



TOWN OF ORANGE

PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT



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TOWN OF ORANGE, CONNECTICUT PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT

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Prepared on behalf of:

Town of Orange Plan & Zoning Commission

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1 INTRODUCTION, VISION, AND GOALS

INTRODUCTION

The 2025 Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) for Orange, Connecticut is grounded in the mandates of Section 8-23 of the Connecticut General Statutes (CGS), which guide the preparation and adoption of a municipal development plan every ten years. The purpose of a POCD is to establish a shared vision for the future of the community. Based on Orange's existing conditions and resources, the Plan recommends forward-looking strategies and goals to guide the Town over the next decade.

PLANNING PROCESS

Broad community and stakeholder engagement is critical to the development of a POCD that will successfully serve the needs of the community. Two public workshops were hosted at the High Plains Community Center and streamed on Orange Government Access Television (OGAT). The purpose of these meetings was to seek feedback from the broader Orange community on creating a vision for the plan, identifying issues and opportunities, and testing strategies and recommendations. The first workshop focused on introducing the community to the POCD planning process and confirming the community's priorities for the Plan. The second workshop honed in on specific recommendations and strategies for public feedback.



Roundtable Discussions at a Public Workshop

A project webpage was established on the Town of Orange Website, providing updates on engagement opportunities and draft POCD chapters for public access. A survey was launched in January 2025 to learn about community priorities, issues, and opportunities. The survey was posted on the Town website, as well as available in hard copies at key community spaces.

Throughout the process, the project team conducted a series of interviews to gather information from Town department heads, commission members, and staff. The Plan & Zoning Commission met with the project team regularly to track progress and share feedback on interim deliverables.

The final POCD was adopted with an effective date of November 28, 2025 following a public hearing. After its adoption, the Plan enters the implementation phase. Although the POCD is primarily an advisory document, it creates a framework for consistent decision-making townwide over the next decade, including zoning amendments and capital budget items.

2015 PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT

It is critical to understand the planning context that has led Orange to where it is today. The 2015 Orange POCD emphasized the town's community pride in its historic character, open spaces, and public facilities. A selection of key recommendations is summarized below:

- Protect important natural resources (i.e., watercourses, wetlands, sensitive habitats).
- Continue open space preservation efforts and strive to convert private open space into dedicated open space owned by the Town or land trust.
- Promote sustainability through energy conservation, water conservation, waste reduction, and education.
- Promote resiliency by improving hazard mitigation and emergency management plans.
- Encourage farmland preservation and preserve undeveloped land.
- Protect historic resources and increase awareness through signage.
- Protect residential neighborhoods by maintaining the equality, livability, and character of the community.
- Consider ways to provide a diverse housing stock.
- Continue to promote a vibrant economic base and encourage well-planned development in the "economic area."
- Enhance overall pedestrian circulation in business areas.
- Maintain a safe and efficient road system by improving dangerous intersections.
- Consider bicycle usage within existing pavement widths when undertaking roadway projects (including narrowing vehicle lanes if appropriate).
- Strive to create an open space system with public access and trails.
- Improve storm drainage.
- Continue the use of septic systems in most areas of Orange.
- Promote "sewer avoidance" in most areas of Orange.

Chapter 1: Introduction, Vision, and Goals

The 2025 Orange POCD incorporates findings and recommendations from the previous POCD where applicable. The update of this Plan reflects input from Town staff and department/commission heads, the Plan & Zoning Commission, and the broader community.

VISION

The following Vision Statement was developed through insights gathered from the public workshops, online survey, and stakeholder interviews. The vision reflects Orange's priorities and future aspirations as a community. This vision statement serves as the guiding framework for the POCD:

The Town of Orange strives to:

- **Preserve existing neighborhoods.**
- **Enhance environmental and open space preservation.**
- **Support local businesses and commercial areas.**
- **Maintain and improve community infrastructure—including facilities, utilities, and roads.**



Orange Town Hall

HOW THE PLAN IS ORGANIZED

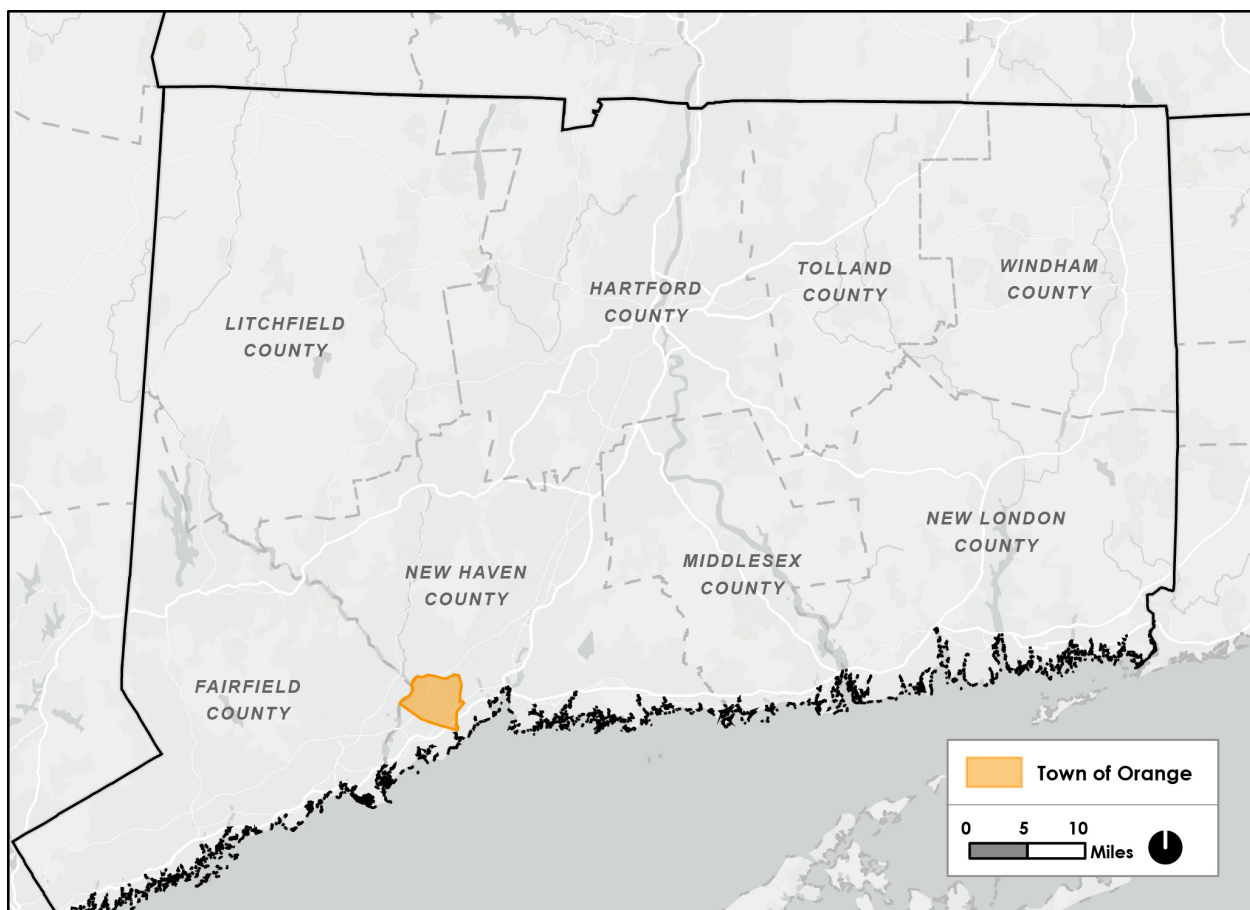
The 2025 Orange POCD is organized into nine chapters. Chapters three through eight each cover a different topic area, and begin with an overview of existing conditions, challenges, and opportunities, followed by recommendations. The final chapter presents a Future Land Use Plan and Implementation Matrix, which provides strategies for implementation of the goals and recommendations established in the Plan.

CONSISTENCY WITH STATE AND REGIONAL PLANS

As stated previously, Section 8-23 of the CGS requires the preparation and adoption of a POCD for each municipality every 10 years. The CGS also requires the Plan to be consistent with both the state and regional POCDs. This is discussed in further detail in Chapter 9: Future Land use and Implementation.

Figure 1: Regional Context of Orange, Connecticut

Source: ESRI, BfJ Planning



Chapter 1: Introduction, Vision, and Goals

The State of Connecticut's Office of Policy and Management (OPM) is responsible for updating the State Conservation & Development Plan on a recurring 5-year cycle as per Section 16a-24 through Section 16a-33 (Chapter 297) of the CGS. The 2025-30 Conservation and Development Policies Plan identifies priorities to be advanced during this planning period.

The Vision for Connecticut's future includes:

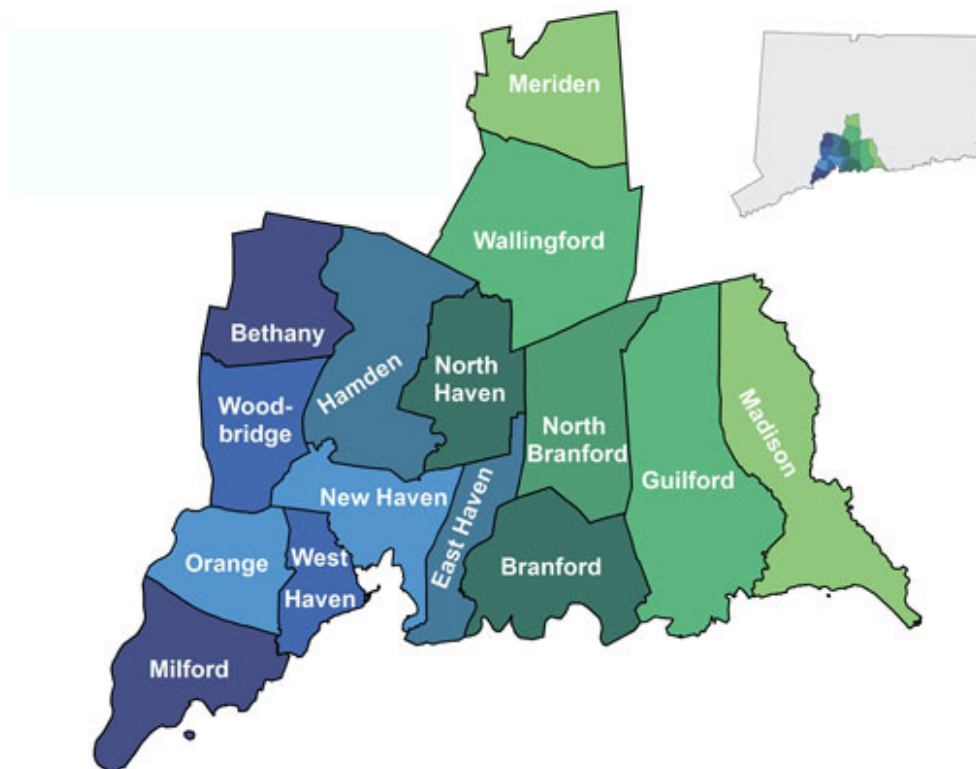
- A Thriving Economy
- Housing for Current and Future Residents
- Stewardship of Resources
- Healthy People and Places
- Connected and Inclusive Communities Plan

SOUTH CENTRAL REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS (SCRCOG)

Orange is one of fifteen municipalities that make up the South Central Regional Council of Governments (SCRCOG). The purpose of SCRCOG is to enable regional cooperation between cities and towns, specifically in relation to transportation, land use and the environment, housing, and municipal services.

Figure 2: South Central Region of Connecticut

Source: South Central Regional Council of Governments



Chapter 1: Introduction, Vision, and Goals

SCRCOG developed the South Central Region: Plan of Conservation and Development 2018-2028 in accordance with Section 8-35a of the CGS. This Plan reflects challenges and opportunities faced by the region in recent years, as well as a vision for the future of South Central Connecticut. The following goals are outlined in the SCRCOG POCD:

- South Central CT seeks to be a vibrant, inclusive and livable region that is attractive to an increasingly diverse population.
- The Region contains a diverse and suitable housing supply that provides housing choice for all incomes and age groups.
- The Region's natural resource systems, water resources, and natural habitats are preserved, protected, and appreciated for their contributions to the environment, economy, and quality of life of current and future generations.
- Drinking and surface water quality is enhanced and maintained by the preservation and protection of wetlands, floodplains, critical watershed lands, and other resources.
- South Central CT's thriving agri-businesses not only provide residents with access to locally grown foods and recreational opportunities, but also contribute to the regional economy.
- The Region is continuously evolving to establish long-term resilience to sea level rise and the impacts of flooding and storm damage.
- Development in the region is focused in existing urban/town/village centers and developed corridors that transportation, employment and utility infrastructure while conserving land areas that are integral for maintaining the region's unique natural resources.
- The Region's transportation network supports regional land use objectives, enhances the economic competitiveness of the region, and maximizes transportation choice for the region's residents.
- South Central CT's rich portfolio of cultural, historical and archaeological resources attract and retain residents and businesses, and contribute to the overall vibrancy of the region.
- South Central CT capitalizes on its locational, transportation, natural, economic and human assets to position itself as a vibrant and attractive region.
- The Region minimizes energy consumption through conservation and environmentally sensitive development practices, and facilitates the use of renewable and reliable energy sources.

2 DEMOGRAPHICS

INTRODUCTION

Past trends and historical information in Orange must be analyzed to plan for its future. The best available data is ordinarily the Decennial Census. However, according to a U.S. Census Bureau representative, some of the 2020 Census data was deemed unreliable partially due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The American Community Survey (ACS) data was published in its place. Additionally, some geographic areas were reclassified in connection with the 2022 ACS. The Town of Orange's "geographic area" determined by the Census was a County Subdivision in 2020, however, after 2021 the ACS classified the "geographic area" as a Census Designated Place (CDP). Therefore, each table in this section cites the source as either the Decennial Census or the ACS.

PRE-EUROPEAN SETTLEMENT

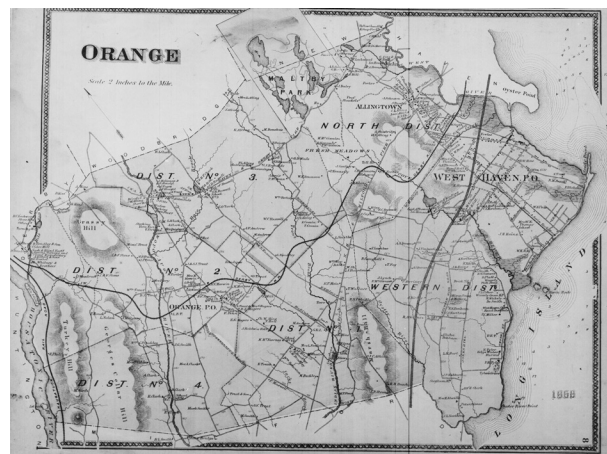
According to the 2015 POCD, human settlements in what is currently the Town of Orange date back about 10,000 years, however, the earliest written history of settlement patterns dates back approximately 400 years. The coastal lands of this area were inhabited by Native Americans of the Paugussett tribe and other Algonquian people.

COLONIZATION

English and Dutch explorers and traders discovered areas around Orange in 1614 and began trading with Native American tribes. Settlement, primarily by Dutch and English migrants, in the area that now includes Orange began after the area was acquired from the Paugussett Tribe in 1639. Due to the arable land, the area grew as an agricultural community. The nearby waters also supported a thriving fishing industry. As described in the 2015 POCD, by 1800 the area then known as Milford included about 2,400 residents. In 1822, the area residents successfully petitioned the Connecticut legislature to establish a separate municipality, the Town of Orange.

Figure 3: Map of Orange, 1868

Source: Map and Geographic Information Center, University of Connecticut



POPULATION GROWTH

Table 1 displays the population of Orange from 1900 to 2020. The significant population decline of 15,084 between 1920 and 1930 was primarily due to the Connecticut legislature's 1921 decision to separate Orange from West Haven. The largest population increase of 5,515, or approximately 182%, from 1950 to 1960 was due to the Baby Boom. The increase of 4,977, or approximately 58%, from 1960 to 1970 reflected the end of the Baby Boom, which lasted from around 1946 to 1964. From 1990 to 2000, the population increased by around 3%. Population increased by 5.5% from 2000 to 2010, then increased by approximately 2% percent in 2020. It is expected that the population will increase at a lower rate in coming decades, as much of the land area has been developed and there is a recent trend of smaller households.

Table 1: Population Growth, Orange, CT, 1900-2020

Source: U. S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 1900-2020

Year	Population	Change	% Change
1900	6,995	2,458	54.2%
1910	11,272	4,277	61.1%
1920	16,614	5,342	47.4%
1930	1,530	-15,084	-90.8%
1940	2,009	479	31.3%
1950	3,032	1,023	50.9%
1960	8,547	5,515	181.9%
1970	13,524	4977	58.2%
1980	13,237	-287	-2.1%
1990	12,830	-407	-3.1%
2000	13,233	403	3.1%
2010	13,956	723	5.5%
2020	14,280	324	2.3%

POPULATION CHANGES

Chart 1 illustrates the age group distribution in Orange for both 2010 and 2020. The proportions of the following age groups remained largely unchanged between these years: under 5 years, 5 to 9 years, and 10 to 14 years. The most significant decline occurred in the 15 to 19-year-old age group, which saw a notable decrease. The second-largest decline was in the 40 to 44-year-old age group. Additionally, approximately one-third of the population in both 2010 and 2020 was 55 years or older, suggesting that many residents have chosen to age in place.

The small proportionate changes in the age groups between 2010 and 2020 resulted in the median age remaining relatively high. It increased from approximately 45 years in 2010 to approximately 47 years in 2020. This is significantly older than the New Haven County median age of approximately 39 years in 2010 and 40 years in 2020 (see Table 2).

Chart 1: Age Group Distribution, Town of Orange CT 2010 & 2020

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census 2020, ACS 2010

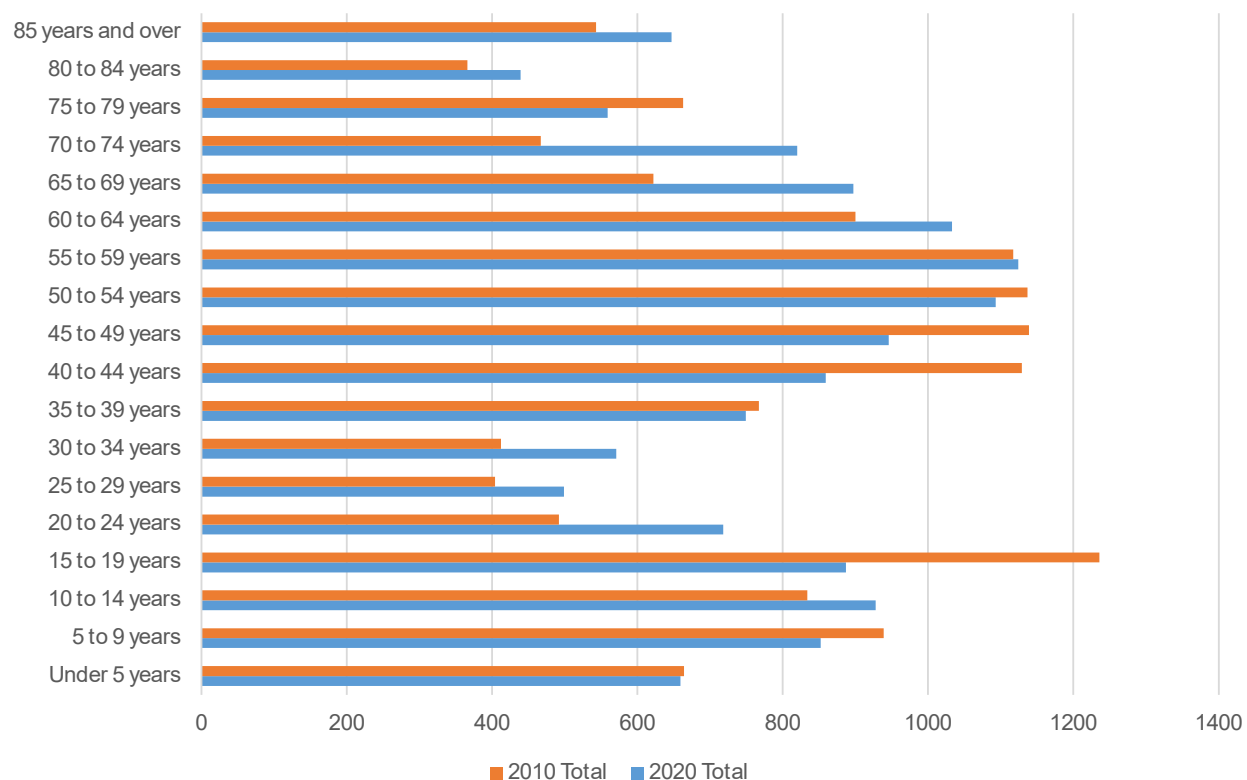


Table 2: Median Age, Town of Orange and New Haven County, CT 2010 & 2020

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census 2020, ACS 2010

Geographic Area	2010 Median Age (Years)	2020 Median Age (Years)
Orange	45.2	47.4
New Haven County	39.2	40.4

RACE AND ETHNICITY

The racial and ethnic background of Orange residents in 2010 and in 2020 is shown in Charts 2 and 3. Orange's population is predominantly White, making up approximately 89% of the population in 2010 and 80% in 2020. Between 2010 and 2020, the percentage of Asian residents increased by approximately 5%, and the percentage of Black or African American residents increased by approximately 2%. The percentage of Hispanic or Latino residents also increased slightly from 3% in 2010 to 5% in 2020 (see Table 3).

Chart 2: Racial and Ethnic Background, Town of Orange, CT, 2010

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census, P9. 2010.

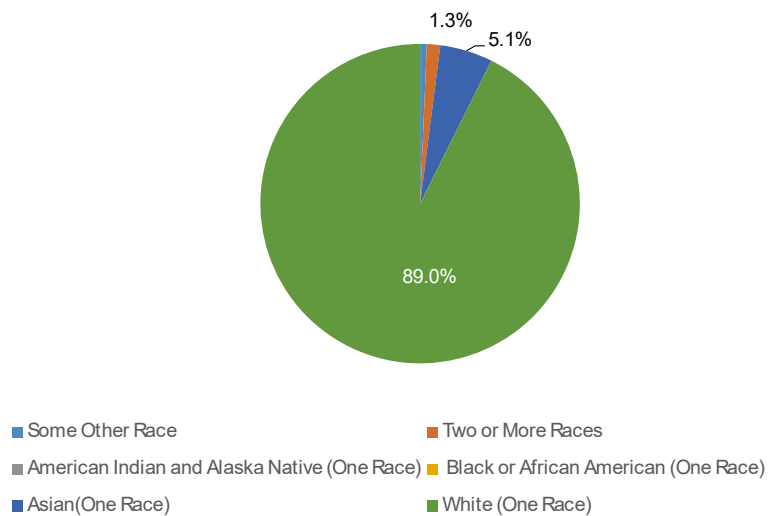


Chart 3: Racial and Ethnic Background, Town of Orange, CT, 2020

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census, P9. 2020.

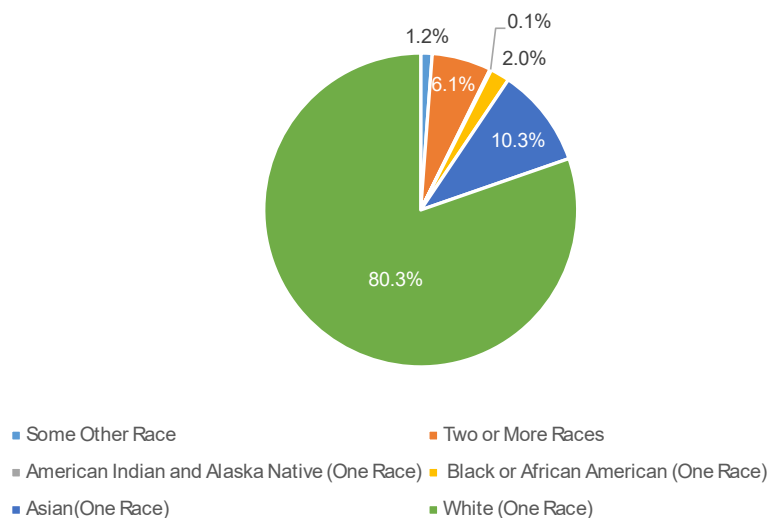


Table 3: Hispanic or Latino Population, Town of Orange, CT 2010 & 2020

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census, P9. 2010, 2020.

	2010 Population	2010 % of Total Population	2020 Population	2020 % of Total Population
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	398	3%	715	5%
Not Hispanic or Latino	13,558	97%	13,565	95%

LANGUAGE SPOKEN AT HOME

Another indicator of the diversity of a community are the languages spoken at home. Table 4 shows languages spoken at home in 2010 and 2020.

The portion of Spanish speaking people decreased by approximately 1% between 2010 and 2020. Other Indo-European languages account for a more significant proportion of the other languages spoken at home, as it includes several languages.

Table 4: Language Spoken at Home, Town of Orange CT, 2010 & 2020

Source: U. S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010 & 2020, Table S1601

Language Spoken at Home (Population 5 years & over)	2010 Total % of Population	2020 Total % of Population
Speak only English	85.9%	84%
Spanish or Spanish Creole	2.6%	1.8%
Other Indo-European	7.6%	7.9%
Asian & Pacific Islander	3.9%	5.2%
Other languages	0%	1%

MOBILITY

Table 5 shows the previous locations of residents who moved to Orange. In 2020, 3.4% of the population over 1 year old moved from elsewhere in New Haven County and 2.7% moved from another state.

Table 5: Mobility, Town of Orange CT, 2010 & 2020

Source: U. S. Census Bureau, Table S0701, ACS, 2020 & 2010

	From Same County		From Other County		From Other State		From Abroad	
	2010	2020	2010	2020	2010	2020	2010	2020
% Total Population 1 year +	3.1%	3.4%	0.2%	0.7%	1.2%	2.7%	0.1%	0.6%

SCHOOL ENROLLMENT

As shown in Table 6, enrollment in Orange Public Schools (kindergarten through sixth grade) remained relatively stable, ranging from 1,169 students in FY 2015-2016 to 1,247 students in FY 2024-2025. The most significant decline occurred between FY 2015-2016 and FY 2016-2017, with a decrease of 28 students. The largest increase took place between FY 2018-2019 and FY 2019-2020, when enrollment rose by 42 students.

Table 6: Town of Orange School Enrollment, Kindergarten-6th Grade

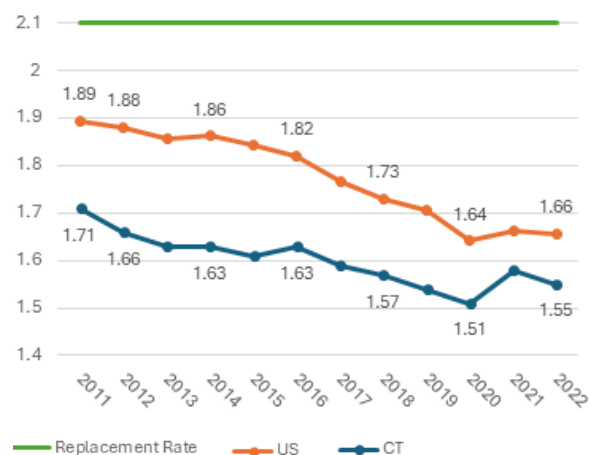
Source: Orange Board of Education

Fiscal Year	Number of Orange Public School Students (K-6)	Change in Number of Students from Previous Year
2015-2016	1,169	
2016-2017	1,141	-28
2017-2018	1,151	10
2018-2019	1,147	-4
2019-2020	1,189	42
2020-2021	1,201	12
2021-2022	1,236	35
2022-2023	1,232	-4
2023-2024	1,242	10
2024-2025	1,247	5

Beyond local trends, it is important to examine national trends as well. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) defines the total fertility rate as the expected number of lifetime births per 1,000 women according to current age-specific birth rates. A total fertility rate of 2.1 would be needed to replace the population over time. The current fertility rate is 1.66 in America and 1.55 in Connecticut (see Chart 4). This is an additional reason that the population of Orange and the student population of the School District is not expected to increase significantly.

Chart 4: Total Fertility Rate Connecticut and the United States (2011-2022)

Source: Center for Disease Control (CDC), Fertility Rates by State, 2014-2022



EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Orange's adult population is well-educated. Charts 5 and 6 show that in 2020, approximately 29% of residents 25 years or older had a Bachelor's Degree and 32% percent had a Graduate or Professional Degree. This increased from 2010, in which approximately 26% of residents 25 years or older had a Bachelor's Degree and 29% percent had a Graduate or Professional Degree.

Chart 5: Educational Attainment, Town of Orange, CT, 2010

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS, Table DP 02.

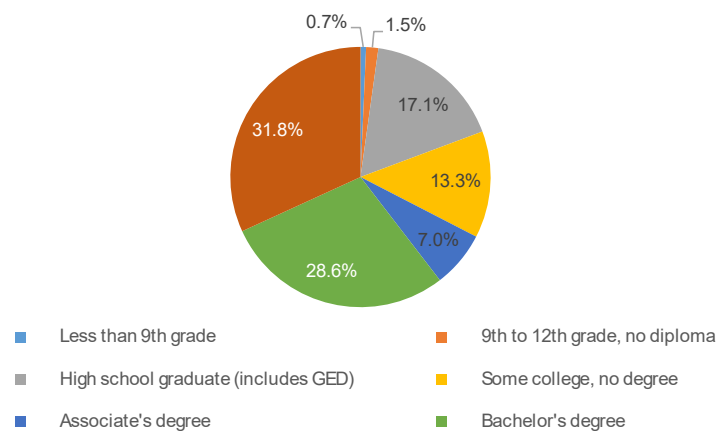
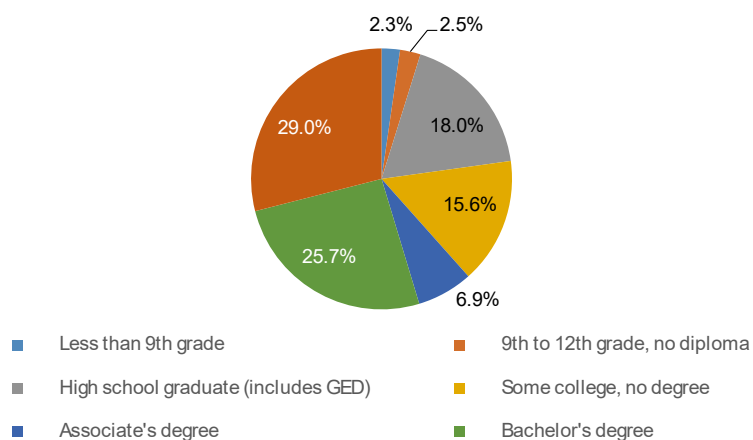


Chart 6: Educational Attainment, Town of Orange, CT, 2020

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS, Table DP 02.



MEDIAN INCOME

The median income for households, families, married-couple families, and non-families is consistently higher in the Town of Orange as compared to New Haven County (see Table 7). Between 2010 and 2020, the median household income in Orange rose from \$102,255 to \$129,489, reflecting a greater increase than New Haven County's median household income, which grew from \$57,056 to \$71,370 over the same period.

Table 7: Median Household Income, Town of Orange and New Haven County, CT, 2010 & 2020

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Table S1901, American Community Survey (ACS) 2020, 2010

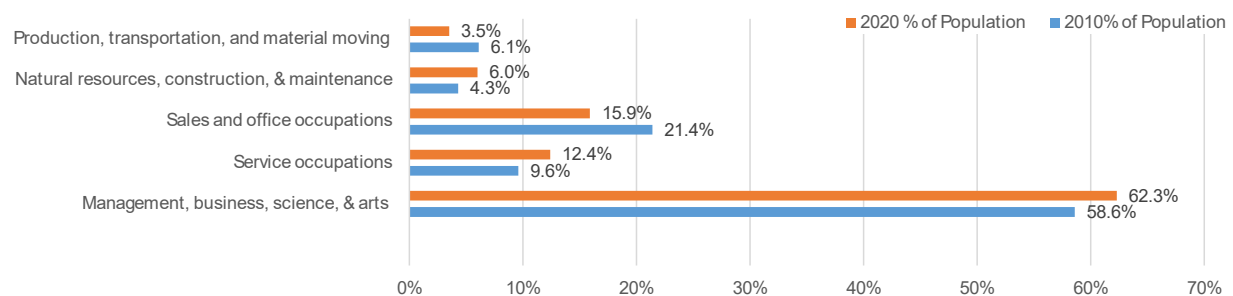
	Household	Family	Married Couple Family	Non-Family
2010 Median Income in Orange, CT (dollars)	\$102,255	\$115,685	\$123,060	\$40,436
2020 Median Income in Orange, CT (dollars)	\$129,489	\$146,417	\$157,480	\$60,750
2010 Median Income in New Haven County, CT (dollars)	\$57,056	\$73,219	\$91,140	\$34,030
2020 Median Income in New Haven County, CT (dollars)	\$71,370	\$92,508	\$113,807	\$42,248

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY

Over half of the Town of Orange's civilian employed population 16 years and over, was employed in the management, business, science, and arts industry in both 2010 and 2020 (see Chart 7). This employment category includes a wide range of skilled professions, including education, finance, law, technology, etc., and grew by over 3% between 2010 and 2020. The second most prevalent employment category in Orange in both 2010 and 2020 was the sales and office occupations sector, encompassing a range of roles in retail, administrative support, and more. Occupations in this category decreased by over 6% between 2010 and 2020. The third most popular category in this timeframe was service occupations, including jobs in food services, personal care, and related fields, having increased by approximately 3% between 2010 and 2020.

Chart 7: Occupation by Industry, Town of Orange, CT, 2010 & 2020

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS, Table DP03, 2010, 2020



3 LAND USE & ZONING

INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses Orange's current land use patterns and existing zoning code. Land use describes what is currently happening on the ground, and zoning is the regulatory tool by which municipalities set regulations to control the land use, height, bulk of buildings, and other dimensional standards for new construction and renovations. The land use and zoning maps included in this chapter are illustrative – official land use and zoning data is available at the Orange Assessor's office and the Plan & Zoning Department, respectively.

LAND USE PATTERNS

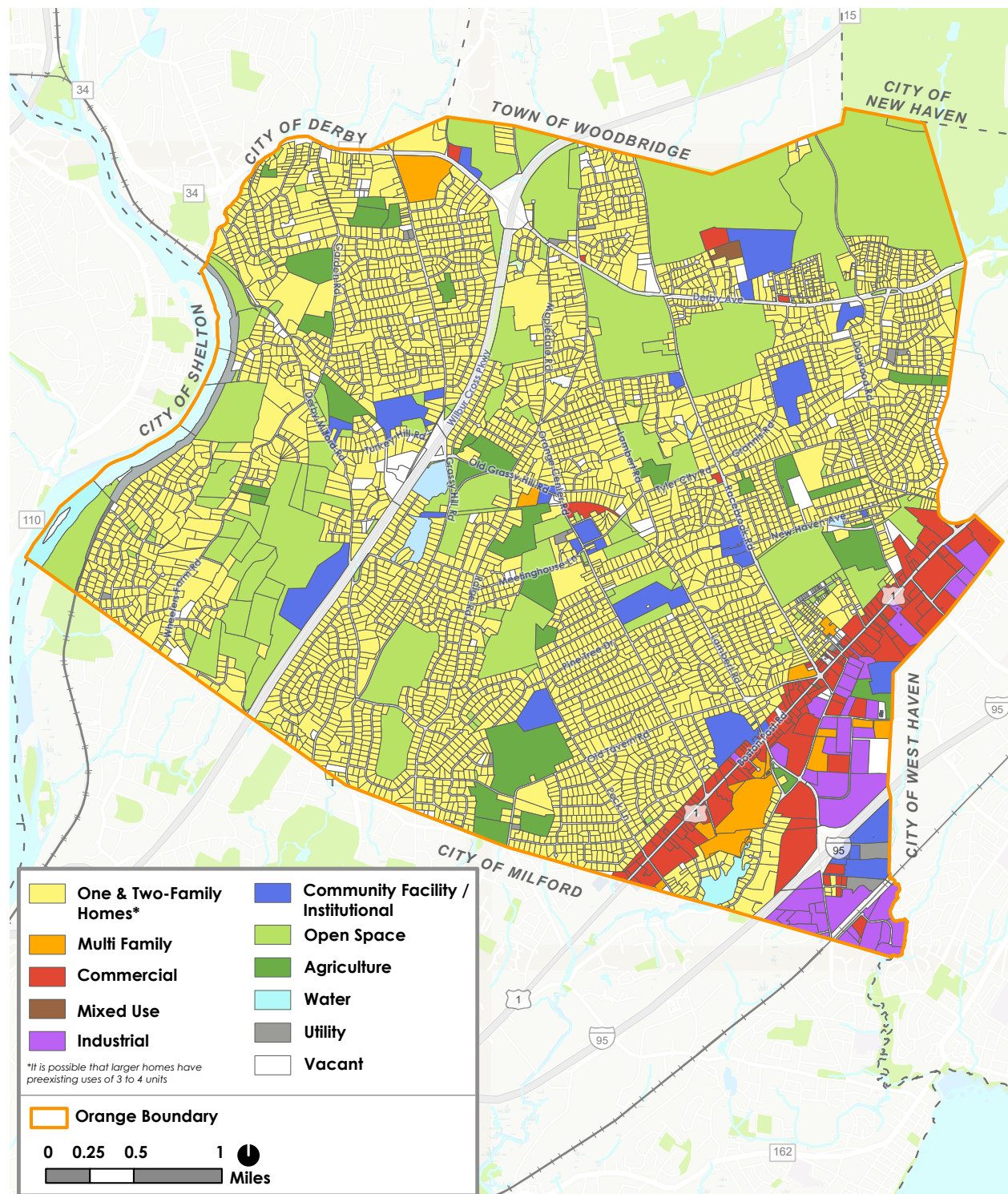
Orange is a suburban community primarily made up of residential neighborhoods accompanied by commercial, light industrial, and community / institutional uses, as shown in Figure 4. The Town contains approximately 11,190 acres with a wide range of land uses that serve residents, employees, and visitors. Land uses in Town are largely bifurcated by Route 1 (Boston Post Road). The area northwest of Boston Post Road features residential, community / institutional, and open space land uses. In contrast, the area along and immediately southeast of Boston Post Road is predominantly characterized by commercial and industrial land uses. The Town's land use pattern is mostly consistent with the one described in the 2015 POCD; approximately two-thirds of land is dedicated to residential use.

One notable land use change is the development of additional multi-family and senior housing, including properties like Firelite Commons, Lascana Homes, Charter Senior Living, and Maplewood at Orange, which have all been developed since the 2015 POCD (See Chapter 4: Housing and Neighborhoods, Figure 6).

Another land use change has been a continued effort by the Town to gradually acquire open spaces and increase this land use category. This is a major land use category in the Town, representing approximately 23% of Orange's land use (a 2% increase from 2015).

Figure 4: Land Use

Source: Esri, South Central Regional Council of Governments (SCRCOG), BfJ Planning



ZONING

The primary law governing land use in Orange is the Zoning Code (Chapter 383). Zoning regulates the use and dimensional regulations for all parcels. As shown in Table 8 and Figure 5, Orange has 12 mapped zoning districts: three residential districts, five business / commercial districts, and four industrial districts. Since the last POCD, major zoning changes include the removal of the Transit Oriented Development (TOD) District from the town's zoning code, and the adoption of the Senior Living District (SLD) and the Assisted Housing District. The TOD district was eliminated, as the Connecticut Department of Transportation decided against building a train station in Orange, opting instead for a new station in the City of West Haven.

Table 8: Summary of Existing Zoning

Source: Town of Orange, 2025

District	Minimum Lot Area	Setbacks			Building Height	Maximum Ground Coverage
		Front	Other	Rear		
Residential (RES)	60,000 square feet	50 feet	25 feet	50 feet	2.5 stories / 35 feet	10%
Senior Living (SLD)	1.5 acres	50 feet	35 feet	35 feet	60 feet	25%
Assisted Housing	2 acres	30 feet	10 feet	25 feet	3 stories / 40 feet	-
Local Shopping (LSC)	25,000 square feet	50 feet	12 feet	50 feet	3 stories / 40 feet	25%
Commercial (C-1)	25,000 square feet	50 feet	12 feet	50 feet	3 stories / 40 feet ^d	25%
Commercial (C-2)	25,000 square feet	50 feet	12 feet	50 feet	3 stories / 40 feet	25%
Light Industrial (L-1)	2 acres	50 feet	35 feet	35 feet	40 feet	40%
Light Industrial (L-2)	2 acres	50 feet	35 feet	35 feet	60 feet	40%
Light Industrial (L-3)	2 acres	50 feet	40 feet	40 feet	40 feet	35%
Light Industrial (L-4)	2 acres	50 feet	35 feet	35 feet	60 feet	40%
Business Office Park (BOP)	8 acres ^a	50 feet ^c	35 feet	35 feet	60 feet	25%
Office Park (OP)	5 acres ^b	50 feet	25 feet	50 feet	4 stories / 60 feet	20%

a Lot area may be reduced to five acres when shown on a subdivision map approved by the Commission and the lot has access on a street other than Marsh Hill Road and Indian River Road.

b Except as otherwise provided in § 383-96.10I.

c A setback of 100 feet shall be provided from the centerline of a major street, including Marsh Hill Road and Indian River Road.

d Except as otherwise provided in § 383-143.9C.

Residence Districts

Orange has three residential districts (Residential (RES), Senior Living (SLD), Assisted Housing). 80% of the Town is zoned RES. Principal permitted uses in this zone include single family detached housing; farms, nurseries and livestock; and two-family dwelling units. Single-family homes on one and a half acre lots (60,000 square feet) create the single largest characteristic of Orange's land development. This is consistent with state planning guidance to keep higher density uses to areas that are sewered. Non-sewered areas rely on septic fields and need reasonable lot sizes so that septic fields can percolate through the soil without leading to contamination.

The SLD, which was adopted in 2018, was created to provide flexible housing arrangements to accommodate the Town's senior population. Located southeast of Boston Post Road, the SLD permits assisted living, memory care assisted living, and senior independent living facilities by special permit. The Assisted Housing District, adopted in 2020, was established to facilitate the development of multifamily apartments that qualify as "assisted housing" in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes § 8-30g(a)(3). The AHD is located along Smith Farm Road and is occupied by Lascana Homes, a 46-unit affordable housing development.



Single-Family Residences



Lascana at Orange
Source: Lascana Homes

Commercial and Industrial Districts

Orange's five commercial districts include Commercial C-1, Commercial C-2, Local Shopping Center (LSC), Business Office Park, and Office Park. Principal permitted uses in the C-1 and C-2 districts include retail, business and professional offices, restaurants, hotels, and places of worship. The C-1 and C-2 districts are characterized by the big box retail stores and commercial centers along Boston Post Road. The two LSC districts are focused on local retail - the LSC along Orange Center Road is home to the Orange Market, while the second LSC district encompasses the Firelite Shopping Center and the Orange Commons Shopping Center on Boston Post Road. The Business Office Park District's principal permitted uses include business and professional offices, utility substations, and government facilities. The Office Park District supports business and professional offices, in addition to laboratories, printing and publishing, data centers, childcare facilities, and convalescent care; the Office Park District encompasses the University of New Haven Orange Campus.

The Town's four industrial districts are Light Industrial #1 (LI-1), Light Industrial #2 (LI-2), Light Industrial #3 (LI-3), and Light Industrial #4 (LI-4). All four districts are located southeast of Boston Post Road. LI-1's principal permitted uses include manufacturing, research laboratories, office buildings, warehousing, freight businesses, motor vehicle repair, and utility substations. LI-2 is Orange's light industrial district. It permits a mix of industrial uses, with commercial uses permitted as special uses subject to approval. LI-3 provides a transition between commercial and light industrial uses. It permits some light industrial uses and office buildings and allows commercial uses and hotels as special uses. LI-4 supports university activity in town; principal permitted uses include university facilities, medical offices and health care facilities, research laboratories, and data centers. This district is primarily occupied by Yale University facilities, including the Yale School of Nursing.



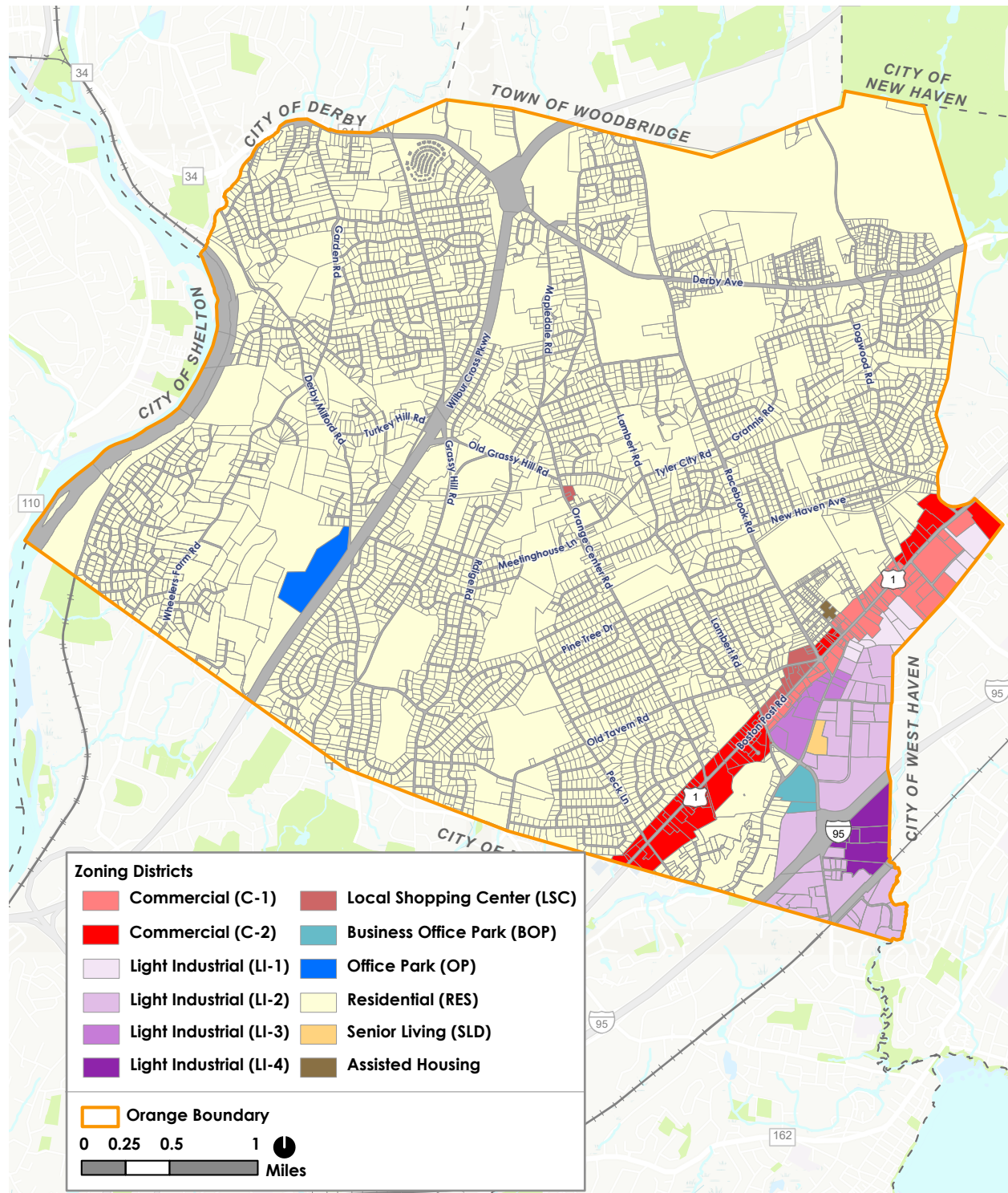
Firelite Commons



Yale School of Nursing
Source: Yale University

Figure 5: Existing Zoning

Source: Esri, Town of Orange, BFJ Planning



RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 Maintain existing physical characteristics.

- 3.1.1 Preserve existing single-family neighborhoods.
- 3.1.2 Encourage mixed-use development, where appropriate.
- 3.1.3 Maintain Orange Center's physical characteristics as a rural hamlet.

3.2 Continue to preserve and expand open space.

- 3.2.1 Encourage policies to help Orange continue to grow and maintain its open space.

3.3 Route 1 is an important commercial corridor.

- 3.3.1 Promote mixed-use development on Route 1.
- 3.3.2 Implement stronger site design and landscape controls along Route 1 / Boston Post Road.
- 3.3.3 Explore strategies to reduce curb cuts and enhance road safety along Route 1, especially with sidewalks.

3.4 Land use regulations need regular review and updates to ensure consistency.

- 3.4.1 Regularly review definitions and regulations.
- 3.4.2 Examine the zoning code and identify potential revisions that would enable homeowners to make minor property upgrades more easily; examine potential regulatory changes to address common nonconforming parcels.
- 3.4.3 Review performance, noise, and lighting standards, particularly in the core commercial areas.

4 HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOODS

INTRODUCTION

This chapter considers the existing characteristics of Orange’s housing and neighborhoods, including affordability and elderly housing, and makes recommendations on how to balance the preservation of existing residential neighborhoods while addressing the community’s evolving housing needs.

The primary datasets used in the analysis are the 2021 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates and the 2010 ACS 5-Year Estimates. Typically, decennial census data is more reliable than ACS data due to its larger sample size and would be utilized for this report. However, the quality of the 2020 Decennial Census data was affected by the pandemic, so the 2021 ACS data is considered a more reliable source for the housing trends analyzed in this chapter.¹

Almost all of Orange is zoned as single-family residential and relies on septic. Sufficient land area is necessary for septic to work in much of the town. Figure 6 illustrates the areas zoned for single-family uses as well as existing multifamily and senior housing developments. The multifamily developments shown in Figure 6 are primarily located within sewered areas. This aligns with the State Plan for Connecticut, which encourages municipalities to “redevelop and revitalize regional centers and areas with existing or currently planned physical infrastructure.” The impact of sewer infrastructure is described in further detail in Chapter 8: Infrastructure.

Additionally, in 2020, the State of Connecticut published the 2020-24 Consolidated Plan for Housing and Community Development in accordance with Section 8-37t of the Connecticut General Statutes and 24 CFR Part 91. The following overarching goals are established in the 2020-24 Consolidated Plan:

- Work to ensure decent housing is available to all.
- Work to ensure that all of the state’s residents live in a suitable living environment.
- Work to ensure that all of the state’s residents have access to economic opportunities.

¹ It should be considered that 2021 data may not include some of the Town’s most recent residential developments.

Figure 6: Types of Housing

Source: Esri, Town of Orange, BFJ Planning

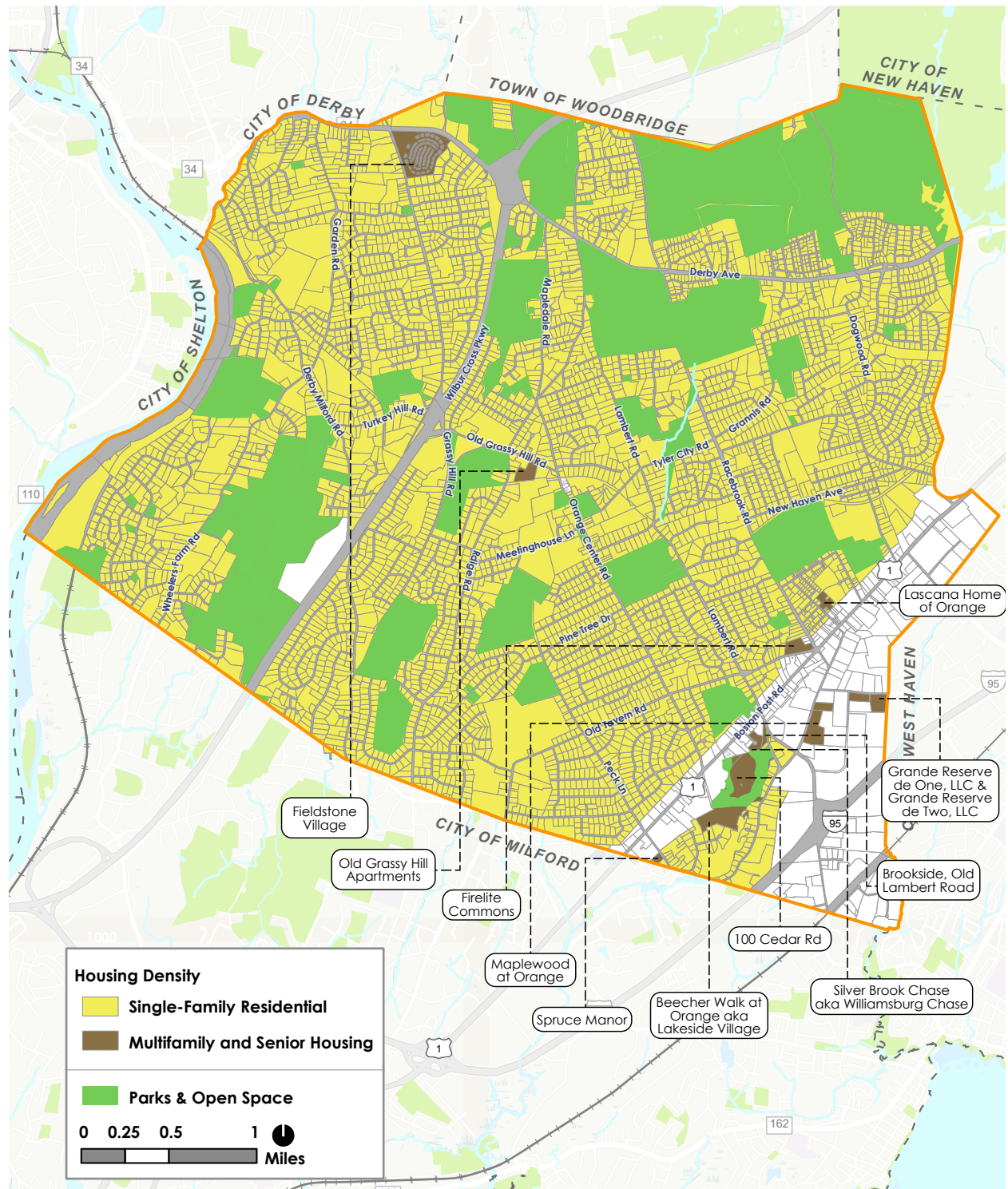
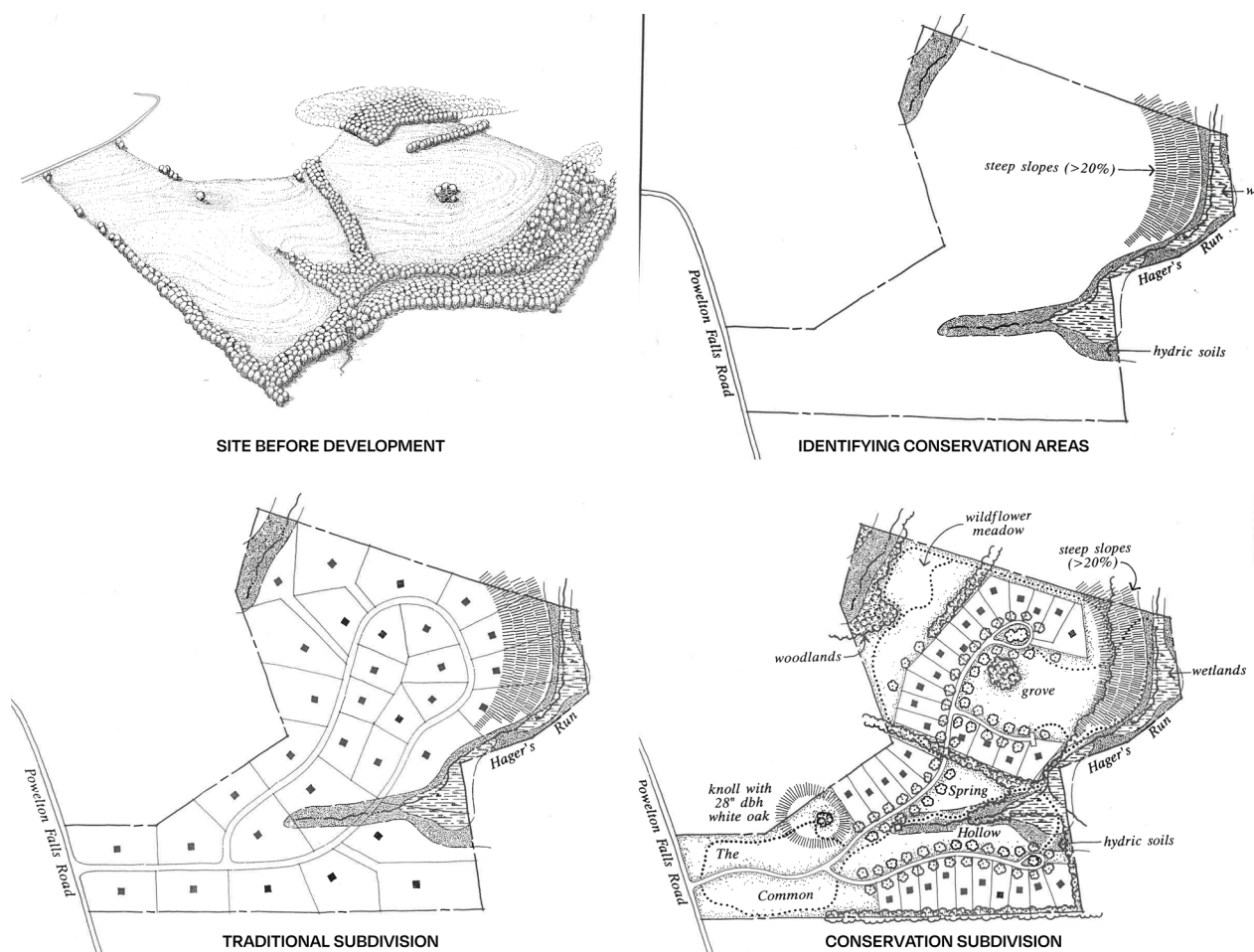


Figure 7 illustrates an example of a conservation or “cluster” development. The Town of Orange could encourage conservation subdivisions as a strategy to maintain existing housing density while preserving open space. The “traditional subdivision” shown in Figure 7 consists of larger lots, leaving little land for conservation. A conservation subdivision, however, reduces lot sizes to maximize preservation of open space. Conservation subdivisions do not increase the overall density of a subdivision but rather use smaller lot sizes to allow for larger conservation areas. One example in Orange is the RES zone. This zone requires 60,000 square feet of land area per single-family home. In a conservation subdivision, the same number of homes could be built on 40,000 square foot lots, saving a third of the land for open space.

Figure 7: Traditional versus Conservation Subdivisions

Source: Rural by Design, Randall Arendt

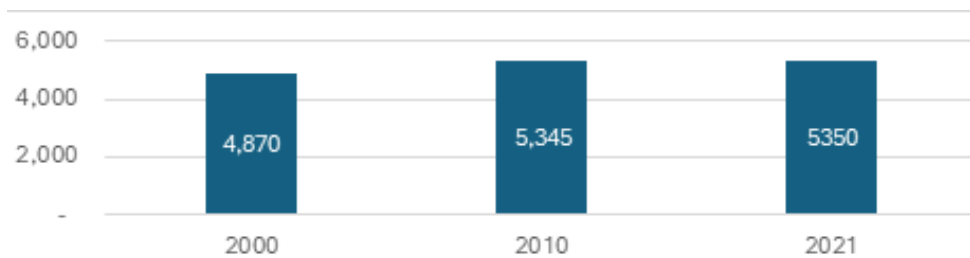


HOUSING STOCK AND DEVELOPMENT

Orange is home to 5,350 housing units. The Town's total housing stock grew by 9.86% over the last 20 years (2000 – 2021). However, growth between 2010 and 2021 was just 0.09%, suggesting that new housing construction has slowed in recent years.

Chart 8: Total Housing Units, 2000 – 2021

Source: US Census Bureau, Decennial Census (2000 and 2010), 2021 ACS 5-Year Estimates



Of the Town's 5,350 housing units, 3.4% are vacant – a 2.5% drop since 2010, similar to the Countywide decrease of 2.2% (see Chart 9). Most vacant units are rentals, with a rental vacancy rate of 8%, significantly higher than the homeowner vacancy rate of 0.3% (see Chart 10). This low homeowner vacancy rate is indicative of a competitive housing market.

Chart 9: Housing Vacancy, New Haven County, Orange, 2010 – 2021

Source: US Census Bureau, 2010 and 2021 ACS 5-Year Estimates

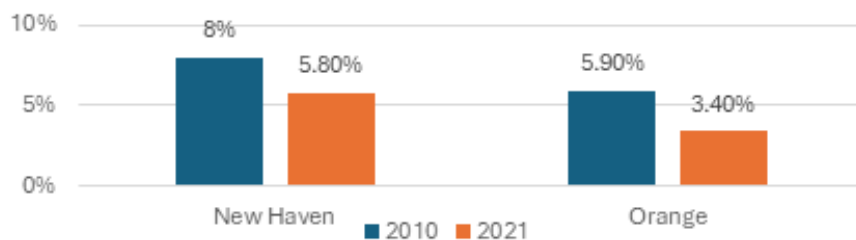
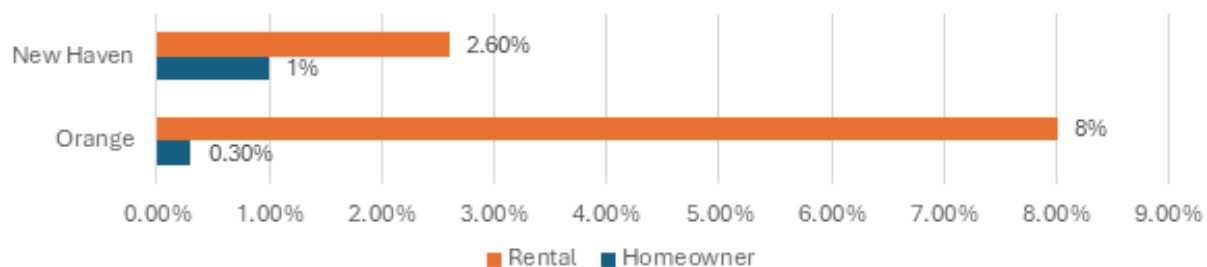


Chart 10: Housing Vacancy by Tenure, New Haven County, Orange, 2021

Source: US Census Bureau, 2021 ACS 5-Year Estimates

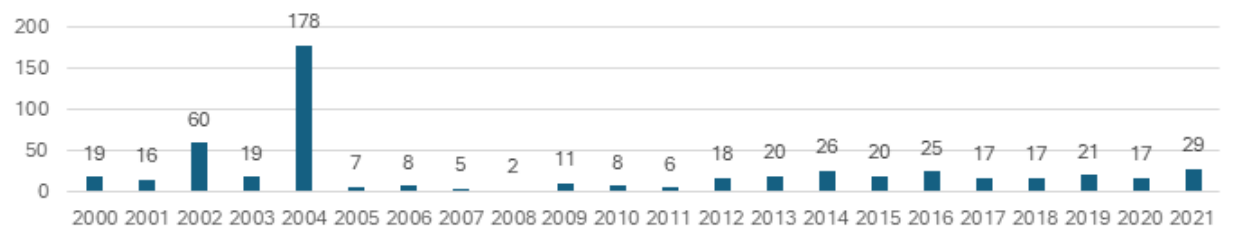


Chapter 4: Housing and Neighborhoods

Between 2000 and 2021, Orange issued 549 housing permits for single-family, two-family, and multi-family units, with a median of 17.5 permits per year. One notable exception is 2004, where the Town issued 178 building permits. This spike was primarily due to the approval of a permit for Grand Reserve Orange, a 168-unit luxury multi-family apartment community on Prindle Hill Road.

Chart 11: Housing Permit Data, 1990 - 2023

Source: CT DECD (Data in years prior to 2018 is Census data. 2018 to present is DECD survey data.)



Grand Reserve Orange Apartments

Source: Grand Reserve Orange

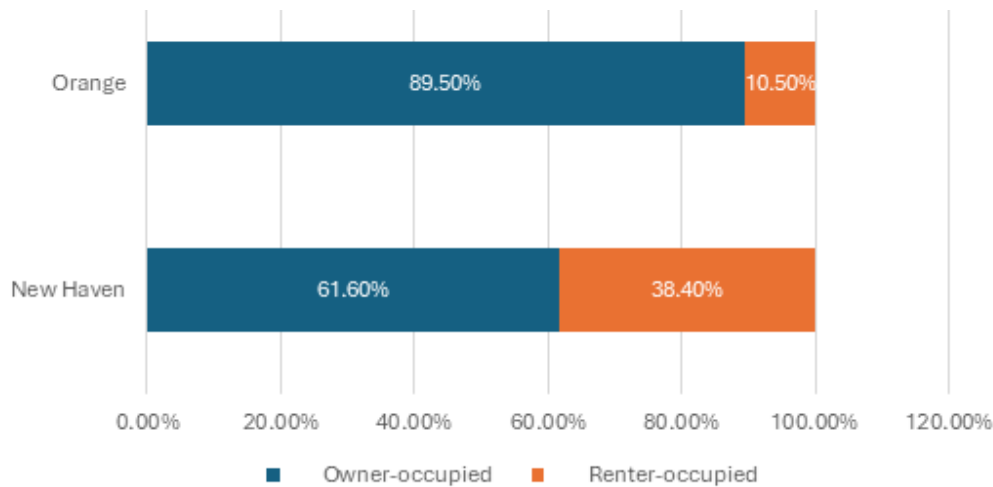
Chapter 4: Housing and Neighborhoods

HOUSING TYPES

Most of Orange's housing units are owner-occupied (89.5%). Renter occupancy in Orange (10.5%) is much less than that of New Haven County (38.4%), indicative of Orange's suburban character.

Chart 12: Housing Occupancy by Tenure, New Haven, Orange, 2021

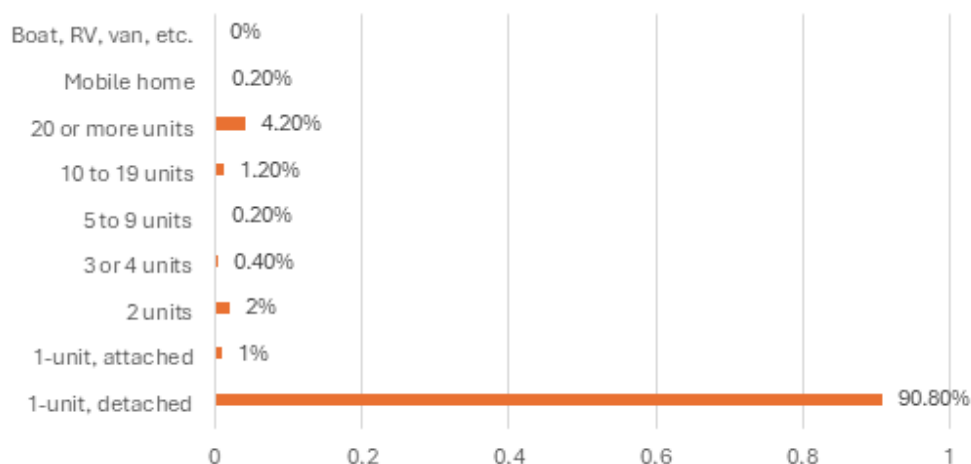
Source: US Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 2021 ACS 5-Year Estimates



Most Orange residents live in detached, single-family homes (90.8%) (see Chart 13). Those in housing structures other than single-family homes tend to live in apartment buildings.

Chart 13: Orange Housing Stock, 2021

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2021 5-Year Estimates

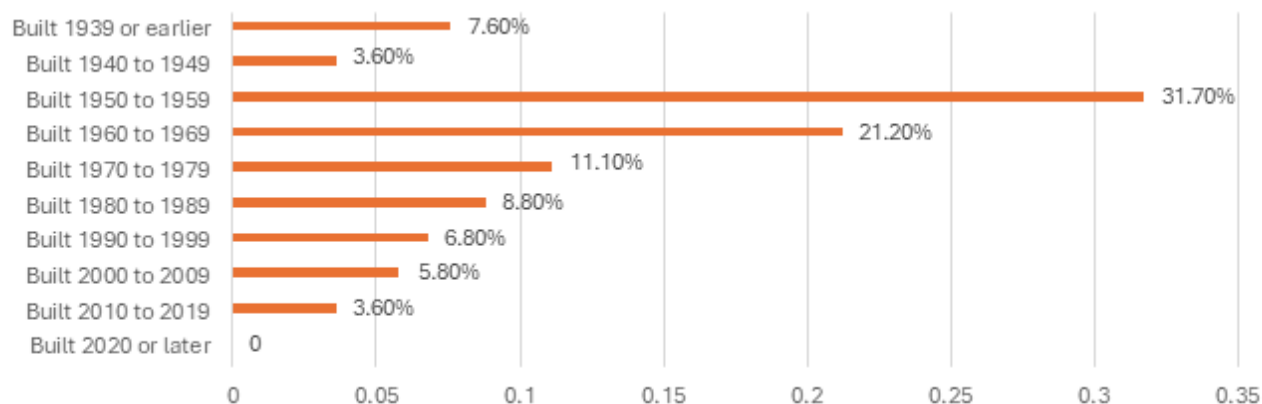


Chapter 4: Housing and Neighborhoods

Approximately half of Orange’s housing stock was built between 1950 – 1969. This growth in housing construction is consistent with the national “Baby Boom” trend, which saw high birth rates from 1946 – 1964. Housing units built between 2000 and 2021 represent only 9.4% of the Town’s total housing stock.

Chart 14: Orange Year Structure Built, 2021

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2021 5-Year Estimates



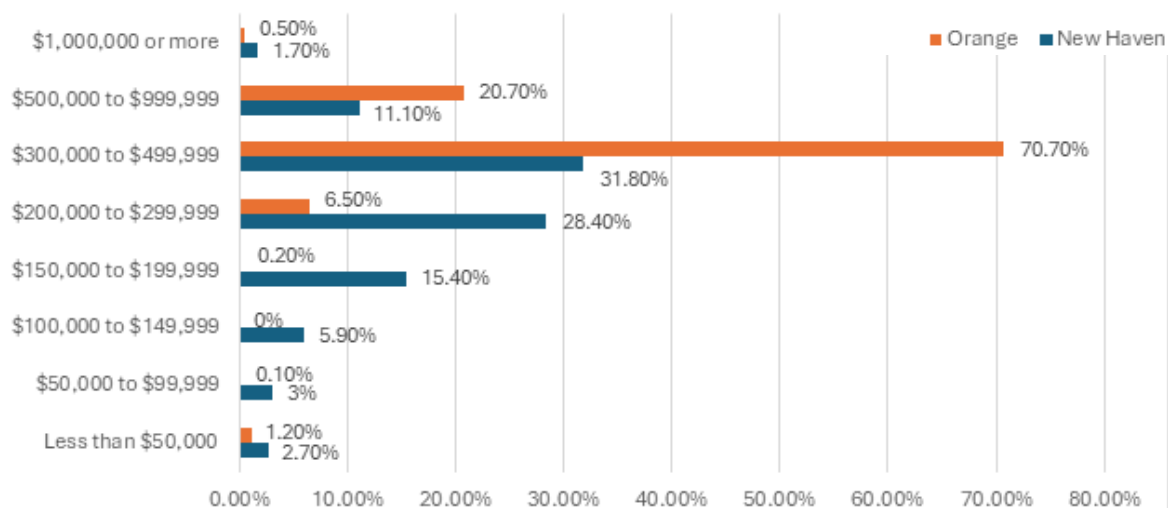
HOUSING VALUE AND AFFORDABILITY

Housing Value

The median housing value in Orange is \$406,100, compared to the Countywide median of \$282,200. Approximately 71% of homes in Orange are valued between \$300,000 and \$499,999.

Chart 15: Housing Value, New Haven County, Orange, 2021

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2021 5-Year Estimates



Chapter 4: Housing and Neighborhoods

Affordability of Housing

Housing cost burden is measured by the percentage of income a household spends on housing costs (i.e., rent, mortgage). Households that spend more than 30% of their income on housing are considered housing cost-burdened. Approximately 58% of renters in Orange spend more than 30% of their income on rent, a 10.4% decrease from 2010 (see Chart 16). Similarly, the number of housing cost-burdened homeowners decreased since 2010: 34.2% were housing cost-burdened in 2010 compared to 30.3% in 2021 (see Chart 17).

Chart 16: Gross Rent as a Percentage of Household Income, Orange, 2021

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2021 5-Year Estimates

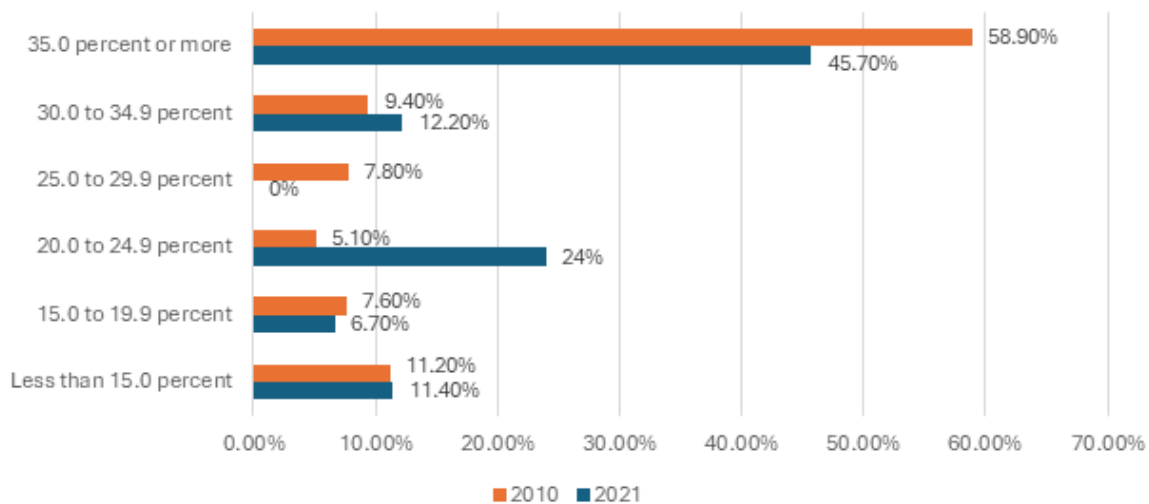
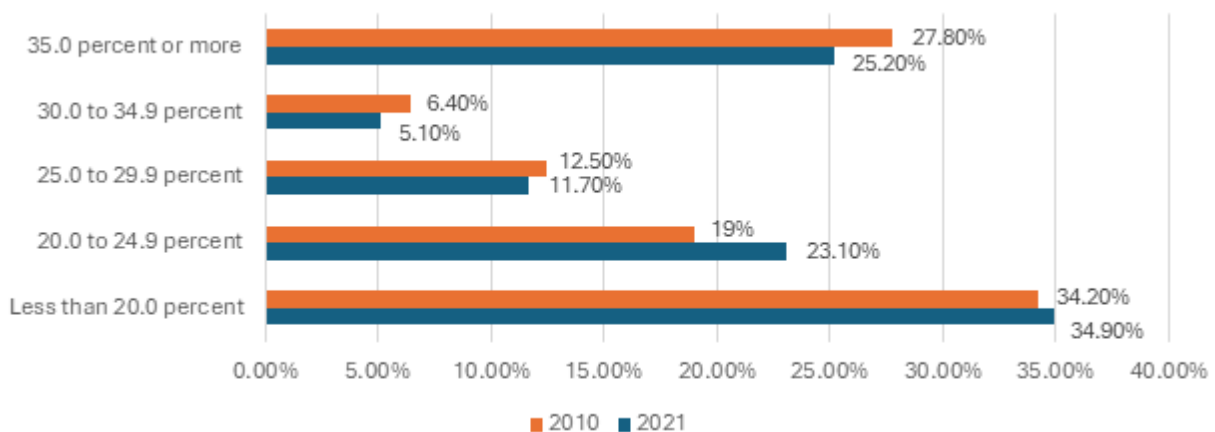


Chart 17: Selected Monthly Owner Costs as a Percentage of Household Income²

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2021 5-Year Estimates



² Calculated for housing units with a mortgage.

Chapter 4: Housing and Neighborhoods

As of 2021, Orange has 72 government subsidized units, accounting for 1.35% of total housing. The majority fall under a variety of government programs ("2021 Government Assisted"), while State / Federal Homeownership programs and subsidized rentals total 10 each. The 46 government assisted units are Lascana Homes, an 100% affordable housing development on Smith Farm Road.

Table 9: Government Assisted Units by Program Type in Orange

Source: CT DOH, Affordable Housing Appeals List, 2021

2021 Total Housing Units	2021 Government Assisted	2021 Tenant Rental Assistance	2021 Single Family CHFA / USDA Mortgages	2021 Deed Restricted Units	2021 Total Assisted Units	2021 Percent Affordable
5,350	46	10	10	6	72	1.35%

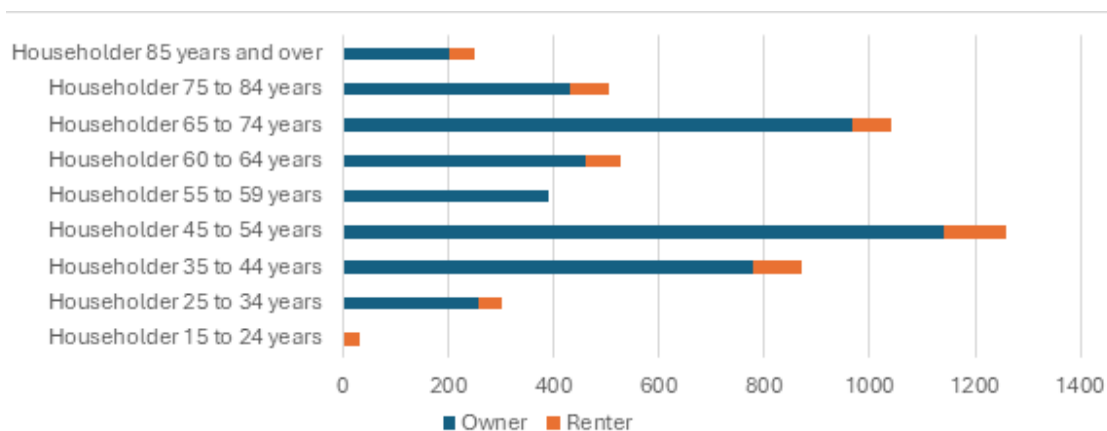
Elderly Housing

The senior population (65+) represents 23% of Orange's population and 35% of householders. Over the last decade, Orange has taken steps to support the Town's aging population. The Town adopted the Senior Living District (SLD) in 2018, a zoning district created to provide flexible housing arrangements for seniors. Charter Senior Living, Errera Community Care Center, and Maplewood are assisted living and rehabilitation care facilities located in the SLD.

Orange also supports senior housing through its special standards for converting single-family dwellings to accommodate elderly housing (§ 383-140). The regulation permits the creation of one additional dwelling unit in any residence district subject to special permit and site plan approval. The converted unit must exist within the existing principal building or be an addition that is connected by a common wall, floor, or ceiling. Other requirements for approval include a minimum lot size of 30,000 square feet, and the presence of at least one person 55 years or older.

Chart 18: Tenure by Age of Householder, Orange, 2021

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2021 5-Year Estimates





Charter Senior Living
Source: Charter Senior Living of Orange



Maplewood at Orange
Source: Maplewood Senior Living

Affordable Housing Plan (2022)

Orange adopted an Affordable Housing Plan in 2022 in accordance with Connecticut General Statute 8-30j. The plan sets forth goals and strategies to achieve the State Department of Housing's (DOH) requirement that at least 10% of the housing stock be designated as affordable. Affordable housing is defined as costing a household no more than 30% of their income. The plan's goals emphasize preserving the existing affordable housing stock, addressing housing gaps, providing housing for target populations like seniors, and exploring housing options in areas well-served by transportation and community infrastructure, especially sewer areas.

In September 2024, the Town of Orange was granted a Certificate of Affordable Housing Completion, which expires in September 2028. The affordable housing units from following developments were included as part of the Affordable Housing Completion calculation:

- Silver Brook Estates- 100 Red cedar Road
- Silver Brook Chase, LLC- Silver Brook Road
- Spruce Manor- 256 Peck Lane and 0 Peck Lane
- Avalon Hill aka Grand Reserve Orange- 45-74 Prindle Hill Road
- Beecher Walk at Orange- S. Lambert Rd
- Lascana Home of Orange CT Limited Partnership- 329 Smith Farm Road
- Brookside Condominiums- Old Lambert Road
- Former Military Housing- Smith Farm Road and Sybil Street

RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Preserve existing residential neighborhoods.

- 4.1.1 Preserve established residential neighborhoods' scale and physical characteristics.

4.2 Orange should continue to support a diverse housing stock to accommodate its population's evolving housing needs.

- 4.2.1 Explore opportunities to streamline approvals and permitting processes for housing rehabilitation.
- 4.2.2 Consider expanding the existing regulations for elderly housing conversions.
- 4.2.3 Consider adopting conservation subdivision regulations.

4.3 Continue to promote opportunities for affordable housing.

- 4.3.1 Support private developers who seek Low Income Housing Tax Credits to provide some affordable units in market rate developments.
- 4.3.2 Pursue state/federal funding programs to support the provision of affordable housing stock.
- 4.3.3 Require that affordable units be deed-restricted in perpetuity, where appropriate.

5 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

INTRODUCTION

Orange's economic vision is centered on fostering a dynamic and sustainable business environment that supports long-term growth while preserving the town's character. Historically, Orange has thrived as a regional economic hub, benefiting from its strategic location along major transportation corridors, including U.S. Route 1 and I-95. Over time, the town has adapted to changing market conditions, transitioning from an agriculture-based economy to a diversified mix of commercial, retail, and industrial sectors. The town's economic development strategy leverages its strong retail presence, stable office market, and growing industrial sector to attract investment and create jobs.

A key focus of economic development efforts in Orange is ensuring long-term sustainability. This involves addressing challenges such as retail vacancies, supporting small businesses, and diversifying the town's economic base to reduce reliance on any single industry.

Orange's economic initiatives align closely with regional and state-level development strategies. Collaborations with organizations such as AdvanceCT, the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD), and the Tourism Board help Orange leverage resources and investment opportunities. Additionally, the town has implemented tax incentives, such as five- and seven-year tax abatements for significant commercial projects, to attract high-value developments.

The town also has an economic development corporation and chamber of commerce which contribute to economic development initiatives in the town. The Orange Economic Development Corporation (OEDC) supports economic development initiatives focused on the Boston Post Road commercial corridor and the industrial area off Marsh Hill Road. The Chamber of Commerce is dedicated to maintaining and expanding business presence in Orange. The Chamber focuses on events, member engagement, and advocacy for local businesses.



Businesses on Boston Post Road/US Route 1

ECONOMIC PROFILE

Historic Trends, Recent Changes, and Future Projections

The Town of Orange has undergone significant economic transformation, evolving from its historical agricultural roots into an economy focused primarily on commercial and industrial sectors. This shift was significantly accelerated by the development of major transportation infrastructure such as Interstate 95 and the Wilbur Cross Parkway, which greatly enhanced Orange's connectivity and appeal to regional businesses. Leveraging these transportation networks, the town strategically expanded on the base of agriculture to commercial, retail, and industrial activities along Route 1 and Boston Post Road. This has been accomplished without any incursions into the agricultural open space, or residential areas of Orange.

In recent years, economic conditions in Orange have shown mixed results across different sectors. The retail sector faces challenges, notably high vacancy rates in key locations, partially due to an oversaturation of certain businesses like gyms, smoke shops, nail salons, and restaurants. Conversely, the industrial sector remains strong, characterized by steady demand for warehouse, storage, and light manufacturing facilities. Industrial developments, including a new storage facility and adaptive reuse of an industrial space, underscore ongoing growth in this sector.

Employment Statistics and Major Industries

Tracking changes in labor force size, employment levels, and unemployment rates over time helps identify key economic shifts, such as periods of job growth, workforce stability, or disruptions caused by external factors like economic recessions or the COVID-19 pandemic (see Table 10). By examining these employment trends, local policymakers, businesses, and residents can better assess the town's economic trajectory, plan for workforce development, and implement strategies to support long-term economic sustainability.



Industrial and Office Uses

Table 10: Employment for Orange, CT

Source: CT Department of Labor

Year	Labor Force	Employment	Unemployment	Unemployment Rate
2010	7,137	6,635	502	7.0
2011	7,169	6,673	496	6.9
2012	7,111	6,658	453	6.4
2013	7,079	6,640	439	6.2
2014	7,197	6,830	367	5.1
2015	7,239	6,924	315	4.4
2016	7,285	7,007	278	3.8
2017	7,435	7,200	235	3.2
2018	7,471	7,245	226	3.0
2019	7,546	7,336	210	2.8
2020	7,374	6,915	459	6.2
2021	7,231	6,914	317	4.4
2022	7,613	7,382	231	3.0
2023	7,553	7,335	218	2.9
2024	7,752	7,600	152	2.0

Labor Force Trends

The labor force in Orange, CT, has experienced steady growth, increasing from 7,137 in 2010 to 7,752 in 2024. Between 2010 and 2019, the labor force gradually expanded, reaching 7,546 before the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, which caused a slight decline to 7,374 as economic disruptions led some individuals to exit the workforce. However, since 2021, the town's labor force has steadily grown, reflecting economic recovery and increased workforce participation. By 2024, the labor force reached its highest level (7,752), suggesting that more residents are either employed or actively seeking work, signaling strong job market conditions in Orange.

Employment Trends

Employment in Orange has largely followed the same trajectory as labor force participation, showing consistent job growth over time. In 2010, 6,635 residents were employed, increasing to 7,600 by 2024. However, the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 caused employment to dip to 6,915, marking a temporary setback as businesses faced closures and layoffs. Despite this disruption, employment quickly recovered in 2021 (6,914) and has continued to rise, reaching an all-time high in 2024. The steady employment increase highlights Orange's economic resilience, as businesses and industries have successfully adapted and grown.

Unemployment and Unemployment Rate

The unemployment rate in Orange has declined significantly from 7.0% in 2010 to just 2.0% in 2024, reflecting consistent economic improvement. Between 2010 and 2019, unemployment steadily dropped as businesses expanded, reaching a low of 2.8% before the pandemic-induced spike to 6.2% in 2020. Widespread economic uncertainty and job losses drove this temporary surge. However, by 2021, unemployment decreased to 4.4%, continuing its downward trend to just 2.0% in 2024, the lowest in the past 14 years. This decline underscores Orange’s strong job market, business growth, and economic stability.

Table 11: Job Counts by Worker Educational Attainment (2022)

Source: US Census, American Community Survey, 2022

	Count	Share
Total (All Jobs)	11,127	100.00%
Less than high school	1,189	10.70%
High school or equivalent, no college	2,191	19.70%
Some college or Associate degree	2,360	21.20%
Bachelor’s degree or advanced degree	2,519	22.60%
Educational attainment not available (workers aged 29 or younger)	2,868	25.80%

Total Workforce Overview

In 2022, Orange supported 11,127 jobs, with workers distributed across various educational backgrounds (see Table 5-2). The largest category (25.8%) consists of workers aged 29 or younger, for whom educational attainment data is not available. This suggests a significant portion of the workforce is early in their careers, likely working in entry-level positions across retail, hospitality, and service industries.

Educational Attainment Breakdown

- 10.7% of workers (1,189 jobs) have less than a high school education.
- 19.7% of workers (2,191 jobs) have a high school diploma or equivalent but no college education.
- 21.2% of workers (2,360 jobs) have some college education or an associate degree.
- 22.6% of workers (2,519 jobs) hold a bachelor’s or advanced degree, forming the most highly educated segment of the workforce.

The high percentage of workers with some college education or an associate degree (21.2%) offers a significant opportunity to expand certification programs and career advancement pathways in advanced manufacturing, healthcare technology, and business services, helping workers transition into higher-paying skilled jobs. Meanwhile, the relatively small share of workers with a bachelor’s degree or higher (22.6%) indicates that although Orange attracts professionals in some industries, there’s potential for growth in knowledge-based sectors like biotech, finance, and engineering. Additionally, the large proportion of workers with a high school diploma or less (30.4%) underscores

the need for workforce training, apprenticeships, and vocational education programs, ensuring that more residents acquire the skills necessary to fill high-demand jobs in manufacturing, logistics, and technical fields. Expanding these initiatives will enable Orange to develop a more competitive and resilient workforce, fostering long-term economic growth.

Labor Market Overview

The largest share of workers is employed in education, health, and social services, underscoring the critical role these industries play in the local and regional economy. Additionally, the professional, scientific, and management sectors account for 16% of all jobs in Orange, highlighting the town's growing base of high-skill, knowledge-based employment.

According to the U.S. Census "Jobs by NAICS Industry Sector", Orange had 11,127 total jobs across a varied mix of industries in 2022. The largest employment sectors were retail trade, healthcare, accommodation and food services, and transportation and warehousing, reflecting the town's strong commercial foundation and accessibility along major highways.

- Retail Trade led employment with 1,929 workers (17.3%), reinforcing the importance of Boston Post Road as a key retail corridor.
- Health Care and Social Assistance employed 1,029 workers (9.2%), indicating steady growth in medical and social services.
- Accommodation and Food Services supported 1,165 jobs (10.5%), reflecting the town's hospitality and restaurant sector strength.
- Transportation and Warehousing accounted for 950 jobs (8.5%), demonstrating the significance of logistics and distribution industries in Orange's industrial zones.
- Utilities (8.1%) and Manufacturing (7.6%) remain essential components of the local economy, particularly in energy production, light industrial manufacturing, and advanced production technologies.

Smaller but vital sectors include finance and insurance (2.3%), professional and technical services (3.3%), and management of companies (4.1%), pointing to opportunities for corporate and office-based employment growth. Agriculture, forestry, and fishing contribute minimally to the workforce, with only 7 jobs (0.1%), reflecting limited but active farmland operations in the town.

Orange faces skill gaps in technical and specialized industries, particularly in trades, advanced manufacturing, and emerging technology fields. As the town's median age remains high, ensuring workforce renewal will be crucial for sustaining long-term economic growth and filling in-demand positions. Additionally, as household incomes rise, businesses must continue to offer competitive wages and career opportunities to attract and retain skilled labor in a rapidly evolving job market.

Workforce Training and Development

To address local workforce needs, Orange benefits from collaboration with educational institutions, technical training programs, and regional workforce development initiatives. The town is situated near several higher education institutions, including University of New Haven Orange Campus, Yale University, Southern Connecticut State University, and Gateway Community College, which offer degree programs and workforce training that align with industry needs. Vocational and trade schools in the surrounding region provide specialized training for skilled labor positions in construction, manufacturing, and healthcare.

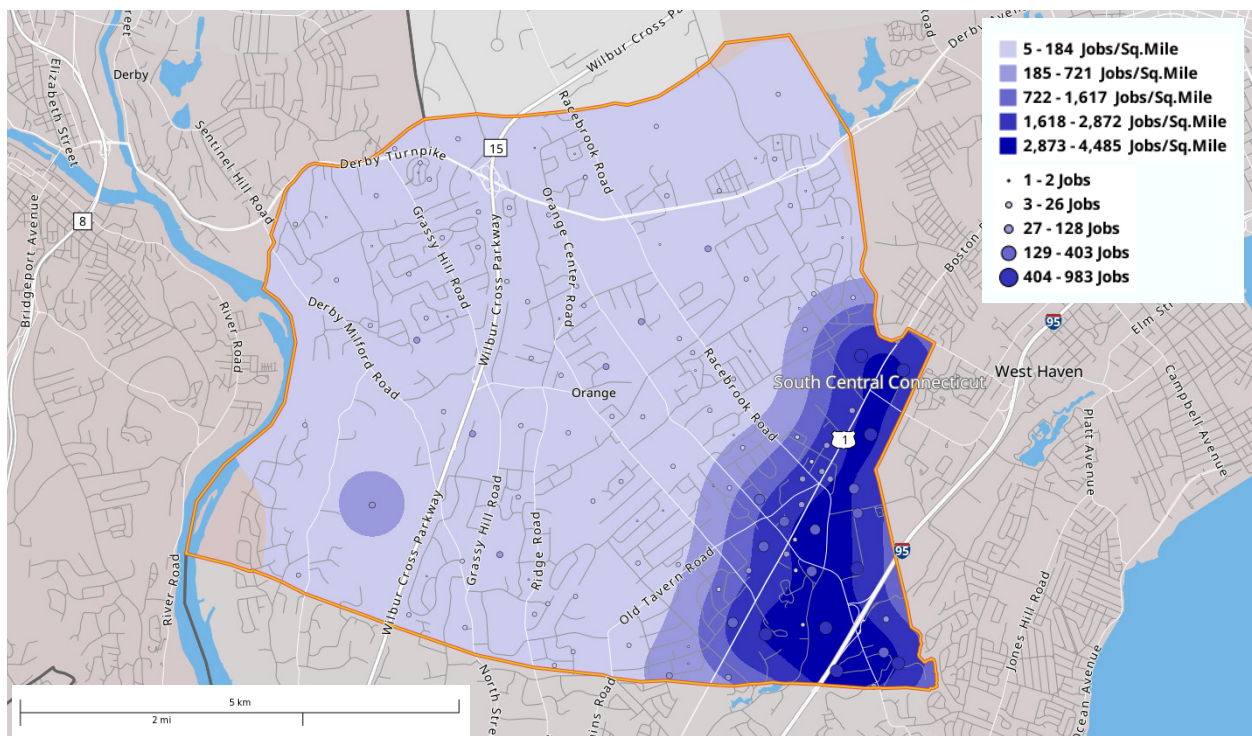
Commuting Patterns and Regional Workforce Interaction

Orange's labor market is heavily influenced by regional commuting patterns, with many residents traveling to New Haven, Bridgeport, Stamford, and Milford for employment in sectors such as healthcare, finance, education, and professional services. Conversely, Orange attracts workers from neighboring towns, particularly for retail jobs along Boston Post Road and industrial operations concentrated on Marsh Hill Road (Figure 8). This reciprocal workforce movement underscores Orange's dual role as both a commuter suburb and an employment hub.

The town's strategic location along Interstate 95 and Route 1 makes it an integral part of the regional economy, facilitating both job inflows and outflows. However, limited public transit access, due to the absence of a local train station, can pose a challenge for workers commuting from greater distances.

Figure 8: Employment Heat Map for the Town of Orange

Source: U.S.Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies, LEHD



CURRENT MARKET CONDITIONS

The description of the retail, office, and industrial sectors below is simply a snapshot of conditions in 2024. These conditions will change depending on market conditions in the future.

Retail Sector

Orange's retail market has an overall vacancy rate of 7.98%. Rental rates for retail spaces range from \$16 to \$22 per square foot (triple net) in Orange. Large retail spaces, including the Christmas Tree Plaza and the former LA Fitness site, remain vacant for extended periods, contributing to an oversupply of retail properties. Recent trends show an overabundance of certain businesses, such as gyms, smoke shops, nail salons, and restaurants. This oversaturation limits diversity and weakens the appeal of Orange's retail sector.

Office Sector

The office sector maintains a low vacancy rate of 1.76%. Rental rates for office space ranges from \$5.50 to \$8.50 per square foot (triple net). The majority of available office spaces are small units along Boston Post Road, catering to professional services and medical practices. Growth in this sector has been driven by expansions, such as an eye care group purchasing an office building and a physical therapy practice seeking larger accommodations.

Despite steady demand for smaller office spaces in Orange, the sector faces limitations in attracting larger tenants due to a lack of available mid-size to large office properties. Smaller, flexible office configurations remain a strength for the market, while continued medical and professional use is expected to dominate demand.

Industrial Sector

The industrial sector exhibits a balanced market, with a vacancy rate of 3.54% and rental rates ranging from \$5.50 to \$8.50 per square foot (triple net). Recent developments include a new storage facility under construction and a gas station project. Existing industrial spaces continue to attract interest, reflecting steady demand.

However, the availability of land for new industrial projects is limited, which may constrain future growth. Orange's industrial sector benefits from its ability to quickly fill vacant spaces, but long-term sustainability will require adaptive reuse and efficient utilization of existing properties.



Retail Uses



Competition from Neighboring Towns

Orange faces growing competition from surrounding municipalities, particularly Milford and Shelton, which offer strong commercial, retail, and industrial markets. Milford, with its well-established retail sector and commercial hubs, draws significant consumer traffic away from Orange, affecting local businesses. Shelton's expanding corporate office market and business-friendly policies make it an attractive destination for companies considering relocation, increasing competition for commercial tenants and job opportunities.

ECONOMIC INCENTIVES

The Town of Orange's Tax Abatement Program is designed to incentivize business investment and development by reducing property tax obligations for qualifying projects. This program encourages economic growth by attracting new businesses, supporting expansions, and fostering job creation within the town. Businesses that invest a minimum of \$4,000,000 in property development, new construction, or significant renovations are eligible for a 5-year tax abatement, while those investing at least \$15,000,000 qualify for a 7-year tax abatement. These abatements allow businesses to phase in their full tax obligations gradually, reducing initial financial burdens and enabling reinvestment in operational and infrastructure improvements.

The tax abatement applies to commercial, industrial, and mixed-use properties, provided that projects align with the town's zoning regulations and economic development goals. The program is intended to stimulate investment in underutilized areas, enhance property values, and support long-term economic sustainability. Businesses seeking to participate must demonstrate the project's potential for economic impact, including job creation and commercial revitalization. The tax abatement program is particularly valuable in the following strategic development areas:

- Boston Post Road (U.S. Route 1) – A major retail and commercial corridor with opportunities for redevelopment and new business attraction.
- Marsh Hill Road and I-95 Corridor – A prime location for industrial, logistics, and corporate office developments due to its accessibility to major highways.
- Adaptive Reuse of Vacant Retail Spaces – Encouraging businesses to convert underutilized properties, such as former big-box stores, into viable commercial or mixed-use spaces.

The Tax Abatement Program is a vital tool for business attraction and retention. It strengthens the town's position as a competitive development destination while ensuring that commercial and industrial growth aligns with Orange's broader economic and community objectives.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR FUTURE ECONOMIC GROWTH

The Orange Shopping Center, located adjacent to the Orange Historic District on Orange Center Road, is a retail area within the Local Shopping District (LSC) zone. The Town is open to a revitalization of this area to better serve residents and employees and be more compatible with the design quality and aesthetics of the Historic District. Such improvements would provide local economic opportunities, while identifying and distinguishing the Town Center.

Figure 9: Local Shopping Center District (LSC)

Source: Town of Orange, BFI Planning



Orange Shopping Center

Additionally, Orange has significant potential for economic expansion in specialized industries such as biomedical technology, advanced manufacturing, and clean transportation infrastructure, particularly by leveraging its existing industrial land along Marsh Hill Road and the I-95 corridor. With its proximity to New Haven's thriving biotech sector, which includes Yale University's medical and research institutions, Orange is well-positioned to support biomedical firms specializing in medical devices, laboratory research, and healthcare technology production. The town's available industrial sites could be repurposed or developed to accommodate biotech manufacturing, research facilities, and logistics hubs for medical supply distribution, complementing New Haven's expanding life sciences ecosystem.

In addition, Orange's industrial zones provide a strong foundation for clean transportation infrastructure and advanced manufacturing. As the electric vehicle (EV) industry continues to expand, the Town could develop EV charging stations, battery storage facilities, and related supply chain operations on its underutilized industrial land. Given Connecticut's push for clean energy and sustainable development, these areas could attract businesses involved in EV component manufacturing, energy storage solutions, and renewable energy integration. By strategically utilizing its industrial properties, Orange can diversify its economic base, attract high-tech industries, and create sustainable job growth while reinforcing its role as a key player in Connecticut's innovation corridor.

Logistics and supply chain development is another area of opportunity. With its location near major highways such as I-95, Route 1, and the Wilbur Cross Parkway, Orange could further develop warehousing, logistics, and distribution centers. Industrial-zoned properties in the town could support last-mile delivery hubs, responding to the increasing demand for regional distribution centers.

Tourism and economic diversification offer promising opportunities for growth in Orange, particularly through the expansion of outdoor recreation opportunities, including hiking trails, guided agricultural experiences, and open-space event venues. The town is home to several historic farms and extensive open space areas.

RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Strengthen and diversify the business base.

- 5.1.1 Attract a broader mix of retail, restaurant, entertainment, and experiential businesses to revitalize commercial districts, particularly along Boston Post Road and reduce vacancies in large retail spaces.
- 5.1.2 Encourage niche markets such as entertainment venues, boutique retail, and sports complexes to create a distinct commercial identity for Orange.
- 5.1.3 Expand the Town's focus on advanced manufacturing, biomedical technology, and clean energy industries, utilizing available industrial-zoned land along Marsh Hill Road and the I-95 corridor.
- 5.1.4 Actively market Orange to biotech and life sciences firms, capitalizing on New Haven's biotech ecosystem and Yale University's research network to attract medical device manufacturers, research labs, and health-tech startups.
- 5.1.5 Promote the adaptive reuse of underutilized retail and industrial properties, converting spaces into mixed-use developments that integrate commercial, residential, and office uses.

5.2 Enhance industrial sector opportunities and small business growth.

- 5.2.1 Prioritize the reuse of industrial properties.
- 5.2.2 Offer business development resources, including mentorship programs and marketing assistance, for locally owned small businesses.
- 5.2.3 Develop an incubator or shared workspace program to support startups in creative, technology-driven, and professional services sectors.
- 5.2.4 Collaborate with regional and state organizations, such as AdvanceCT, to provide small business grants, low-interest loans, and technical assistance.
- 5.2.5 Continue to support the Chamber of Commerce and the Orange Economic Development Corporation.

5.3 Promote adaptive reuse and redevelopment.

- 5.3.1 Encourage revitalization of the existing local shopping center adjacent to the Orange Historic District.
- 5.3.2 Target large vacant properties in Industrial Zones.
- 5.3.3 Leverage tax incentive programs and grant funding to encourage investment in redeveloping vacant retail, office, and industrial properties.

5.4 Support workforce development.

- 5.4.1 Collaborate with local employers, universities, and trade schools to develop workforce training programs in high-demand industries such as biotech, advanced manufacturing, and logistics.

5.5 Promote tourism and community events.

- 5.5.1 Develop heritage tourism initiatives to enhance access to historic sites, museums, and cultural attractions that showcase Orange's history.
- 5.5.2 Expand outdoor recreation opportunities, including hiking trails, guided agricultural experiences, and open-space event venues.

5.6 Maintain a competitive business climate and retain key employers.

- 5.6.1 Provide targeted business incentives and expansion support to industries in biomedical technology, clean energy, logistics, and high-growth sectors.
- 5.6.2 Strengthen collaboration with state and regional economic development agencies to attract new employers and maintain Orange's business-friendly reputation.
- 5.6.3 Regularly evaluate zoning and regulatory policies to ensure they align with emerging market trends and community needs.

6 TRANSPORTATION & MOBILITY

INTRODUCTION

Orange benefits from a well-connected transportation network that supports regional mobility and economic growth. The town's proximity to major highways and availability of public transportation positions it as an attractive location for businesses and residents seeking easy access to regional markets and employment hubs.

A safe and efficient transportation system that accommodates the needs of all users is essential to Orange's ability to continue to grow and prosper. Strategies to enhance mobility and circulation within Orange and to the region are also critical to improve the Town's economic viability and local quality of life.

Informed by stakeholder engagement, analysis of data, and a consideration of best practices, this chapter aims to address current circulation and transportation challenges while anticipating future needs. Whether it is optimizing the roadway network, encouraging public transit and walkability, or enhancing connectivity to the region, this chapter sets forth a vision that aligns with broader POCD objectives, ensuring a well-connected and more sustainable Town.

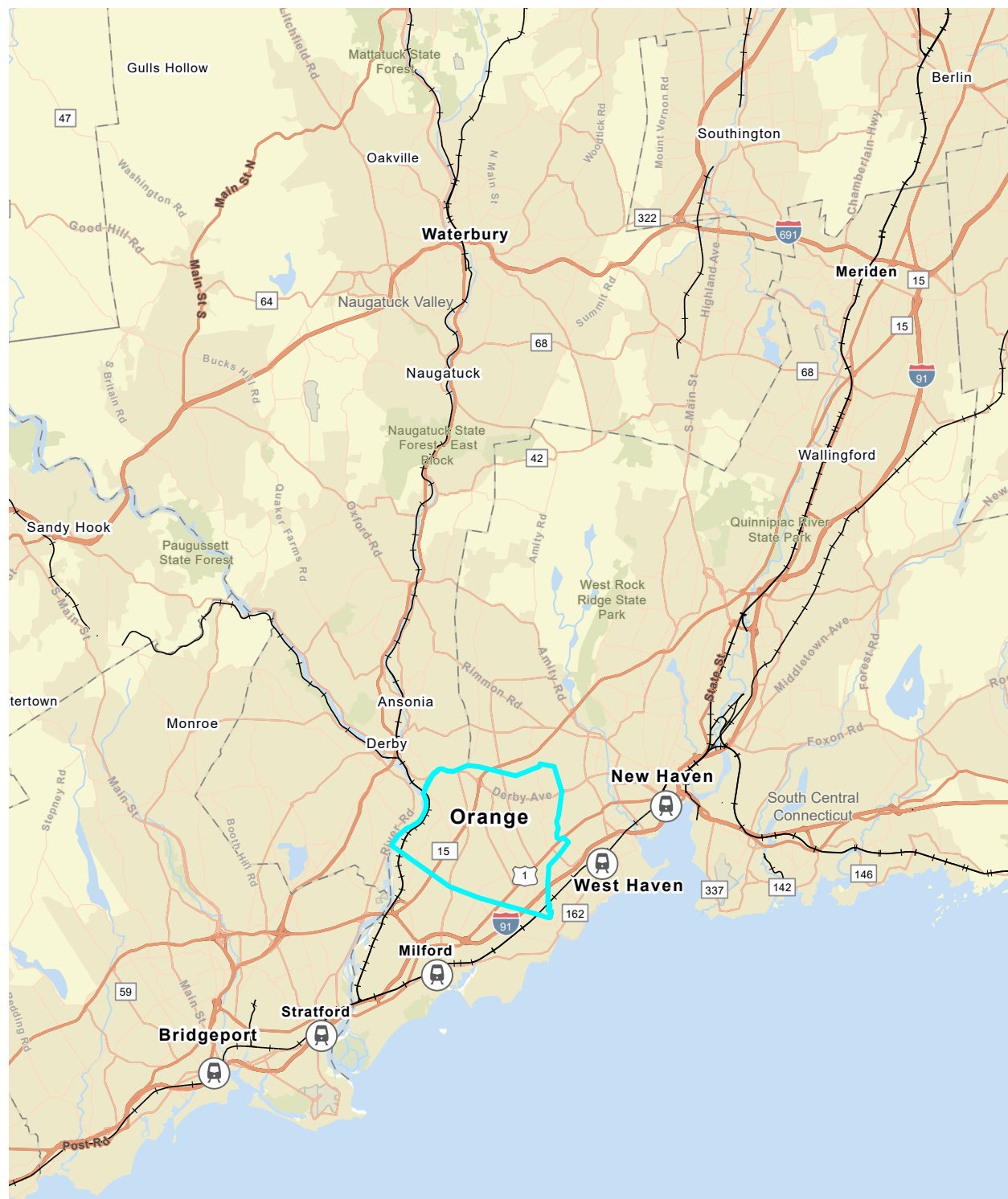
REGIONAL CONNECTIVITY

Orange is well-connected to the region through a network of transportation systems that facilitate easy access to neighboring towns and major cities (Refer to Figure 10). The Town is located along the Boston Post Road (U.S. Route 1), providing a direct route to New Haven and Milford, while Interstate 95 (I-95) and the nearby Merriitt Parkway (Route 15) offer efficient travel options for commuters heading south toward Bridgeport, Stamford, and New York, and north to Hartford.

Additionally, Orange benefits from its proximity to the Metro-North Railroad stations in Milford and West Haven, allowing residents convenient access to New York City and other destinations along the New Haven Line. Public bus services operated by CTtransit also connect Orange to surrounding communities. These transportation networks make Orange a well-integrated part of the region, supporting both local travel and long-distance commuting.

Figure 10: Regional Connectivity

Source: Esri, CT DOT, BfJ Planning



EXISTING CONDITIONS

Roadway Overview and Functional Classification

CTDOT has established a functional classification for roads. This classification is based on use, design, and capacity. Figure 11 shows the classification of the roadways in Orange.

Interstates, Expressway Highway System – Function as multi-lane, high volume and high speed through roads connecting major municipal centers to each other and other Interstates/Expressways.

- Interstate 95 (I-95) cuts across the southeastern corner of Orange, with on- and off- ramp access via Marsh Hill Road. I-95 is a major transportation corridor for commuters and commercial traffic between New York and Boston, while also providing Orange with convenient access to nearby coastal communities and business districts.
- Route 15 / The Wilbur Cross Parkway runs through the eastern part of Orange, providing a scenic, limited-access route for travelers between Orange and Hartford. Route 15 provides direct access to Orange via interchanges at Route 121 and Route 34.

Principal Arterial – Connects major developments and activity centers to each other and to the interstate highway system.

- Route 1 (Boston Post Road) serves as Orange's key commercial corridor while also facilitating regional connectivity between Milford, West Haven, and New Haven. The corridor is lined with numerous commercial centers, making it an economic hub for the Town and a destination for both residents and visitors.
- Route 34 (Derby Avenue) connects Orange to neighboring New Haven, Shelton, and Derby, with direct interchange access to Route 15 (Wilbur Cross Parkway).

Minor Arterial – Generally carries higher traffic volumes than major collector roadways and provides direct connection to principal arterials.

- In Orange, the following are classified as Minor Arterials: Racebrook Road, Orange Center Road, Lambert Road, South Lambert Road, Marsh Hill Road, Grassy Hill Road, Derby Milford Road, Wheelers Farm Road, Ridge Road, Old Tavern Road.

Major Collector – Designed to carry traffic from local streets to arterial roadways. Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) is typically in the range of 1,500 to 8,000 vehicles per day.

- In Orange, the following are classified as Major Collectors: Turkey Hill Road, Meetinghouse Lane, Tyler City Road, Grannis Road, New Haven Avenue, Dogwood Road, Dogburn Road, Racebrook Road (north of Derby Avenue), Pine Tree Drive, and Peck Lane, are classified as Minor Arterials.

Local Streets – These roads carry less volume but play a key role in the overall network. They provide access to adjacent land and are meant to carry low volumes of traffic at low speeds, not to carry through traffic. These streets contain a high percentage of the overall street mileage, but have the lowest level of through mobility, while providing the highest level of access to the adjacent land uses. In Orange, this primarily includes the Town's many residential streets.

ROADWAY JURISDICTION

While the Town has maintenance jurisdiction over most roads in Orange (i.e., local residential streets), CT DOT maintains jurisdiction over the Town's most trafficked roads that are essential to the local economy and quality of life (see Figure 12 for an overview). CT DOT is responsible for the upkeep, repairs, resurfacing, and signage of the following roadways:

- **CT Routes**
 - Route 15 / Wilbur Cross Parkway
 - Route 34 / Derby Avenue
 - Route 114 / Racebrook Road
 - Route 121 / Grassy Hill Road
 - Route 152 / Orange Center Road
- **US Routes**
 - Route 1 / Boston Post Road
- **Interstate 95 (I-95)**

AVERAGE ANNUAL DAILY TRAFFIC

AADT is the total volume of vehicle traffic of a roadway segment for a year divided by 365. Figure 11 shows AADT volumes that are available for roadways within Orange. AADT generally corresponds with roadway classification. The segment of I-95 within Orange has the highest traffic volume (128,300). Table 12 summarizes the AADT volume estimates of the top eight highest trafficked roadways in the Town.

Table 12: Orange Roadways with the Highest Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) Volumes

Source: CTDOT, 2024

	Street/Roadway	AADT Volume
1	I-95	128,300
2	Route 15	64,000
3	Route 34 / Derby Ave.	28,100
4	Marsh Hill Rd.	21,000
5	Route 1	18,800
6	South Lambert Road	13,500
7	Racebrook Road	12,100
8	Orange Center Road	10,200

Note: Volume based on highest reported AADT segment of each roadway within Orange.

Figure 11: Roadway Classification and Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) Volumes

Source: Esri, CT DOT, BfJ Planning

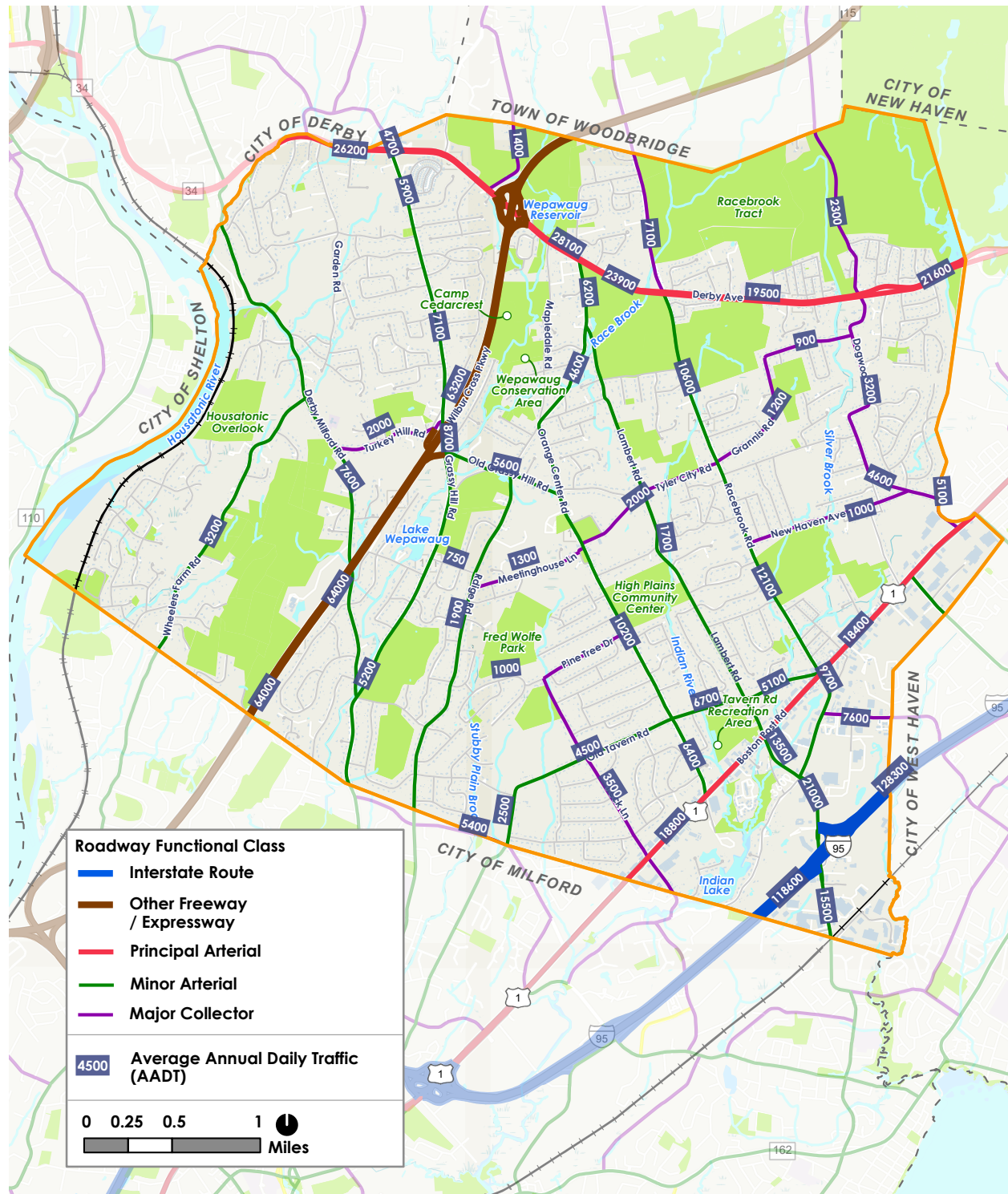
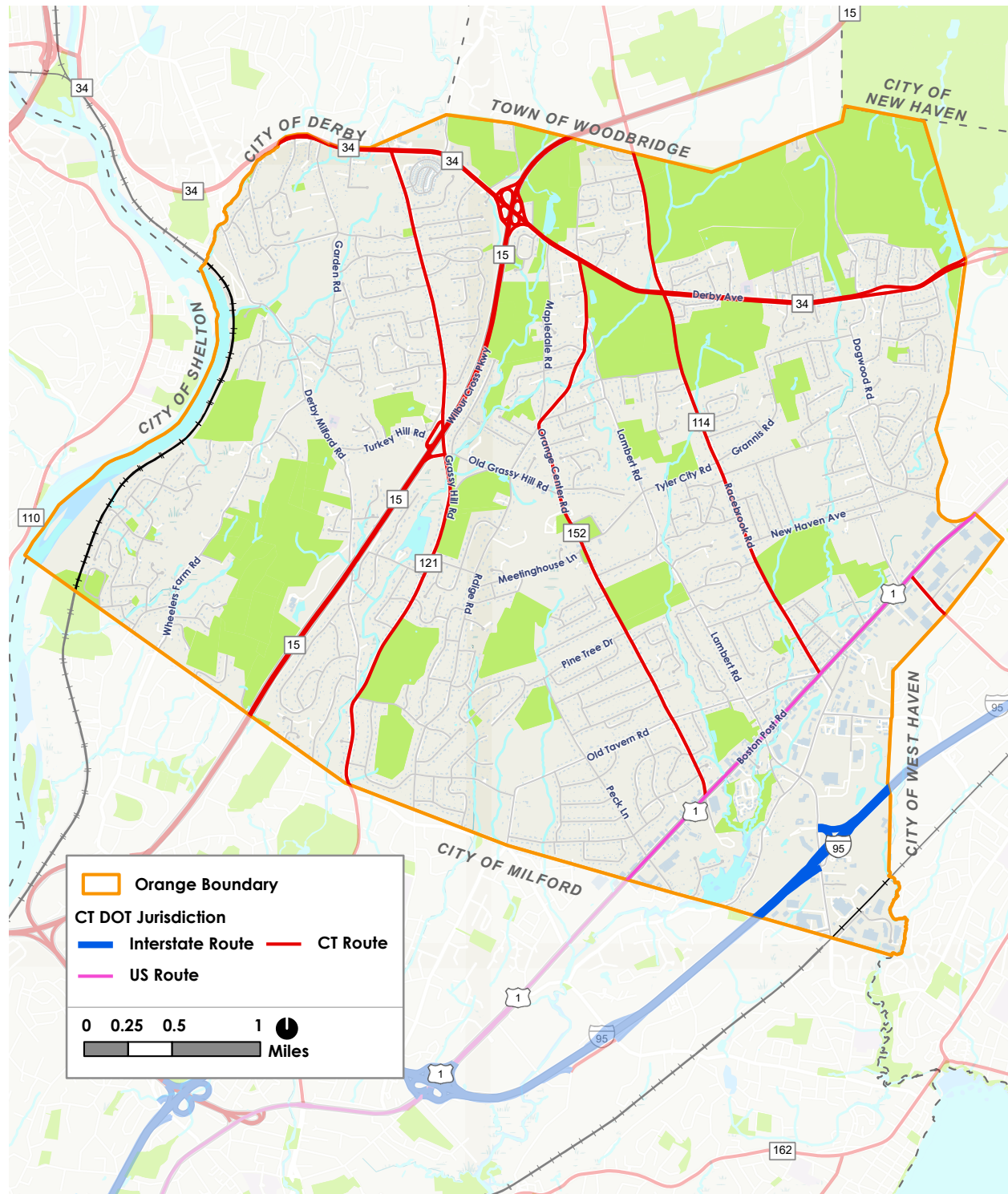


Figure 12: Roadway Jurisdiction

Source: Esri, CT DOT, BfJ Planning



CRASH ANALYSIS

High Accident Intersections – An inventory of motor vehicle crash records was obtained from the Connecticut Crash Data Repository for the most recent available five-year period (2020-January 2025). During the period, about 725 incidents occurred at intersections in Orange. Table 13 shows that the intersection with the highest number of documented crash incidents during the period was Racebrook Road – Derby Avenue, followed by Route 1 – Lambert Road / South Lambert Road. The locations in Table 13 present opportunities for further study and potential safety enhancements, in coordination with CTDOT where necessary. See Figure 13, following the table, for an intersection crash density map.

Beyond intersection crashes, additional analysis looked at accidents that involved fatalities, as well as pedestrian- and bicyclist-involved crashes.

Crash Fatalities – During this analysis period, there were 7 incidents that resulted in a fatality: three separate incidents on Derby Avenue, two incidents on Route 1 (each incident involving a pedestrian), one incident on Route 15, and another on Marsh Hill Road near the I-95 on-ramp. Refer to Figure 13 for a reference of fatal crash locations.

Pedestrian- and Bicyclist-Related Incidents – During the reporting period, 22 crashes involved a pedestrian, two of which were fatal on Route 1. Generally, pedestrian-related crash incidents were most concentrated along the Route 1 corridor, with 10 total during this period. While three pedestrian-related incidents occurred on Derby Avenue and another on Orange Center Road, most other pedestrian-related incidents occurred on local residential streets.

During this period there were five total crashes that involved a bicyclist, with no identifiable pattern or “hot-spot” area of incidents (Refer to Figure 13).

Table 13: Orange Intersections with Highest Crash Incidents (2020-2024)

Source: CT Crash Data Repository, CTDOT, MMUC 2020 - Jan. 2025

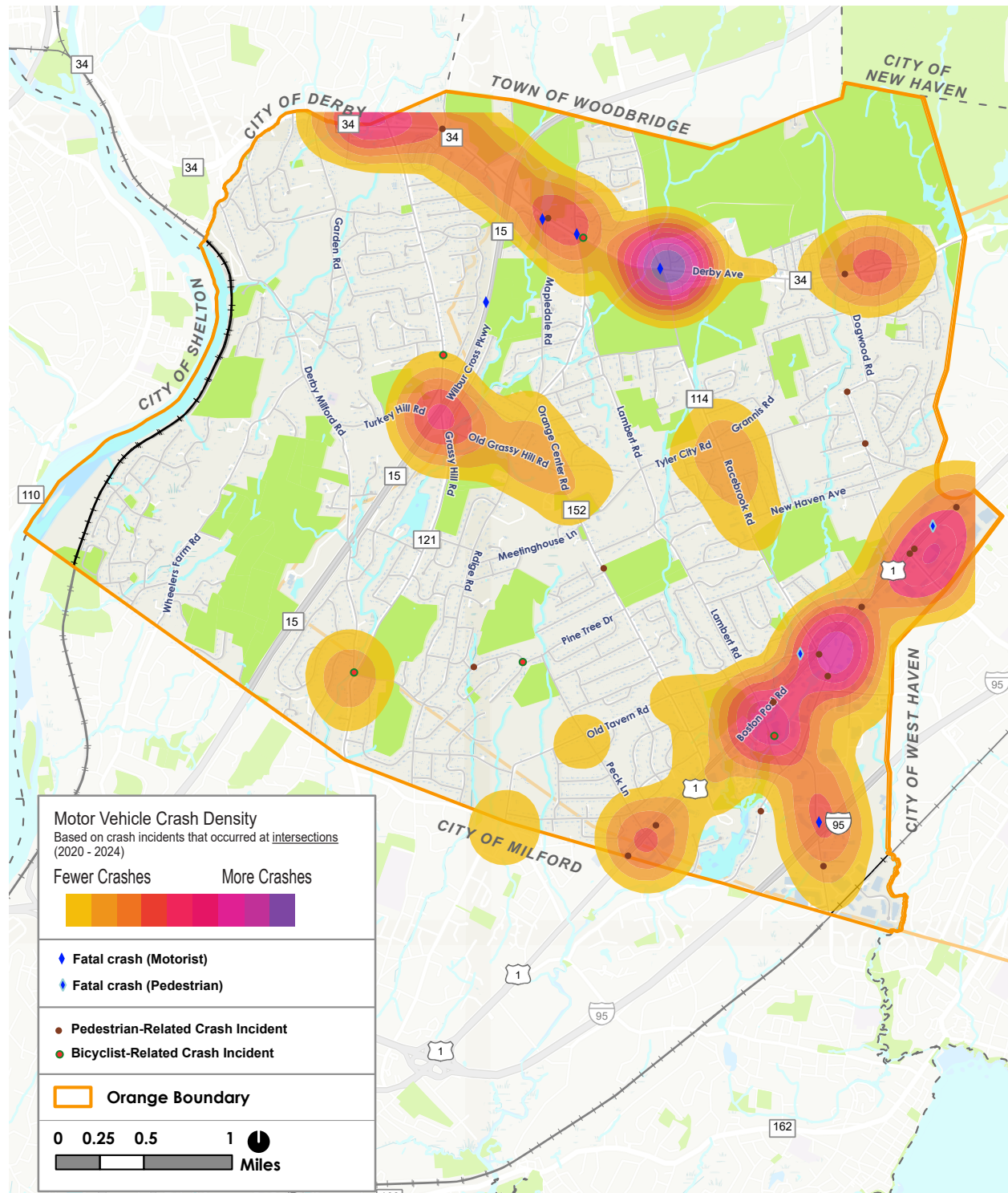
Intersection	Injuries	Fatalities	Total
Racebrook Road - Derby Avenue	17	1	50
Route 1 – Lambert Road / South Lambert Road	8	0	35
Route 1 - Racebrook Road – Old Tavern Road	6	0	33
Derby Ave. - Grassy Hill Road / Sodom Lane	13	0	26
Derby Ave. - Dogburn Road	14	0	24
Route 1 – Peck Lane	11	0	21
Derby Ave. – Orange Center Road	8	1	20

Note: (1) Data are based on crashes that were specifically reported as having occurred at an intersection; Excludes Interstate and Expressway crashes.

(2) Intersections identified in this table had at least 20 crashes over this period.

Figure 13: Intersection Crash Density and Incidents Involving Pedestrians and Bicyclists (2020-2024)

Source: Esri, CT DOT, BfJ Planning



RECENT AND PLANNED ROADWAY IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

A number of recently completed projects and planned capital improvements will have positive impact on Orange's roadway network. These efforts are summarized below:

Route 1 Roadway and Pedestrian Improvements (Ongoing)

- **Lambert Road to Racebrook Road** – Completed in 2022, CT DOT added a center turn lane to improve traffic flow and replaced an aging culvert beneath the roadway.
- **Milford City Border to Lambert Road** – Starting in 2024, CT DOT is initially focusing on improving traffic efficiency and safety which is compromised by the number of access driveways and high volumes along the corridor. Key interventions include widening the road in order to install a center turning lane, intersection upgrades, driveway and intersecting road enhancements, and pavement marking improvements. The upgrades are also coordinating new bus shelters with CTtransit.
- **Sidewalk Construction** – Currently, there are no sidewalks along Route 1 in Orange. However, CT DOT is in the design stage of exploring sidewalk construction on both sides of Route 1 in Orange from the Milford border to Lambert Road. This work will coordinate with anticipated upgrades in adjacent Milford.

Roadway Resurfacing

- **Town of Orange Three-Year Paving Projection** – While CT DOT maintains key State roadways such as Route 1, Orange Center Road, Racebrook Road, and Derby Avenue, the Town is responsible for repaving its local roads. The Town maintains a three-year paving action plan based on roadway priority areas.
- **Route 15 Pavement Rehabilitation** – CT DOT has initiated a project to rehabilitate the pavement on Route 15, covering both northbound and southbound lanes from approximately one mile south of the Derby-Milford Road overpass in Orange to the southern entrance of the Heroes Tunnel in New Haven. Construction is in its final stages.

Route 15 and Route 34 Interchange Improvements

- A project is underway to enhance the interchange at Route 15 and Route 34 in Orange. This initiative includes adding a northbound acceleration lane from Route 34 westbound and a southbound deceleration lane onto Route 34 westbound. The project also involves reconstructing the existing median on Route 15 and installing a concrete median barrier. Construction began in 2020.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Rail

Although Orange does not have its own rail station, residents benefit from proximity to the Metro-North Railroad stations in Milford and West Haven, allowing convenient access to New York City via the New Haven Line. Both stations are accessible from the center of Orange in less than a 20-minute drive.

While local advocacy has sought to establish a commuter station in Orange in recent decades, the opening of the West Haven station in 2013 has helped to boost local service. An Orange station is no longer proposed by DOT due to the completion of the West Haven Station. As a result, Orange has eliminated the Transit Oriented Development (TOD) zone from its ordinance.

CTtransit Bus Service

CTtransit provides bus service within Orange through the New Haven Division. Four routes operate with stops in Orange, connecting the Town to nearby cities like New Haven and Milford. These routes also connect riders to major transit hubs, allowing transfers to other bus lines and Metro-North commuter rail services. While Orange does not have an extensive local bus network, CTtransit remains an important transportation option for residents, workers, and visitors needing reliable public transit. Four bus routes currently serve Orange:

- **Route 261** – Known as the Boston Post Road route, connects downtown New Haven to the CT Post Mall in Milford, passing through Orange. The route operates on weekdays, roughly from 6:30am to 6:30pm. On Saturdays, the service runs from approximately 3:00pm to 10:00pm, and on Sundays, from 7:00am to 7:00pm.
- **Route 262** – Provides limited-stop service between downtown New Haven and the CT Post Mall in Milford, with stops to Orange's businesses and services off Marsh Hill Road. The route operates hourly, seven days a week, from approximately 6:00am to 12:00am.
- **Route 255** – Connects downtown New Haven to Seymour, passing through Orange. In Orange, the route serves the Derby Shopping Center, providing residents with access to shopping and transit connections. The service operates seven days a week, with varying schedules.
- **Route 265** – Primarily operates between downtown New Haven and West Haven. While the main route does not extend into Orange, certain designated trips continue into Orange via Bull Hill Lane, offering access to shopping destinations along the Boston Post Road corridor, such as Burlington Coat Factory. Service runs seven days a week, with varying schedules.

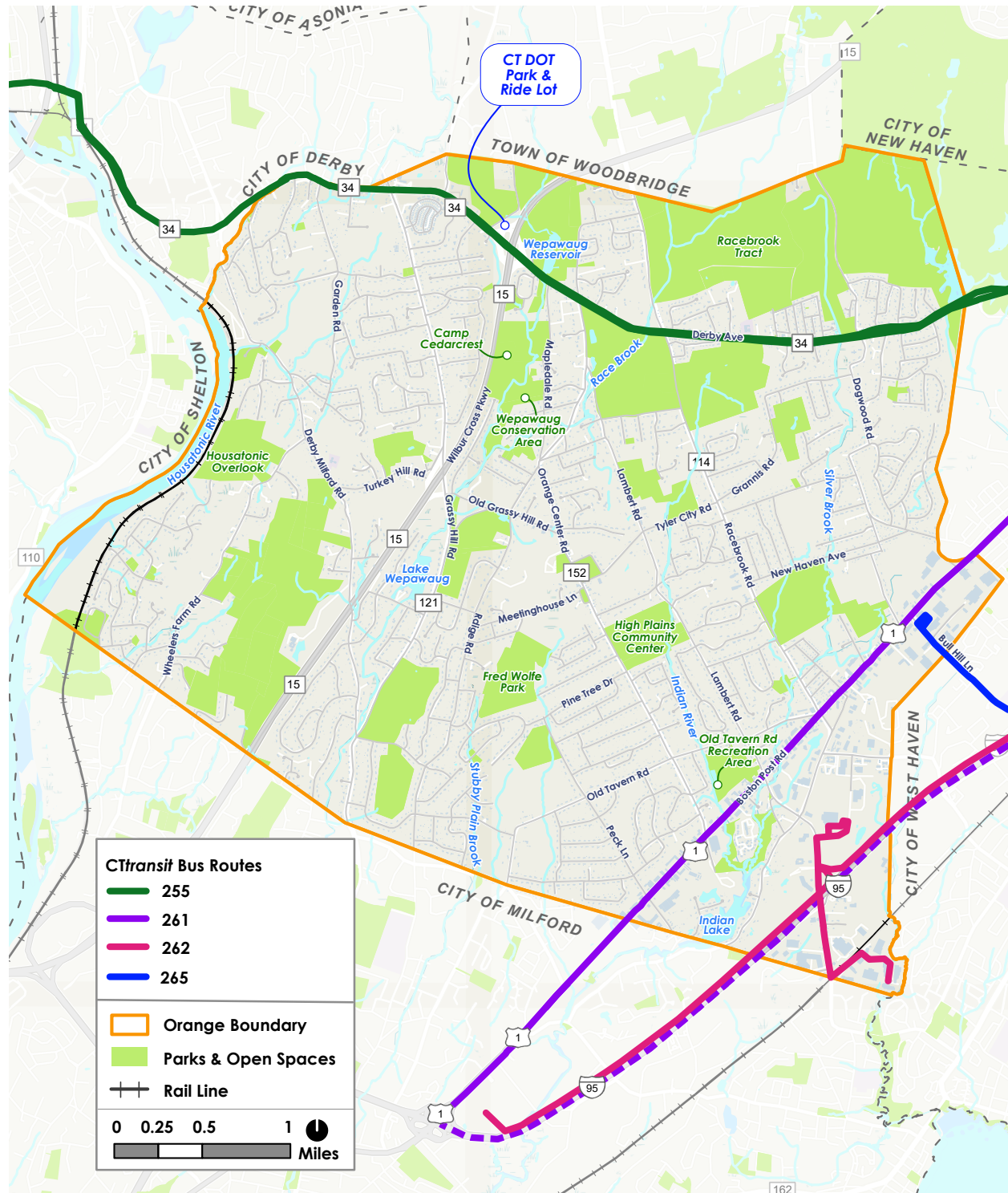
As can be seen from Figure 14, these bus routes generally provide east-west service via Route 34, Route 1, and I-95. There are no north-south service routes in Orange, leaving most of the residential areas in the center of the Town unserved.



CTtransit Bus on Boston Post Road
Source: Google Earth

Figure 14: CTtransit Bus Service in Orange (2025)

Source: Esri, CT DOT, BFJ Planning



Journey to Work Trends

According to the most recent U.S. Census Bureau ACS 5-year estimates (2023), residents in Orange over 16 years of age in the labor force primarily drove alone to work (86%), followed by 10% that carpool. Other modes of transportation account for a small share of the population's commutation patterns: Public transportation (1.4%); Taxi/Motorcycle (1.3%); Walk (1.3%). Note that these numbers have been adjusted to account for the roughly 14% of the resident workforce that works from home.

Commuter Parking / Park-and-Ride

CT DOT maintains a free commuter parking lot in Orange on Greenway Road (at the Route 34 / Wilbur Cross Parkway interchange) (shown on Figure 14). The lot is a resource for individuals who carpool as well as a park-and-ride option for users of the CTtransit Route 255 bus.

Greater New Haven Transit District – ADA Paratransit

Greater New Haven Transit District (GNHTD) provides ADA paratransit service in the Greater New Haven area where CTtransit's New Haven Division operates. This service is available within a ¾ mile perimeter of the fixed route service routes discussed above. Service is provided from 5:00am to 1:30am, seven days a week, and requires that trips must begin and end within the designated service area.

Town of Orange Dial-A-Ride

The Town provides a transportation service for seniors and residents with disabilities. Residents who are eligible must apply with the Town's Transportation Coordinator. Once approved, rides must be scheduled 24 to 48 hours in advance. The service operates Monday through Friday from 7:00 am until 6:00 pm.

The program transports within Orange as well as to Milford, West Haven, East Haven, New Haven, North Haven, Hamden, Derby, Shelton, and additional local areas by request on a case-by-case basis. The service is free for health aides and otherwise operates on a suggested donation basis.

PEDESTRIAN AND BIKE INFRASTRUCTURE

Pedestrian Facilities

As a suburban town with rural areas, Orange's development pattern has historically been auto oriented. There is a lack of formal sidewalks in Orange that connect uses. However, planned CT DOT sidewalk installation on Route 1 from the Milford city border to Lambert Road will provide significant investment in such infrastructure, allowing for safer pedestrian conditions along this key commercial corridor.

Although Orange does not have a Complete Streets policy, the Town's Zoning Regulations emphasize pedestrian safety, requiring that new developments include sidewalks to provide safe access from parking areas to buildings and to minimize pedestrian use of driveways and parking areas. For example, the recent development of Firelite Commons included the construction of a sidewalk along the adjacent portion of Old Tavern Road.

CTDOT Complete Streets - In 2023, the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT) introduced new design criteria requiring the inclusion of sidewalks, bike lanes, and crosswalks in all major state road projects. These standards apply to state roads and also influence local projects funded through state grants.

Orange's 2015 POCD highlighted two key sidewalk extension goals that have yet to be realized. (Refer to Figure 15). Such efforts would help promote safe pedestrian circulation within Orange. The planned sidewalk construction on Route 1 will provide an important opportunity to strategize future expansions.

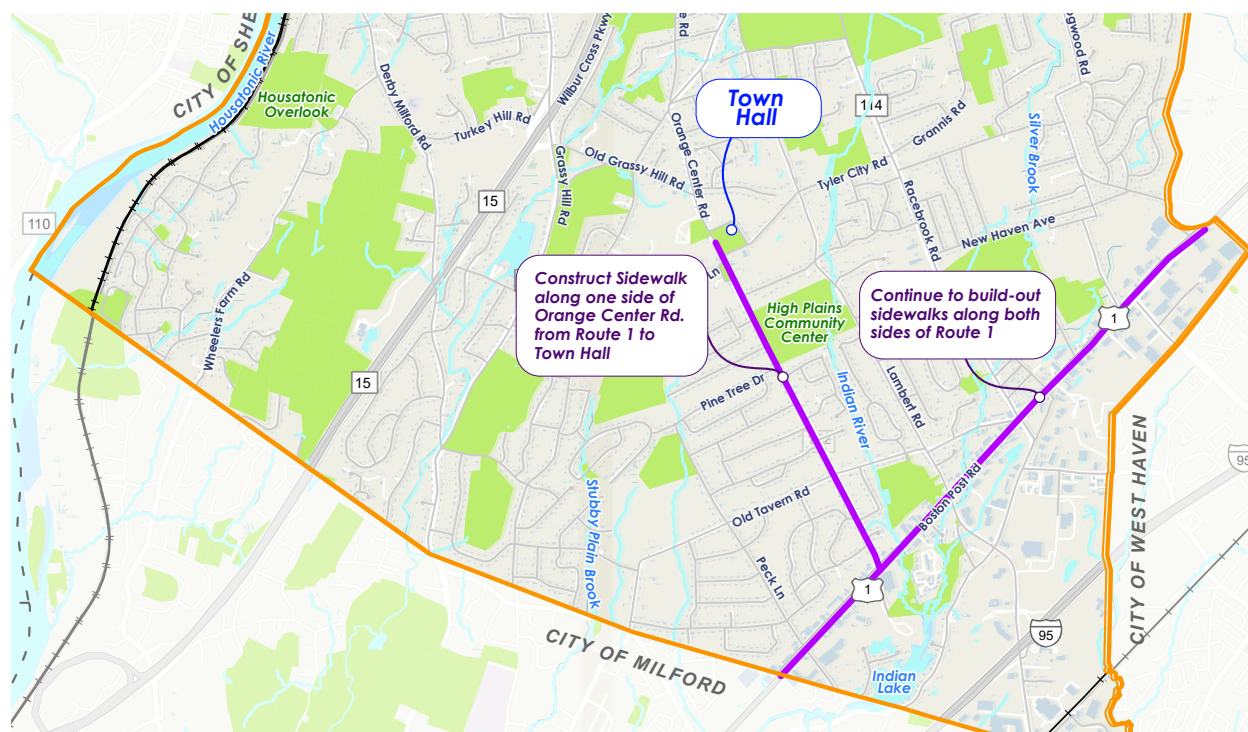
- Install continuous sidewalks on both sides of Route 1. Although partial sidewalk installments are already planned, the vision for sidewalks along both sides of the roadway should continue to be pursued with CT DOT.
- Additionally, there are no formal sidewalks along Orange Center Road, but the opportunity remains to coordinate with CT DOT to connect Town Hall and the High Plains Community Center to Route 1. If the Orange Shopping Center is redeveloped in the long-term, the sidewalk extension should be considered to this location.

Bicycle Facilities

Although there are no designated bike lanes or bike route infrastructure in Orange, the opportunity remains to better provide residents with safe biking options, as well as to coordinate with regional bike route connections.

Figure 15: Sidewalk Construction/Extension Priorities

Source: Esri, CT DOT, BfJ Planning



RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1. Continue to coordinate with CT DOT on ongoing and potential future roadway improvement studies and projects

Subsequent recommendations that suggest interventions on State roadways assume necessary partnership and coordination, as well as general ongoing town advocacy to illuminate areas where improvements are needed. Due the prevalence of CT DOT jurisdiction over Orange's most critical roadways, such coordination is paramount.

6.2 Address overall roadway efficiency and safety issues.

- 6.2.1 Target intersection upgrades to improve traffic safety at locations that have the highest crash rates. Intersections with the highest crash rates include:

- Racebrook Road - Derby Avenue
- Route 1 – Lambert Road / South Lambert Road
- Route 1 - Racebrook Road – Old Tavern Road
- Derby Ave. - Grassy Hill Road / Sodom Lane
- Derby Ave. - Dogburn Road
- Route 1 – Peck Lane
- Derby Ave. – Orange Center Road

It is anticipated that improvements on Route 1 will enhance the safety of this corridor. Crash data should continue to be monitored after such improvements are complete.

- 6.2.2 In tandem with regional growth and development, continue to study targeted opportunities to promote roadway traffic efficiency and congestion problems.

6.3 Address speeding and traffic calming in residential areas.

- 6.3.1 Continue to enforce speed limits through monitoring and citations.
- 6.3.2 Continue to consider traffic calming in residential areas. For example, in coordination with DOT when necessary, the Town should continue to consider location-appropriate traffic calming measures (i.e. portable speed monitors that alert drivers when they are over the speed limit, and red light cameras).

6.4 Ensure the vitality and traffic efficiency of Route 1 and adjacent uses.

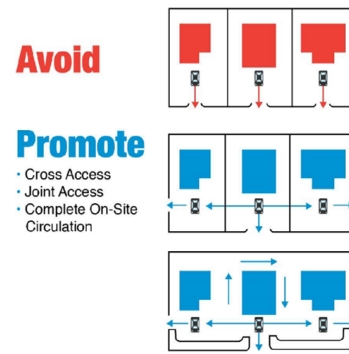
- 6.4.1 Continue to support CT DOT plans for Route 1 improvements, including the planned installation of sidewalks from the Milford border to Lambert Road.
- 6.4.2 Continue to ensure access management strategies during the site plan review process for new developments on Route 1.

Access Management – A key strategy of access management is to connect parking areas via easements between adjacent properties in an effort to reduce the number of access driveways on commercial corridors such as Route 1.

Efficient and safe site access along Route 1 has become a growing concern. Inefficient lot layouts, excessive curb cuts/driveways, a lack of connections between parking lots, and a lack of clear signage contribute to congestion, reduced customer turnover, and frustration for drivers.

Figure 16: Access Management – Driveway Consolidation Concept

Source: Center for Urban Transportation Research, University of Florida.



- 6.4.3 Promote better landscaping in large parking lot areas along Route 1 through the site plan and the subdivision review process. This will support the objective to efficiently divide and organize parking lots with landscaping and trees. Such features can promote safer parking conditions, mitigate heat island effect, and help with stormwater runoff.

6.5 Continue to improve pedestrian facilities.

- 6.5.1 Evaluate opportunities to improve pedestrian conditions around key community facilities, including crosswalks and signage.
- 6.5.2 In addition to the planned sidewalk installation on Route 1 from the Milford border to Lambert Road, advocate for sidewalk installation on both sides of the corridor, extending east to the border with West Haven. As sidewalks are built out, the Town should work with property owners to ensure adequate maintenance, including snow removal.
- 6.5.3 Continue to investigate the feasibility of installing pedestrian sidewalks or paths on one side of Orange Center Road, connecting Route 1 to Town Hall. It might be preferable to focus on the east side of the road as that is where some sidewalks/pathways currently exist near Town Hall.

6.6 Undertake a Town-wide bicycle study to assess current conditions and to identify opportunities for potential infrastructure improvements.

Although opportunities for designated bicycle infrastructure in Orange are limited, such a study could investigate opportunities for off-road recreational facilities, as well as longer-term strategies to establish safer on-road routes.

6.7 Continue to partner with CTtransit to ensure evolving demographic changes in Orange are met with adequate service.

7 OPEN SPACE, HISTORIC, & COMMUNITY FACILITIES

INTRODUCTION

The preservation of parks, agricultural land, open space, and historic resources is central to the Town of Orange's physical characteristics and quality of life for residents. This chapter identifies the Town's existing parks, open spaces, historic, and community facilities, while providing strategies for future preservation and expansion of these assets.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Open Space

Preservation of open space is a critical way to conserve natural resources, provide opportunities for recreational uses, and shape patterns of development townwide. Orange residents consider open space preservation as a high priority for the town and acknowledge its many community benefits. The Orange Land Trust, Conservation Commission, and the local government have successfully acquired a significant amount of land for preservation purposes in recent years. These entities work together to preserve and maintain over 1,000 acres of open space townwide.

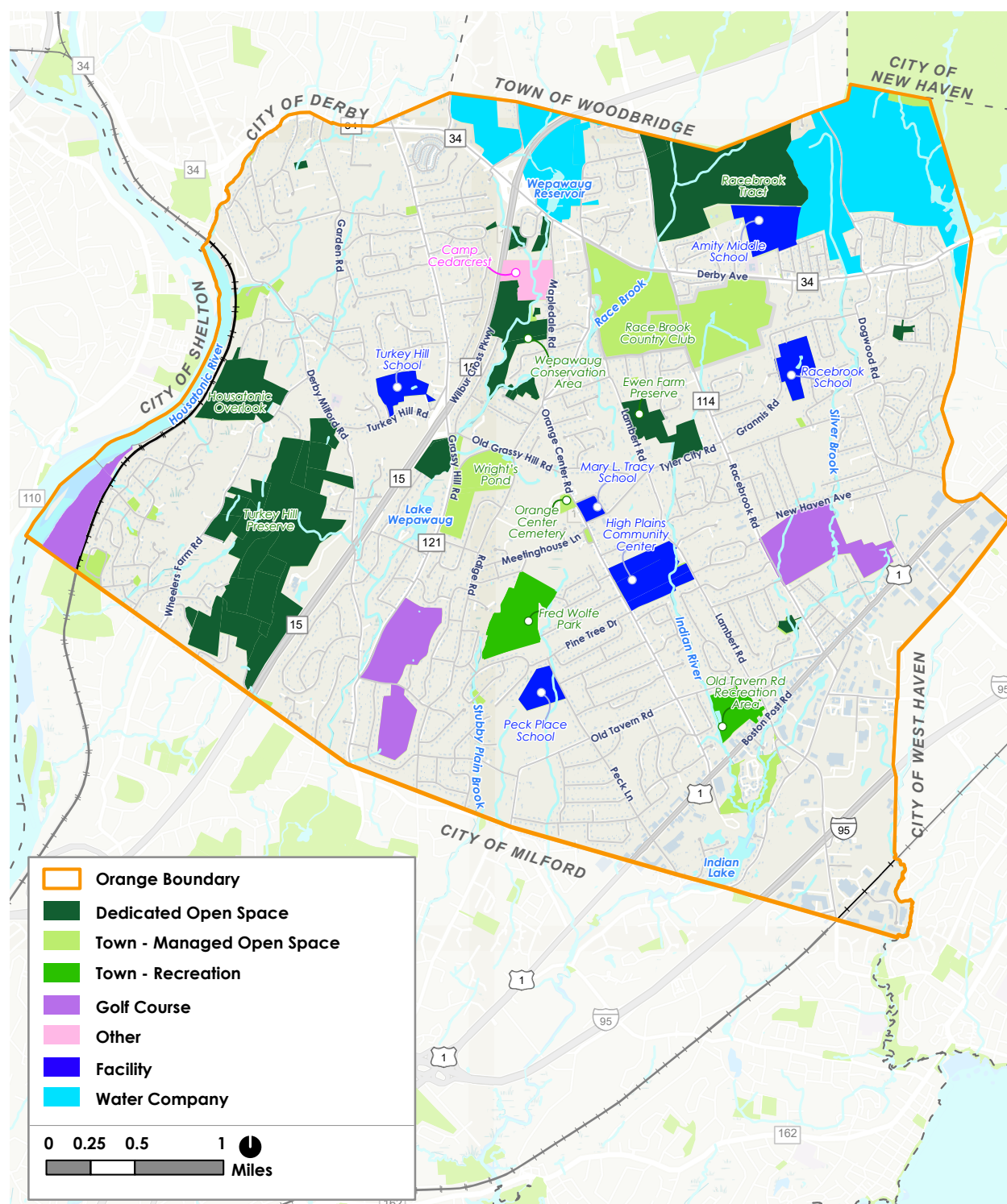
The Orange Conservation Commission operates under Town Charter (Section 6.6). The Commission is focused on the conservation and development of natural resources and stewardship of open space in the town. The Orange Land Trust, a private 501(c)(3) non-profit, currently holds 25 properties in Orange, totaling approximately 100 acres. The Land Trust also offers educational programs, environmental scholarships, and hosts events like hikes and wildlife lectures. Figure 17 shows the various types of open space within the Town of Orange. Open space includes dedicated open space, managed open space, recreational areas, and golf courses.



Housatonic Overlook

Figure 17: Open Space in Orange

Source: Esri, CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (CT DEEP), BfJ Planning



Dedicated Open Space

Dedicated open space includes Racebrook Tract, Wepawaug Conservation Area, Housatonic Overlook, Ewen Farm Preserve, and Turkey Hill Preserve. These areas are owned by either the Town or a non-profit organization and allow for public use of the land. A comprehensive Guide to Open Spaces in Orange can be found on the Conservation Commission's website.³

- Racebrook Tract, located on the northern border of Orange, consists of approximately 230 acres of open space in Orange and 181 acres in Woodbridge. It includes blazed trails, a handicapped accessible trail, and the Orange Arboretum.
- The Wepawaug Conservation Area, connected to the Orange Triangle Trail and Kowal Natural Preserve, is owned by the Orange Land Trust, the Town of Orange, and Camp Cedarcrest. The Orange Triangle Trail is of particular significance, as it follows the Wepawaug River and connects to the Wepawaug Conservation Area, the Whitney Tract, and the Ravine.
- Located on the west border of Orange, the Housatonic Overlook and Tucker's Ridge offer scenic views of the Housatonic Valley and various trails. This area was recently expanded with the Town and Land Trust's purchase of a parcel on Wheelers Farm Road in 2022.
- Positioned just to the southeast to the Housatonic Overlook, Turkey Hill Preserve is the largest swath of dedicated open space in Orange, stretching across 376 acres. This conservation area is composed of various natural features, such as ponds, gorges, streams, and steep hills.
- The Ewen Farm Preserve serves as a reminder of the Town's agricultural heritage, composed of 43 acres of a historic farm owned by the same family since 1820.



Tucker's Ridge



Turkey Hill Preserve
Source: Orange Historical Society

³ Orange Conservation Commission. Guide to Open Spaces in Orange, CT. Available at: <https://www.orangectconservationcommission.com/guide.html>.

Chapter 7: Open Space, Historic, and Community Facilities

Town – Managed Open Space

Managed Open Space refers to land that provides the environmental and scenic benefits of open space but may serve specific uses, such as the Orange Center Cemetery.

Wright’s Pond is a Town-owned site with various uses and habitats, as well as both active and passive uses. Community members visit for ice skating, fishing, and bird watching year-round, while other areas of the site consist of protected wetlands.

Additionally, in recent years, the Town of Orange has made significant contributions to the preservation of managed open space with the acquisition of previously privately owned open spaces. For instance, in 2021, the Town purchased the 287-acre Racebrook Country Club property. The Town owns the entire facility and leases it to Racebrook Country Club. The Town’s acquisition of this land protects its uses as a recreational area and green space.

Town – Recreation Areas

Fred Wolfe Park offers opportunities for play, including soccer fields, as well as trails. Similarly, Old Tavern Road Recreation Area is often used for organized sports, consisting of eight baseball/softball fields.

Golf Courses

Golf courses, such as Great River Golf Club, Grassy Hill Country Club, and Orange Hills Country Club, offer recreational opportunities for residents and visitors alike. Although some of these sites are privately owned, they contribute to the town’s total green space and ability for permeable surfaces to absorb stormwater (see Chapter 8: Infrastructure).

Facilities

Schools and community centers, such as Peck Place School, Turkey Hill School, Racebrook School, Amity Middle School, and High Plains Community Center provide open spaces for recreational uses, such as softball/baseball, soccer, ice skating, and walking. These spaces serve as hubs for community interaction, as well as active uses of open space.



High Plains Community Center

Water Companies

The areas highlighted in light blue on the map are owned by the South Central Regional Water Authority (SCRWA). See Chapter 8 for more information on the SCRWA.

NATURAL DIVERSITY

In addition to open space management, another critical aspect of sustainability is protection natural resources, such as sensitive habitats. Figure 18 shows areas of known locations, both historic and extant, that contain state and federal listed species. Species included on state lists are considered endangered, threatened, or of special concern under the Connecticut Endangered Species Act (CGS, Section 26-303 and Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies 26-303).⁴ These areas of natural diversity should be considered when pursuing conservation opportunities.

AGRICULTURAL LANDS

Orange's history of agriculture and farming contributes greatly to the present-day community character. Figure 19 shows parcels classified by SCRCOG as farmland. Additionally, characteristics, such as stone walls and barns, help create the scenic quality of Orange. Continuing to preserve these agricultural features is essential to support the rural character of the community.

Public Act 490 (PA-490) is one key strategy for encouraging agricultural uses. PA-490 is a law in Connecticut that allows farm, forest, or open space land to be assessed at its use value, as opposed to its market or highest and best use value for the purpose of local property taxes.⁵ This law supports agricultural landowners in Orange through creating more affordable local property taxes.

Examples of existing farms within Orange include Treat Farm, Grassy Hill Farm, Homestead Tree Farm, Casner Farms, Meadow Brook Valley Farm, Sunflower Farm, Cedar Hill Farm, Latella Farm, Field View Farm, and more.



Treat Farm



Maple View Farm

⁴ Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection (DEEP). *Natural Diversity Database*.

⁵ Connecticut Department of Agriculture. *Public Act 490 – The basics*.

Figure 18: Natural Diversity

Source: Esri, CT DEEP, BfJ Planning

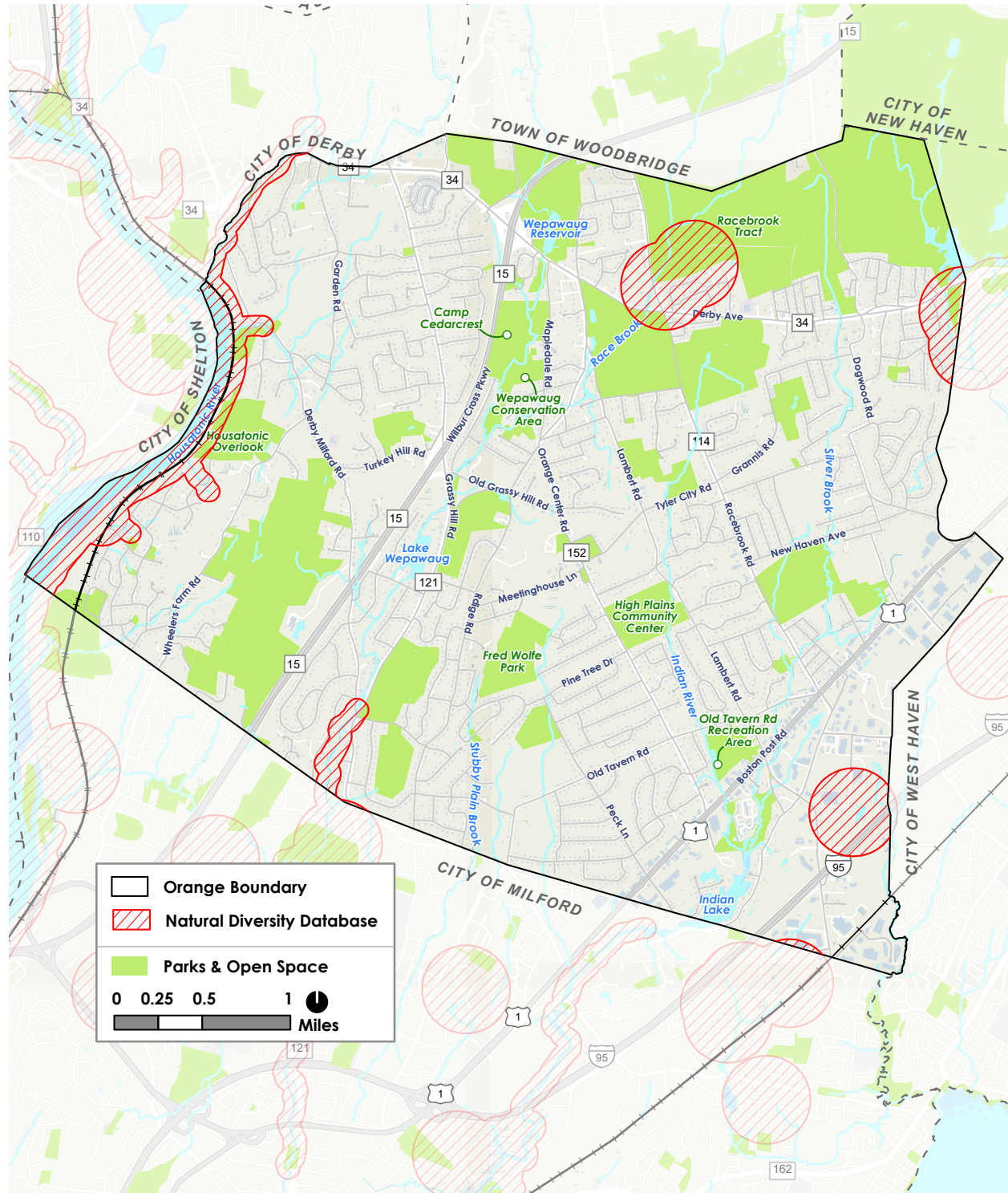
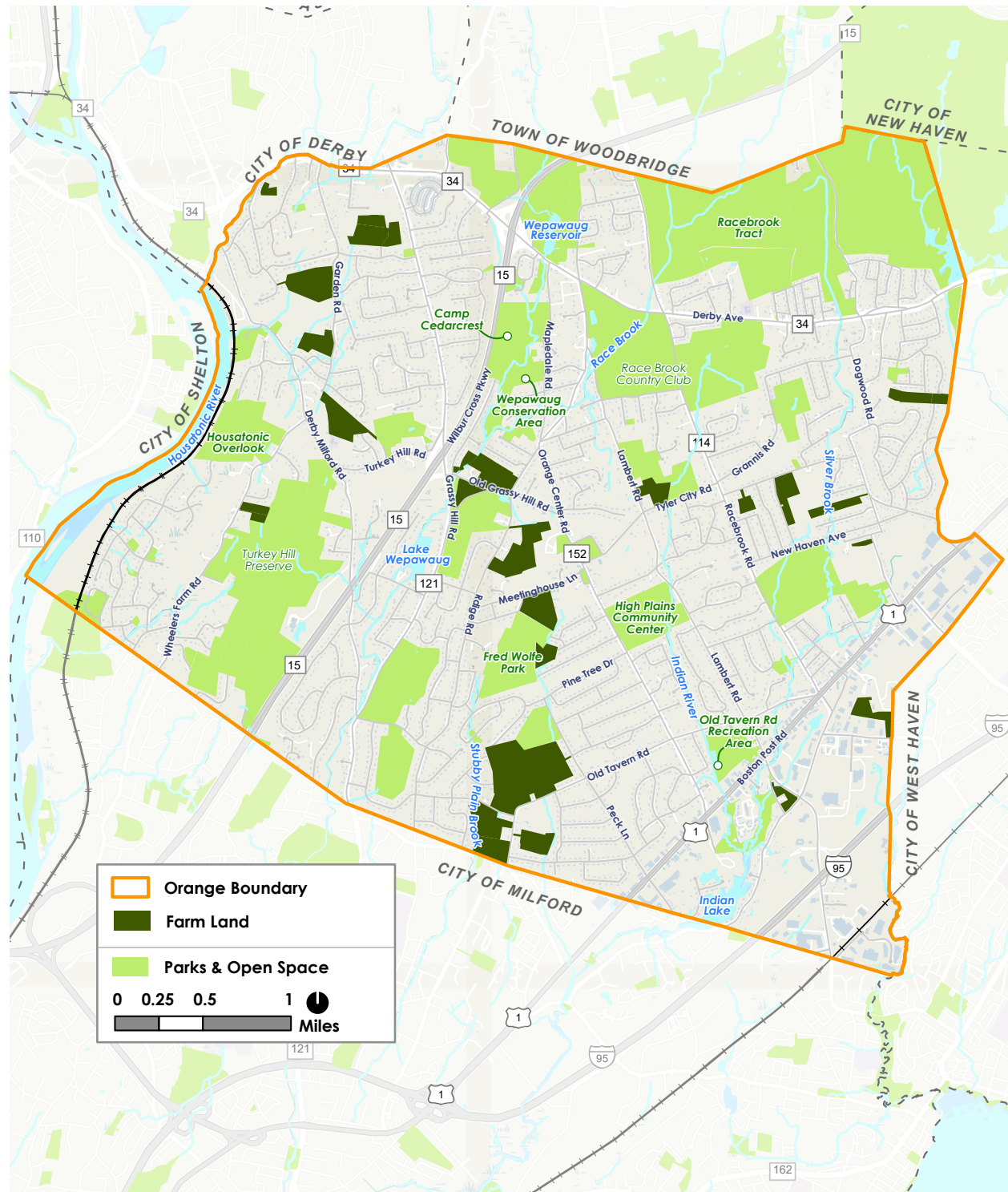


Figure 19: Farm Land

Source: Esri, SCRCOG, BFJ Planning



HISTORIC AND ARCHITECTURAL RESOURCES

Orange Center Historic District

Key historic resources include the Orange Center Historic District, designated as a Local, State, and National Register Historic District. The Orange Center Historic District was established in 1976 and is in the geographical center of the town (see Figure 20). Historic and architectural resources within this district date back from the late 18th to early 20th centuries and are centered around the Town Hall and Town Green. The presence of this district is a marker of the historic development of the village of Orange Center.⁷

Historic Places

Three significant sites in Orange are listed on the National and State Register of Historic Places (see Figure 20).⁸

- The Col. Asa Platt House, a federal style building, was constructed in 1810. It is thought to have been built by the same architect as the Orange Congregational Church, David Hoadley.
- The Henry F. Miller House, an international style house, was built in 1949.
- The William Andrew House, also referred to as the Bryan-Andrew House, was constructed around 1750 for the Bryan family. The area became known as "Bryan's Farm." The house was bought by the Town in 2000 and restored to be a museum.

Additionally, the Town owns three properties which are maintained by the Historical Society as educational sites and tributes to the town's history (see Figure 20).

- The Stone-Otis House was built in 1830 on the east side of the Town Green. The home was purchased by the Town of Orange in 1965. The Historical Society restored the home, and it is now open to visitors.
- The William-Andrew House/Bryan-Andrew House is in the process of being restored by the Historical Society. It is open as both a house museum and for local school tours to experience a typical day in early Orange.
- The Academy Museum was built in 1812 as a school and sits on the east side of the Town Green. It functioned later as Orange Town Hall and is now used by the Orange Historical Society. It is home to the Mary Rebecca Woodruff Research Center, which contains much of Orange's historical materials, including primary source documents, maps, newspapers, municipal documents, and more.



Orange Historic District



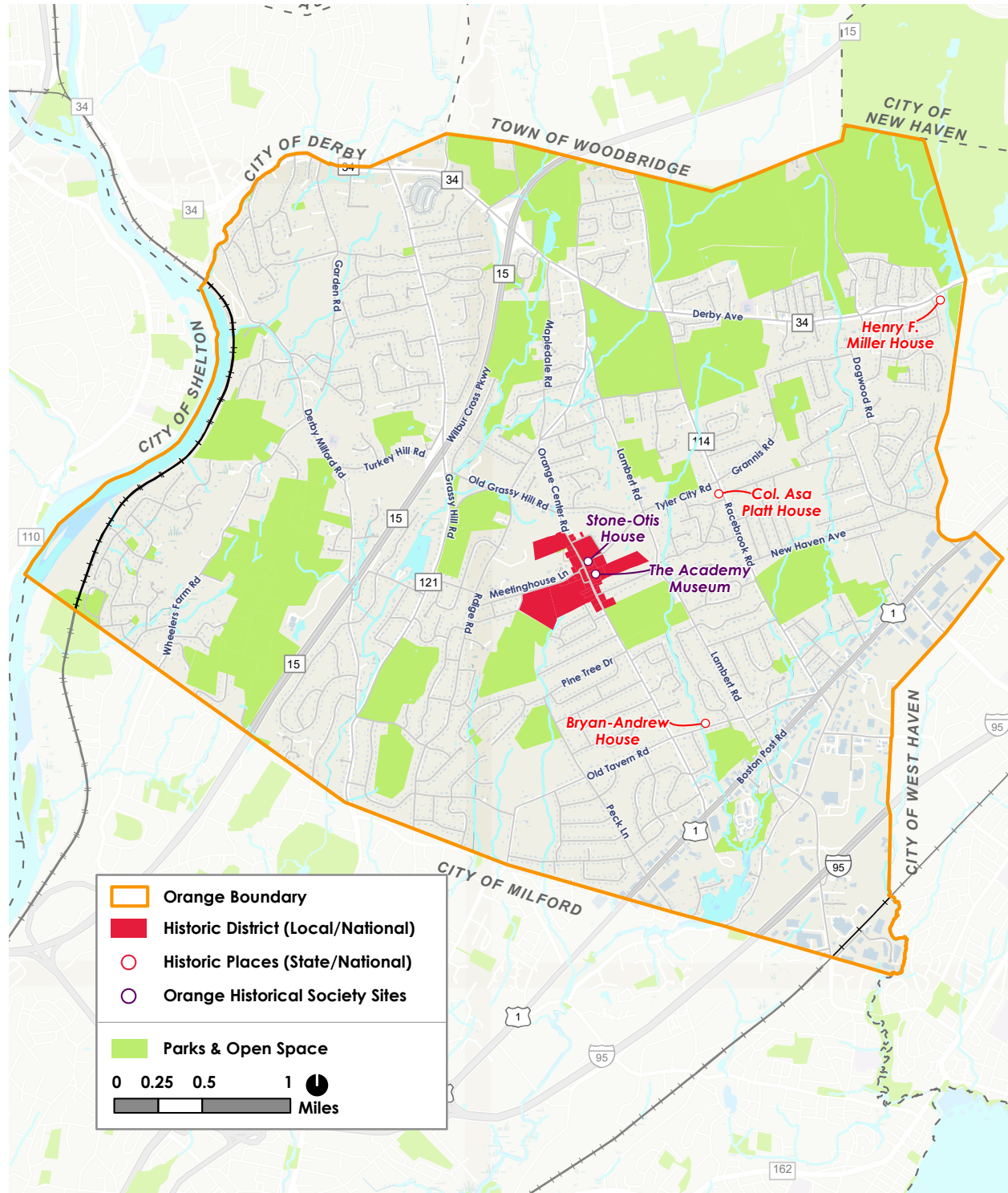
Stone-Otis House
Source: Orange Historical Society

⁷ Orange Historical Society. *Orange Historic District*.

⁸ Orange Historical Society. *Town of Orange Historic Places*.

Figure 20: Historic Resources

Source: Esri, Orange Historical Society, BFJ Planning



COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Community facilities in Orange are essential for the functions of education, public works, public safety and health, and recreation. Figure 21 shows the Town's municipal facilities, as well as local and regional educational facilities.

Local Educational Facilities

Residents of Orange are served by four public local educational facilities: Mary L. Tracy, Peck Place, Race Brook, and Turkey Hill.

Mary L. Tracy School was built in 1910 as Orange Center School. It currently houses an Early Childhood Center offering pre-school and kindergarten programs. Peck Place School, Race Brook School, and Turkey Hill School serve students in grades one through six. The Board of Education is currently undergoing a facilities study for the various public schools, evaluating potential improvements, such as air conditioning.

Local school enrollments (PK–6) have increased slightly since the previous POCD. In 2013, total enrollment was 1,193. By 2024, it had risen to 1,247 and remained stable in 2025 at 1,246. See Chapter 2: Demographics for more data on school enrollment.

Table 14: 2024-2025 Orange Public School Enrollment

Source: Orange Board of Education

School	2024 Enrollment	2025 Enrollment
Mary L. Tracy	190	188
Peck Place	381	386
Race Brook	378	374
Turkey Hill	298	298
TOTAL	1,247	1,246



Mary L. Tracy School



Peck Place School

Source: Orange Public Schools

Chapter 7: Open Space, Historic, and Community Facilities

Regional Educational Facilities

The Amity Regional School District (Regional School District #5) serves students from Orange, Woodbridge, and Bethany. Amity Middle School- Orange provides education for students in grades seven through eight. Amity Senior High School, located in Woodbridge, serves students in grades nine through twelve.

MUNICIPAL FACILITIES

Orange's municipal facilities are essential for the day-to-day function of the town and contribute to a high quality of life for residents.

High Plains Community Center

The High Plains Community Center features several recreation amenities, including picnic pavilions, soccer fields, tennis courts, softball fields, a disc golf course, fitness center, gymnasium, indoor pool, nature trail, and walking track.

The Center also houses the town's Community Services Department, which provides senior services, youth services, and accessible transportation. The Senior Center hosts classes, events, and recreational activities like pickleball, pool, and bingo. Transportation services are offered through donation-based program for seniors and residents with disabilities, focusing on medical appointments and, when possible, recreational/social errands. The transportation fleet consists of three handicapped-accessible vans and two cars. There have been increased transportation requests due to more residents aging in place.

Case Memorial Library

The Case Memorial Library, located in Orange Center next to Town Hall, provides a multigenerational educational and community space for residents. The library hosts a variety of events, including story times, arts and crafts clubs, and book clubs. It also offers computers for public uses, as well as meeting rooms for use by non-profit organizations and local government agencies.



Case Memorial Library

Chapter 7: Open Space, Historic, and Community Facilities

Orange Town Hall

The Orange Town Hall shares a site with the Orange Center Firehouse (Fire Station 1) and the Mary L. Tracy School. It houses several departmental offices essential to the day-to-day operations of Orange. It features a meeting room on the lower level, used for public meetings such as the Board of Selectmen and Plan and Zoning Commission regular sessions.

Police Department

The Police Department is responsible for public safety in the Town of Orange. They also manage calls for both medical and emergency services. Recent facility upgrades include improving the department's communication infrastructure, replacing the roof, and expanding the women's locker room.

Fire Stations

Orange has an all-volunteer fire department. There are two firehouses, Fire Station 1 and 2, located on Boston Post Road and Orange Center Road. The Fire Marshal's office, separate from the Orange Volunteer Fire Department, is responsible for enforcing fire and life safety codes and conducting fire prevention presentations.

Public Works

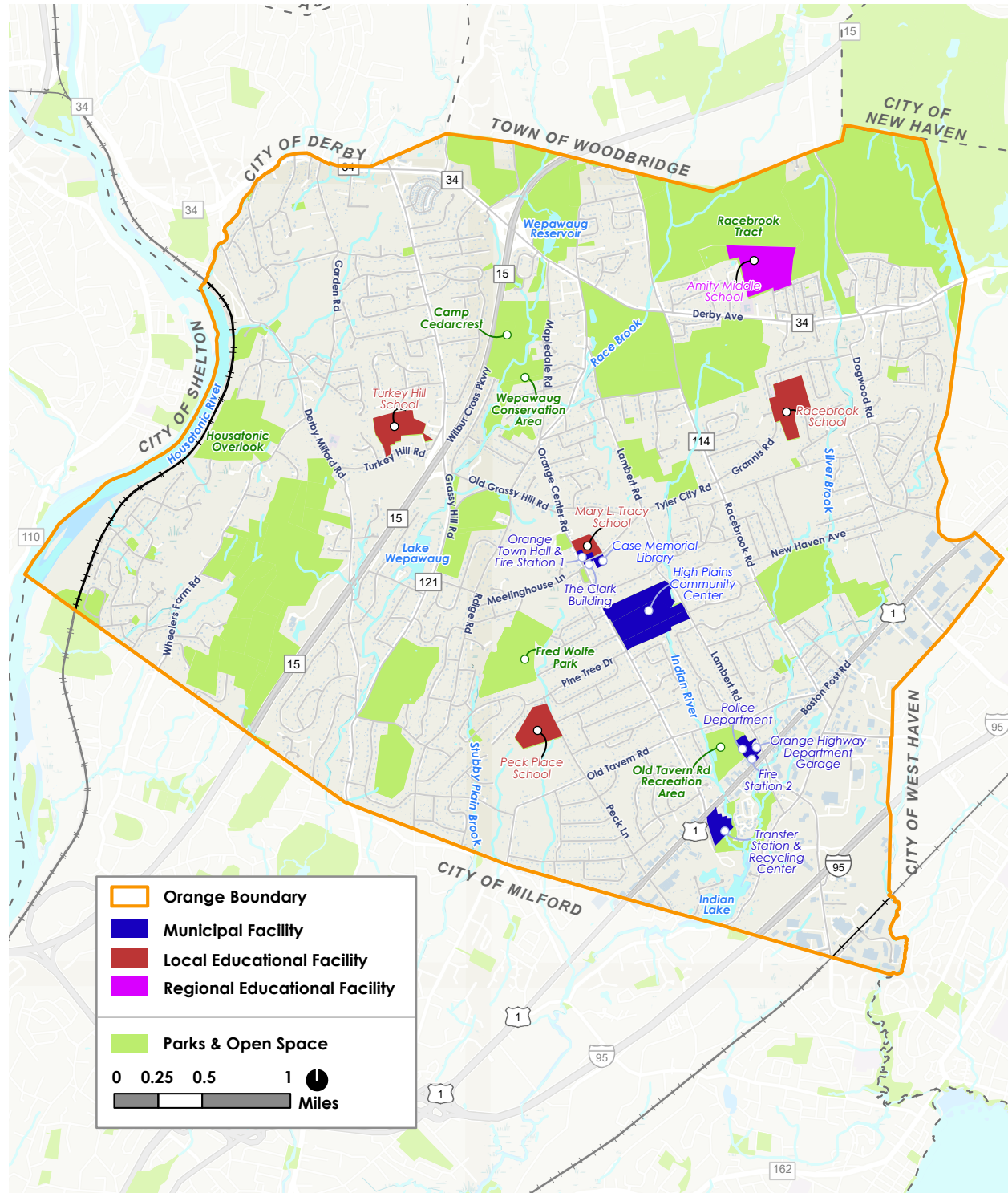
The Department of Public Works (DPW) supervises the Highway Department (plowing, paving, equipment maintenance), solid waste and recycling, and building facilities. The Department also oversees sewered areas of the town, as well as Town-owned buildings, including capital improvement projects, maintenance, and repairs.



Fire Station on Orange Center Road

Figure 21: Community Facilities

Source: Esri, Town of Orange, BFJ Planning



RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Continue open space preservation efforts.

- 7.1.1 Continue to preserve open space as opportunities present themselves.
- 7.1.2 Continue to convert managed open space and perceived open space into dedicated open space owned by the Town or Land Trust.
- 7.1.3 Continue to coordinate open space preservation efforts with the Conservation Commission, Orange Land Trust, and similar organizations.
- 7.1.4 Consider areas of natural diversity when pursuing conservation opportunities.

7.2 Document and promote recreational spaces.

- 7.2.1 Update the Conservation Commission's Guide to Open Spaces.
- 7.2.2 Update the open space inventory in Orange regularly and categorize parcels as appropriate.
- 7.2.3 Document and publicize existing trails and recreational spaces on the Town's website.
- 7.2.4 Create a Trail Plan that documents opportunities to enhance, expand, and connect trails townwide.

7.3 Maintain investment in recreational facilities.

- 7.3.1 Modernize existing recreational infrastructure and implement ADA upgrades where appropriate.
- 7.3.2 Consider the effects of climate change when investing in upgrades to recreational areas.

7.4 Continue agricultural/farmland preservation efforts.

- 7.4.1 Continue to preserve existing agricultural lands and lands that have potential for agricultural use.
- 7.4.2 Continue with reduced local tax assessment on agricultural lands (PA-490 farm assessment).
- 7.4.3 Continue to seek ways to support local farms and farmers, including leasing Town land to farmers.

7.5 Protect historic resources.

- 7.5.1 Continue to identify and protect historical and architectural resources and support commissions that protect them.
- 7.5.1 Promote educational programs about historic resources and increase awareness of historic resources through appropriate signage, displays, and events.
- 7.5.3 Offer educational resources for private owners of historic properties and available funding opportunities to support building maintenance.

7.6 Maintain and improve community facilities and services.

- 7.6.1 Maintain effective services related to education, public works, public safety/health, and emergency services.
- 7.6.2 Maintain and improve educational and municipal facilities when needed.
- 7.6.3 Address the needs of both youth and aging populations through programmatic and facility offerings.
- 7.6.4 Continue to maintain and improve transportation services for seniors and residents with disabilities.
- 7.6.5 Consider upgrades to facilities for fire services.

8 INFRASTRUCTURE

INTRODUCTION

The Town of Orange prioritizes the preservation of its natural resources, including water resources and open space. Orange will continue its efforts to enhance the Town's environmental health and resiliency from natural hazards.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Water Resources

Several rivers, streams, ponds, and reservoirs make up Orange's landscape (see Figure 22). Water quality protection is critical to environmental health, as many Orange residents access drinking water through wells and public water supply sources located within the town.

One important way to protect water quality is through management of water runoff. Increasing the amount of impervious surface, such as parking lots and roads, can reduce groundwater infiltration and flow, which in turn, reduces the water supplied to wetlands and aquifers. It can also accelerate runoff and transmit pollutants more directly into the town's watercourses and waterbodies. In Orange, most of the existing draining infrastructure consists of traditional storm drains and catch basins. These catch basins discharge directly to surface waters without treatment.

Some rivers in Orange are considered impaired by CT Department of Energy & Environmental Protection (DEEP), including the Housatonic River, Wepawaug River, Race Brook, Indian River, and Silver Brook (see Figure 23). Managing water quality is of particular importance when promoting environmental and public health in these areas.

Water Supply

The majority of Orange is served by public water provided by the South Central Regional Water Authority (SCRWA) (see Figure 24). The SCRWA 2024 Annual Report states that they serve an estimated population of 11,019 residents in Orange.⁹ Additionally, SCRWA possesses 580 acres of landholdings in Orange (see Chapter 7, Open Space map). Water supply is currently adequate in Orange, but extensions could be explored if needed as part of new developments.

⁹ South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority. *Annual Report Fiscal Year 2024*.

Figure 22: Water Resources

Source: Esri, CT DEEP, BfJ Planning

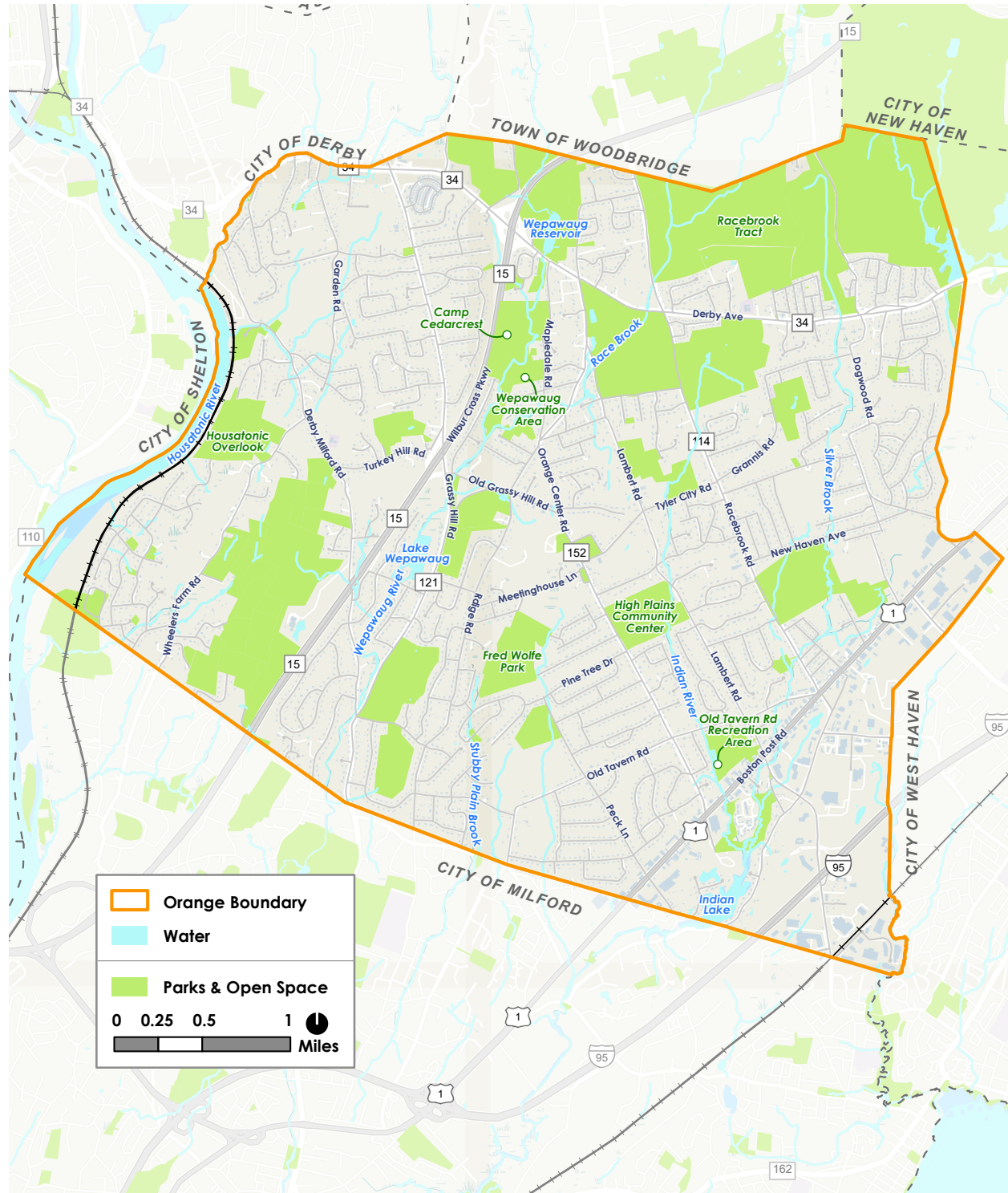


Figure 23: Impaired Waterbodies

Source: Esri, CT DEEP, BfJ Planning

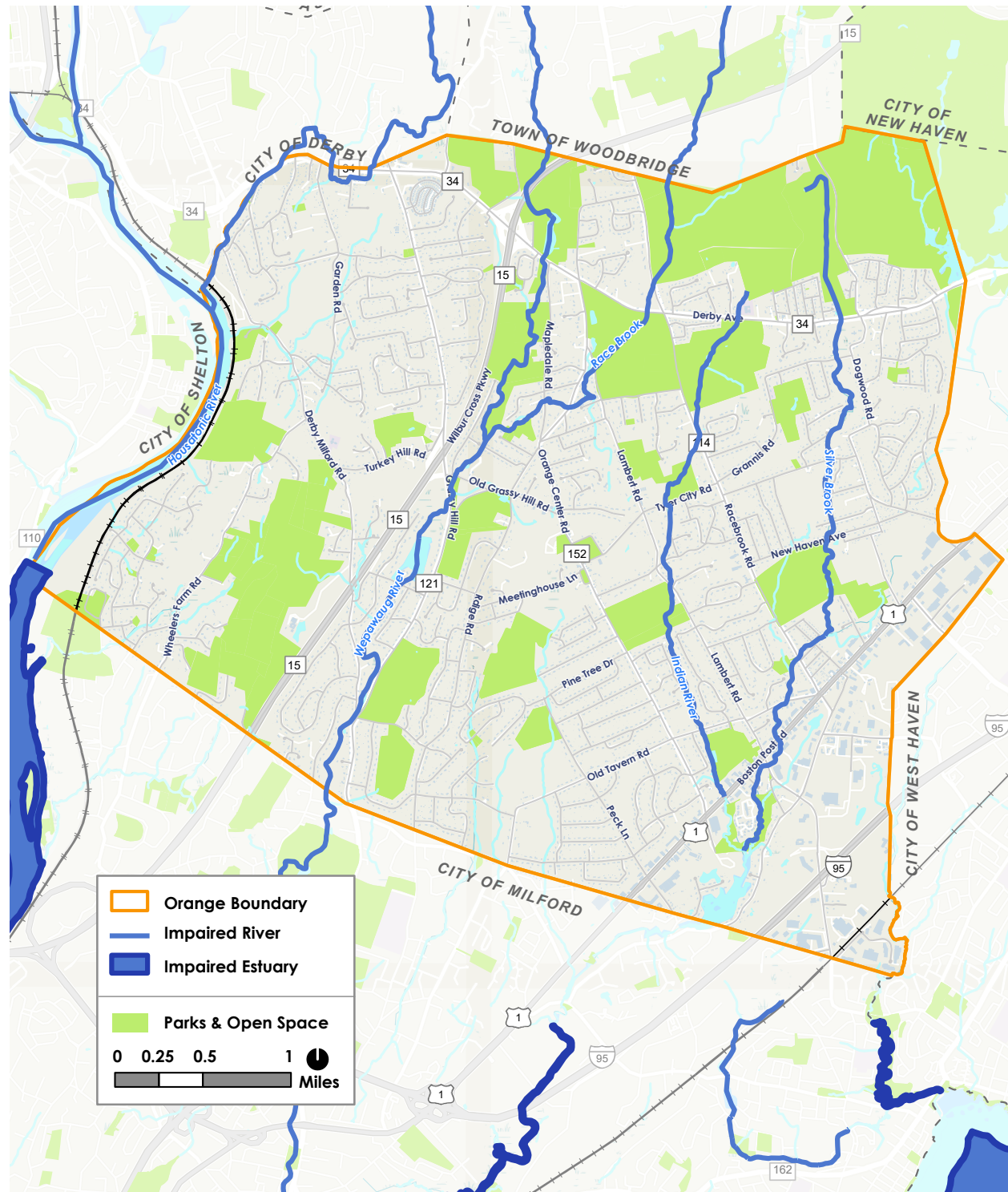
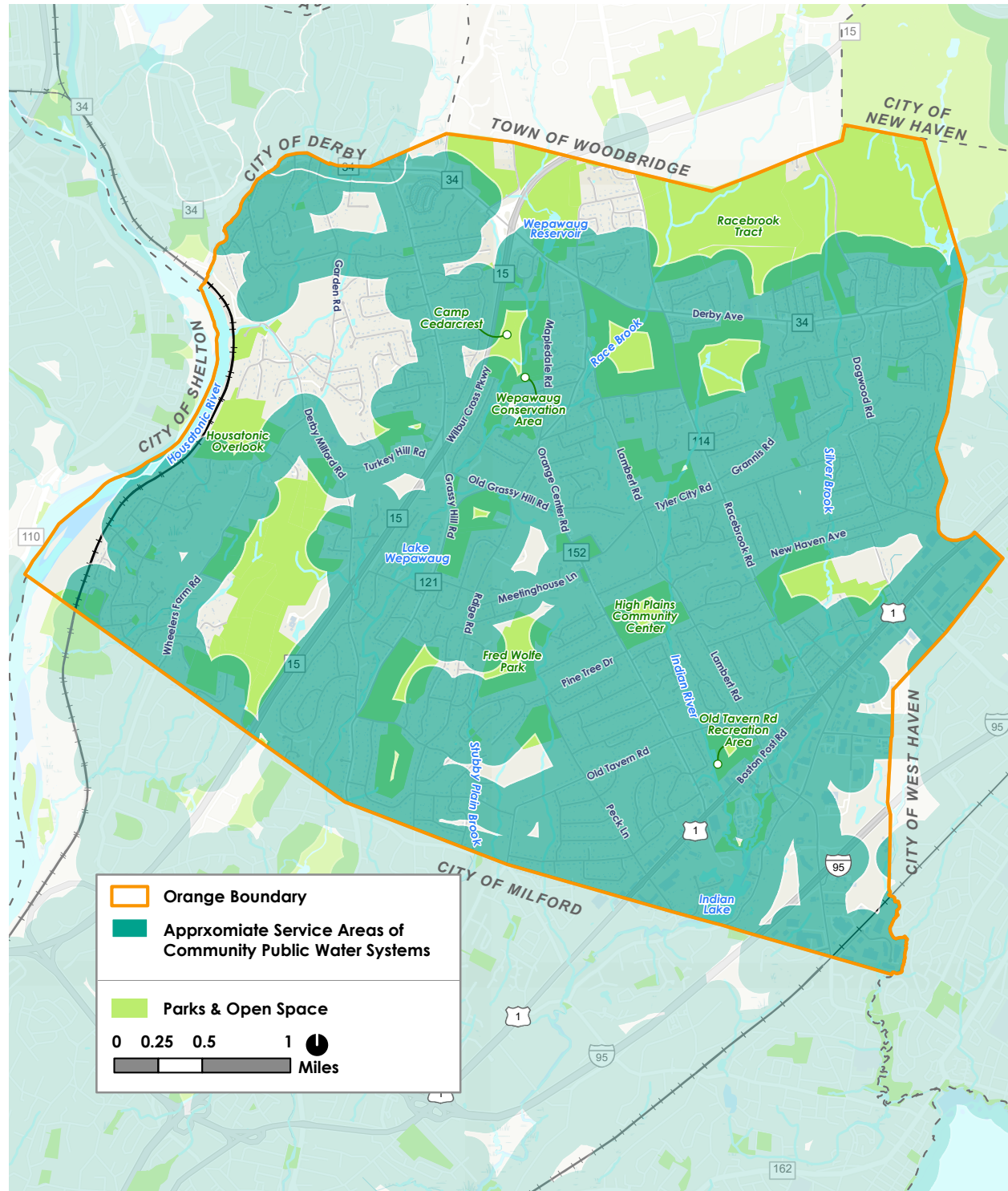


Figure 24: Service Areas of Community Public Water Systems

Source: Esri, CT Department of Public Health, BFJ Planning



Stormwater Management

Managing stormwater is another key aspect of environmental health for Orange residents. Areas of localized flooding have increased in recent years following major storm events. For instance, a significant flooding occurred in town during 2021 due to Tropical Storms Elsa and Ida. Tropical Storm Elsa occurred on July 9, 2021, and Ida occurred on September 1, 2021, resulting in 4.09 inches of rain and 5.77 inches of rain respectively. In response to these events, a drainage study was performed by Cardinal Engineering on behalf of the Town of Orange in the neighborhoods of Old Country Road/Coachmans Lane, Derby-Milford Road, and Pine Tree Drive/Peck Lane. Strategies identified to mitigate the flooding in Orange include replacing various culverts.

Flood Zones

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) provides spatial data on all floodplain areas for municipalities across the United States. A floodplain is defined as any land area susceptible to being inundated by floodwaters from any source. In Orange, areas with a 1% annual chance of flooding (Zones A and AE) are predominantly located in the immediate area surrounding the Housatonic River, Wepawaug River, Race Brook, Indian River, and Silver Brook (see Figure 24). Aside from these areas, most of Orange is located within the 500-year floodplain (Zone X). These areas are considered to be of minimal flood hazard.

SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES

Adopting sustainable practices is key to supporting a more resilient and healthier Orange that can adapt to climate change and be better prepared to recover from emergencies and natural disasters.

Sustainable Design/Green Building Practices

One way to encourage sustainable growth is to incentivize green building practices. Enforcing Low Impact Development (LID) techniques is one approach to creating more sustainable building practices, through minimizing the amount of impervious surfaces and promoting infiltration of stormwater runoff. Additionally, Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED), is a national standard for sustainable building design that encourages buildings to conserve energy and water, reduce carbon emissions, and promote stewardship of natural resources.

Energy Conservation

Orange can greatly increase its sustainability by transitioning to renewable energy sources for residents, businesses, and the municipality itself. Possible ways to facilitate this transition include replacing streetlights with energy-saving LEDs, installing solar panels on municipal buildings, and encouraging energy-efficient appliances for new development. EnergyStar, created by the EPA and US Department of Energy, promotes energy efficient products such as water heaters, furnaces, boilers, and windows. The Town could explore incentivizing EnergyStar products or products that meet its criteria in the development of new residential or commercial buildings.

Land Use Regulation

The Town can also explore amendments to its Zoning Code to promote sustainable land use strategies. Minimizing the amount of impervious surface townwide is extremely important to improving water quality and decreasing flooding following major storms. Limiting the percentage of impervious surface for new development is one strategy, as well as providing incentives for using pervious pavers, green roofs, and rain gardens.

SEWAGE TREATMENT

The majority of residential areas in Orange use on-site septic systems for sewage treatment. However, the commercial and industrial areas, located around the Route 1/Post Road corridor, are served by public sewers. Sewer service is provided through intermunicipal agreements between Orange and the City of West Haven and City of Derby (see Figure 26).

Specifically, the northwestern area of Orange, on the corner of Derby Avenue and Grassy Hill Road uses the Derby Water Pollution Control Facility, whereas the area along the Post Road uses the West Haven wastewater treatment facility. Both agreements limit the area allowed to be served by sewers. Any parcels proposed for development outside of the agreed upon sewer service areas would necessitate an amendment to the intermunicipal agreements. These amendments must be approved by the Orange Board of Selectmen.

Figure 25: FEMA Flood Zones

Source: Esri, FEMA National Flood Hazard Layer (NFHL), BFI Planning

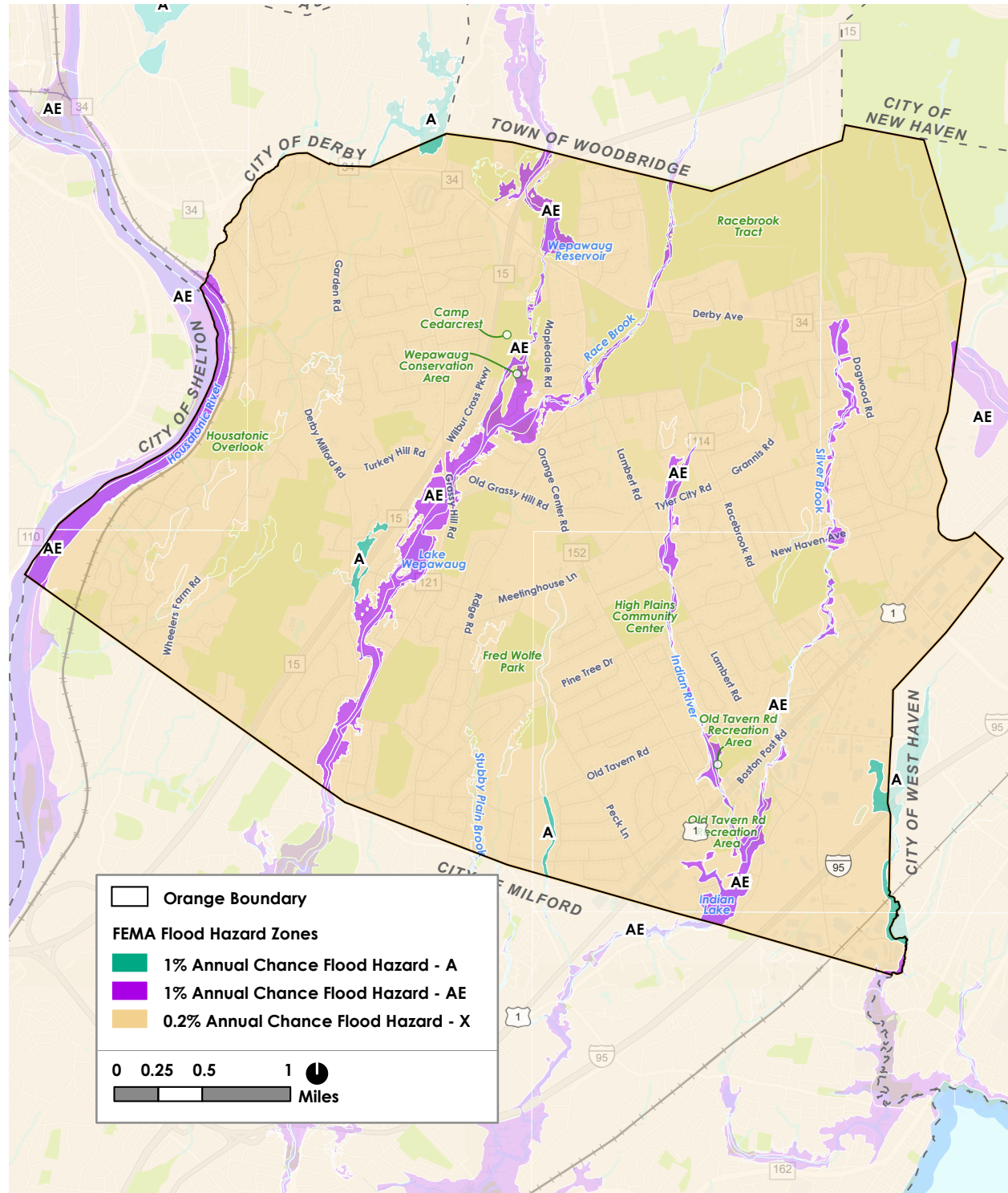
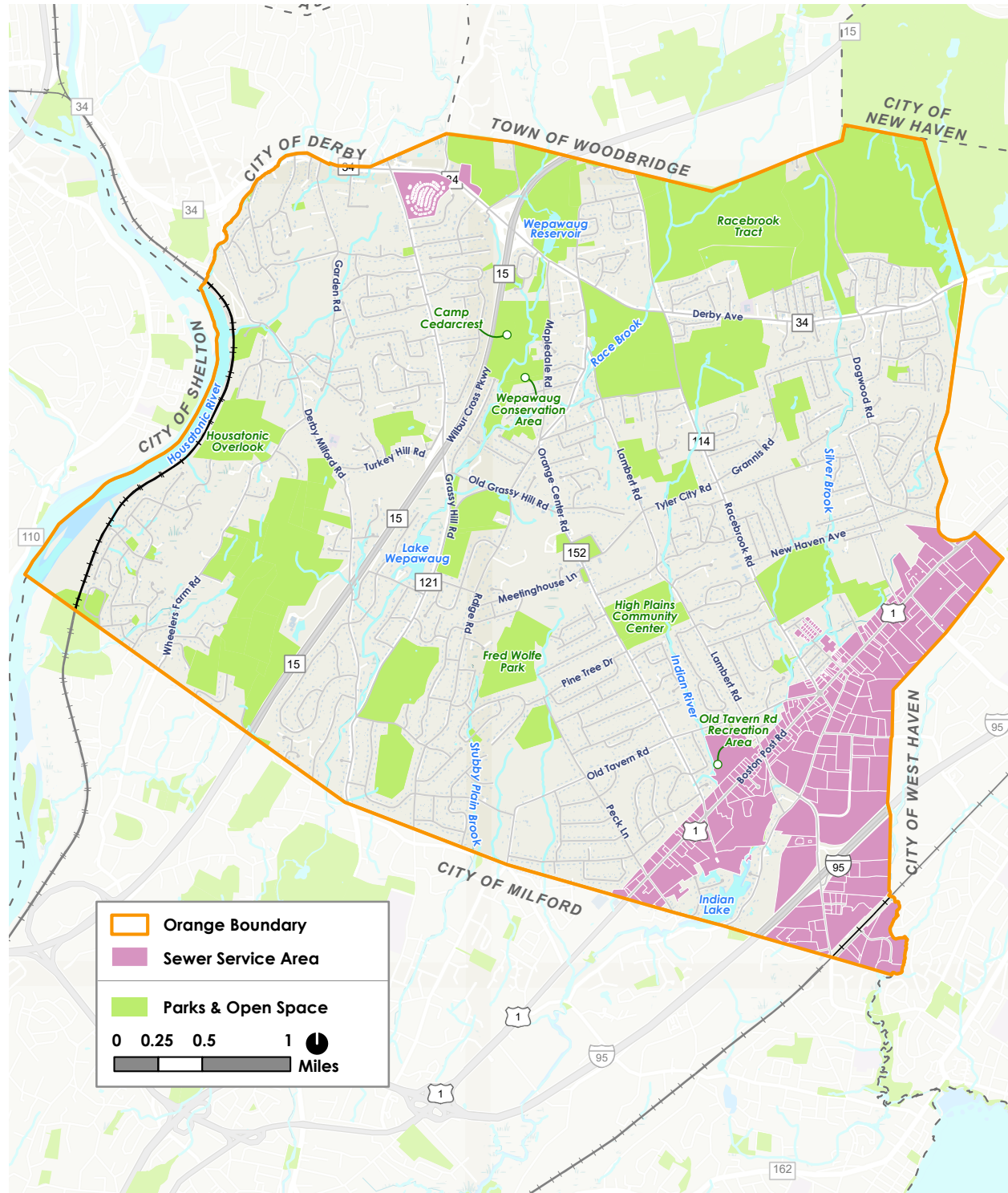


Figure 26: Orange Sewer Service Area

Source: Esri, Town of Orange, BFJ Planning



RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 Manage water quality and stormwater.

- 8.1.1 Continue to address storm drainage issues, particularly in neighborhoods experiencing flooding following storm events.

8.2 Promote sustainable building practices.

- 8.2.1 Promote green building design for residential, commercial, and municipal buildings
- 8.2.2 Incorporate land use regulations that minimize the creation of impervious surfaces and promote the use of native plantings.

8.3 Encourage energy-saving practices.

- 8.3.1 Explore the possibility of transitioning municipal facilities to more renewable energy sources, i.e. installing solar panels on roofs.
- 8.3.2 Transition municipal streetlights to energy-saving LEDs.
- 8.3.3 Consider incentivizing EnergyStar products or products that meet its criteria in the development of new residential or commercial buildings.

8.4 Manage sewage treatment and public water supply.

- 8.4.1 Explore ways to extend Orange's public water.
- 8.4.2 Maintain the capacity of Orange's public sewer systems.
- 8.4.3 Continue the use of septic systems in most areas of Orange and encourage or incentivize upgrades to the older or under-performing septic systems.
- 8.4.4 Evaluate necessary infrastructure upgrades and maintain existing intermunicipal sewer agreements.

9 FUTURE LAND USE & IMPLEMENTATION

INTRODUCTION

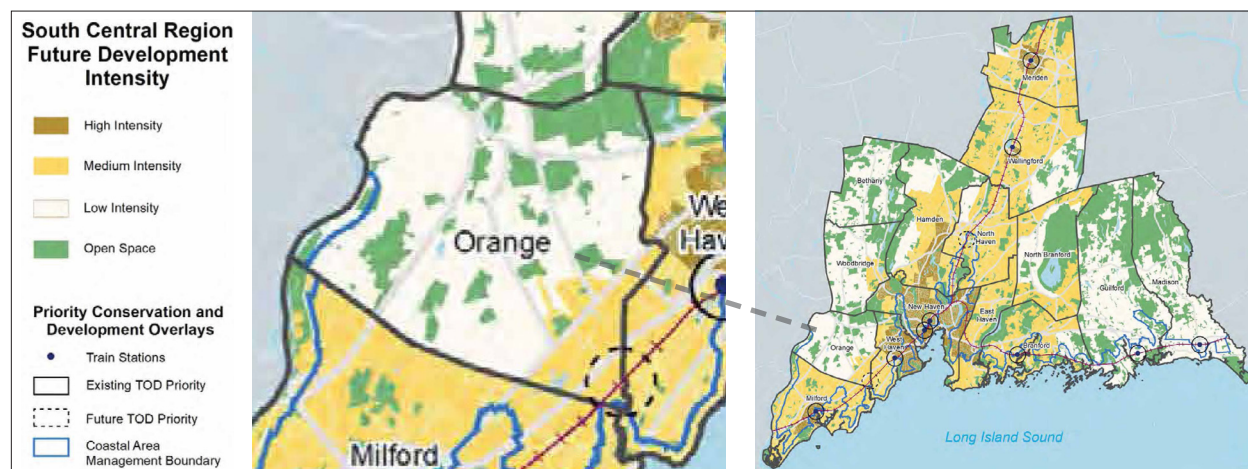
This chapter presents a general future land use plan based on the zoning and land use recommendations outlined in the previous chapters. An implementation matrix then details methods for the effective realization of the Plan's recommendation. As previously stated, this Plan is consistent with Section 8-23 of the Connecticut General Statutes (CGS), which requires each municipality to prepare and adopt a Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) every ten years. Also described below are the regional and State plans that include Orange. The South Central Regional Plan is categorized by intensity levels and the State Plan is categorized by Activity Zones.

SOUTH CENTRAL REGION: PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT 2018-2028

SCRCOG's 2018-2028 POCD includes a map illustrating a Future Development Intensity Plan (Figure 27). This map was developed by synthesizing existing land uses and the regional goals and strategies identified in the SCRCOG POCD. The Plan depicts areas of medium intensity surrounding Boston Post Road and I-95, highlighting this area's proximity to the regional transportation network, as well as a mix of single- and multi-family housing supported by a range of institutional, retail, office, and industrial uses. The other areas of Orange are depicted as low intensity, as they are not served by sewer infrastructure and are primarily composed of residential uses, agriculture, and preserved open space.

Figure 27: South Central Region Future Development Intensity Plan

Source: SCRCOG

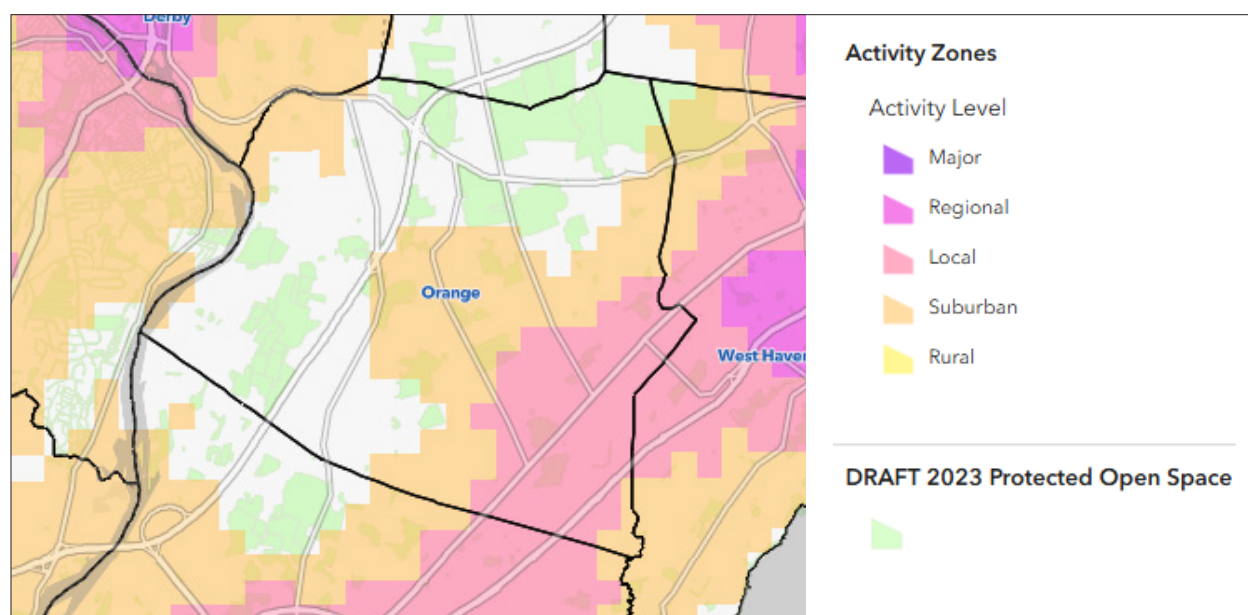


THE CONNECTICUT CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT POLICIES PLAN, 2025-2030

The State adopted the 2025-2030 Conservation and Development (C&D) Policies Plan in March 2025. The Plan includes Locational Guide Map to provide only general guidance for conservation and development (Figure 28). The map identifies Activity Zones where employment hubs, medical and educational institutions, civic and commercial uses, cultural attractions, and transportation assets are clustered. The Plan classifies the southwest region of Orange, surrounding Boston Post Road and I-95, as a Local Activity Level. The more central area of Orange is labeled as Suburban.

Figure 28: 2025-2030 Locational Guide Map

Source: CT Office of Policy and Management



COASTAL AREA MANAGEMENT (CAM)

While most people may not consider Orange to be a shorefront community, there is a very small part of the southeastern part of the Town that is within the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) coastal area management boundary. Some 36 Connecticut Coastal Towns, including Orange, have a designated CAM boundary.

Any municipal plan of conservation and development with a CAM designation should meet the following criteria: (A) be consistent with the municipal coastal program requirements, (B) give reasonable consideration for restoration and protection of the ecosystem and habitat of Long Island Sound, and (C) be designed to reduce hypoxia, pathogens, toxic contaminants and floatable debris in Long Island Sound.

FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

The future land use plan (Figure 29) is centered around the Town's goals to enhance open space and preserve existing neighborhoods, while also supporting local businesses and commercial areas.

Low-Density Residential

Most of Orange's housing stock is composed of single-family detached homes on one and a half acre lots (60,000 square feet). These areas rely on septic fields, which require reasonable lot sizes to function properly. Therefore, low-density residential is recommended to continue in these non-sewered areas throughout the town.

Multi-Family Residential

The multifamily areas shown in Figure 29 consist of existing multifamily housing, including affordable and senior housing. These housing arrangements are particularly important in serving Orange's senior population, including assisted living and independent living facilities. Multifamily housing throughout Orange relies on sewer service provided through intermunicipal agreements between the Town and the City of West Haven and City of Derby. Since the Town does not have its own sewer system, any future medium or high-density development would necessitate an assessment of current capacity.

Commercial

Following existing land use patterns, commercial uses, including retail, business and professional offices, restaurants, hotels, and places of worship, are directed towards Boston Post Road. It is important to note that improvements to the shopping center located on Orange Center Road could provide a smaller-scale, local commercial area within the center of Town.

Industrial

The Town's industrial uses, including manufacturing, warehousing, motor vehicle repair, etc., are located south-east of Boston Post Road. This area is strategically situated with access to both Boston Post Road and I-95.

Institutional

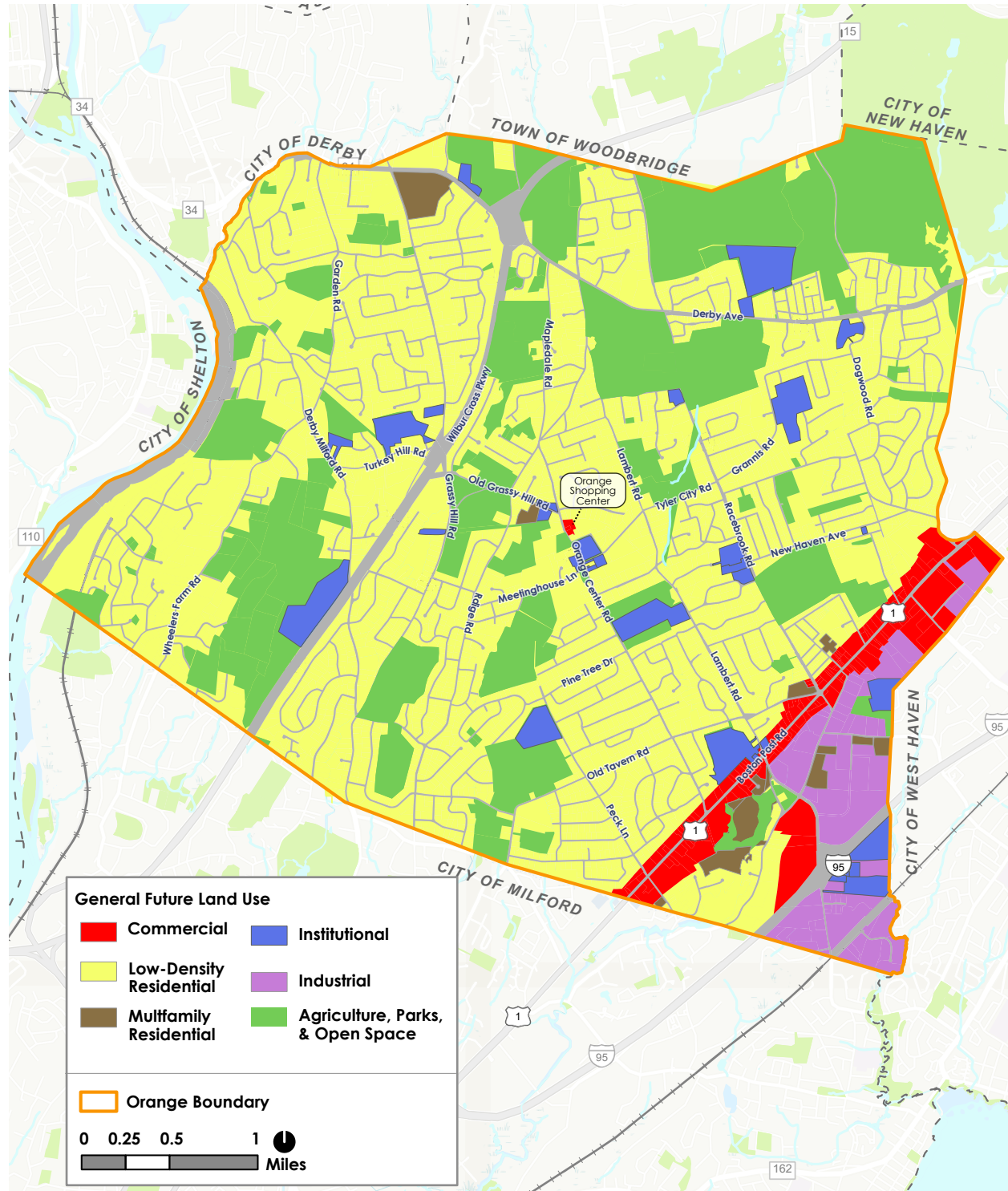
Institutional uses are expected to be maintained in place, including municipal buildings and schools.

Agriculture, Parks, and Open Space

Agriculture, parks, and open space are of particular importance to the Orange community. We recommend preserving these valuable resources to protect the town's agricultural and natural assets while also creating opportunities for recreation.

Figure 29: General Future Land Use

Source: Esri, Town of Orange, BFJ Planning



IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

It is important to note that the POCD alone cannot initiate change or ensure preservation. Plans must be actively implemented through coordination between departments, boards, commissions, and elected officials. The following implementation matrix details key recommendations, the general timeframe for each action, and the primary entity responsible for implementation. All actions are dependent on the availability of funding or other economic factors impacting the Town, yet this checklist can help guide future decisions.

LAND USE AND ZONING			
Goals and Objectives			
3.1 Maintain existing physical characteristics.			
3.1.1 Preserve existing single-family neighborhoods.			
3.1.2 Encourage mixed-use development, where appropriate.			
3.1.3 Maintain Orange Center's physical characteristics as a rural hamlet.			
Type	Responsibility	Partners	Timeframe
Policy/Regulations	Plan & Zoning Commission		Long-Term
3.2 Continue to preserve and expand open space.			
3.2.1 Encourage policies to help Orange continue to grow and maintain its open space.			
Type	Responsibility	Partners	Timeframe
Policy/Regulations	Plan & Zoning Commission	Conservation Commission, Land Trust	Long-Term
3.3 Route 1 is an important commercial corridor.			
3.3.1 Promote mixed-use development on Route 1.			
3.3.2 Implement stronger site design and landscape controls along Route 1 / Boston Post Road.			
3.3.3 Explore strategies to reduce curb cuts and enhance road safety along Route 1, especially with sidewalks.			
Type	Responsibility	Partners	Timeframe
Policy/Regulations	Plan & Zoning Commission	Department of Public Works, Economic Development Corporation, Chamber of Commerce	Short & Medium-Term
3.4 Land use regulations need regular review and updates to ensure consistency.			
3.4.1 Regularly review definitions and regulations.			
3.4.2 Examine the zoning code and identify potential revisions that would enable homeowners to make minor property upgrades more easily; examine potential regulatory changes to address common nonconforming parcels.			
3.4.3 Review performance, noise, and lighting standards, particularly in the core commercial areas.			
Type	Responsibility	Partners	Timeframe
Policy/Regulations	Plan & Zoning Commission	Planning & Zoning Department	Short & Medium-Term

HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS			
Goals and Objectives			
4.1 Preserve existing residential neighborhoods.			
4.1.1 Preserve established residential neighborhoods' scale and physical characteristics.			
Type	Responsibility	Partners	Timeframe
Policy/Regulations	Plan & Zoning Commission		Long-Term
4.2 Orange should continue to support a diverse housing stock to accommodate its population's evolving housing needs.			
4.2.1 Explore opportunities to streamline approvals and permitting processes for housing rehabilitation.			
4.2.2 Consider expanding the existing regulations for elderly housing conversions			
4.2.3 Consider adopting conservation subdivision regulations.			
Type	Responsibility	Partners	Timeframe
Policy/Regulations	Plan & Zoning Commission	Planning & Zoning Department	Medium & Long-Term
4.3 Continue to promote opportunities for affordable housing.			
4.3.1 Support private developers who seek Low Income Housing Tax Credits to provide some affordable units in market rate developments.			
4.3.2 Pursue state/federal funding programs to support the provision of affordable housing stock			
4.3.3 Require that affordable units be deed-restricted in perpetuity, where appropriate.			
Type	Responsibility	Partners	Timeframe
Policy/Regulations	Plan & Zoning Commission	Board of Selectman, Board of Finance	Long-Term

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT			
Goals and Objectives			
5.1 Strengthen and diversify the business base.			
5.1.1 Attract a broader mix of retail, restaurant, entertainment, and experiential businesses to revitalize commercial districts, particularly along Boston Post Road and reduce vacancies in large retail spaces.			
5.1.2 Encourage niche markets such as entertainment venues, boutique retail, and sports complexes to create a distinct commercial identity for Orange.			
5.1.3 Expand the Town's focus on advanced manufacturing, biomedical technology, and clean energy industries, utilizing available industrial-zoned land along Marsh Hill Road and the I-95 corridor.			
5.1.4 Actively market Orange to biotech and life sciences firms, capitalizing on New Haven's biotech ecosystem and Yale University's research network to attract medical device manufacturers, research labs, and health-tech startups.			
5.1.5 Promote the adaptive reuse of underutilized retail and industrial properties, converting spaces into mixed-use developments that integrate commercial, residential, and office uses.			

Type	Responsibility	Partners	Timeframe
Policy/Regulations	Plan & Zoning Commission	Economic Development Corporation, Chamber of Commerce	Short-Term
5.2 Enhance industrial sector opportunities and small business growth.			
5.2.1 Prioritize the reuse of industrial properties.			
5.2.2 Offer business development resources, including mentorship programs and marketing assistance, for locally owned small businesses.			
5.2.3 Develop an incubator or shared workspace program to support startups in creative, technology-driven, and professional services sectors.			
5.2.4 Collaborate with regional and state organizations, such as AdvanceCT, to provide small business grants, low-interest loans, and technical assistance.			
5.2.5 Continue to support the Chamber of Commerce and the Orange Economic Development Corporation.			
Type	Responsibility	Partners	Timeframe
Policy/Regulations	Plan & Zoning Commission	Economic Development Corporation, Chamber of Commerce	Medium & Long-Term
5.3 Promote adaptive reuse and redevelopment.			
5.3.1 Encourage revitalization of the existing local shopping center adjacent to the Orange Historic District.			
5.3.2 Target large vacant properties in Industrial Zones.			
5.3.3 Leverage tax incentive programs and grant funding to encourage investment in redeveloping vacant retail, office, and industrial properties.			
Type	Responsibility	Partners	Timeframe
Policy/Regulations	Economic Development Corporation	Chamber of Commerce	Medium & Long-Term
5.4 Support workforce development.			
5.4.1 Collaborate with local employers, universities, and trade schools to develop workforce training programs in high-demand industries such as biotech, advanced manufacturing, and logistics.			
Type	Responsibility	Partners	Timeframe
Program/Advocacy	Economic Development Corporation	Local universities, schools, and employers	Short & Medium-Term
5.5 Promote tourism and community events.			
5.5.1 Develop heritage tourism initiatives to enhance access to historic sites, museums, and cultural attractions that showcase Orange's history.			
5.5.2 Expand outdoor recreation opportunities, including hiking trails, guided agricultural experiences, and open-space event venues.			
Type	Responsibility	Partners	Timeframe
Program/Advocacy	Economic Development Corporation, Chamber of Commerce	Conservation Commission, Land Trust	Short & Medium-Term

5.6 Maintain a competitive business climate and retain key employers.

5.6.1 Provide targeted business incentives and expansion support to industries in biomedical technology, clean energy, logistics, and high-growth sectors.

5.6.2 Strengthen collaboration with state and regional economic development agencies to attract new employers and maintain Orange's business-friendly reputation.

5.6.3 Regularly evaluate zoning and regulatory policies to ensure they align with emerging market trends and community needs.

Type	Responsibility	Partners	Timeframe
Policy/Regulations	Board of Selectman, Board of Finance, Plan & Zoning Commission		Short & Medium-Term

TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY

Goals and Objectives

6.1 Continue to coordinate with CTDOT on ongoing and potential future roadway improvement studies and projects.

Type	Responsibility	Partners	Timeframe
Policy/Studies	Department of Public Works	Police Department, Plan & Zoning Commission	Long-Term

6.2 Address overall roadway efficiency and safety issues.

6.2.1 Target intersection upgrades to improve traffic safety at locations that have the highest crash rates.

6.2.2 In tandem with regional growth and development, continue to study targeted opportunities to promote roadway traffic efficiency and congestion problems.

Type	Responsibility	Partners	Timeframe
Policy/Studies	Department of Public Works	Police Department, Plan & Zoning Commission	Short & Medium-Term

6.3 Address speeding and traffic calming in residential areas.

6.3.1 Continue to enforce speed limits through monitoring and citations.

6.3.2 Continue to consider traffic calming in residential areas.

Type	Responsibility	Partners	Timeframe
Policy/Studies	Police Department	Department of Public Works	Short & Medium-Term

6.4 Ensure the vitality and traffic efficiency of Route 1 and adjacent uses.

6.4.1 Continue to support CT DOT plans for Route 1 improvements, including the planned installation of sidewalks from the Milford border to Lambert Road.

6.4.2 Continue to ensure access management strategies during the site plan review process for new developments on Route 1.

6.4.3 Promote better landscaping in large parking lot areas along Route 1 through the site plan and the subdivision review process.

Type	Responsibility	Partners	Timeframe
Policy/Studies	Department of Public Works	Police Department, Plan & Zoning Commission	Short & Medium-Term

6.5 Continue to improve pedestrian facilities.

6.5.1 Evaluate opportunities to improve pedestrian conditions around key community facilities, including crosswalks and signage.

6.5.2 In addition to the planned sidewalk installation on Route 1 from the Milford border to Lambert Road, advocate for sidewalk installation on both sides of the corridor, extending east to the border with West Haven.

6.5.3 Continue to investigate the feasibility of installing pedestrian sidewalks or paths on one side of Orange Center Road, connecting Route 1 to Town Hall. It might be preferable to focus on the east side of the road as that is where some sidewalks/pathways currently exist near Town Hall.

Type	Responsibility	Partners	Timeframe
Policy/Studies	Department of Public Works	Police Department, Plan & Zoning Commission	Short & Medium-Term

6.6. Undertake a Town-wide bicycle study to assess current conditions and to identify opportunities for potential infrastructure improvements.

Type	Responsibility	Partners	Timeframe
Studies	Department of Public Works	Plan & Zoning Commission, Police Department,	Short-Term

6.7 Continue to partner with CTtransit to ensure evolving demographic changes in Orange are met with adequate service.

Type	Responsibility	Partners	Timeframe
Policy/Studies	Department of Public Works	Police Department, Plan & Zoning Commission	Long-Term

OPEN SPACE, HISTORIC, AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES			
Goals and Objectives			
7.1 Continue open space preservation efforts.			
7.1.1 Continue to preserve open space as opportunities present themselves.			
7.1.2 Continue to convert managed open space and perceived open space into dedicated open space owned by the Town or Land Trust.			
7.1.3 Continue to coordinate open space preservation efforts with the Conservation Commission, Orange Land Trust, and similar organizations.			
7.2.4 Consider areas of natural diversity when pursuing conservation opportunities.			
Type	Responsibility	Partners	Timeframe
Policy/Regulations	Plan & Zoning Commission	Conservation Commission, Land Trust	Long-Term
7.2 Document and promote recreational spaces.			
7.2.1 Update the Conservation Commission's Guide to Open Spaces.			
7.2.2 Update the open space inventory in Orange regularly and categorize parcels as appropriate.			
7.2.3 Document and publicize existing trails and recreational spaces on the Town's website.			
7.2.4 Create a Trail Plan that documents opportunities to enhance, expand, and connect trails townwide.			
Type	Responsibility	Partners	Timeframe
Program/Advocacy	Conservation Commission	Land Trust, Plan & Zoning Commission	Short-Term
7.3 Maintain investment in recreational facilities.			
7.3.1 Modernize existing recreational infrastructure and implement ADA upgrades where appropriate.			
7.3.2 Consider the effects of climate change when investing in upgrades to recreational areas.			
Type	Responsibility	Partners	Timeframe
Policy/Regulations	Department of Public Works	Board of Selectman, Board of Finance, Plan & Zoning Commission, Conservation Commission, Land Trust	Medium & Long-Term
7.4 Continue agricultural/farmland preservation efforts.			
7.4.1 Continue to preserve existing agricultural lands and lands that have potential for agricultural use.			
7.4.2 Continue with reduced local tax assessment on agricultural lands (PA-490 farm assessment).			
7.4.3 Continue to seek ways to support local farms and farmers, including leasing Town land to farmers.			

Type	Responsibility	Partners	Timeframe
Policy/Regulations	Board of Select-man, Board of Finance	Plan & Zoning Commission, Conservation Commission, Land Trust	Long-Term
7.5 Protect historic resources. 7.5.1 Continue to identify and protect historical and architectural resources and support commissions that protect them. 7.5.2 Promote educational programs about historic resources and increase awareness of historic resources through appropriate signage, displays, and events. 7.5.3 Offer educational resources for private owners of historic properties on available funding opportunities to support building maintenance.			
Type	Responsibility	Partners	Timeframe
Program/Advocacy	Historic District Commission	Plan & Zoning Commission, Conservation Commission, Land Trust	Long-Term
7.6 Maintain and improve community facilities and services. 7.6.1 Maintain effective services related to education, public works, public safety/health, and emergency services. 7.6.2 Maintain and improve educational and municipal facilities when needed. 7.6.3 Address the needs of both youth and aging populations through programmatic and facility offerings. 7.6.4 Continue to maintain and improve transportation services for seniors and residents with disabilities. 7.6.5 Consider upgrades to facilities for fire services.			
Type	Responsibility	Partners	Timeframe
Policy/Regulations	Department of Public Works	Board of Selectman, Board of Finance, Plan & Zoning Commission, Volunteer Fire Department, Fire Marshal	Long-Term

INFRASTRUCTURE			
Goals and Objectives			
8.1 Manage water quality and stormwater.			
8.1.1 Continue to address storm drainage issues, particularly in neighborhoods experiencing flooding following storm events.			
Type	Responsibility	Partners	Timeframe
Policy/Regulations	Department of Public Works		Long-Term
8.2 Promote sustainable building practices.			
8.2.1 Promote green building design for residential, commercial, and municipal buildings.			
8.2.2 Incorporate land use regulations that minimize the creation of impervious surfaces and promote the use of native plantings.			
Type	Responsibility	Partners	Timeframe
Policy/Regulations	Plan & Zoning Commission	Department of Public Works	Medium & Long-Term
8.3 Encourage energy-saving practices.			
8.3.1 Explore the possibility of transitioning municipal facilities to more renewable energy sources, i.e. installing solar panels on roofs.			
8.3.2 Transition municipal streetlights to energy-saving LEDs.			
8.3.3 Consider incentivizing EnergyStar products or products that meet its criteria in the development of new residential or commercial buildings.			
Type	Responsibility	Partners	Timeframe
Policy/Regulations	Department of Public Works, Plan & Zoning Commission		Medium & Long-Term
8.4 Manage sewage treatment and public water supply.			
8.4.1 Explore ways to extend Orange's public water.			
8.4.2 Maintain the capacity of Orange's public sewer systems.			
8.4.3 Continue the use of septic systems in most areas of Orange and encourage or incentivize upgrades to the older or under-performing septic systems.			
8.4.4 Evaluate necessary infrastructure upgrades and maintain existing intermunicipal sewer agreements.			
Type	Responsibility	Partners	Timeframe
Policy/Regulations	Department of Public Works	Plan & Zoning Commission, Board of Selectman	Long-Term

APPENDIX A



Town of Orange

Plan of Conservation and Development Update

Public Survey Results

Prepared for:

Town of Orange

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BFJ Planning

February 21, 2025

Introduction

As part of the public engagement process for the 2025 Town of Orange Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) update, a public survey was conducted to gather community input on key issues and opportunities explored in the Plan. This feedback is critical to shape a POCD update that reflects the town's shared values and aspirations.

The survey was open from January 6th to February 17th, 2025, available online on the Town of Orange website and promoted through social media and local news outlets, such as the Milford-Orange Times, Orange Live, Orange Town News. Results from the survey will help guide the planning team in identifying priorities, shaping recommendations, and drafting the Plan's vision statement.

A total of 228 people responded to the survey. All responses remain confidential, with results presented in raw summary format. The survey included 16 multiple-choice, rating, or ranking questions, along with three demographic questions.

Overview of Key Findings

The planning team sought to gather input from a diverse range of stakeholders. Among the respondents, approximately 76% are Orange residents, 5% work in Orange, 18% are both residents and work in Orange, and 1% are neither.

Regarding age distribution, the largest groups of respondents were aged 40-49 (~26%) and 50-59 (~21%). The next most represented age groups were 60-69 (~18%) and 70-79 (~15%). Additionally, around 11% of respondents were aged 30-39, approximately 5% were 80 and older, and about 4% of respondents were aged 20-29.

Respondents generally had long-term ties to Orange, with over half (~53%) having lived in the town for more than 20 years. The remaining respondents were fairly evenly distributed among those who had lived in town for 2-5, 6-10, 11-15, and 16-20 years. Only 5% had lived in Orange for less than 2 years.

The following pages include all raw data from survey responses. Below is a summary of key takeaways.

Strengths:

- Top strengths: schools, quality of life (cleanliness, safety, access to nature, sense of community, etc.), location, and parks and open space.

Weaknesses:

- Biggest concerns: affordable cost of living, taxes, and public services (trash pickup, snow plowing, etc.).

Future Residency:

- Approximately 61% of respondents plan to stay in Orange for 10 years, 11% do not, and 22% are unsure.

Town Priorities for the Next 5 Years:

- High priority: preserving residential neighborhoods.

- Moderate priorities: expanding senior housing options (age-restricted) and adopting zoning code revisions to allow homeowners to make changes to their property more easily.
- Low priority: expanding housing options at a mix of price points.

Housing Types:

- Most respondents believe that Orange has the right amount and mix of housing types.
- Many respondents also see a need for more senior housing and affordable or workforce housing.

Concerns with Potential New Development:

- Top concerns: school capacity, infrastructure limitations (water, sewer), and parking/traffic.

Open Space:

- Approximately 47% of respondents view converting private open space into dedicated open space owned by the Town or Land Trust as a high priority. Around 31% see it as a moderate priority.

Healthier Environment and Greener Community:

- Strong support for preserving and expanding open space, improving the pedestrian and bike environment, and protecting drinking water.

Economic Development:

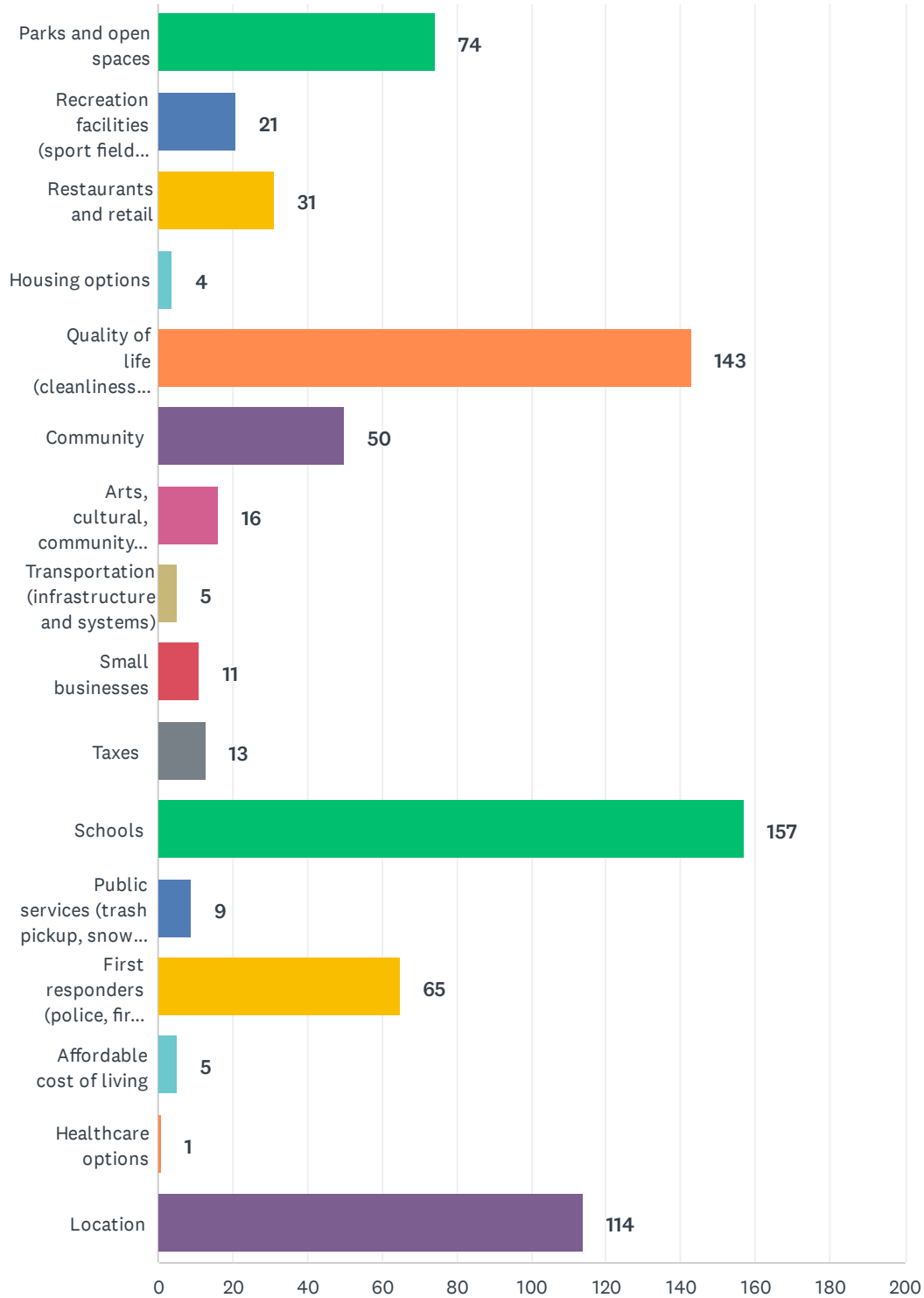
- Most popular strategy: supporting local entrepreneurship, especially small businesses.
- Most desired new businesses: cafes, bakeries, coffee shops, restaurants, and bars.

Transportation:

- Approximately 63% of respondents support the creation of sidewalks on both sides of Route 1.
- Around 68% of respondents feel uncomfortable walking and think that sidewalks are inadequate.
- Around 55% of respondents stated they experience traffic/congestion regularly, 53% encounter speeding, and 43% reported issues of bicycling safety.

Q1 What are the Town's greatest strengths? Please select your top three (3) choices.

Answered: 227 Skipped: 1



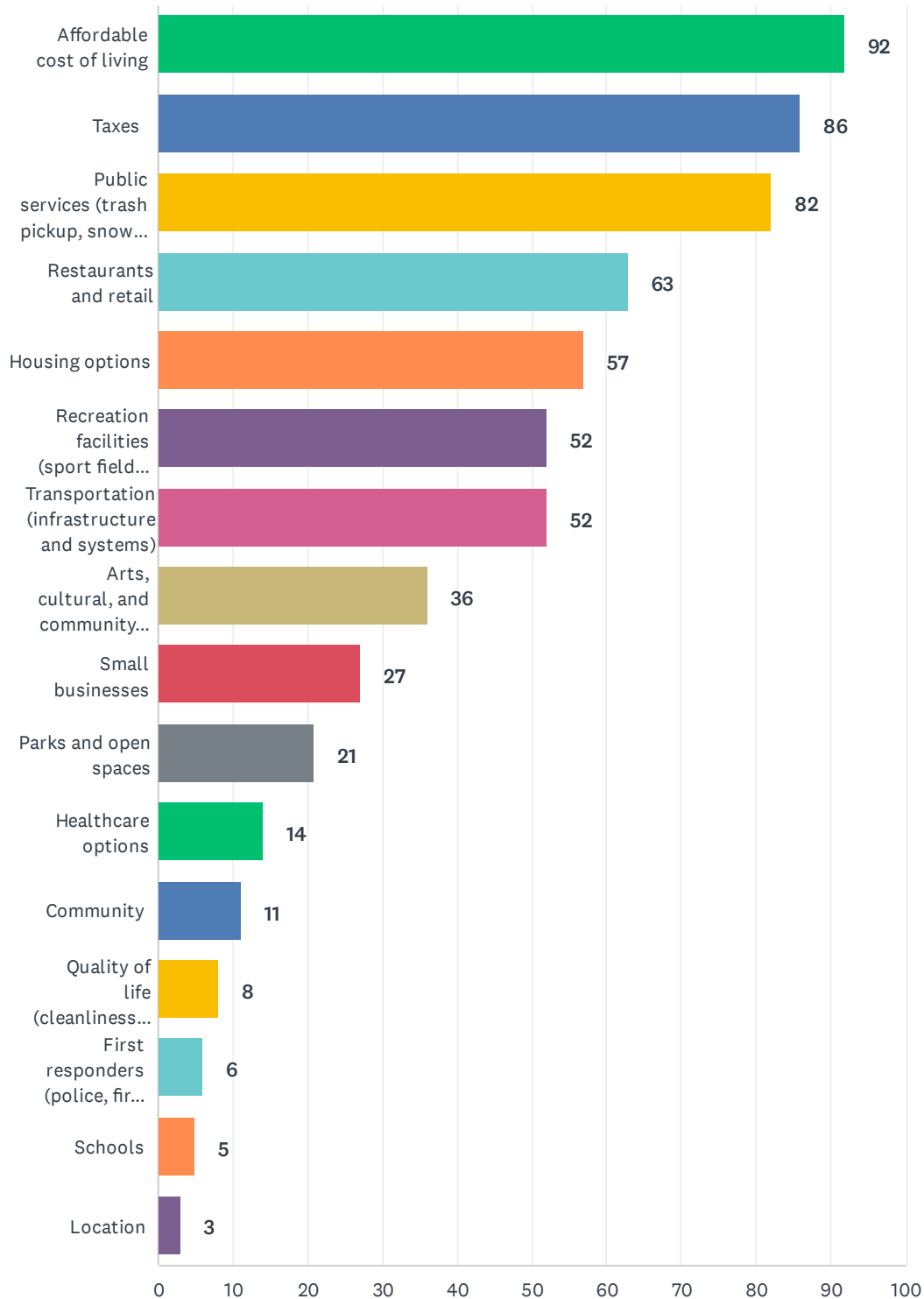
Town of Orange Plan of Conservation and Development

ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Parks and open spaces (1)		32.60%	74
Recreation facilities (sport fields, indoor facilities, etc.) (2)		9.25%	21
Restaurants and retail (3)		13.66%	31
Housing options (4)		1.76%	4
Quality of life (cleanliness, safety, access to nature, sense of community, etc.) (5)		63.00%	143
Community (6)		22.03%	50
Arts, cultural, community events, organizations		7.05%	16
Transportation (infrastructure and systems) (8)		2.20%	5
Small businesses (9)		4.85%	11
Taxes (10)		5.73%	13
Schools (11)		69.16%	157
Public services (trash pickup, snow plowing, etc.) (12)		3.96%	9
First responders (police, fire, EMS, etc.) (13)		28.63%	65
Affordable cost of living (14)		2.20%	5
Healthcare options (15)		0.44%	1
Location (16)		50.22%	114
Total Respondents: 227			

BASIC STATISTICS				
Minimum	Maximum	Median	Mean	Standard Deviation
1.00	16.00	10.00	8.64	4.89

Q2 What are the Town's greatest weaknesses (i.e. the things that hold the Town back)? Please select your top three (3) choices.

Answered: 218 Skipped: 10



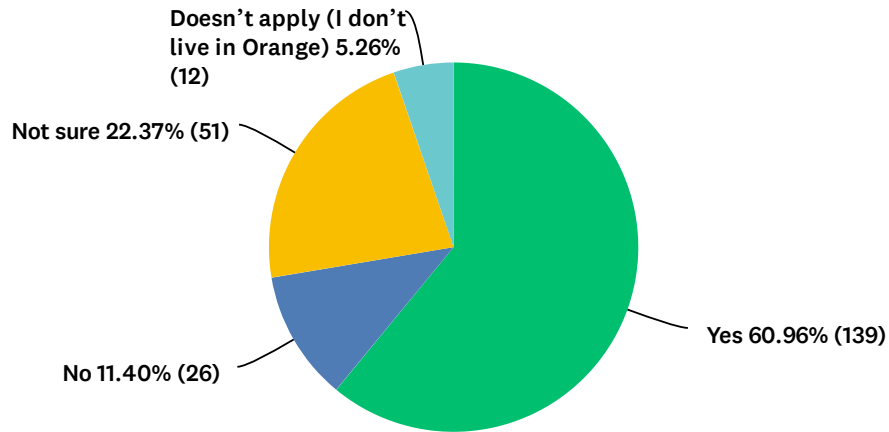
Town of Orange Plan of Conservation and Development

ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Affordable cost of living (14)		42.20%	92
Taxes (10)		39.45%	86
Public services (trash pickup, snow plowing, etc.) (12)		37.61%	82
Restaurants and retail (3)		28.90%	63
Housing options (4)		26.15%	57
Recreation facilities (sport fields, indoor facilities, etc.) (2)		23.85%	52
Transportation (infrastructure and systems) (8)		23.85%	52
Arts, cultural, and community events and organizations (7)		16.51%	36
Small businesses (9)		12.39%	27
Parks and open spaces (1)		9.63%	21
Healthcare options (15)		6.42%	14
Community (6)		5.05%	11
Quality of life (cleanliness, safety, access to nature/beaches, sense of community, etc.) (5)		3.67%	8
First responders (police, fire, EMS, etc.) (13)		2.75%	6
Schools (11)		2.29%	5
Location (16)		1.38%	3
Total Respondents: 218			

BASIC STATISTICS				
Minimum 1.00	Maximum 16.00	Median 9.00	Mean 8.26	Standard Deviation 4.34

Q3 If you are a resident of Orange, do you see yourself living in Orange 10 years from now?

Answered: 228 Skipped: 0

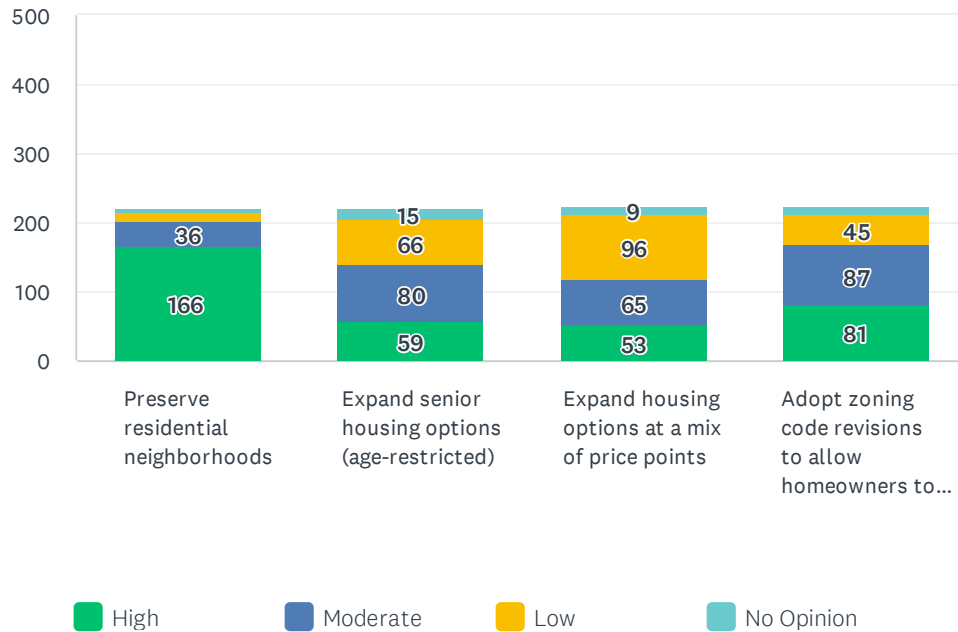


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes (1)	60.96%	139
No (2)	11.40%	26
Not sure (3)	22.37%	51
Doesn't apply (I don't live in Orange) (4)	5.26%	12
TOTAL		228

BASIC STATISTICS				
Minimum	Maximum	Median	Mean	Standard Deviation
1.00	4.00	1.00	1.72	0.98

Q4 During the next 5 years, what priority should the Town give to the following areas? [Rate: High, Moderate, Low, No Opinion]

Answered: 226 Skipped: 2

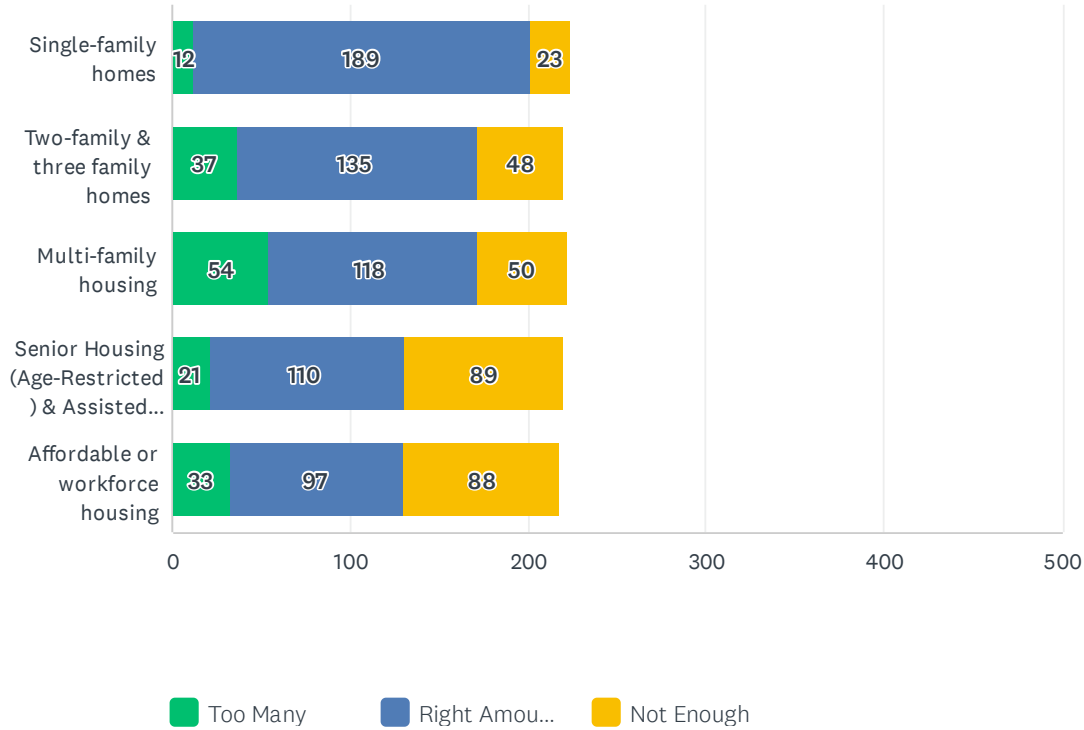


	HIGH (1)	MODERATE (2)	LOW (3)	NO OPINION (4)	TOTAL
Preserve residential neighborhoods	75.45% 166	16.36% 36	6.36% 14	1.82% 4	220
Expand senior housing options (age-restricted)	26.82% 59	36.36% 80	30.00% 66	6.82% 15	220
Expand housing options at a mix of price points	23.77% 53	29.15% 65	43.05% 96	4.04% 9	223
Adopt zoning code revisions to allow homeowners to make changes to their property more easily, i.e., minor changes to sheds and garages and streamlining permitting for undersized lots	36.32% 81	39.01% 87	20.18% 45	4.48% 10	223

BASIC STATISTICS					
	MINIMUM	MAXIMUM	MEDIAN	MEAN	STANDARD DEVIATION
Preserve residential neighborhoods	1.00	4.00	1.00	1.35	0.68
Expand senior housing options (age-restricted)	1.00	4.00	2.00	2.17	0.90
Expand housing options at a mix of price points	1.00	4.00	2.00	2.27	0.87
Adopt zoning code revisions to allow homeowners to make changes to their property more easily, i.e., minor changes to sheds and garages and streamlining permitting for undersized lots	1.00	4.00	2.00	1.93	0.86

Q5 Does Orange have too many, about the right amount, or not enough of the following housing types?

Answered: 225 Skipped: 3



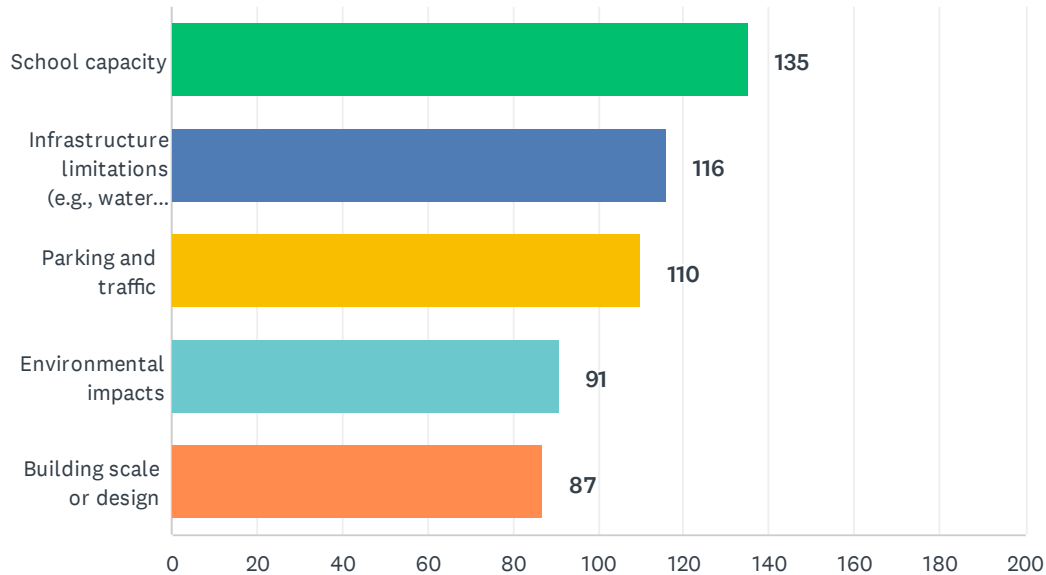
	TOO MANY (1)	RIGHT AMOUNT (2)	NOT ENOUGH (3)	TOTAL
Single-family homes	5.36% 12	84.38% 189	10.27% 23	224
Two-family & three family homes	16.82% 37	61.36% 135	21.82% 48	220
Multi-family housing	24.32% 54	53.15% 118	22.52% 50	222
Senior Housing (Age-Restricted) & Assisted living facilities	9.55% 21	50.00% 110	40.45% 89	220
Affordable or workforce housing	15.14% 33	44.50% 97	40.37% 88	218

Town of Orange Plan of Conservation and Development

BASIC STATISTICS					
	MINIMUM	MAXIMUM	MEDIAN	MEAN	STANDARD DEVIATION
Single-family homes	1.00	3.00	2.00	2.05	0.39
Two-family & three family homes	1.00	3.00	2.00	2.05	0.62
Multi-family housing	1.00	3.00	2.00	1.98	0.68
Senior Housing (Age-Restricted) & Assisted living facilities	1.00	3.00	2.00	2.31	0.64
Affordable or workforce housing	1.00	3.00	2.00	2.25	0.70

Q6 What, if any, are your concerns when you hear about potential new development in Orange? Please select up to three (3).

Answered: 221 Skipped: 7

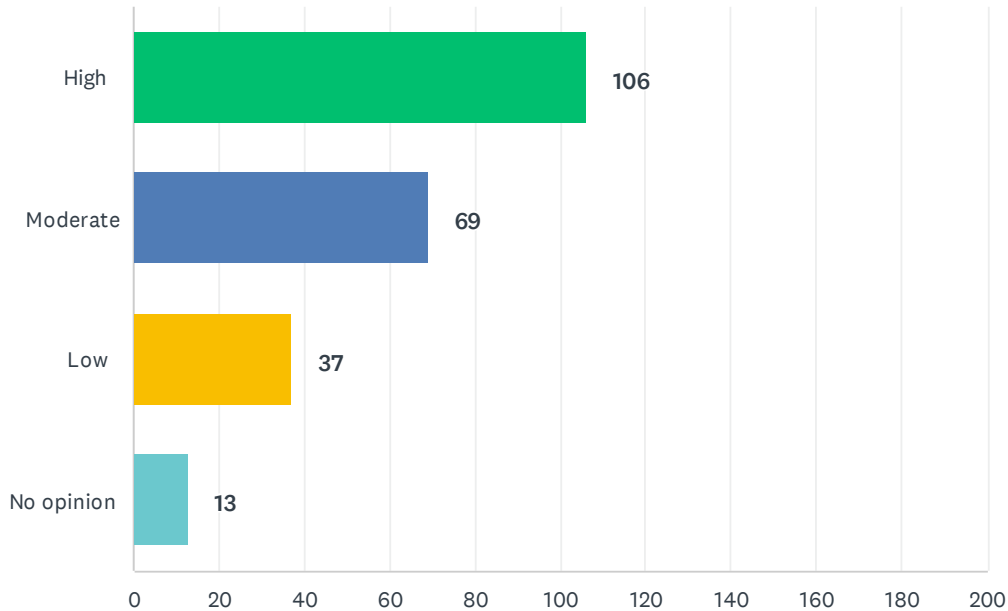


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
School capacity (4)	61.09%	135
Infrastructure limitations (e.g., water, sewer) (5)	52.49%	116
Parking and traffic (3)	49.77%	110
Environmental impacts (2)	41.18%	91
Building scale or design (1)	39.37%	87
Total Respondents: 221		

BASIC STATISTICS				
Minimum	Maximum	Median	Mean	Standard Deviation
1.00	5.00	3.00	3.19	1.37

Q7 What priority should the Town give to converting private open space into dedicated open space owned by the Town or Land Trust?

Answered: 225 Skipped: 3

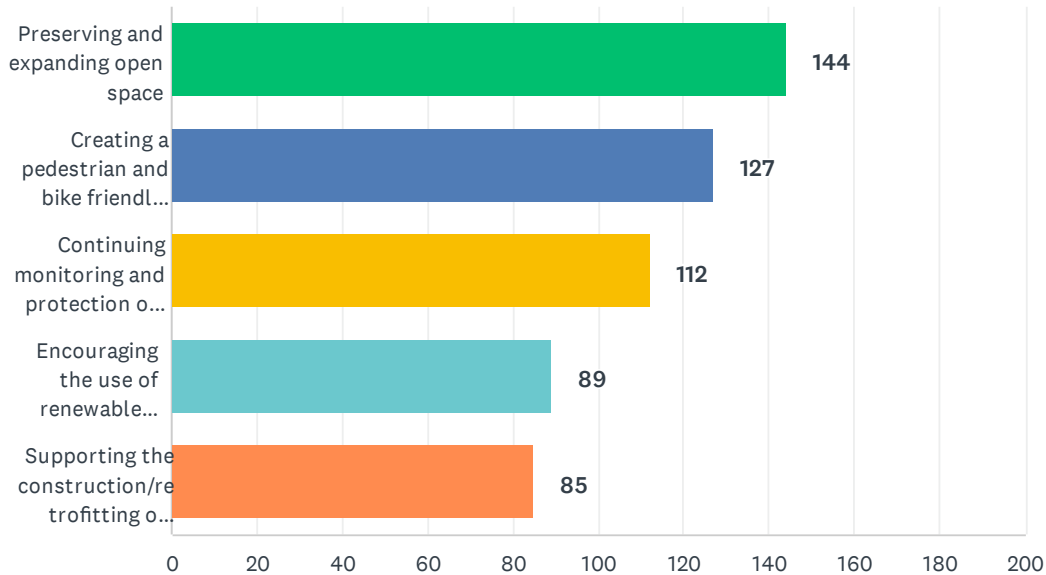


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
High (1)	47.11%	106
Moderate (2)	30.67%	69
Low (3)	16.44%	37
No opinion (4)	5.78%	13
TOTAL		225

BASIC STATISTICS				
Minimum 1.00	Maximum 4.00	Median 2.00	Mean 1.81	Standard Deviation 0.91

Q8 Which of the following objectives do you believe to support a healthier environment and greener community?

Answered: 225 Skipped: 3

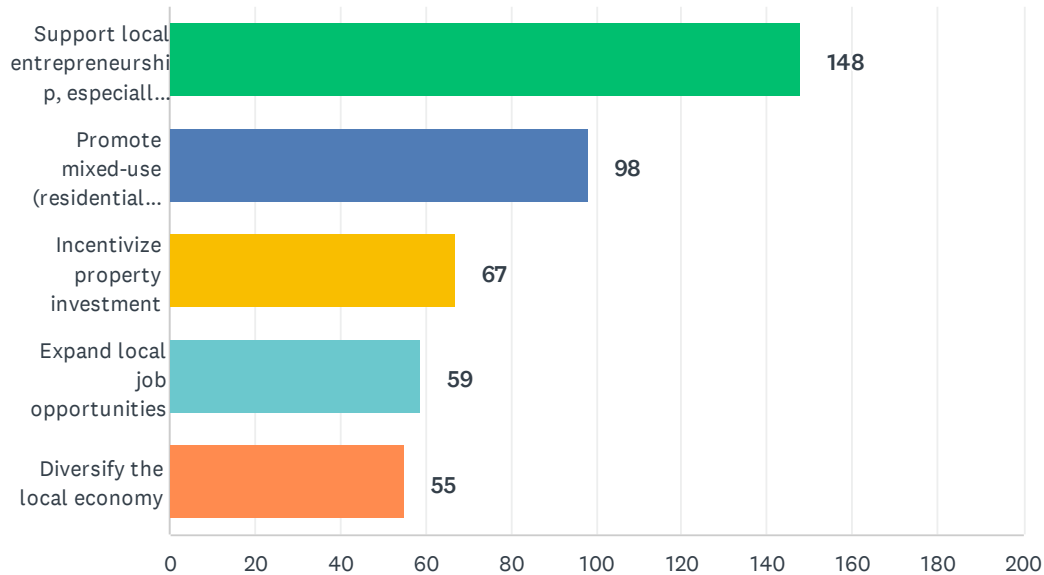


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Preserving and expanding open space (3)	64.00%	144
Creating a pedestrian and bike friendly environment (1)	56.44%	127
Continuing monitoring and protection of drinking water quality (5)	49.78%	112
Encouraging the use of renewable energy (e.g., solar panels) (4)	39.56%	89
Supporting the construction/retrofitting of energy-efficient buildings ("green buildings") (2)	37.78%	85
Total Respondents: 225		

BASIC STATISTICS				
Minimum	Maximum	Median	Mean	Standard Deviation
1.00	5.00	3.00	2.95	1.42

Q9 How could we better support economic development along Route 1 and the area south of I-95?

Answered: 220 Skipped: 8

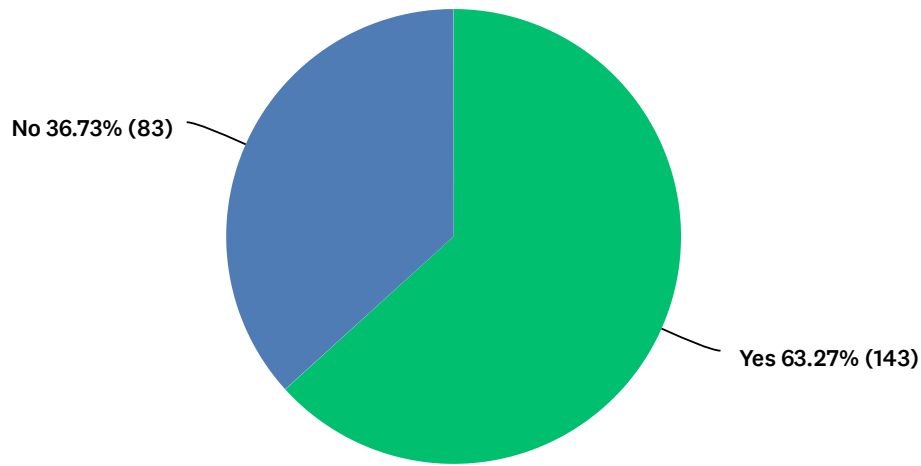


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Support local entrepreneurship, especially small businesses (3)	67.27%	148
Promote mixed-use (residential & commercial) areas to support local retail and restaurants (5)	44.55%	98
Incentivize property investment (4)	30.45%	67
Expand local job opportunities (1)	26.82%	59
Diversify the local economy (2)	25.00%	55
Total Respondents: 220		

BASIC STATISTICS				
Minimum	Maximum	Median	Mean	Standard Deviation
1.00	5.00	3.00	3.21	1.31

Q10 Do you support sidewalks on both sides of Route 1?

Answered: 226 Skipped: 2

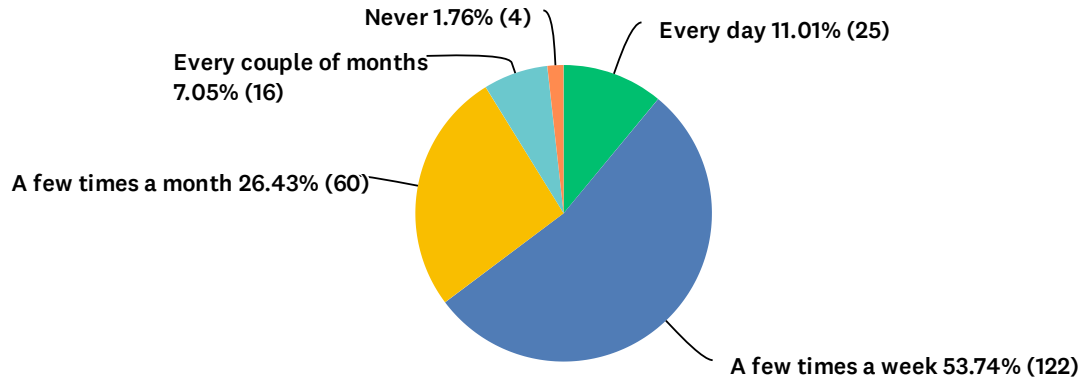


ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Yes (1)		63.27%	143
No (2)		36.73%	83
TOTAL			226

BASIC STATISTICS				
Minimum	Maximum	Median	Mean	Standard Deviation
1.00	2.00	1.00	1.37	0.48

Q11 Generally, how often do you shop in Orange's commercial areas?

Answered: 227 Skipped: 1

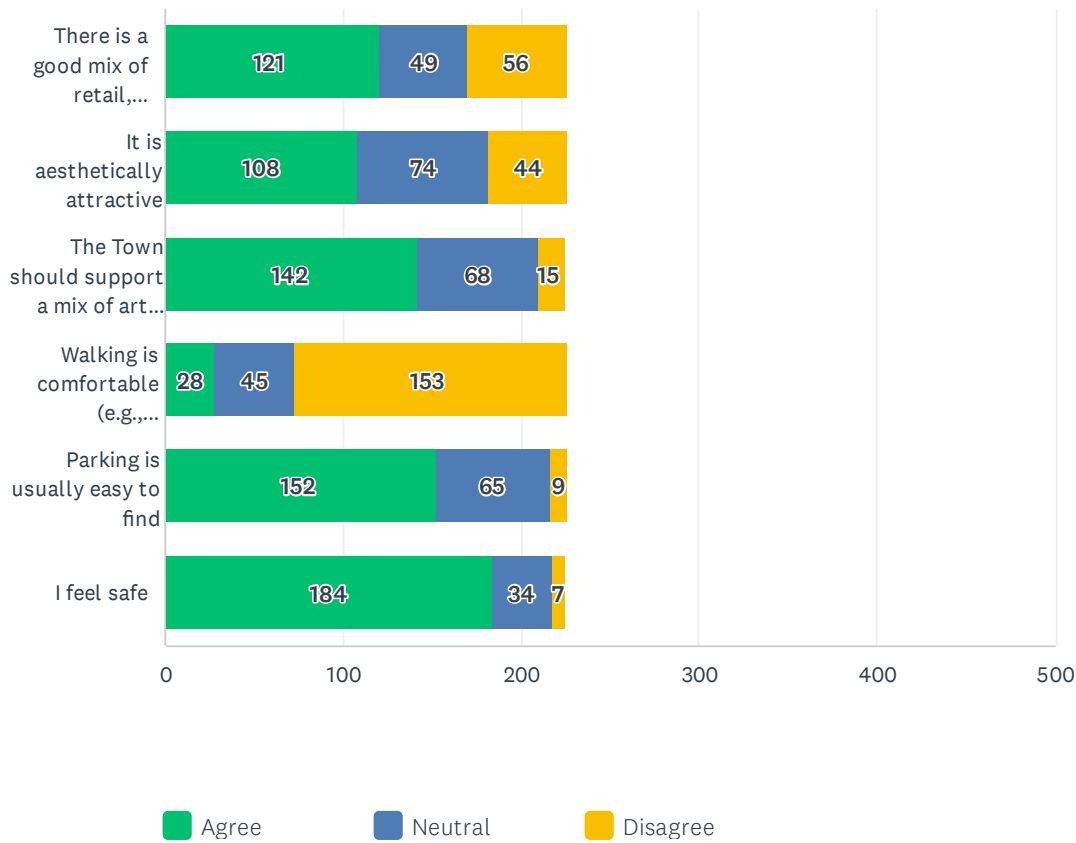


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Every day (1)	11.01%	25
A few times a week (2)	53.74%	122
A few times a month (3)	26.43%	60
Every couple of months (4)	7.05%	16
Never (5)	1.76%	4
TOTAL		227

BASIC STATISTICS				
Minimum	Maximum	Median	Mean	Standard Deviation
1.00	5.00	2.00	2.35	0.83

Q12 Do you agree with the following statements about Orange?

Answered: 227 Skipped: 1



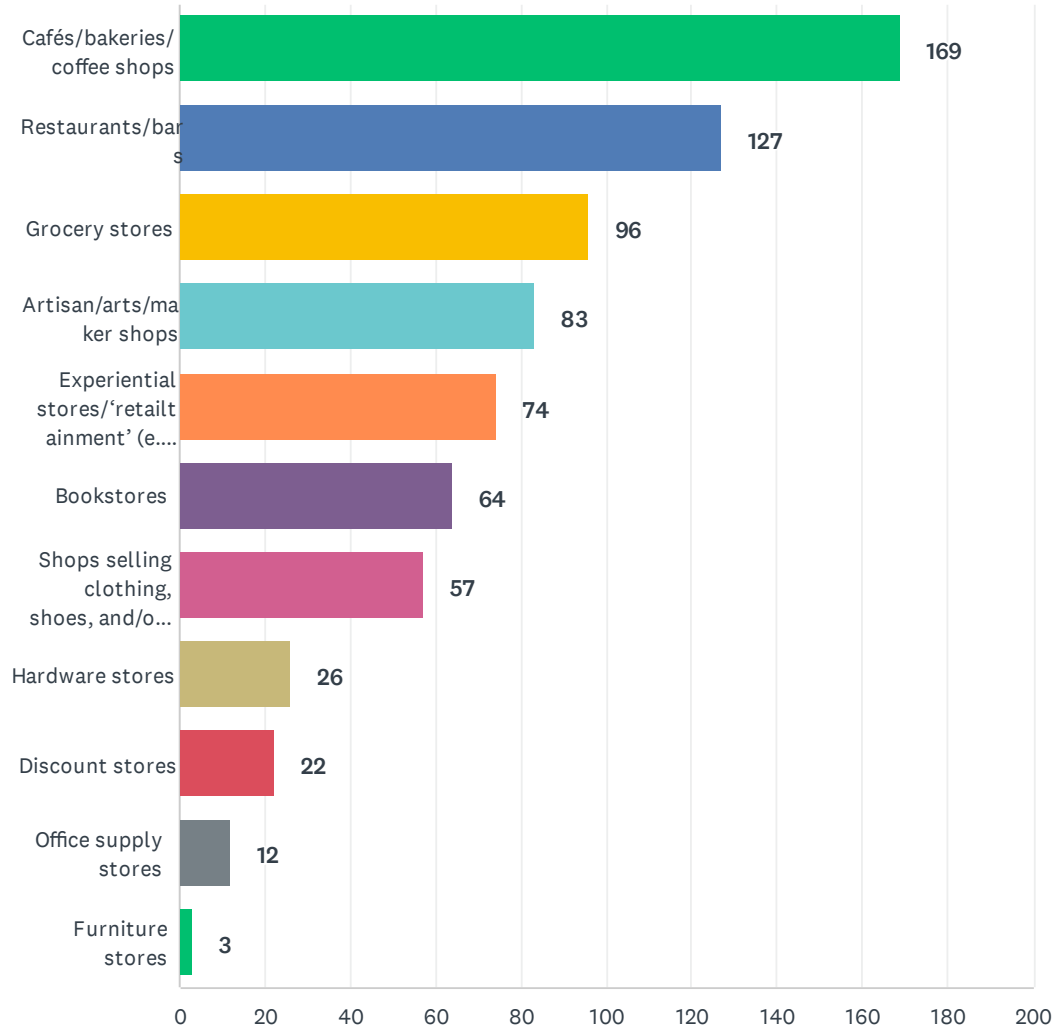
	AGREE (1)	NEUTRAL (2)	DISAGREE (3)	TOTAL
There is a good mix of retail, restaurants, services, and other amenities	53.54% 121	21.68% 49	24.78% 56	226
It is aesthetically attractive	47.79% 108	32.74% 74	19.47% 44	226
The Town should support a mix of arts and cultural attractions	63.11% 142	30.22% 68	6.67% 15	225
Walking is comfortable (e.g., sidewalks are adequate)	12.39% 28	19.91% 45	67.70% 153	226
Parking is usually easy to find	67.26% 152	28.76% 65	3.98% 9	226
I feel safe	81.78% 184	15.11% 34	3.11% 7	225

Town of Orange Plan of Conservation and Development

BASIC STATISTICS					
	MINIMUM	MAXIMUM	MEDIAN	MEAN	STANDARD DEVIATION
There is a good mix of retail, restaurants, services, and other amenities	1.00	3.00	1.00	1.71	0.84
It is aesthetically attractive	1.00	3.00	2.00	1.72	0.77
The Town should support a mix of arts and cultural attractions	1.00	3.00	1.00	1.44	0.62
Walking is comfortable (e.g., sidewalks are adequate)	1.00	3.00	3.00	2.55	0.70
Parking is usually easy to find	1.00	3.00	1.00	1.37	0.56
I feel safe	1.00	3.00	1.00	1.21	0.48

Q13 What types of retail businesses would you like to see more of in Orange? Please select up to four (4) choices.

Answered: 224 Skipped: 4



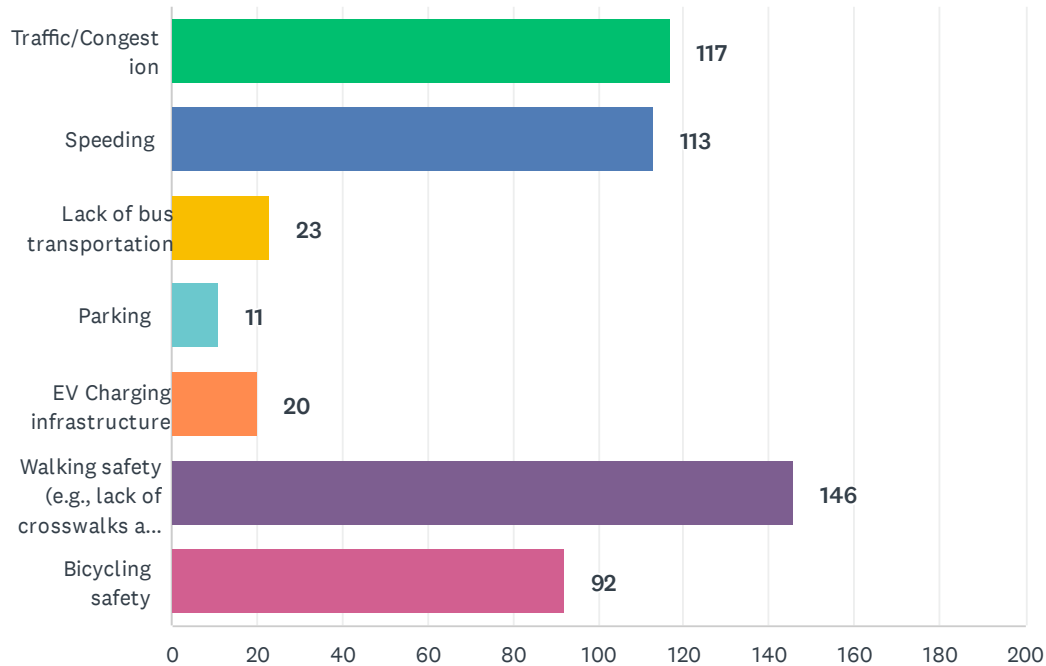
Town of Orange Plan of Conservation and Development

ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Cafés/bakeries/coffee shops (2)		75.45%	169
Restaurants/bars (3)		56.70%	127
Grocery stores (1)		42.86%	96
Artisan/arts/maker shops (5)		37.05%	83
Experiential stores/'retailtainment' (e.g., pottery studio, paint & sip) (6)		33.04%	74
Bookstores (10)		28.57%	64
Shops selling clothing, shoes, and/or accessories (4)		25.45%	57
Hardware stores (8)		11.61%	26
Discount stores (11)		9.82%	22
Office supply stores (7)		5.36%	12
Furniture stores (9)		1.34%	3
Total Respondents: 224			

BASIC STATISTICS				
Minimum 1.00	Maximum 11.00	Median 3.00	Mean 4.23	Standard Deviation 2.86

Q14 What, if any, are the transportation problems you regularly encounter in Orange? Please select up to three (3) choices.

Answered: 214 Skipped: 14

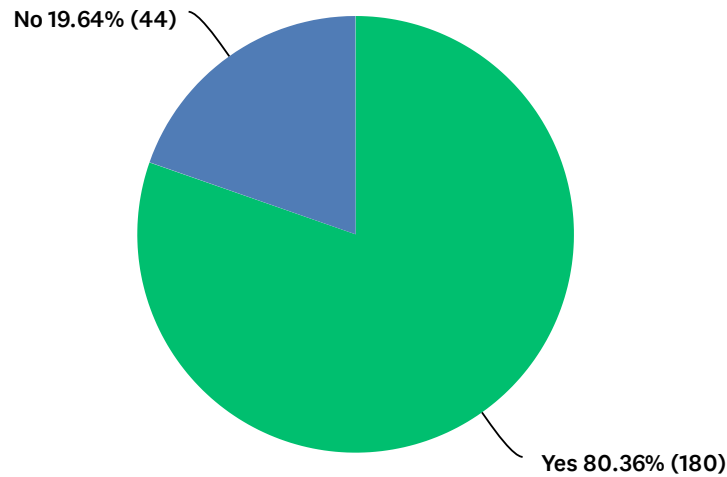


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Traffic/Congestion (1)	54.67%	117
Speeding (2)	52.80%	113
Lack of bus transportation (3)	10.75%	23
Parking (4)	5.14%	11
EV Charging infrastructure (5)	9.35%	20
Walking safety (e.g., lack of crosswalks and sidewalks, accessibility) (6)	68.22%	146
Bicycling safety (7)	42.99%	92
Total Respondents: 214		

BASIC STATISTICS				
Minimum 1.00	Maximum 7.00	Median 4.00	Mean 3.98	Standard Deviation 2.38

Q15 In general, do you feel that existing community services and facilities (e.g. senior services, library, outdoor recreation, etc.) offered by the Town meet the needs of you and members of your household?

Answered: 224 Skipped: 4

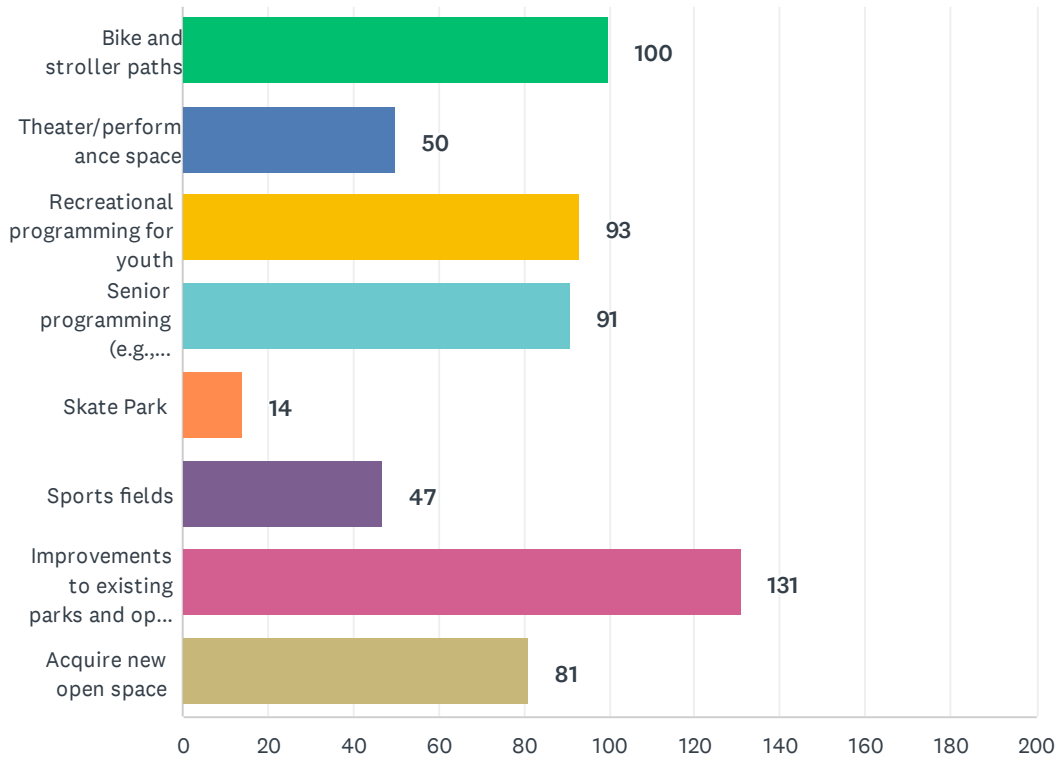


ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Yes (1)		80.36%	180
No (2)		19.64%	44
TOTAL			224

BASIC STATISTICS				
Minimum	Maximum	Median	Mean	Standard Deviation
1.00	2.00	1.00	1.20	0.40

Q16 Which community facilities and programming would you most support public spending for? Please select up to three (3) choices.

Answered: 224 Skipped: 4

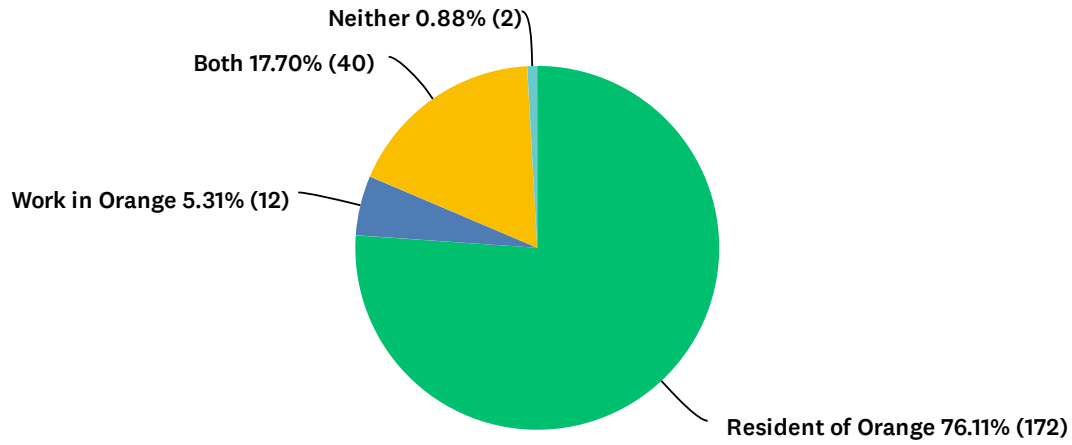


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Bike and stroller paths (1)	44.64%	100
Theater/performance space (2)	22.32%	50
Recreational programming for youth (3)	41.52%	93
Senior programming (e.g., activities, tax assistance, transportation assistance) (4)	40.63%	91
Skate Park (5)	6.25%	14
Sports fields (6)	20.98%	47
Improvements to existing parks and open spaces (7)	58.48%	131
Acquire new open space (8)	36.16%	81
Total Respondents: 224		

BASIC STATISTICS				
Minimum	Maximum	Median	Mean	Standard Deviation
1.00	8.00	4.00	4.55	2.47

Q17 Do you live or work in Orange?

Answered: 226 Skipped: 2

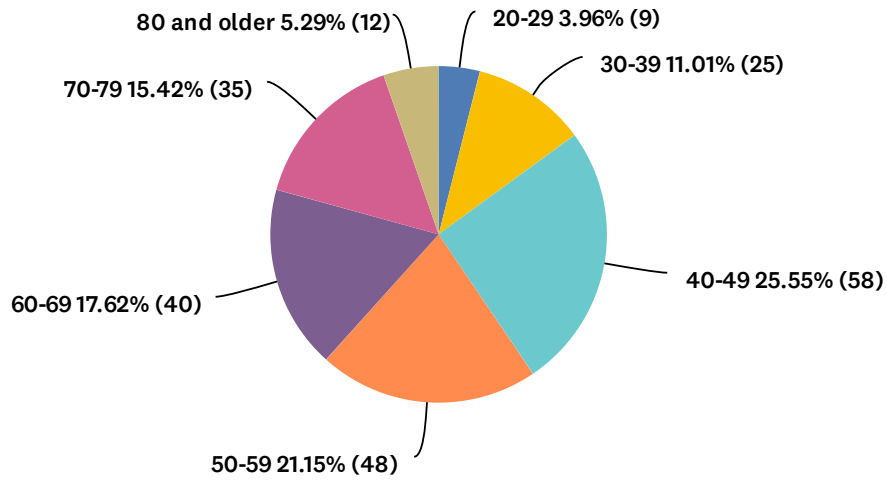


ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Resident of Orange (1)		76.11%	172
Work in Orange (2)		5.31%	12
Both (3)		17.70%	40
Neither (4)		0.88%	2
TOTAL			226

BASIC STATISTICS				
Minimum	Maximum	Median	Mean	Standard Deviation
1.00	4.00	1.00	1.43	0.81

Q18 Age

Answered: 227 Skipped: 1

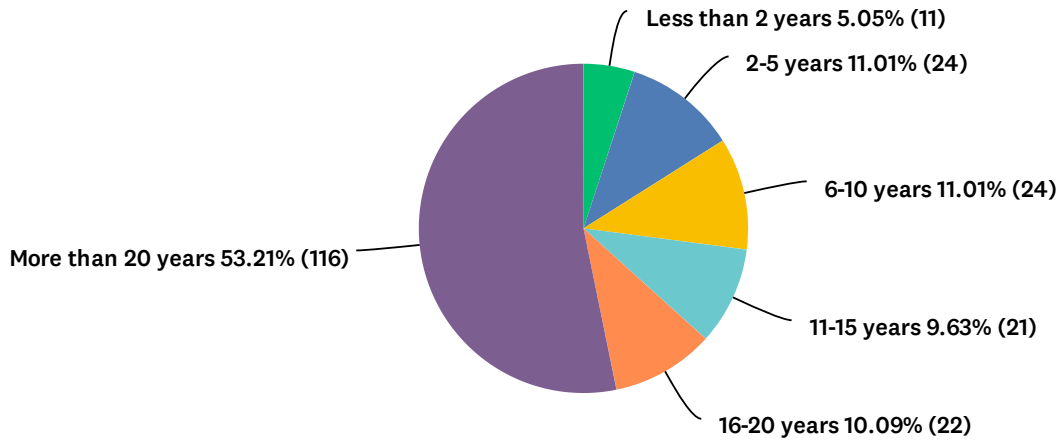


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
19 and younger (1)	0.00%	0
20-29 (2)	3.96%	9
30-39 (3)	11.01%	25
40-49 (4)	25.55%	58
50-59 (5)	21.15%	48
60-69 (6)	17.62%	40
70-79 (7)	15.42%	35
80 and older (8)	5.29%	12
TOTAL		227

BASIC STATISTICS				
Minimum	Maximum	Median	Mean	Standard Deviation
2.00	8.00	5.00	5.05	1.52

Q19 How long have you lived in Orange?

Answered: 218 Skipped: 10



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Less than 2 years (1)	5.05%	11
2-5 years (2)	11.01%	24
6-10 years (3)	11.01%	24
11-15 years (4)	9.63%	21
16-20 years (5)	10.09%	22
More than 20 years (6)	53.21%	116
TOTAL		218

BASIC STATISTICS				
Minimum	Maximum	Median	Mean	Standard Deviation
1.00	6.00	6.00	4.68	1.66

APPENDIX B

Public Workshop #1

Town of Orange

Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD)

Public Workshop #1

November 13, 2024 | 7:00-8:30 PM

High Plains Community Center Cafeteria, 525 Orange Center Rd, Orange, CT 06477

Introduction

The first Public Workshop for the Town of Orange Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) Update was held on November 13, 2024 at the High Plains Community Center. Approximately 20 members of the public were in attendance. Oscar Parente, Chair of the Town of Orange Plan and Zoning Commission (P & Z) introduced the Special Meeting and fellow Commission members. Representatives of BFJ Planning then gave a presentation on the POCD process, facilitated an interactive exercise, and ended with a question-and-answer session.



Presentation

Frank Fish of BFJ Planning began the presentation by introducing the project team, composed of staff from the Town's Planning and Zoning Department and BFJ Planning. He then gave an overview of the public meeting agenda, explaining that after the presentation, attendees will be invited to participate in an interactive visioning exercise and then ask questions in a town hall format.

What is a POCD?

Mr. Fish described the purpose of the meeting by first explaining the concept of a POCD. State law requires municipalities to update POCDs at least every 10 years. POCDs are not law, but instead act as a Town-wide framework for plans, initiatives, and investments. POCDs lay the groundwork for decisions on the zoning code, capital budget, and general policy. They can also assist the Town by acting as a "to-do list" for the Town to track implementation of short-, medium, and long-term goals. A POCD is intended to be an expression of the community's shared vision for the future.

Public Workshop #1

Town of Orange

Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD)

Project Overview: POCD Timeline

Suzanne Goldberg of BFJ Planning then presented the project timeline, highlighting key opportunities for public input, including a tentative second Public Workshop in March and Public Hearing in June. The Final Plan is expected to be adopted by the end of September 2025, following the State's 65-day review period.

Proposed POCD Plan Chapters

Ms. Goldberg presented the proposed POCD chapters, which include:

- Introduction, Vision, and Goals
- Demographic and Socioeconomic Trends (Orange Today)
- Built Environment: Land Use and Zoning
- Housing and Neighborhoods
- Economic Development
- Transportation and Mobility
- Quality of Life (Historic, Cultural, and Parks)
- Infrastructure (Community Systems, Sustainability, and Resilience)
- Future Land Use Plan and Implementation

Stakeholder Meetings

Ms. Goldberg described a key component of the community engagement process which is already underway. Over the past two months, the BFJ team has been conducting stakeholder interviews with Town Departments, Boards, Commissions, and other groups, to gain insight into the existing conditions in Orange, as well as opportunities, challenges, and priorities for the next 10 years. In-person and virtual stakeholder interviews have been conducted with the First Selectman, Finance Department, Fire Marshal, Police Department, Public Works Department, Building Department, Senior Center & Community Services Department, Board of Education, Orange Land Trust, Chamber of Commerce, and Conservation Commission. Preliminary key takeaways from these interviews include:

Theme	Details
Open Space & Sustainability	Open space conservation is a high priority.
	Desire to encourage sustainability and natural resource protection.
Infrastructure	Lack of sewer infrastructure limits development.
Transportation Management and Mobility	Areas of high crash rates generally due to speed and volume of vehicles.
	Sidewalks could enhance commercial areas and improve pedestrian safety, i.e., Boston Post Road.
	State routes require coordination with CT DOT to implement major traffic solutions.
Housing and Economic Development	Desire to balance open space, housing, and economic development.

Public Workshop #1

Town of Orange

Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD)

	Preserve existing single-family neighborhoods.
	Support the existing commercial areas and industrial parks.
Town Services	Increase in aging population has led to a need for services to support these residents.
	School system is a source of pride for the community.
	Town's buses and car service for seniors and disabled population is well utilized.

Orange Today

Mr. Fish then transitioned to an overview of key demographic statistics in Orange. These statistics include a modest increase in population and median household income from 2010 to 2020. In terms of race and ethnicity in the town, as of 2020, 80.5% of the Orange population is White, 10.4% is Asian, 6.1% is Black or African American, and 2.4% is Hispanic or Latino (of any race). Lastly, Mr. Fish highlighted the presence of an aging population in Orange, stating that the median age is 45 years, older than the New Haven County median age of 40.8 years, and 25% of the population is 55 years+.

Transportation

Mark Freker of BFJ Planning presented two maps showing transportation information for the Town of Orange. The first map highlighted State Routes, including I-95, Route 1, Route 15, Route 34, Route 114, Route 121, and Route 152. The presence of State Routes may require Town coordination with Connecticut DOT for any future improvements. Mr. Freker then presented a map showing Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) townwide. This is critical in analyzing traffic flow and areas of high usage. Mr. Freker explained that BFJ plans to examine traffic safety within the town by conducting a crash analysis.

Lastly, Mr. Freker discussed next steps for the project, stating that the project team will be launching an online survey in early 2025 to gather input on proposed POCD goals. BFJ will then develop recommendations and draft POCD chapters, which will be presented for community feedback at the second Public Workshop.

Interactive Visioning Exercise

Mr. Fish introduced the interactive visioning exercise, inviting attendees to leave feedback on the boards around the room, which show goals from the 2015 POCD. Community members were tasked with adding green dots to goals they agreed with, red dots to goals they disagreed with, and comments on sticky notes for any further feedback. Photos of the boards are included at the end of this document.



Public Workshop #1

Town of Orange

Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD)

Question-and-Answer Session

The meeting concluded with a question-and-answer session for attendees. The questions and comments are summarized here.

- An attendee asked what the function of this plan will be.
 - Mr. Fish explained that this plan has several purposes, including the ability to guide decisions at the state and regional level. It also sets the stage for the Town's capital budget and future zoning changes.
 - A member of the P & Z stated that the Commission's actions and decisions on applications are intended to be consistent with this advisory document.
- A member of the public suggested that the POCD look at strategies for reducing carbon emissions, i.e. through electric buses and solar panels.
- An attendee added that LED lights can also help with energy reduction.
- A member of the public advocated for continued open space protection. They would like to ensure that golf courses and farmland will be conserved if these properties go up for sale.
- An attendee stated that they would like to see more recent data than the 2020 census for the existing conditions section, since the town has experienced development and changes from COVID since then.
 - Mr. Fish stated that the decennial census is more accurate, but BFJ can add 2024 data from the ACS, with an understanding that it is typically developed from a smaller sample size.
- A member of the P&Z concluded the meeting by encouraging members of the public to spread the word about the POCD process to community members and share the upcoming survey online.



What is your vision for the Orange 2025 Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD)?

2015 POCD Goals

Agree / Disagree

Comments?

Housing & Residential Development

- Protect residential neighborhoods by maintaining the equality, livability, and character of the community.
- Encourage conservation design of subdivisions to preserve open space.
- Consider ways to help address the housing needs of an aging population.
- Consider ways to provide a diverse housing stock.



Business & Economic Development

- Continue to promote a vibrant economic base and encourage well-planned development in the "economic area."
- Simplify the current business zoning configuration to help guide business development.
- Enhance overall pedestrian circulation in business areas.



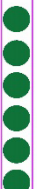
Transportation

- Maintain a safe and efficient road system by improving dangerous intersections.
- Do you prioritize sidewalks?
- Are bicycle lanes important?
- Strive to create an open space system with public access and trails.



Utility Infrastructure

- Improve storm drainage.
- Continue the use of septic systems in most areas.
- Promote "sewer avoidance" in most areas.
- Encourage extension of natural gas service.



- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| - Look into traffic calming on Dogwood Rd, i.e. speed humps | - As traffic increases on major roadways, traffic to 34 & Route 1 spills onto Dogwood Rd creating increased traffic and speeds | - Better transit services for senior citizens and folks with disabilities |
| - Sidewalks on Route 1 | - Intersections at Route 34 & 114 and Route 34 & Orange Center Rd need to be improved | - Intersections at Orange Center Rd / Ridge & Maplewood need to be improved |



What is your vision for the Orange 2025 Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD)?

Comments?

- Very important for the aquifer/wells

- ● ● ● ● ● ● ●

●●

- Reduce carbon emissions
- Electric buses
- Solar panels

● ● ● ● ● ●

- Farmland/town character

- **Address space needs for public works activities.**

- 

- Need for year-round recreation facilities

- Need for year-round recreation facilities

Public Workshop #2

April 2, 2025 | 7:00-8:30 PM

High Plains Community Center Cafeteria, 525 Orange Center Rd, Orange, CT 06477



Introduction

The second Public Workshop for the Town of Orange Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) Update was held on April 2, 2025 at the High Plains Community Center. Approximately 20 members of the public attended. Oscar Parente, Chair of the Town of Orange Plan and Zoning Commission (P&Z) introduced the Special Meeting and fellow Commission members. Representatives of BFJ Planning then gave a presentation on the POCD process and draft recommendations, followed by roundtable discussions.

Presentation

Frank Fish of BFJ Planning began the presentation by introducing the project team. He then gave an overview of the public meeting agenda, explaining that after the presentation, attendees will be invited to participate in roundtable discussions to give feedback on draft recommendations.

What is a POCD?

Mr. Fish explained that State law requires municipalities to update POCDs at least every 10 years. POCDs set the stage for future decisions on the zoning code, capital budget, and general policy.

Public Workshop #2

Town of Orange

Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD)

Project Overview: POCD Timeline

Mr. Fish gave an overview of the project timeline, highlighting the Public Hearing planned for September, following the State's 65-day review period. The Final Plan is expected to be adopted by October 2025.

Proposed POCD Plan Chapters

Mr. Fish presented the POCD chapters for which a draft has been completed:

1. Introduction, Vision, and Goals
2. Demographics
3. Housing and Neighborhoods
4. Land Use and Zoning
5. Economic Development
6. Transportation and Mobility
7. Open Space, Historic, and Community Facilities
8. Infrastructure

The final and ninth chapter, "Future Land Use Plan and Implementation," will be completed using feedback received at the Public Workshop.

Summary of Public Survey Results

Suzanne Goldberg of BFJ Planning presented an overview of findings from the public survey. The survey was available online from January 7th to February 17th, 2025 and received 228 responses. Ms. Goldberg shared the following highlights:

- Top strengths: schools, quality of life (cleanliness, safety, access to nature, sense of community, etc.), location, and parks and open space.
- Biggest concerns: affordable cost of living, taxes, and public services (trash pickup, snow plowing, etc.).
- High priority: preserving residential neighborhoods.
- Most respondents believe that Orange has the right amount and mix of housing types.
- Around 55% of respondents stated they experience traffic/congestion regularly, 53% encounter speeding, and 43% reported issues of bicycling safety.
- Around 68% of respondents feel uncomfortable walking and think that sidewalks are inadequate.

A full summary of survey results can be found on the Town's website.

Preliminary Plan Vision & Recommendations

Ms. Goldberg introduced next section, which consisted of a high-level summary of recommendations proposed in each of the draft chapters. The full chapters can be accessed at bit.ly/orange2025pocd. The first chapter, "Introduction, Vision, and Goals," outlines the following draft vision for the 2025 POCD.

Public Workshop #2

Town of Orange

Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD)

The Town of Orange strives to:

- Preserve existing neighborhoods.
- Enhance environmental and open space preservation.
- Support local businesses and commercial areas.
- Maintain and improve community infrastructure—including facilities, utilities, and roads.

Ms. Goldberg then presented a summary of the “Demographics” chapter. Michelle Gilman of BFJ Planning presented an overview of the “Housing and Neighborhoods” and “Land Use and Zoning” chapters. Mr. Fish highlighted key points from the “Economic Development” chapter, and Mark Freker of BFJ Planning followed up with an overview of “Transportation and Mobility.” Lastly, Ms. Goldberg summarized recommendations from the “Open Space, Historic, and Community Facilities” and “Infrastructure” chapters.

Roundtable Discussions

Mr. Fish introduced the breakout table discussion exercise, inviting attendees to join a breakout table. A subject matter expert from the BFJ Planning team, specializing in Land Use and Zoning, Sustainability and Infrastructure, or Transportation, was seated at each table to facilitate the discussion and take notes. Following the roundtable exercise, a spokesperson for each group reported back on key points from the discussion. A selection of topics discussed at the tables can be found below.

Open Space and Sustainability

- Participants suggested a greater description of Public Act 490 and its value for Orange’s agricultural resources.
- Participants recommended encouraging native species plantings in new development.
- Group members asked for the Lesniack Property and “Clark Forest” to be added to open space descriptions.

Transportation and Mobility

- Participants voiced that congestion is not a major issue in Orange.
- Attendees were interested in discussing examples traffic calming.
- There was strong support for connections to Orange Center through a sidewalk path.

Land Use, Zoning, and Economic Development

- Participants shared that Orange Center presents an opportunity for revitalization.
- Members of the group discussed the pros and cons of expanding elderly-housing conversions and accessory units.

