

New Milford  
2010  
Plan of  
Conservation  
and  
Development

**DRAFT**

For July 1, 2010  
Public Hearing



# TOWN OF NEW MILFORD



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Office of the Planning Commission

New Milford Residents:

We are pleased to submit to you the 2010 New Milford Plan of Conservation and Development. This Plan is presented in a format that is easy to follow and is intended to serve as a guide that is flexible while maintaining stability in the long-term goals of the community. The Plan is a guide toward enhancing the quality of life and the community character of New Milford, addressing such important community issues as conservation, public facilities, transportation, economic development and the environment.

This Plan is the result of numerous meetings by the P.O.C.D. Committee, the Planning Commission, discussions with municipal employees and many public forums with residents over the past year, as well as many hours of research, review and discussion by the Commission, its staff and its consultant.

The 2010 Plan of Conservation and Development brings together in a thoughtful, comprehensive manner the various elements that contribute to the quality of life of New Milford.

We acknowledge and thank all involved for their contribution of time and commitment to the development of this Plan.

The New Milford Planning Commission

Peter Eng, Chair  
Katherine A. Francis, Secretary  
Robert Rush  
Carl J. Perrone  
Eugene J. Schilling  
Theresa Volinski

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# INTRODUCTION

# 1

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## About Plans of Conservation and Development

A Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) is a tool for guiding change that will inevitably occur in New Milford's future. A POCD should establish a common vision for the future physical development of New Milford and recommend policies to help attain that vision.

The goals and recommendations in a POCD should reflect an overall consensus of what is best for the community and its residents.

The POCD primarily addresses the conservation and development of New Milford (the physical layout). However, as you will see in the POCD, some social and economic development issues are addressed since they are often inter-related with conservation, development, and land use issues.

State Statutes set forth what must be included in a POCD. The following are excerpts from the Connecticut General Statutes (CGS) 8-23.

### The POCD shall:

- Be a statement of policies, goals and standards for the physical and economic development of the municipality...
- Provide for a system of principal thoroughfares...sidewalks, multipurpose trails...

- Be designed to promote...the coordinated development of the municipality...to have compact, transit accessible, pedestrian-oriented mixed use development patterns and land reuse... recommend the most desirable use of land within the municipality for residential, recreational, commercial, industrial, conservation and other purposes and include a map showing such proposed land uses...
- Recommend the most desirable density of population in ... the municipality...
- Note any inconsistencies with the following growth management principles:
  - redevelopment and revitalization of commercial centers...
  - expansion of housing opportunities and design choices...
  - concentration of development around transportation nodes...
  - conservation and restoration of the natural environment, cultural and historical resources and existing farmlands...
  - protection of environmental assets critical to public health and safety...
  - integration of planning across all levels of government...
- Make provision for the development of housing opportunities...
- Promote housing choice and economic diversity in housing...

- Consider the following:
  - the community development action plan of the municipality...
  - the need for affordable housing...
  - the need for protection of existing and potential drinking water supplies...
  - the use of cluster development and other development ...
  - the state plan of conservation and development ...
  - the regional plan of development...
  - physical, social, economic and governmental conditions and trends...
  - the needs of the municipality ...
  - the objectives of energy-efficient patterns of development...
  - protection and preservation of agriculture.

**The POCD may:**

- Show the commission's recommendation for
  - conservation and preservation of traprock and other ridgelines...
  - airports, parks, playgrounds and other public grounds...
  - the general location, relocation and improvement of schools...
  - the general location and extent of public utilities...for water, sewerage, light, power, transit and other purposes...
  - the extent and location of public housing projects...
  - programs for the implementation of the plan...
  - proposed priority funding areas...

## Use of this POCD

This Plan of Conservation and Development is an advisory document to the Planning Commission, other boards and commissions, and residents. It is intended to provide a framework for decision-making with regard to conservation and development activities in New Milford over the 10 to 20 years.

While the statutory responsibility to adopt the POCD rests with the Planning Commission, implementation will only occur with the diligent efforts of the residents and officials of the Town of New Milford.

## Past Plans in New Milford

The Town has consistently maintained a Plan of Conservation and Development. The most recent POCD was the 1997 Plan of Conservation and Development. Previous town plans were undertaken in 1959, 1965, 1972 and 1986.

The Town has undertaken other planning efforts including the 1996 *Downtown New Milford Plan* and various economic development studies.

# The POCD Development Process

The process to create this POCD began in late 2007 when the Planning Commission held initial workshops to gather input from boards, commissions and residents. The Commission then formed a POCD Update Committee to oversee the process.

The New Milford Plan of Conservation and Development Update Committee prepared this POCD, with oversight by the Planning Commission and input from residents and other local officials.

Additional public input played a critical role. The Committee held three interactive public workshops to solicit ideas for strategies prior to the creation of Issue Booklets. Then, the Center for Research and Public Policy conducted a professional telephone survey of residents. The Committee held an additional meeting where residents and organizations/interest groups provided their input. In addition, the Committee allowed public input at each of its working meetings.

A Plan of Conservation and Development becomes an official document after a public hearing and adoption by the Planning Commission. A public hearing on adoption [was] held on [date], 2010 and the Plan of Conservation and Development was adopted by the Commission on [date], 2010. The effective date of this Plan of Conservation and Development is [date], 2010.

## Input into this POCD

Gathering input from residents and local officials played an important role while developing this POCD.

**Board/Commission Scoping Meeting** – October, 30, 2007

**Public Scoping Meeting** – December 8, 2007

**Conservation Input Meeting** – October 23, 2008

**Development Input Meeting** – January 22, 2009

**Infrastructure Input Meeting** – February 26, 2009

**Infrastructure Interviews** – February, 2009

**Telephone Survey** – Conducted in May, 2009

**General Public Input Meeting** – June 23, 2009

**Town Council Review & Endorsement** – 65-day period prior to Public Hearing

**Public Hearing** – [date]

Notes:

# CONDITIONS AND TRENDS

# 2

## Overview

New Milford is located in Litchfield County in western Connecticut. The Town is bordered to the north by Kent, to the east by Washington and Roxbury, to the south and east by Bridgewater, to the south by Brookfield and to the west by New Fairfield and Sherman. New Milford is a member of the Housatonic Valley Council of Elected Officials (HVCEO), a regional planning agency comprised of ten municipalities. New Milford and Bridgewater are the only HVCEO communities located in Litchfield County.

Greater Region



## Regional Context

New Milford provides many amenities to neighboring communities and the region. Some of these regional amenities include:

- The New Milford Hospital
- Retail businesses
- Jobs
- Housing that is generally more affordable than in nearby communities
- Candlewood Lake
- Major roadways such as Routes 7 and 202
- Major rivers such as the Housatonic, Aspetuck, and Still Rivers
- State Parks
- Scenic mountains, such as Bear Hill and Mount Tom
- A food supply via local working farms

At the same time, New Milford residents depend upon communities in the HVCEO Region, communities further south and New York state for jobs and rely upon a regional transportation network.

Development patterns in New Milford are often influenced by trends occurring elsewhere in the region. Housing demand, the types of businesses that locate in New Milford and traffic are all influenced by the larger region.

## Historical Highlights

Looking at New Milford's past gives insight into the forces that shaped development patterns. New Milford's natural features and man-made features played a large role in shaping the Town's patterns. These same resources continue to influence development in New Milford (e.g., limited options to cross the Housatonic River). Historic trends also continue to impact New Milford, including the loss of farmland and ever-shifting economies that require continual adaptation.

In 1712, the State General Assembly granted New Milford the privileges of a township. During these early years the first "highways" were laid out, local government formed, villages such as Gaylordsville emerged, and settlers built the first bridges across the Housatonic River.

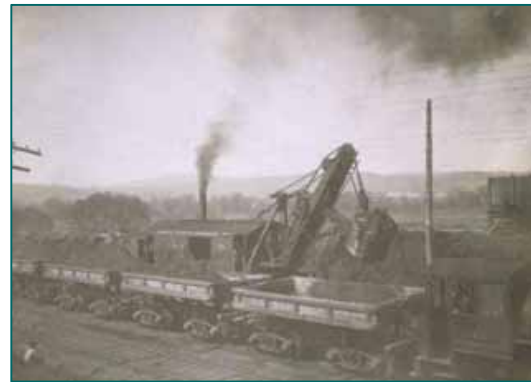
With abundant natural resources, the Town was able to play an important industrial role in the early 1800s. Local industry included marble quarries, iron works, a paper mill and agriculture. Having a means (the River) to ship these products was critical.

While the Housatonic River supported industry, crossing the River was a challenge. Bridges were built downtown and in Gaylordsville. These bridges, along with the opening of a rail line from Bridgeport to New Milford in 1840, helped the Town emerge as a trading center.

By the late 1800s, factories were active in the Downtown and the Town Hall and Town Green were built. Elsewhere, summer homes were being built as New Milford became popular with summer residents. This trend continued into the early 1900s and more and more farmland was converted to summer housing. New Milford then saw a decline in population from 1910 to 1930 as residents left for jobs in other cities. Also in the early 1900s, Downtown was greatly damaged by fire and was rebuilt.



Downtown, c. 1902-1915.



Railroad in New Milford, 1904.



Boardmans Bridge, c. 1913.

Development patterns greatly changed as advancements in communications and electricity enabled people to live throughout the Town. The development of electricity drastically altered New Milford's physical landscape when Connecticut Light and Power constructed the Rocky River hydroelectric project and created Candlewood Lake. The Lake proved to be a popular amenity and further enticed summer visitors.

Roads also shaped New Milford's development patterns. In the 1920s, Route 7 was paved as a two lane road and other state routes were constructed. As early as the 1930s, businesses aimed at meeting the needs of automobile drivers were built along southern Route 7. While Downtown was still a community focal point, Route 7 attracted business development.

By the 1960s, housing development was rapid, agriculture was still declining and the Town faced traffic and sewer capacity issues. The Town had recognized the need to plan for growth and adopted its first town plan in 1959. Then 11 years later, the Town adopted zoning; many development patterns seen today were already established by that time.



Downtown, 1938

## Land Use in New Milford

New Milford is the largest municipality in Connecticut at 64.4 square miles, or approximately 40,900 acres. More than half of all land in New Milford is either developed (e.g., residential, commercial, etc.) or dedicated to a use (e.g., dedicated open space). The remaining 41% of land is vacant, meaning it is possible that it might be developed. For developed and committed land, residential use is the largest category, with just under 10,000 acres.

Open space comprises 24% of all land in New Milford. Though of the 9,500 acres of open space, almost 3,500 acres are not permanently protected and thus classified as unprotected open space (see sidebar).

### Definitions

**Developed Land** - with buildings, structures, or improvements used for a particular economic or social purpose (such as residential or commercial).

**Committed Land** - used for a particular economic or social purpose (including open space).

**Protected Open Space** - land or development rights owned by the Federal government, the State, the Town, land trusts, or conservation organizations intended to remain for open space purposes.

**Unprotected Open Space** - land used for other purposes but provides open space benefits, such as golf courses and water supply lands.

**Vacant Land** - land that is not developed or committed.

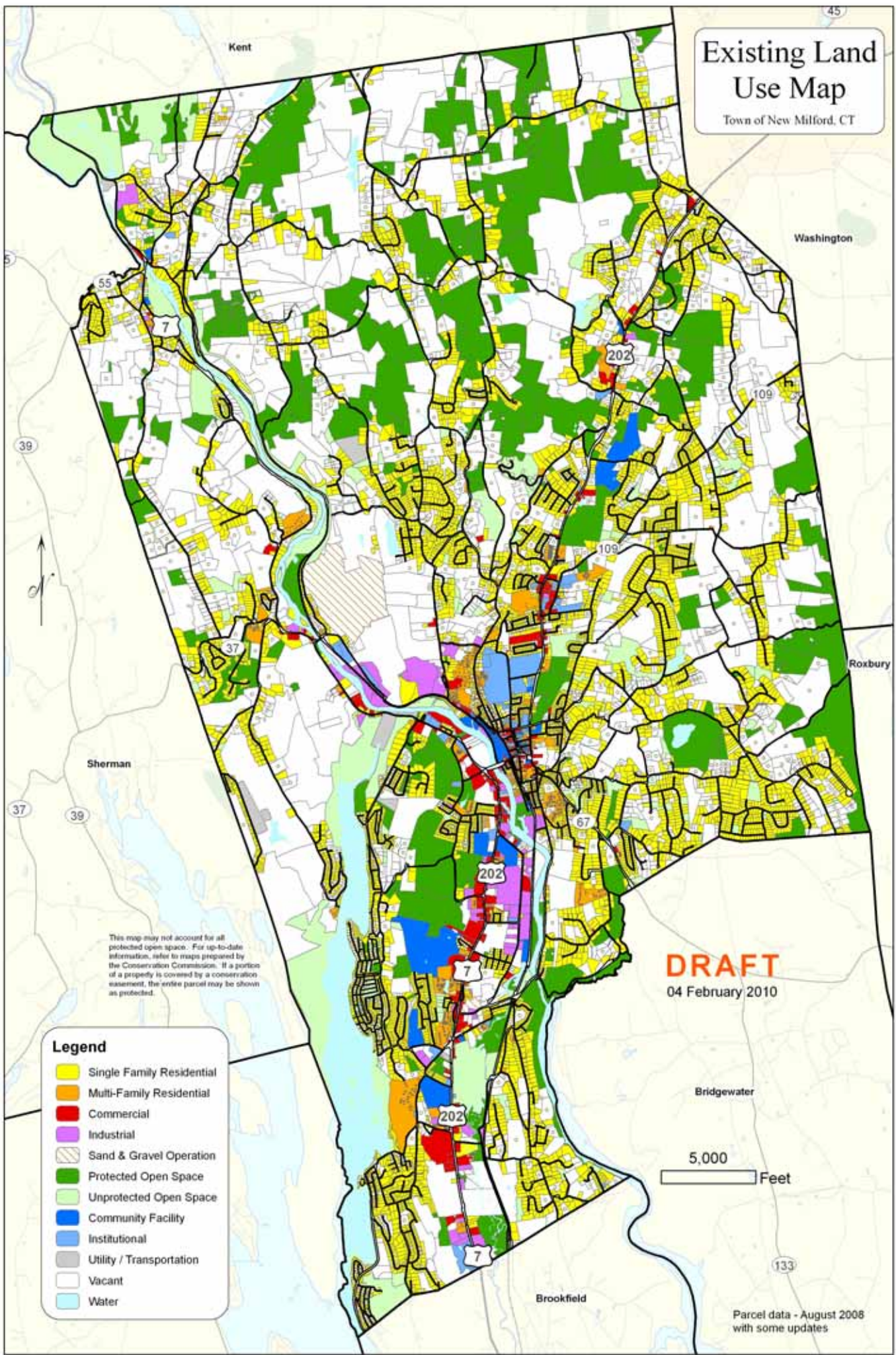
### Land Uses in New Milford\*

Use	Acres	% of Developed & Committed Land	% of Total Land Area
<b>Residential</b>	<b>9,757</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>24%</b>
- Single Family Residential	9,033		
- Multi-Family Residential	724		
<b>Commercial &amp; Industrial</b>	<b>1,355</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>3%</b>
- Commercial	515		
- Industrial	478		
- Extraction	362		
<b>Open Space</b>	<b>9,797</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>24%</b>
- Protected Open Space (likely larger based on recent acquisitions)	6,344		
- Unprotected Open Space	3,453		
<b>Institutional &amp; Community Facility</b>	<b>757</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>2%</b>
- Community Facility	434		
- Institutional	312		
<b>Other</b>	<b>2,358</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>6%</b>
- Right of Way, Transportation, Utility	1,959		
- Water Features	426		
<b>Total Developed &amp; Committed Land</b>	<b>23,856</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>58%</b>
<b>Vacant</b>	<b>16,902</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>41%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>40,953</b>		<b>100%</b>

\*Based upon available data available in August 2008, with limited updates. For up-to-date data on open space, see maps and inventory prepared by the Conservation Commission.

# Existing Land Use Map

Town of New Milford, CT



This map may not account for all protected open space. For up-to-date information, refer to maps prepared by the Conservation Commission. If a portion of a property is covered by a conservation easement, the entire parcel may be shown as protected.

- Legend**
- Single Family Residential
  - Multi-Family Residential
  - Commercial
  - Industrial
  - Sand & Gravel Operation
  - Protected Open Space
  - Unprotected Open Space
  - Community Facility
  - Institutional
  - Utility / Transportation
  - Vacant
  - Water

**DRAFT**  
04 February 2010

5,000 Feet

Parcel data - August 2008  
with some updates

Hold for back of Land Use map

# New Milford's People

## Changes in Population

According to the Connecticut State Data Center (CSDC), an estimated 28,439 people lived in New Milford in 2007.

The Town's population increased by 5% from 2000 to 2007. This is a very low rate of growth compared to the previous four decades (see table). In fact, New Milford's rate of growth from 1970 to 2000 had been much higher than the State's rate, but is now more in line with the State (the State growth rate was 6% from 2000 to 2007).

Projections of future population levels can help a community understand how it may grow if current trends continue and can provide insight into possible demographic changes. Projections prepared by the CSDC and the Connecticut Department of Transportation (ConnDOT) project the Town's population to reach between 34,000 to 35,500 by 2030 (see table). This represents an addition of roughly 8,000 people over the 2007 population estimate, or a 28% increase.

Given the amount of vacant residentially-zoned land in the Town, these projections appear to be reasonable (see build out analysis on p. 26).

New Milford's Population		
	Pop.	Change
1790	3,167	
1800	3,221	2%
1810	3,537	10%
1820	3,830	8%
1830	3,979	4%
1840	3,974	0%
1850	4,508	13%
1860	3,535	-22%
1870	3,586	1%
1880	3,907	9%
1890	3,917	0%
1900	4,804	23%
1910	5,010	4%
1920	4,781	-5%
1930	4,700	-2%
1940	5,559	18%
1950	5,799	4%
1960	8,318	43%
1970	14,601	76%
1980	19,420	33%
1990	23,629	22%
2000	27,121	15%
2007	28,439	5%

Sources: US Census, HVCEO. 2007 Estimate from CT State Data Center.

## Population Projections, New Milford

	Population				# Change		
	2000	2010	2020	2030	2000 to 2010	2010 to 2020	2020 to 2030
CSDC	27,121	30,029	32,835	35,446	+2,895	+2,806	+2,611
ConnDOT		29,020	31,280	34,390	+1,886	+2,260	+3,110

Sources: CT State Data Center and ConnDOT LU-27C, 2008.

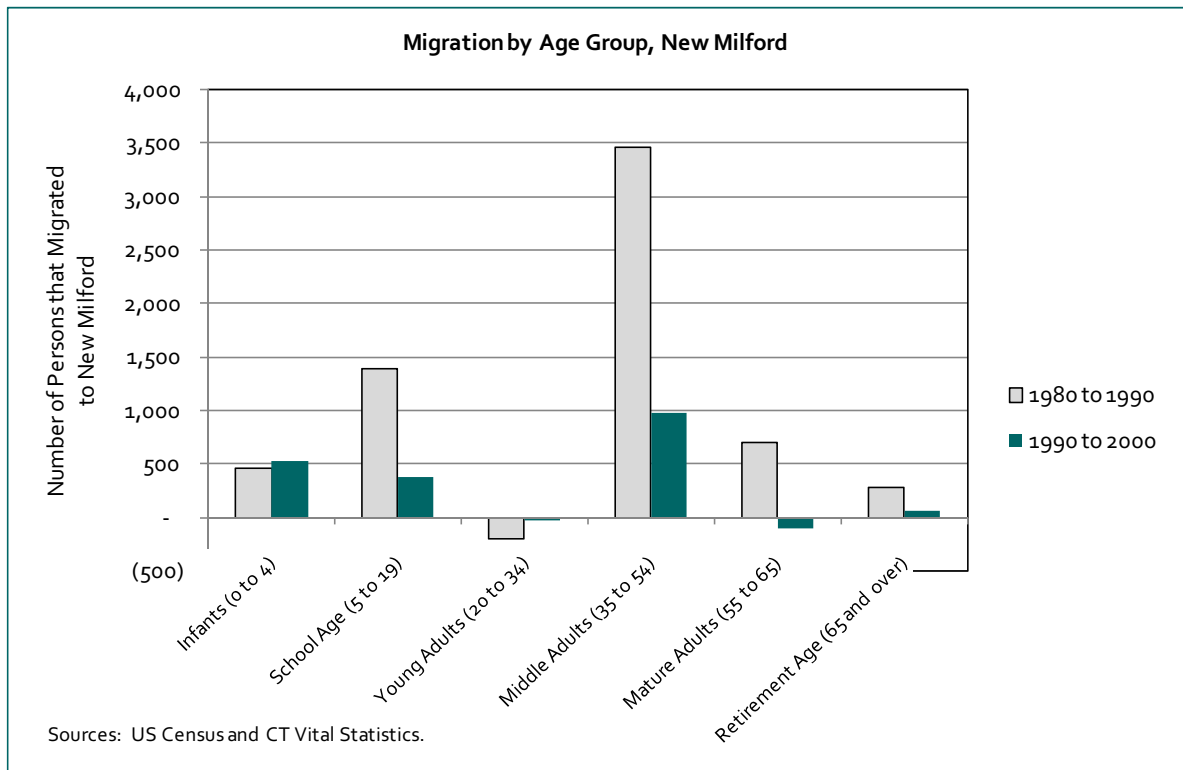
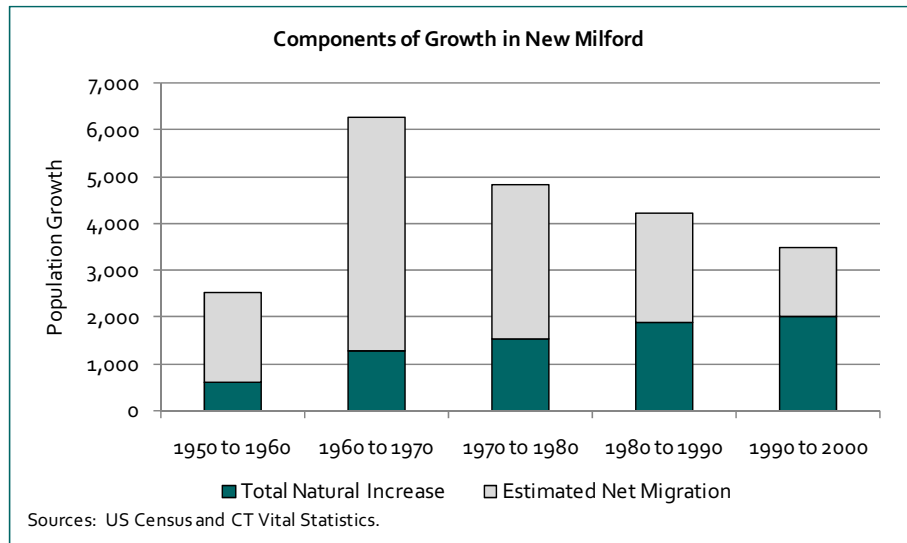
### Components of Population Growth

From 1950 to 1980, in-migration was the main driver of population growth in New Milford. In-migration was especially experienced in the 1960s - 80% of growth during that decade can be attributed to people moving to New Milford.

The influence of migration on population increases began to moderate over the next 30 years and by the 1990s, just over half of new growth was due to natural increase.

An analysis of which age groups have been migrating to New Milford since 1980 reveals that the age 35 to 54 group dominated migration from 1980 to 1990. This migration pattern would likely have driven a demand for "trade up" housing (i.e., larger single family houses) in Town. They also tend to have school-age children. Migration of that age group slowed during the next decade, although this group and children still comprised most migrants.

Like many communities in Connecticut, New Milford is losing its "young adult" population. From 1990 to 2000, the Town also saw a loss of "mature adults", those ages 55 to 65, despite their in-migration in the previous decade. The Town has also seen slight in-migration of those at retirement age; this age group may be drawn to elderly housing, nursing homes and medical services offered in Town.



### Age Composition

While the previous discussion looked at the age composition of migrants to New Milford, the following table looks at the age composition of all residents, how the age composition has changed over time, and the projected age composition (i.e., the proportion of the total population in each age group). Projected changes could mean that New Milford will see less demand for larger single-family houses and a greater need for smaller units that are close to services.

### Additional Demographic Characteristics

Additional characteristics of New Milford's residents, based on 2000 Census data, include:

- In terms of racial composition, 94% of residents are white, 2% are Asian, 1% are two or more races, and 1% are black
- 3% are of Hispanic or Latino origin
- 30% have a bachelors degree or higher
- 8% speak a language other than English at home and 3% speak English less than "very well"

**Changes in New Milford's Age Composition**

Description	Age Range	Needs / Wants	1980 Share	2000 Share	Projected 2020 Share	Future Trend
Infants	0 to 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child care</li> <li>• Pre-school programs</li> </ul>	8%	7%	6%	↓
School Age	5 to 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School facilities</li> <li>• Recreation programs and facilities</li> </ul>	26%	22%	20%	↓
Young Adults	20 to 34	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rental housing, starter homes</li> <li>• Social destinations</li> </ul>	25%	17%	18%	↔
Middle Adults	35 to 54	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Starter homes, trade-up homes</li> <li>• Family programs, school programs</li> </ul>	23%	35%	23%	↓
Mature Adults	55 to 64	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Smaller homes, second homes</li> <li>• Leisure programs and facilities</li> </ul>	7%	9%	16%	↑
Retirement Age	65 +	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lower upkeep, higher service housing</li> <li>• Elderly programs, tax relief</li> </ul>	10%	9%	18%	↑

Sources: US Census and CT State Data Center.

## New Milford's Housing Stock

### Trends

There were 11,367 housing units in New Milford in 2007, according to the Connecticut Economic Resources Center, Inc. (CERC). This increase of 657 housing units from 2000 to 2007 seems to indicate a slowdown in housing growth in New Milford when compared to the previous 40 years. The rate of housing growth had generally outpaced that of the Region over the last 40 years, though since 2000 the rates are similar.

Reflecting state-wide trends, New Milford's household size has been shrinking each decade, dropping to 2.68 persons per household in 2000. This means that New Milford needed more units to house residents in 2000 than over the previous 40 years.

### Housing Characteristics

Overall, New Milford offers a range of housing types that can help meet needs of various age groups. While most of New Milford's housing units are single family units (78%), almost 1,500 housing units (or 13%) are in larger buildings that have five or more units. There are also a number of smaller multi-family housing units (8% of the housing stock). Of all housing units, almost 18% are rental units, according to 2000 census data.

The 2009 HVCEO *Housing Market Assessment* identifies 42 apartment / condominium complexes and one age-restricted development in New Milford. HVCEO also lists three nursing or residential care homes in New Milford, with a total of 218 beds. The Census considers nursing/residential care homes to be "group quarters" and counted 223 people living in group quarters in 2000.

New Milford has attracted a summer population for over 100 years. Census data indicates that 379 vacant housing units are for "occasional use." This represents around 4% of all housing units. These housing units may be important from a fiscal perspective because the owners pay property taxes but generally require fewer town services than units occupied year-round.

### Housing Units in New Milford

	# of Units	Change
1960	3,415	--
1970	5,456	+2,041
1980	7,346	+1,890
1990	9,295	+1,949
2000	10,710	+1,415
2007	11,367	+657

	Town Growth	Region Growth
1960-70	60%	41%
1970-80	35%	36%
1980-90	27%	18%
1990-00	15%	10%
2000-07	6%	7%

Sources: HVCEO and CERC.

### Persons Per Household

	New Milford	Region
1960	3.28	--
1970	3.21	--
1980	2.97	--
1990	2.77	2.75
2000	2.68	2.74

Source: HVCEO.

### Types of Housing, 2006

Units in Structure	% of Units	
	New Milford	Region
1-unit	78%	74%
2-unit	4%	8%
3-4 units	4%	6%
5+ units	13%	12%
Mobile Home	1%	1%

Source: HVCEO Bulletin 135: *Housing Market Assessment*, 2009.

### Housing Prices

New Milford provides modest priced housing for the region's residents. As shown the tables, New Milford's median single family and condominium sales prices were the lowest in the Region in 2006.

Data on sales for single-family units and condominiums in New Milford from 1988 to 2008 shows an upswing in prices from the early 1990s until 2006.

The median sales price for a single family house peaked at \$370,000 in 2006. The peak median price for a condominium was \$184,250, also in 2006.

#### Median Sales Price, Single Family Houses, 2006

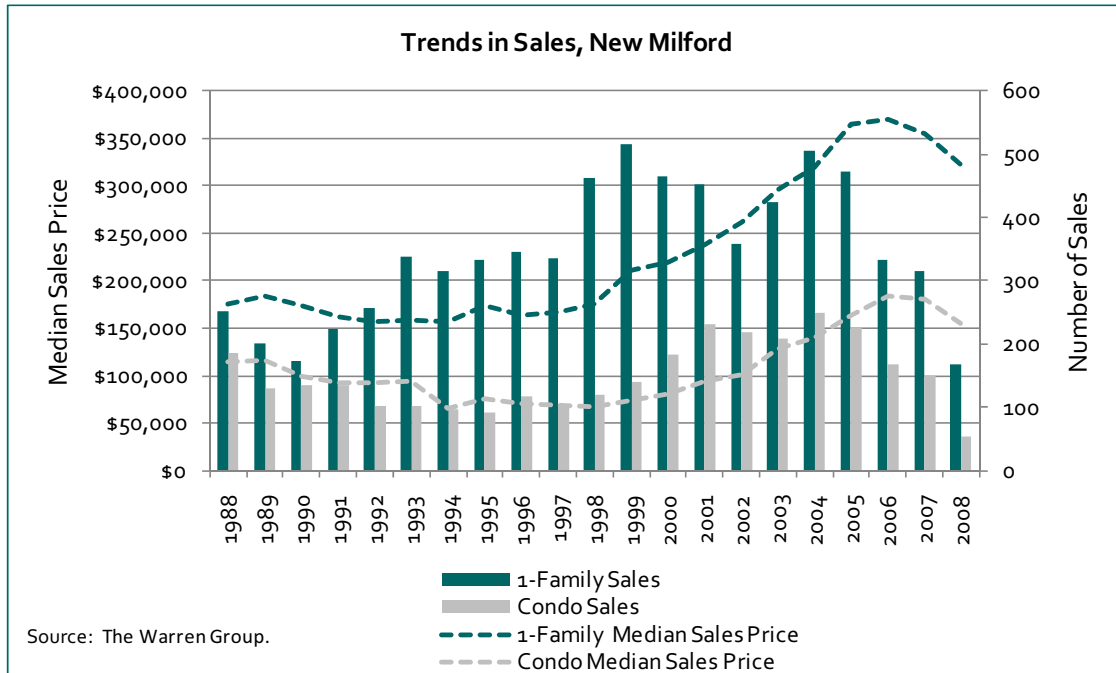
Ridgefield	\$797,500
Redding	\$676,500
Sherman	\$510,000
Bridgewater	\$490,000
Newtown	\$490,000
Brookfield	\$440,000
New Fairfield	\$422,000
Bethel	\$382,444
Danbury	\$373,000
<b>New Milford</b>	<b>\$370,000</b>

Source: HVCEO Bulletin 135: Housing Market Assessment, 2009.

#### Median Sales Price, Condominiums, 2006

Redding	\$675,000
Newtown	\$562,075
Ridgefield	\$413,000
New Fairfield	\$328,000
Bethel	\$268,000
Danbury	\$261,000
Brookfield	\$235,000
<b>New Milford</b>	<b>\$184,250</b>

Source: HVCEO Bulletin 135: Housing Market Assessment, 2009.



## Housing Affordability

“Affordable housing” has many meanings including subsidized or low income housing or “work force housing”. Work force housing generally means housing for lower wage employees, young adults just entering the work force and often municipal employees (those earning 80% to 120% of the median income). Affordable or modest price housing also is important for fixed income seniors who wish to stay in the community when ready to downsize to a smaller home.



When looking at New Milford’s housing stock, there are two ways to analyze affordability. The first is to examine “naturally occurring affordability”. These are housing units that have no resale restrictions placed upon them, but due to location, size, or condition have a lower market value and are therefore more affordable than other units in the Town or Region. However, the affordability of naturally occurring affordable units is not protected – prices can rise beyond the reach of local and regional residents.



The HVCEO *Housing Market Assessment* analyzed what could be considered the natural affordability of the Region’s housing stock. The analysis used a commonly accepted rule of thumb that housing is affordable if no more than 30% of a household’s income is spent on housing costs. According to the report, of the Region’s ten communities, New Milford’s and Danbury’s housing stock provided the most affordable opportunities for median, moderate and low income households (see table).



Houses in New Milford.

### Affordability of Housing Stock

Affordable To:	New Milford			Region
	Affordable Price	# of Homes	% of Homes*	% of Homes
Median Income Households (100% AMI**)	\$325,000	4,641	55%	33%
Moderate Income Households	\$255,000	2,767	33%	16%
Low Income Households	\$151,250	676	8%	4%

\*Percentage based on owner-occupied units.

\*\*AMI: area median income, \$80,192 in 2007.

Source: HVCEO *Bulletin 135: Housing Market Assessment*, 2009.

A second measure of affordability is to examine the number of protected affordable units in a community.

The State, pursuant to CGS 8-30g, considers a unit to be affordable if a dwelling unit is assisted, CHFA-financed or deed restricted (see sidebar for details). According to this definition, New Milford has 249 affordable units, comprising 2.22% percent of the Town’s housing stock. While well-below the State’s 10% goal, this percentage is the third highest in the Region.

These analyses indicate that while New Milford’s housing stock appears to be affordable when comparing income to housing prices, the Town falls far short of having 10% of its housing stock protected as affordable.

The HVCEO *Housing Market Assessment* quantified the number of affordable housing units needed in each community based on population at risk of homelessness due to income and current housing payment levels. The analysis allocated the need across the Region based on a number of factors including the location of jobs and the existing affordable housing stock.

To address those at greatest risk (low or moderate income households that are paying at least 50% of their income for housing expenses), 716 units would be needed in New Milford. To address that group and provide for the next risk level (low or moderate income households paying more than 30% of their income for housing costs), 1,700 affordable housing units would be needed.

### Affordable Housing Definition

In order to qualify as an affordable unit under CGS 8-30g, a dwelling must be:

- assisted housing (funded under a state or federal program);
- CHFA-financed housing (financed under a program for income-qualifying persons or families); or,
- housing that is deed restricted to be affordable to low- or moderate-income persons or families for at least 40 years.

Until 10% of a community’s housing stock is affordable, it is subject to an affordable housing appeals procedure that shifts the burden of proof to the community to show that threats to public health or safety outweigh the need for affordable housing.

### State-Recognized Affordable Housing, 2008

Danbury	10.29%
Bethel	5.02%
<b>New Milford</b>	<b>2.22%*</b>
Ridgefield	2.05%
Newtown	1.98%
Brookfield	1.71%
New Fairfield	0.66%
Bridgewater	0.13%
Sherman	0.06%
Redding	0%

\*As shown in the table on p. 16, a large percentage of housing units in New Milford are “naturally” affordable to low and moderate income households. While most of those units do not meet the State’s requirements for “affordable”, they play a critical role in meeting the Town’s and Region’s housing needs.

Source: DECD 2008.

## New Milford's Economy

This section highlights economic characteristics of New Milford's labor force and jobs in town. It is important to keep in mind the distinction between labor force and jobs:

- **Labor Force** – the labor force is comprised of New Milford residents who work or are seeking employment. They may work in New Milford or elsewhere.
- **Jobs** – These are jobs that are located in New Milford. They may be filled by New Milford's labor force or by people who live elsewhere.

### Labor Force

According to the 2000 Census, roughly 74% of the Town's population age 16 or older is in the labor force. This equals just over 15,000 residents. As discussed later, there are roughly 8,600 jobs located in New Milford. With almost two working residents per job, this means that many residents must depend upon jobs elsewhere for employment.

According to the CT Department of Labor (CTDOL), New Milford's 2008 unemployment rate was 4.5%; which is almost triple the 2000 rate of 1.6%. However, the 2008 rate reflects the current economic downturn and is still lower than the State's rate of 5.7%.

In 2000, the largest number of New Milford residents worked in manufacturing, educational, health and social services, and retail (see table). Compared to the Region and State, New Milford had a slightly higher percentage of its labor force employed in manufacturing and retail trade.

Sectors of Employment, Labor Force, 2000

Industry	New Milford's Labor Force		Region's Labor Force	State's Labor Force
	#	%	%	%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting, mining	84	0.6%	0.3%	0.3%
Construction	1,233	8%	8%	6%
Manufacturing	2,715	18%	17%	15%
Wholesale trade	452	3%	3%	3%
Retail trade	1,954	13%	12%	11%
Transportation, warehousing, utilities	582	4%	3%	4%
Information	544	4%	5%	3%
Finance, insurance, real estate, rental and leasing	1,199	8%	9%	10%
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, waste management services	1,479	10%	13%	10%
Educational, health and social services	2,700	18%	18%	22%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	858	6%	6%	7%
Other services (except public administration)	678	5%	5%	5%
Public administration	343	2%	2%	4%

Sources: 2000 Census and HVCEO.

The majority of New Milford's labor force (73%) works within the HVCEO Region, according to 2000 Census data. This includes just over 5,200 residents who work in New Milford. Almost 500 residents worked at home in 2000.

The remainder of New Milford's labor force commutes to other parts of Connecticut, including the Waterbury and New Haven areas or to New York State. From 1990 to 2000, fewer New Milford residents worked in New Milford and slightly fewer commuted to Bethel. The other destinations, particularly Danbury and Ridgefield, saw increases in the number of New Milford residents commuting there for work.

All of the top ten work destinations, except for Washington and New Milford itself, are south of town. The dependency on jobs to the south, combined with the facts that more New Milford workers were heading to these work destinations in 2000 than in 1990 and that 84% of New Milford residents drive along to work, likely contribute to the Route 7 congestion issues in New Milford and on other stretches of Route 7 to the south.

**Top Work Destinations, New Milford Labor Force, 2000**

<b>Destination</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Change from 1990 to 2000</b>
New Milford	5,236	36%	-424
Danbury	3,121	21%	+495
Brookfield	951	7%	+280
Westchester Co., NY	574	4%	+144
Ridgefield	472	3%	+331
Stamford	337	2%	+183
Bethel	291	2%	-11
Norwalk	283	2%	+79
Newtown	257	2%	+107
Washington	224	2%	+84

Source: HVCEO.

## Jobs in New Milford

In 2007, there were roughly 8,600 jobs in New Milford (see sidebar); the Town lost approximately 500 jobs since 2000. The Town had seen steady increases in jobs from 1970 to 2000, though the increases slowed down each decade.

The retail and healthcare / social services sectors provide the most jobs in New Milford. This is not surprising given the number of retail stores in the Town and the presence of the New Milford Hospital. The local government and manufacturing sectors closely follow, providing roughly 1,100 and 900 jobs respectively.

## Change in Jobs in New Milford

	Jobs	Change
1970	4,281	
1980	7,170	+2,889
1990	8,260	+1,090
2000	9,130	+870
2007	8,625	-505

Source: CT DOL.

## Jobs by Industry, 2007

Industry	New Milford				Danbury Labor Market Area	State
	Establishments	% of Establishments	Annual Average Jobs	% of Jobs	% of Jobs	% of Jobs
<b>Total - All Industries</b>	<b>892</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>8,625</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting	*	*	*	*	0.1%	0.3%
Utilities	3	0.3%	47	1%	0.2%	0.4%
Construction	134	15%	471	5%	5%	4%
Manufacturing	68	8%	939	11%	14%	11%
Wholesale Trade	84	9%	420	5%	4%	4%
Retail Trade	121	14%	1,517	18%	17%	11%
Transportation and Warehousing	6	1%	24	0%	2%	2%
Information	6	1%	26	0%	2%	2%
Finance and Insurance	35	4%	143	2%	4%	7%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	24	3%	61	1%	1%	1%
Professional, Scientific, Technical Services	90	10%	484	6%	4%	5%
Management of companies, enterprises	*	*	*	*	4%	2%
Administrative, Support, Waste Management, Remediation Services	53	6%	433	5%	4%	5%
Educational Services	*		*	*	1%	3%
Health Care and Social Assistance	67	8%	1,558	18%	16%	14%
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation	15	2%	172	2%	1%	1%
Accommodation, Food Services	60	7%	575	7%	7%	7%
Other Services	97	11%	329	4%	3%	3%
Federal Government	3	0.5%	50	1%	1%	1%
State Government	3	0.5%	40	0%	2%	4%
Local/Municipal Government	12	1%	1,144	13%	8%	9%

\*Data not shown individually for confidentiality, but included in total, therefore percentages do not add to 100%.

Source: CTDOL, 2007.

The following table compares wages for jobs in New Milford to the City of Danbury, the Danbury Labor Market Area (LMA) and the State.

The data indicates that wages in New Milford lag in all but four industries (they are in bold). The total average annual wages in New Milford was roughly \$10,000 less than the Danbury LMA and \$17,000 less than Danbury and the State.

**Top 10 Employers in New Milford, 2008**

- Town of New Milford
- New Milford Hospital
- Kimberly Clark Corp.
- Wal-Mart
- Candlewood Valley Care Center
- Canterbury School Inc.
- Stop & Shop
- Medical Instill Technologies
- Big Y Foods
- New Milford Nursing Home

Source: Town Final Official Financial Statement, 2008

**Average Annual Wages, 2007**

For Jobs Located in:

Industry	New Milford	Danbury	Danbury LMA	CT
Total - All Industries	\$41,291	\$58,645	\$53,206	\$58,019
Utilities	<b>\$94,501</b>	*	\$84,595	\$105,462
Construction	\$45,542	\$55,579	\$53,012	\$55,912
Manufacturing	\$54,166	\$110,607	\$91,204	\$69,360
Wholesale Trade	\$57,049	\$84,993	\$75,552	\$79,901
Retail Trade	\$28,014	\$30,167	\$29,574	\$30,154
Transportation and Warehousing	\$28,909	\$60,726	\$47,743	\$46,762
Information	\$47,797	\$61,632	\$60,412	\$68,966
Finance and Insurance	\$45,433	\$125,555	\$109,000	\$146,288
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	\$38,986	\$40,394	\$44,737	\$53,587
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	\$65,279	\$71,478	\$69,495	\$83,372
Administrative & Support & Waste Management, Remediation Services	\$28,543	\$31,465	\$33,363	\$36,536
Health Care and Social Assistance	\$48,190	\$54,682	\$48,954	\$44,339
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation	<b>\$32,686</b>	\$28,492	\$26,937	\$28,153
Accommodation and Food Services	\$15,715	\$19,781	\$19,192	\$17,823
Other Services (except Public Administration)	<b>\$28,642</b>	\$26,821	\$26,405	\$29,222
Federal Government	\$53,770	\$66,285	\$61,799	\$57,929
State Government	<b>\$60,999</b>	\$46,797	\$46,902	\$59,243
Local/Municipal Government	\$40,757	\$46,704	\$45,272	\$47,016

Excludes Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting; Management of Companies and Enterprises; and Educational services because wage data not available for New Milford.

Source: CTDOL, 2007.

Manufacturing played an important role in New Milford’s history. Manufacturing jobs peaked in New Milford in 1980 at just over 2,500 jobs (see table). New Milford began to see a decline in manufacturing jobs a decade before the Danbury Labor Market Area started its decline. CERC recently analyzed the HVCEO Region and reached the following conclusions about manufacturing:

- Manufacturing provides a greater share of jobs in the Region when compared to the State and the U.S.; but,
- The Region’s future prospects in manufacturing are limited.

Manufacturing Jobs		
	New Milford	Danbury LMA
1970	1,769	17,016
1980	2,540	22,820
1990	2,240	24,100
2000	1,640	19,070
2007	1,769	17,016

Source: CT DOL.

CERC categorized remaining job sectors in the Region as follows:

Current Strength

- Retail trade
- Management of companies and enterprises

Emerging Strength

- Utilities
- Wholesale trade
- Educational services
- Arts, entertainment, recreation
- Accommodation and food services
- Other services (excluding public administration)

High Priority Retention Target

- Health care and social assistance

Limited Prospect

- Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting
- Mining
- Construction
- Manufacturing
- Transportation and warehousing
- Information
- Finance and insurance
- Real estate and rental and leasing
- Professional and technical services
- Administrative and waste management

The table below shows the top ten origins of those who work in New Milford (residents of those towns / regions work in New Milford). In 2000, New Milford residents filled the majority of jobs in the Town, though that number decreased from 1990 to 2000.

New Milford employers depend upon residents from nearby communities and New York to fill jobs. The increase in commuters coming from the east could have implications for traffic along Route 202.

Top Origins of Workers in New Milford, 2000			
Origin	#	%	Change from 1990 to 2000
New Milford	5,236	54%	-424
Danbury	771	8%	0
NY State	312	3%	-152
Brookfield	258	3%	-80
Torrington	256	3%	+125
Washington	229	2%	+9
New Fairfield	180	2%	+74
Litchfield	173	2%	+39
Sherman	165	2%	-14
Bethel	159	2%	-19

Source: HVCEO.

# Fiscal Overview

## Revenue

New Milford's revenues totaled \$88 million in Fiscal Year Ending (FYE) 2007. This total represents a steady climb over the previous four years for a total increase of 16%. Both property taxes and "other" revenues increased each year over the past four years. "Other" revenue includes intergovernmental funding, charges for services, licenses, interest income and other sources.

Property taxes comprised 71% to 72% of revenue each of these years. Compared to other communities in the State, 97 municipalities derive a higher percentage of revenues from taxes than New Milford and 71 derive a lower percentage from taxes.

The top 12 taxpayers in New Milford are listed in the sidebar. In total, they comprise just under 6% of the net taxable grand list. Additional tax revenues come from property taxes from other land uses, from motor vehicle taxes and personal property taxes.

Compared to neighboring communities and the City of Danbury, New Milford has a lower per capita revenue than all but two communities.

## Major Taxpayers, 2007 Grand List

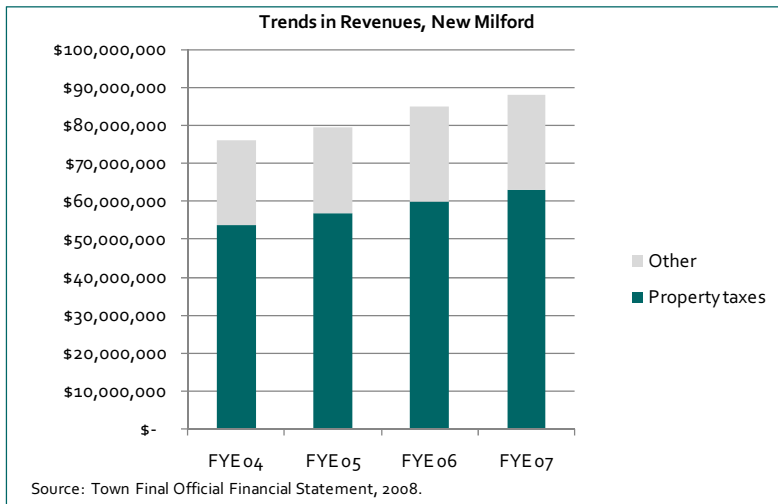
	% of Grand List
Kimberly-Clark	1.97%
CL&P	1.16%
FNM Trust (shopping center)	0.52%
Home Depot	0.42%
First Light	0.30%
1 <sup>st</sup> Treetop (shopping center)	0.24%
Givaudan	0.23%
United Water	0.23%
Fairfield Plaza (shopping center)	0.21%
CLC Real Estate	0.17%
Danbury Road Developers	0.17%
Candlewood New Milford Med. Center	0.14%

Source: Town Final Official Financial Statement, 2008.

## Per Capita Revenue, 2006

Roxbury	\$ 3,560
Bridgewater	\$ 3,359
Kent	\$ 3,285
Washington	\$ 3,165
New Fairfield	\$ 3,056
Brookfield	\$ 3,007
<b>New Milford</b>	<b>\$ 3,004</b>
Sherman	\$ 2,649
Danbury	\$ 2,296

Source: OPM.



### Expenditures

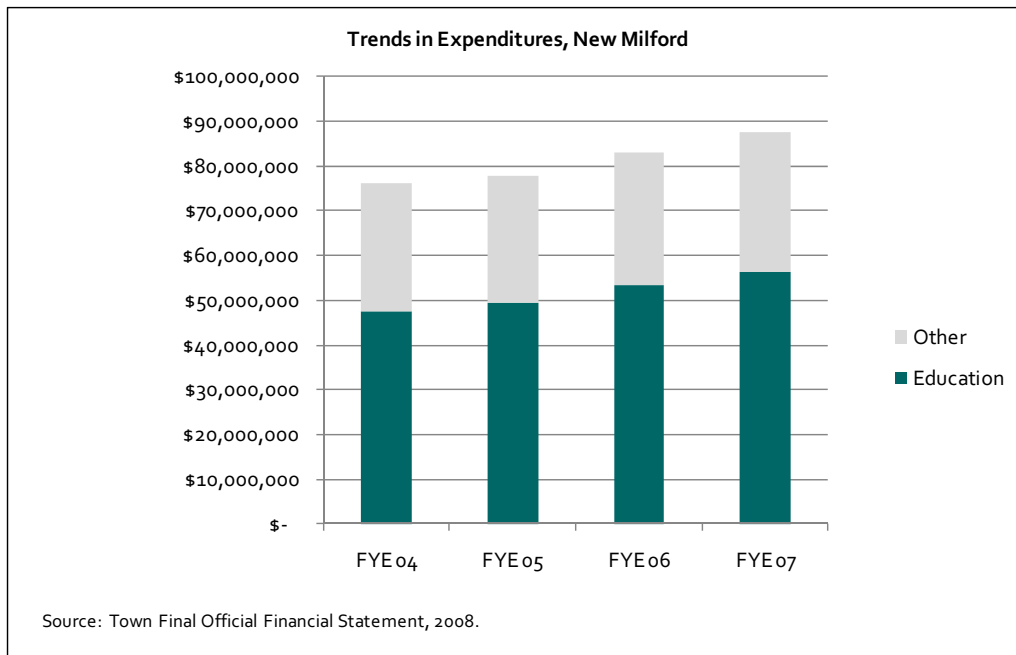
Expenditures increased by 15% the from FYE 04 to FYE 07. Education expenditures increased by 19% over this time frame while expenditures for remaining government functions increased less than half that rate (by 8%).

Compared to neighbors and the City of Danbury, New Milford had the third lowest expenditures per capita, at \$2,944.

### Per Capita Expenditures, 2006

Roxbury	\$3,620
Bridgewater	\$3,298
Washington	\$3,296
Kent	\$3,245
Brookfield	\$3,023
New Fairfield	\$2,985
<b>New Milford</b>	<b>\$2,944</b>
Sherman	\$2,723
Danbury	\$2,241

Source: OPM.



## Zoning

New Milford is divided into a number of zoning districts. There are 12 zones for residential uses and 7 zones for commercial and industrial uses. Just over 35,000 acres, or 85% of New Milford, are zoned for residential uses, with the majority slated for 1- and 2-acre lots. Just over 3,000 acres are zoned for business uses, with industrial zones comprising the largest acreage in that category.

### Zoning in New Milford

Zone	Acres	% of Land Area
<b>Residential</b>	<b>35,010</b>	<b>85%</b>
R-160 Residential (min. lot area 160,000 sq. ft.)	333	
R-80 Residential (min. lot area 80,000 sq. ft.)	16,676	
R-60 Residential (min. lot area 60,000 sq. ft.)	5,895	
R-40 Residential (min. lot area 40,000 sq. ft.)	9,489	
R-20 Residential (min. lot area 20,000 sq. ft.)	1,096	
R-8 Residential (min. lot area 8,000 sq. ft.)	570	
R-5 Residential (min. lot area 5,000 sq. ft.)	33	
Two Family Residential (R-8-2)	25	
Multi-Family Residential	163	
Active Adult Community (AAC)	291	
Cluster Conservation Subdivision (CCSD)	277	
Major Planned Residential Development (MPRDD)	163	
<b>Commercial and Industrial</b>	<b>3,072</b>	<b>8%</b>
Restricted Business (B-1)	591	
General Business (B-2)	254	
Lake Business (B-3)	55	
Business (B-4)	8	
Industrial – Commercial (I / C)	529	
Industrial (I)	1,350	
Restricted Industrial (RI)	284	
<b>Other Zones</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>&lt; 1%</b>
Airport District	115	
Village Center District	40	
Motor Vehicle Wrecking and Junkyard (M-V)	5	
Town Landmark	1	
<b>No Zone ( Right of Way / Water / Other)</b>	<b>2,709</b>	<b>7%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>40,953</b>	

## Residential Build Out

A residential build out analysis was performed to gauge how much new development could occur in New Milford based on current zoning requirements. The analysis indicates possible land use patterns and total growth potential in the Town (see map on page 29).

In general, new development might occur on vacant land and on land that is underdeveloped (e.g., a parcel that has extra acreage).

The analysis assumed the following:

- New housing units would be single-family dwellings, except in multi-family districts.
- Wetlands, steep slopes (25% or greater), water courses, and flood plains would preclude development.
- Permanently protected open space would not be developed.
- Non-conforming vacant lots would be developed if size and configuration might support a house.

The land use analysis indicated that there was just under 17,000 acres of vacant land in New Milford. Of that amount, almost all of it is zoned for residential development. After accounting for environmental constraints and zoning requirements, the analysis indicates that around 5,538 housing could be constructed in New Milford.

While the analysis does account for some level of environmental constraints, the extent of constraints cannot be fully accounted without site inspections. Using GIS, some parcels were examined more carefully to calibrate the analysis. This more detailed analysis indicated that the primary constraint to achieving build out might be the difficulty in providing access to adjacent roads due to steep slopes. This analysis suggested that the build out analysis could be calibrated by reducing build out by 30%. This is the “low” estimate in the table.

The build out analysis includes development on unprotected open space (450 units). It may be the case that the development potential of unprotected open space is low.

The 1997 POCD estimated that an additional 9,861 units could be added to the existing 9,295 units, for a total of 19,156. The current analysis estimates fewer units, likely due to some zoning changes, differences in how environmental constraints were accounted for, and differences in technology available to conduct the analysis. Regardless of these differences, the results of both analyses indicate that there may still be potential for a large amount of residential development in New Milford.

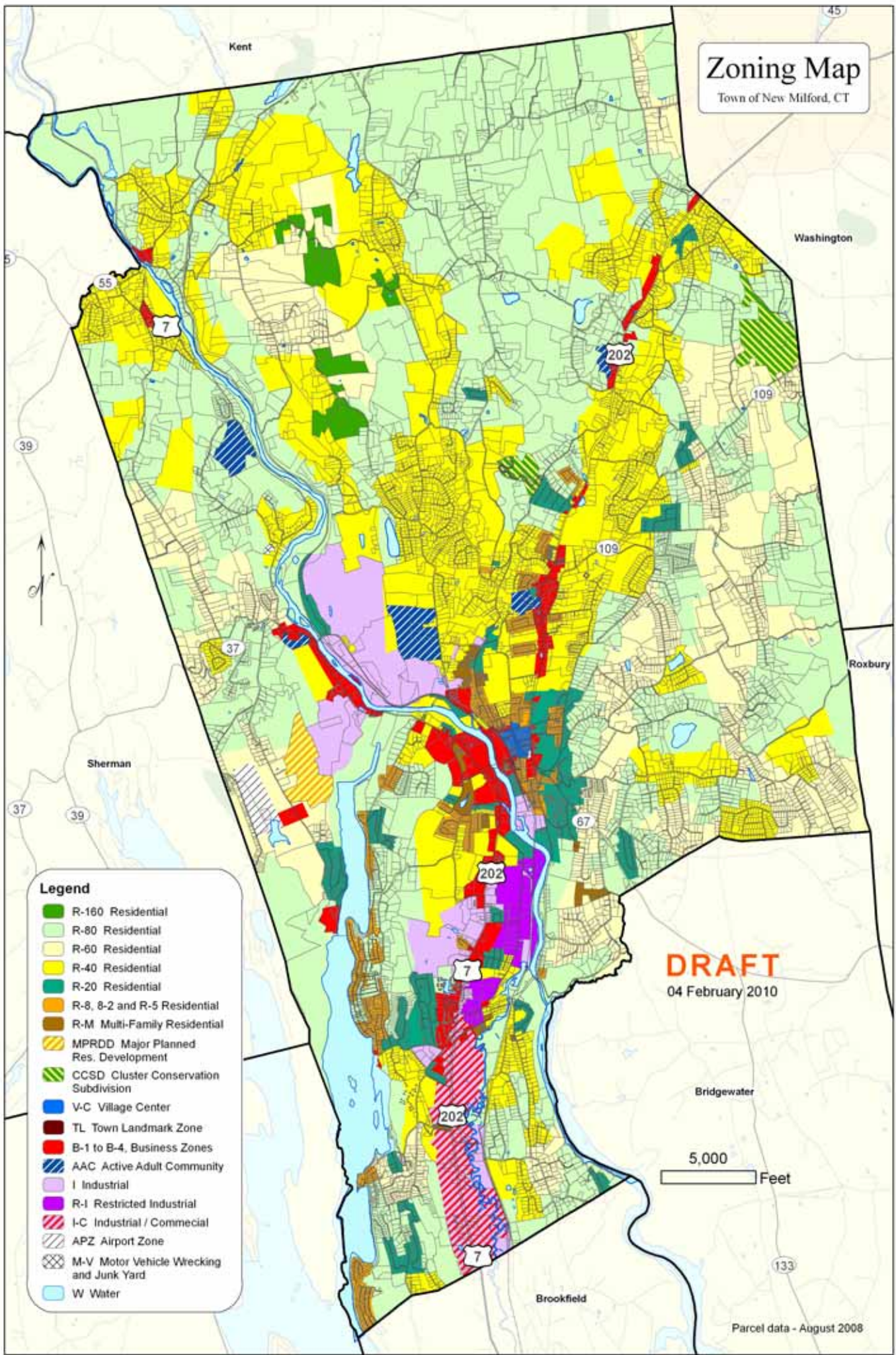
Regardless of the number of potential units, the build out reveals the potential pattern of housing development. There is very little land for residential development near the Town’s core developed areas – near Downtown or along the southern Route 7 corridor. Under current zoning, new housing would be scattered around the Town in areas that are currently characterized by lower densities and around Candlewood Lake.

### Residential Build Out Results

	High	Low
Existing Housing Units (2007)	11,367	11,367
Potential New Units (+/-)	5,538	3,877
<b>Total Units at Build Out</b>	<b>16,905</b>	<b>15,244</b>
Existing Population (2007)	28,439	28,439
New Population (2.68 persons per unit) (+/-)	14,842	10,390
<b>Estimated Population at Build Out (+/-)</b>	<b>43,281</b>	<b>38,829</b>

# Zoning Map

Town of New Milford, CT



- Legend**
- R-160 Residential
  - R-80 Residential
  - R-60 Residential
  - R-40 Residential
  - R-20 Residential
  - R-8, 8-2 and R-5 Residential
  - R-M Multi-Family Residential
  - MPRDD Major Planned Res. Development
  - CCSD Cluster Conservation Subdivision
  - V-C Village Center
  - TL Town Landmark Zone
  - B-1 to B-4, Business Zones
  - AAC Active Adult Community
  - I Industrial
  - R-I Restricted Industrial
  - I-C Industrial / Commercial
  - APZ Airport Zone
  - M-V Motor Vehicle Wecking and Junk Yard
  - W Water

**DRAFT**  
04 February 2010

5,000 Feet

Parcel data - August 2008

Back of Zoning Map

# Potential Buildout - High Scenario

Town of New Milford, CT

Kent

Washington

Sherman

Roxbury

New Fairfield

Brookfield

Bridgewater

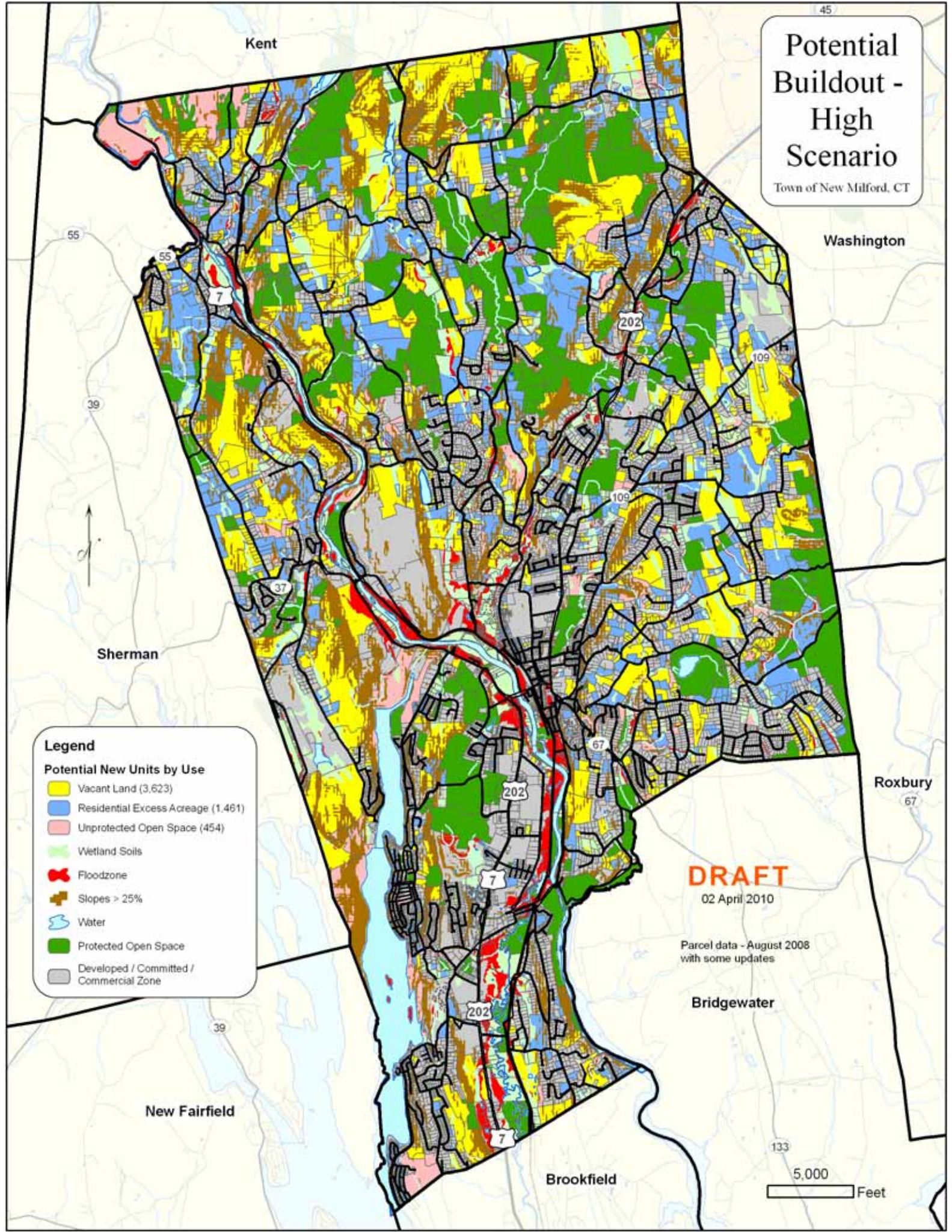
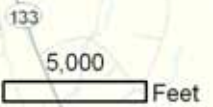
**Legend**

**Potential New Units by Use**

- Vacant Land (3,623)
- Residential Excess Acreage (1,461)
- Unprotected Open Space (454)
- Wetland Soils
- Floodzone
- Slopes > 25%
- Water
- Protected Open Space
- Developed / Committed / Commercial Zone

**DRAFT**  
02 April 2010

Parcel data - August 2008  
with some updates



Notes:

# ISSUES AND THEMES

# 3

## Overview

A POCD should address issues that are important to the community and outline goals. To solicit input, the Town held a number of public workshops, conducted a statistically valid, random sample telephone survey, and invited various community groups to provide its input at a special meeting. Public input provided insight into the issues that residents felt should be addressed in the POCD. Residents also offered possible strategies that the Town could undertake to address these issues.



POCD Workshop Attendees.

## Prominent Themes

Overall themes emerged during this process:

- When implementing the POCD, coordination and cooperation between town boards and commissions and non-profit entities will be critical.
- The distinct character of New Milford should be maintained.
- New Milford has numerous natural assets that should be protected.
- Zoning should protect natural resources and character, match the ability of infrastructure to support development, and guide growth to appropriate locations.
- Working farms should be preserved to protect our character, provide economic development activity and to provide a local food source.
- New Milford is a sub-center that provides, jobs, goods and services to its residents and the residents of other communities in the region. Continued business development is important.
- We should encourage that Downtown remain an activity center and a destination with a mixture of uses. T
- The Downtown could be expanded to the River.
- Reopening the train station Downtown could increase vitality.
- Improving circulation and alleviating congestion downtown are critical.

## Goals

Based up these themes, the POCD is organized into Conservation, Development and Infrastructure Goals. The Goals, intended to guide New Milford over the next 10 to 20 years, are summarized here. Strategies to help achieve these goals are outlined in the following chapters.

**Conservation Goals** (protecting natural and cultural resources and assets):

- Protect natural resources
- Protect water quality and address drainage issues
- Preserve open space and greenways
- Preserve, protect and promote working farms
- Preserve New Milford's character

**Development Goals** (guiding residential and business growth)

- Enhance New Milford's community structure
- Encourage residential growth to areas that can support growth and encourage flexible patterns
- Promote housing options and choices to meet needs
- Encourage business development in appropriate areas and enhance business zones
- Maintain and enhance Downtown New Milford as a hub of civic, business and residential activity

**Infrastructure Goals** (supporting conservation and development patterns):

- Address community facility needs
- Ensure roads meet the needs of the community
- Support transit options
- Improve the viability of walking and bicycling around town
- Address utility needs



Marshland in New Milford.



Medinstill.



Town Hall.