connecticut into an internationally recognized leader in manufacturing

Governor’s Workforce Council

- [Workforce Strategic Plan 2020](#) – makes recommendations to improve the state’s workforce and employment system

Department of Labor (DOL)

- [Office of Apprenticeship Training](#) – the only federally authorized entity in Connecticut for Registered Apprenticeship Programs to increase workforce recruitment and proficiency, help employers transfer occupational skills to a new generation of workers, and promote succession planning

Department of Agriculture (DoAg)

- [CT Grown Program](#) – identifies and promotes Connecticut’s agriculture and aquaculture products
- [Farm Transition Grants](#) – grant program to support the diversification of existing farm operations, transitioning to value-added agricultural

productions and sales, and other venues in which a majority of products sold are grown in the [state](#)

- [Farmland Restoration, Climate Resiliency and Preparedness](#) – grant program to increase long-term climate resiliency of farming operations and decrease farm vulnerability to extreme weather events

Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP)

- [Connecticut Brownfield Remediation Liability Relief Programs](#) – work closely with DECD’s Office of Brownfield Remediation and Redevelopment to provide liability relief and financial assistance for cleanup and redevelopment of brownfields.
- [Urban Sites Remedial Action Program](#) – DEEP and DECD work together to facilitate the transfer, reuse, and redevelopment of potentially polluted properties located within a distressed municipality or targeted investment community.
- [DEEP CERCLA 128\(a\) Brownfield Grant Program](#) – DEEP’s Remediation Division was awarded funding from EPA to administer to brownfield sites under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to provide grants to municipal and non-profit entities to assess or cleanup brownfield sites. The purpose of the grant program is to encourage and enable the creation, preservation, or addition of park space, greenways, or other recreational space, or other property used for nonprofit purposes. Funding through this grant program is available through federal fiscal year 2027.
- [Coastal Management Program](#) – encourages water-dependent uses and facilities in shorefront areas and promotes public access, while requiring that coastal hazard areas be managed to ensure that hazards to life and property are minimized, coastal development allows for tidal wetland migration and incorporates Low Impact development techniques.
- [Statewide Outdoor Recreation Plan*](#) – identifies significant economic activity associated with outdoor recreation in Connecticut including the top-value-added activities, and establishes goals for enhancing access, quality and preservation/ protection of these important resources

Department of Administrative Services (DAS)

- [CT DAS SBE/MBE Program Certification Program](#) also known as the Supplier Diversity or Set-Aside Program - provides enhanced opportunities for small or minority-owned businesses

Policies

guide agency planning,
programming and
policymaking

Seek **multiple benefits** and create efficiencies across agencies to **optimize the use of state resources** in conservation and development initiatives

Leverage federal and private financial resources to support programs and projects that balance priorities

Encourage **planning and preliminary phasing** among partners in conservation and development to advance **well-balanced projects** for potential state investment

Develop greater capacity to **govern, develop, leverage and use existing data**

Promote **regional solutions** to conservation and development and in the efficient use of limited resources

Clearly **communicate priorities** horizontally and vertically within and across agencies

Seek out and facilitate **meaningful engagement** with **diverse stakeholders**

Implementation Measures

to guide agency actions that are required to be consistent with the C&D Plan:

- Acquisition of real property
- Development or improvement of real property
- Acquisition of public transportation equipment or facilities

- Draft proposes legislative change to increase threshold from \$200,000 to \$1 million for actions required to be consistent with Plan in return for some form of documentation of consistency
- Implementation measures designed to aid in determining consistency of actions
- Intent is to increase transparency around agency decision making and implementation of the Plan
- Agencies to assist OPM-ORG in developing process around reporting – may be on a programmatic basis

Implementation Measures	Stewardship of Resources	Thriving Economy	Healthy People and Places	Housing for Current and Future Residents	Connected and Inclusive Communities
Increase and diversify CT's housing supply to include rental and ownership, affordable and market-rate, small and family-sized units in a variety of medium- and high-density development types appropriate to the neighborhood context through new construction, rehabilitation of existing units and adaptive reuse of existing buildings.		X	X	X	
Reduce the number of low- and moderate-income households that are cost-burdened by combined housing, transportation and energy costs.			X	X	
Promote universal design as a component of new construction or substantial renovation projects.			X		
Augment use of existing public sewer, water, stormwater and transportation infrastructure, while ensuring adequate capacity, maintenance and sustainability of such systems to support existing and planned development.	X				X
Promote infill, redevelopment and revitalization of environmental justice communities and other neighborhoods that have suffered from prolonged disinvestment.		X	X	X	
Preserve historically, culturally, and architecturally significant sites, structures, landscapes, buildings, and objects.		X	X		
Avoid developing prime farmland soils, wetlands, habitat areas, and core forest.	X				
Avoid new development activities in areas prone to flooding and inundation from sea-level rise or storms.	X	X	X		
Incorporate low-impact development techniques, energy efficiency and resilience, and climate resilience technologies and techniques in development projects.	X		X		
Encourage development project design to consider the applicability of future technologies such as smart city technologies, autonomous vehicles, 5G service, new energy systems, etc.	X	X			
Foster bike, pedestrian and micro-mobility connections between residential, commercial and mixed-use development and existing or planned transit.			X	X	X


- Sample -

Other Implementation Proposals

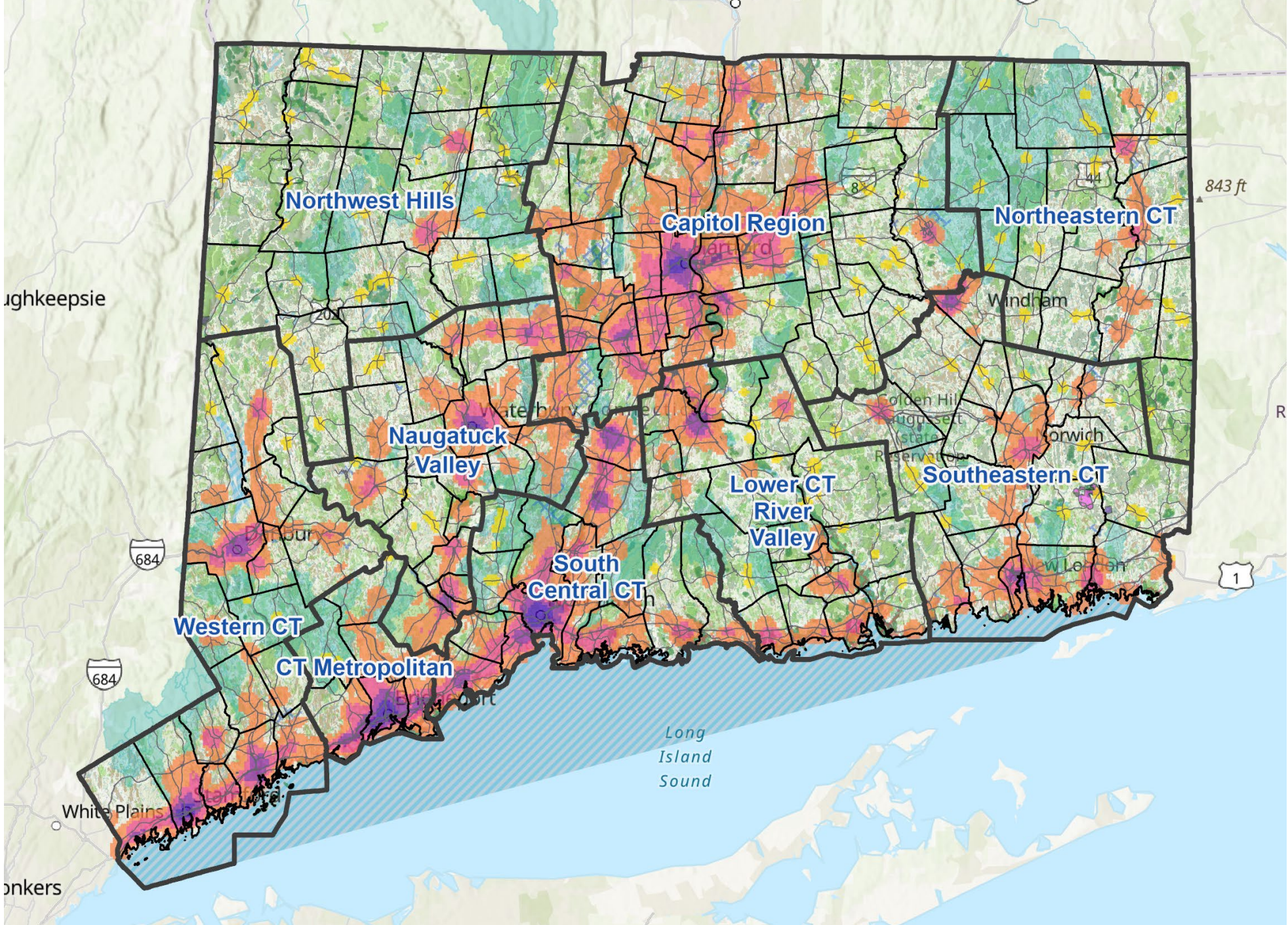
- Convene ad hoc implementation committee of agencies during life of Plan
 - Forum for reviewing opportunities to combine efforts and integrate resources for agency plans, programming and policy development; as well as balancing conflicting priorities
 - Help develop process for documenting required consistency of actions
 - Update Appendix B - Plans and Programs resource - on an annual basis
 - Develop GIS resource of agency activities
- Annually engage Continuing Committee of CGA around implementation
- Regularly offer opportunities for stakeholder engagement around implementation



Locational Guide Map (LGM)

- General guidance for applying the policies and implementation measures of the C&D Plan
 - Descriptive not prescriptive
 - Identifies activity centers and conservation factors
 - Activity centers are where employment hubs, civic uses, transportation assets, cultural attractions and medical and educational institutions cluster at a local scale
 - Activity centers vary in intensity
 - Conservation factors - resources to be restored, preserved and/or protected - are identified throughout
- 

2025-2030 Locational Guide Map



Activity Zones

- Major
- Regional
- Local
- Suburban
- Rural

Tribal Reservation Lands

- State Recognized
- Federally Recognized

Aquifer Protection Areas

Hurricane Surge Inundation

Drinking Water Watersheds

Critical Habitats

DRAFT 2023 Protected Open Space

- Core Forest (small)
- Core Forest (medium)
- Core Forest (large)

Inland Wetland Soil

Prime Farmland Soil

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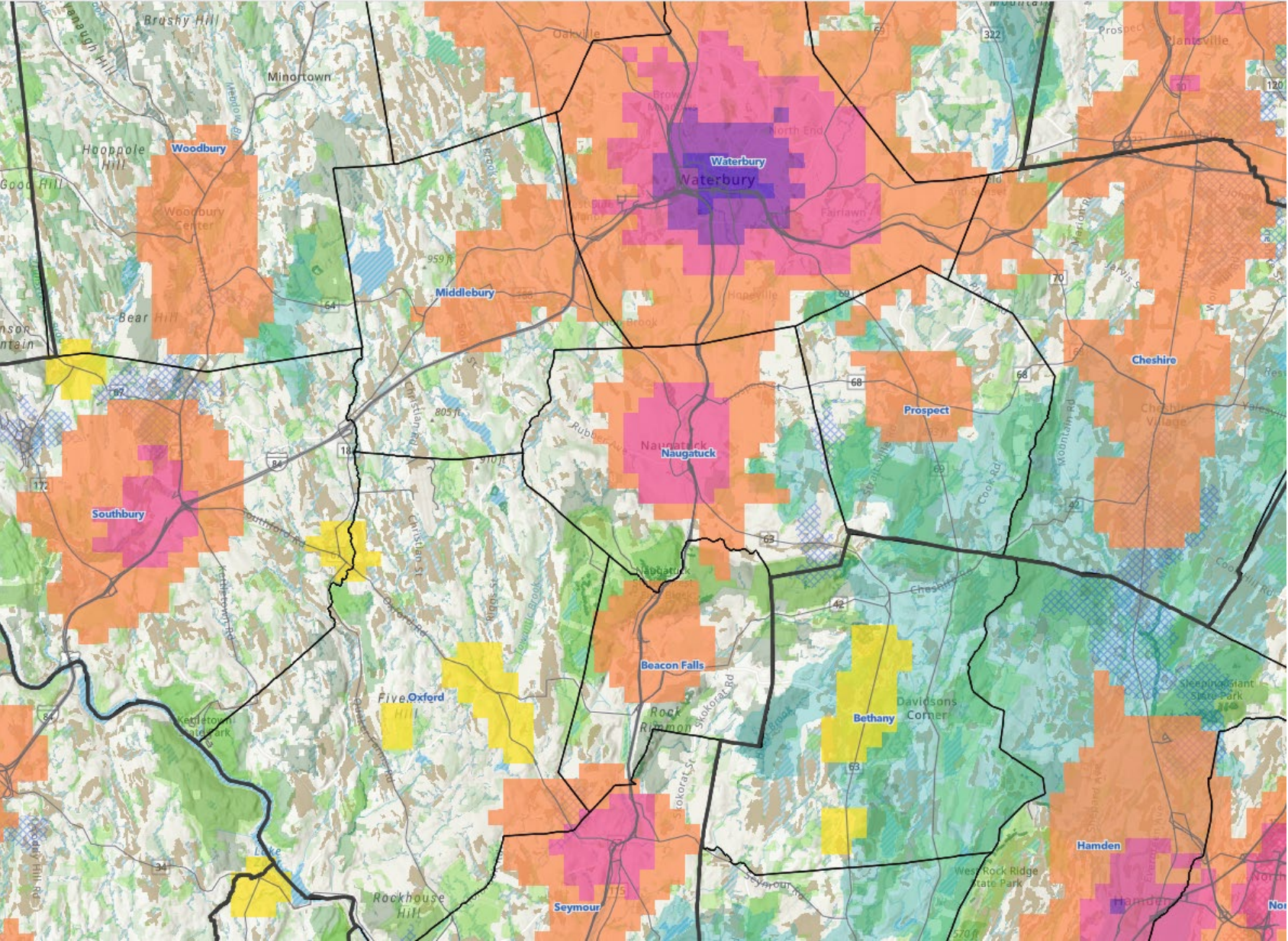
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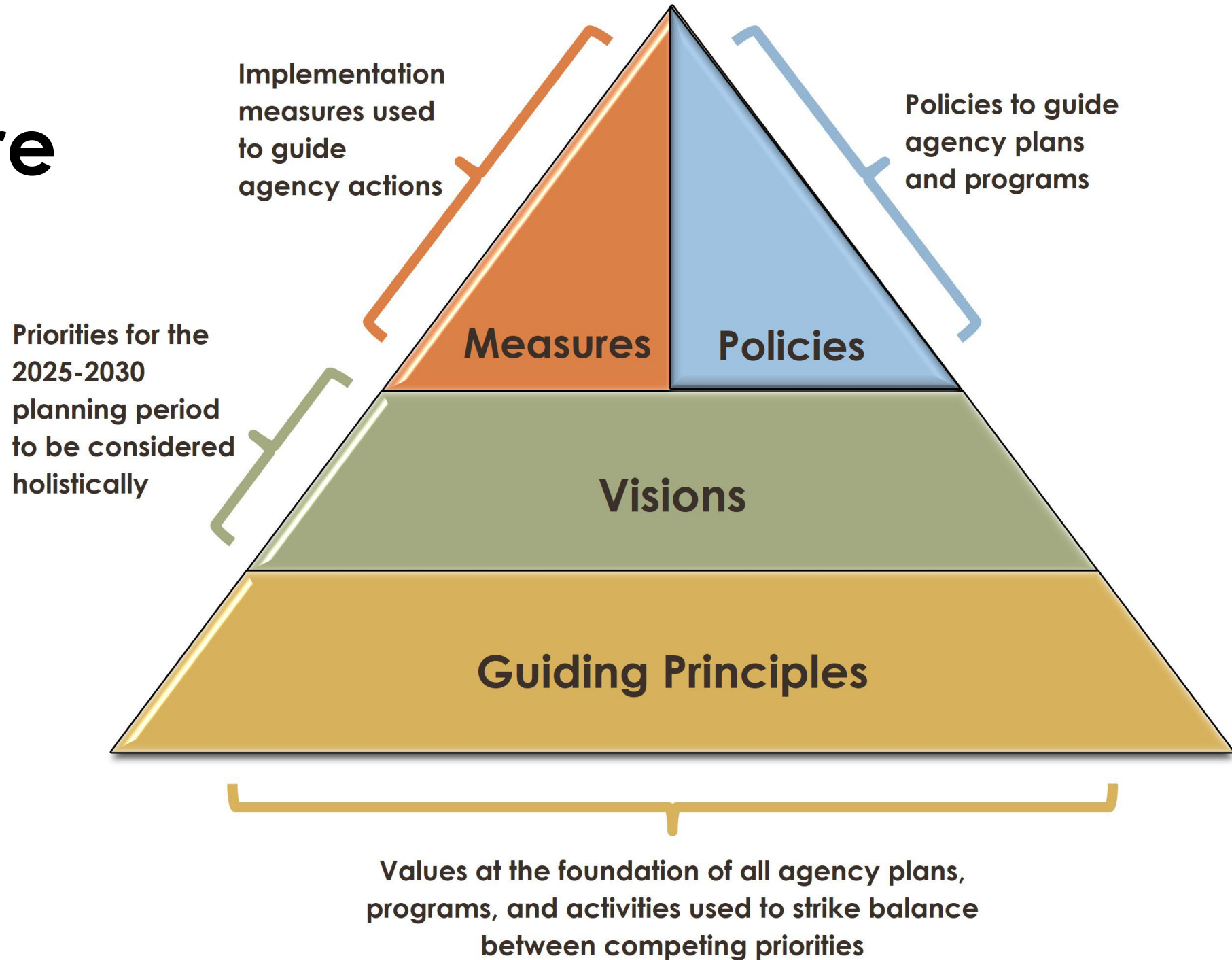


Next Steps

- Final Draft will be submitted to Committee by Dec. 1st (CGS Sec. 16a-29)
- Continuing Committee must hold a public hearing within 45 days of opening of the 2025 session (CGS Sec. 16a-30)
- Continuing Committee must submit its recommendations to CGA within 45 days of completion of public hearing (CGS Sec. 16a-30)
- Legislative proposals to accompany Plan
 - Revise CGS Sec.16a-31 to increase threshold to \$1 million for state agency actions required to be consistent
 - Repeal Chapter 297a (16a-35c – 16a-35h) Priority Funding Areas

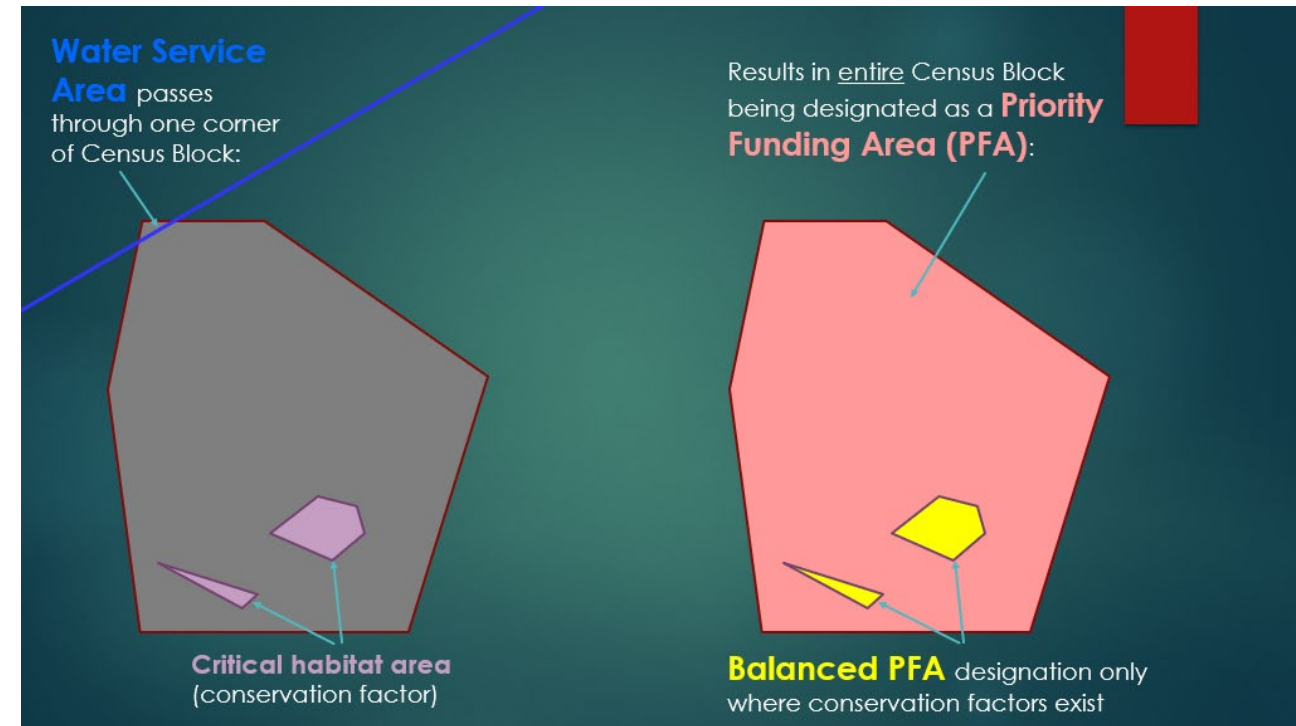
Discussion

Plan Structure



Existing Locational Guide Map (LGM)

- Has relied on Census Block as basic unit of geography for LGM and Priority Funding Area Map
- Census Blocks vary significantly in size between densely and sparsely populated areas
- Spatial mismatch between factors and Census Block designation
- Mapping at a statewide scale should not be used to make site-specific decisions
- Trying a new approach to the LGM with assistance from GIS Office



New LGM

- Developing methodology to identify “Activity Centers” of varying intensities around the state, inspired by work from Brookings Institution and the Indianapolis Metropolitan Planning Organization
- Activity Centers: where employment, civic uses, transportation assets, cultural attractions, and medical and educational institutions cluster at a local scale
 - Provide tool for agencies to compare current conditions relative to specific Visions or agency objectives, and better explore the presence of model components
 - Highlight areas for placemaking investments at various scales and areas for conservation, resource protection and connectivity
 - Planning tool to be used in conjunction with C&D Plan text
- Still in data and model exploration stage

LGM Methodology

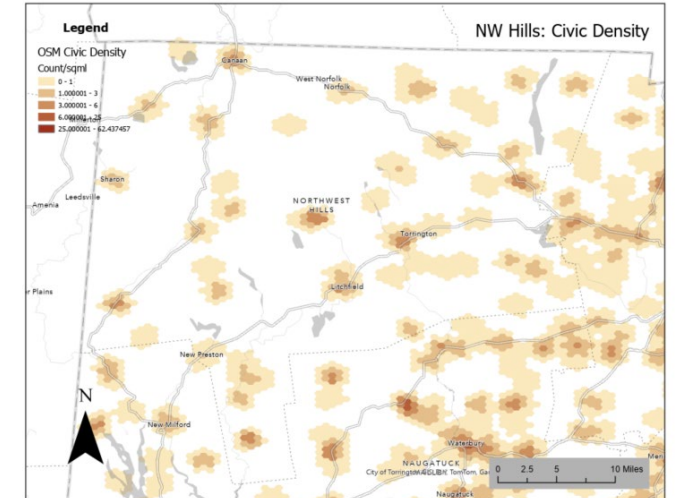
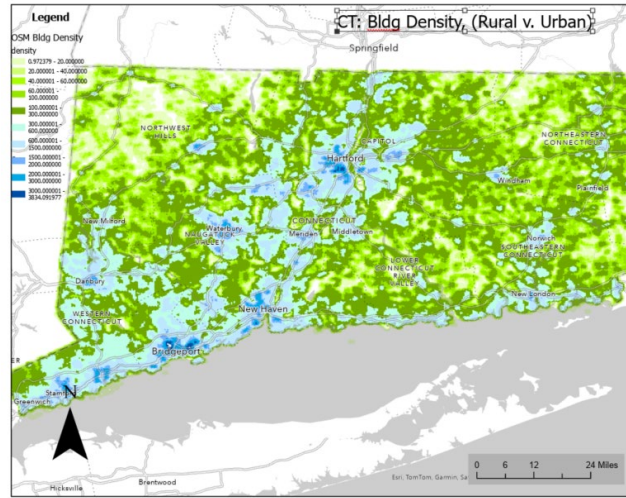
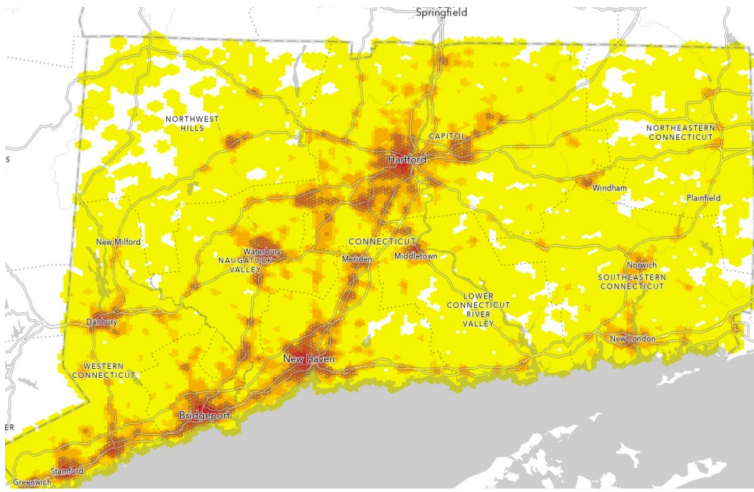
- Publicly available data sets
- Activity model components
 - Civic centers
 - Recreation centers
 - Cultural centers
 - Commercial centers
 - Transit and traffic centers
- Combination or additive model
 - E.g. Suitability analysis

Data	Background
Open Street Maps	Crowd-sourced data set (identifies features in the environment) https://download.geofabrik.de/north-america/us.html (OSM with shape files)
Overture Foundation Maps	(OSM-based semi-open sourced) Needs DB based access but may be more complete, use for second round. https://community.esri.com/t5/geoanalytics-engine-blog/using-overture-maps-data-in-geoanalytics-engine/ba-p/1341493
Living Atlas (ESRI)	Combines public sources with some proprietary data sets, mostly webservice
CT Geodata Portal	CT spatial data aggregation site
CT ECO	Imagery products
Safegraph	Commercial Points of Interest – useful if want to identify commercial centers.

Activity Center Potential Data

Data Sets	Locations	Notes and Limitations
Town Hall	https://hub.arcgis.com/datasets/fedmaps::city-town-halls/explore?location=-0.000000%2C0.000000%2C2.88	Downloaded OSM
Libraries	https://www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?mid=1oWybcLqMD7wmB5gDcASg-uCHx4&hl=en_US&ll=41.51652271310471%2C-72.73447000000002&z=9 Web map library regions https://ctlibraryassociation.org/CT_Library_Association_Regions	Need to process
Post Office	https://postalpro.usps.com/gis/json_psv_files https://postalpro.usps.com/gis/po-location-icd https://portal.ct.gov/SOTS/Register-Manual/Section-VII/Post-Offices-in-Connecticut	OSM also available Need to process some of these
Place of Worship	https://www.expertgps.com/data/ct/churches.asp https://download.geofabrik.de/north-america/us.html https://hifld-geoplatform.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/geoplatform::all-places-of-worship/explore	OSM Need to process
Transportation Stops	https://openhartford-hartfordgis.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/ct-transit-bus-stops/explore?location=41.629837%2C-72.436144%2C10.06	Contacted Greg Ciparelli May need to get from COGs and bus operators
State and Federal Government Facilities	https://carto.nationalmap.gov/arcgis/rest/services/structures/MapServer/36 https://www.arcgis.com/apps/mapviewer/index.html?url=https://services2.arcgis.com/FiaPA4ga0iQKduv3/ArcGIS/rest/services/Structures_Landmarks_v1/FeatureServer&source=sd	
Colleges and Universities	https://mycollegeselection.com/maps/colleges-in-connecticut-map/ https://www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?mid=11yx6Vhkjn1Vgpj7OIUCEhJ2NFic&hl=en&ll=41.48548255739967%2C-72.76881449999998&z=10	Need to process
Hospitals	https://www.arcgis.com/apps/mapviewer/index.html?webmap=f267723b90944727966f66768a8012f4	Need to process
Bldgs, parcels, & CAMA	"N:\GIS\State_Parcels_2023"	2023 parcel and cama data set. Size of Buildings
Housing prices	N:\GIS\State_Parcels_2023	2023 CAMA
Traffic density (AADT)	https://connecticut-ctdot.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/CTDOT::annual-average-daily-traffic/explore?location=41.629819%2C-72.753420%2C11.17	downloaded
Crash densities	https://connecticut-ctdot.opendata.arcgis.com/search?q=crashes	downloaded
Employment (LEHD)	https://lehd.ces.census.gov/data/	
Transit Routes	DOT	Downloaded
Parks and Recreation		

Data Exploration



- Able to create/ transform new data to new geographies
- Scale matters – working to determine whether different scales needed between urban and rural contexts
- Working through process to identify model layers and additive layers
- Will have a draft for March 1st

Using the LGM

- Comparison tool for agency-specific objectives
- Goal is to continue to refine with improved data and methodology
- For statutory purposes:
 - “Regional Center” or “Urban Center” are the same
 - “Neighborhood Conservation Area” includes Corridor and Neighborhood Activity Zones
 - “Growth Area” includes Regional Activity Zones and Corridor and Neighborhood Activity Zones

CITATION	REFERENCE
<u>4-66g(e)</u>	Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP): carved out municipality <15,000 with 5,500-6,000 acres of Regional Water Authority land can from denial of a STEAP grant for sewer due to inconsistency with Locational Guide Map
<u>8-23(f)(6)(F), 8-23(f)(7) and 8-23(g)</u>	Municipal POCDs: 1) may include programs for implementing plans for corridor management areas designated in C&D Plan; 2) may show proposed priority funding areas ; 3) must consider priority funding areas in identifying existing and planned sewer service areas
<u>10-416(l)</u>	Historic home rehab tax credits: After 7/1/15, 70% of these credits must be for homes located in Regional Centers , designated in C&D Plan
<u>16a-25(9)</u>	C&D Plan: Plan is defined as text and any Locational Guide Map
<u>16a-27(d)</u>	C&D Plan: Revisions after 7/1/05 must identify 1) priority funding areas ; and 2) corridor management areas along limited access highways or rail lines with recommendations.
<u>16a-32(b)(8)</u>	Interim Changes to C&D Plan: notifications and public hearing requirement for changes to Locational Guide Map
<u>16a-35c</u>	Priority Funding Areas: definitions, requires designation to consider “ regional centers, growth areas, neighborhood conservation areas and rural community centers ” and corridor management areas in the C&D Plan
<u>22a-246c(a)</u>	Beverage container recycling grant <u>program</u> ; establishes DEEP grant for new or expanded beverage container redemption centers in “ urban centers ” which have the same meaning as “ regional center ” as defined in C&D Plan.
<u>25-68d(d)</u>	Floodplain Management Certification: Agency exemption application may be approved by DEEP Commissioner if agency has shown activity is in the “public’s interest” defined as a remediation project that is in or adjacent to regional center, neighborhood conservation area, growth area or rural community center as designated in C&D Plan.
<u>32-1o</u>	State Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy: must be consistent with text and Locational Guide Map of C&D Plan
<u>32-70g(a)</u>	Knowledge Center Enterprise Zones: DECD may establish if in compliance with C&D Plan
<u>32-75d(b)</u>	Airport development zones: DECD may establish if in compliance with C&D Plan
<u>32-80(b)</u>	Enterprise corridor zones: After 7/1/05, two or more municipalities may designate an Enterprise Corridor zone, if at least one is located along an interstate and designated as a regional center on Locational Guide Map