



2023

MASTER PLAN UPDATE

CITY OF WESTFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

Prepared by:





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INTRODUCTION



Acknowledgements

The development of this master plan would not have been possible without the engagement and commitment of many residents and stakeholders who know and love Westfield. These individuals believe in the future of Westfield and provided invaluable insights to the planning process. Thank you to the following individuals.

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I. The Planning Process

Initiated by the Planning Board, the master planning process was a coordinated effort between City representatives and a resident working group. It involved reviewing past plans and regulations, assessing data, and most importantly talking with residents.

Master Plan Committee

A dedicated group of residents served on an advisory Master Plan Committee (MPC), including two representatives of the Planning Board. The MPC met 12 times over 2022 – 2023 to discuss the planning process, engage on specific topic areas, facilitate public workshops, and to review and shape the plan development.

Implementation Committee

To administer and coordinate implementation, it is recommended to establish a Master Plan Implementation Committee and lead contact (staff or committee) for implementation and regional collaborations, consider a designated grant writer (or grant writing group), and develop a list of grant projects and grant opportunities. The Implementation Committee could be a standing committee designated by the City Council or it could be a subcommittee of the Planning Board.

II. A Plan for Westfield's Future

This master plan, the City's first since 1962, is a collective vision for the future and includes strategies and actions for the City over the next 10-20 years. At the foundation of the plan is a vision for Westfield. Over approximately the past year, City residents, board members, and staff carefully considered how this plan can best support residents, businesses, community organizations, and City government.

The master plan is a proactive approach to protecting the character of Westfield while remaining adaptable to the future. The City continues to grow, and the master plan is intended to guide decisions about policy, regulations, City operations, and programs that support the community. It identifies areas of consensus, areas of differences, and seeks to balance solutions.

Twelve Subject-Matter Elements of the Plan

The master plan identifies priorities related to all aspects of community life. By collecting and synthesizing the trends of the past and resident preferences for the future, the City has a better understanding of what should be kept the same, protected, or changed. This plan is intended to be a "living" document that residents come back to over time to update as the City progresses.

This master plan addresses 12 subject-matter areas, which make up elements of the plan. Each element includes a vision statement, introduction to the subject matter area, discussion of existing conditions in Westfield, challenges and opportunities related to existing conditions, current related practices used by the City, and a list of goals, policies, and actions to help move the City forward over the term of the master plan. The goals, policies and actions are provided with implementation timelines, a list of responsible parties for implementation.

Twelve Subject-Matter Areas

- Land Use
- Housing
- Economic Development
- Natural Resources
- Art, Historic and Cultural Resources
- Open Space and Recreation
- Services and Facilities
- Circulation, Transportation and Mobility
- Agriculture
- Energy
- Water Supply
- Natural Hazards and Environmental Preparedness

III. The Evolution of Westfield

The area that is now the City of Westfield was originally inhabited by the Pocomtuc and referred to as Woronoco. The first European settlers arrived from the Connecticut Colony circa 1640 and built trading houses. Massachusetts asserted jurisdiction over the area and eventually prevailed after a boundary survey.

In 1647, Massachusetts made Woronoco part of Springfield, which was also known as "Streamfield." Permanent settling began in the 1660s; and in 1669, "Westfield" was incorporated as an independent town. The name Westfield derived from being the most westerly settlement in Streamfield. In fact, from its founding until 1725, Westfield was the westernmost settlement in the Massachusetts Colony. During this time, Westfield was primarily an agricultural community.

Early in the 19th century, Westfield began to industrialize, and the manufacture of bricks, whips, and cigars became economically important. At one point in the 19th century, Westfield was a prominent center of the buggy whip industry, and the city is still known as the "Whip City." Other firms produced bicycles, paper products, pipe organs, boilers and radiators, textile machinery, abrasives, wood products, and precision tools. Westfield transformed itself from an agricultural town into a thriving industrial city in the 19th century, but in the second half of the 20th century its manufacturing base was eroded by wage competition in the U.S. Southeast, then overseas.

In 1939, Westfield became the first city in Massachusetts, and all of New England, to elect a female Mayor when Alice Burke defeated incumbent Raymond H. Cowing. Today, Westfield is home to approximately 41,000 residents. It is a community with much to offer, including Westfield State University, Stanley Park, and Baystate Noble Hospital.

IV. Westfield Today—A City of Opportunity

The current population of the City of Westfield is 41,303 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020). Figure I-1 above shows Westfield’s significant population growth between 1950-2020. The City had a population growth of 97% between 1950 and 2020.

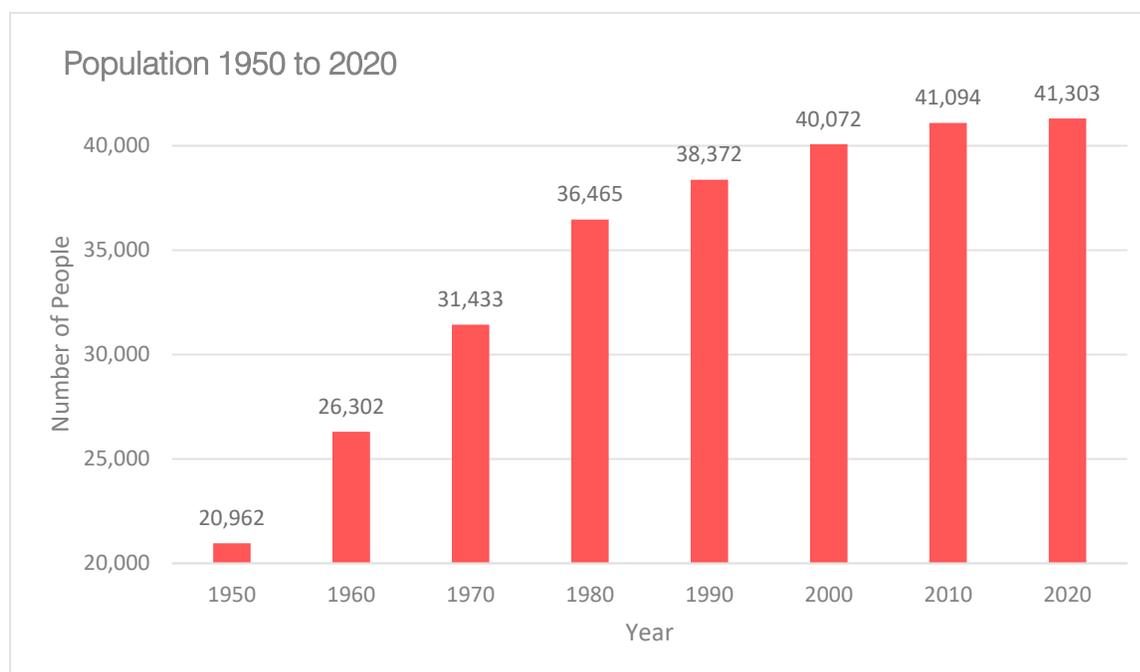


Figure I-1. Change in Population of Westfield

Source: U.S. Census, 2020

The University of Massachusetts (UMass) Donahue Institute provides 20-year population projections in five-year increments for each community in Massachusetts. Table I-1 presents the population projections for 2020 through 2040 for the City of Westfield. Using 2020 ACS 5-Year Estimate population of 41,303, the Planning Information Center projections suggest an increase between 2020-2040 of approximately 2.88%, with most of this increase anticipated to occur between 2020 and 2025 (UMass Donahue Institute, 2020).

Table I-1. Population Projections, 2020-2040 ^a					
Year	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
Population	41,303	41,923	42,113	42,302	42,493
5-Year Percent Change		1.50%	0.45%	0.45%	0.45%
10-Year Percent Change			1.96%		0.90%

Source: UMass Donahue Institute Population Estimates Program, 2020

Notes:

a. Based on ACS 5-Year Estimate population of 41,303 in 2020.

Figures I-2 through I-5 below provide further demographic information related to age, race and ethnicity, educational attainment, and household income.

The age distribution in Westfield is somewhat skewed towards adults, with 26.3% of age distribution from 20 to 39. There are 2,469 individuals that are likely to be retired or approaching retirement (ages 65-69) (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020). Figure I-2 provides an overview of age distribution.

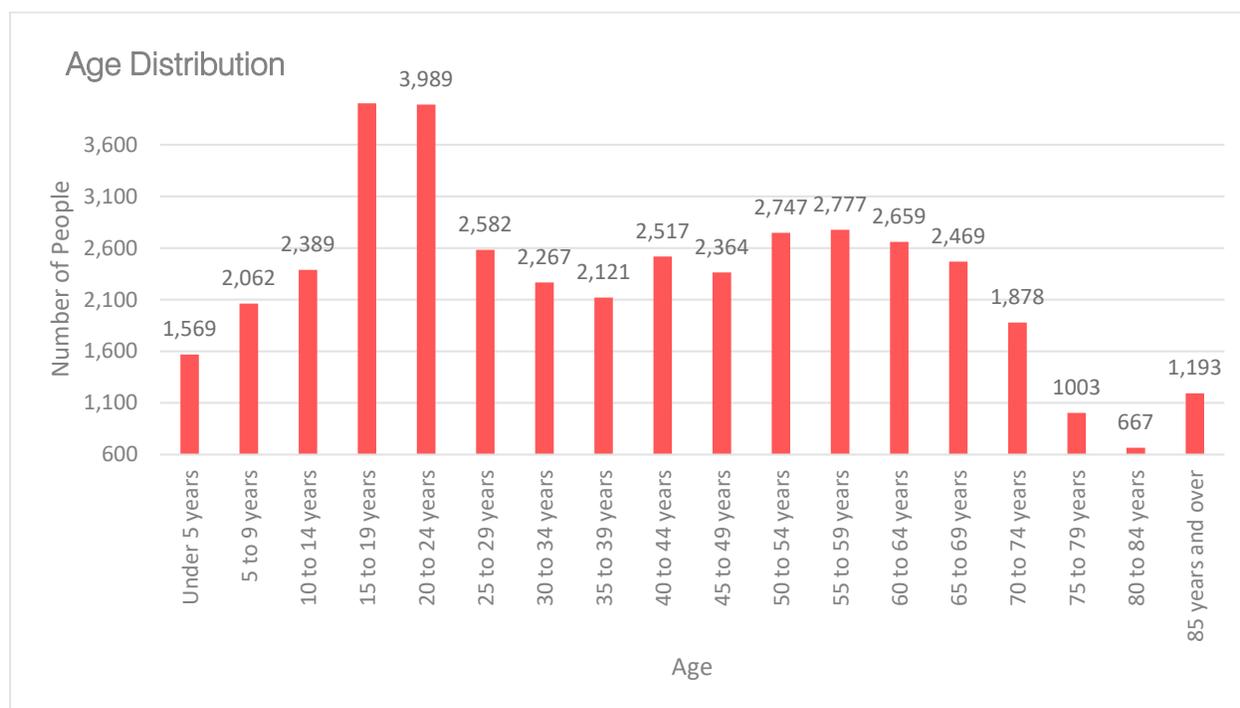


Figure I-2. Age Distribution in Westfield

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020

The 2020 American Community Survey found that 90.1% of respondents reported their race as White alone, while only 2.6% reported their race as Asian alone. Fewer than 1,000 individuals (1.5%) in Westfield reported their race as Black or African American alone, while 50 reported their race as Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone (0.1%), under 50 reported their race as American Indian and Alaska Native alone (0.1%). Another 2.4% reported themselves as being two or more races and 3.1% identified as some other race. Of the 41,303 individuals, roughly 10% of individuals reported their ethnicity as Hispanic or Latino (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020). Figure I-3 provides an overview of race and ethnicity.

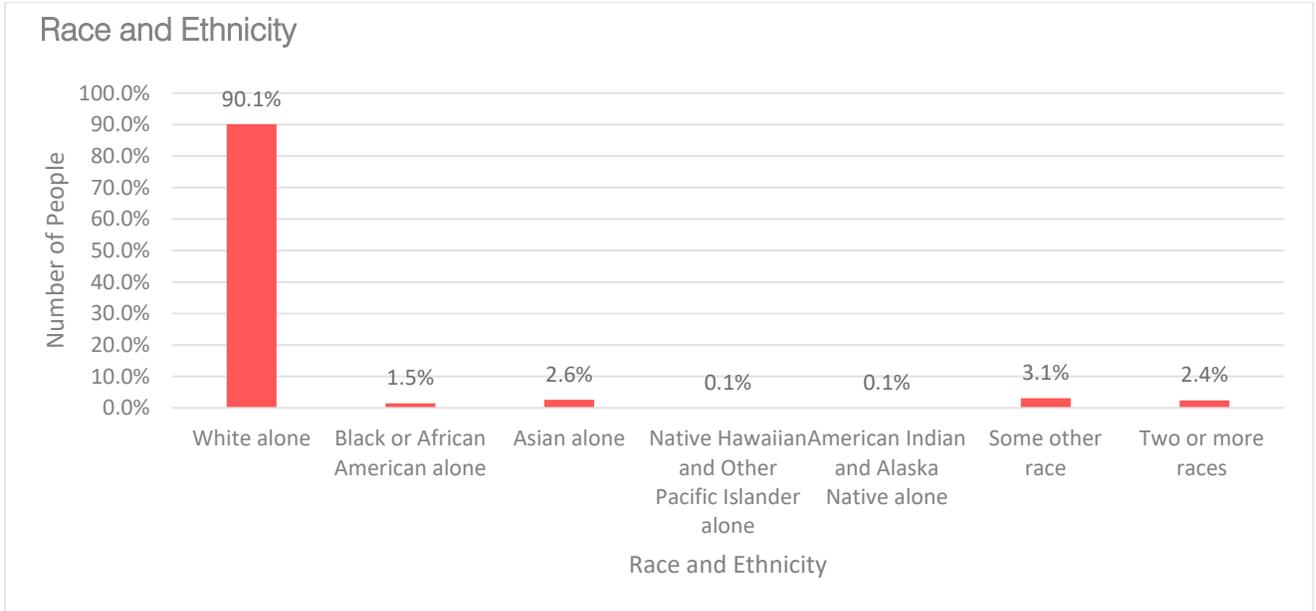


Figure I-3. Race and Ethnicity in Westfield
 Source: U.S Census Bureau, 2020

In Westfield, 32.2% of the population 25 years or older has earned a bachelor’s degree or higher and 89.3% has earned at least a high school diploma or higher (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020). Figure I-4 provides an overview of educational attainment.

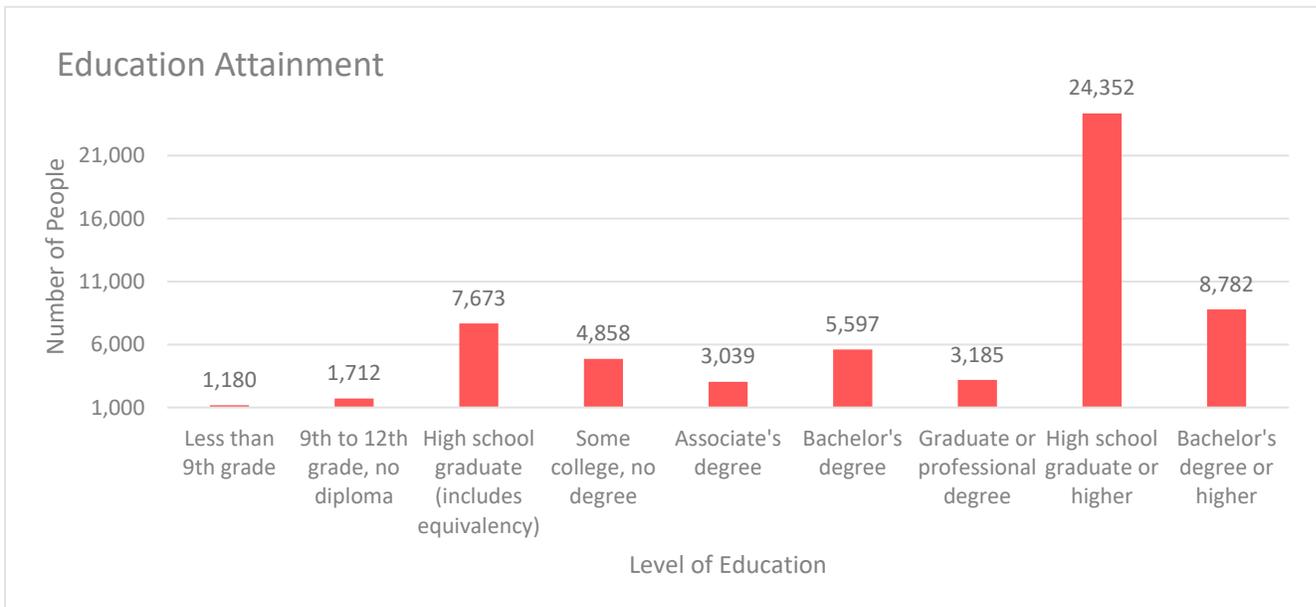


Figure I-4. Educational Attainment in Westfield for People 25 Years and Older
 Source: U.S Census Bureau, 2020

The median income of City of Westfield is \$74,456 which is \$15,334 less than Commonwealth’s median household income (\$84,385) (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020). About 2.7% of households in Westfield earn under \$10,000 and 6.9% earn 200,000 or more. Figure I-5 provides an overview of household income.

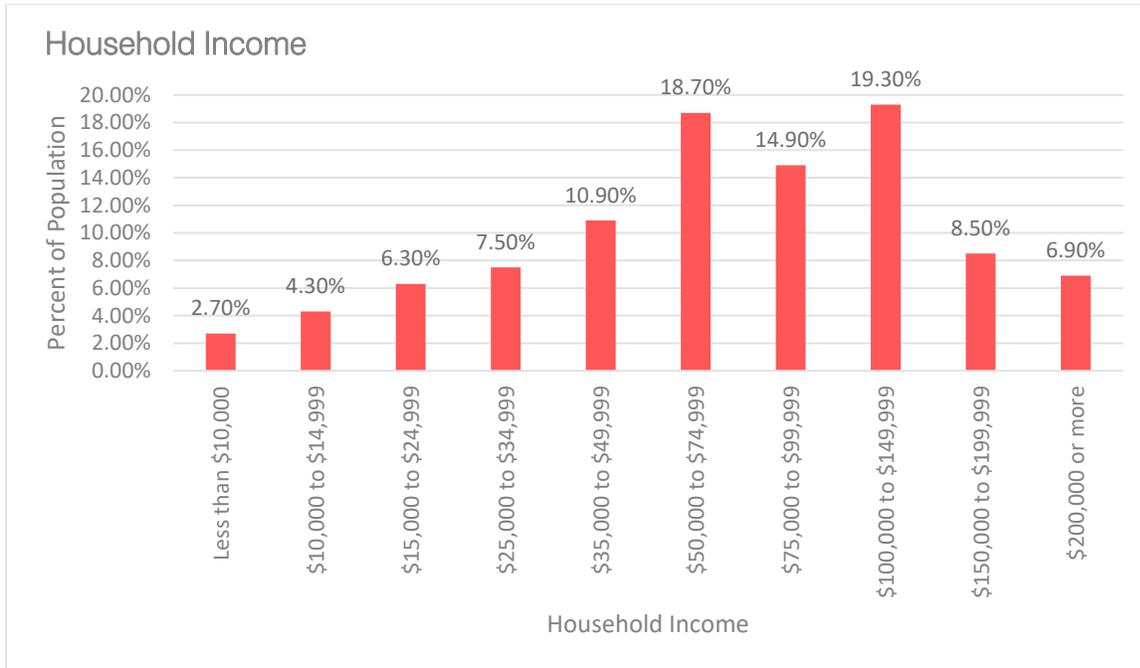


Figure I-5. Household Income
 Source: U.S Census Bureau, 2020

City Governance

Incorporated as a city in Massachusetts, Westfield is governed by a mayor and a city council, both of which are elected every two years. In addition to managing services throughout the City, the Mayor serves as chairman of the School Committee. The current Mayor, Michael A. McCabe took office on January 3, 2022. City Council currently includes 13 members, one for each of its six wards and 7 at-large councilors.

The City of Westfield government includes the following departments:

- Animal Control
- Auditor
- Assessors
- Building
- Business License
- City Clerk & Elections
- Collector
- Community Development
- Conservation
- Council On Aging / Senior Center
- Emergency Management
- Engineering
- Fire
- Gas & Electric
- Health
- Information Technology
- Law
- Parking Clerk
- Personnel
- Planning
- Police
- Public Safety
- Public Works
- Purchasing
- Communication Center
- Schools
- Retirement
- Weights & Measures
- Treasurer
- Veterans Services
- Westfield-Barnes Regional Airport

Table I-2 provides a summary of Westfield's current boards and commission along with their general purpose.

Table I-2. Boards and Commissions of Westfield	
Board or Commission	Purpose
Board of Assessors	The Board of Assessors works in conjunction with the Assessor's Office to effectively price and evaluate city property and real estate.
Board of Health	The Board of Health oversees the Health Department and ensures the public health and safety of the residents of Westfield by accomplishing the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administration of a variety of health and safety related programs and services • Environmental Protection • Health Inspections and related Code Enforcement • Public Health Nursing
Board of Public Works	The Board of Public Works ensures the Department of Public Works is using their time and resources efficiently. The Board assists with setting policies and awarding contracts.
Board of Registrars	The Board of Registrars works with the City Clerk Office in an effort to making voting as easy and efficient to all capable voters throughout the City of Westfield.
Cable Television Commission	As an advisory board to the Mayor, the Cable Television Commission monitors cable-television-service-provider license compliance. The Commission hears and facilitates resolution of customer complaints regarding customer service.
Commission for Citizens with Disabilities	The Commission for Citizens with Disabilities strives to enable and facilitate the full integration and participation of people with disabilities in the City of Westfield.
Community Preservation Committee	The Committee reviews applications and recommends the expenditure of CPA funds for qualified projects, which are subject to Mayoral endorsement and a City Council appropriation vote.
Conservation Commission	The conservation commission works to promote and develop the natural resources of Westfield. They are responsible for controlling activities which take place in Areas Subject to Protection under the MA Wetlands Protection Act and City Ordinance 1738.
Council on Aging Board	The Council on Aging sets policy and direction of services for all senior citizens in Westfield.
Cultural Council	The Cultural Council provides grants to support programs in the arts, humanities, and interpretive sciences in Massachusetts. This includes the study, pursuit, performance, exhibition, and appreciation of cultural activities in the broadest sense.

Fire Commission	The Fire Commission is the appointing authority and has responsibility for the change, management and control of the officers and members of the Westfield Fire Department. Some of the duties include but are not limited to, the hiring, termination and promoting of firefighters, ruling on grievances, deciding on disciplinary matters and approval of funding.
Flood Control Commission	The mission of the Flood Control Commission is to monitor and report on dikes and waterways vital to the City's interest, which includes routine maintenance and essential improvements.
Historical Commission	<p>The Historical Commission's purpose is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To preserve, protect and develop historical and archeological assets. • To report the existence of archeological, paleontological and historical sites and objects. • To conduct research for places of historic and archeological value. • To cooperate with the state archeologist in such research or surveys. • To seek to coordinate the activities of unofficial bodies organized for similar purposes. • To make recommendations to the city council related to the above. • To report to the state archeologist the existence of any archeological, paleontological or historic site or object discovered.
License Commission	The License Commission is the licensing and enforcement agent for all liquor, auto agent dealers, food service, entertainment and coin-operated devices licenses.
Municipal Light Board	The Westfield Gas + Electric Municipal Light Board is responsible for establishing the direction for the utility, controlling through policy statements, reviewing major programs, and budgets.
Off-Street Parking Commission	The commission's purpose is to establish public, off-street automobile parking facilities and to foster the provisions for commercial, special purpose, and cooperative off-street automobile parking facilities within the city.
Parks & Recreation Commission	The purpose of the Commission is to set policies and advises the Department Head, Mayor, and City Council on needed parks and recreation programs; plan, acquire and develop recreation facilities, parks and open space areas to meet current and future needs as the city grows.
Planning Board	The Planning Board is charged with preparing and adopting comprehensive plans for the City regarding such elements as land use, natural and cultural resources, and socioeconomic concerns. It also serves as the custodian of the Zoning Ordinance, though not as its enforcement authority.

Police Commission	The commission has responsibility for the charge, management and control of the officers and members of the Westfield Police Department. Some of the duties include, but are not limited to, the hiring, terminating and promoting of police officers, ruling on grievances, deciding on disciplinary matters, and approval of funding.
Retirement Board	Westfield's Retirement Board oversees the retirement system for the employees of the City of Westfield
School Committee	The Westfield School Committee oversees the City's public schools with the intent of providing rigorous, inclusive educational experiences that promote academic, emotional, and social growth to become lifelong learners, and to empower students with knowledge and skills for future success in college and career.
Traffic Commission	The Traffic Commission is responsible for the overall road safety in the city concerning signs, road markings, speed limits and designs.
Water Commission	The Board of Water Commissioners has charge, control, and management of the waterworks, water supply, and wastewater treatment systems of the city, and has the powers to perform the duties conferred or imposed upon them by Chapter 322 of the Acts of 1897.
Westfield Airport Commission	The Airport Commission has custody, care, and management of the City's Airport.
Westfield Housing Authority	The Westfield Housing Authority, along with the City of Westfield, work together to meet the needs of housing and improvements to the City's public housing inventory.
Westfield Redevelopment Authority	The Westfield Redevelopment Authority is a corporate and politic body, established by the City of Westfield and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The Redevelopment Authority has the powers of an "operating agency" and additional powers as an "urban renewal agency."
Youth Commission	The Youth Commission attempts to create an environment in which young people and adults can communicate their thoughts and ideas about the city. These young adults are interested in improving the lives of their fellow students by taking the next step in making a difference.
Zoning Board of Appeals	The Zoning Board of Appeals hears appeals of administrative zoning actions, petitions for variance relief in the case of a substantial hardship, and certain special permit requests. The Board gives due consideration to promoting the public health, safety, convenience and welfare, encouraging the most appropriate use of land and conserving property values.

V. Listening to the Community

Participation and input were foundational to developing this plan. Throughout the planning process, the City engaged with residents in a variety of ways. Many residents noted that this was a welcome way to connect after several years of COVID-related social distancing. The Master Plan Committee hosted events virtually and in person. Participants actively engaged in offering their ideas on the City's needs, challenges, strengths, and potential strategies for the future.

Public Workshops Results

The City held two public workshops that were well attended by residents. The first workshop focused on considering strengths and weaknesses and then creating improvement actions for the plan. The second workshop provided an overview of the proposed plan and an opportunity for workshop participants to provide comments.

During the first workshop, participants engaged in interactive breakout groups. Participants expressed their appreciation for Westfield's beauty, diversity, and accessibility across natural, community, and built systems. They indicated that Westfield's dynamic landscape and proximity to natural areas provides residents with an escape from urban life. Residents want to maintain the City's rich cultural history through historic preservation while embracing new stories through its diversifying population for future generations. Along with access to natural areas and new perspectives, Westfield's high-quality services and transportation options offer residents with amenities often only enjoyed by residents of larger cities.



Photo I-1. Audience Members Gathered at the Master Plan First Workshop, November 2, 2022.

Workshop participants felt that the City could do more to encourage people to visit Westfield's natural areas and take advantage of its services. Improved transportation routes to access the waterfront and better connect the City with Westfield State University would promote use of recreational areas. Students of all ages were also a priority for the workshop participants, who support updating technology in schools and organizing more community events geared toward young people. PFAS contamination in the drinking water was another notable concern for the safety of all residents.

A combination of policy updates and technological upgrades to address the concerns of residents will ensure that Westfield continues to promote a safe, prosperous community for current and future generations. A summary of recommendations from the first workshop is provided below:

Natural Systems

- Design and implementation of additional green infrastructure and stormwater management strategies is critical to addressing climate change.
- Expand Westfield's riverfront amenities while enhancing accessibility for all people to experience the waterfront.
- Construct a boat launch for the Westfield River.
- Better connect the City and college through expanded transportation routes, including an extended rail trail into new neighborhoods.

- Start up the Barnes Aquifer Protection Advisory Committee.

Community Systems

- Increase the number of events downtown thereby encouraging people to explore the area.
- Integrate Westfield State University more into the community through downtown events and additional modes of transportation.
- Develop a distinct cultural identity for the community.
- Review Business Improvement District (BID) to encourage small businesses over chains.

Built Systems

- Secure funding for the school system, particularly to update technology in classrooms.
- Expand electric bike banks downtown.
- Updated sewers are necessary.

A summary of Westfield's strengths and weaknesses for natural systems, community systems, and built systems is provided below:

Natural Systems

Strengths

- Westfield has a wide array of diverse landscapes, including farmlands, forests, wetlands, urban areas, and rivers.
- Hampton Pond, Stanley Park, and the Rail Trail are important to residents, many of whom feel these areas are underutilized.
- Westfield's aquifer is perceived favorably due to water accessibility for residents.

Weaknesses

- Concern regarding Westfield's drinking water safety due to pollution and PFAS contamination.
- Fear of future climate change impacts, including droughts and aquifers.
- Underutilization of open space areas and recreational areas, including Stanley Park.
- Lack of staff to maintain parks and support recreational facilities/activities.

Community Systems

Strengths

- Westfield has a deep history, which is maintained through its historic resource preservation.
- City departments and public facilities, including Westfield Athenaeum and emergency services, offer high quality services.
- Diversity of people and perspectives contributes to a unique City.
- Walkable, pedestrian-friendly area reflecting complete streets concept.

Weaknesses

- Small businesses are threatened by a combination of chains and variety of rising costs.
- Downtown contains vacant storefronts and inconsistent building appearances.
- Community events are not promoted enough and there is often a lack of events to engage teenagers and young adults.

Built Systems

Strengths

- Trails, including the rail trail and local hiking trails, are critical aspects of the community.
- Fiber optics network and Westfield Gas & Electric are viewed favorably by many residents.
- Residents appreciate the accessibility of the airport and other amenities that larger cities enjoy.

Weaknesses

- Unsafe, vulnerable roadways.
- Flooding and other climate-related disasters threaten many homes and businesses within Westfield.
- Outdated school system technology.
- Small business relief from taxes and other financial burdens.

Community Survey Results

A community survey was issued at the beginning of the planning process and identified resident’s preferences on various priorities and strategies for the City’s future.

The survey received 612 responses, approximately 1.5% of the population. Highlights from the survey included a reverence for the City’s rural character, including its natural resources, scenic views, and the peace and spaciousness provided by the low-density settlement pattern. Many participants noted the need to protect land uses that contribute to these attributes.



Figure I-7. Word cloud of responses from the community survey.

Respondents indicated that the rural landscape of the community makes Westfield a great place to live. In the master plan survey that was issued in 2022, residents indicated concerns about over development, sprawl, and a lack of identity in the downtown area. Respondents were very supportive of promoting development of vacant or underutilized properties (33.99% very supportive; 30.54% supportive) and updating land development regulations and zoning (29.00% very supportive; 35.42% supportive).

The respondents were asked to react to ten statements regarding development in City with either “more,” “less,” or “same amount.” Respondents indicated that Westfield needs “more” of the following types of development:

- Commercial scale renewable energy facilities
- Smaller-scale industrial
- Alternative housing options
- Commercial

Respondents indicated a need for “less” of the following types of development:

- Larger-scale industrial
- Single-family residential in new subdivisions
- Multi-family residential

Respondents indicated “same amount” of single family residential along existing roads and streets and diverged regarding mixed use and office development.

Response	More	Less	Same Amount
Commercial scale renewable energy facilities	56.62%	16.39%	26.99%
Smaller-scale industrial	55.70%	11.40%	32.89%
Alternative housing options	44.33%	25.33%	30.33%
Commercial	41.98%	15.21%	42.81%
Larger-scale industrial	19.57%	42.60%	37.83%
Single-family residential in new subdivisions	22.46%	36.61%	40.93%
Multi-family residential	25.12%	34.56%	40.23%
Mixed use development	29.32%	28.83%	41.85%
Office development	19.08%	21.47%	59.45%

Respondents indicated that the rural landscape of the community makes Westfield a great place to live. Respondents indicated the Westfield River, Hampton Ponds, and the Greenway Rail Trail as write-in responses for aspects that make Westfield a great place to live. Respondents were asked to indicate areas that a master plan can address on a scale of very important” to “not important,” with respondents indicating natural resource protection as the most important measure for the City (79.02% very important; 16.89% important). The scenic resources and aesthetic character were also selected with high importance (38.83% very important; 40.00% important).

Participants were asked to review options for areas that a master plan can address. Respondents selected the following natural resource action as a top priority:

- Conserving wildlife habitat, aquifers, wetlands, and forested areas (25.70%)

Respondents were “very supportive” and “supportive” of the following natural resource action:

- Improving flood protection, stormwater, wastewater, and water infrastructure (38.16% very supportive; 30.92% supportive)

Participants “disagreed” or “strongly disagreed” with the following statement:

- The City has done a good job protecting its natural and environmentally sensitive features. (16.09% disagree; 9.36% strongly disagree)
- Based on the community survey, write-ins for what makes the City a great place to live, include public safety (police and fire) and Westfield Gas + Electric. This was reiterated in the visioning session as city departments and public facilities, including Westfield Athenaeum and emergency services, are seen to offer high quality services. Similarly, the fiber optics network and Westfield Gas & Electric are viewed favorably by many residents. During the community visioning sessions, concern regarding Westfield’s drinking water safety due to pollution and PFAS contamination was noted as a major weakness of the City.
- Respondents to the survey rated quality of public schools, public works services, safety and security, and senior services as all being very important or important items for the Master Plan to address. However, improving public schools was ranked the highest priority. During the visioning session, it was noted that improving school technology should be a high priority.

Survey respondents were asked how important it is that the City takes measures to address agriculture and food production. The residents indicated this measure as very important (41.68%) and important (43.16%). Participants were also asked to review the option of promoting and supporting agriculture through its Master Plan. Respondents were generally supportive of this action with 43.11% indicating very supportive and 31.64% indicating supportive as a survey response. Survey participants were also asked to react to the following statement, “The City has done a good job protecting its agricultural resources and supporting the farming community,” with 39.93% respondents agreeing with the statement.

Respondents were asked to share aspects that make Westfield a great place to live. The write-in responses indicated Westfield Gas & Electric is valued by the Westfield community. Respondents also commented Gas & Electric along with Whip City Fiber are a great asset as an open-ended response to additional comments in the survey. The respondents were very supportive (39.14%) to supportive (29.11%) of enhancing sustainability and energy efficiency through this Master Plan. The survey respondents indicated a need for more commercial scale renewable energy facilities (56.62%) and indicated sustainability and energy efficiency as very important (48.93%) and important (33.44%) measures for the Master Plan.

CHAPTER 1. LAND USE



1.0 LAND USE

1.1 Vision

We envision future development that protects and enhances the natural environment, respects local character, uses best design practices for sustainability, avoids overburdening municipal infrastructure and services, and supports a high quality of life for residents.

1.2 Introduction

The Land Use element's purpose within Westfield's Master Plan is to help shape a plan for land use in the City over the next 20 years. This involves updating the current, as well as proposing new land use controls and regulations designed to implement this plan. As defined by the Guidebook to Massachusetts Land Use 2021 by the American Planning Association, a land use plan is designed to provide a basis for decision making for the long-term future of the community.

Planning for land use implies creating a balance of uses that is appropriate for achieving the community's goals and is reflective of the natural characteristics of the land, its suitability for use, and the availability of existing and proposed public and/or private services and facilities. Westfield's land use consists of agricultural land, forests, wetlands, recreation and public space, undeveloped areas including open land, mining, and waste disposal sites, transportation and utilities, and commercial, industrial, and residential uses. The land use chapter is the centerpiece of master planning, connecting all other elements of the plan, serving as a guide for thoughtful municipal decision making on how to best manage land in the City.

Westfield's growth was first initiated by farmers, then by industry and commercial development, and more recently commercial, industrial, and residential development. One can find that depending on which zoning district governs a certain type of development there, it was likely caused by the community need at the time and the City's topography and physiography that shape and constrain land use patterns.

Westfield still has developable land and has been identified as a focal point for the region's growth, especially with the recent growth in commercial, industrial, and residential development. This element examines existing land uses and current zoning, along with a discussion of recent development trends and desired development outcomes ensuring that there is a balanced approach by which the City can expect for future growth.

1.3 Existing Conditions

To establish a plan and propose new land use controls and regulations, a proper inventory of the existing conditions is required. This section includes an overview of the existing conditions, current zoning, along with a discussion of recent development trends of land use in the City.

1.3.1 Existing Land Use

This section includes a summary of existing conditions regarding land use in Westfield. This involves updating the current, as well as proposed new land use controls and regulations designed to implement this plan. The existing conditions discuss land use and zoning development in the City.

The physical landscape of Westfield provides a wide variety of experiences for visitors and residents alike. Residents of Westfield enjoy a variety of recreational opportunities including the Westfield and Little Rivers, Hampton Ponds, the Metacomet Ridge to the east, and regional access to the Berkshires. Chapter 4, Natural Resources, provides more information on the City's natural features and open space resources.

The City has a land area of 30,280 acres, consisting of a variety of residential, industrial, commercial, recreation uses, and natural features including forested and productive agricultural land. Between 1999 and 2021, vacant land, agricultural land, and forested land have declined while commercial and residential uses have increased. The City's industrial and commercial areas consist of a mix of manufacturing and retail businesses that are mainly concentrated along Route 10 and Route 202. Other commercial developments can also be found along Route 20 and East Main Street. Industrial areas are also concentrated at Westfield Industrial Park and the north side of the city where more recently development industrial uses have been constructed. Map 1-1, *Existing Land Use*, can be found at the end of this chapter and provides a visual representation of the land uses across Westfield.

Forested land covers the largest portion of land area in Westfield, currently representing over 13,741 acres (45% of the total land area). Agricultural land uses have decreased by 488 acres (2% of the total land area) between 1999 and 2021. The agriculture industry historically was and continues to be an essential part of the City and includes several operating farms. Agricultural land currently consists of 3,013 acres of land (10% of the total land area). Based on the MassGIS digital orthophotos, farmland in Westfield is primarily pasture (40% of agricultural land) and cropland (60% of agricultural land) areas. Additional information on agricultural uses and employment can be found in Chapter 9, *Agriculture*. The City's prime farmland soils and ecological communities including forested land, agricultural land, wetlands, and open water are discussed further in Chapter 4, *Natural Resources*.

The City's principal forms of development are residential, consisting of primarily single-family housing. The City's residential area has seen an increase of 714 acres between 1999 and 2021. Medium density development (housing on 1/4 – 1/2 acre lots) had largest increase between 1999 and 2021 (see Table 1-1).

Mass GIS Land Use Description	1999 (Acres)	2009 (Acres)	2021 (Acres)	Change 1999-2021 (Acres)	Percent Change 1999-2021 (%)
Low Density (Housing on 1/2 - 1 acre lots)	1,942	1,942	2,055	113	5.8
Medium Density (Housing on 1/4 - 1/2 acre lots)	3,230	3,644	3,600	371	11.5
High Density (Housing on smaller than 1/4 acre lots)	1,475	1,540	1,700	224	15.3
Multi-Family Residential	151	169	157	6	4.0
TOTAL	6,798	7,277	7,512	714	10.5

Source: Primus Engineering/MassGIS Digital Orthophotos, MassGIS Land Use (1999)

Residential areas currently represent over 7,511 acres (25% of the total land area). The residential landscape consists primarily of medium density residential development (1/4 - 1/2 acre lots). Land

use changes that have occurred between 1999 and 2021 are summarized in Table 1-2 and Figure 1-1.

Table 1-2. Land Use Over Time					
Class of Land Use	1999 (Acres)	2009 (Acres)	2021 (Acres)	Change 1999-2021 (Acres)	Percent Change 1999-2021 (%)
Agricultural Land	3,501	2,978	3,013	-488	-13.9
Forest	14,044	13,828	13,741	-303	-2.2
Recreation & Public Space	974	656	841	-133	-13.7
Residential	6,798	7,277	7,512	714	10.5
Industrial	604	1,220	707	103	17.1
Commercial	559	534	652	93	16.6
Transportation and Utilities (including the Westfield-Barnes Regional Airport)	1,269	1,286	1,473	204	16.1
Vacant (Open Land and Transitional areas)	1,317	1,008	801	-516	-39.2
Water	470	635	567	97	20.6
Wetlands	211	353	470	259	122.7
Other	533	505	503	-30	-5.6
TOTAL	30,280	30,280	30,280		

Source: Primus Engineering/MassGIS Digital Orthophotos, MassGIS Land Use (1999)

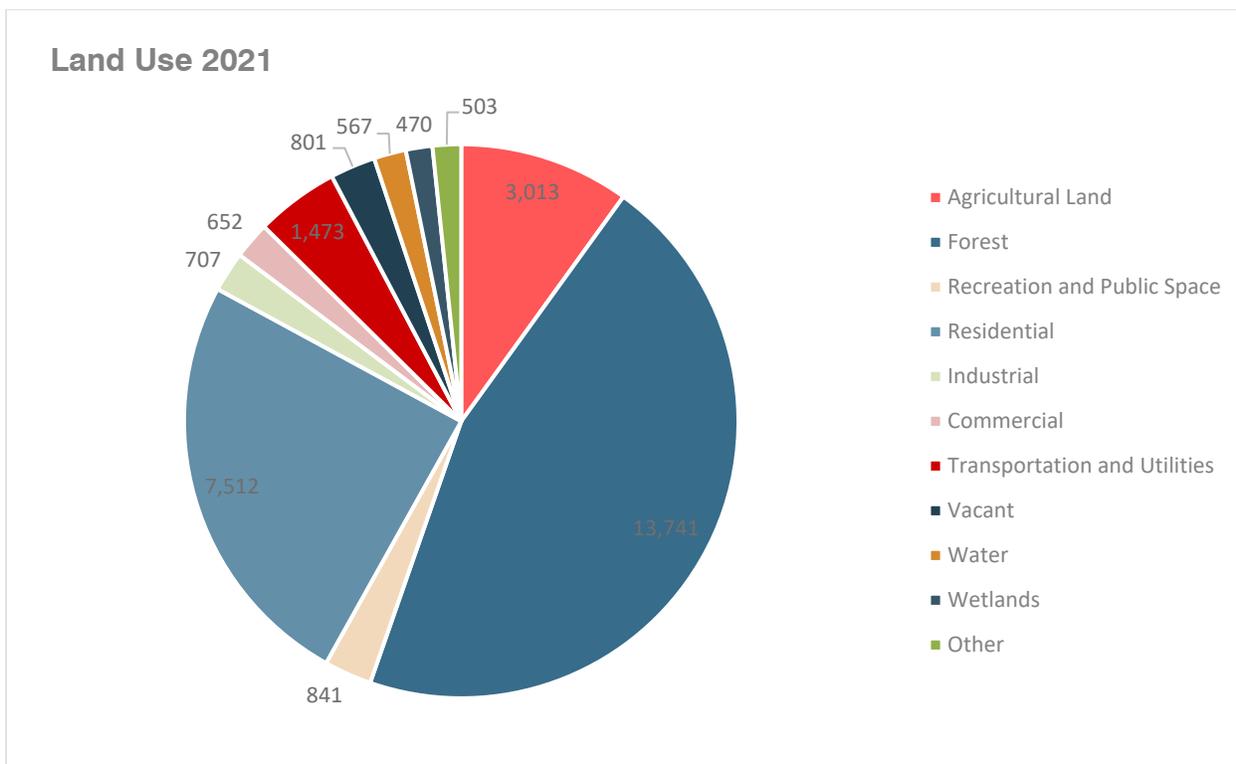


Figure 1-1. Land Use 2021

Source: Primus Engineering/MassGIS Digital Orthophotos, MassGIS Land Use (1999)

Table 1-3 below provides a breakdown of existing land use based on data available through MassGIS digital orthophotos. This dataset documents land area covered by forests, wetlands, impervious surfaces, agriculture, and other land and water classifications.

Land Use	Mass GIS Land Use Description	Westfield Land Area (Acres)	% Westfield Land Area (Acres)
Agriculture	Cropland: Generally tilled land used to grow row crops.	1,717	6%
	Pasture: Fields and associated facilities (barns and other outbuildings) used for animal grazing and for the growing of grasses for hay.	1,202	4%
	Orchard: Fruit farms and associated facilities.	19	0%
	Nursery: Greenhouses and associated buildings as well as any surrounding maintained lawn. Christmas tree (small conifer) farms are also classified as Nurseries.	75	0%
	Total Agriculture	3,013	10%
Recreation & Public Space	Urban Public/ Institutional: Lands comprising schools, churches, colleges, hospitals, museums, prisons, town halls or court houses, police and fire stations, including parking lots, dormitories, and university housing. Also, may include public open green spaces like town commons.	321	1%
	Water Based Recreation: Swimming pools, water parks, developed beach areas and associated parking lots.	18	0%
	Spectator Recreation: University and professional stadiums designed for spectators as well as zoos, amusement parks, drive-in theaters, fairgrounds, racetracks and associated facilities and parking lots.	36	0%
	Participation Recreation: Recreation Facilities used by the public for active recreation. Includes ball fields, tennis courts, basketball courts, athletic tracks, ski areas, playgrounds, and bike paths plus associated parking lots. Primary and secondary school recreational facilities are in this category, but university stadiums and arenas are considered Spectator Recreation.	302	1%

Table 1-3. Existing Land Use 2021			
	Golf Course: Includes the greenways, sand traps, water bodies within the course, associated buildings and parking lots.	164	1%
	Total Recreation & Public Space	841	3%
Residential	Low Density Residential: Housing on 1/2 - 1 acre lots. See notes below for details on Residential interpretation.	2,055	7%
	Medium Density Residential: Housing on 1/4 - 1/2 acre lots.	3,600	12%
	High Density Residential: Housing on smaller than 1/4 acre lots.	1,700	6%
	Multi-Family Residential: Duplexes (usually with two front doors, two entrance pathways, and sometimes two driveways), apartment buildings, condominium complexes, including buildings and maintained lawns.	157	1%
	Total Residential	7,512	25%
Commercial	Malls, shopping centers and larger strip commercial areas, plus neighborhood stores and medical offices (not hospitals).	652	2%
	Total Commercial	652	2%
Industrial	Light and heavy industry, including buildings, equipment, and parking areas.	707	2%
	Total Industrial	707	2%
Undeveloped	Forest: Areas where tree canopy covers at least 50% of the land. Both coniferous and deciduous forests belong to this class.	13,741	45%
	Mining: Includes sand and gravel pits, mines, and quarries. The boundaries extend to the edges of the site's activities, including on-site machinery, parking lots, roads, and buildings.	336	1%
	Open Land: Vacant land, idle agriculture, rock outcrops, and barren areas.	783	3%
	Transitional: Open areas in the process of being developed from one land use to another (if the future land use is at all uncertain). Formerly identified as "Urban Open".	18	0%
	Waste Disposal: Landfills, dumps, and water and sewage treatment facilities	72	0%

Table 1-3. Existing Land Use 2021			
	such as pump houses, and associated parking lots.		
	Total Undeveloped	14,950	49%
Transportation and Utilities	Powerline/Utility: Powerline and other maintained public utility corridors and associated facilities, including power plants and their parking areas.	203	1%
	Transportation: Airports (including landing strips, hangars, parking areas and related facilities), railroads and rail stations, and divided highways (related facilities would include rest areas, highway maintenance areas, storage areas, and on/off ramps).	1,270	4%
	Total Transportation and Utilities	1,473	5%
Cemeteries	Includes the gravestones, monuments, parking lots, road networks and associated buildings.	95	0%
	Total Cemeteries	95	0%
Wetlands	Non-Forested Wetland: DEP Wetlands (1:12,000) WETCODEs 4, 7, 8, 12, 23, 18, 20, and 21.	470	2%
	Wetlands	470	2%
Water	DEP Wetlands (1:12,000) WETCODEs 9 and 22.	567	2%
	Water	567	2%
TOTAL		30,280	100%

Source: Primus Engineering/MassGIS Digital Orthophotos

1.3.2 Existing Zoning Districts

The allowable use of land is determined by the designation of a zoning district, which is established in the City of Westfield Zoning Ordinance, as amended in December 2022. Map 1-2, *Zoning*, illustrates all of the zoning districts and overlay districts across Westfield. The City employs 14 different zoning districts that range from residential to industrial in nature. Table 1-4 represents each of these districts and the land area within the City that is designated as such.

Table 1-4. Land Area by Zoning Category		
Zoning District	Acres	Percentage of Total Land Area
Rural Residential (RR)	18,781.7	62.0%
Residential A (RA)	4,755.5	15.7%
Residential B (RB)	668.1	2.2%
Residential C (RC)	177.5	0.6%

Zoning Category	Area (Acres)	Percentage
Residential C-1 Residential Project District (RC)	11.5	< 0.1%
Commercial A Neighborhood Commercial District (CA)	60.0	0.2%
Court Street Mixed Residence/Business District (CRB)	31.6	0.1%
Broad Street Mixed Residence/Business District	42.3	0.1%
Commercial Office Retail Enterprise District (CORE)	87.9	0.3%
Business A General Business District (BA)	658.3	2.2%
Business B Service Business District (BB)	721.2	2.4%
Industrial A District (IA)	2,870.3	9.5%
Industrial Park District (IP)	262.7	0.9%
Airport District (AD)	1,137.5	3.8%

Source: City of Westfield

The zoning ordinance also establishes the dimensional requirements for lot sizes within the City to allow for flexibility of development in various parts of the City and to promote infill in already built, established neighborhoods. The Planning Board may issue a special permit to allow exemptions to this minimum lot size and/or an increase in the density (number of dwellings per units per lot) for residential purpose lots within the RR, RA, RC, and RC Districts provided they meet specific criteria outlined in Section 4-20.2 of the General Use Regulations.

1.3.3 Development Trends

Figure 1-2 provides annual single-family, two-family, multi-family, and commercial building permit data from 2012 to 2021. Residential construction has remained relatively steady from 2012-2021. The City experienced an increase in single-family residential development in 2017, issuing 43 building permits and an increase in 2021, issuing 44 building permits. Commercial construction also experienced a sharp increase in 2021, while two-family and multi-family constructions have remained relatively low throughout the period. It is likely that much of the construction in 2021 is due to federal and state funding, and grant opportunities due to offsetting impacts of the pandemic. Map 1-3, *Impervious Surfaces*, also assists with identifying areas for potential future development.

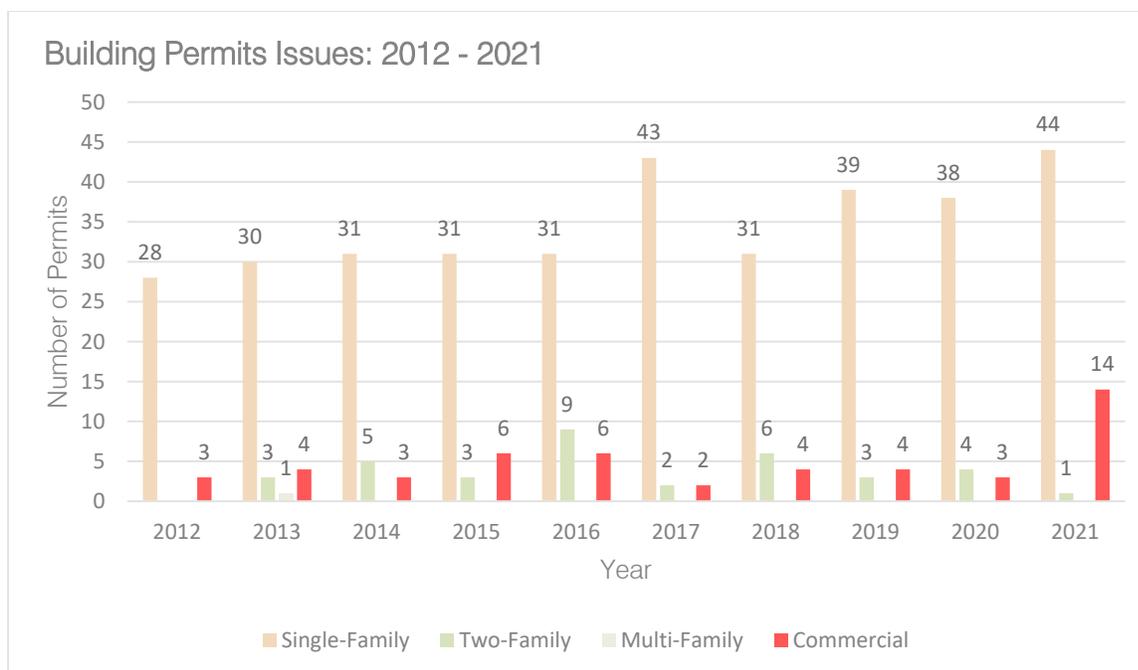


Figure 1-2. Building Permits (2012-2021)

Source: City of Westfield, 2021

1.4 Challenges and Opportunities

1.4.1 Challenges

The City of Westfield consists of a variety of natural features, including forested and productive agricultural land that contribute to its rural and scenic character. Growing development pressures and climate related disasters threaten many homes and businesses within Westfield, including farmlands. Agricultural lands help maintain the City's rural character in the face of growing development pressures and should be preserved.

The City's downtown lacks a strong identity, consisting of some vacant lots, storefronts, and inconsistent building appearances that need improvement. Several commercial and industrial uses are located within the Barnes Aquifer and on floodplains. Limiting future development within and in proximity to the Barnes Aquifer and floodplains is essential as land development can have a significant impact on water quality and wildlife habitat. The City has a Floodplain Overlay District that protects floodplain areas from certain uses and types of development. The City can additionally consider resurrecting the Barnes Aquifer Protection Advisory Committee (BAPAC) to protect the aquifer from development impacts.

As the City's Zoning Ordinance has been amended over time, it can be confusing with uses that may be permitted in various districts and how it is referenced in other parts of the document. For example, in the "CORE District" any uses from the "Business A District" are also allowed. Some codified processes may need to be reexamined to improve efficiency of the permitting process. Submitted plans should be checked with local, state, and federal regulations to avoid problems down the road. Additionally, some issues of enforcement have been identified, where those who are

responsible for enforcement should be making sure plans are followed as they were submitted and approved.

1.4.2 Opportunities

Zoning Review

The current Zoning Ordinance should encourage development where most appropriate, with least impact on the environment, and where public infrastructure already exists. Over time as the Zoning Ordinance has gotten amended, discussion has occurred that leads to an identified opportunity to review the overall zoning regulations in the City.

Recent Planning Board meetings have included the adoption of residential flag lots and looked at types of uses in the use districts along Southampton Road, along with design review identified in the Rapid Recovery Plan for the downtown. The City can look at their current zoning regulations to determine how the zoning can best provide predictability in future development and preservation in the City.

The zoning map depicts some instances where zoning districts that are established as Rural Residential happen to be located among some of the most intense zoning districts – Industrial Park and Industrial A in the northern part of the city. Also, within the same area some instances of spot zoning have prevailed over time. The City may want to explore opportunities for transitional zoning districts as it may explore future land uses.

Restrictions on Development

Thinking about how to balance both development and preservation, there may be opportunities to look at how the Westfield Zoning Ordinance limits development potential across the city. The Water Resource Protection District serves as a function of protecting, preserving, and maintaining the public water supply and the lands that contribute to it. Some of the major industrial uses are found within this zoning overlay, as well as proposed development that may be more intense in nature.

The community has identified in its Summary of Findings document from the Community Resilience Building (CRB) Workshop, ways to make the Transfer of Development Rights ordinance to be more useable, especially in the aquifer areas, addressing impervious limits. Additionally, the report seeks to resurrect Barnes Aquifer Protection Committee and/or establish a new local Westfield Aquifer Protection Committee. The City may want to consider looking at how to address some of these development concerns in the aquifer through sustainable practices and water management.

Resilience in Development – Smart Growth

Resilience in development can be thought of as a way for the City to look at protecting important City resources and directing development and redevelopment to areas where existing infrastructure is in place to support new uses.

The City has already established Smart Growth Zoning Overlay Districts directing development to 22.2 acres off Southwick Road whose criteria and standards can be met with a by-right development, which promotes multi-family housing options, with plan approval. By-right development prioritizes multifamily housing With both a mixed use and residential component permitting at minimum 20 percent “affordable,” commitment to providing developers with these options are resilient in nature.

Valley Vision, the Pioneer Valley's Regional Land Use Plan, identified Westfield Center where Transit Oriented Development (TOD) may make sense. TOD promotes development along public transit routes to provide equitable access for all while encouraging more people to utilize public transit. An alternatives analysis was completed that show there may be potential to support TOD development in the Westfield Center so housing and businesses that locate there are within close proximity to PVTa Olver Transit Station, with new development and redevelopment promoting walking, biking, and transit use.

1.5 Current Measures/Practices

1.5.1 Existing Regulations

Overlay Districts

In addition to zoning districts, the City has three overlay districts. An overlay is a specific type of zoning district that floats on top of underlying zoning. Overlay districts are typically used to place additional requirements or restrictions on certain areas but can also be used to allow for more flexibility in uses and dimensions. As an example, they can be used to limit development in significant natural resource areas such as ground and surface water supply areas or increase housing density in designated areas. Below is a definition of each current overlay zoning district in the City.

Floodplain Management District

The Floodplain Management District is intended to promote the good health, safety and general welfare of all users of property within areas prone to flooding; to minimize the need for flood rescue and relief efforts generally undertaken at the expense of the general public; to minimize prolonged interruptions of business; to minimize damage to public facilities and utilities; to help maintain a stable tax base by providing for the sound use and development of flood prone areas in such a manner as to minimize future flood damage; and, to insure that all users of land within the flood prone areas are notified of the potential hazards that may be caused by flooding.

Water Resource Protection District

The intent and purposes of the Water Resource Protection District is to promote the health, safety and general welfare of the community; to protect, preserve and maintain the public water supply and the lands that contribute to it; to conserve the natural water resources within the City; and to prevent the pollution of the public water supply of the City and surrounding areas.

Smart Growth Zoning Overlay District

The purposes of the Westfield Smart Growth Zoning Overlay District is to encourage smart growth in accordance with the purposes of G. L. Chapter 40R; to increase the stock of affordable housing in Westfield, and assist the City in meeting the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' goal of 10% affordable housing in each community; to encourage revitalization and economic development within the overlay district's boundaries; to promote mixed use development, including a variety of housing types and commercial uses; to create an increased variety or mix of attractive housing options, which will encourage residents of all income types to live and work downtown; to promote well-designed projects, which enhance and support the historic character and architectural styles of the neighborhood; and to promote the re-development and adaptive re-use of existing structures in

the Smart Growth District. Currently, there have been no smart growth projects realized in this overlay as an originally permitted residential development fell victim to the 2008 housing market crash.

1.6 Goals, Policies, and Actions

1.6.1 Goals

1. Concentrate and reimagine development opportunities in the downtown and other identified corridors like Routes 10/ 202 and Route 20 that directly contribute to the City's future identity.
2. Ensure that current and future development has minimal adverse impacts on natural resources, and that environmentally sensitive areas are protected, especially regarding stormwater runoff, drinking water supply and water quality.
3. Enhance livability of neighborhoods by ensuring minimal impacts to quality-of-life issues, like traffic, pollution, and other nuisances throughout the City brought by the built environment.

1.6.2 Policies

1. Periodically evaluate and update development standards as necessary to help minimize impacts to natural systems, provide sustainable economic opportunities, and encourage a variety of housing types.
2. Continue to explore future opportunities for growth within the context of sustainability and preservation of character of neighborhoods.
3. Maximize natural areas in proximity to groundwater aquifers and recharge areas and scrutinize any development activities to ensure minimal threats to drinking water.
4. Encourage infill commercial and redevelopment along main commercial strips, as well as mixed-use/residential projects in the downtown.
5. Encourage residential infill, redevelopment and investment in the City's neighborhoods, particular in older downtown areas.
6. Continue to foster engagement with Westfield State University leadership to understand potential of university growth and off-campus impacts and opportunities.
7. Minimize impervious coverage.
8. Discourage land uses which generate high volumes of vehicle-trips, especially trucks, when not coupled with traffic mitigation measures or suitable/non-residential neighborhood routing.

1.6.3 Actions

1. Review the provisions of Transfer of Development Rights and Open Space Subdivisions in the City's Zoning Ordinance for ways to incentivize and encourage these development options.

Lead Party: Planning Department

Support Party: Planning Board, City Council, Conservation Commission

Timeframe: Medium-term

2. Conduct a review of the City's Zoning Ordinance and develop a comprehensive update for adoption.

Lead Party: Planning Department

Support Party: Planning Board, Consultant, Ad hoc committee

Timeframe: Medium -term

3. Update the performance review standards within land use regulations that limit the site disturbances and alterations affecting critical natural resources, like the Barnes Aquifer, to ensure that development impacts are minimized or suitably mitigated.

Lead Party: Planning Department

Support Party: Planning Board

Timeframe: Medium-term

4. Create an inventory of existing developed areas that are most appropriate for density increases, infill development and/or redevelopment, and steer developers toward such areas.

Lead Party: Planning Department

Support Party: Assessors Department, Community Development, Advancement Officer

Timeframe: Medium-term

5. Review and revise regulations to encourage appropriate infill commercial, residential, and multi-use development along existing commercial strips and downtown.

Lead Party: Planning Department

Support Party: Planning Board, Assessors Department, Consultant

Timeframe: Medium-term

6. Meet regularly with campus leaders to stay abreast of Westfield State University's plans for growth.

Lead Party: Mayor

Support Party: Planning Department, Community Development

Timeframe: Ongoing

7. Establish stricter impervious coverage maximums and open space minimums; eliminate or reduce codified minimum parking requirements that can result in unnecessary paved areas.

Lead Party: Planning Department

Support Party: City Council

Timeframe: Medium-term

8. Discourage incompatible residential development in areas affected by aircraft overflights, publicize the Airport Exposure Map, and establish disclosure polices, land acquisitions, and/or rezoning.

Lead Party: Airport

Support Party: Planning Department

Timeframe: Short-term/ongoing

9. Comprehensively update subdivision rules and regulations to improve clarity of process and accommodate green infrastructure and low-impact design alternatives.

Lead Party: Planning Department

Support Party: Planning Board, Engineering

Timeframe: Short-term

10. Design a more interactive, educational zoning map to encourage residents to learn about land use planning and Westfield's zoning bylaws.

Lead Party: Planning Department

Support Party: Zoning Board of Appeals

Timeframe: Medium-term

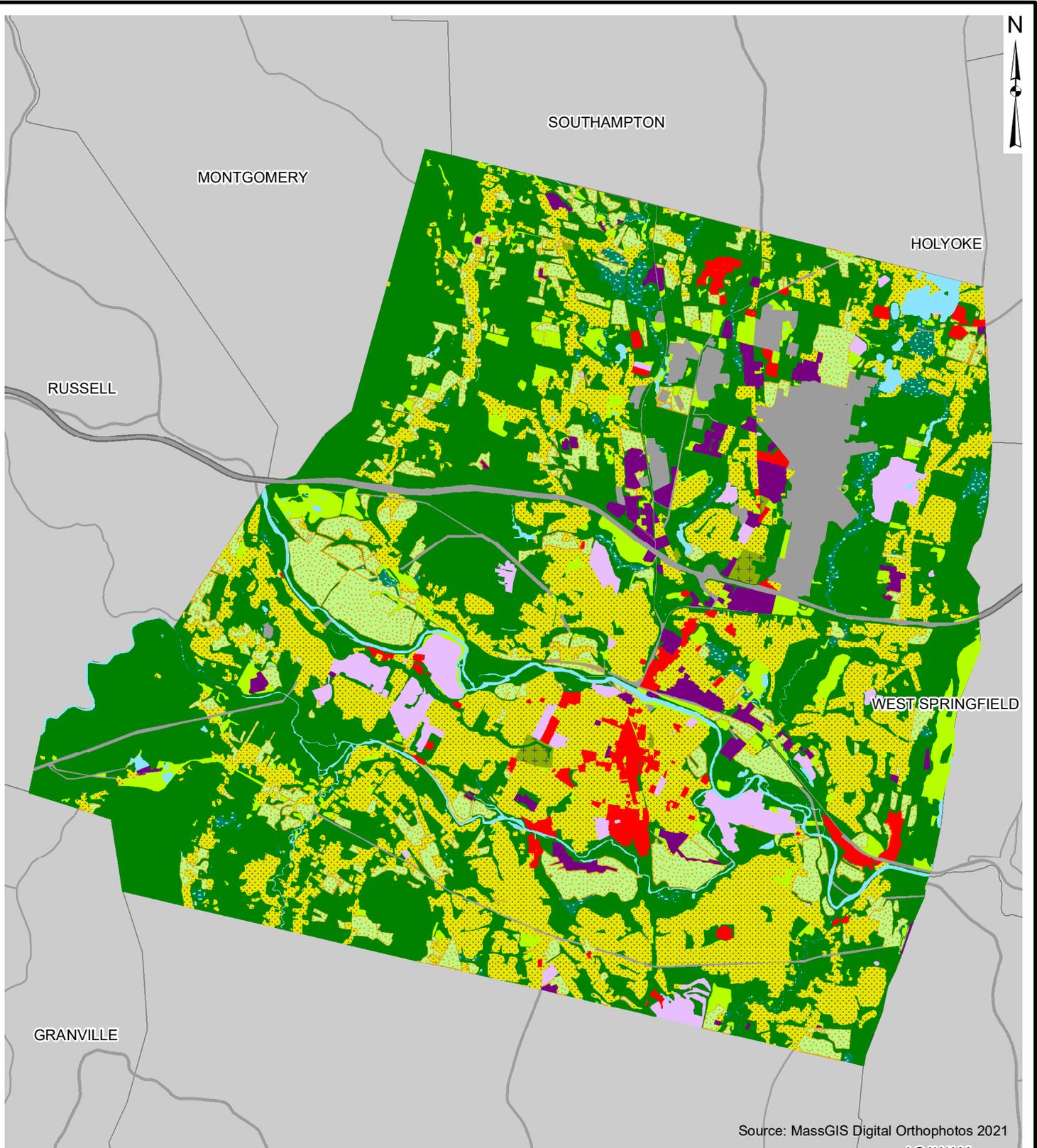
11. Assess existing municipal lighting throughout the City and determine where detrimental lighting impacts could be reduced or mitigated.

Lead Party: Planning Department

Support Party: Engineering, Gas & Electric

Timeframe: Short-term

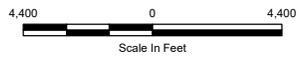
Path: P:\MA\Westfield\Westfield, MA - Master Plan Update\GIS\Existing Land Use.mxd User: Butt, Aqsa Saved: 8/24/2022 4:05:10 PM Opened: 8/24/2022 4:06:50 PM



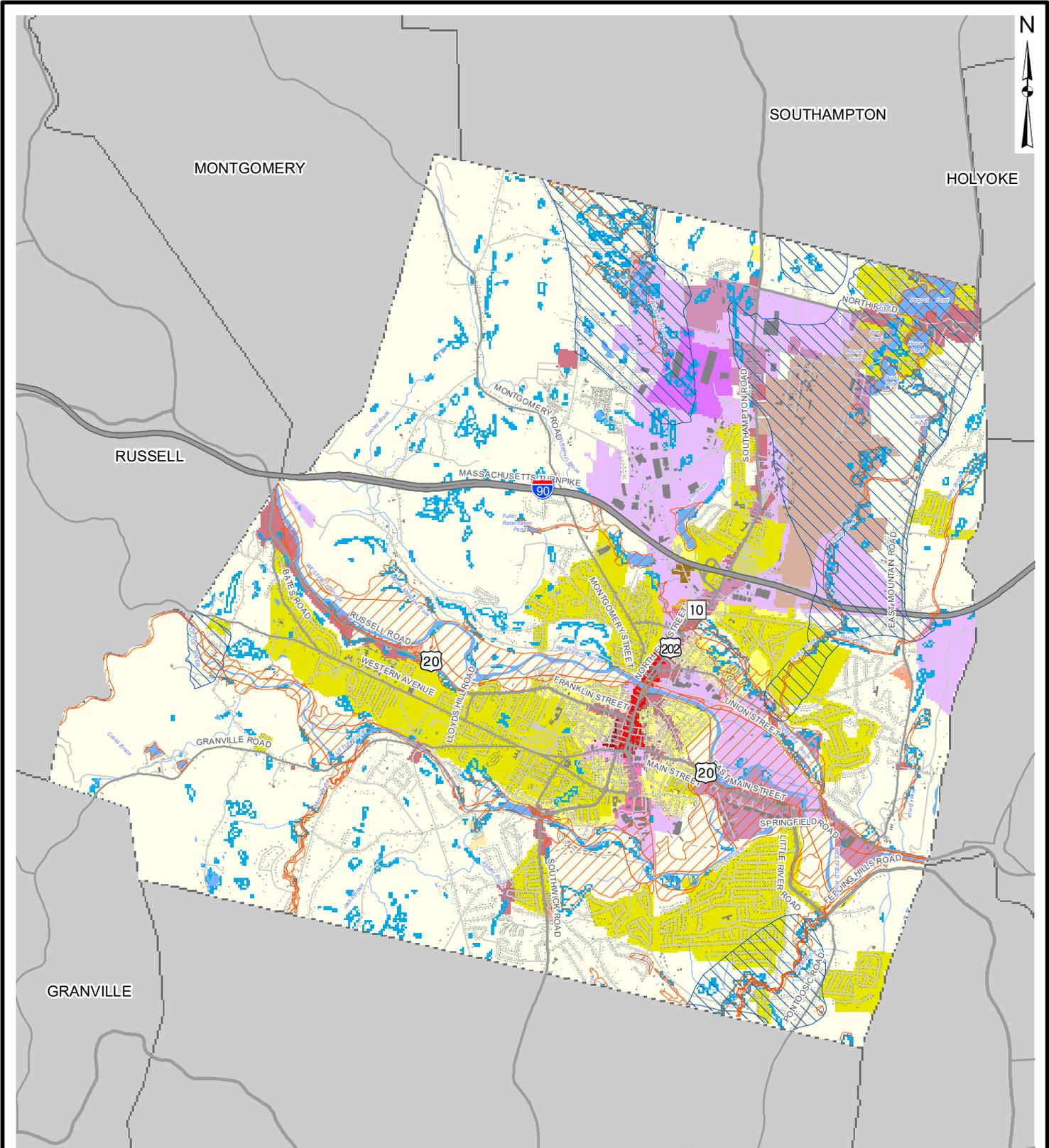
Source: MassGIS Digital Orthophotos 2021

Legend

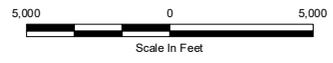
- Forest
- Residential
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Recreation and Public Space
- Agriculture
- Wetlands
- Cemetery
- Transportation and Utilities
- Undeveloped
- Water



MAP 1-1	
WESTFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS WESTFIELD MASTER PLAN UPDATE	
EXISTING LAND USE	
May 2023	SCALE: NOTED
	



DATASOURCE: City of Westfield, MassGIS, 2022

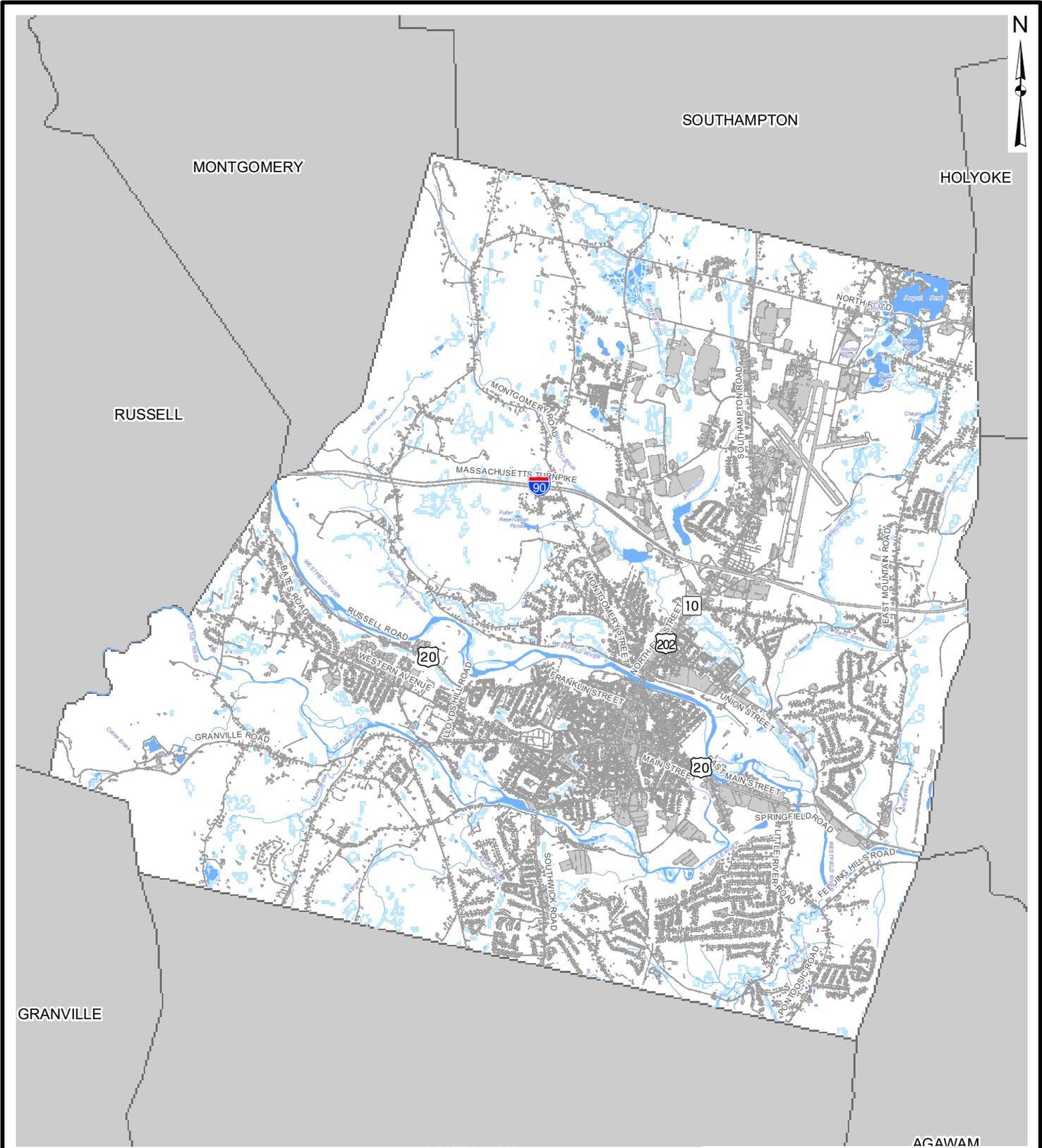


Zoning Districts

- | | |
|--|-------------------|
| AIRPORT DISTRICT | INDUSTRIAL A |
| BUSINESS A | INDUSTRIAL PARK |
| BUSINESS B | RC |
| BROAD ST MIXED RESIDENCE / BUSINESS DISTRICT | RESIDENCE A |
| COURT ST MIXED RESIDENCE / BUSINESS DISTRICT | RESIDENCE B |
| COMERCIAL A | RESIDENCE C |
| COMERCIAL OFFICE RETAIL ENTERPRISE | RESIDENCE C-1 |
| COMMERCIAL A | RURAL RESIDENTIAL |

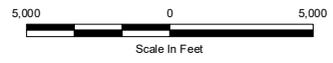
- | |
|-------------------------------|
| Flood Zone Overlay District |
| Aquifer Zone Overlay District |
| Open Water |
| Streams |
| Wetlands |

MAP 1-2	
WESTFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS WESTFIELD MASTER PLAN UPDATE	
Zoning & Overlay Districts	
May 2023	SCALE: NOTED



-  Impervious Surfaces
-  Open Water
-  Streams
-  Wetlands

DATASOURCE: MassGIS, 2022



MAP 1-3	
WESTFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS WESTFIELD MASTER PLAN UPDATE	
IMPERVIOUS SURFACES	
May 2023	SCALE: NOTED
	

CHAPTER 2. HOUSING



2.0 HOUSING

2.1 Vision

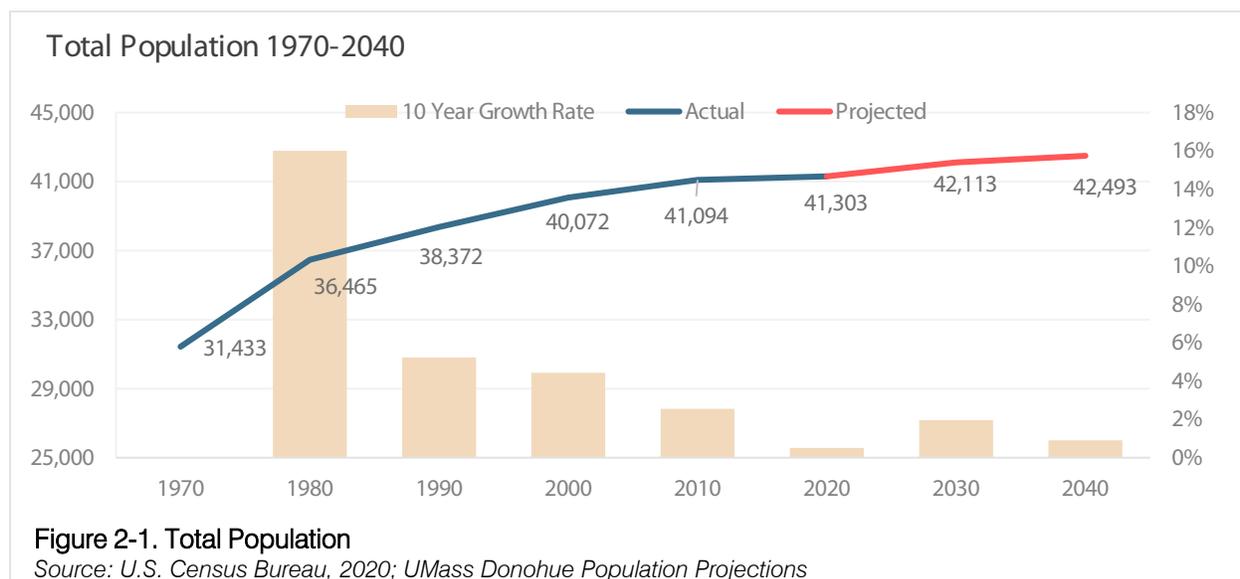
We envision a community where existing residents and new residents can live in quality housing compatible with local character, where a variety of housing types and prices are available that all individuals and families can afford, and where older residents can stay living in town or age in place.

2.2 Introduction

Housing is one of the most fundamental topics in a Master Plan as it is one of the essential elements of everyday life. There is a shared understanding of the importance of having safe, reliable, and affordable housing for residents in the City. Westfield’s existing housing stock has met these demands, consisting of a mix of single-family and multi-family homes across all levels of density and price points. While existing housing construction has been able to keep up with the slow demand based on current population trends, there presents an opportunity to leverage housing as an asset in attracting and retaining the next generation of Westfield residents.

2.3 Population Profile

Westfield’s population was 41,303 as of 2020. Since 1970, the population in Westfield has been steadily rising, growing by 10,000 residents over the past 50 years. Interestingly, despite the steady growth, the 10-year growth rate decade-over-decade has been decreasing. From 2010 – 2020 the population grew by just under 1 percent. According to population projections from the University of Massachusetts Donahue Institute, the current population is projected to increase by about 1,100 additional residents over the next twenty years continuing the City’s trend of slow and steady growth (UMass Donahue Institute, 2020).



2.3.1 Population by Age

Westfield’s population is relatively spread out across Census defined age groups. Typical of many New England communities, the segment of the population aged 65 and over has increased and is the second largest share of residents at 17.5% of residents. Westfield population also has a larger

proportion of residents aged 18 – 24 and under 18 but these populations have decreased in share over the past decade. They have decreased from 37% of the population to 34% of the population. Westfield has also seen an increase in the share of residents aged 25 – 34. Coupled, these age trends highlight the growing share of the population that is either a Millennial (hitting prime home buying age) or a Baby Boomer (typically seeking to downsize). Both trends signal shifts in housing preferences as Millennials seek to buy their first home and older adult residents may seek to downsize.

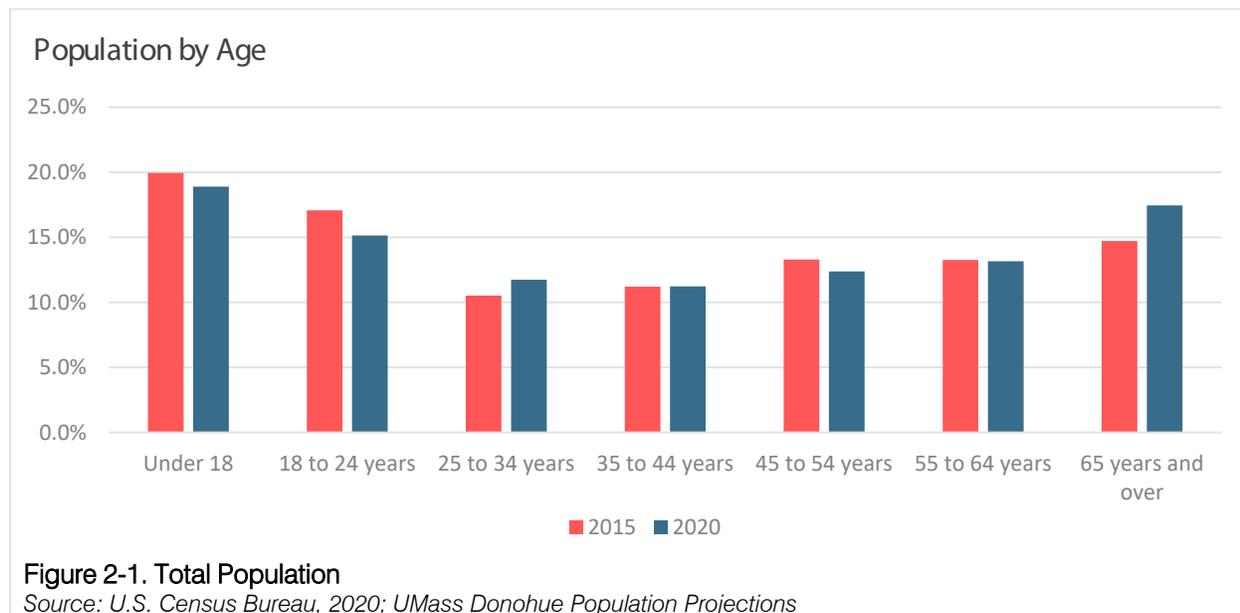


Figure 2-1. Total Population

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020; UMass Donohue Population Projections

2.3.2 Race & Ethnicity

Westfield is predominately White with over 90% of residents identifying as White alone (non-Hispanic/Latino). Westfield has grown more racially diverse since 2015 with just over 10% of residents identifying as Hispanic or Latino, an increase of 27.1%. Despite this growth, Westfield remains less diverse than the rest of Hampden County, where over a quarter of residents identify as Hispanic or Latino and nearly 9% identify as Black or African American.

Within Westfield, the White population is distributed across much of the City. There is a very distinct difference between the edges of the City in the more suburban and rural parts and the downtown area.

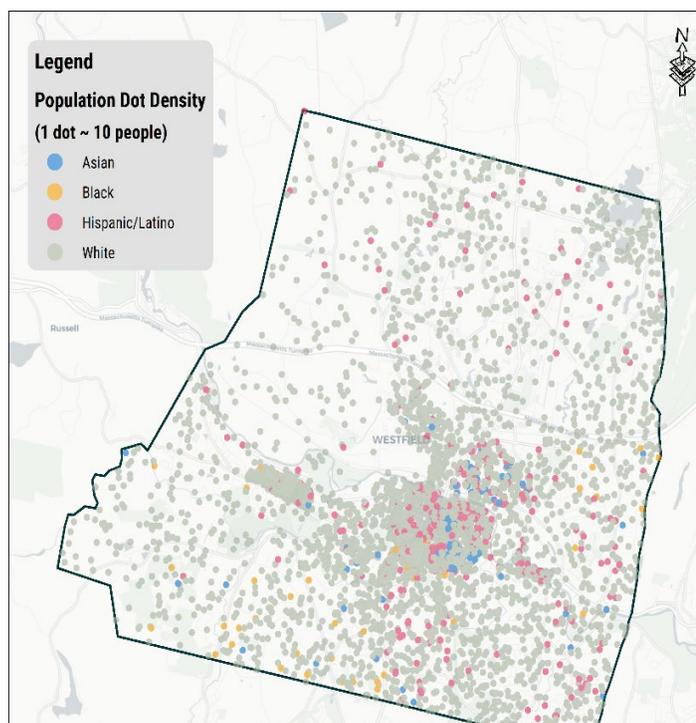
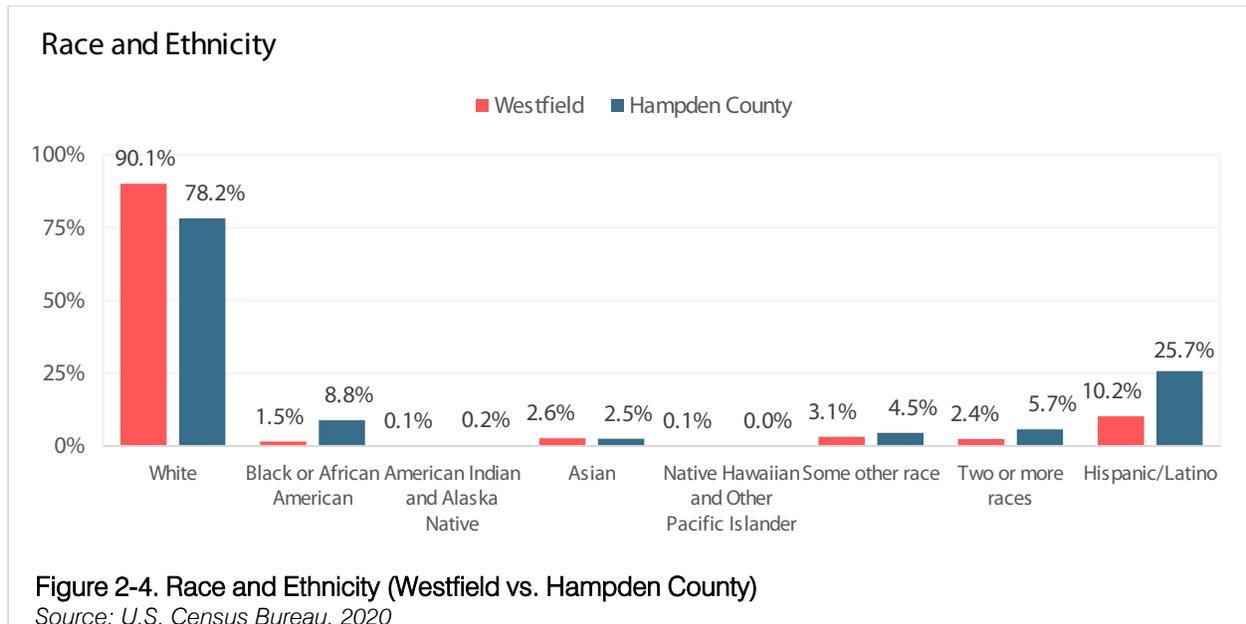


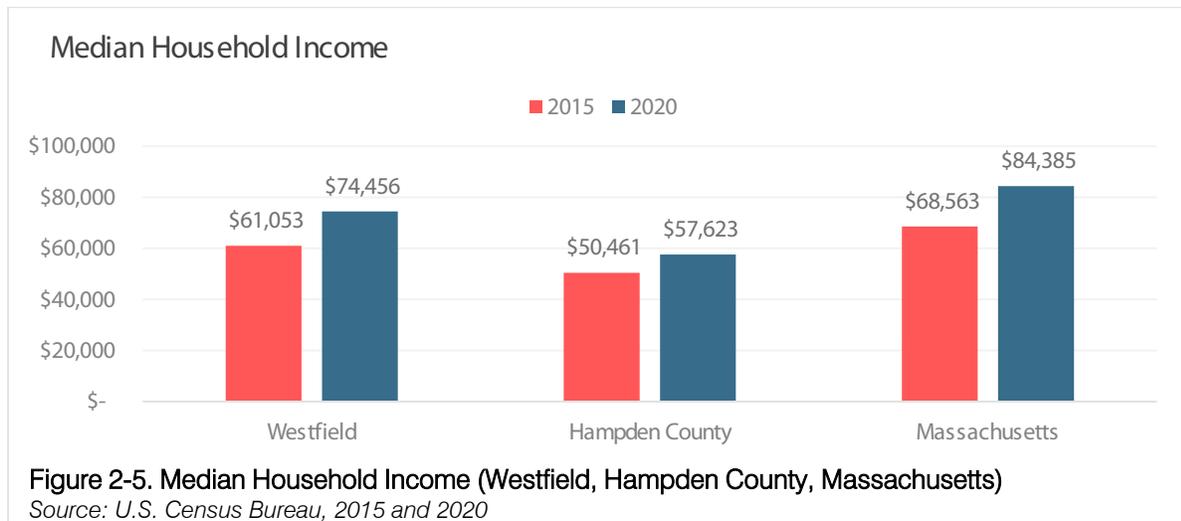
Figure 2-3. Population Dot Density

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020

distribution of residents by race and ethnicity across the City.



The downtown area has much higher concentrations of both Hispanic and Latino and Black or African American residents compared to all surrounding parts of Westfield. This part of the City also has higher concentrations of lower-income households, higher prevalence of multi-family housing, and a much older housing stock on average than many other areas around Westfield.



2.3.3 Household Income

The median household income in Westfield in 2020 was \$74,456 which was an increase of over \$13,000 since 2015. While this figure is higher than Hampden County’s median income of \$57,623, it does remain lower than the statewide median of \$84,385.

Within Westfield, median incomes vary by the area of the City. Downtown Westfield has the highest concentration of lower income census block groups, with a significant portion of block groups having

median incomes between \$30,000 and \$50,000 a year. The Hampton Ponds neighborhood has the lowest median household income, which is below \$30,000. Higher income block groups are primarily on the edges of the City corresponding to where newer housing and neighborhoods have been developed. These areas show median household incomes over \$100,000 a year, which is more than double that of downtown area.

2.4 Household Characteristics

2.4.1 Household Composition

From 2010 – 2020 the population of Westfield grew by just under 1 percent. Over this same period, the number of households in Westfield increased by 190 or 1.3%.

Based on ACS estimates for the past decade, the changes in households were driven by increases in family households (4.8%), which are households with related members, and decreases in non-family households (-5.4%), which are either 1-person households or households with non-related roommates. Over the past decade, the average household size for owner households in Westfield has increased from 2.66 to 2.68, which can be attributed to the increases in family households. For rental households, the average household size decreased from 2.38 to 2.16, which can be linked to decreases in larger renter households.

As household composition in Westfield has shifted towards a higher percentage of family households and slightly larger average household size, across tenure the percentage of renters and owners has remained steady. Based on 2020 ACS 5-year estimates, Westfield's households are split 32% renter households and 68% owner households.

Interestingly, Westfield's steady proportions of renter and owner households match Hampden County trends, though by household type they do not. Hampden saw decreases in family households and increases in non-family households. This trend translates to a net decrease in household size across the county making Westfield an outlier in this demographic shift.

Across household size and tenure, Westfield has seen an 8.3% increase in 1-person renter households and a 14.7% increase in 2-person households. This trend coupled with decreases in 4- and 5-person renter households has led to the decline in average household size among renters. This trend reflects the broader county-wide household changes among renters.

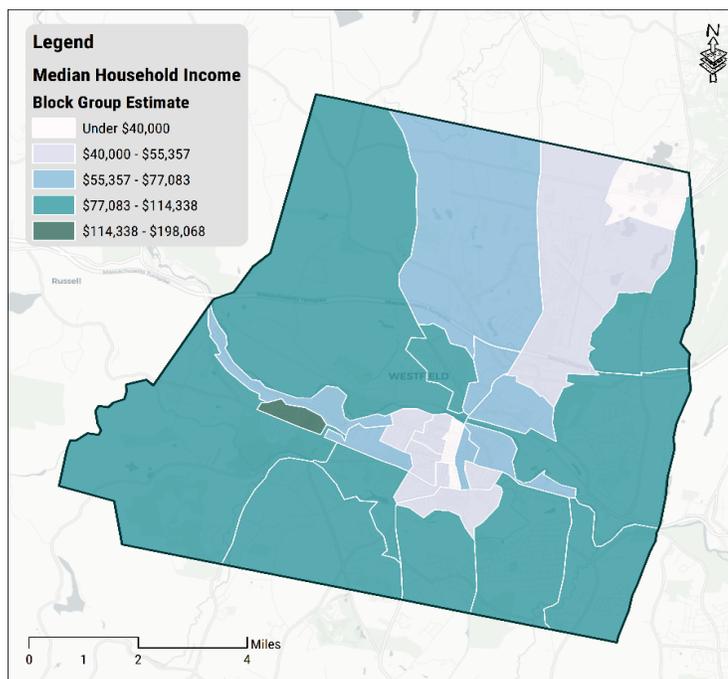
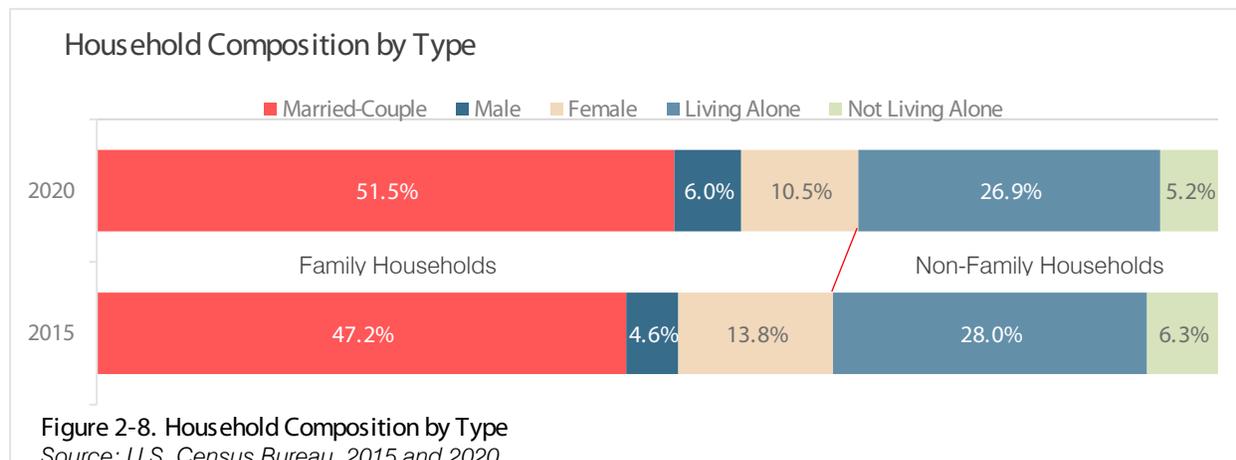


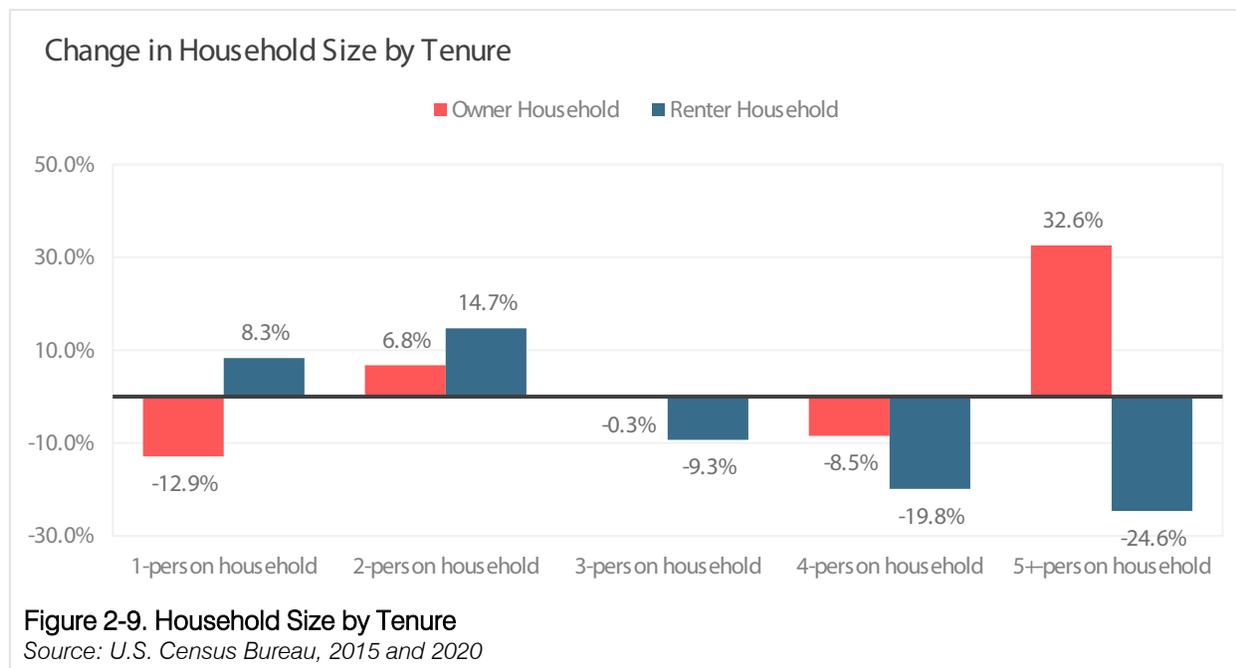
Figure 2-6. Median Household Income by Census Block Group
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020

.Among owner households in Westfield, the last decade saw a 6.8% increase in 2-person households and a 32.6% increase in 5+ person households. These trends reflect the increases in married couples and family households.



2.4.2 Housing Tenure

Westfield has many single-family homes that are predominately owner-occupied. It is this characteristic that pushes Westfield’s owner-occupied percentage up higher than both the county and the state. Over the past decade, the rate of owner occupancy has remained steady at 68% of all occupied housing units.



Homeownership is also a reflection of the residents within Westfield who have lived in the community for many years. It is unsurprising then that 94% of householders who moved to Westfield before 1990 are homeowners. This rate slowly decreases based on when the householder moved into the City.

Over 60% of all householders who moved to Westfield in the past six years are renters. This is fairly common as the barriers to entry for renters can be far fewer than homeowners in terms of the process and cost to own a home. Renters also have flexibility in their lease terms to move to a different unit compared to someone who owns their home and would have to go through the process of buying and selling.

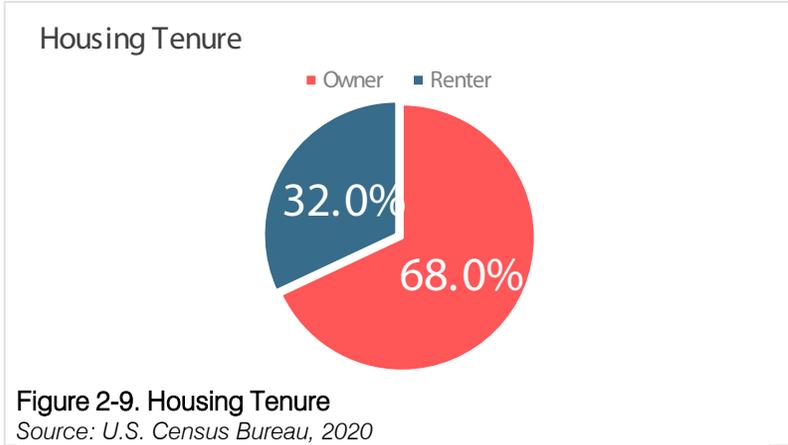


Figure 2-9. Housing Tenure
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020

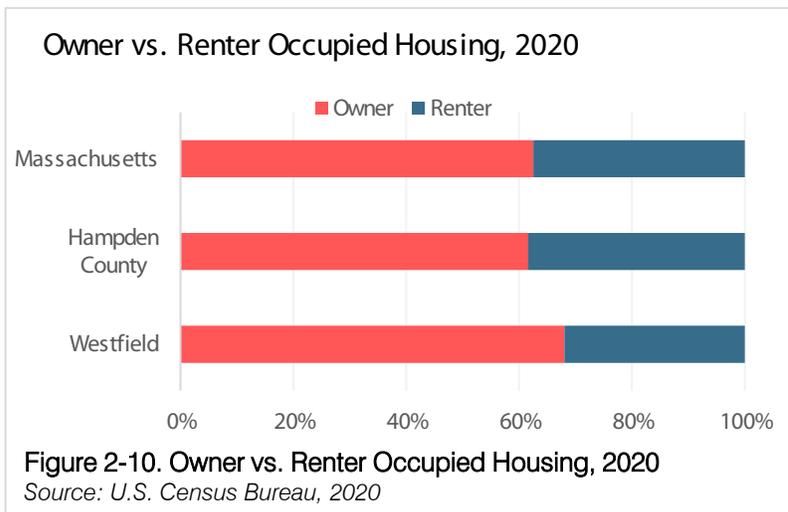


Figure 2-10. Owner vs. Renter Occupied Housing, 2020
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020

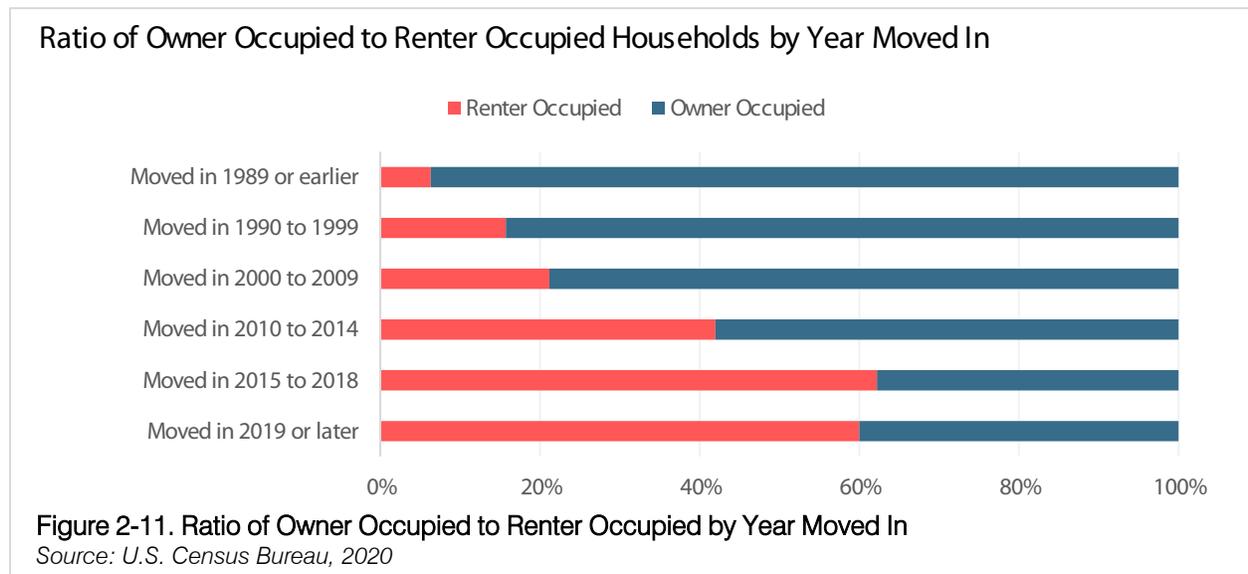
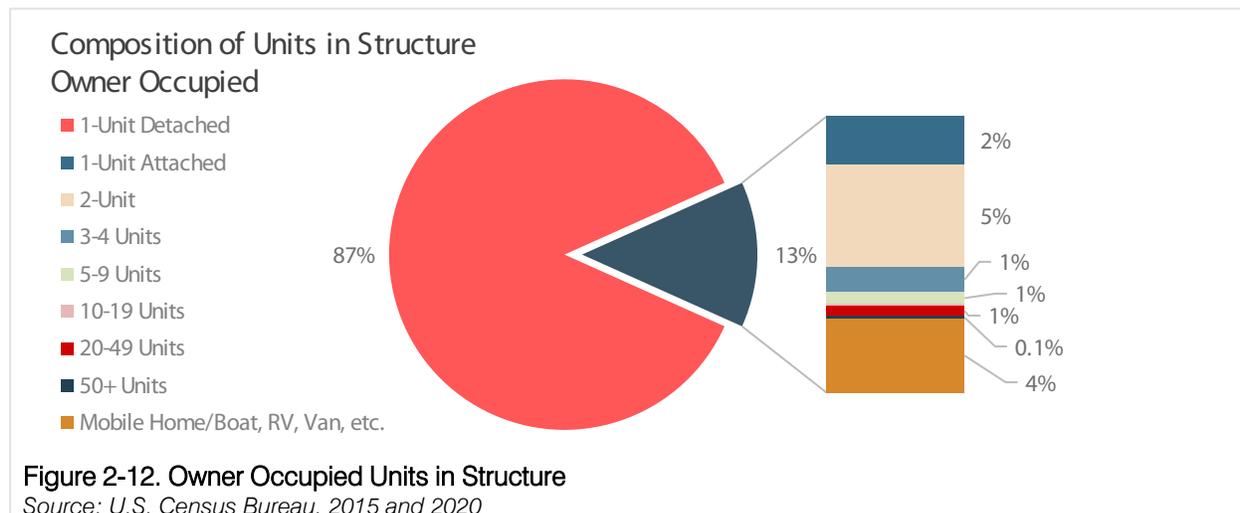


Figure 2-11. Ratio of Owner Occupied to Renter Occupied by Year Moved In
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020

2.4.3 Tenure by Units in Structure

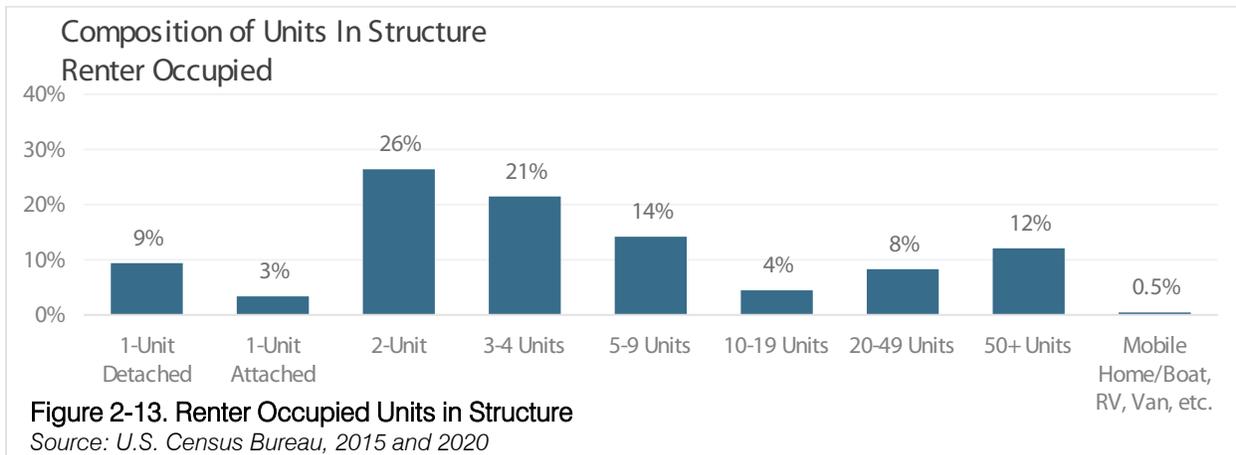
Looking at the composition of units in owner occupied structures, the vast majority (87%) of owner-occupied units are single-family structures with another 11% spread across 1-unit attached (e.g., row house, townhouse), 2-unit and mobile homes. There are very few alternative ownership unit typologies in Westfield such as townhomes, three- or four-unit structures, or larger multi-family condominiums.



Conversely, the renter-occupied housing stock is spread across several different residential structure types with 73% of all renter units in structures with fewer than ten units and 24% in structures greater than 10 units. Despite Westfield’s varied rental housing stock, limited supply of rental housing in absolute terms coupled with little permitting of new multi-family residential has led to a tight rental market. This rental market tightness, like much of the county and state, has led to increases in rents out of affordable ranges for many households.

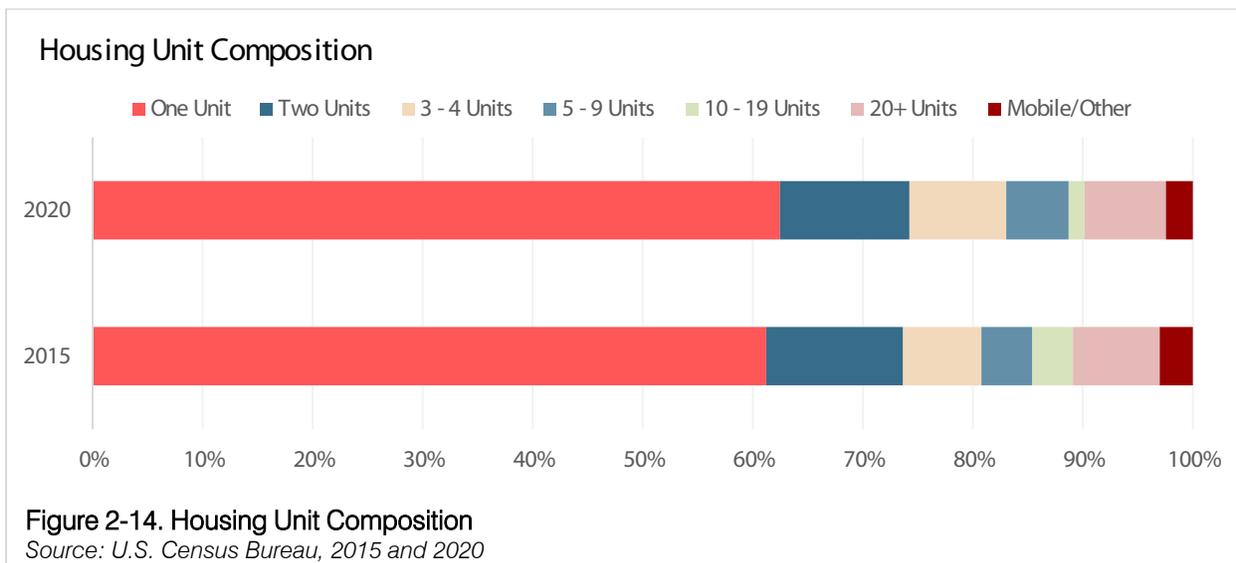


Photo 2-1. New Condos in Westfield

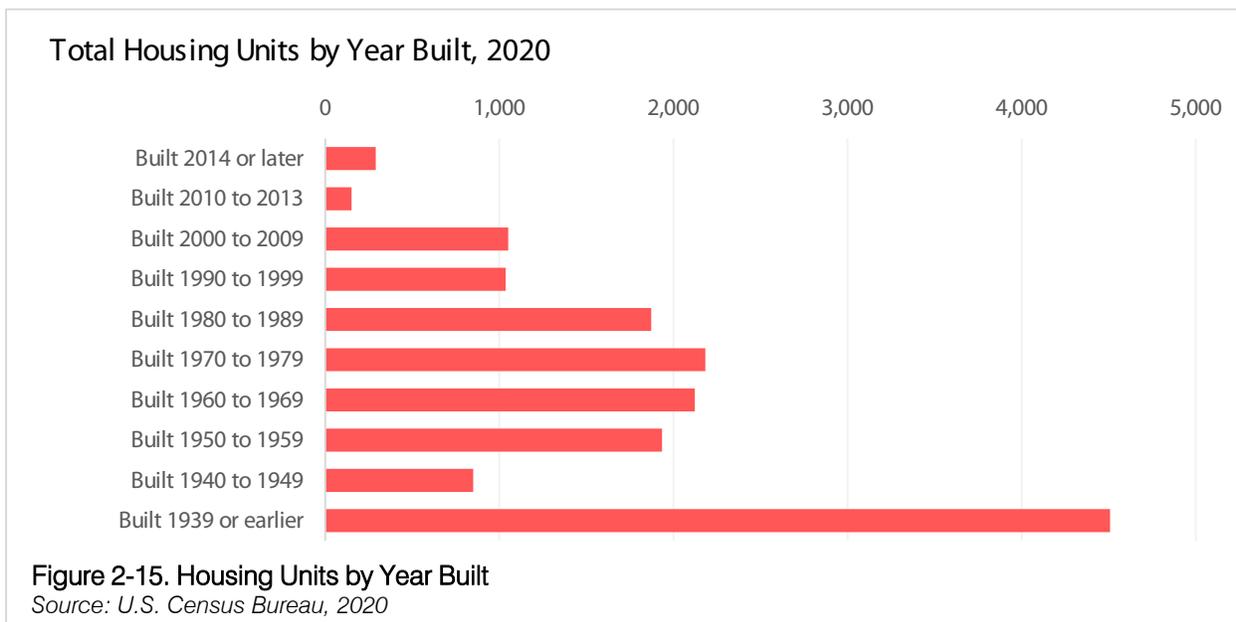


2.5 Housing Unit Characteristics

In addition to understanding the change in households and housing tenure in Westfield, it is also important to understand how the actual housing stock has changed over time. With an ever-tightening housing market and added competition for a limited stock of housing units, aligning housing supply with demand becomes important to try to balance housing within the local market. Layering on the complexities of the pandemic and its impact on housing prices and availability has created a sense of urgency both locally and regionally for addressing housing issues.



Westfield overall saw a decrease in the total number of housing units between 2015 and 2020 from 16,069 to 15,998. This decrease could be attributed to changes in census classification, survey margins of error and demolitions of housing units. Despite this slight decrease, the number of single-family homes increased by 1.6% during this time to just shy of 10,000, consisting of 62.5% of the total housing stock. During this time, the largest decrease in total households was seen in multi-family housing, with housing in 10–19-unit buildings decreasing by 60% during this time.



2.5.1 Age of Housing Stock

The median year that a housing unit was built in Westfield is 1963, which is closely in line with the Massachusetts average of 1961. Given the history of the City, Westfield has had housing dating back to the 19th century. Much of the housing built in and around the downtown was built throughout the 1800s into the first quarter of the 20th century as industrialization drove growth in housing. Additionally, there was a bump in housing production in mid-20th century, following a pattern of post-war suburban development. As was mentioned earlier, much of the new residential development (built after 1980) has been occurring around the City’s periphery on former greenfields, creating subdivisions in these areas.

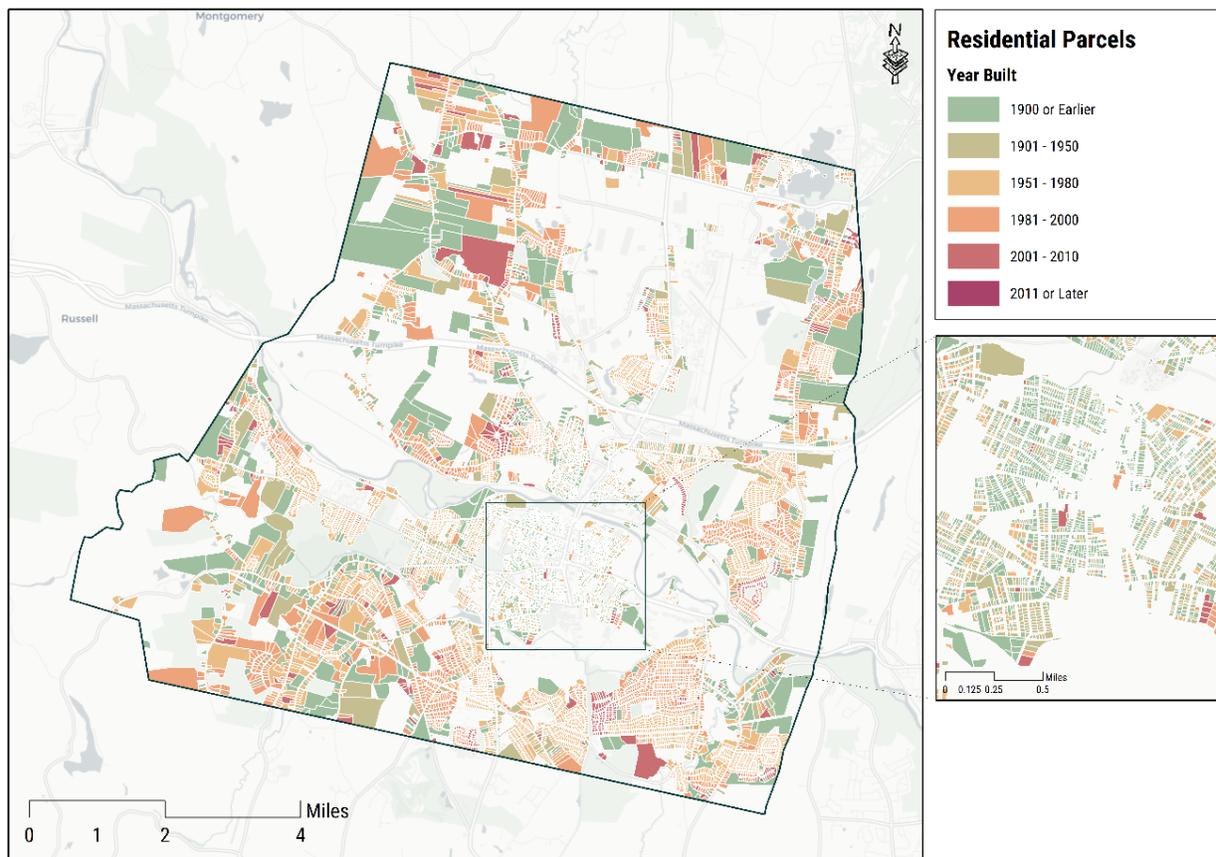


Figure 2-16. Map of Residential Properties by Year Built

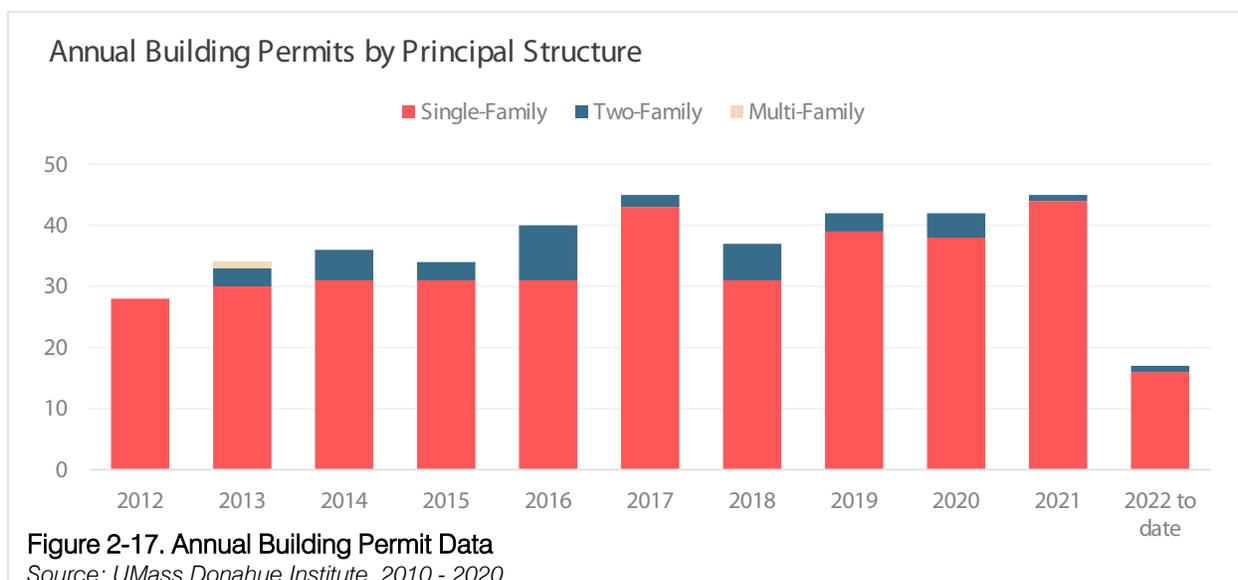
Source, MassGIS, City of Westfield, RKG Associates

2.5.2 Residential Permitting

According to annual residential building permitting data, provided by the City of Westfield, Westfield’s residential permitting has been largely driven by single-family structures.

In recent years, Westfield has seen consistent rates of permits issued for single-family structures, but little to no multi-unit residential permitting. The limited supply of new housing units can be linked to the slowdown in the City population’s growth rates. As population and household growth is constrained by the availability of new housing.

The lack of housing production, particularly multi-family, can also lead to higher home prices and asking rents as households migrate in and out of the City based on economic activity. This can place financial burden on new and existing lower income households.



2.6 Housing Market Dynamics

2.6.1 Home Values vs. Rents

Based on ACS 5-year rolling estimates, home values have remained stable for most of the decade. From the 2018 – 2020 5-year estimates, home prices increased markedly for smoothed home values meaning that year-over-year market prices are trending much higher, which is described in the following section. Over this same period, rents have risen at a higher rate due to the limited rental stock and lack of new production. Over the past decade, ACS estimates indicate that rent has increased from \$810 to \$964 across all rental housing stock. For the limited amount of rental housing that is currently on the market, asking rents are far higher.

Year	Median Rent Price	Rolling 5-yr Change in Rent	Median Home Price	Rolling 5-yr Change in Home Price
2010	\$810		\$224,400	
2011	\$823	1.6%	\$225,300	0.4%
2012	\$812	-1.3%	\$227,000	0.8%
2013	\$832	2.5%	\$222,700	-1.9%
2014	\$848	1.9%	\$221,800	-0.4%
2015	\$866	2.1%	\$222,700	0.4%
2016	\$913	5.4%	\$222,200	-0.2%
2017	\$946	3.6%	\$220,500	-0.8%
2018	\$961	1.6%	\$227,400	3.1%
2019	\$969	0.8%	\$234,400	3.1%
2020	\$964	-0.5%	\$247,300	5.5%

2.6.2 Home Sale Prices

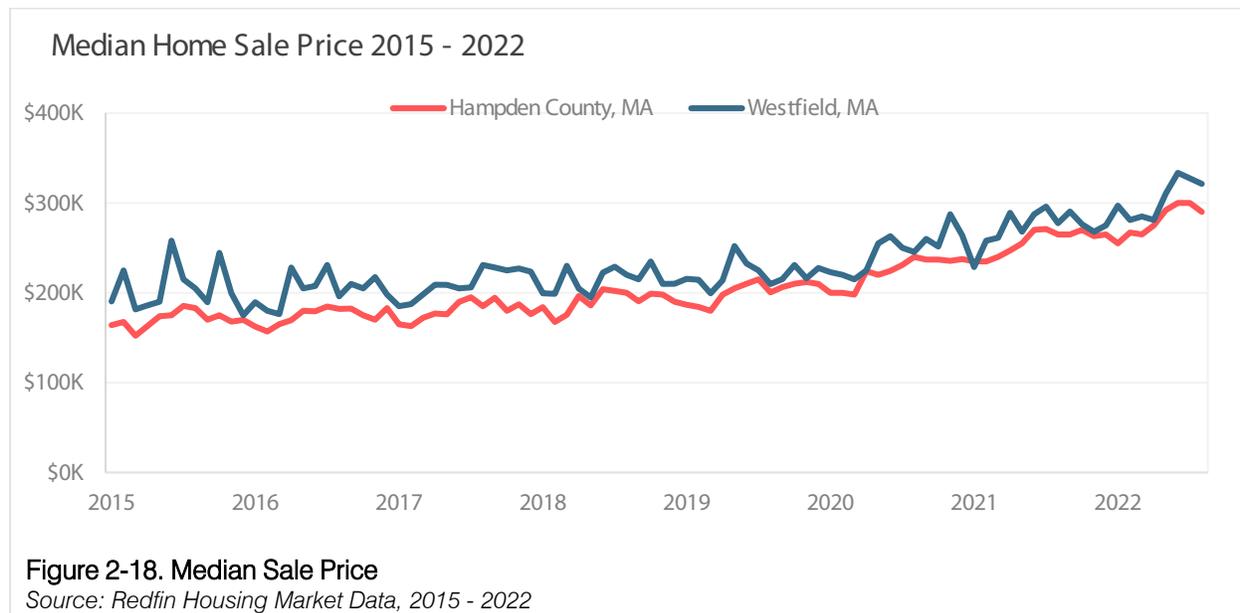
Based on housing market data from Redfin, a real estate brokerage and analytics firm, the median home sale price of all homes in Westfield went from \$190,450 in 2015 to \$297,000 in 2022. That is a \$100,000 jump, or 56% increase in five years. Over this same period, Hampden County home sales

increased from \$164,000 to \$255,000, marking a 55% increase in home sale price. One of the salient factors contributing to these increases in home prices is the limited supply of available housing.

2.6.3 Median Gross Rent

Gross rent is a measure of the monthly agreed-upon rent plus an estimate of monthly utility costs and fuels if they are paid by the tenant. This measure captures the true cost of renting a unit if utilities are not included in the monthly payment. It should be noted that ACS measures of gross rent include all rented units in Westfield, not just those that are recently listed on the market, which is why ACS gross rent estimates do not reach as high as recently listed rental units. What is important about gross rent estimates is that they provide a good indicator of how rents are trending across the entirety of the City's rental stock.

Over the past decade, the distribution of gross rents in Westfield has increased in the price ranges that are above \$1,000 per month and have decreased in the price ranges below. This trend signals increasing rents across the City's rental market. Meaning lower income households are more likely to face cost burdening or being priced out of the City. Zumper, a rental analytics platform, provides insights into the median asking rents of rental units placed on the market over the last five years. Based on these estimates the median asking rent for a 2-bedroom unit increased from \$697 in 2015 to \$1,070 in 2022

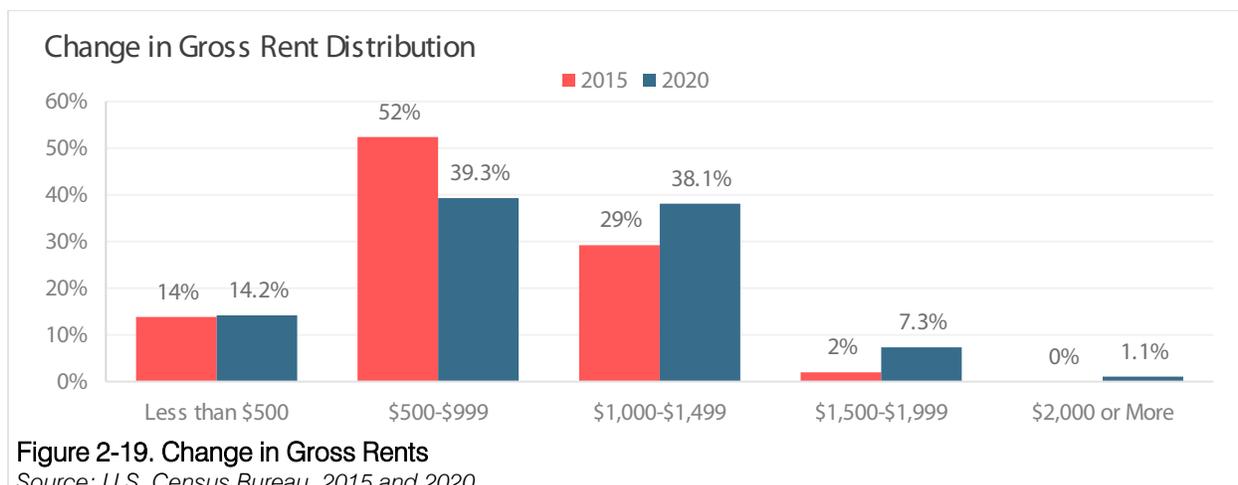


2.6.4 Vacancy

The Census records vacant units a few different ways to comprise the total vacancy count for a particular geography. Housing vacancies are captured in four different categories by the Census, which includes: vacant available, vacant unavailable, seasonal, and vacant other.

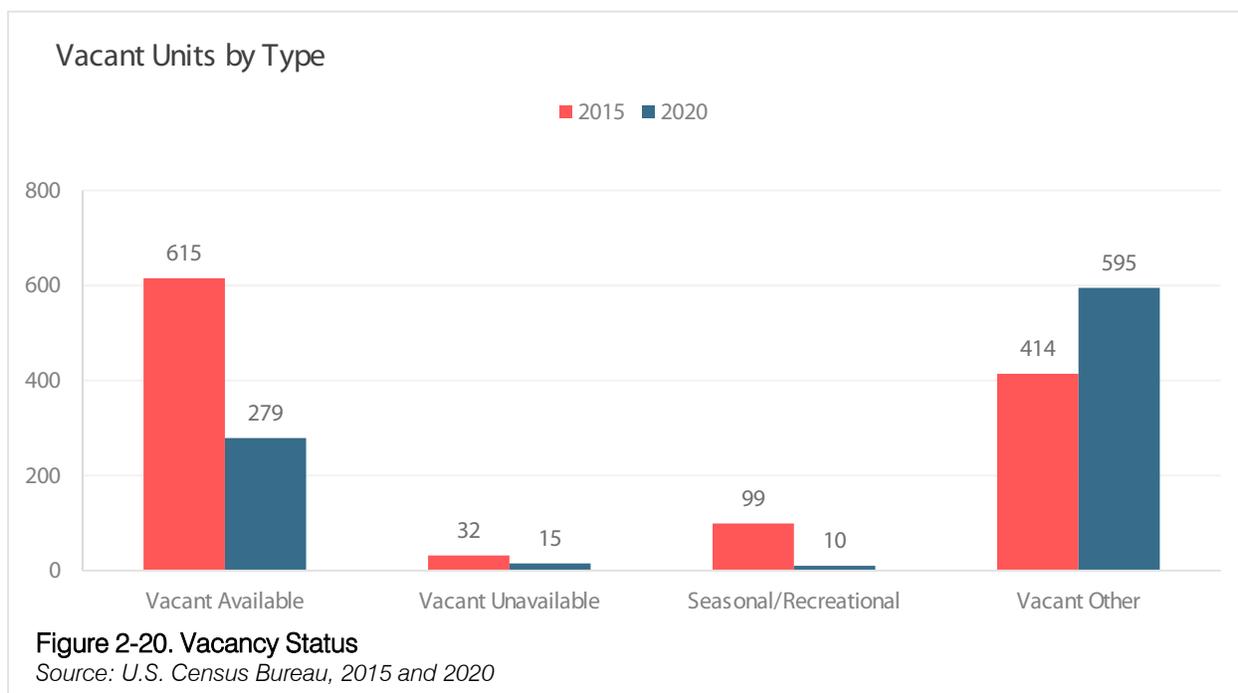
- Vacant available refers to unoccupied units that are currently for sale or for rent.
- Vacant unavailable refers to off market for sale and for rent units.
- Seasonal and recreational refer to housing units that are not occupied year-round such as second homes, summer cottages or lake houses, etc.

- Vacant other refers to units that are not available for rent or sale and are off the market for different reasons. These include undergoing substantial rehab, uninhabitable units, foreclosure, among others.



Understanding and quantifying housing vacancy is important because it allows the quantification of a portion of the housing stock that might otherwise be available to year-round renters and owners but for the fact that it is categorized as vacant. It is also important to note that maintaining a healthy level of vacant units is important to allow households the ability to find other housing that may be more suitable for their needs.

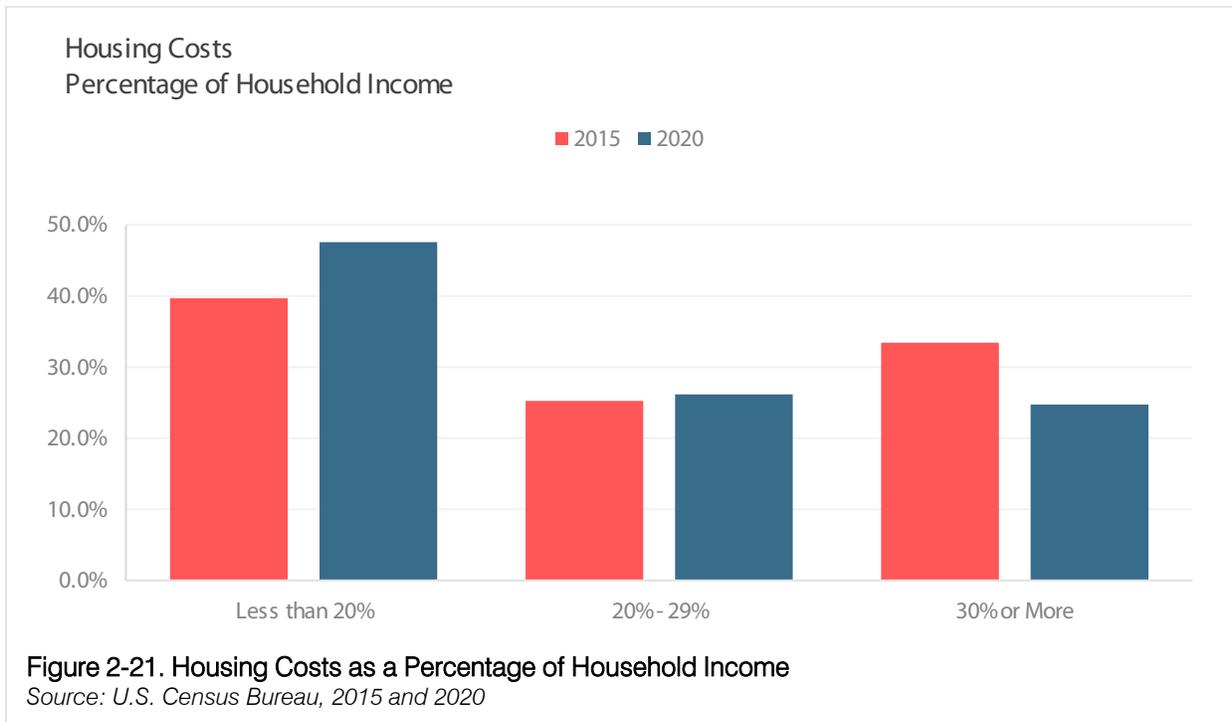
Over the past decade, Westfield has seen its vacancy rate drop from 3.8% to 1.7%. This means that of the total available housing stock less than 4% has been available for sale or for rent over the last ten years. These vacancy rates are quite low and may not be allowing households to move into or within the City. This may be attributed to the general lack of new housing construction, particularly rental units, which coupled with rising prices and changes in demand have led to consistently low vacancy rates.



2.6.5 Affordability

While housing affordability has remained a major issue both nationally and within Massachusetts, Westfield has been bucking such a trend. Despite the recent growth of housing prices and asking rents in recent years, the number of cost-burdened households, defined as households who spend more than 30% of their income on housing costs, has decreased from 33.4% to 24.7% of all households between 2015 and 2020. At the same time, the number of households that pay less than 20% of their income on housing costs increased from 39.7% to 47.6%.

Chapter 40B is a state statute, which enables local Zoning Boards of Appeals to approve local affordable housing developments under flexible rules if at least 20 – 25% of the proposed units have long-term affordability requirements. Typically, households with higher rates of cost burdening tend to be of lower household income levels, meaning they are most acutely impacted by rising housing costs and limited available supply. Based on the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) subsidized housing inventory list, the City of Westfield currently has 1,170 40B units putting the cities subsidized housing inventory at 7.3% out of the 10% minimum requirement. These are the most recent numbers provided by DHCD but it should be noted that they are subject to change when the subsidized housing inventory is recalculated against the 2020 Decennial estimates.



2.7 Land Use and Zoning

The following map shows the amount of land that is currently being used for housing. Based on the housing type composition, most of the land that is used for housing is dedicated to single-family housing and is scattered throughout the City. Additionally, there is a greater presence of two-family housing scattered throughout the downtown area. This section of town has an older and more dense housing stock, and the diversity of housing in this section of the City reflects that.

While most of the residential uses have been classified as single-family, most of the housing along the western portions of town has been zoned as Rural Residential (RR). This district accommodates both residential and agricultural uses and has a minimum lot requirement of 60,000 square feet per dwelling unit with private water and septic system. This low density has promoted a rural character in much of the City despite the large-scale industrial activity that occurs throughout the City. Additionally, this limits the amount of land available for future housing development, which presents an opportunity to further build density within the center of the City. Where the only districts that currently allow for new multi-family are concentrated.

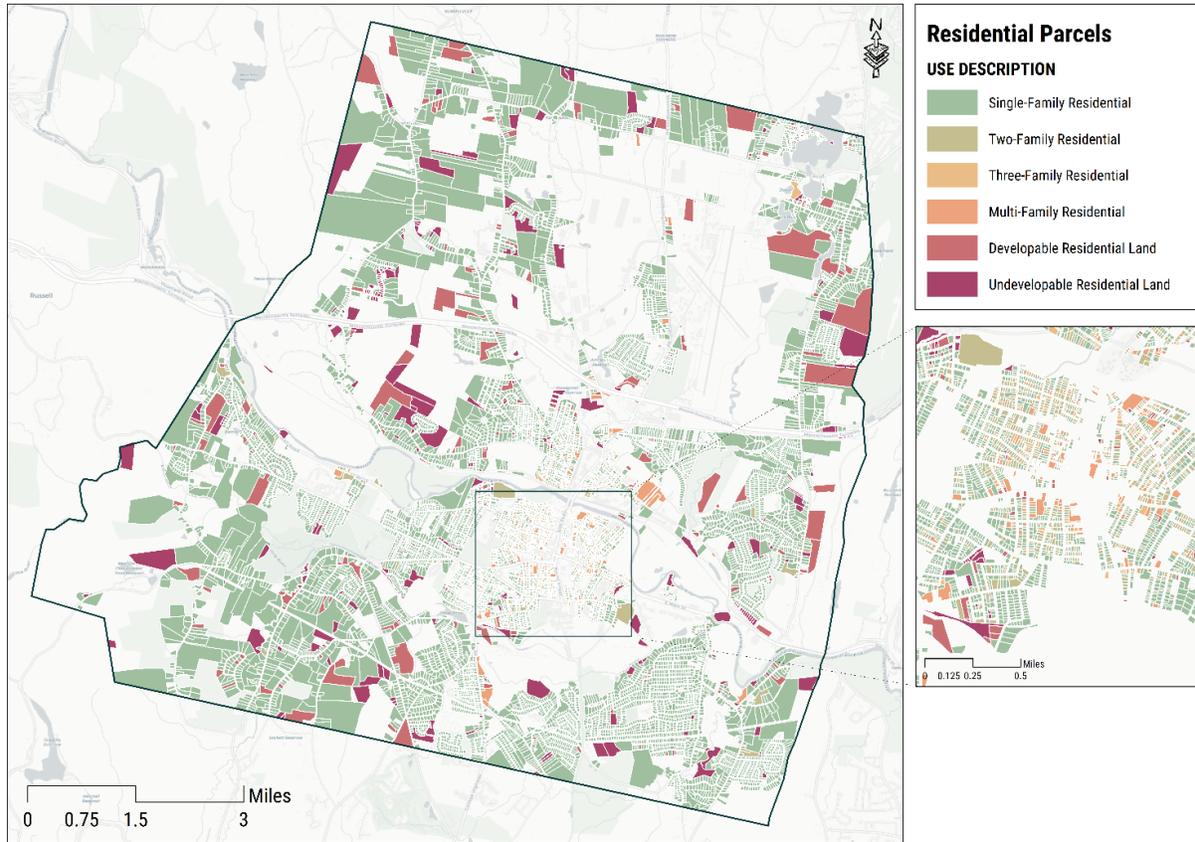


Figure 2-22. Map of Residential Uses

Source: MassGIS, City of Westfield, RKG Associates

2.8 Challenges and Opportunities

2.8.1 Challenges

Over the past fifty years Westfield's population has been steadily increasing. Decade-over-decade, the rate of growth has been decreasing leading to a flattening in the population growth curve. Population projections from the UMass Donahue institute suggest that these trends will persist for the next twenty years. One major contributing factor to this slowdown in growth is the limited supply of existing housing and lack of new housing production.

As rental households continue to grow in their share of total households, supply becomes very important. Westfield has a lot of rental housing diversity by unit type but a limited supply of available rental units. This has meant very low vacancy rates and demand driven increases in rents.

Housing in Westfield, and across Massachusetts as a whole, continues to get more expensive and in many cases housing costs are increasing at a faster pace than incomes. This means households are having to spend more of their income on housing costs and less on other monthly and annual expenses. This in turn can mean less expendable income for retail, goods, and services from businesses in the City.

2.8.2 Opportunities

Population trends by age highlight the growing share of the population that is either a Millennial (hitting prime home buying age) or a Baby Boomer (typically seeking to downsize). Both trends signal shifts in housing preferences as Millennials seek to buy their first home and older adult residents may seek to downsize. This could be an opportunity for Westfield to tailor housing policies to the future renters and buyers coming to the market. This is particularly true for renter-occupied households who are growing as a share of households in the City and region.

Locations for future housing, like downtown or older buildings like Abner Gibbs and Fort Meadow, could provide opportunities to bring in a mix of housing types and price points. New housing in the downtown area could help create a built-in customer base for businesses, events, and activities as well as having residents live in a walkable location with access to services.

2.9 Current Measures

As an Entitlement Community under HUD, Westfield receives funds provided by HUD through the CDBG program. Westfield also benefits from being a member of the Holyoke-Chicopee Westfield HOME Consortium. The Consortium provides access to HOME funds and the new HOME-ARP funds. The City is investing both CDBG and HOME funds directly into housing and services to benefit low- and moderate-income households. This includes funding service providers operating in the City to help with the needs of low- and moderate-income households as well as using HOME-ARP funds for the development of affordable rental housing.

In 2022, Westfield offered a First Time Homebuyer Assistance Program using a combination of HOME funds and money through the City's Community Preservation Act (CPA). The assistance provides a maximum of 3% of the purchase price not to exceed \$5,000. The assistance is provided in the form of a deferred payment loan.

2.10 Goals, Policies, and Actions

2.10.1 Goals

1. Ensure that Westfield residents have increased access to housing options that are safe, accessible, and affordable based on incomes, preferences, and abilities.
2. Provide housing options that continue to diversify by size, price, and location to provide choices to those who wish to remain in the community and those who wish to call Westfield home in the future.
3. Support needs across the continuum of housing including those experiencing homelessness, lower income households, those with disabilities, veteran households, older adult households, families with children, and more.

2.10.2 Policies

1. Maintain and expand upon the diversity of housing options in Westfield to ensure households of varying incomes and life stages can find safe and accessible housing in the City.
2. Identify opportunities to add mixed-income and market-rate housing in the downtown to bring more households within walking distance of local businesses, services, and public transportation.
3. Provide safe, affordable, and accessible housing for older adults in Westfield to help them age in place and remain in the community.
4. Provide housing options that appeal to younger residents and workers who want to live in Westfield.
5. Ensure Westfield provides additional housing and support service options to the existing resources, such as the food pantry and Samaritan Inn, for those experiencing homelessness or housing instability.
6. Provide housing options that are affordable and safe for families with children.

2.10.3 Actions

1. Identify and prioritize locations that could support additional housing to accommodate the projected population and employment growth in Westfield.

Lead Party: Planning, Community Development

Support Party: Planning Board

Timeframe: Short-term

2. Encourage housing options that appeal to both the younger and older generations in Westfield, both of which comprise an increasing percentage of the City's population.

Lead Party: Community Development, Planning

Support Party: Planning Board

Timeframe: Short-term

3. Identify neighborhoods where accessory dwelling units (attached or detached) are appropriate and update zoning to allow property owners to build them.

Lead Party: Planning

Support Party: Planning Board, City Council, Property Owners

Timeframe: Medium-term

4. Review and update zoning in the downtown area to reduce barriers to residential development or adaptive reuse with a residential component.

Lead Party: Planning

Support Party: Planning Board, City Council

Timeframe: Short- to medium-term

5. Consider the use of development subsidies to encourage more market-rate housing in the downtown area either through adaptive reuse projects or new construction.

Lead Party: City Council

Support Party: Property Owners, Community Development

Timeframe: Short-term

6. Reevaluate participation in the Housing Development Incentive Program (HDIP) by adopting a Housing Development Zone to encourage the revitalization of downtown and allow developers to access state tax credits for residential projects.

Lead Party: Community Development, City Council

Support Party: Planning, Developers, Property Owners

Timeframe: Short-term

7. Review annual federal funding programs and targets to align with housing needs and opportunities identified in the Master Plan.

Lead Party: Community Development

Support Party: City Council

Timeframe: Ongoing

8. Work with local housing providers and homeless shelters to identify needs and solutions for people who are unhoused or experiencing housing instability.

Lead Party: Community Development

Support Party: Westfield Housing Authority, local homeless shelters, Domus/local service providers

Timeframe: Medium-term

9. Identify opportunities, incentives/density bonuses to encourage affordable housing production that would elevate the City's current subsidized housing inventory to reach or exceed 10% of the year-round housing stock.

Lead Party: Planning

Support Party: Planning Board

Timeframe: Ongoing

10. Identify opportunities to encourage affordable housing production that is safe for families with children.

Lead Party: Planning

Support Party: Planning Board

Timeframe: Medium-term

11. Revise zoning dimensional and density regulations affecting traditional downtown neighborhoods to mirror the historic built pattern, and thus facilitate housing improvements and expansion.

Lead Party: Planning

Support Party: Planning Board, City Council

Timeframe: Short-term

12. Reduce multi-unit residential parking requirements to allow more land for housing development, especially where municipal parking and public transportation options are available.

Lead Party: Planning

Support Party: Planning Board, City Council

Timeframe: Short-term

13. Continue to prioritize redevelopment of the vacant Elm Street block with a robust mixed-income housing component.

Lead Party: Westfield Redevelopment Authority

Support Party: Community Development

Timeframe: Ongoing

14. Develop and promote a "Friendly 40B" policy and to facilitate creative and denser housing development in appropriate locations.

Lead Party: Planning

Support Party: Community Development, Zoning Board of Appeals

Timeframe: Short-term

15. Establish a CPA-funded municipal housing trust to create and preserve affordable housing in Westfield.

Lead Party: Community Development

Support Party: Community Preservation

Timeframe: Medium-term

16. Continue to promote and replenish the City's first-time homebuyer assistance program.

Lead Party: Community Development

Support Party: Community Preservation

Timeframe: Ongoing

17. Continue to provide older adults with services that support them staying in their homes (fuel assistance, home visits, safety audits, code/accessibility improvements, etc.)

Lead Party: Council on Aging

Support Party: Senior Center, Fire Department

Timeframe: Ongoing

18. Revise local zoning to comport with recent revisions to MGL Chapter 40A Sections 5 & 9, eliminating supermajority vote requirements to facilitate multi-family housing, dimensional/density/parking requirement easing, accessory dwelling units, and related matters.

Lead Party: Planning

Support Party: Planning Board

Timeframe: Short-term

CHAPTER 3. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



3.0 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

3.1 Vision

We envision that Westfield will possess a balanced framework of local economic policies that promote sustainable growth in jobs, business activity and a tax base that supports our City's unique community character and its fiscal stability without sacrificing the quality of its natural environment.

3.2 Introduction

The purpose of the economic development section of a master plan is to assess a community's existing economic conditions and develop strategies to take advantage of opportunities and address any concerns. This can be done through an evaluation of strengths and weaknesses and engagement with residents regarding their desired vision for local business activity. While market conditions will drive what types of businesses will ultimately choose to locate in Westfield, the City can be proactive in encouraging preferred businesses through its zoning bylaws, permitting processes, and infrastructure improvements. With careful planning, it will be possible to increase the commercial base while maintaining the community's valued character.

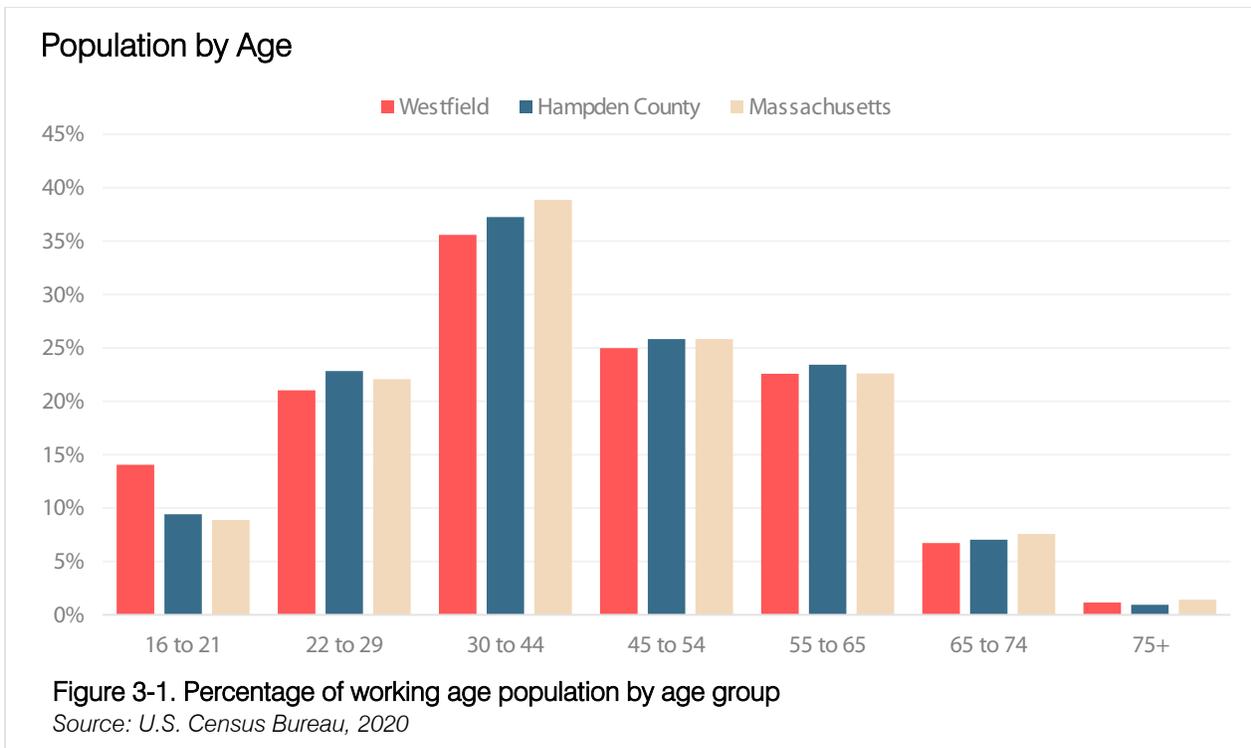
3.3 Labor Force and Employment

While educational attainment is one factor in understanding the availability of specific kinds of workers, the overall level of engagement of workers in the local economy is also very influential. The measures commonly examined are labor force participation and unemployment rates. The labor force participation rate measures the percentage of the population aged 16 and over who are either employed or actively looking for employment. If this number is low, then there may be some elasticity in the labor market; if it is already high, then there may not be much flexibility and there are likely few options for employers looking to hire. Likewise, particularly low unemployment would suggest a strong labor market, which is good news for workers but may make hiring a challenge for businesses.

3.3.1 *Age of Workforce*

The age breakdown of the workforce is another indicator of labor market trends. If a community has a large share of resident workers who are 60 years and older, for example, they may be facing major shifts in employment in the coming decade as those workers retire. On the other hand, if unusually high numbers of resident workers are in their 20s and 30s, the community may see stability in employment and income growth as these young workers advance in their careers.

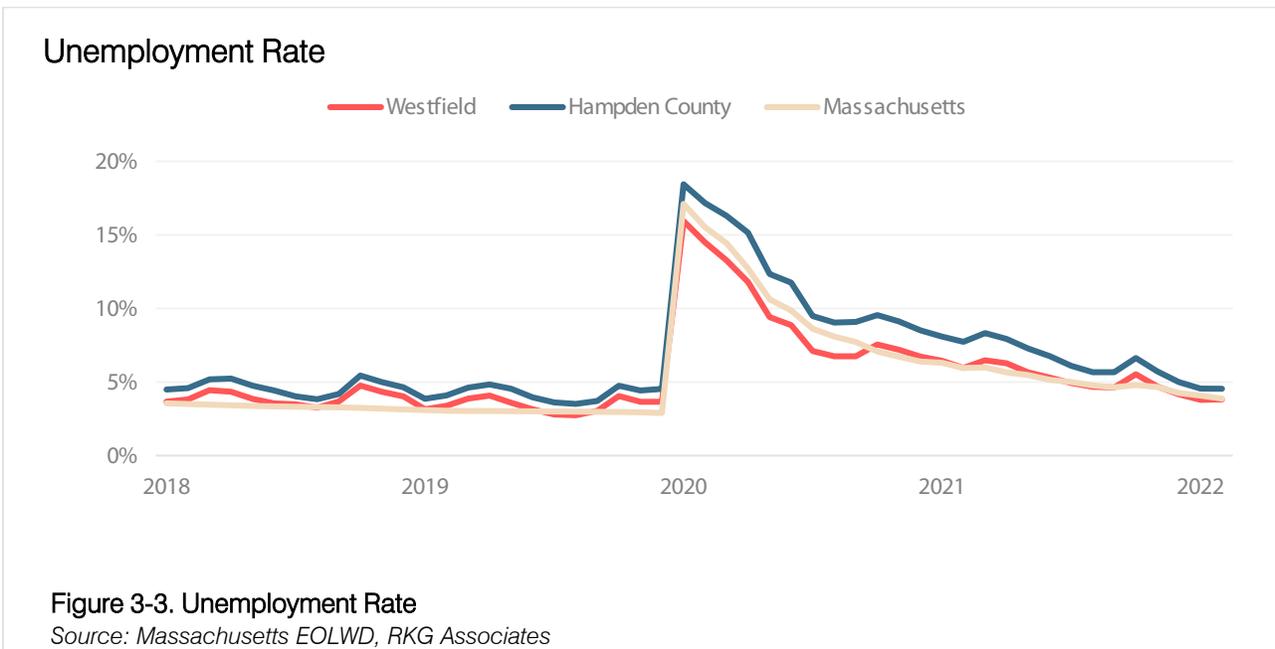
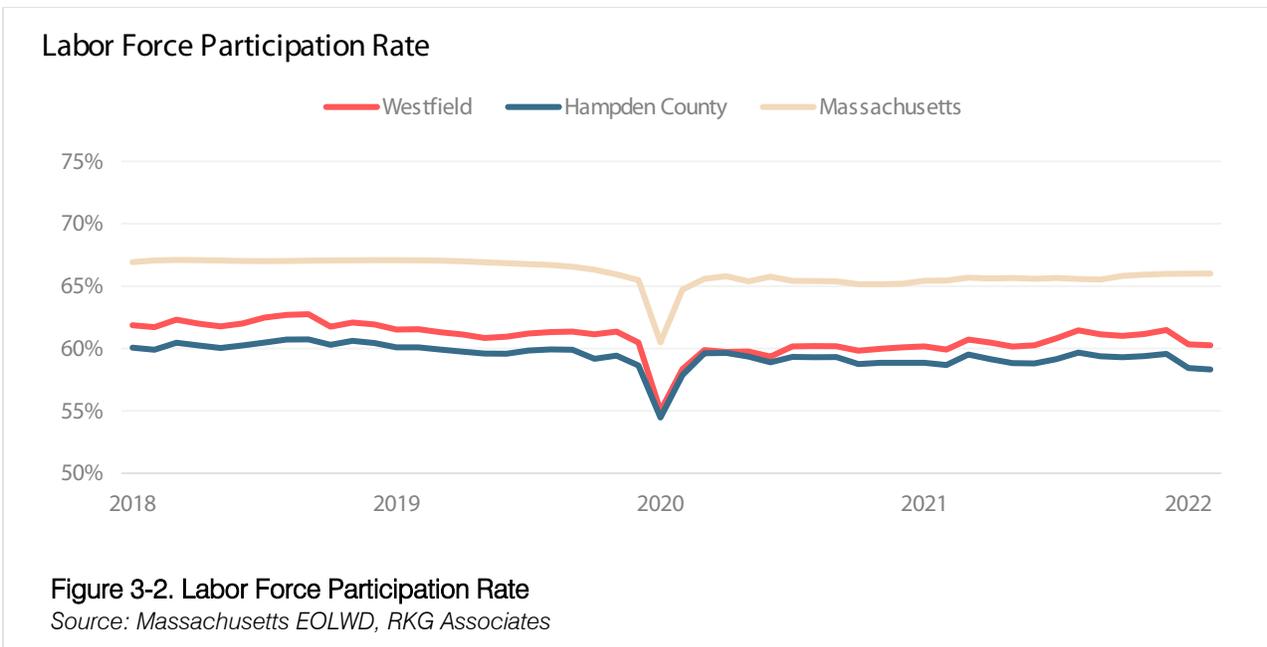
The largest cohort of workers is those between the ages of 30 to 44, making up just over 35% of the total workforce within Westfield. Despite this, there is a much higher percentage of Westfield residents aged 16 to 21 who are in the workforce compared to countywide and statewide averages. This age group is very early in their careers, and they are many years away from reaching their peak earning potential. While this figure can potentially skew the total spending power among Westfield residents, it stands out as an opportunity to address an aging workforce.



3.3.2 Unemployment and Labor Force Participation Rate

Westfield’s labor force participation rate has mostly recovered since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic where it dropped to as low as 54% in April of 2020. Even with the full recovery, the participation rate remains significantly lower than the statewide rate, which has remained over 65% since the pandemic-induced drop in the labor force participation rate.

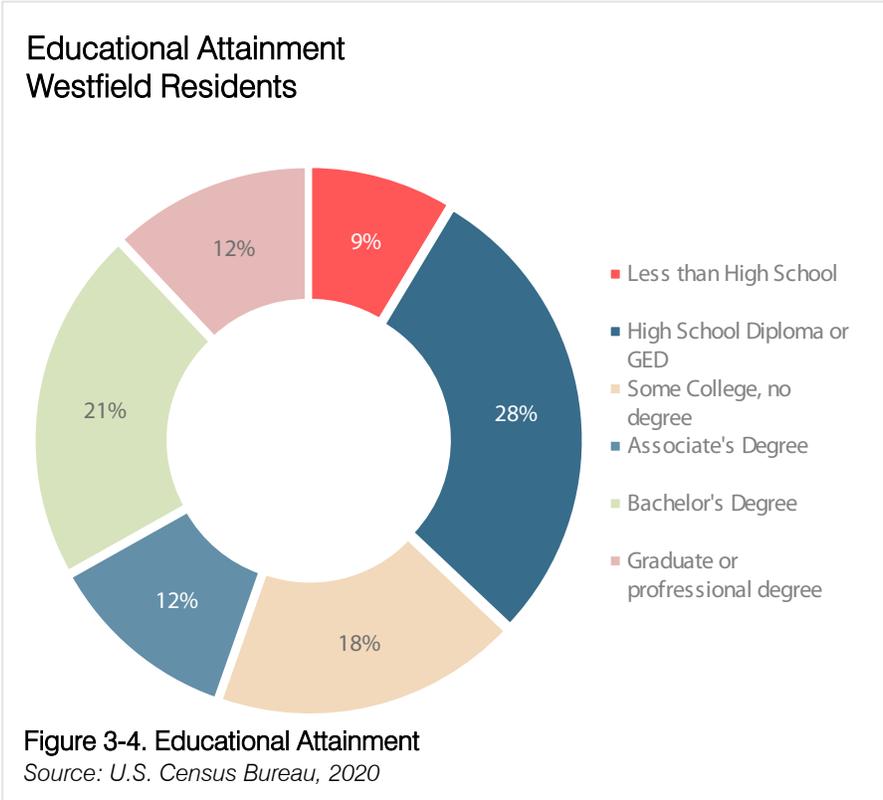
Like labor force participation rates, unemployment rates were significantly impacted in the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic but have begun to return to pre-pandemic levels. Westfield’s unemployment patterns have closely mirrored, yet remained below, the unemployment rate for Hampden County. In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, Westfield’s unemployment rate remained well below countywide and statewide averages and experienced a faster recovery in the following months. As of May 2022, Westfield’s unemployment rate was 3.8%, which is lower than both the countywide average of 4.5% and the statewide average of 3.9%. This is well within the range of what economists consider to be “full employment,” which essentially means that people who might be actively looking for jobs have likely found them and thus there is very little slack in the labor market.



3.3.3 Education

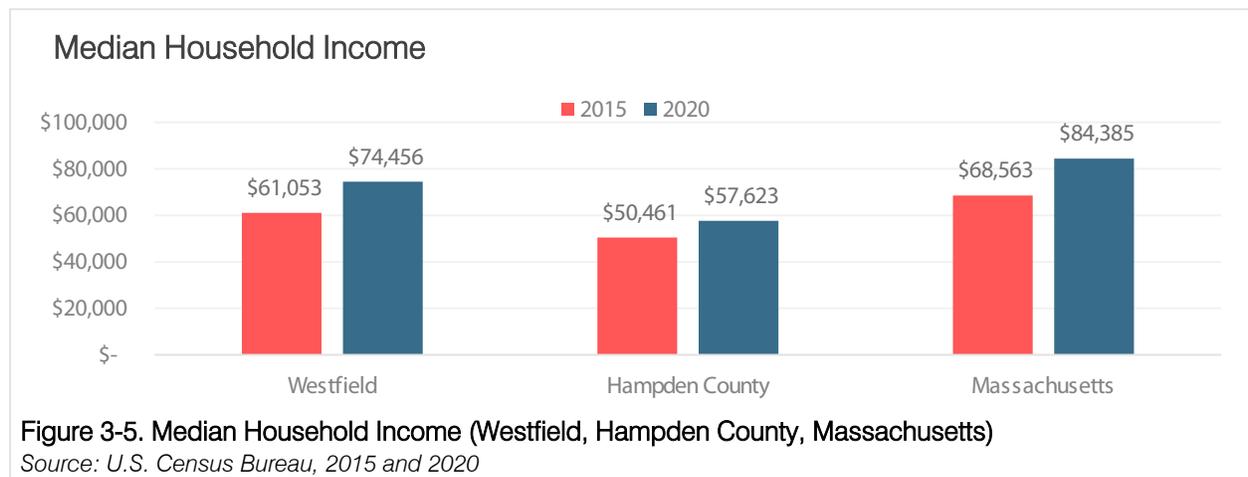
The educational attainment of a resident population is something many businesses consider when choosing where to locate. The availability of a suitably skilled workforce is one factor, and for consumer-facing businesses, the spending potential of the local population – heavily influenced by income and education – is important, too.

Westfield’s population has lower levels of educational attainment compared to statewide averages, with 32% of residents over the age of 25 with a bachelor’s degree or higher compared. This is lower than the state’s percentage of 45% of residents. However, Westfield’s rate is higher than in Hampden County, with only 28% of the population over 25 with at least a bachelor’s degree. In addition, the total population over 25 has slightly increased during this time, with the total population by education level increasing. However, only the proportion of the population with less than a high school degree has increased while the proportion of residents over 25 with any education level beyond a high school diploma decreasing.



3.3.4 Household Income

The median household income in Westfield in 2020 was \$74,456 which was an increase of over \$13,000 since 2015. While this figure is higher than Hampden County’s median income of \$57,623, it does remain lower than the statewide median of \$84,385, which includes the Boston Metropolitan area.



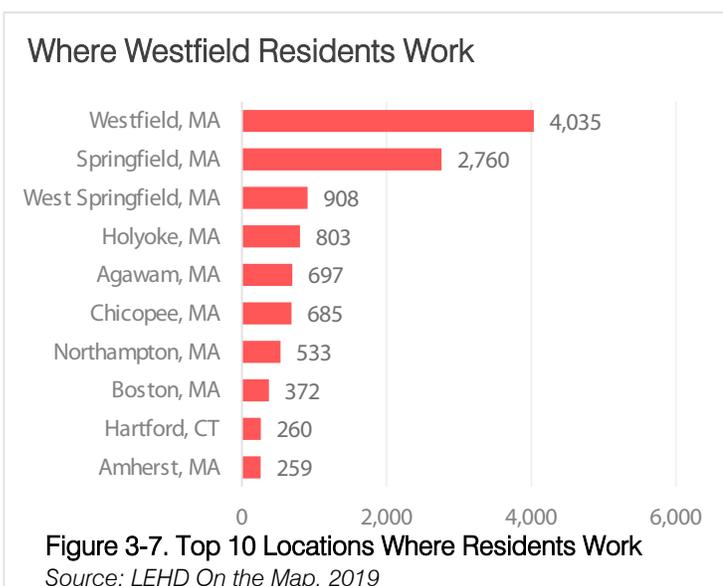
Within Westfield, median incomes vary by the area of the City. Downtown Westfield has the highest concentration of lower income census tracts, with a significant portion of tracts having median incomes between \$30,000 and \$50,000 a year. Higher income tracts are primarily on the edges of the City corresponding to where newer housing and neighborhoods have been developed. These areas show median household incomes over \$100,000 a year, which is more than double that of the downtown area.

3.3.5 Commuting Patterns

Commuting patterns have important implications for economic development. Changes in the daytime population related to the inflow and outflow of workers impact the viability and types of retail and other amenities in a community. Furthermore, the sources and destinations of workers can suggest opportunities for filling gaps in Westfield – in housing that is accessible to workers, or in industries that align with residents’ skills.

Westfield is a net exporter of workers, albeit only by a small margin. Just over 10,000 workers commute into Westfield every day while over 11,500 Westfield residents leave the City for work, keeping the daytime population within the City relatively consistent. There are an additional 3,400 residents of Westfield who work within the City, representing roughly one-fifth of all jobs within the City.

Most workers within Westfield come from within the City, representing just over a quarter of all primary jobs. There is a relatively even distribution of worker origins from outside Westfield as they primarily hail from within the Springfield Metropolitan Area. Among the places where Westfield residents work, just under a quarter of residents work within the City. Over 2,700 Westfield residents commute into Springfield, representing the largest portion of residents who work outside the City. Beyond this, a relatively even number of residents commute into neighboring cities and towns throughout the region. In



addition, 2.1% of residents commute into Boston, and 1.5% commute into Hartford, CT, showing the geographic advantage of the proximity to these two major job centers.

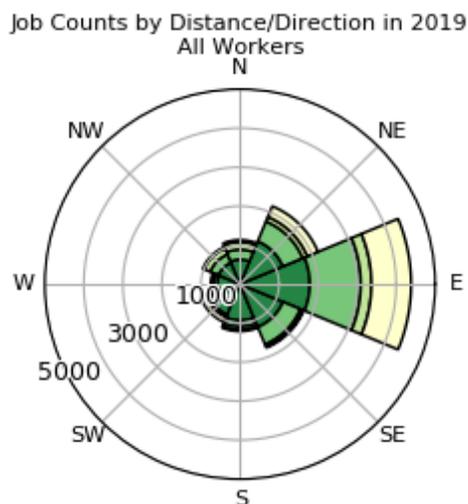


Figure 3-8. Distance and Direction of Resident Workers

Source: LEHD On the Map, 2019

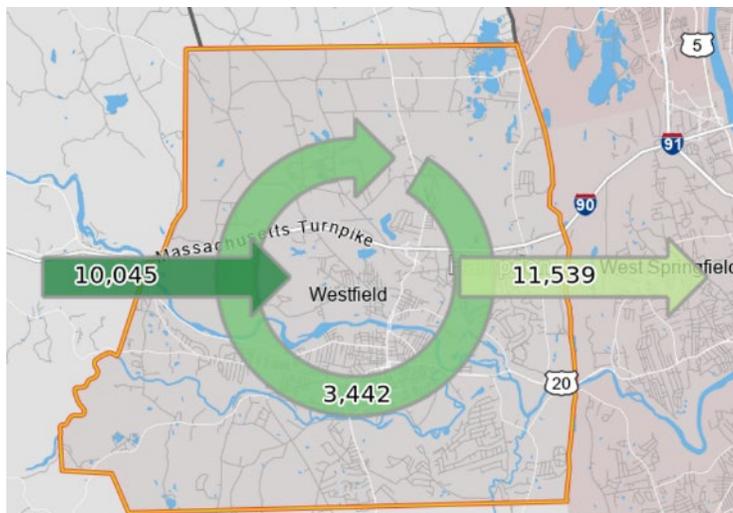


Figure 3-9. Commuters, Inflow, and Outflow of Workers in and out of Westfield

Source: LEHD On the Map, 2019

3.4 Employment Base

In 2021, Westfield was home to over 21,900 jobs, a 6% growth rate since 2011. The largest industries by employment are Manufacturing (5,166), Health Care and Social Assistance (5,100), Government (2,877), Retail Trade (1,662), and Construction (1,039). Among the top five occupations, Healthcare Support Occupations grew at the fastest rate at 50% since 2012, growing by over 1,700 jobs since then.

Industries that have seen significant growth also include Wholesale Trade (32%) and Transportation and Warehousing (28%). These industries, along with Manufacturing and Health Care, have contributed to an additional growth of 2,319 jobs since 2012, accounting for 11% of all current jobs within Westfield. While Manufacturing remains the largest and most established sector within Westfield consisting of 24% of all of the City’s jobs, Health Care and Social Assistance has grown from consisting of 16% of all jobs in 2012 to 23% of all jobs in 2022, showing the largely diversification of Westfield’s economy that has taken place beyond its manufacturing tradition. Jobs associated with the University may be spread across both Government and Educational Services (NAICS 61).

Table 3-1. Employment by 2 Digit NAICS Code, 2012-2022

NAICS Code	Description	2012 Jobs	2022 Jobs	% Change in Employment (2012-2022)
31	Manufacturing	4,984	5,166	4%
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	3,392	5,100	50%
90	Government	3,269	2,877	-12%
44	Retail Trade	1,875	1,662	-11%
42	Wholesale Trade	907	1,194	32%
56	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	1,105	1,152	4%
23	Construction	1,208	1,039	-14%
72	Accommodation and Food Services	1,123	996	-11%
48	Transportation and Warehousing	501	643	28%
54	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	482	472	-2%
11, 21, 22, 51, 52, 55, 61, 71, 81, 99	All Others	2,441	1,722	-29%

Source: EMSI/Lightcast, RKG Associates

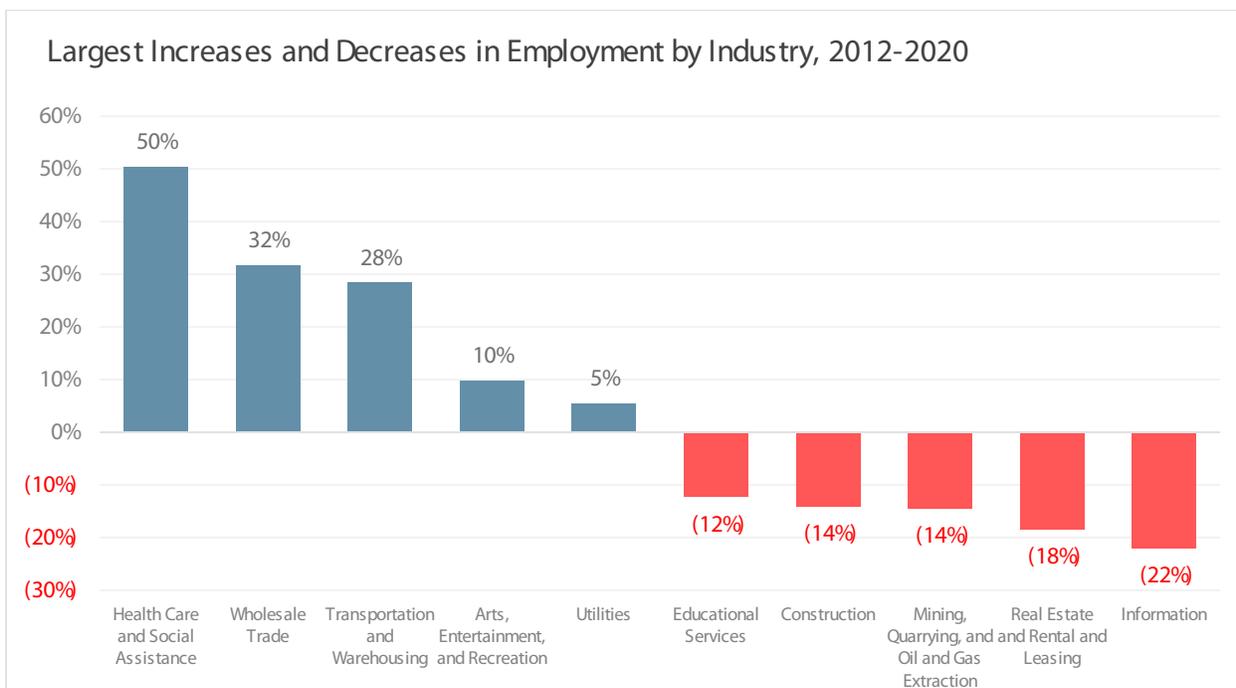


Figure 3-10. Top Increases and Decreases in Employment by Industry

Source: EMSI/Lightcast, RKG Associates

3.4.1 Location Quotients

Location quotients (LQs) compare employment by industry in two or more geographic areas. The location quotient is a ratio of the percentage of an industry’s employment in one geography to that of a larger comparison geography. If the ratio falls between 0.80 and 1.20, then the proportion of jobs is very similar in both geographies. If the ratio is less than 0.80, then the identified industry sector is thought to be under-represented in the local economy. Conversely, a ratio greater than 1.20 can show a specialty within the local economy as compared to the larger geography. The location quotient can be useful in identifying opportunities for certain industry sectors to gain a larger share of the employment base or to indicate when a community may be heavily reliant on one or two industry sectors. In some cases, a high location quotient may indicate a specialty area in the local economy. The comparison geography used for Westfield in this instance was for all of Massachusetts.

Two very large industries stand out with higher LQs compared to statewide averages. Those include

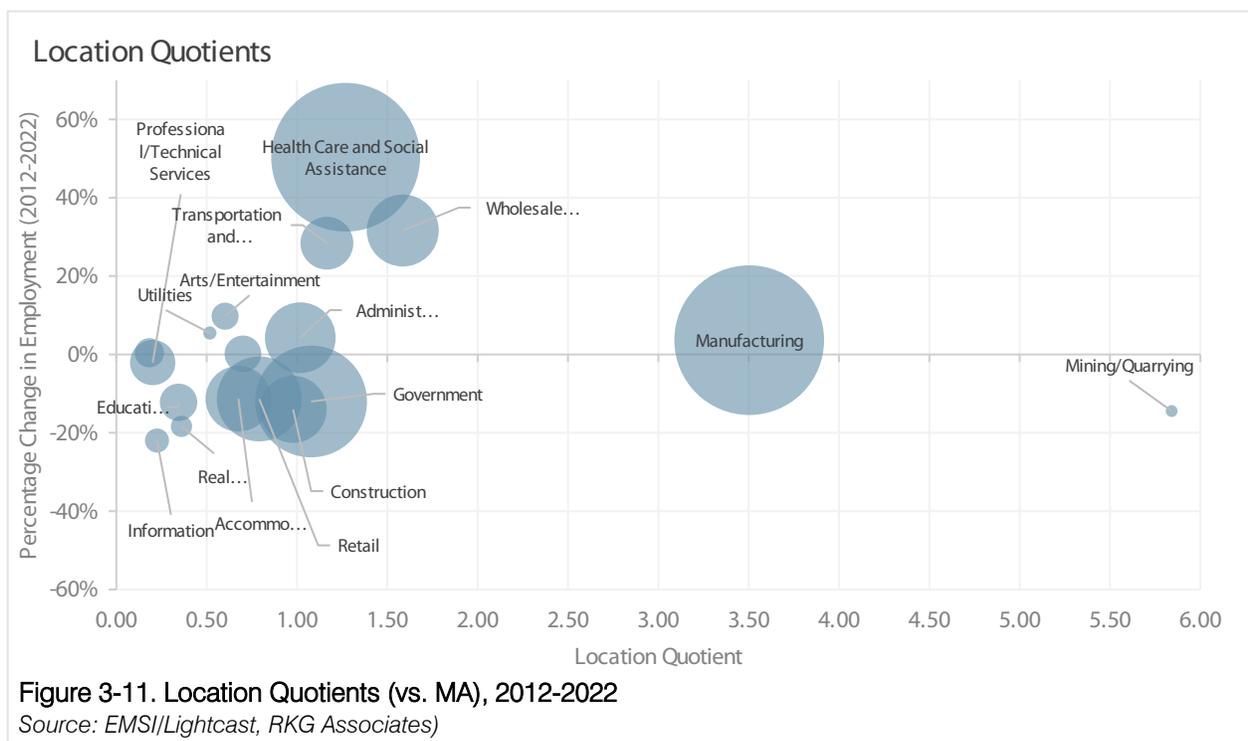


Figure 3-11. Location Quotients (vs. MA), 2012-2022

Source: EMSI/Lightcast, RKG Associates)

both Manufacturing and Health Care. The presence of several large manufacturers and industrial facilities in Westfield provide a specific niche in the local market, especially compared to the state overall. Manufacturing also has a very high LQ relative to Massachusetts at 3.5. While this industry has grown only by 4% since 2012, it remains the largest and most stable employment sector within Westfield and continues to play an outsized role in the employment makeup of the City. The presence of the hospital is a second major driver of employment concentration within the Health Care sector in Westfield.

3.5 Major Employers

Some of the major employers in Westfield reflect the well-represented healthcare, education, and manufacturing sectors that operate in the City. Westfield State University and Baystate Noble

Hospital continue to be leading employers in Westfield. Several manufacturing companies like Mestek, Advance Manufacturing, and Cadence Aerospace are employing hundreds of workers in Westfield as well. In the retail sector, large regional and national chain stores like Walmart and Big Y provide hundreds of jobs in the community.

3.6 Property Taxes

The fiscal implications of property taxes are an important consideration that businesses, and even individuals, evaluate when making choices about where to locate. While low property taxes can help attract businesses and residents, limited funding can result in the insufficient provision of public services and amenities, inhibiting a town's ability to remain competitive with its neighboring communities. In most communities, property taxes represent a sizable majority of municipal revenues.

Table 3-2. Property Tax Comparison – Westfield and Surrounding Communities

Municipality	2012 Property Tax Rates			2022 Property Tax Rates			% Change in Rates, FY12-FY22		% Change in Levy, FY12-FY22	
	Res.	C/I/PP	Levy % Split: R/CIPP	Res.	C/I/PP	Levy % Split: R/CIPP	Res.	C/I/P P	Res.	C/I/PP
Agawam	\$14.40	\$28.46	79/21	\$16.11	\$30.58	77.6/22.4	11.9%	7.4%	25.8%	36.5%
Granville	\$12.02	\$12.02	86.8/13.2	\$15.28	\$15.28	80.9/19.1	27.1%	27.1 %	2.9%	59.4%
Holyoke	\$16.85	\$38.53	71.3/28.7	\$19.26	\$40.60	76.2/23.8	14.3%	5.4%	21.2%	-5.8%
Montgomery	\$14.39	\$14.39	95.8/4.2	\$13.95	\$13.95	90.8/9.2	-3.1%	-3.1%	18.4%	176.0 %
Russell	\$18.40	\$18.40	88.9/11.1	\$19.90	\$19.90	83.4/16.6	8.2%	8.2%	24.3%	98.6%
Southampton	\$14.01	\$14.01	93.9/6.1	\$15.07	\$15.07	94/6	7.6%	7.6%	38.7%	37.0%
Southwick	\$14.23	\$14.23	89.5/10.5	\$16.98	\$16.98	87.1/12.9	19.3%	19.3 %	18.7%	49.2%
West Springfield	\$17.25	\$35.64	69.6/30.5	\$15.76	\$30.92	69.8/30.2	-8.6%	- 13.2 %	24.4%	22.9%
Westfield	\$16.13	\$30.36	82.9/17.1	\$18.49	\$36.31	82.5/17.5	14.6%	19.6 %	18.8%	21.9%

Source: MA Dept. of Revenue, 2022

Westfield's residential property tax rate is slightly higher than its surrounding neighbors and is significantly higher for commercial and industrial property, coming in at a rate of \$36 per \$1,000 of assessed value. Despite such a high rate regionally, it only accounts for 17.5% of the total tax levy in 2022. Despite Westfield's strong existing commercial and industrial base, its higher tax rate can become a competitive disadvantage in the long run when looking to attract businesses, jobs, and residents compared to neighboring communities.

3.7 Commercial/Industrial Districts

Westfield has several large and diverse areas of commercial activity. This includes districts that contain a walkable main street and downtown-oriented businesses, to large-scale strip malls and big box retail, to large and small-scale manufacturing, warehousing, and distribution centers, to agricultural businesses. This diversity in commercial and industrial activity is a critical asset for the town, as they are a critical source of property tax revenue and employment opportunities for Westfield residents. However, the downtown commercial district is still relatively disconnected from surrounding areas due to limited parking and high traffic, resulting in limited foot traffic by pedestrians.

3.7.1 *Downtown Westfield/Elm Street Corridor*

Westfield has a dense, walkable, and historic downtown that has been the traditional center of commerce and residence. Downtown contains small and midscale commercial buildings that date back as far as the 19th and early 20th centuries. While retail vacancies remain significantly high, there are existing small retail and dining establishments scattered along the Elm Street corridor and surrounding the recently renovated Westfield Green. In addition, there remain significant redevelopment opportunities along Elm Street, including the lot adjacent to the recently constructed bus terminal. In addition, there has been significant investment in capital projects in recent years, including the recent renovation of Park Square, investment in rail trails adjacent to the river, and large vacant lot redevelopment project.

3.7.2 *Westfield State University*

Westfield State University is a state university with its main campus located along Western Avenue in the western portion of the City. The campus serves as a major anchor institution that enrolls 5,000 students. While the campus sits on its own in this section of the City, there remains limited interaction between the university and the City. A university dorm located downtown was returned to its original use as residential apartments after being underutilized. Although there is a disconnect between the school and City, the downtown area remains a popular area for students to reside off campus due to its affordability and location. The original Normal School building on Washington Street has been used for student housing since being completely renovated.

3.7.3 *Westfield-Barnes Regional Airport*

Westfield Municipal Airport serves as an anchor in the heart of the northern industrial portion of the City. The airport is currently used by the Air National Guard as a station, and currently services primarily small personal aircraft despite its runway capacity to service larger planes. Additionally, there remains an opportunity to build up cargo airplane capacity given its location near a significant manufacturing area within the City. This would also present an opportunity to ease freight trucking within the City given the traffic issues surrounding this.

3.7.4 *North Side Industrial Area*

The northern section of Westfield is home to larger-scale facilities, specifically in the warehousing and distribution sectors. The availability of land and existing zoning conditions make this area more hospitable to attract large-scale businesses. With this activity, there are significant environmental challenges to development due to its location over the Barnes Aquifer.

3.7.5 *Wyben Village*

The Wyben area is a rural district located in the northwest section of the City. This area has primarily maintained its rural character despite the rapid industrialization that has occurred throughout Westfield. The area, situated along North and Montgomery Roads, contains a variety of agricultural-related businesses that include Raven Hollow Winery, Kosinski Farms, and Allen Tree Farm.

3.7.6 *The Strip/East Main Street/Springfield Road*

The eastern portion of Route 20, which connects downtown Westfield to West Springfield and onward to downtown Springfield, is primarily a low-density commercial containing big box retail. The area services a major commuter corridor and contains three grocery stores (Aldi's, Price Rite, and Big Y World Class Market), a Walmart Supercenter, a Dollar Tree, a Home Depot, and chain restaurants such as KFC, McDonald's, Applebee's, and Five Guys. There is also a significant amount of vacancy that has plagued the shopping centers in recent years, which presents another opportunity for redevelopment along a busy corridor. Alternative reuse of traditional retail space has been demonstrated by FunZ Trampoline Park, which replaced the former Bon-Ton department store.

3.7.7 *Turnpike Industrial Road*

The Turnpike Industrial Road and surrounding area contains a high concentration of industrial businesses at various scales. The area also sits outside of the aquifer overlay district, making any commercial and industrial development easier to implement by right and with less concerns for drinking water impacts. Currently, the City seeks to encourage industrial development in this industrial area due, in part, to environmental issues in the North Side Industrial Area. Currently, the City has preliminary plans for an industrial subdivision extension off Turnpike Industrial Road.

3.8 Challenges and Opportunities

3.8.1 *Challenges*

The population of Westfield has remained relatively steady over the last decade, but a more rapidly aging population could make it more difficult for employers in the area to find available workers as job gains are realized. The share of residents that are over 65 in Westfield is higher than both the countywide and statewide figures while the share of children under 5 decreased by 35% since 2015.

Westfield's downtown offers a unique opportunity to revitalize a mixed-use walkable center with both commercial and residential uses. Today, the downtown has a high storefront vacancy rate, but boasts a high apartment occupancy rate, and has experienced significant capital investment (e.g., public improvements, streetscaping etc.) in recent years. There appear to be several properties that could be strong candidates for adaptive reuse and redevelopment bringing more residents, businesses, and jobs to downtown. There are also opportunities to activate many of the public spaces that have been largely dormant with the onset of the pandemic. These could be used for events, festivals, pop-ups, and informal gatherings to bring people together and bolster the local business community downtown.

3.8.2 *Opportunities*

Westfield has a strong industrial and manufacturing tradition, giving it the nickname "Whip City" due to its history of buggy whip building in the 19th century. To this day, production manufacturing

consists of the highest share of jobs within the City with room to further grow in this field. Job growth has been consistent and steady in the City with an increase of 6% since 2011. One of Westfield's major advantages is its central location within Western Massachusetts. Westfield is 20 minutes to downtown Springfield, 45 minutes to Hartford, CT, and under an hour and a half between both Boston and Albany, NY. With the presence of I-90 and US Route 20 crossing east to west and US Route 202 from north to south, Westfield has been able to take advantage of its location as a major transportation and logistics hub.

Westfield has an opportunity to build off its educational and healthcare institutions to continue this employment growth trend and possibly keep more younger workers living and working here. The City is home to Westfield State University, which enrolls about 5,000 undergraduate and graduate students who play a role in the stimulation of the local economy throughout the year. Finding ways to partner with the University could help fulfill some employment needs locally while strengthening the town/gown relationship. In addition, healthcare is the fastest growing industry sector in the City and is anchored by Noble Hospital and Western Massachusetts Hospital. As the population continues to both grow and age, strong healthcare options will be important for jobs and quality of life in Westfield.

3.9 Current Measures and Practices

The City has taken several steps to allocate funding toward economic development measures. This includes an allocation of CDBG toward assisting microenterprises and small businesses to retain current workers. During COVID, the City offered assistance through the Emergency Business Grant Program which provided funds for utility payments, debt, payroll, and other business expenditures. In the past, the City also offered programs like the Vacant Storefront Assistance Grant and the Downtown Business Sign Grant Program.

In addition to providing assistance with the revitalization of downtown, the Community Development and Planning Departments have also provided assistance with revolving loan programs for businesses and the creation and marketing of industrial parks in the City.

Lastly, the City is currently partnering with the University to host a series of conversations around strengthening the relationship between the two entities. The Town/Gown process is exploring ways both entities can work together to achieve mutually beneficial goals and also bring the University and its students in as an important partner in Westfield.

3.10 Goals, Policies, Actions

3.10.1 Goals

1. Create a vibrant downtown that supports local businesses, provides goods and services for residents, and attracts visitors.
2. Ensure that Westfield supports and encourages economic development and provides an ideal location to open and grow a business.
3. Provide an equitable economic climate that generates and sustains a range of job opportunities for residents of all levels of education, skill, and interest.

4. Ensure that Westfield's cultural, natural, recreational, and agricultural resources are highlighted to promote increased tourism to support local businesses.

3.10.2 Policies

1. Inspire a renewed focus on Downtown Westfield to fill vacant storefronts, bring in new customers, encourage a diversity of businesses.
2. Identify opportunities or organizations to manage the Downtown as a place with a clear identity, vision, and coordinated implementation.
3. Create a partnership of organizations, businesses, and City resources to reactivate public spaces and host events to increase visitation and spending in the downtown.
4. Identify and encourage residential development opportunities to build a permanent customer base for businesses and activity in and around the downtown.
5. Identify the City's strengths and opportunities around economic development and build a brand that sets Westfield apart from its competitors.
6. Create fast, easy, and barrier-free pathways for innovators, entrepreneurs, and small business owners to operate in the city.
7. Align land use regulations with identified future growth areas for economic development to encourage the types of uses the City wants in places it will be supported and desirable.
8. Continue to support a diversified economy by encouraging business growth and development across a wide range of industry sectors.
9. Identify and pursue joint economic development efforts in partnership with Westfield State University to encourage student, faculty, and staff participation in the local economy.
10. Identify opportunities to promote unique aspects of Westfield that can increase visitation to the City such as agricultural assets, the rail trail, local events, access to the river, and downtown.

3.10.3 Actions

11. Include a rent subsidy for new businesses that align with the City's ideal business mix, temporary pop-up storefront program, and streamline or easing permitting requirements.

Lead Party: Community Development

Support Party: Planning, Building Department, Health Department, City Council, Property Owners

Timeframe: Medium-term/Ongoing

12. Identify options for creating a downtown management organization and move forward with operationalizing it. Options could include reconstituting the Business Improvement District (BID) or new models such as a Main Streets organization.

Lead Party: Community Development

Support Party: Business and Property Owners, City Council

Timeframe: Short-term

13. Meet with downtown property owners and business owners to identify opportunities to fill vacant storefronts and understand what role the City could play in assisting property owners with bringing new or expanded businesses to downtown.

Lead Party: Community Development, City Advancement Officer

Support Party: Business and Property Owners

Timeframe: Short-term/Ongoing

14. Reactivate and expand the public spaces in downtown, create a year-round series of events, and develop a sustained marketing effort to bring in more visitors and customers. Consider providing staff and financial support to a downtown organization for this purpose.

Lead Party: Community Development, Public Works/Parks

Support Party: Cultural Council, Business Owners, Property Owners, WOW, City Council, Artworks

Timeframe: Short- to medium-term/Ongoing

15. Review current zoning to remove barriers to residential development in and around the downtown for adaptive reuse, mixed use, and new residential development.

Lead Party: Planning

Support Party: Planning Board

Timeframe: Ongoing

16. Designate a business liaison in City Hall to serve as the primary point of contact for new or existing businesses looking for assistance.

Lead Party: Mayor

Support Party: Community Development, City Advancement Officer

Timeframe: Short-term/Ongoing

17. Work with local or regional business development organizations and possibly faculty at the University to provide business education, financial, legal, and other services to new or expanding businesses in Westfield.

Lead Party: Community Development, City Advancement Officer

Support Party: MA Small Business Development Center (or similar org), University

Timeframe: Medium-term

18. Review the City's zoning regulations in relation to potential economic growth areas and identify ways to remove barriers to new commercial and industrial development that aligns with the City's long-term economic development vision and goals.

Lead Party: Planning

Support Party: Planning Board

Timeframe: Medium-term

19. Ensure economic growth areas are supported with appropriate infrastructure such as water, sewer, broadband, and transportation access.

Lead Party: Planning, Engineering

Support Party: Gas & Electric, Airport, State Agencies (MassDOT), DPW

Timeframe: Medium-term

20. Meet with businesses in Westfield to understand staffing needs and how the City could assist in identifying employment opportunities, training opportunities, partnerships with the University, internships for high school or vocational students to prepare the future workforce in the City.

Lead Party: Community Development

Support Party: University, Westfield Public Schools, Westfield Technical Academy,

Timeframe: Medium-term

21. Continue efforts to market the airport as a transportation asset in Westfield and the region and identify new business opportunities to increase utilization of the airport and foster job growth.

Lead Party: Westfield-Barnes Regional Airport

Support Party: City Advancement Officer

Timeframe: Ongoing

22. Develop a brand and marketing campaign for Westfield that highlights the unique aspects of the City such as business development opportunities, transportation connectivity, the airport, anchor institutions, an active downtown, and recreational and cultural assets.

Lead Party: Community Development, City Advancement Officer

Support Party: City Council, Westfield-Barnes Regional Airport, Property Owners, University

Timeframe: Medium-term

23. Build upon the Town-Gown Visioning to implement specific partnerships between the City and the University. These efforts could involve bringing more students to downtown to support local businesses, bringing University sponsored events off campus and to the community, University involvement or sponsorship of events in downtown, or local vendor preference for University contracts and spending.

Lead Party: City Council ad hoc committee

Support Party: University, Mayor

Timeframe: Ongoing

24. Maintain a regionally competitive commercial tax rate.

Lead Party: City Council

Support Party: Assessor, City Advancement Officer

Timeframe: Ongoing

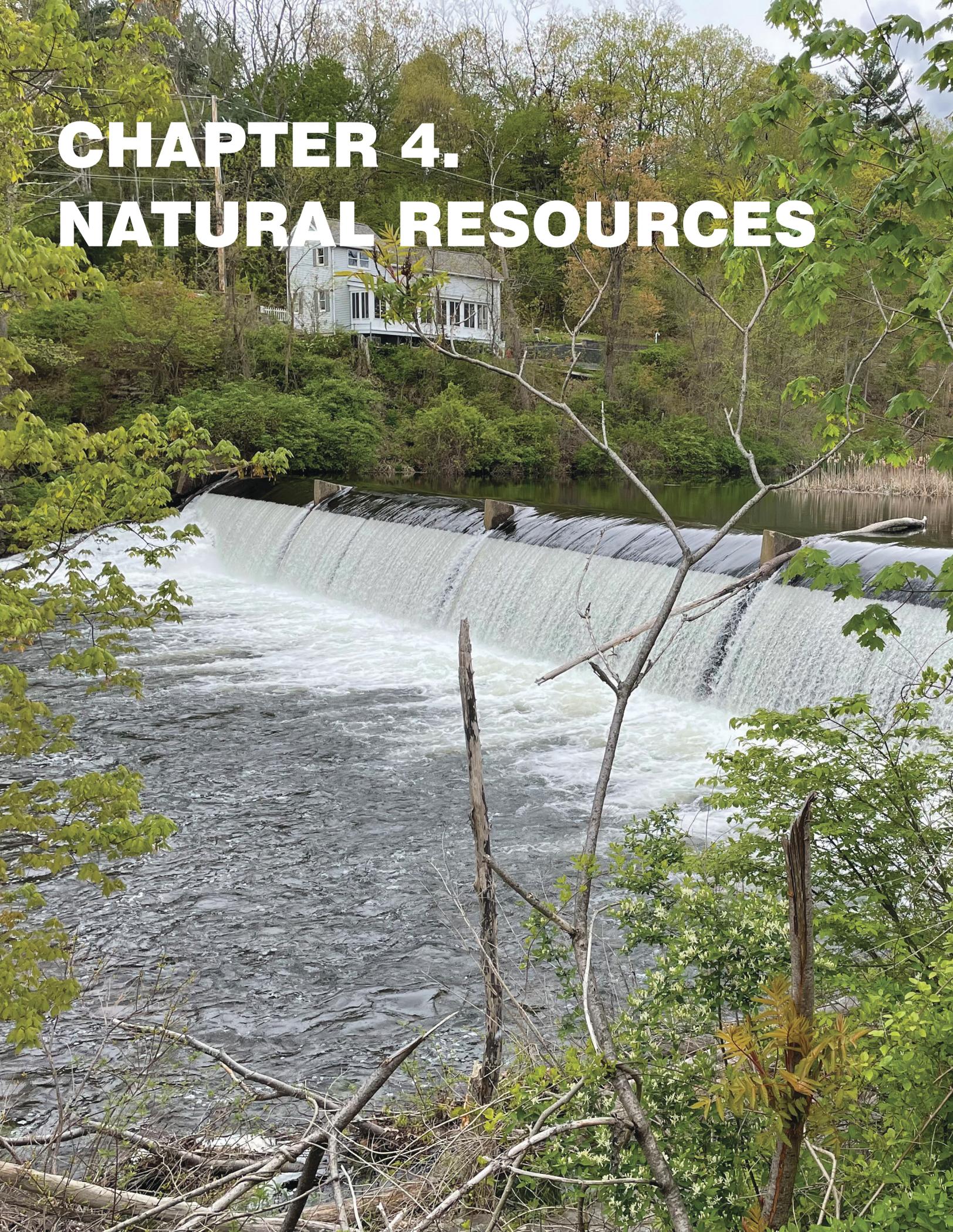
25. Encourage recognizable businesses along the downtown corridor to complement the locally owned specialty shops to draw in more commerce.

Lead Party: Community Development, City Advancement Officer

Support Party: City Council, Property Owners

Timeframe: Medium-term

CHAPTER 4. NATURAL RESOURCES



4.0 NATURAL RESOURCES

4.1 Vision

We envision that our City's valuable and abundant natural resources will be preserved and protected for the benefit of current and future generations in a way that supports recreational activities, ecosystem functions, and the quality of water, air, and soil.

4.2 Introduction

The Natural Resources element provides information on natural resources in Westfield including water, soils, prime agricultural lands, mountains, ridges, forests, wetlands, and floodplains. Natural resources are physical features and materials that come from the Earth and can be used for human needs. Natural resources are as simple as the air we breathe and water we drink, but also include resources that humans rely on for day-to-day functions.

Westfield is in the Pioneer Valley of Western Massachusetts, along the edge of the Connecticut River Valley. The Westfield River flows from the Berkshires through Westfield and into the Connecticut River. The relationship of the City to the river and the way it has carved out the topography of the land has played a defining role in the City's physical character, historic settlement patterns, and more recent development. The Westfield River cuts through lowlands consisting of fertile soils that have historically provided productive agriculture land for its inhabitants.

Residents of Westfield enjoy a variety of natural features and open space resources, including the Westfield and Little Rivers, the Metacomet Ridge/East Mountain and regional access to the Berkshires. These natural resources in Westfield can support recreational activities, a healthy economy, ecosystem services, and the quality of water, air, and soil. Natural resource management is a critical component of this Master Plan because protection of these resources will contribute to the health and wellbeing of residents, ecosystems, and wildlife in the future. Because natural resources span so many topic areas, this common theme must be reflected in other elements of this plan. As an example, land use, open space and recreation, economic development, water supply, and energy are inextricably linked to natural resources, making them vital components of all focus areas of master planning.

4.3 Existing Conditions

The City today consists of many natural areas and ecological communities. This includes its remaining contiguous area of forested land and farmlands that are now dispersed throughout the City. These areas, along with water and wetlands, provide habitat for a variety of waterfowl and wildlife and are important to preserve. The City has been focused in recent years on the development of and improvement to downtown parks as well as the construction of the Columbia Greenway Bike Trail. There has not been any significant addition to the open space inventory in the City, however acquiring conservation land in areas that have critical ecosystem importance, such as East Mountain, the Westfield River corridor, and the eastern slopes of Tekoa/Ball and Westfield Mountains, was rated as a high priority action in the 2018 Open Space and Recreational Plan. Westfield's Stanley Park is also popular within the region and the Grandmother's Garden and Half Mile Falls Park provide additional access to the public for passive and active recreation.

Over the years, the City has lost some of its agriculture land (488 acres between 1999-2021) due to dense population, residential, industrial, and commercial land areas. Loss of agriculture land and increase in residential, commercial, industrial land by acres is detailed in Table 1-2 of Chapter 1, *Land Use*. Today, over 25% of all developed land in the City consists of residential development. Land use changes that have occurred between 1999-2021 are further summarized in Chapter 1, *Land Use*. Agriculture land that is preserved under the Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR) program is further detailed in Chapter 9, *Agriculture*.

To establish effective policies to protect the City's vulnerable natural resources, a thorough inventory of the City's natural resources is required. This section includes existing conditions of Westfield's natural resources under the following categories:

- Mountain Ridges & Topography
- Air Quality
- Soils and Surficial Geology
- Wetlands
- Floodplains
- Water Sources
- Habitat
- Renewable Energy

In addition, this chapter identifies threats and challenges to natural resources management for the City of Westfield to consider future actions to mitigate and protect these important assets.

4.3.1 *Mountain Ridges & Topography*

The topography of the City consists of a combination of uplands and lowlands, with high ridges in the eastern portion of the City, which includes the East Mountain Wildlife Management Area. East Mountain is part of the Holyoke Range and consists of basalt bedrock with mineral rich soils. A series of drumlins with prominent heights are present in the City. These include Ball Mountain (1,114 ft) in the west, Round Hill (452 ft) in the north, and Grindstone Mountain (868 ft) in the northwestern portion of the City. The twin summits of the Pochassic Hills are located north of the Westfield River in the western portion of the City. The Westfield Mountain range has summits that range from 797 feet to 972 feet in elevation and are located in southwestern portion of the City. The topography of City is also influenced by the Westfield River and Little River that cut through lowlands and consists of prime farmland soils. These natural resources in Westfield are undeveloped lands that provide habitat for wildlife and enhance the quality of water, air, and soils.

4.3.2 *Air Quality*

Air quality is impacted by many factors including weather patterns, season, and wind. Because of its location and geography in western Massachusetts, Westfield can sometimes be affected by air pollution. According to the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP), valley areas in western Massachusetts are prone to high fine particle concentrations, which occur from smoke from nearby wildfires. National wildfire smoke, although occasionally visible in western Massachusetts, has shown to not cause air quality issues for locals.

In 2022, The MassDEP granted the City of Westfield nine PurpleAir sensors through its Air Sensor Grant to measure fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) in vulnerable areas of the City, because of a priority to better inform Environmental Justice populations. Monitors in Westfield were installed in residential areas with low-and-moderate income households and densely populated and heavily traveled neighborhoods. These include the north part of the City at Westfield Barnes Airport, Westfield Intermediate School and Colonial Pine Acres, as well as downtown at the PVTA Transit Center, Westfield Technical Academy, the Police, Fire and DPW headquarters, and the Senior Center. In addition to the air quality monitors mentioned above, a similar sensor was installed at Westfield State University. These monitors provide real-time data to the public. Figure 4-1, Air Quality Monitoring in Westfield shows real time data on Westfield's air quality (date: September 16th, 2022). At the time of the writing of the plan, monitoring sites indicated that air quality in Westfield was satisfactory, and that air pollution posed no risk with 24 hours of exposure.

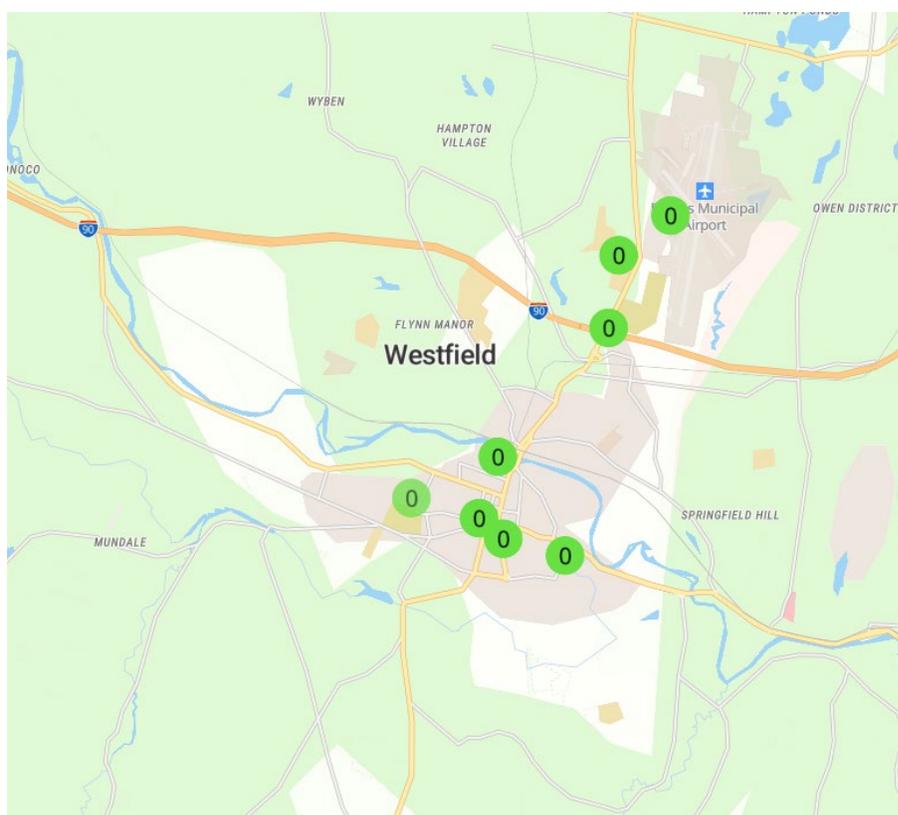


Figure 4-1. Air Quality Monitoring in Westfield (September 16th, 2022)

Source: PurpleAir (map.purpleair.com)

4.3.3 Soils and Surficial Geology

Westfield is situated along the Westfield River with an important history as an agriculture center. Historically, the City's land was primarily known for farmsteads and productive agriculture land. This was supported by floodplains along the Westfield River which consist of fertile soils. Today, there are two important farmland categories in Westfield:

- A. Prime farmland, which covers 18% of land. Prime farmland is defined as, "land that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for economically producing

sustained high yields of food, feed, forage, fiber, oilseed crops, when treated and managed according to acceptable farming methods.”

- B. Farmland of statewide importance, which covers 37% of the land. This land is in addition to prime farmland that is determined by the state agency and generally includes land that nearly prime farmland that can economically produce high yields of crops.

Prime farmland soils and agriculture activities are further detailed in *Chapter 9, Agriculture*.

Outwash plains soils make up more than half of the City. The rapid permeability of outwash plains (hydrologic soil groups A and B) has the potential to cause pollution where there is not sufficient depth to groundwater to capture pollutants. Soils with slower infiltration rates (hydrologic soil groups C and D) attenuate pollutants better than those with rapid percolation. See Table 4-1 for additional information on soil hydrologic groups in Westfield. See Map 4-1, Surficial Geology, for relationship of outwash plain soils to aquifers.

Group	Acres	Percentage of City
A	14,830	49%
A/D	568	2%
B	2,760	9%
B/D	486	2%
C	2,180	7%
C/D	2,768	9%
D	2,471	8%
Blank	4,217	14%

Source: NRCS and MassGIS

^a Note: For dual soil groups (A/D, B/D, or C/D), the first letter applies to the soil that has been drained and the second letter applies to soil in its natural, undrained condition.

MassGIS provides Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Soil Survey Geographic database (SSURGO-certified soils data) for Massachusetts. Soils are classified according to physical and chemical properties. The soils of Westfield were influenced by glaciation and consisted primarily of sandy loams. According to MassGIS, these soils are depicted as many types as possible with varying slopes. The top five soils that represent largest areas in the City include:

- A. Hinkley: loamy sand, 0 to 3 percent slopes and 3 to 8 percent slopes
- B. Windsor: loamy sand, 0 to 3 percent slopes and 3 to 8 percent slopes
- C. Merrimac: fine sandy loam, 0 to 3 percent slopes
- D. Urban land-Hadley-Winooski association: 0 to 8 percent slopes and 0 to 15 percent slopes
- E. Rock outcrop-Holyoke complex: 15 to 35 percent slopes

The Soils Survey of central part of the Hampden County indicates that the primary uses of the soils in the central part of the Hampden County have shifted from agriculture uses to sources of construction materials for residential development.

The U.S. Geology Survey defines surficial materials as those at or near the Earth’s surface. Surficial geology primarily consists of consolidated clay, silt, sand, and gravel sized particles that are produced by erosion or deposited by water or wind. According to the MassGIS statewide surficial geology data, local soils range from floodplain alluvium to till or bedrock. Most of the surficial geology

of City of Westfield is characterized as sand and gravel. Of the total soils, 16,914 acres (56%) are classified as sand and gravel deposits, 4,740 acres (16%) as floodplain alluvium, 163 acres (0.5%) as fine-grained deposit, and 8,462 acres (28%) as till or bedrock. The floodplain alluvia are formed by flooding and are mainly present along the Westfield River and Little River and along Westfield's ponds and brooks. These soils provide many ecosystem functions including removal of contaminants from rivers. Changes in land use, including deforestation and plowing for agriculture, can increase erosion in uplands affecting the sediment deposited downriver. Map 4-1 depicts parts of City where these occur. Additionally, kettle holes in the north-central and northeast sections of Westfield are some of the City's most unique geological features and provide both wildlife habitat and recreational opportunities. Hampton Ponds State Park includes Hampton and Pequot ponds, both of which are kettle holes, and the Brickyard ponds are kettle holes as well. See Map 4-1, *Surficial Geology*, for additional information on the geologic makeup of Westfield.

4.3.4 Water Sources

Sources of drinking water can include rivers, lakes, streams, ponds, reservoirs, springs, and groundwater wells. Water supply in Westfield comes from both groundwater supply and the reservoirs. The existing conditions analysis and overview of groundwater in Westfield is discussed in more detail in Chapter 11, *Water Supply*.

Surface Water

Surface water is any body of water above ground, including oceans, streams, rivers, lakes, wetlands, reservoirs, and creeks. During wet periods with increased rainfall, stormwater contributes to a larger percentage of water flow; during dry periods, groundwater feeds streams, lakes, ponds, and reservoirs and may prevent them from drying out. There are approximately 573 acres of surface water in Westfield. The most significant surface water resource in Westfield is the Westfield River, and most other rivers and streams drain into the Westfield River. The river flows through the City from west to east, including through the City center. The Westfield River is designated as a National Wild and Scenic River. To be designated a National Wild and Scenic River, a river must have at least one "outstandingly remarkable" natural, scenic, or cultural value. The Westfield River exceeds that standard with many outstanding values that encompass scenic, geologic, historic, fishery, and recreational resources, water quality and flow, and rare and endangered species. A fish ladder to allow for migration and spawning of species such as shad and salmon are located in West Springfield. The Little River also runs west to east through the City and enters the Westfield River southeast of the City center. It flows down Westfield Mountain and through steep ravines, providing animal habitat and hiking opportunities. It flows through Stanley Park as well, where there is a short boardwalk alongside it for walking and viewing. Other rivers and streams in Westfield include Ashley Brook, Barry Brook, Cooley Brook, Great Brook, Jack's Brook, Manhan River, Munn Brook, Pond Brook, Powdermill Brook, and Sandy Mill Brook.

The health and quality of a watershed is directly linked to the health and quality of its receiving surface waterbodies. It is important to recognize that all activities within the watershed can have an impact on these surface waters, and that is why land development and land use is closely tied to watershed protection measures. Human activities including land development, road maintenance, and dumping of waste can have a significant impact on water quality. "A watershed is a land area that channels rainfall and snowmelt to creeks, streams, and rivers, and eventually to outflow points such as reservoirs, bays, and the ocean." The City is located within the Westfield River Watershed.

The entire Westfield River watershed includes 517 square miles in Hampden, Hampshire, and Berkshire Counties, and further west and north is made up of the three East, Middle and West branches.

As water travels over the surface of the land or through the ground, it dissolves naturally occurring minerals and, in some cases, pollutants caused by human activities like driving or land uses such as parking lots, farms, or industrial facilities. MADEP maintains a periodic report of water quality in the Commonwealth, which is titled the "Massachusetts Integrated List of Waters." Surface water resources are classified in this list by MADEP regarding use and water quality goals. Table 4-2 below provides the levels of freshwater water quality classification.

Table 4-2. Water Quality in Westfield Waterbodies			
Waterbody	Integrated List Category	Segment	Uses Attained/Impairment
<i>Ashley Brook</i>	Category 5: Waters requiring one or more TMDL(s)	Headwaters (perennial portion), south of Hillside Road, Westfield to mouth at confluence with Jacks Brook, Westfield	Escherichia Coli (E. Coli)
<i>Great Brook</i>	Category 2: Attaining some uses, others not assessed	Source, outlet Congamond Lakes, Southwick to mouth at confluence with Westfield River, Westfield.	Uses attained: aesthetic, primary and secondary contact recreation
<i>Jacks Brook</i>	Category 5: Waters requiring one or more TMDL(s)	Headwaters (perennial portion), east of Fowler Road, Westfield to inlet of Crane Pond/Little River, Westfield.	Escherichia Coli (E. Coli)
<i>Little River</i>	Category 5: Waters requiring one or more TMDL(s)	From Springfield Water Works Intake Dam (NATID: MA00708) northwest of Gorge Road, Russell to Horton's Bridge, Westfield (formerly part of segment MA32-26)	Escherichia Coli (E. Coli) and Fecal Coliform
<i>Little River</i>	Category 5: Waters requiring one or more TMDL(s)	Horton's Bridge to confluence with Westfield River	Combined Biota/Habitat Bioassessments and Escherichia Coli (E. Coli)
<i>Manhan River</i>	Category 5: Waters requiring one or more TMDL(s)	Outlet Tighe Carmody Reservoir, Southampton to mouth at confluence with Connecticut River, Easthampton.	Escherichia Coli (E. Coli)
<i>Moose Meadow Brook</i>	Category 5: Waters requiring one or more TMDL(s)	Outlet Westfield Reservoir to mouth at confluence with Westfield River, Westfield	Escherichia Coli (E. Coli) and Fecal Coliform
<i>Munn Brook</i>	Category 2: Attaining some uses, others not assessed	Headwaters, outlet Winchell Reservoir, Granville to mouth at confluence with Little River, Westfield.	Uses attained: Fish, other aquatic life, and wildlife
<i>Pond Brook</i>	Category 2: Attaining some uses, others not assessed	Headwaters, outlet Chapin Pond, Westfield to mouth at confluence with Powdermill Brook, Westfield.	Uses attained: Fish, other aquatic life and wildlife, aesthetic, primary and secondary contact recreation

Table 4-2. Water Quality in Westfield Waterbodies			
<i>Powdermill Brook</i>	Category 5: Waters requiring one or more TMDL(s)	Headwaters, perennial portion northeast of Montgomery Road (west of Grindstone Mountain), Westfield to mouth at confluence with Westfield River, Westfield.	Algae, Escherichia Coli (E. Coli), Sedimentation/ Siltation, Turbidity
<i>Westfield River</i>	Category 2: Attaining some uses, others not assessed	Route 20 bridge, to Westfield city boundary with West Springfield and Agawam.	Uses attained: Fish, other aquatic life and wildlife, aesthetic, primary and secondary contact recreation
<i>Westfield River</i>	Category 2: Attaining some uses, others not assessed	Confluence with Middle Branch Westfield River in Huntington to Route 20 bridge	Uses attained: Fish, other aquatic life and wildlife, aesthetic, primary and secondary contact recreation
<i>Buck Pond</i>	Category 5: Waters requiring one or more TMDL(s)	Westfield.	Non-Native Aquatic Plants, Chlorophyll-a, Dissolved Oxygen
<i>Horse Pond</i>	Category 5: Waters requiring one or more TMDL(s)	Westfield.	Eurasian Water Milfoil, Myriophyllum Spicatum, Non-Native Aquatic Plants, Chlorophyll-a, Dissolved Oxygen
<i>Pequot Pond</i>	Category 5: Waters requiring one or more TMDL(s)	Westfield and Southampton.	Eurasian Water Milfoil, Myriophyllum Spicatum, Non-Native Aquatic Plants, Chlorophyll-a, Dissolved Oxygen, Enterococcus, Total Phosphorus

Source: Massachusetts Integrated List of Waters

Water quality in Westfield's water bodies ranges from good to impaired. In Westfield, there are nine waterbodies on the list designated as impaired, as noted in the table above and on the map of Impaired Waterbodies (Map 4-2). Five ponds and lakes are considered impaired by invasive exotic aquatic weeds, known as a Category 4c Water on the Massachusetts Year 2006 Integrated List of Waters and ten ponds, lakes, streams, and river segments are listed as waters requiring a total maximum daily load (TMDL) analysis, known as Category 5 Waters. A TMDL is a regulatory term in the U.S. Clean Water Act, describing a plan for restoring impaired waters that identifies the maximum amount of a pollutant that a body of water can receive while still meeting water quality standards. Waterbodies including Arm Brook, Barry Brook, Brickyard Brook, Bush Brook, Cook Brook, and Kellog Brook were not assessed (Category 3 in the Integrated Waters List). Waterbodies that are of particular concern are also illustrated in Map 4-2, *Impaired Waterbodies*.

The Westfield Five-Year Watershed Action Plan (2005) includes a Water Quality Assessment, which identifies sources and solutions for these impairments. In the lower watershed, urbanized areas, and impervious surfaces are having an impact on water quality. Westfield has a stormwater ordinance and is performing public education and outreach to reduce stormwater pollution. Other causes of impairment in Westfield's waterbodies include streambank erosion, illegal dumping, and road salt

contamination. See maps 4-4, *FEMA Flood Map*, and 4-6, *Watersheds*, for additional information on surface water and critical water supplies in Westfield.

Source Water Protection Measures

Protection of water resources is a critical component of maintaining water volume and quality. Maintaining the current abundance of high-quality surface and subsurface water supplies in Westfield depends on balancing development to avoid overtaxing the carrying capacity of the land, proper watershed management, and appropriate pollution management, such as through the State's Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System Program (MS4) permitting process. The protection of natural resources and vegetated land areas is a crucial component of reducing contaminated loads to water sources. Westfield's Watershed Protection Action Plan provides a comprehensive overview of how sources can be protected through proactive management.

Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System Program (MS4) and Stormwater Management Plan

Proper management of stormwater helps reduce pollutant loads in surface water and ground water supply. The City of Westfield is classified as a Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4). There exist two independent conveying structures, one for stormwater and one for wastewater (or sewage), within the City. The stormwater system is comprised of catch basins and associated piping, which are designed to drain water from our parking lots and roadways. The City of Westfield is a member of the Connecticut River Stormwater Committee. A component of the MS4 Program is implementing 'Best Management Practices' which often include nature-based solutions for improving water quality, storage, and conveyance.

Westfield Source Water Assessment and Protection Program (SWAP)

The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has completed a Source Water Assessment for all Westfield Municipal drinking water sources. This Source Water Assessment and Protection (SWAP) report identifies land uses within water supply protection areas that may be potential sources of contamination. city groundwater sources were determined to be highly vulnerable to contamination due to the absence of hydrogeologic barriers that can prevent the contaminant migration from activities on the land surface. Susceptibility to contamination for Westfield's drinking water sources is high due to the presence of such high threat land uses as auto repair/body shops, airport, railroads, machine shops, transportation corridors and illegal dumping. Even seemingly minor household impacts like lawn fertilization, septic systems, and home car washing can have a compounded effect on water quality. Other elements of the Master Plan can help establish practices for protecting ground water sources. For example, amendments to land uses or introduction of a Water Resource Protection District may help mitigate impacts from current detrimental land uses.

Westfield Water Resources Department Rules and Regulations

The Westfield Water Resources Department has a Rules and Regulations governing document that sets standards for use of the water distribution system to help protect water quality, pressure, and volume. The Rules and Regulations cover the following:

Westfield River Watershed Action Plan

The Westfield River Watershed Action Plan includes a description of the condition of each sub-watershed within five categories:

- Water Quantity and Stream Flow
- Water Quality
- Habitat and Fish Passage
- Land Use, Open Space and Growth
- Recreation

Groundwater

Westfield has eight public wells that are sourced from groundwater. Large volumes of underground water-saturated soil materials are referred to as aquifers or groundwater reservoirs. Barnes Aquifer is the primary source of drinking water for Westfield and has a capacity for withdrawal of more than 21 million gallons per day. Groundwater quality is defined in more detail in Chapter 11, *Water Supply*. See Map 4-5, *Groundwater Supply Protection*, for more information on groundwater sources within Westfield.

4.3.5 Wetlands

Wetlands often occur in transitional areas between dry land and open water, and they support vital natural functions such as providing protective flood storage, productive wildlife habitats, improvement of water quality, nutrient and sediment retention, and storage for stormwater. They are typically areas of poor drainage and standing water, either on a seasonal or year-round basis. Approximately 1,760 acres (5.8%) of the City is wetlands, though their formal delineations require site-level investigation. The most common wetland types are wooded swap deciduous (32%) and open water (33%), comprising 65% of Westfield's wetlands. Among other areas, wetland areas occur along Arm Brook and Brickyard Brook in Westfield. Large wetland areas consisting of deep marsh and shrub swap lie on both sides of Root Road. Map 4-3, *Wildlife Habitat*, depicts parts of the City where wetlands primarily occur.

Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) wetlands are summarized by the description in Table 4-3 below.

Table 4-3. DEP Wetlands in Westfield	
Wetland Description	Acres
Bog	19
Deep Marsh	149
Open Water	573
Shallow Marsh Meadow Or Fen	109
Shrub Swamp	269
Wooded Swamp Coniferous	14
Wooded Swamp Deciduous	571
Wooded Swamp Mixed Trees	56
TOTAL	1,760

Source: MassDEP Wetlands

4.3.6 Floodplains

The Federal Emergency Management Agency defines a floodplain as land area that is susceptible to being inundated by floodwaters from any source. Approximately 6,140 acres of land in Westfield is classified by FEMA as flood zones. Flood zones are FEMA designated areas subject to temporary inundation during storm events or seasonal increases in rainfall or snowmelt. Flood zones are defined as areas with a 1% chance of flooding in any given year. These zones play an important role in naturally protecting a community from flood damage. Flood zones are commonly associated with water bodies and are designated and mapped by FEMA by category. Table 4-4 and Map 4-4 provide information on FEMA flood zones in City of Westfield.

Table 4-4. FEMA Flood Zones		
Flood Zone	Acres	Percentage of Floodplain
A: 1% Annual Chance Flood	800	13%
AE: 1% Annual Chance Flood	1,547	25%
AE: Regulatory Floodway	1,709	28%
X: 0.2% Annual Chance of Flooding	1,853	30%
X: Reduced Flood Risk due to Levee	231	4%

Source: MassGIS FEMA National Flood Hazard Layer

4.3.7 Habitat

The open waters, wetlands, rivers, and forests in the City provide habitat for a variety of waterfowl and wildlife. This section provides an overview of various wildlife habitats found within Westfield. The following categories of wildlife habitats are also depicted in Map 4-3, *Wildlife Habitat*.

Vernal Pools

Vernal pools, also called vernal ponds or ephemeral pools, are unique, ecologically significant seasonal pools of water that provide habitat for distinctive plants and animals. They are a specific type of wetland usually devoid of fish and thus allow the safe development of natal amphibian and insect species unable to withstand competition or predation by fish. According to the Commonwealth's Natural Heritage and Endangered Species office (NHESP), Westfield currently has 14 certified vernal pools, which are mostly located on forested land. Two of the certified vernal pools are located on Wyben Woods, which is land protected by the City. Additionally, 83 unverified "potential vernal pools" are also located in the City. Potential vernal pools are identified through aerial photography and are only certified once assessed by the Natural Heritage Endangered Species Program (NHESP).

Forested Land

Forests provide habitat to a variety of species, many of which are endangered in Massachusetts. A combination of hardwood and softwood trees are located throughout Westfield's forests. Approximately 13,741 acres of Westfield are classified as forests. Over the past 25 years, there has been a 2.2% decrease in forested land. Urban environments also contain trees to create aesthetically pleasing parks, enhance streetscapes, and advance general public welfare. Westfield adopted the Tree Ordinance, which "established protections for city trees." The City is recognized as a "Tree City USA" through the Arbor Day Foundation.

Wildlife Corridor and Habitat

BioMap2 is a framework offered by the MassWildlife's Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program and Division of Fisheries and Wildlife for protection and stewardship of lands and waters that are most important for conserving biological diversity in Massachusetts. BioMap2 is the preferred information source for conservation planning and action.

Westfield has 4,527 acres (15% of the City) of Critical Natural Landscape area. Critical Natural Landscape identifies large natural landscape blocks that are minimally impacted by development, as well as buffers around some Core Habitats to enhance resilience. A large area of Critical Natural Landscape is located in the northwest corner of the City, with additional areas adjoining the Westfield and Little Rivers, and located in the far southwest section of the City, overlapping into both Russell and Granville. There are eighteen areas of BioMap2 Core Habitat in Westfield. Core Habitats are specific areas that promote the conservation of species listed under the Massachusetts Endangered Species Act (MESA) and in the State Wildlife Action Plan. They include 1 forest core, 5 aquatic cores, 2 wetland cores, 3 priority natural community cores, 1 vernal pool core, and areas for 33 species of conservation concern. Some of these core areas overlap, but together they make up 5,874 acres (19% of the City). Most of these core habitats are located in the northern section of the City, north of the Mass Pike, and some extend into the neighboring towns of Montgomery, Holyoke, Southamptton, and Southwick. Map 4-3 identifies parts of the City where Critical Natural Landscape areas and Core Habitats by BioMap2 occur.

Species of Concern

The Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program (NHESP) Office lists species that are scarce in Massachusetts and considered to be endangered, threatened, or of special concern. This list includes several animals and plant species in Westfield, which cover 3,894 acres (13%) of land within the City. The Massachusetts Endangered Species Act (MESA) and its regulations protect rare species and their habitats. NHESP Priority Habitat areas determine whether a proposed project or activity must be reviewed by the NHESP for compliance with the (MESA) and its implementing regulations. There are 14 plant and 22 animal species that are considered endangered, threatened, or of special concern that have been identified in Westfield. Documented MESA-listed species observations are summarized in Table 4-5 below.

Common Name	Scientific Name	Taxonomic Group	MESA Status	Most Recent Observation
Agassiz's Clam Shrimp	<i>Eulimnadia agassizii</i>	Crustacean	Endangered	2018
American Clam Shrimp	<i>Limnadia lenticularis</i>	Crustacean	Special Concern	2018
Bridle Shiner	<i>Notropis bifrenatus</i>	Fish	Special Concern	1944
Bristly Buttercup	<i>Ranunculus pensylvanicus</i>	Vascular Plant	Special Concern	2010
Brook Floater	<i>Alasmidonta varicosa</i>	Mussel	Endangered	Historic
Climbing Fumitory	<i>Adlumia fungosa</i>	Vascular Plant	Special Concern	1988
Creeper	<i>Strophitus undulatus</i>	Mussel	Special Concern	2020
Dwarf Wedgemussel	<i>Alasmidonta heterodon</i>	Mussel	Endangered	Historic
Eastern Box Turtle	<i>Terrapene carolina</i>	Reptile	Special Concern	2019

Table 4-5. MESA-listed Species Observations				
Eastern Hog-nosed Snake	<i>Heterodon platirhinos</i>	Reptile	Special Concern	1993
Eastern Meadowlark	<i>Sturnella magna</i>	Bird	Special Concern	2014
Eastern Spadefoot	<i>Scaphiopus holbrookii</i>	Amphibian	Threatened	2019
Eastern Whip-poor-will	<i>Antrostomus vociferus</i>	Bird	Special Concern	2017
Frosted Elfin	<i>Callophrys irus</i>	Butterfly/Moth	Special Concern	2010
Giant St. John's-wort	<i>Hypericum ascyron</i>	Vascular Plant	Endangered	1858
Golden-winged Warbler	<i>Vermivora chrysoptera</i>	Bird	Endangered	1992
Grasshopper Sparrow	<i>Ammodramus savannarum</i>	Bird	Threatened	2014
Hairy Wild Rye	<i>Elymus villosus</i>	Vascular Plant	Endangered	1913
Houghton's Flatsedge	<i>Cyperus houghtonii</i>	Vascular Plant	Endangered	1973
Jefferson Salamander (complex)	<i>Ambystoma jeffersonianum</i>	Amphibian	Special Concern	2019
Long-leaved Bluet	<i>Houstonia longifolia</i>	Vascular Plant	Endangered	1914
Marbled Salamander	<i>Ambystoma opacum</i>	Amphibian	Threatened	1982
New England Blazing Star	<i>Liatris novae-angliae</i>	Vascular Plant	Special Concern	2010
New Jersey Tea Inchworm	<i>Apodrepanulatrix liberaria</i>	Butterfly/Moth	Endangered	1999
One-flowered Pyrola	<i>Moneses uniflora</i>	Vascular Plant	Special Concern	1974
Pine Barrens Speranza	<i>Speranza exonerata</i>	Butterfly/Moth	Special Concern	1999
Pine Barrens Zanclognatha	<i>Zanclognatha martha</i>	Butterfly/Moth	Special Concern	1999
Purple Clematis	<i>Clematis occidentalis</i>	Vascular Plant	Special Concern	2009
Purple Needlegrass	<i>Aristida purpurascens</i>	Vascular Plant	Threatened	1858
Shining Wedgegrass	<i>Sphenopholis nitida</i>	Vascular Plant	Threatened	2016
Smooth Rock-cress	<i>Boechera laevigata</i>	Vascular Plant	Special Concern	2007
Upland Sandpiper	<i>Bartramia longicauda</i>	Bird	Endangered	2014
Upright Bindweed	<i>Calystegia spithamea</i>	Vascular Plant	Endangered	1934
Variable Sedge	<i>Carex polymorpha</i>	Vascular Plant	Endangered	Historic
Vesper Sparrow	<i>Pooecetes gramineus</i>	Bird	Threatened	2011
Wood Turtle	<i>Glyptemys insculpta</i>	Reptile	Special Concern	2013

Source: MassWildlife's Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program Rare Species Viewer

4.3.8 Renewable Energy

Several different types of renewable energy sources can replace or supplement traditional forms of energy production within the City. Common renewable energy sources include solar, wind, geothermal, hydroelectric, and biomass. Renewable energy sources provide an array of benefits including improved public health due to zero production in greenhouse gas emissions and resilience against natural hazards, weather, and climate change. Energy reliance was identified as a top priority

in the City's Community Resilience Building Workshop Summary of Findings. Solar farms were noted as infrastructural assets for providing an alternative energy source and the Westfield Barnes Airport was identified as an infrastructural asset. The Westfield Barnes Airport is noted for its large standing area, emergency response via airlift, backup emergency power, and potential for intergovernmental partnership related to energy. Common renewable energy sources and renewable energy source production within the City is detailed in Chapter 10, *Energy*.

4.4 Challenges and Opportunities

4.4.1 Challenges

A variety of land uses and human activities pose a threat to the City's natural resources. This section presents the most notable threats to the natural resources in Westfield.

Hazardous Waste and Landfill Areas

Landfills and hazardous waste can pollute water and air. Landfills also release methane gas, which is a potent greenhouse gas that contributes to climate change. Diesel fuel and other chemicals are stored at local businesses. These chemicals are considered dangerous and require proper storage and disposal to avoid contamination of groundwater supplies. MCP/Chapter 21E Tier Classification sites are approximate locations of oil and/or hazardous material disposal sites that have been (1) reported and (2) Tier Classified under M.G.L. Chapter 21E and the Massachusetts Contingency Plan (MCP). All MCP/Chapter 21E Tier Classification sites in Westfield are summarized in Table 4-6 below.

Table 4-6. MCP/Chapter 21E Tier Classification		
Site Name	Address	Tier Classification
New Chief Medical Examiner Facility	178 East Mountain Road	Tier 1
Mobil Station	181 Elm Street	Tier 1
Westfield Citgo	41 Franklin Street	Tier 1
No Location Aid	41 Jefferson St	Tier 2
Westfield Riverfront Redevelopment Zone	146 Emery St & 362 Elm St	Tier 1D
Former City Cleaners Residence	47 School Street	Tier 1D
	32 Noble Ave	Tier 1D

Source: MassGIS MassDEP Tier Classified Oil and/or Hazardous Material Sites

Westfield currently has no active landfills. Westfield has two inactive landfills located at Barnes Municipal Airport which was used for construction and demolition waste and Lockhouse Road which was used for municipal solid waste. Westfield has two closed and capped landfills which are located at the Western Massachusetts Hospital and Twiss Street. The two closed and capped landfills were used for municipal solid waste. Post closure, the Twiss Street landfill was granted a permit by the Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) for solar installation. According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, The Twiss Street Solar is a solar photovoltaic installation with a 1.5-megawatt capacity.

Invasive Species

Invasive species can alter habitat and threaten or eradicate native plants and animals. A variety of invasive, non-native plant species occur in Westfield. The Westfield River Watershed Invasive Species Partnership provides a list of invasive species in the Westfield River Watershed. These

include Emerald Ash Borer, Hemlock Woolly Adelgid and plants such as Oriental bittersweet, Garlic mustard, Japanese knotweed, and Glossy buckthorn. Monitoring for new invasives can help ensure early control measures to forestall major impacts on the environment.

Increasing Land Development

Future population increases and demand for new development may threaten open space, water supplies, and natural resources. Residential construction has remained relatively steady from 2012-2021. The City experienced an increase in single-family residential development in 2017, issuing 43 building permits and an increase in 2021, issuing 44 building permits. Building permits issued between 2012-2021 are detailed in Chapter 1, *Land Use*.

Development trends in the county indicate that the loss of natural forest land through conversion to a developed state is happening at a rapid pace. Hampden County lost 5.01 thousand hectares (kha) of tree cover from 2001 to 2021, an equivalent of 1.90 metric tons (Mt) of CO₂ emissions. The extent of contiguous forest cover area in Westfield is a major asset to wildlife habitat and could be negatively impacted by any fragmentation associated with new development.

4.4.2 Opportunities

Westfield consists of large natural landscape blocks that are minimally impacted by development, as well as buffers around some core habitats that enhance resiliency. When protected in their current form, these areas can help preserve corridors and networks that enable animals to move between critical habitat areas. Additionally, monitoring for new invasive species can help ensure early control measures to prevent major impacts on the ecosystems. The development of an invasive species management plan could also be utilized to inventory existing and future invasive species trends.

There is an opportunity to cleanup sites and create designated places that allow for access along waterways. Access to waterways include the Columbia Greenway Rail Trail, which allows the community to experience some of Westfield's natural resources, including a future connection to the Women's Temperance Park north of the Westfield River. Initiatives like Earth Day clean up can help encourage more stewardship and interaction with community members to protect the City's natural resources and prevent litter from moving into waterways and blocking drains.

4.5 Current Measures/Practices

4.5.1 Existing Regulation

Article III, Section 3-160 in the Zoning Ordinance covers the Floodplain Management District, which includes all Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHAs) within the City designated as Zone A and AE on the Hampden County Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) issued by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for the administration of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). These are locations where the NFIP's floodplain management regulations must be enforced because they are within the land area covered by the floodwaters of the base or 100-year flood. The City also has a Floodplain Overlay District that protects floodplain areas from certain uses and types of development. Further, the Conservation Commission also regulated floodplain development under its jurisdiction in the Wetlands Protection Act. The Floodplain Overlay District is defined in more detail in Chapter 1, *Land Use*.

State protections for wetlands and vernal pools (310 CMR 10.00) are through the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act Regulations. This Act protects certified vernal pools and up to 100 feet beyond the pool boundary by preventing alterations which would result in impairment of the wildlife habitat function. Several potential vernal pools have been identified in the City that, if certified, would fall under this protective statute.

Westfield's Conservation Commission is charged with administering the recently updated Westfield Wetlands Protection Ordinance #1738, Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act (M.G.L. Chapter. 131 § 40), and its regulations (310 CMR 10.00). The purpose of the Westfield Wetlands Protection Ordinance is to protect and enhance wetlands and wildlife habitat, to maintain natural resources, and to preserve the quality of life for all inhabitants of Westfield by controlling activities that take place in Areas Subject to Protection.

Several areas in the City provide designated habitat for rare species, protected under the Massachusetts Endangered Species Act. The Massachusetts Endangered Species Act and its implementing regulations protect rare species and their habitats by prohibiting the "Take" of any plant or animal species listed as Endangered, Threatened, or Special Concern. "Take" can occur through the modification, degradation, or destruction of Habitat. Permits are required to harm or remove any rare species for the purpose of science, conservation, education, or management, and are granted by the Division of Fisheries & Wildlife.

4.5.2 Existing Policies and Guidelines

The Westfield Conservation Department provides important information, policies, and guidelines for landowners. These include:

- Tree Replacement Policy
- Land Development Guide
- Farming in Wetland Resource Areas
- Native Wetlands Plants Suggestion List
- Massachusetts Prohibited Plant List
- Procedures for Hand Pulling Aquatic Plants

4.6 Goals, Policies, and Actions

4.6.1 Goals

1. Protect and preserve environmentally sensitive areas.
2. Promote ecological diversity and environmental sustainability.
3. Ensure current vulnerable open spaces and natural resources are protected from development and monitor potential conflict between human activity and natural resources avoid potential harm to the environment.
4. Encourage community involvement and stewardship to support the City's natural resources.
5. Restore degraded environmental resources and protect them from further harm.
6. Maintain high quality water to protect the health and welfare of all residents and visitors.

4.6.2 *Policies*

1. Identify and protect natural landscape blocks, open waters, wetlands, rivers, and forests that provide habitat for a variety of waterfowl and wildlife that may be threatened by future human impact.
2. Adopt and implement programs to protect natural resources and conservation areas through acquisition, conservation easements, and other measures.
3. Lead and support restoration of natural resources that may have been subject to damage and degradation.
4. Adopt or improve regulations that direct development to less environmentally sensitive areas, which are areas that provide designated habitat for rare species under the Massachusetts Endangered Species Act.
5. Enhance Westfield's water quality by protecting undeveloped land in proximity to sensitive water resources.
6. Promote environmental outreach and awareness that supports natural resources, especially through partnerships with Westfield State University and the Westfield Public School System.
7. Create designated areas that allow for public access to the waterways and promote the City's natural resources.

4.6.3 *Actions*

1. Acquire conservation land in areas that have critical ecosystem importance.

Lead Party: Conservation Commission

Support Party: Land Trust, Planning Department, Community Preservation Committee

Timeframe: Medium-term

2. Protect undeveloped land in proximity to Barnes Aquifer, a source of drinking water for Westfield.

Lead Party: Planning Board

Support Party: Conservation Commission

Timeframe: Medium-term

3. Develop and implement tree protection requirements to ensure existing trees are minimally impacted by development activities; Codify more concise landscaping standards and tree replacement requirements and penalties.

Lead Party: Planning Department

Support Party: Conservation Commission, DPW Natural Resources/Tree Warden

Timeframe: Medium-term

4. Perform tree inventories and continue with the City's downtown Tree Planting Program.

Lead Party: Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), Greening the Gateway Cities Program

Support Party: Department of Public Works Land and Natural Resources Division

Timeframe: Short-term/Ongoing

5. Manage Hampton Ponds and Brickyard Ponds for invasive species.

Lead Party: Conservation Commission, Department of Conservation and Recreation

Support Party: Civic groups, volunteers, Westfield River Watershed Association

Timeframe: Ongoing

6. Continue to identify and protect all endangered, threatened, and species of special interest.

Lead Party: Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program

Support Party: Conservation Commission

Timeframe: Long-term

7. Work with local environmental organizations and groups that relate to the environment to promote programs or events.

Lead Party: Community Development

Support Party: Conservation Commission, Mayor

Timeframe: Short-term

8. Encourage stewardship and interaction with community members through initiatives like Earth Day clean up.

Lead Party: Conservation Commission

Support Party: Local businesses, Mayor

Timeframe: Short-term

9. Promote community events that present an opportunity to bring people along the riverbanks to promote river awareness.

Lead Party: Community Development

Support Party: Westfield River Watershed Association, Conservation Department

Timeframe: Short-term

10. Conduct a natural resources inventory that identifies environmentally sensitive areas, including important habitats like forests, wetlands, rivers and streams, to ensure these areas are protected for the future.

Lead Party: Conservation Commission

Support Party: Department of Public Works Land and Natural Resources Division

Timeframe: Medium-term

11. Update City of Westfield website and social media pages to include information on where to access public open spaces and highlight exciting events related to outdoor recreation for residents and visitors to stay informed.

Lead Party: Community Development

Support Party: Conservation Commission, Mayor

Timeframe: Medium-term

12. Continue to participate in air quality monitoring efforts and adopt local measures to improve or mitigate air quality, as warranted.

Lead Party: Community Development

Support Party: MassDEP, Health

Timeframe: Ongoing

13. Develop low-impact trails and informational nature signage on conservation lands for passive recreation.

Lead Party: Conservation Commission

Support Party: MassDEP, Health

Timeframe: Medium-term

14. Develop and promote a City tree planting donation fund, to be available to the general public and to developers as an impact mitigation measure.

Lead Party: City Council

Support Party: DPW Natural Resources Division

Timeframe: Short-term

15. Maintain the Arbor Day Foundation's "Tree City USA" designation.

Lead Party: DPW Natural Resources Division

Support Party:

Timeframe: Ongoing

16. Update land use regulations to strengthen open space, tree planting/preservation and impervious coverage requirements.

Lead Party: Planning Board

Support Party: Conservation Commission

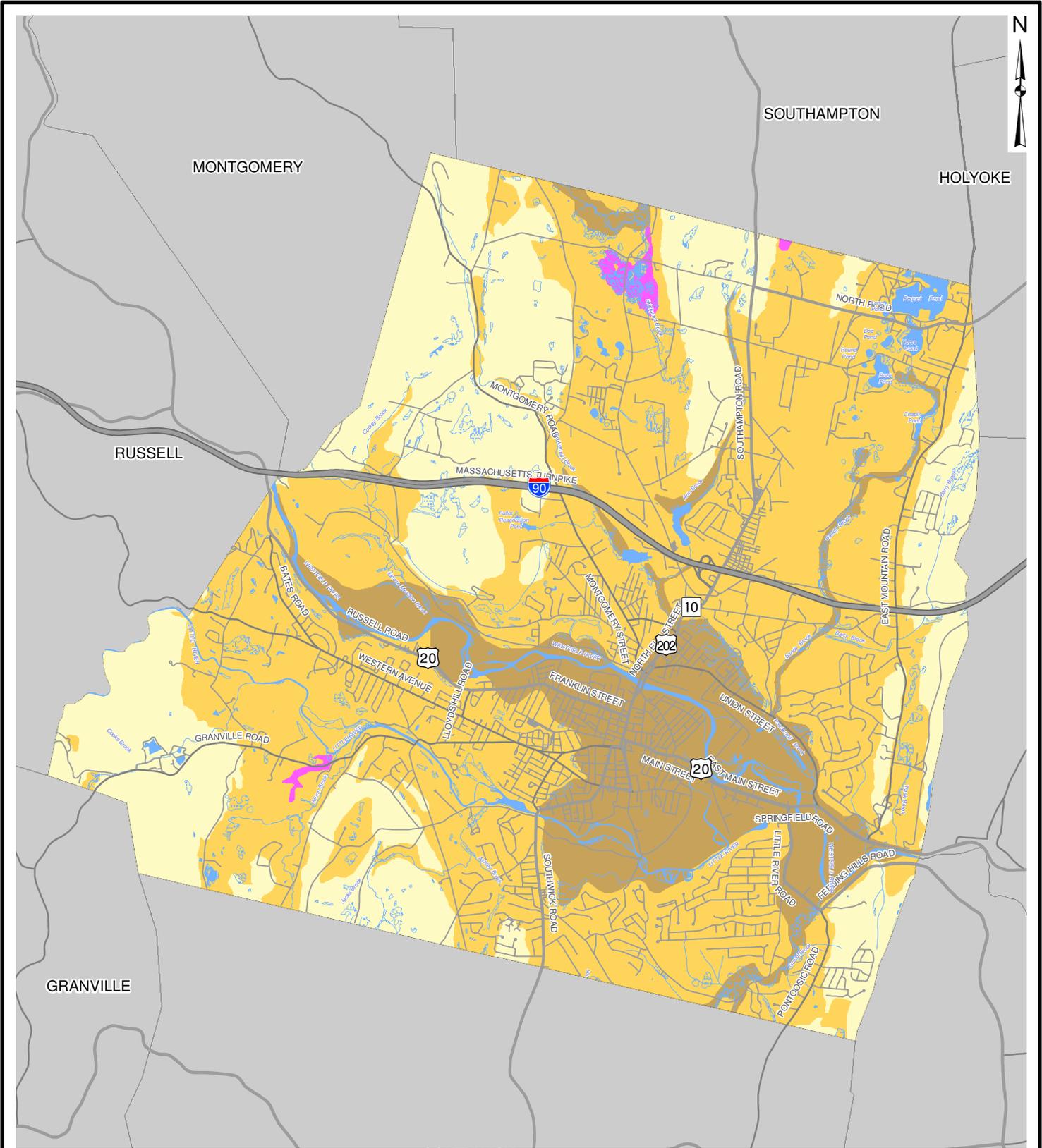
Timeframe: Ongoing

17. Work with farmers to encourage soil conservation and enrichment through cover crops and tillage methods, as well as promoting participation in the state's APR program.

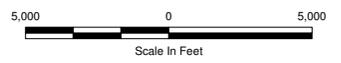
Lead Party: (future) Agricultural Commission

Support Party: Conservation, MDAR

Timeframe: Ongoing

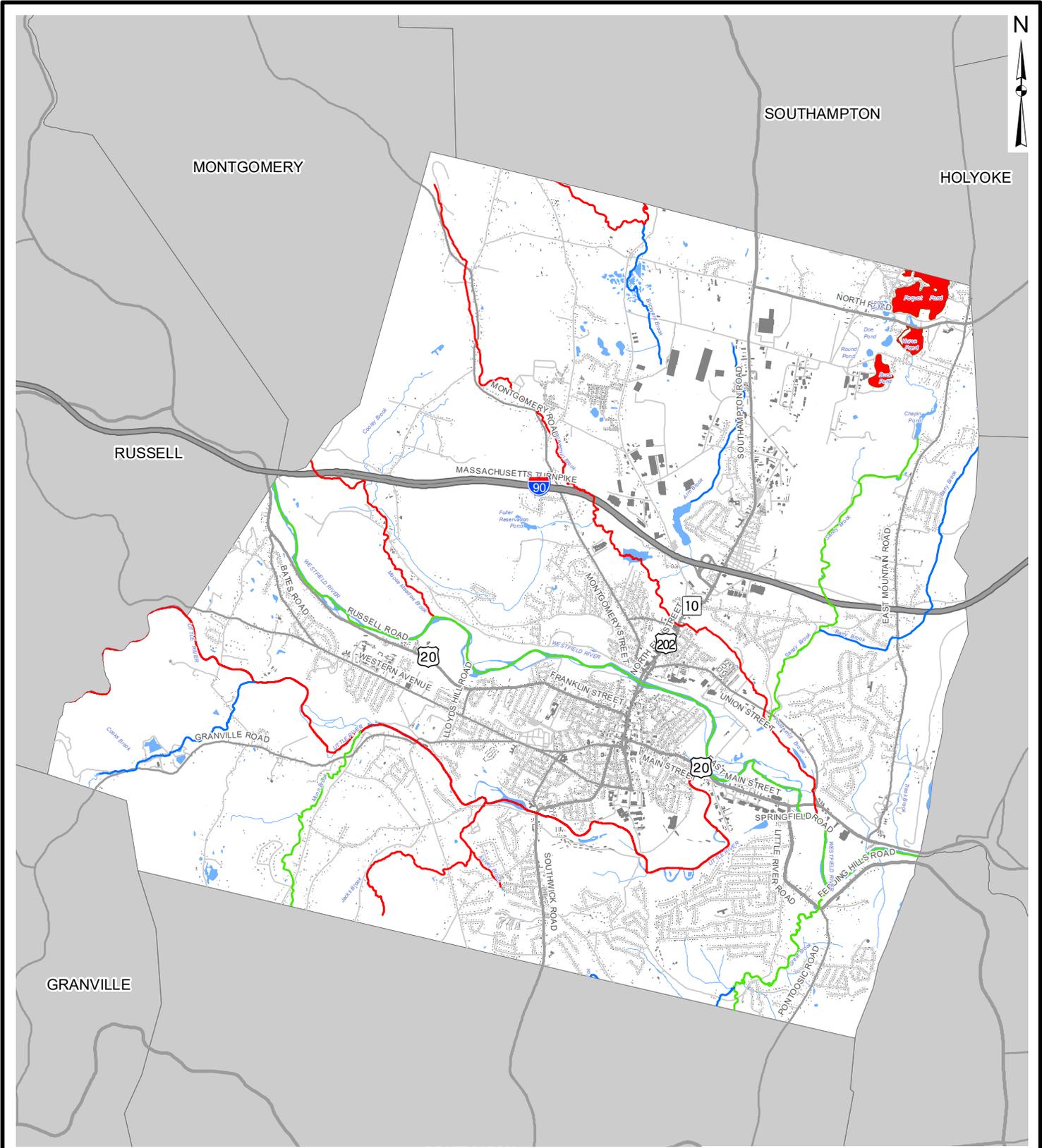


DATASOURCE: MassGIS, 2022



- Surficial Geology (1:250,000)**
- Sand and Gravel
 - Till or Bedrock
 - Sandy Till over Sand
 - End Moraine
 - Large Sand Deposit
 - Fine-Grained Deposit
 - Floodplain Alluvium

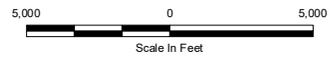
MAP 4-1	
WESTFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS WESTFIELD MASTER PLAN UPDATE	
SURFICIAL GEOLOGY	
May 2023	SCALE: NOTED



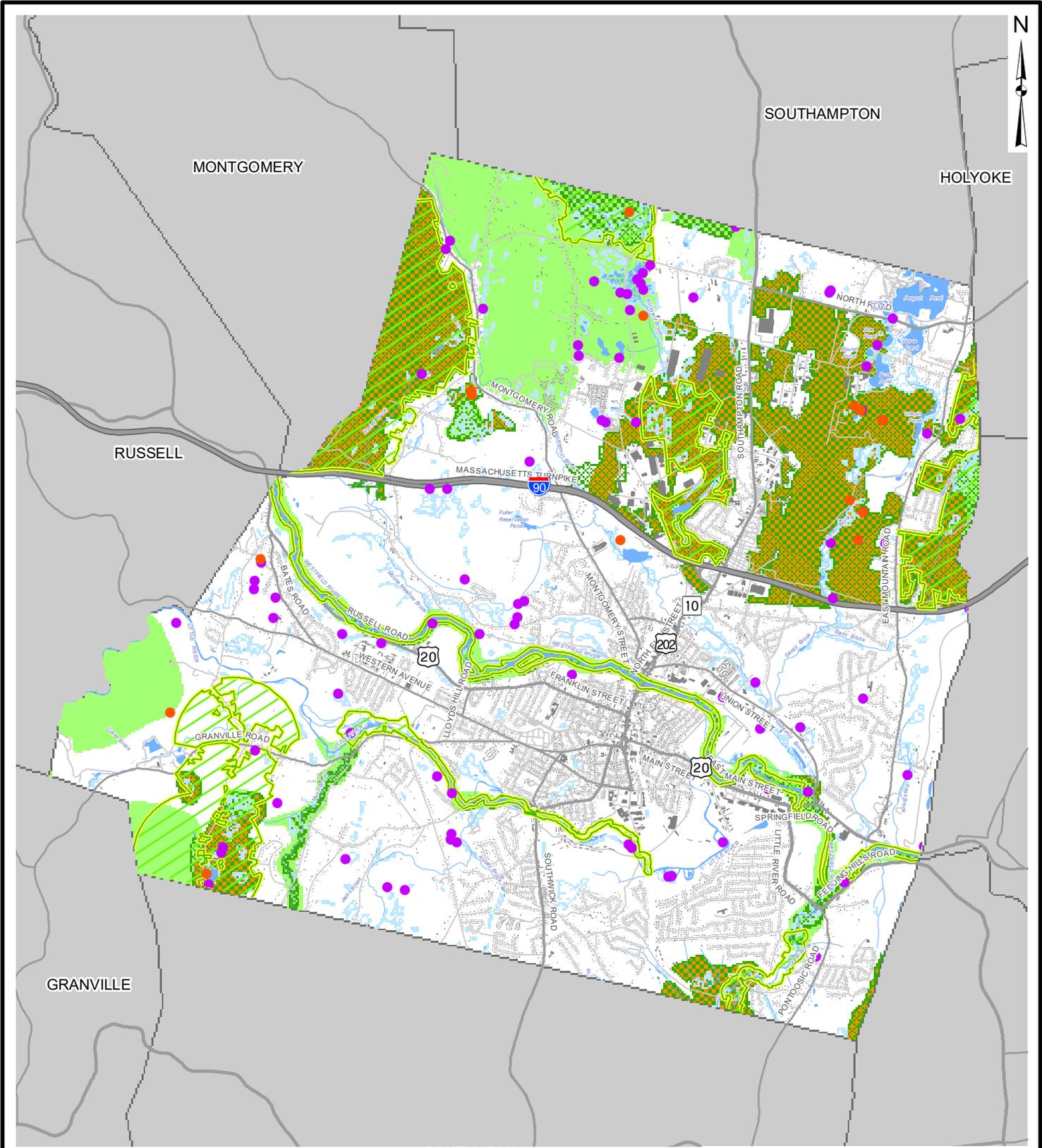
2018/2020 Integrated List Data - 305(b)/314/303(d)

- 2 - Attaining some uses; other uses not assessed
- 3 - No uses assessed
- 5 - Impaired - TMDL required
- 5 - Impaired - TMDL required

DATASOURCE: MassGIS, 2022

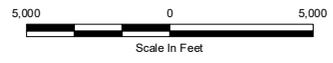


MAP 4-2	
WESTFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS WESTFIELD MASTER PLAN UPDATE	
IMPAIRED WATERBODIES	
May 2023	SCALE: NOTED

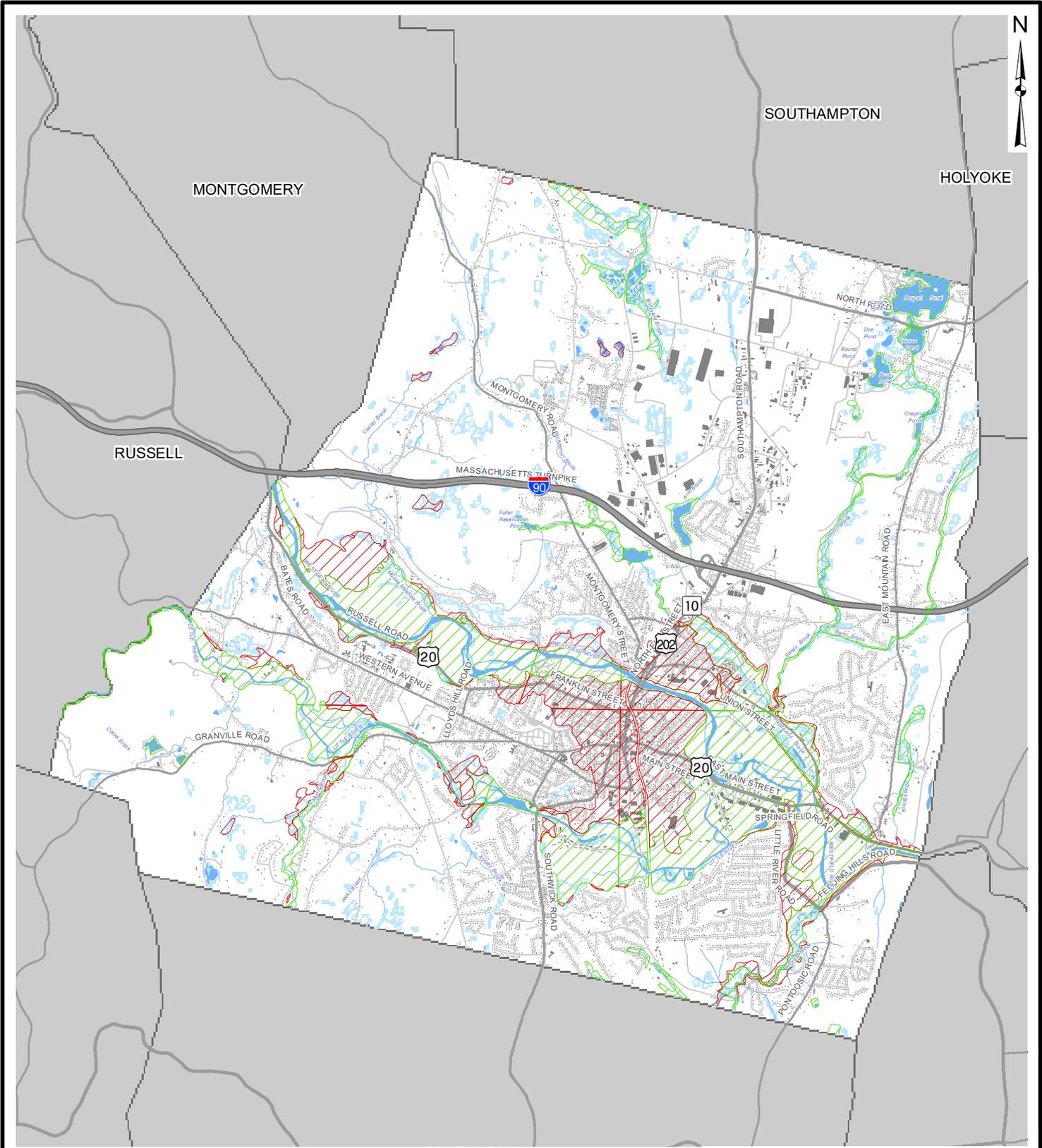


- Certified Vernal Pool
- Potential Vernal Pool
- NHESP Estimated Habitats of Rare Wildlife
- BioMap2 Core Habitat
- BioMap2 Critical Natural Landscape
- BioMap2 CH Species of Conservation Concern
- MADEP Wetlands

DATASOURCE: MassGIS, 2022



MAP 4-3	
WESTFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS WESTFIELD MASTER PLAN UPDATE	
WILDLIFE HABITAT	
May 2023	SCALE: NOTED

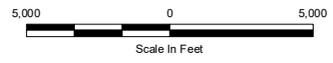


-  Open Water
-  Streams
-  Wetlands

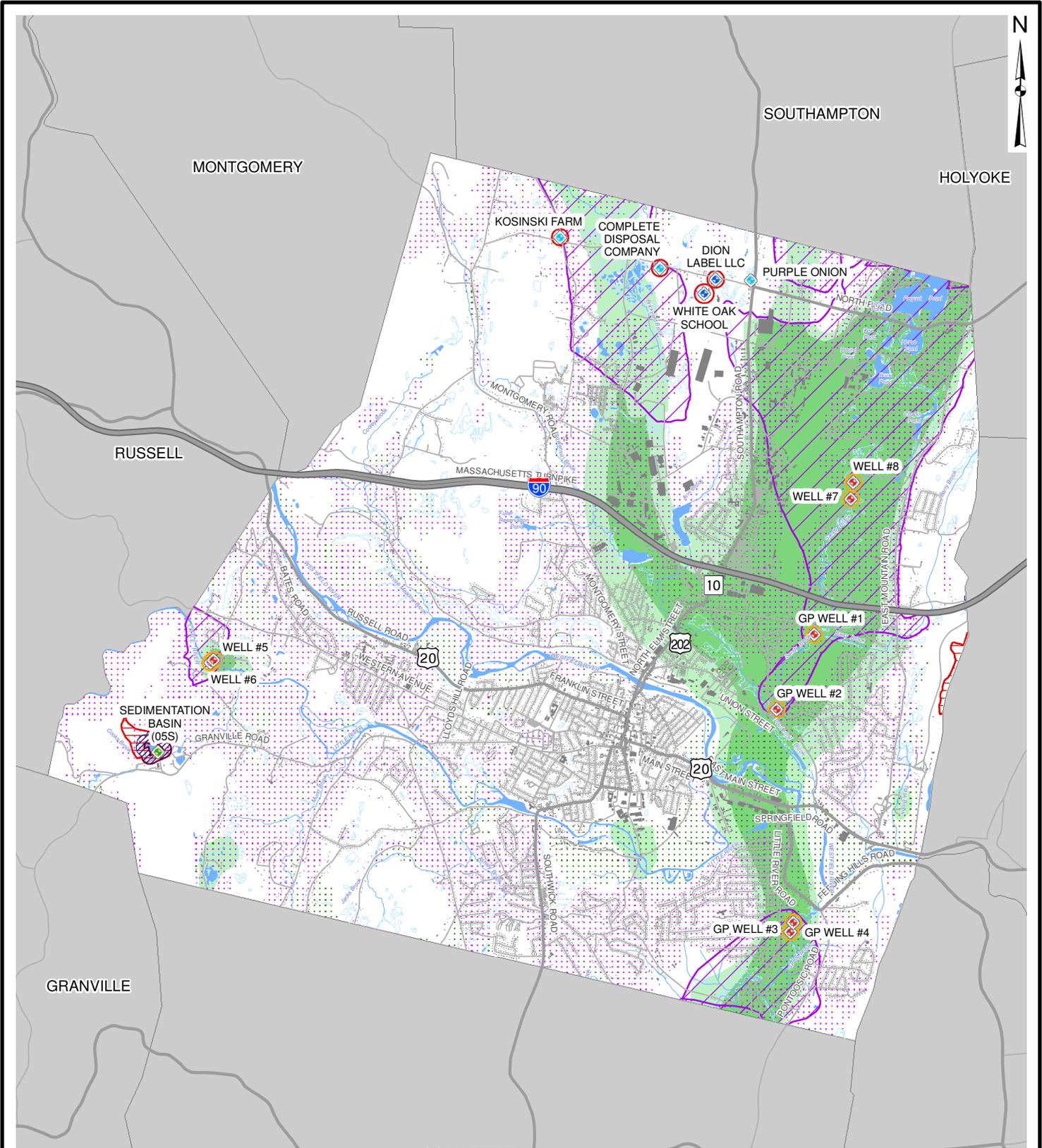
FEMA Q3 100 & 500 Year Flood Zones

-  100 Year Flood Zone
-  500 Year Flood Zone

DATASOURCE: MassGIS, 2022



MAP 4-4	
WESTFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS WESTFIELD MASTER PLAN UPDATE	
FEMA FLOOD MAP	
May 2023	SCALE: NOTED
	



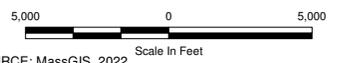
-  Surface Water Protection Areas - ZONE A
-  Surface Water Protection Areas - ZONE B
-  MADEP Interm Wellhead Protection Areas
-  MADEP Zone 1 Protection Areas
-  MADEP Zone 2 Protection Areas

Hydrologic Soil Group

-  A
-  B

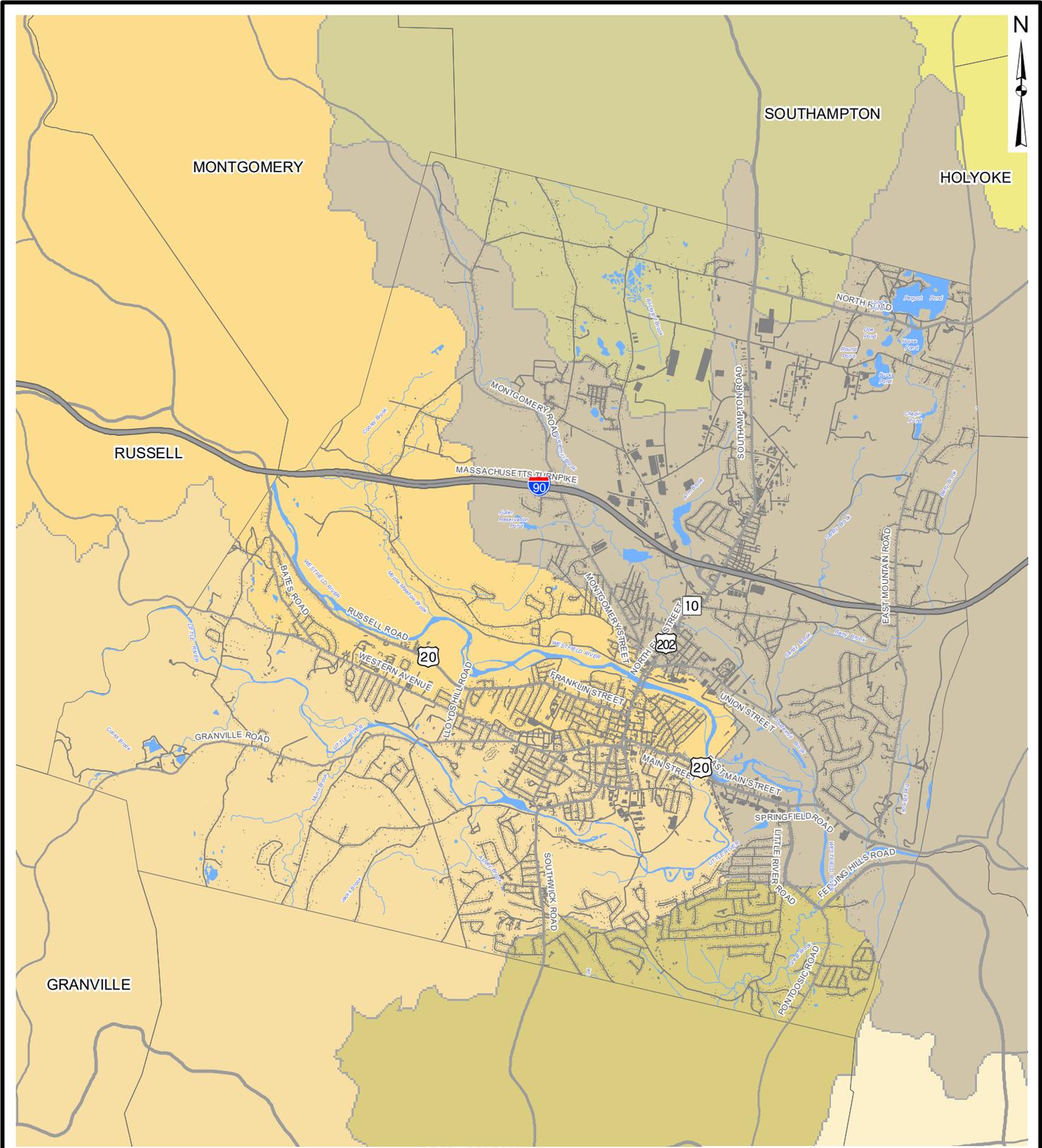
Aquifers

-  High Yield
-  Medium Yield

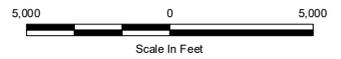


DATASOURCE: MassGIS, 2022

MAP 4-5	
WESTFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS WESTFIELD MASTER PLAN UPDATE	
GROUNDWATER SUPPLY PROTECTION	
May 2023	SCALE: NOTED
	



DATASOURCE: MassGIS, 2022



Watershed Sub-basins (HUC-12)

- | | | | |
|--|--|---|---|
|  | Connecticut mainstem-Batchelor Brook to Mill River |  | Manhan River-headwaters to North Brook |
|  | Great Brook |  | Muddy Brook |
|  | Little River |  | Stony Brook |
|  | Manhan River-North Brook to mouth |  | Westfield River-Little River to mouth |
| | |  | Westfield River-West Branch to Little River |

MAP 4-6	
WESTFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS WESTFIELD MASTER PLAN UPDATE	
WATERSHEDS	
May 2023	SCALE: NOTED
	

CHAPTER 5. ART, HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES



5.0 ART, HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

5.1 Vision

We envision that Westfield's rich art, historic, and cultural assets will be preserved and promoted as a strength and as an increasingly important part of our City's identity and sense of place.

5.2 Introduction

This chapter identifies historical and cultural resources which are locally significant to the City of Westfield and, in some cases, the surrounding region. For historic resources, the methodology of identification was to use resources previously identified by traditional standards, such as documentation in the Massachusetts Historical Commission's (MHC) Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System (MACRIS), as well as those that are locally important to the City's history and culture but not formally identified. Cultural resources in Westfield include visual, literary, and performing arts as well as festivals and sites which provide cultural experiences. The purpose of this chapter is to highlight the City's historic and cultural assets, discuss why they are important, examine potential ways they can be supported and strengthened to benefit the City and residents, and consider ways to plan for resiliency to provide long-term protection.

The land which now makes up the City was initially an important Native American center. Today's Westfield land was originally used by the Algonquin Woronoakes, who later joined with the Agawam, Norwottucks, Squawkeags, and Pocumtucks as part of the Pocumtuck Confederacy.

Westfield was settled in the 1630s-1640s as the Woronoco fur trading station by European Colonists from Connecticut. The name was chosen as it was then the westernmost settlement of the colony. Westfield became part of Massachusetts in 1647, was incorporated as a town in 1669, and as a city in 1920. Development of the Hampshire and Hampden Canal through Westfield, followed by the railroad, supported rapid community growth from the nineteenth century through the early twentieth century.

More than 350 years since incorporation, the City remains vibrant, and is committed to work towards resiliency, while honoring its heritage through the advocacy, protection, and promotion of its unique historic and cultural resources.

5.3 Existing Conditions

5.3.1 *Historical Resources*

The United States Department of the Interior (DOI) is responsible for the protection and management of the country's natural resources and cultural heritage. As a bureau of the DOI, the National Park Service (NPS) "cares for special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage." The NPS defines the nation's historic and cultural resources as the physical and spiritual reminders of the decisive times, people, and places in American history and culture.

The City's resources are listed in MACRIS by the identifier "WSF" followed by an inventory number. There are currently 894 "WSF" inventory points in the MHC's MACRIS database and visible on MACRIS Maps. This can be compared with Southampton (365), Agawam (524), Russell (181), Southwick (203), Granville (174), West Springfield (484), and Holyoke (1,338). The City of Westfield has completed a number of inventories, but, depending on when the forms were completed, they

may not be up to current MHC standards of documentation which now require detailed information about a resource's existing conditions and history as well as a fully developed explanation of context. There are also likely City resources which have never been documented. Most of the current formal documentation is within the City center with sporadic documentation in other parts of the City. Outside of the center, other areas which have been documented include Mundale (WSF.E), Little River (WSF.F), Wyben-West Farms (WSF.G), Westfield State Sanatorium (WSF.I), Adams Nursery (WSF.J), and a cluster of inventory points related to Barnes Air National Guard Base.

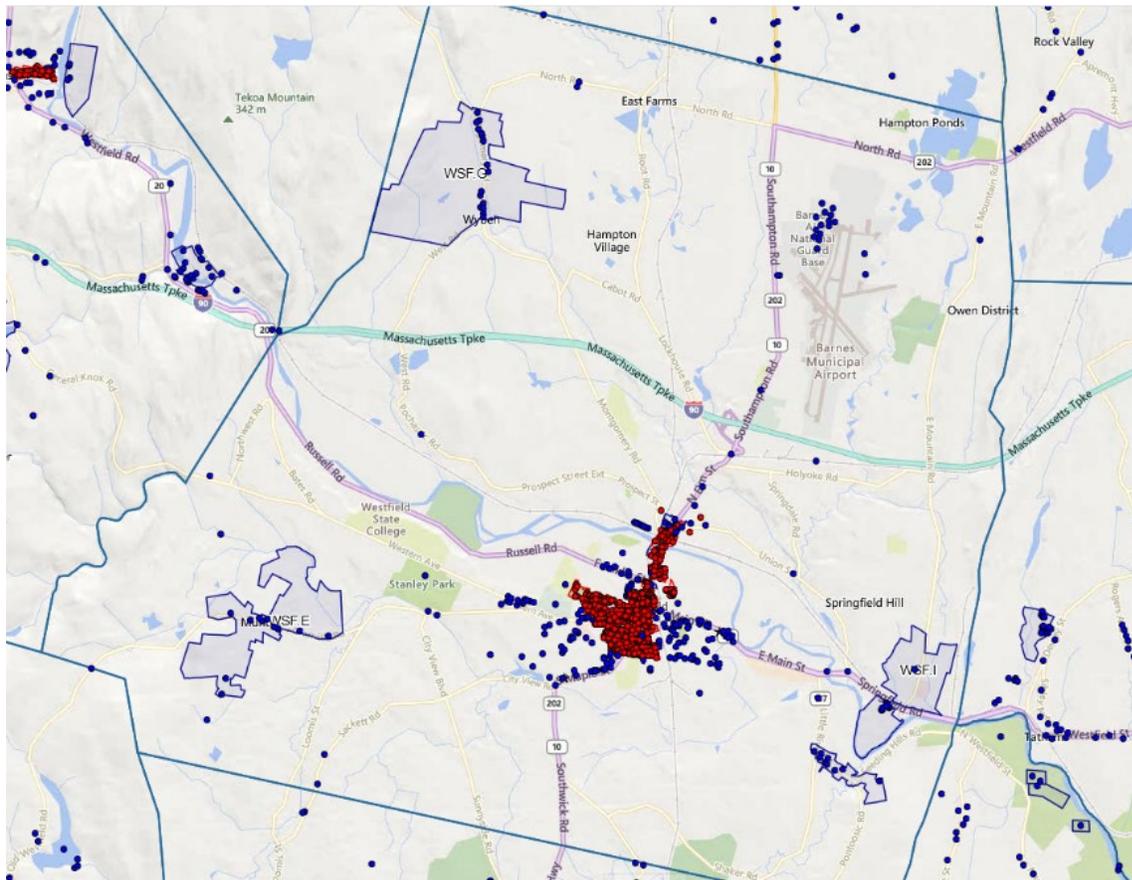


Figure 5-1. MHC MACRIS Map of Westfield showing blue inventory points and areas and red National Register points and districts

Source: MHC MACRIS, 2023

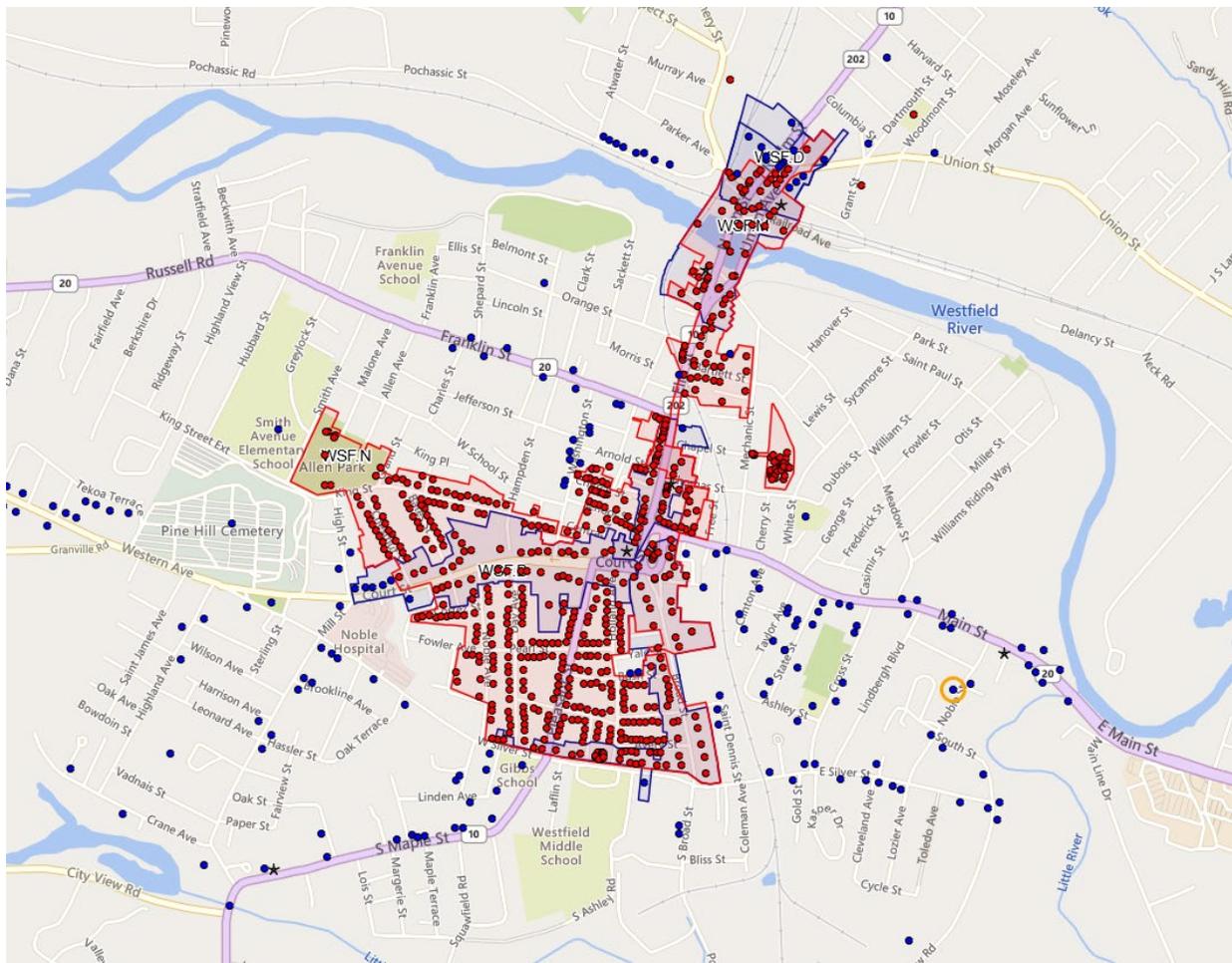


Figure 5-2. Zoom perspective of red National Register points and districts near the City Center

Source: National Register of Historic Places, 2023

The NPS National Register of Historic Places (NR) is the official list of the nation's historic places worthy of preservation. Authorized by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the NR is part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect America's historic and archeological resources. Listing is an honorary designation and does not place restrictions on property owners when using private funds to do work related to a listed property. NR listed properties are automatically included in the Massachusetts State Register of Historic Places (SR). In addition to recognizing the historic and cultural significance of a property or district, NR and SR listing provides limited protection from adverse impacts by federal or state involved projects. Listing also provides opportunities for benefiting from preservation and rehabilitation incentives like historic rehabilitation tax credits, and grant programs which are only available to NR properties.

In Westfield, all NR listings are within or near the City center. The listing with the greatest number of inventoried resources is the Westfield Center National Register Historic District (WSF.N), designated in 2013. The Mechanic Street Cemetery (WSF.K), also documented as the Old Burying Ground (1683, WSF.802) was designated to the NR in 2002.

The City’s individual NR listings include the Prospect Hill School (1897, WSF.399), the Moseley School (1915, WSF.358), and the apartments at 6 Grand Street (1870, WSF.620).

Burial grounds are also considered to have historical and archaeological significance. The Pine Hill Cemetery (1842, WSF.801), Owen District Cemetery (1808, WSF.803), Mundale Parish Cemetery (835, WSF.804), and Middle Farms Cemetery (1790, WSF.805) have all been documented but are not listed on the NR.

Documented archaeological sites are not shown on MACRIS and information is only available through a permitting process. There is a likelihood of remaining archaeological resources in Westfield due to the known presence of Native Americans, development beginning in the seventeenth century, canal and railroad related structural remains, and areas of undeveloped land.

5.3.2 Historic Districts

Westfield has several historic resources which remain in use and relevant today. Many are at least locally significant and range in construction date and period of use from the 1700s through the late twentieth century. The NPS considers a general fifty-year cut-off or older to initially determine the potential for historic significance of a historic resource. Other factors such as context, social history, and integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association are also important in determining the level of a resource’s significance. The City has multiple NR Listings and Districts but does not currently have any Local Historic Districts (LHDs) under the City ordinance.

5.3.3 Cultural Resources

There are varying definitions related to the question of what makes up a community’s “cultural resources.” The Mass Cultural Council (MCC) is a state agency that strives to “promote excellence, inclusion, education, and diversity in the arts, humanities, and sciences, fosters a rich cultural life for all Massachusetts residents and contributes to the vitality of our communities and economy. As promoted on the MCC website, “Culture elevates. In all its forms, culture is essential to the health and vitality of the Commonwealth...Culture lifts the human spirit and makes Massachusetts a better place to live, work, and prosper.”

Using this perspective there are an abundance of cultural sites and programmatic offerings in Westfield, including many which relate to and utilize historic buildings, sites, and landscapes and highlight the City’s heritage and culture.

Cultural sites include a children’s museum, one of two in the region, an athenaeum, which is a major asset for residents and attracts visitors to attend programming, a historical museum managed by a regional historical society, and a creative arts center.

Table 5-1. Cultural Resources	
Resource	Information on the Resource
Amelia Park Children’s Museum	APCM provides an enriching environment where children and their families can learn about themselves, their communities, and the world around them. Integrated throughout the museum is a broad range of creative exhibits and imaginative hands-on activities, which foster a climate of learning and exploration. Central to the museum’s philosophy

Table 5-1. Cultural Resources	
Resource	Information on the Resource
	is that children can learn through the arts, history, science, and the region's rich environmental and cultural diversity.
Westfield Athenaeum	The Westfield Athenaeum's mission "to enrich the diverse community of Westfield by providing open access to educational, cultural, recreational and informational resources and programs" grew out of certain Westfield citizens' efforts to create a library for their community.
Edwin Smith Historical Museum	This museum opened in 1927 provides visitors with a "visual and tactile journey through Westfield History" with a range of artifacts dating back to the City's Colonial settlement in the 1600s.
Creative Arts Center on Elm Street	Connected to Weekends in Westfield (WOW), the Creative Arts Center offers classes and workshops on painting, stained glass, yoga, meditation, and more. The Center also supports WOW events like the Community Talkabouts for community members to "connect, collaborate, and create" like the recent "City-University Collaboration" event.
Westfield State University	The local university offers concerts, lectures, galleries, theater performances, and a variety of other activities with many open to the general public.

The City's Cultural Organizations organize and sponsor programming, education, outreach, and advocacy to provide residents and guests with ways to experience Westfield's local history and culture.

Table 5-2. Cultural Organizations	
Resource	Information about the Resource
Artworks of Westfield, Inc.	This is a local arts & cultural non-profit with a mission to create and promote the widest variety of cultural, literary, and performing arts and musical events for the community and to collaborate with businesses and invested groups to develop and maintain venues for presentations and performances.
Greater Westfield Choral Association	This group formed in 1977 as a community chorus. Annual concerts present major sacred works of the Classical and Romantic periods.
Westfield Community Access Television	WCPC 15 provides live and archived broadcasts and the Westfield Community Calendar/Bulletin Board for individuals and non-profit organizations to publicize meetings and events of local interest. There is also a calendar format of the Community Calendar on the City website.
Western Hampden Historical Society	The WHHS began in 1901 and continues to preserve history through maintaining the Dewey House and providing educational historical talks at meetings in October, December, and May. The Dewey House, built in 1735, is a walk back into Colonial Westfield.

Table 5-2. Cultural Organizations	
Resource	Information about the Resource
	Two open houses are held each year, as well as student tours.
Westfield Historical Commission	The WHC has worked to install plaques and signs for local historic resources, established a preservation awards program, worked on outreach in the community and within the public school system, created cemetery and monument walking tours, partnered with the Westfield Athenaeum on cataloging and storing donated historic resources, and has recently been involved in a regional project to document the nineteenth century Hampshire and Hampden Canal.
Westfield Theater Group	A department within the Westfield Women's Club that has provided high quality live theater to Westfield residents and visitors for over eight decades. It is open to the public with two main performances each year.
Westfield on Weekends (WOW)	Westfield on Weekends is a volunteer, non-profit organization devoted to enriching the creative vitality of our community through accessible artistic and cultural events, programs and entertainment. WOW supports events such as the Westfield Concert Series, PumpkinFest and DecemberFest along with programming and classes at the Creative Arts Center on Elm Street.
Westfield Women's Club	An organization for women of all ages and backgrounds that is over 100 years old. A variety of subgroups, including the Garden Club, Book Club, and Theater Group, allow women to explore similar interests with each other in the community.

There are a variety of local events specific to the City of Westfield. These events instill local pride, encourage community engagement, and provide the potential to attract visitors from the region.

Table 5-3. Cultural Events	
Resources	Information about the Resource
Westfield Fair	Established in 1927, this event is run on a 20-acre property by the Westfield Fair Association. It features agricultural and livestock exhibits, a midway, motorized competitions, live entertainment, food, kids' activities, and more. The grounds can be rented and are also used by Whip City BMX.
Westfield Artworks Downtown Live Concerts	Westfield Artworks sponsors free, live downtown concerts on Fridays from June through September.
Westfield PumpkinFest	This October event, sponsored by WOW, is held behind the Boys & Girls Club. It includes pumpkin carving and decorating; Trunk or Treating; a DJ, live performances and a 2 p.m. concert; a Big Rig Rally; local vendors; food trucks; and more.

Table 5-3. Cultural Events	
Resources	Information about the Resource
Westfield DecemberFest	Another WOW event, DecemberFest coordinates with the kick-off of Small Business Saturday. Past activities have included the Mayor's tree lighting with cocoa and carols, a Pop-Up Holiday Marketplace, the Tree Jubilee fundraiser, a free concert by the Westfield State Music Department, a Holiday Lights Tour, and activities at the Creative Arts Center.
City of Westfield Veteran Events	The City of Westfield held the following Veteran Events in 2022: Vietnam Veterans' Recognition Day; Patriots Day Ceremony and a historical walking tour of Parker Park; 104 th Infantry Regiment Memorial; Memorial Day Services and Ceremony; Independence Day Parade; POW/MIA Candlelight Recognition; Veterans Day Service, Parade, and Ceremony; Pearl Harbor Ceremony
Stanley Park of Westfield, Inc. Summer Programming	The most recent round of the summer performances in the park included eight Westfield Bank sponsored Sunday Night Concerts, six Friday morning programs for Children, and garden and nature workshops.
Westfield Theatre Group Performances	The Westfield Theatre Group has been operating for more than 85 years and is a part of the Westfield Woman's Club. The Group's purpose is to provide quality live theater to the community and to encourage community participation in productions.
Westfield Historical Commission Tours	The Westfield Historical Commission has developed virtual tours of the Historic Monuments of Westfield; the Dewey House; the Edwin Smith Historical Museum; the Wyben One Room Schoolhouse; the Nobel & Cooley Drum Factory in Granville; the Westfield City Hall; and on Westfield Immigrants & their Churches.
Westfield Farmers Market	Offers free musical performances every Thursday during the summer on the grounds of the Church of the Atonement.

5.3.4 Recreation Resources

The City has outdoors sites, attractions, organizations, and events which benefit residents and regional visitors. Many of these landscapes and public spaces are historically significant cultural resources which relate to the City's social history, community planning, and land use.

The City has state, local, and pocket parks, including some which were established more than 100 years ago. Multi-modal trail systems along historic transportation routes are another draw to Westfield. Work is underway to allow these trails to further regional connections.

Table 5-4. Recreational Resources	
Resource	Information on the Resource
Tekoa Park	This site was designated as Homer Park in 1904 and renamed Tekoa Park in 1919. Trees were cut back in the 1920s. By 1931, the Works Progress

Table 5-4. Recreational Resources	
Resource	Information on the Resource
	Administration had created a picnic area, constructed a pavilion, and planted mountain laurel in the area overlooking the pond. The park was rededicated in 1932. IN 1969, through funding for "Project Epic," a complete historical, biological, and geological study was completed for the site. This site is currently underutilized.
Parker Memorial Park (Elizabeth Parker Park)	This was formerly the site of the Parker family home, donated in 1939 by Frederick L. Parker in honor of his mother, Elizabeth. She was a descendant of the Chapin family of Springfield and her husband was President of the Westfield-based American Whip Company. In 1988, war memorials were added to this park representing engagements in the Revolutionary War, Civil War, World War I, World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War.
Lawrence Holcomb Park	This land was donated to the city in 1925 by the Pine Hill Association for use as a public park. It was renamed in 1964 in honor of Holcomb who worked for the City Parks Department from 1933-1963.
Robinson State Park	This park includes (1930s) historic Civilian Conservation Corps-constructed Buildings and a portion of the Metacomet-Monadnock Trail. There is a fee to enter, and activities include biking, canoeing, and kayaking, cross-country skiing, educational programs, fishing, hiking, horseback riding, and swimming. In addition to hiking trails, there is a paved road along the Westfield River. Most of the park is in Agawam but there is some land within Westfield borders.
Stanley Park	This park was created in 1949 and has nearly 300+ acres of trails, woods, picnic areas, recreational facilities, and gardens, which include the Rose & Flower Garden, Asian Garden, a Rhododendron Display Garden, The Arboretum, Herb Garden, and Woodland Wildflower Garden. This site includes the Frank Stanley Beveridge Wildlife Sanctuary, the Carillon Tower, and a Duck Pond with a Colonial-era Village that with an orchard, mill and waterwheel, an old town meeting house, covered bridge, carriage shed, blacksmith shop, and arched bridges with a backdrop of flowering azaleas and rhododendron. It is run by the private, non-profit Stanley Park organization.
Hampton Ponds State Park	This park is on the former site of the Pequot Club, founded in 1886. The area had a dance pavilion, roller-skating rink, bowling alley, and a stage for performances. The site is currently managed by the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR).
Chauncey Allen Park and Grandmother's Garden	Chauncey Allen Park is a municipally owned park of approximately eleven acres to include

Table 5-4. Recreational Resources	
Resource	Information on the Resource
	Grandmother’s Garden, a formal flower garden designed by Thomas Desmond, L.A. of Simsbury, Connecticut. The half-acre garden was wholly constructed by volunteer efforts under the direction of Elizabeth Bush Fowler in 1933. It is this community and civic involvement that holds the fundamental key to the character of the garden and park.
Columbia Greenway Rail Trail	This multi-modal trail is part of an ongoing project along the path of the former railroad as well as the Hampshire and Hampden Canal to link to trails in bordering communities. The related community organization is the Friends of the Columbia Greenway Rail Trail.
General Knox Trail	The 300-mile-long Henry Knox Cannon Trail was one of the earliest heritage trails in the country and is located along the Revolutionary War transportation route in New York and Massachusetts. There is a Knox Trail Marker which was erected in 1927, at the intersection of Main Street (U.S. 20) and U.S. 202.
Westfield River Esplanade and Levee Trail	The Westfield River Esplanade is located along the Westfield River Levee between Sackett Street and Elm Street. The two-mile multi-use Levee Trail provides an east-west off road connector for neighborhoods and other recreation sites and will eventually connect to the Columbia Greenway Trail. The Esplanade will have “multi-use potential to residents and visitors.”

5.4 Challenges and Opportunities

5.4.1 Challenges

Historic buildings in downtown Westfield appear to have received minimal recognition even though they are integral to the character of the City. Many structures do not have placards or wayfinding signs that outline the history. Therefore, preservation becomes especially difficult. It is also difficult to identify which historical structures should be prioritized for protection.

The City could also improve on incorporating the cultural history of the area into local events and new development. Encouraging residents and visitors to public sites of historic significance is an ongoing issue as many people no longer take the time to explore Westfield’s rich history in the same way residents once did. Unique Westfield traditions may be lost if there is not a larger push toward protecting historic landmarks and educating young residents on the City’s history.

5.4.2 Opportunities

The City has sites, organizations, and events which support active and passive recreation and relate to Westfield’s historic and cultural history. These offerings are resources for residents but also can be marketed to attract visitors from the region and beyond to experience heritage tourism while boosting the City’s economy.

The City has an active Historical Commission (since 1963) and sixteen-member Cultural Council in addition to local organizations dedicated to advocating for resources which are historically and culturally significant and relate to the history of the community.

Public referendum adopted the Community Preservation Act (CPA) in 2003 and the City now has a Westfield Community Preservation Committee and a Community Preservation Plan. Revenues generated from the CPA surcharge on property tax bills (which enables supplemental state funding not available to non-CPA communities) can be used to acquire and preserve land for open space and recreation, preserve and restore historical resources or support community housing. Funding requests are accepted on a rolling basis through the City's Planning Department, which provides staff assistance to the CPA.

Placemaking principles can be seen in City and cultural group initiatives to include engaging with the community in planning, utilizing partnerships to achieve programmatic goals, and having a vision such as working through multiple phases of the Columbia Greenway Rail Trail.

5.5 Current Measures and Practices

5.5.1 Existing Regulations

The WHC and preservation work in Massachusetts follows guidance set forth in **Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 40, Section 8D**:

A city or town which accepts this section may establish a historical commission, hereinafter called the commission, for the preservation, protection and development of the historical or archeological assets of such city or town. Such commission shall conduct research for places of historic or archeological value, shall cooperate with the state archeologist in conducting such researches or other surveys, and shall seek to coordinate the activities of unofficial bodies organized for similar purposes, and may advertise, prepare, print, and distribute books, maps, charts, plans and pamphlets which it deems necessary for its work. To protect and preserve such places, it may make such recommendations as it deems necessary to the city council or the selectmen and, subject to the approval of the city council or the selectmen, to the Massachusetts historical commission, that any such place be certified as an historical or archeological landmark.

The WHC is made up of residents of Westfield who have been appointed by the Mayor and approved by the City Council to direct the city's commitment to the preservation of the historical assets of the community.

Commission responsibilities include:

- To preserve, protect and develop historical and archaeological assets.
- To report the existence of archaeological, paleontological, and historical sites and objects.
- To conduct research for places of historic and archaeological value.
- To cooperate with the state archaeologist in such research or surveys.
- To seek to coordinate the activities of unofficial bodies organized for similar purposes.
- To make recommendations to the city council related to the above.
- To report to the state archaeologist the existence of any archaeological, paleontological, or historic site or object discovered.

The WHC has identified specific properties as meeting the criteria for listing in a local register, known as the *Westfield Historical Commission list of Properties of Historical Significance*, which places them under Ordinance 1352 (Demolition Delay). This Ordinance allows the Commission a time frame to work with owners of listed buildings who wish to demolish or alter in such a way that would nullify its historical significance. Under Ordinance 1352, the Commission may hold up the issuance of a demolition permit of a listed building for 180 days to allow time to present a case for historic preservation. Listed properties are required to apply for a Certificate of Historical Review, at which time the owners and the Commission meet to discuss alternatives to demolition.

The WHC has initiated outreach and advocacy through online information and virtual and in person tours of locally significant historic resources. The City's website highlights local "Historic Homes" to include the Steiger-Watson-Loomis "Octagon House" and Joseph Dewey House. Other highlighted resources include the Westfield Normal School, Westfield Normal Training School, Prospect Hill School, the Landlord Fowler Tavern, the Old Bury Ground on Mechanic Street, and buildings related to the whip industry.

Local and Regional Cultural Councils are addressed in **M.G.L. Chapter 10, Section 58**:

Any city or town may establish a local cultural council and any consortium of cities and towns, with the approval of the council, may establish a regional cultural council. Local cultural councils shall consist of at least five and not more than twenty-two members to be appointed by the mayor of a city, the city manager in a city having a Plan D or E form of government, the board of selectmen of a town or the executive officer in a town having a town council form of government.

The *Mass Cultural Council Strategic Plan (FY18-FY23)* and Mass Cultural Council "Our Vision for Communities" are both good sources for better understanding broad-perspective state goals and initiatives to adapt them for a local focus in Westfield.

The Westfield Cultural Council (WCC) receives funds from the state and distributes them to support local cultural programming. The WCC can have a maximum of ten members appointed for three-year overlapping terms. (MGL Chapter 10, Section 58). Each member may serve no more than two terms. "Members shall have demonstrated scholarship or creativity in, or distinguished service to, the arts, humanities, or interpretive sciences." Their responsibilities are to review and approve applications for local grants utilizing funds from the Massachusetts Cultural Council. Mass Cultural has developed Local Cultural Council Program Guidelines (Revised August 2021).

5.5.2 Existing Policy

The WHC has worked to install plaques and signs for historic resources, established a preservation awards program, worked on outreach in the community and within the public school system, created a cemetery and monument walking tours, and partnered with the Westfield Athenaeum on cataloging and storing donated historic resources.

The WCC funds "may only be used to support programs in the arts, humanities, and interpretive sciences in Massachusetts. This definition includes the study, pursuit, performance, exhibition, and

appreciation of cultural activities in the broadest sense.” The WCC’s funds should be used to support activities that “contribute to the cultural vitality of the community as a whole” with priority given to “quality community wide programs” with collaboration encouraged.

5.6 Goals, Policies, and Actions

5.6.1 Goals

1. Protect, preserve, and promote Westfield’s unique built, archaeological, historic resources, cultural resources, and landscapes.
2. Encourage a broader understanding of the City’s history while promoting an authentic and inclusive environment.
3. Support and strengthen cultural programming throughout Westfield to instill local pride, encourage community engagement, and attract visitors and residents to invest in the economy.
4. Ensure the longevity and resiliency of the City’s irreplaceable historic and cultural resources.
5. Promote sustainable development compatible with landscapes and resources that relate to the historic and cultural identity of Westfield.

5.6.2 Policies

1. Plan for City policies, programs, and ordinances that support best practices in collaboration with the Historic Commission, Community Preservation Committee, and the Cultural Council.
2. Identify, publicize and protect locally significant historic archaeological and built resources, streetscapes, cultural sites, landmarks, statues, landscapes, and important pathways/walkways to integrate a wayfinding system and increase knowledge of these sites.
3. Foster partnerships to establish new, and improve existing, cultural programming to enhance Westfield’s community character.
4. Follow best practices to plan for the resiliency of Westfield’s irreplaceable historic and cultural resources.

5.6.3 Actions

1. Establish and implement a Westfield Historic Preservation Plan.

Lead Party: Historical Commission

Support Party: Community Preservation Committee (Matching Grant Funding Source)

Timeframe: Medium-Term

2. Update and expand community-wide inventory data to meet current standards of the Massachusetts Historical Commission, and include archaeological sites, landscapes, and built 20th century resources.

Lead Party: Historical Commission

Support Party: Community Development, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission

Timeframe: Long-Term

3. Explore options for exterior architectural protections in the Westfield Center National Register Historic District (ex. local historic district, architectural conservation district, design review board, and/or design guidelines).

Lead Party: Historical Commission

Support Party: Community Development, Planning, Planning Board, City Council

Timeframe: Medium-term

4. Form a core stakeholder group related to historic and cultural engagement and programming with an established scope and purpose to include supporting a Westfield Center Cultural District, cultural communities, immigrant groups, and places of worship.

Lead Party: Community Development

Support Party: Mayor, Cultural Council, Parks and Recreation, Westfield Athenaeum, Western Hampden Historical Society, Westfield on Weekends, Greater Westfield Chamber of Commerce, Westfield State University, Council on Aging/Senior Center, Westfield Youth Commission

Timeframe: Short-term

5. Establish a Westfield Center Cultural District as a hub for community events.

Lead Party: Community Development

Support Party: Mayor, City Council, Cultural Council, Chamber of Commerce

Timeframe: Medium-term

6. Support and recognize Neighborhood (Ward) Councils and Civic Associations to strengthen these areas and encourage neighborhood programming.

Lead Party: City Council, Mayor

Support Party: Community Development, Ward Councilors/Representatives from each neighborhood/association

Timeframe: Short-term

7. Initiate cultural resource and emergency preparedness planning to identify resources, responsible entities, and steps towards resiliency.

Lead Party: Emergency Management Agency

Support Party: Westfield Athenaeum, DPW, City Clerk, MVP program

Timeframe: Short-term/Ongoing

8. Pursue grant funding to support the preservation and rehabilitation of eligible historic and cultural resources.

Lead Party: Historical Commission

Support Party: Community Development, Community Preservation, local non-profits,

Timeframe: Medium-term/Ongoing

9. Dedicate support staff and project funding for the Historical Commission's efforts.

Lead Party: Mayor

Support Party: City Council, Community Preservation

Timeframe: Long-term/Ongoing

10. Develop themed walking/driving tours of the City's unique historic and cultural features, expanded civic cultural events, and their marketing/promotion.

Lead Party: Cultural Commission

Support Party: Historical Commission, Community Development, Mayor, Civic groups

Timeframe: Short-term/Ongoing

CHAPTER 6. OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION



6.0 OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

6.1 Vision

We envision a community with a high-quality, well-maintained system of passive and active open spaces and recreational sites, facilities and programs that meet the changing needs of all residents.

6.2 Introduction

This chapter inventories open space and recreational resources and identifies community needs and opportunities for improvement to recreational facilities and programming, and protection of open space and natural resources. This chapter aligns with the 2018 Open Space and Recreation Plan Update and the City's efforts to provide active and passive recreation opportunities, manage its recreational assets, recommend potential land acquisition targets, and to acquire and manage passive and active recreation lands. By having both of these plans in place, the City will be well-positioned to pursue future opportunities, build public-private partnerships, seek grant funding, and to continue to provide the active and passive recreational activities that greatly enhance the quality of life of Westfield residents and bring the community together.

6.3 Existing Conditions

6.3.1 Recreation Facility Inventory

The City of Westfield owns almost 800 acres that are in use for recreation for open space or are undeveloped but have potential for that use. Of that total, about 170 acres are parks and playgrounds. The remaining 630 acres serve other uses including conservation land, water supply protection, cemeteries, and undeveloped land that could potentially be used for open space or recreational opportunities. There are an additional 220 acres of school grounds that the City owns, with some of this land used as recreational facilities such as athletic fields and playgrounds that are accessible to the public when not in use by the schools.

The Parks and Recreation Department manages 11 playgrounds, 18 parks, four cemeteries, a skate park, three spray parks and a "dog friendly" area at Arms Brook Park and provides more than 75 different programs year-round. The Parks and Recreation Facilities are as follows:

- 911 Memorial Park
- Apremont Park
- Arm Brook
- Boardman Athletic Fields
- Chapman Playground
- Columbia Greenway Rail Trail
- Cowles Court Pocket Park
- Cross Street Playground
- East Mountain Road Cemetery
- Gateway Entrance Park
- General Shepard Park
- General Wareham Park
- Half Mile Falls Park
- Hampton Ponds Playground
- Kane/Wojtkiewicz Park
- Lawrence Holcomb Park
- Little River Playground
- Mary Noble Wildlife Sanctuary
- Mechanic Street Cemetery
- Middle Farms Cemetery
- Mundale Cemetery
- Municipal Playground

- Paper Mill Playground
- Park Square
- Elizabeth Parker Park
- Sadie Knox Playground
- Seargent John Hussey Memorial Park
- Soldiers Monument
- Steiger Drive (Undeveloped Land)
- Tekoa Park
- The Barbara Swords Park
- Westfield Dog Bark
- Westfield River Walk
- Westfield Skate Park at Amelia Park
- White Street Pocket Park
- Whitney Playground
- Women’s Temperance Park
- Woronoco Soccer Complex

6.3.2 *Recreational Landscapes*

The Westfield River winds through the City from west to east, passing through the City center and providing numerous opportunities for recreation and scenic vistas. The City has already completed a number of projects in the riverfront area, including the Great Bridges project, the Westfield River Walk, and Half Mile Falls Park. The Westfield River Walk is a walking path that provides views of the Westfield River, the Great River Bridges and various City parks. The path also intersects with the Columbia Greenway Rail Trail near Sackett Street. Half Mile Falls Park lies on the north side of the Great River Bridges. The park offers water fountains, benches, plantings and a view of the bridges and the Westfield River. The park at times is used to host community events such as concerts.

Kettle ponds formed from glaciation are located in the northern half of the City, and include Hampton Ponds, Pequot Pond and Horse Pond which are used extensively for recreation. They are also located within the Barnes Aquifer recharge area.

Mountain ridges run along the western and eastern borders of the City. They extend up to 1,100 feet in elevation along the Westfield/Drake mountains and the Tekoa/Ball mountains along the west and southwest edges of the City. East Mountain near the eastern border with Agawam rises to almost 700 feet. These mountainous areas support trail networks such as the New England Scenic Trail and other hiking trails.

6.3.3 *Trail Networks*

New England Scenic Trail (a.k.a. Metacomet- Monadnock Trail) runs along eastern edge of the City on the border with Agawam, from the Southwick town line north to Route 20, before it crosses into Agawam and then into West Springfield. The entire trail extends from near New Haven, CT on Long Island Sound up to the border of Massachusetts and New Hampshire near the town of Royalston.

The Columbia Greenway Rail Trail is a multi-use linear park that follows along a portion of the route of the former New York / New Haven / Hartford Railroad (and before that, the Northampton, Massachusetts to New Haven, Connecticut canal). The rail trail is a phased project that connects the south end to the Southwick Rail Trail and extends north, currently to Main Street in downtown Westfield. It traverses downtown Westfield on a mostly elevated line for a total of 3.2 miles.

The last phase of the Trail, between downtown and Women's Temperance Park, has recently been completed. At a future date, the Columbia Greenway Rail Trail may extend northward from the Westfield River, and, ideally, connect to communities in Southampton, Easthampton (the Manhan

Rail Trail) and Northampton (the Norwottuck Rail Trail), as well as extend southward to New Haven, Connecticut.

6.3.4 *Acquisitions and Improvements*

There have been many improvements since 2010 that add to the open space and recreational opportunities in the City. These include the following projects:

- Great River Bridge (2012) – This project added a parallel bridge and created additional riverfront parks, improved landscaping, and streetscapes on both sides of the Westfield River. It was a multi-faceted effort that involved bridge, park, traffic, utility, pedestrian, and street scape improvements. The Westfield River Trail now serves as an east-west connection between the new Great River Bridge Parks, Women’s Temperance Park, and a new riverfront esplanade park.
- Park Square Green and Pavilion (2012) – This project included reconstruction and reorganization of the roadways and traffic system at the intersections of Main, Broad, Elm, and Court Streets. Sidewalks were improved and street trees were planted, with the central feature being the Park Square Green. The Green includes a stage for performances, a pavilion, a multilevel fountain, and a broad green space that can be used for festivals, concerts, and other events.
- Westfield River Esplanade (2016) – This project involved construction of a multi-use trail connecting a future portion of the Columbia Greenway with Elm Street and Sackett Street. These connections will facilitate the future expansion of multi-use trails to the East and West along the top of Westfield River Levee.
- Columbia Greenway (Phases 1 – 4, 2012 - 2018, Phase 5, estimated completion 2023) –The first section of the Greenway from Southwick to just south of Tin Bridge was completed in Fall 2012. The second phase extended the trail northerly to East Silver Street and was completed in Summer 2015. The third phase of the project continued its northward extension to Main Street and was completed in late 2016. The fourth phase, completed in 2018, focused on the northern end of the Rail Trail, with major rehabilitation to the trail’s bridge over the Westfield River. The final phase of the project is currently under construction, connecting Main Street up to the Westfield River. This final and critical section will bring the elevated off-street trail straight through the heart of Downtown Westfield.
- Municipal Playground Pickleball Courts (2019) – The City removed the three clay tennis courts at Municipal Playground and replaced them with six asphalt pickleball courts and one asphalt multi-use court for both pickleball and tennis. LED lights were also installed for evening play.
- Chapman Playground Improvements (2012) – Improvements to the 3-acre park included new playscapes, a spray park, updated bathrooms, a new open-air pavilion, and a walking path around the perimeter of the park that accesses the Westfield Riverwalk.
- Cross Street Park accessible playground (2021) – A newly designed accessible playground was installed that incorporates climbing walks, tunnels and slides, as well as sensory and educational panels that allow play for children of all different abilities.

Additional improvements to recreational facilities that are being planned include rebuilding or upgrading the outdated skatepark at Amelia Park, adding additional pickleball courts to meet increasing demand, and improvements to Hampton Ponds playground.

6.3.5 Recreation Department

The Parks and Recreation Department manages all of the parks, playgrounds and cemeteries in Westfield, and it provides both youth and adult recreation programs for community residents.

Staffing

The Parks and Recreation Department is a division of the Department of Public Works (DPW). The Parks Department and Recreation Department were created separately with two separate budgets and directors, they were combined into a single department in 1998. The department is managed by the Deputy Superintendent of Parks and Recreation who also serves as the Tree Warden and Director of Lands and Resources. Other full-time staff include a Program Coordinator, and Head Clerk in the Administrative Office. Part-time and seasonal staff maintain facilities, teach lessons, run programs, and work as camp counselors. The department also relies on volunteers to help lead programs, coach the youth leagues, and to serve on the Parks and Recreation Commission.

Budget

The Parks and Recreation Department budget for the 2023 Fiscal Year is \$340,505.71 which includes funding for staffing, purchases, equipment, utilities, transportation, and other miscellaneous items. It does not include funding for any new projects. As the Department is a division of the DPW, the budget is allocated as part of their overall budget.

Programs

The Westfield Parks and Recreation Department runs the following youth and adult programs throughout the year:

- Youth soccer
- Adult Softball leagues
- Youth and adult horseback riding lessons and guided trail rides
- Youth and adult tennis lessons
- Youth and adult pickleball lessons
- Boys and Girls Basketball leagues, co-sponsored by the Westfield Boys and Girls Club
- Boys and Girls Suburban Basketball Travel league
- Youth basketball clinics
- Adult Men's Basketball league
- Special events (dances, parties, holiday activities)
- Adult fitness classes
- Boys and Girls T-Ball
- Youth field hockey

Summer Programs:

- Adventure Zone - full day general summer camp
- Playground program - half -day general summer camp

- Basketball camp
- Soccer camp – for various levels and ages
- Dance camp
- Golf camp
- Volleyball camp
- Field Hockey clinics
- Skateboard camp
- Nature camp
- Horseback riding camp
- Theater Arts program
- Visual Arts programs – variety of mediums, levels, and ages
- Teen empowerment camp

Needs

The City has invested significant resources into improving open space and recreation facilities, including the many new downtown parks and amenities mentioned above, as well as a renovation of the playground at Chapman Park, a new playscape at Whitney Playground, handicapped accessible play equipment at Cross Street playground, and a new spray park at Sadie Knox. Continued coordination within the DPW and Parks and Recreation Division will be necessary to ensure that these new and improved facilities will be adequately maintained. It will be important to ensure that there are adequate resources to hire maintenance staff. Community vigilance and police patrols are also necessary to reduce the incidence of vandalism at park facilities. Additional funding is needed to implement many of the actions in the 2018 OSRP, and increased personnel time to focus on grant writing would be key to acquiring more funding.

Other needs identified in the OSRP include: More recreational options for teens, such as a teen center, additional facilities with teen use such as skateparks and basketball courts, and more teen-focused programming and events; more inclusive playground facilities that can be enjoyed by children with disabilities; an analysis of feasibility of land acquisition or designation for motorized recreational vehicles such as ATVs to reduce their use in sensitive environments; additional bike and multi-use trails as well as more hiking trails; and becoming a more pedestrian and bike-friendly community through increased walking and bicycling connections, bicycle lanes, and bicycle education.

6.3.6 Open Space Inventory

Westfield is the third-largest City in area in the Commonwealth at 47.5 square miles, or 30,400 acres. A large amount of this area is undeveloped forest or pastureland – 15,600 acres, or 51.3%, according to the 2018 Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) update (see Chapter 9, *Agriculture*, for more information). Forested areas cover 14,758 acres of that area, according to 2005 data. Both the eastern and western edges of the City are characterized by mountain ridges (Westfield/Drake Mountains and Tekoa/Ball Mountains on the west and southwest, and East Mountain on the east). The land between these mountain ridges is characterized by a relatively flat topography interspersed with rolling hills, along with many rivers and streams and interesting geological features such as kettle holes in the north. According to 2005 data, there are an estimated 1,925 acres of agricultural land, which makes up 6% of the total land area of the City.

There are 605 acres of recreation and conservation land owned by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in the City. The largest recreation area managed by the Division of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) is Hampton Ponds State Park, located in the northeast corner of the City. It is used extensively for water-based recreation, including swimming, boating, fishing, and sailing. The facilities include a playground, picnic area, pavilion, and restrooms. The Department of Fish and Game manages three wildlife management areas: East Mountain, Honey Pot, and Westfield WMAs. It also manages 290 acres of Westfield River Access.

There are approximately 3,020 acres of recreation and conservation land in Westfield that are owned by private entities, including non-profits and land trusts. Some of these parcels have permanent protection status, including those with conservation restrictions (CRs) and agricultural preservation restrictions (APRs). The APR program is run through the Massachusetts Department of Agriculture and provides farmers a payment up to the difference between the “fair market value” and the “fair market agricultural value” of their farmland in exchange for a permanent deed restriction that precludes uses of the land that would impact its agricultural viability. There are 19 CRs totaling 390 acres and 39 APRs totaling 1,579 acres (see Chapter 9, *Agriculture*, for more information).

Private open space properties that are not permanently protected from development make up a significant percentage of the open space in the City. Some of the larger properties include the East Mountain, Tekoa, and Shaker Farms Country Clubs, Stanley Park, and the Westfield Sportsmen’s Club. Stanley Park, one of the most popular active and passive recreation areas in Westfield, is owned by a non-profit organization and is open to the public, however as it is not permanently protected, its continued recreational value is not assured. The park has many amenities including gardens, athletic fields, playgrounds, picnic areas, pavilions, a duck pond with colonial-era village, and walking and hiking trails. Additional private recreational facilities include Roots Athletic Center, an indoor/outdoor commercial multi-use sports complex and Mr. Whippy’s Golf Acres, which offers mini-golf, a driving range, batting range and go-karting.

In Westfield, there are about 2,639 acres enrolled in Chapter 61A (agriculture) and 50 acres enrolled in Chapter 61B (recreation). There are approximately 706 acres currently enrolled in Chapter 61 forest land. Chapter 61, 61A, and 61B is a voluntary program designed by the Massachusetts Legislature to tax property in the Commonwealth for its timber resources, agricultural, or recreational value rather than its development value. Landowners who enroll their land in the program receive property tax reductions in exchange for a lien on their property. The terms of the lien require that enrolled land remain in an undeveloped state and be managed for forest production, agricultural production, or recreation. Furthermore, the lien provides the municipal government of the City or Town in which the enrolled property is located a right of first refusal should the landowner put the land up for sale while it is enrolled in the program.

Land Trusts and Conservation Organizations

Stanley Park is a non-profit organization that funds and manages the park. The Westfield River Watershed Organization is a volunteer-led non-profit that promotes protection and appropriate recreational use of the river and watershed. The group leads educational, recreational and clean-up events during the year. The Franklin Land Trust and Mass Audubon hold some land in Westfield. Winding River Land Conservancy once owned three conservation areas in Westfield, two with full protection and one with limited protection, but has since become an inactive land trust. There are

no other land trusts or conservation organizations that are currently contributing to open space acquisition or management in Westfield. Increased coordination with land trusts and conservation groups to pursue land protection and development restrictions is listed as a high-priority action item in the OSRP.

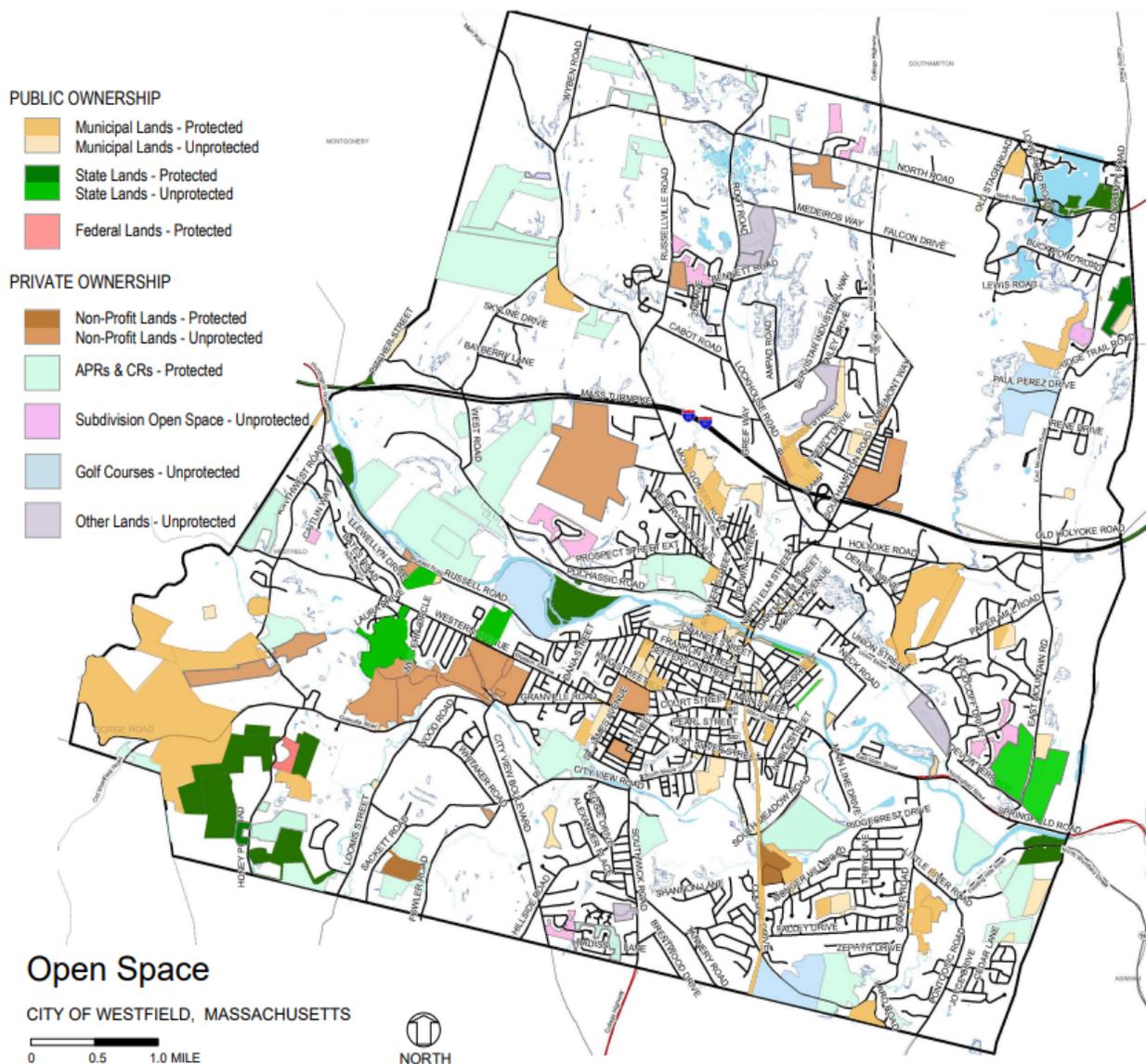


Figure 6-1. Open Space Map from 2018 OSRP
Source: City of Westfield

6.4 Analysis of Need

Using standards by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) (<https://www.nrpa.org/publications-research/ParkMetrics/>) to conduct an assessment of the adequacy of the City's park and recreation facilities.

6.5 Challenges and Opportunities

6.5.1 Challenges

Resource protection needs in the City include long-term protection of surface and groundwater resources, protecting connected parcels of open space, and managing the unauthorized use of private lands for activities that are environmentally harmful, such as motorized recreation and dumping of waste.

It is critical for the City to ensure that there is a sustainable source of high-quality drinking water for residents. As the Barnes Aquifer is the primary source of drinking water for the City, the City needs to manage and protect the aquifer recharge area, or Zone II, and the land surrounding that designated area to limit the possibility of contamination. Thoughtful long-term planning and effective land use regulations will be essential in managing the future use and development of this area.

A relatively small amount of land is protected in Westfield. Large, contiguous blocks of open space, particularly of priority habitat, are important for wildlife habitat and corridors, passive recreation such as hiking and mountain biking, scenic landscapes, and groundwater recharge. These high priority areas need to be protected from development. According to the 2018 OSRP, three areas of critical importance for conservation due to their biodiversity, presence of rare species and habitat integrity are East Mountain, the Westfield River corridor, and the eastern slopes of Tekoa and Ball Mountains. Working forests and farmlands should also be prioritized for conservation.

Another significant area of need identified in the 2018 OSRP was for expanded pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure and amenities. This includes more and improved sidewalks, particularly in the areas surrounding the schools as well as in areas surrounding downtown, and more bicycle-lane striping and signage. Other possible strategies identified by PVPC in a 2010 study include traffic calming measures, angled parking, making select streets one-way, and road diets. The City Council adopted a Complete Streets ordinance in April 2022, which will allow the City to obtain funding to make many of the improvements mentioned above.

6.5.2 Opportunities

The City has made major improvements to the downtown area in the last 10 years that have greatly increased green spaces, recreational opportunities, pedestrian and bicycle connectivity, and spaces for community events. The City has already capitalized on this momentum by nearly completing the final phase of the Columbia Greenway but should consider adding and improving sidewalks and bicycle lanes to improve recreational infrastructure and connectivity for non-motorized travel. The City should also ensure that there are adequate resources to maintain street trees, and to replant and plant new trees. As temperatures continue to increase with climate change, trees are becoming more important for providing shade and for reducing the urban heat island effect.

The City's Parks and Recreation Department manages many excellent park and recreational facilities and provides a wide variety of high-quality programs for youth and adults. The Department should

consider providing additional facilities for teens and coordinating with the school district and non-profits like the YMCA and Boys and Girls Club to offer more programming options for teens.

The City should look into spaces suitable for building a community garden. City residents have expressed interest in using community gardens, and nearly 40% of OSRP survey respondents said they would like to see community gardens in Westfield. In addition, partnering with a local food bank or soup kitchen would allow for gardeners to provide surplus food to those in need.

The City should work with local land trusts, non-profit organizations, and property owners in order to pursue land conservation in areas that are of critical ecological importance. Coordination with land trusts and conservation groups will improve the City's ability to achieve its goals for creating effective protected corridors of open space.

6.6 Current Measures and Practices

6.6.1 Existing Regulations

The Parks and Recreation Commission is the primary body that establishes policies and practices for open space and recreation in the City. The Commission is made up of eight community members appointed by the Mayor and approved by City Council. The Commission sets policies and advises the department head and City administration on needed parks and recreation programs, and plans, acquires, and develops parks, recreation facilities, and open space areas to meet current and future needs.

The Conservation Commission is a seven-member board that is charged with administering the Westfield Wetland Protection Ordinance #1738, and the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act and its regulations. The Commission works to protect and enhance wetlands and wildlife habitat, maintain natural resources, and to preserve the quality of life for all inhabitants of Westfield by controlling activities in areas subject to protection. It also has the care and custody of three open space parcels.

The Community Preservation Committee was established in 2003 following the City adoption of the Community Preservation Act. The revenues generated by the CPA surcharge on property tax bills is used to acquire and preserve land for open space and recreation, preserve and restore historic resources or support community housing. The Committee reviews applications and recommends the expenditure of CPA funds for qualified projects, which are then subject to endorsement by the Mayor and a City Council appropriation vote. The City's Community Preservation Plan is used to evaluate funding requests and guide the Committee in its efforts.

6.6.2 Existing Policy and Administration

The Westfield Parks and Recreation Department controls and manages all of the City's parks, spray parks, playgrounds, and four cemeteries. The Deputy Superintendent of Parks and Recreation manages all maintenance requests, and relays maintenance requests to the responsible parties.

The Land and Natural Resources Division of the Department of Public Works is also managed by the Deputy Superintendent of Parks and Recreation. The Division manages over 200 acres of parkland and school sports fields, an additional 5,000 acres of forest land, and the City's shade trees.

The Westfield Tree Ordinance puts forth regulations for the care, maintenance, planting, and removal of public shade trees in the City. A public hearing is required to approve any proposal to cut down or remove a public shade tree, with exceptions made for specific circumstances. All permits for trimming or other alteration of shade trees must procure a permit from the Director of Lands and Resources.

The Westfield Wetland Protection Ordinance protects wetlands, related water resources, and adjoining land areas in the City by controlling any activities that may impact wetland functions and values as well affect the following: Protection of public and private water supply, protection of groundwater supply, flood control, storm damage prevention, pollution prevention, fisheries protection, and protection of wildlife habitat. The ordinance stipulates that, unless as permitted by the Conservation Commission, no person “shall remove, fill, dredge, alter or build upon or within 50 feet of any bank or beach; or within 50 feet of any marsh, wet meadow, bog, or swamp; upon or within any lake, pond, river, stream, or intermittent stream; upon or within any land under said waters; upon any land subject to flooding or groundwater inundation.”

6.7 Goals, Policies, and Actions

6.7.1 Goals

1. Ensure that recreation and open space facilities are attractive and available for all neighborhoods, ages, classes, and abilities.
2. Provide for the protection of connected blocks of open space that preserve landscape character and critical wildlife habitat and corridors and prioritize protection of open spaces, such as floodplains and farmland, that improve community resilience.

6.7.2 Policies

1. Increase access to the Westfield and Little Rivers for passive recreation use by people of all ages and abilities and expand access to the Westfield River riverfront for walking, bicycling, and access for non-motorized boating.
2. Provide recreational and open space facilities in underserved areas and continue to support the development of new facilities such as inclusive playgrounds, while also utilizing existing facilities to the maximum extent possible.
3. Protect important undeveloped parcels in critical aquifer recharge areas and surrounding land through acquisition and long-term preservation.
4. Prioritize the acquisition of significant properties for the purposes of resilience, wildlife habitat, and passive recreation.
5. Develop and maintain premier-level park and sports facilities.

6.7.3 Actions

1. Prioritize funding for land acquisition to create contiguous blocks of protected open space, particularly in areas with critical ecosystem importance such as the Westfield River corridor, Tekoa and Ball Mountains on the border with Montgomery, and the Metacomet Ridge including Provin Mountain and East Mountain.

Lead Party: Conservation Commission

Support Party: City Council, Planning Department, Community Preservation Committee

Timeframe: Long-term/Ongoing

2. Work with private landowners to secure public access for trails.

Lead Party: Conservation Commission

Support Party: Community Preservation Committee, Planning Department

Timeframe: Long-term/Ongoing

3. Revise and strengthen local ordinances and regulations to incentivize open space preservation and habitat corridor connectivity, including the Transfer of Development Rights and Open Space Residential Development Zoning Ordinances.

Lead Party: Planning Department

Support Party: City Council

Timeframe: Long-term/Ongoing

4. Ensure adequate financial resources are dedicated to the maintenance of park and recreation facilities and continue to develop new facilities and amenities in underserved areas.

Lead Party: Parks and Recreation

Support Party: Mayor, City Council, Community Preservation Committee

Timeframe: Short-term/Ongoing

5. Continue multi-use trail development along the Westfield River and extend greenway trail connections to the north.

Lead Party: Engineering

Support Party: Community Preservation Committee, Friends of the Columbia Greenway Trail, Conservation Commission, MassDOT, Planning

Timeframe: Short term/Ongoing

6. Acquire open spaces that can function as storage for floodwaters and also allow suitable uses like playfields or community gardens, such as at 146 Main St.

Lead Party: Planning Department

Support Party: Parks and rec, Community Preservation

Timeframe: Medium-term/Ongoing

7. Develop, formalize and promote non-motorized boating access points along the Westfield River.

Lead Party: Planning Department

Support Party: Conservation Commission

Timeframe: Medium-term/Ongoing

8. Commit necessary funding to develop, rehabilitate, and properly maintain parks and sports facilities of high caliber.

Lead Party: Mayor

Support Party: School Committee, Parks and Rec, City Council

Timeframe: Medium-term/Ongoing

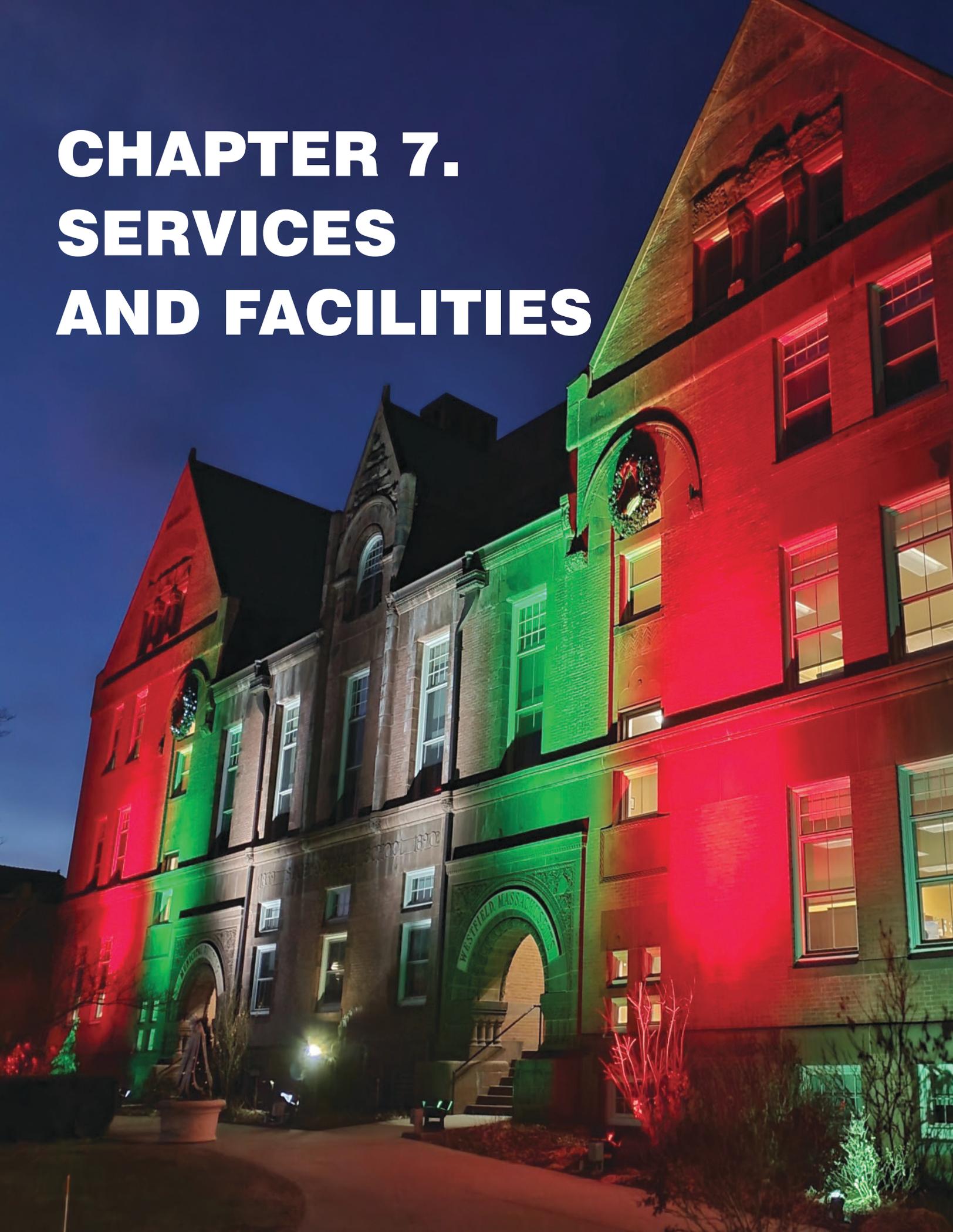
9. Reimagine the Westfield Riverfront to offer expanded recreational opportunities and provide residents with easy access to the waterfront.

Lead Party: Planning Department

Support Party: Department of Public Works, City Council, Mayor

Timeframe: Medium-term

CHAPTER 7. SERVICES AND FACILITIES



7.0 SERVICES AND FACILITIES

7.1 Vision

We envision continued high-quality municipal facilities and services, where City staff are well-resourced, where public and community entities are prepared to quickly respond to and recover from emergencies, and where taxpayers are not overburdened.

7.2 Introduction

The purpose of this element is to provide an inventory and analysis of the basic services and facilities offered by the City of Westfield for the benefit of its residents and the public at large. These services and facilities include health and human services, water, sanitary sewers, educational facilities, libraries, public safety, and community facilities. The City's public services and facilities are directly impacted by growth and development. It is therefore vital for a municipality to plan for the provisions of these services and facilities and to coordinate the implementation of these plans in conjunction with the fiscal budget process on an organized long-term basis.

Westfield is a full-service city, with professionally staffed departments, and elected and appointed boards and commissions. Detailed information, including members and contact information, is available for each department, board and commission, on the City website. There are 30 City departments, 29 boards and commissions, an elected City Council, and an elected Mayor. The majority of departments are housed at City Hall at 59 Court Street. Information Technology and the Public Safety Communication Center are located at 179 Apremont Way. Veteran's Services is located at the Senior Center at 45 Noble Street. See Map 7-1, *Public Infrastructure*, for the location of these facilities.

Other departments are off-site (some discussed later in this chapter):

- Public Works / Water Department 28 Sackett Street
- Public School District Office 94 North Elm Street
- Parks & Recreation 4 Holcomb Street
- Westfield Gas & Electric 100 Elm Street
- Animal Control / Shelter 178 Apremont Way
- Westfield-Barnes Regional Airport 110 Airport Road
- Fire - 34 Broad Street
- Police – 15 Washington Street

7.3 Existing Conditions

7.3.1 Health and Human Services

The City of Westfield provides numerous health and human services for its residents, including library services, senior services, and hospital and patient services. These are primarily based on facilities outside City Hall.

Library

Library services for the public are available at the Westfield Athenaeum at 6 Elm Street, a non-City facility. The Athenaeum was originally founded in 1830 as the Westfield Social Library and officially

opened its doors at the Athenaeum in 1868. The current location of the Athenaeum was constructed in 1927, and the original library on Main Street was torn down the following year.

Council on Aging/Senior Center

The Westfield Council on Aging/Senior Center works to maximize the independence of older adults by providing services and programs that facilitate self-reliance, enhance socialization, and promote all aspects of healthy, valued, and creative aging. The Senior Center is located at 45 Noble Street, which opened in 2015. The Senior Center is supported by an active Friends of the Westfield Senior Center, whose goal is to provide enhancements to the programs and activities of the Westfield Senior Center through fundraising, advocacy, and facility improvement. The proposed 2023 budget for the Council on Aging is \$528,288, an increase of over \$30,000 from the previous year.

The COA/Senior Center provides and supports numerous programs and services for seniors in the City. For example, the Whip City Travelers offers monthly casino trips to Mohegan and Foxwoods, Atlantic City, and multiple day or one day trips that include luncheons or dinner. Other programs and services include providing information and referrals, a companion program, health insurance counseling, case management and a nutrition program. More information on programs and services is available on the COA/Senior Center webpage on the City's website.

Baystate Noble Hospital

Baystate Noble Hospital is located at 115 West Silver Street. It is an 85-bed acute care community hospital and part of the Baystate Health Network, which is headquartered in Springfield, Massachusetts. Baystate Noble is open 24 hours per day and provides numerous services to Westfield and surrounding communities, including behavioral health, women's health, and emergency services. A full list of services is available on the website. The hospital wing offers free parking, 24 hours per day, 7 days per week.

7.3.2 Public Safety

The role of public safety in a municipality is to maintain the quality of life that makes the community a safe and desirable place to live. The City of Westfield provides these services through their Police Department, Fire/Rescue/Ambulance services, and Emergency Management Agency.

Police

The Westfield Police Station is located at 15 Washington Street. The building was constructed in 1972, at which time the Police Department moved from the basement of Old Normal School, 59 Court Street, which also included City Hall. This was the first police headquarters building.

The department is overseen by a 3-member Police Commission, appointed by the Mayor. The appointments are staggered and are subject to review and approval every two years of service. The responsibilities of the commission include management and control of the officers and members of the Westfield Police Department. Duties include, but are not limited to, the hiring, terminating and promoting of police officers, ruling on grievances, deciding on disciplinary matters, and approval of funding. The department includes 82 full time police officers, consisting of 19 reserve, 35 auxiliary, 15 Special, 4 clerical, 3 full-time animal control, 6 full-time school crossing guards, 3 substitute school crossing guards. There are also volunteers for the Westfield Auxiliary Police. Internal divisions of the department include Animal Control, Community Police, Detective Bureau, Patrol (including

Marine Patrol and Special Response Team), Firearms Licensing, School Resource Officers, and Traffic Bureau. In addition to these functions the department maintains a Child Identification Program, Citizens Police Academy, and Medication Disposal Program, among other services.

Fire/Rescue/Ambulance

There are three staffed fire and rescue stations in the City of Westfield. Central Headquarters is located at 34 Broad Street. The North Side Substation is located at 129 Southampton Road, and the Little River Substation is at 366 Little River Road.

The Westfield Fire Department is overseen by the Westfield Fire Commission, which is made up of a three-member commission appointed by the Mayor. It has appointing authority and is responsible for the change, management and control of officers and members of the Westfield Fire Department. Some of the duties include, but are not limited to, the hiring, termination and promoting of firefighters, ruling on grievances, deciding on disciplinary matters and approval of funding. The Fire Department provides fire, rescue, and ambulance services, and is staffed 24 hours each day by 86 paid personnel, including 41 staff at advanced paramedic level. Within the department, there are four engine companies, one tower, and one rescue truck. Fire and Rescue respond to approximately 8,200 fire/rescue calls per year.

Ambulance/paramedic maintain five ambulances and all medical personnel are cross trained as firefighters and are certified by the Massachusetts Office of Emergency Medical Services. Personnel respond to approximately 6,400 medical calls each year. Calls involve all types of emergency situations as well as routine non-emergency transport to or from area hospitals, nursing homes and other health care facilities. The City maintains five fully equipped and certified ambulances.

Emergency Management

The mission of the Westfield Emergency Management Agency is to ensure the safety of the residents of the City during possible emergency situations, and to assist in mitigating risks to the City. Like many communities in Massachusetts, the Emergency Management Agency is staffed primarily by volunteers. Within the Agency, there are 11 total volunteer positions (multiple radio operators), with 6 positions currently vacant. The Emergency Operations Center is located at 179 Apremont Way and is equipped with radio equipment which includes Police and Fire Department radios, State radios, and Ham radios (RACES). The Westfield Emergency Management Agency works directly with the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) and Emergency Management Agencies from surrounding communities as well as the City's Police and Fire Departments to be prepared to respond. The facility is equipped with an auxiliary generator should commercial power be lost. As part of the emergency management system, the City also maintains an automated Emergency Response System.

The Emergency Management Agency supports the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC), comprised of Local Businesses, School Department, Fire Department, Police Department, Gas and Electric, Public Health, Senior Center, Local Hospitals, Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency, Red Cross, Salvation Army, Westfield State University, Business Development, and the Massachusetts National Guard. Meetings are held the first Wednesday of the month March-June and September-November.

7.3.3 School Facilities

The City of Westfield provides public educational services to all eligible students. The Westfield Public Schools include pre-K through Twelfth Grade. The school system strives to provide students with the best possible education, one that will lay the groundwork for an enriching and productive future. Westfield Public Schools support their commitment to excellence by having the programs, facilities, staff, and dedication to provide quality services for all of the children in the City. The City is also home to Westfield State University, a public university and part of the Massachusetts Public Higher Education System

Pre-K – 12 and Sufficient Progress

The City, along with Westfield Public Schools, is committed to providing and maintaining a high-quality education to the children and families of Westfield. The 2022 public school budget is \$64,396,647. This total consists of the City contribution of \$26,940,874 and \$37,455,773 in Chapter 70 funds. (The Chapter 70 program is the major program of state aid to public elementary and secondary schools.) The Westfield Public School district is administered by an elected seven-member school committee with the mayor serving as chairperson. Each member serves for a four-year term. The primary responsibility of the school committee is to formulate general policies reflecting the educational expectations of the community and adoption of the budget.

Westfield Public Schools educates approximately 4,774 students in 12 buildings. Table 8-1 provides more information about each of those facilities. This includes an early childhood center (pre-K), the Westfield Virtual School, seven elementary schools, and three secondary schools. Bus transportation is provided for high school and middle school students who live two miles or more from the school, and 1.5 miles or more for grade school students.

A new elementary school on Franklin Street is now under construction following a bid for \$53 million. The school is anticipated to open by December 2024. This will replace both the Abner Gibbs and Franklin Avenue Schools and be built on the current Franklin Avenue School site. The new building will include 88,000 square feet of floor space and \$31 million of its total cost will be reimbursed by the Massachusetts School Building Authority.

School	Grade (PK – SP) and Enrollment															Total
	PK ^a	K ^b	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	SP ^c	
Abner Gibbs	0	30	31	34	34	42	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	171
Fort Meadow Early Childhood Center	79	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	79
Franklin Ave	0	34	32	39	33	38	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	176
Highland	0	66	59	67	79	53	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	324
Munger Hill	0	55	64	62	74	75	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	330
Paper Mill	0	69	58	69	68	51	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	315
Southampton Road	0	57	61	55	65	54	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	292
Westfield High	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	25	26	26	30	10	1,100
Westfield Intermediate School	0	0	0	0	0	0	32	34	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	669

School	Grade (PK – SP) and Enrollment															Total
	PK ^a	K ^b	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	SP ^c	
Westfield Middle School	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	31	36	0	0	0	0	0	678
Westfield Technical Academy	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	15	13	13	11	2	541
Westfield Virtual School	0	4	10	5	7	6	17	14	19	17	0	0	0	0	0	99
District	79	31	31	33	36	31	34	35	33	38	40	40	39	41	12	4,774

Notes:

- PK means “prekindergarten.”
- K means “kindergarten.”
- SP means “sufficient progress.”
- Source: <https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/profiles/student.aspx?orgcode=03250000&orgtypecode=5&>

Post-Secondary

Westfield State University is a public university and part of the Massachusetts Public Higher Education System. It is located at 577 Western Avenue. It was founded in 1839 in Barre, Massachusetts by Horace Mann and moved to Westfield in 1844. The University provides full and part-time programs leading to undergraduate and graduate degrees. There are approximately 5,000 students.

7.3.4 Public Works

The Department of Public Works is located at 28 Sackett Street. Its mission is to preserve the integrity of the infrastructure in the City of Westfield through effective management and operation. The Westfield DPW is comprised of 10 Divisions. Details of Water, Wastewater, and Solid and Hazardous Waste Divisions are included below.

7.3.5 Water Division

The Water Division, responsible for producing and delivering drinking water that meets or exceeds all federal and state standards, is a part of the Public Works department, with the main office located at 28 Sackett Street.

Over 11,000 residential and commercial customers are serviced by four reservoirs, Tekoa Reservoir (4-million-gallon capacity), Sackett Distribution Reservoir (1.7 million gallons, serving as holding area for Water Filtration Plant treatment process), Granville Reservoir (184-million-gallon capacity and treated by the Southwick, Massachusetts treatment facility), and Montgomery Reservoir (which was taken offline but kept as emergency back-up supply). There are 8 public wells that tap into the Barnes Aquifer, a large underground water source, as well as the Great Brook and Northwest Road Aquifers. Well 1 was turned off in March 2019 and remains offline. All water from Wells 3 and 4 is treated to remove the fungicide Ethylene DiBromide (EDB). All water from Wells 2, 7, & 8 is filtered to remove Per and Poly Fluorinated Alkyl Substances (PFAS). There are 13 dams within the City, seven public (four owned by Westfield and three owned by the City of Springfield), and six private dams. Westfield owns two other dams located in the Town of Montgomery. For more information on dams, see Map 7-3, *Dams*.

Name	Owner Type	Owner Name	Hazard Code
West Parish Filter #1 Dam	Public	City of Springfield	Significant
West Parish Filter #2 Dam	Public	City of Springfield	Significant
West Parish Filter #3 Dam	Public	City of Springfield	High
Howard Smith YMCA Pond Dam	Private	Private Association or other non-profit	N/A
Florek Pond Dam	Private	Private	N/A
Stevens Paper Co. Upper Dam	Private	Private	Low
Stevens Paper Co. Low Dam	Private	Private	Low
Stanley Park Dam	Private	Private	N/A
Powdermill Brook Dam	Public	City of Westfield	High
Westfield Sportsmen Club Dam	Private	Private	Significant
Arm Brook Dam	Public	City of Westfield	High
Chapin Pond	Public	City of Westfield	Low
Horse Pond Dam	Public	City of Westfield	Significant

Source: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/massgis-data-dams#downloads->

The Water Division has recently begun or completed a number of projects to help continue to provide water services to the residents of Westfield:

- Dry Bridge Road Water Treatment plant, a groundwater treatment plant for Wells 1 and 2 utilizing four 40,000lb Granular Activated Carbon vessels for removal of polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) to non-detect level was begun March 2022
- Repairs to the Sackett and Northwest storage tanks including surface coatings and hatchway repairs were completed in 2021 and 2022.
- Replacement of the aging 2.7-million-gallon water storage tank on East Mountain Road was completed in 2020.

In October 2019 the Westfield Water Department was awarded the #1 Top Project Award by the Water and Wastes Digest, a national publication dedicated to water and wastewater utilities. This accolade was granted for the Department's response to treat water from wells that had been contaminated with PFAS, a chemical found in firefighting foam used at the Barnes Air National Guard Base. Temporary and permanent treatment measures were quickly put in place, gaining high praise from the publication. The City maintains a page on its website with updates and further information for the public: <https://www.cityofwestfield.org/672/PFCs-Information-Updates>.

7.3.6 Wastewater Resources and Facilities

The Wastewater Division is part of the Public Works Department, with the main office located at 28 Sackett Street. The City's wastewater collection system is comprised of a separated sanitary sewer system. The City's raw sewage and stormwater sewage are carried through separate pipes. Proper management of stormwater helps reduce pollutant loads in surface water and ground water supply. See Map 7-2, *Stormwater System*, for more on the system's extent. The City's proactive management of water sources is further detailed in Chapter 11, *Water Supply*.

The projected 2023 sewerage and wastewater budget is approximately \$6 million, almost \$750,000 more than the previous year's budget. There are 29,500 customers and 8,000 service connections. Costs are divided by Residential (\$455 per unit per year), Senior Residential (\$151.83 per year for

65+ residents of Westfield), and Commercial (\$6.33 per 1,000 gallons with minimum quarterly charge of \$113.75).

The City's Water Recovery Facility is located at 149 Neck Road and treats 6.1 million gallons of wastewater per day. There are 18 pump stations and 3,969 manholes throughout the City. The City owns service laterals in public right-of-way, but not on private property. This includes 667,800 linear feet of gravity sewers, 18,600 linear feet of dry sewers, and 25,600 linear feet of force main. The City maintains a public notification system on sanitary sewer overflows for residents. The wastewater system is projected on Map 7-4, Wastewater System.

Through a state Gap II grant of \$39,424 awarded to the City in 2018, combined with \$9,296 from Westfield Gas & Electric (WG+E), Westfield completed improvements to the Water Pollution Control Plant that anticipated a 24% reduction in electricity use and a six-month payback.

7.3.7 *Solid and Hazardous Waste Management*

The Refuse & Recycling Division is part of the Public Works Department, with the main office at 28 Sackett Street. The City provides weekly curbside pickup for Westfield residents, with disposal at the Twiss Street Transfer Station. Recycling pickup occurs biweekly with A and B recycling routes. Effective January 5, 2015, the City implemented the single stream recycling program. Operation hours for the Transfer Station are Monday through Saturday, 7:00 AM to 2:45 PM.

Total trash tonnage for the City is 11,545, with 428 tons from the public school system. Recycling tonnage is 3,173.86. The City currently does not provide bulk pickup, although that is subject to change. Landfills and other risks to water quality are illustrated in Map 7-5, *Water Resources Risk*.

7.3.8 *Gas and Electric*

WG+E is a department of the City. It provides natural gas and electrical services to residents and businesses. They are responsible for inspecting, maintaining, and replacing natural gas lines and meters that carry gas to the meter on a customer's property. In 1899, the City purchased the formerly private company Westfield Electric Light Company and has maintained the department ever since. This City-owned public utility is headquartered at 100 Elm Street.

Westfield is also home to Whip City Fiber. Whip City Fiber is a high-speed internet service delivered across a fiber optic network directly to a home or business. This fiber optic technology provides upload and download speeds of up to 1 gigabit per second—that is 1,000 Mbps, 10 times faster than the best residential service currently available. At the end of 2018 a 2-year buildout was completed for the City, which provides service to over 70% of the community. The goal is to serve all of Westfield by the end of 2025. Whip City Fiber is powered by WG+E.

7.4 **Challenges and Opportunities**

The services provided by the City are generally well equipped to provide an adequate level of services to the community. This section outlines the challenges and opportunities within the City services framework.

7.4.1 Challenges

City Services

This category includes City Hall, library, DPW, and senior services. In general, the services provided by the City meet the needs of the community and are adequately staffed and have the resources necessary to do so. The Library provides a variety of services for the community, including children and teen events, information on community resources, and numerous exhibits and events. However, while it has been updated and expanded over the years, the Westfield Athenaeum, which houses the library, is an older structure, and will need continuous upkeep. Senior services are actively utilized by elderly residents and attendance for programs and events continues to remain consistent. The current senior center was completed in 2015 and offers many services and programs, as well as transportation. The DPW is currently able to adequately maintain City roads and infrastructure but will continuously be in need of equipment upgrades as wear and tear on existing machinery requires that they be replaced. Issues related to the DPW-related services are covered in the next section.

Infrastructure Services

This category includes water supply, wastewater, stormwater, energy, and solid waste. The majority of residents are part of the City water supply and wastewater system. The City maintains a Sanitary Sewer Master Plan and a Facilities Plan to guide the City on future improvements and upkeep. The City provides solid and hazardous waste management for residents. Currently the City does not provide bulk pickup.

The City has recently dealt with issues concerning the water supply, including the discovering of PFAS in the water. The City has proactively worked to remedy these issues with their water supply, but will need to continue maintenance, monitoring, and upkeep. In addition, the City will need to continue maintenance and upkeep of the wells to provide water for residents. The City will also need to continue to work towards making water and wastewater systems resilient in the face of climate change. Drinking water quality and source water protection measures are detailed further in Chapter 11, *Water Supply*.

The City has made efforts to upgrade energy efficiency at several facilities, including energy conservation measures, lighting, weatherization, steam traps, refrigeration controls, and electric vehicle acquisition and charging station at North Middle, South Middle, Munger Hill, Paper Mill, Vocational, and High Schools, Twiss St Garage, Fire Headquarters, and Head Start Building. These upgrades were completed through the Massachusetts Green Communities Program. The City also received grant funds through this program to fund lighting in municipal facilities including South Middle School, DPW Garage, and Airport, and to fund energy conservation measures, LED lighting and administrative assistance, in municipal facilities including Vocational School, Fire HQ, Southampton Rd Fire Station, and High, Munger Hill and Papermill Elementary Schools. The Green Communities Program continues to be an excellent source of funding for cities and towns like Westfield to continue towards energy efficiency throughout their municipal buildings. The City's renewable energy sources and energy efficiency upgrades are further detailed in Chapter 10, *Energy*.

School Department

The School Department constitutes approximately 40% of the City's annual budget (FY 22). The overall student population declined over the past two years, decreasing by 330 students from fiscal 2020 to fiscal 2021, and by an additional 157 to fiscal 2022. This provides an opportunity for the school department to focus on upgrading and improving upon current facilities and programs, as

they will likely not need to accommodate much in the way of additional attendance growth. Plans are currently underway to build a new elementary school on Franklin Street, to be completed by 2024. This is in line with community feedback that expressed optimism about the school district but noted the need for updated school buildings and technology.

The continued maintenance and operations of public buildings can be a strain on City resources. While the City continues to provide upkeep and maintenance, as well as the construction of new buildings (see the Public Schools and Senior Center).

7.4.2 *Opportunities*

WG+E is a City-owned public utility, offering the City the option to continue to provide and expand natural gas and electric services, along with fiber through Whip City Fiber. Expansion of the fiber network is particularly important, especially with the increase in remote work. Not only is this a benefit to current residents but can be a draw for future residents looking to relocate to lower cost of living in western Massachusetts.

The City is home to Westfield State University, part of the Massachusetts State University System. Both the City and the University have expressed interest in growing their partnership. Similarly, there are opportunities to partner with Baystate Noble Hospital.

Westfield has implemented the Green Communities program to begin upgrade facilities throughout the City. As a Green Community, Westfield is poised to continue to take advantage of this funding to update and improve their current facilities.

While the City has had to deal with water-related issues, like PFAS, officials applied pressure for years. In 2019, the Westfield Water Department was commended for their efforts with the Top Project Award for Water and Wastes Digest. The Department continues to invest in keeping the City's water supply safe and free from chemicals like PFAS.

7.5 **Goals, Policies, and Actions**

7.5.1 *Goals*

1. Provide, expand, and update the necessary infrastructure and resources to maintain and enhance a strong public school system.
2. Provide an orderly and efficient system of public facilities and services to support Westfield's current and future needs.
3. Enhance, adapt, and expand capacity of City-owned utilities (e.g., water, sewer, gas, electric and fiber) to ensure adequate capacity for healthy economic and residential development.

7.5.2 *Policies*

1. Support the School Department and School Committee in their efforts to provide students access to a high-quality educational environment and experience.
2. Ensure that public safety services and facilities are well maintained and adequately staffed throughout the City to ensure that there is capacity for growth and development.
3. Provide City departments with adequate staff and resources to ensure a high level of service to the community for current and future residents and businesses.

4. Maintain and enhance the services provided by the DPW related to City infrastructure and programs to ensure that future development has access and adequate capacity.
5. Continue to provide high quality public utilities to the residents of the City and find ways to expand and improve service to ensure equal access to utility service throughout the City.
6. Build partnerships with educational institutions to address critical issues of climate change.

7.5.3 *Actions*

1. Expand, maximize, facilitate, and streamline municipal transactions, permitting and governing actions that can be accomplished or accessed remotely/online.

Lead Party: Mayor

Support Party: Information Technology, applicable Department Heads/Boards

Timeframe: Short-term/Ongoing

2. Establish clear policies for meeting special communication needs in regard to City services and procedures (e.g., addressing language or hearing barriers).

Lead Party: Mayor

Support Party: City Council, City Solicitor

Timeframe: Short-term

3. Discourage dead end streets in future development to improve access and connectivity for emergency management services.

Lead Party: Planning Board

Support Party: Emergency Management

Timeframe: Medium-term

4. Assess staff capabilities and budgeting resources to adequately allocate funds for departments assigned with tasks beyond their typical scope of workload.

Lead Party: Mayor, City Council

Support Party: All Departments

Timeframe: Short-term

5. Build a partnership with Westfield State University as an elementary shelter in the face of climate change and major weather events.

Lead Party: Emergency Management

Support Party: Westfield State University

Timeframe: Short-term

6. Continue to modernize and upgrade City schools and school related facilities to meet or exceed State educational standards, with special focus on a new or renovated Westfield High School.

Lead Party: School Committee

Support Party: School Department, City Council, Mayor

Timeframe: Long-term/Ongoing

7. Continue to support high quality public services through support for the continued build-out of the public fiber system.

Lead Party: WG+E; Whip City Fiber

Support Party: City Council, Mayor

Timeframe: Short-term/Ongoing

8. Continue to support public safety efforts and officials with adequate staffing, equipment, and infrastructure, including a new Police Station, as community needs change.

Lead Party: EMA, DPW, Police, Fire

Support Party: City Council, Mayor

Timeframe: Short-term/Ongoing

9. Continue to implement the Sanitary Sewer System Master Plan, reviewing methods for continued funding and possible expansion to address future growth and development in the City.

Lead Party: DPW

Support Party: Engineering, City Council, Mayor

Timeframe: Ongoing

10. Continue to prepare, implement and track a capital budget for equipment and maintenance expenses.

Lead Party: Mayor

Support Party: Department Heads, City Council

Timeframe: Ongoing

11. Continue to support services and programs at the Senior Center and evaluate future needs as programs and services evolve and population dynamics change.

Lead Party: Council on Aging

Support Party: City Council, Mayor

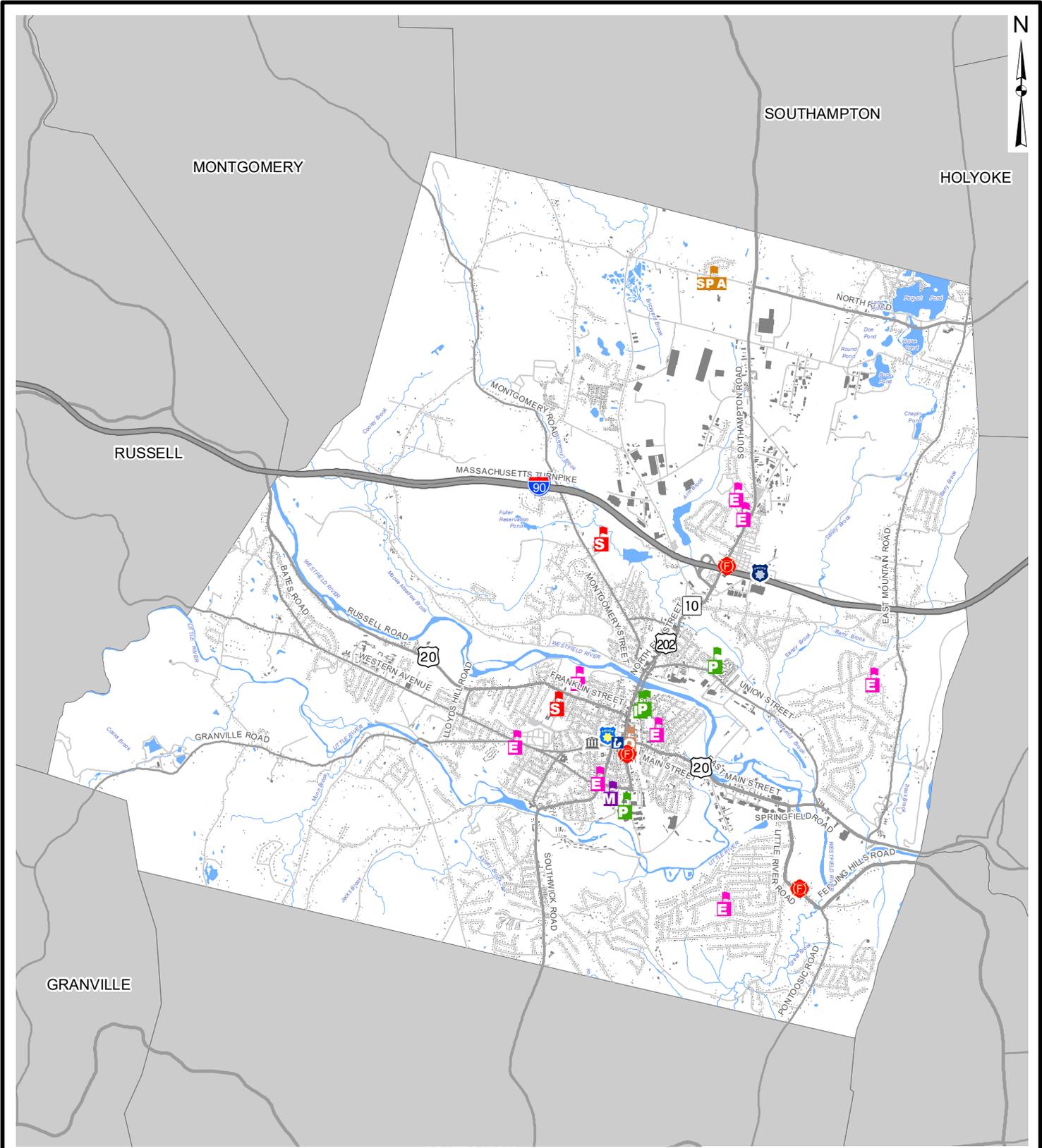
Timeframe: Short-term/Ongoing

12. Support community-wide efforts that reduce solid and food waste.

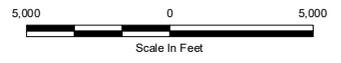
Lead Party: City Council

Support Party: Department of Public Works

Timeframe: Short-term

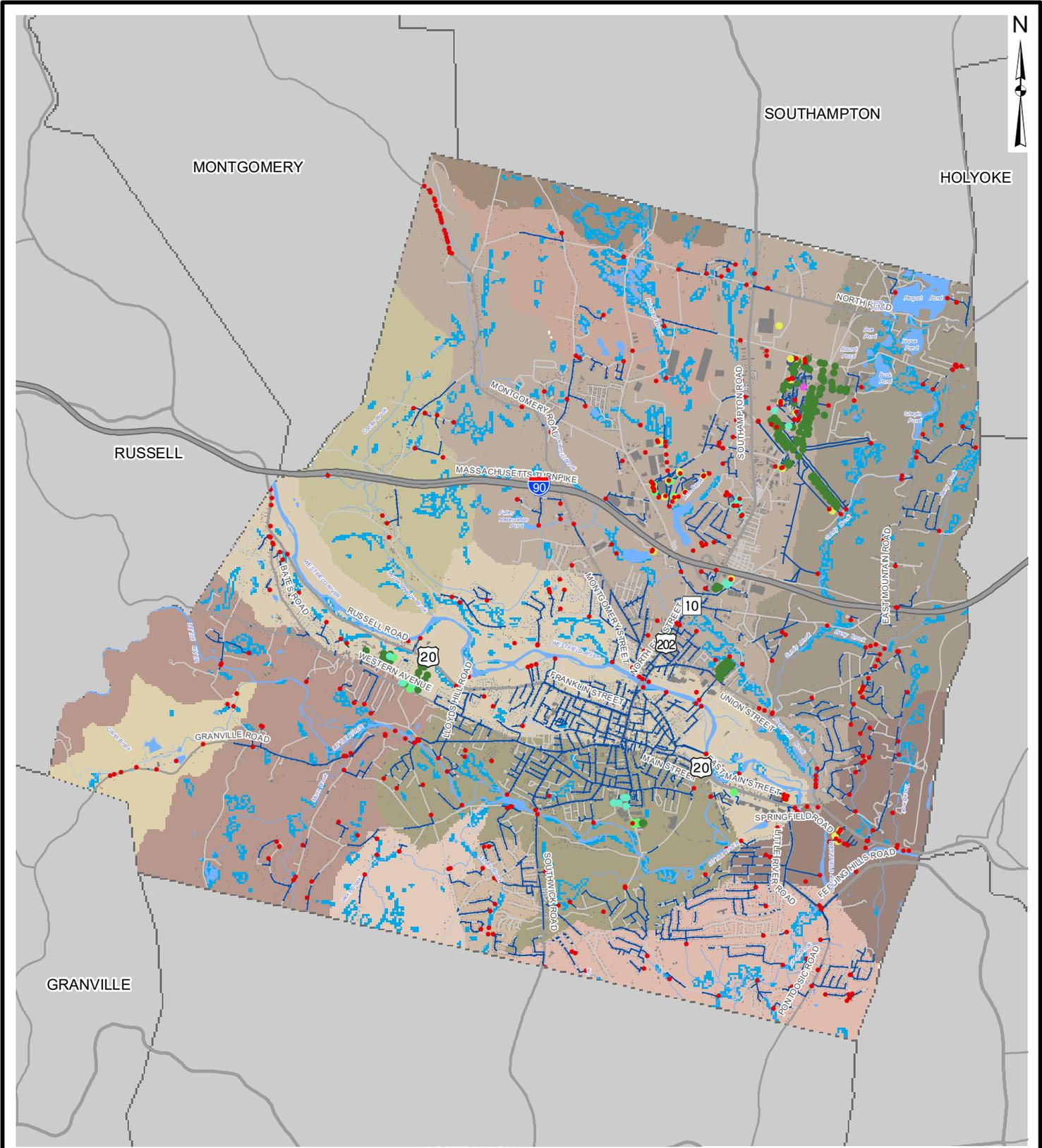


DATASOURCE: MassGIS, 2022



- | | | | | |
|--|---------------------|------------------------|--|--------------------------------|
| | Town and City Halls | Schools (PK-12) | | Public Other |
| | Local Police | | | Public Secondary |
| | State Police | | | Public Voc/Tech/Ag Reg'l HS |
| | Fire Stations | | | Special Education (Approved) |
| | Libraries | | | Special Education (Unapproved) |

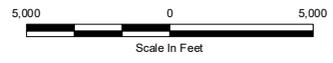
MAP 7-1	
WESTFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS WESTFIELD MASTER PLAN UPDATE	
PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE	
May 2023	SCALE: NOTED



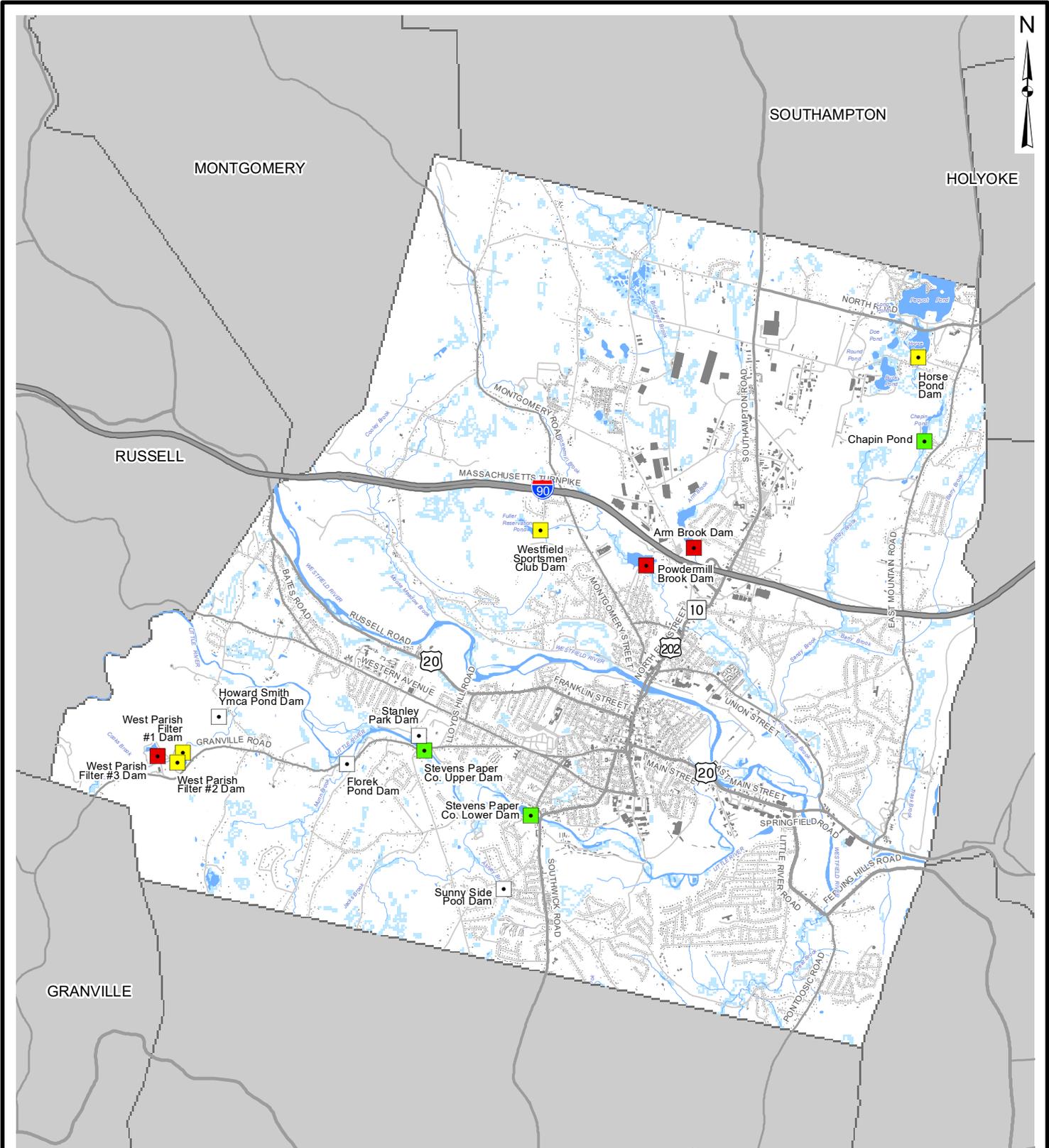
Management Facilities

- Below-Grade Storage
- Dry Detention
- Infiltration
- Leaching Cell
- Sediment Separator
- Stormceptor
- Swale
- Stormwater Discharge
- StormGravityMain
- Open Water
- Streams
- Wetlands
- Stormwater Catchments

DATASOURCE: City of Westfield, MassGIS, 2022

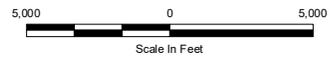


MAP 7-2	
WESTFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS WESTFIELD MASTER PLAN UPDATE	
Stormwater System	
May 2023	SCALE: NOTED

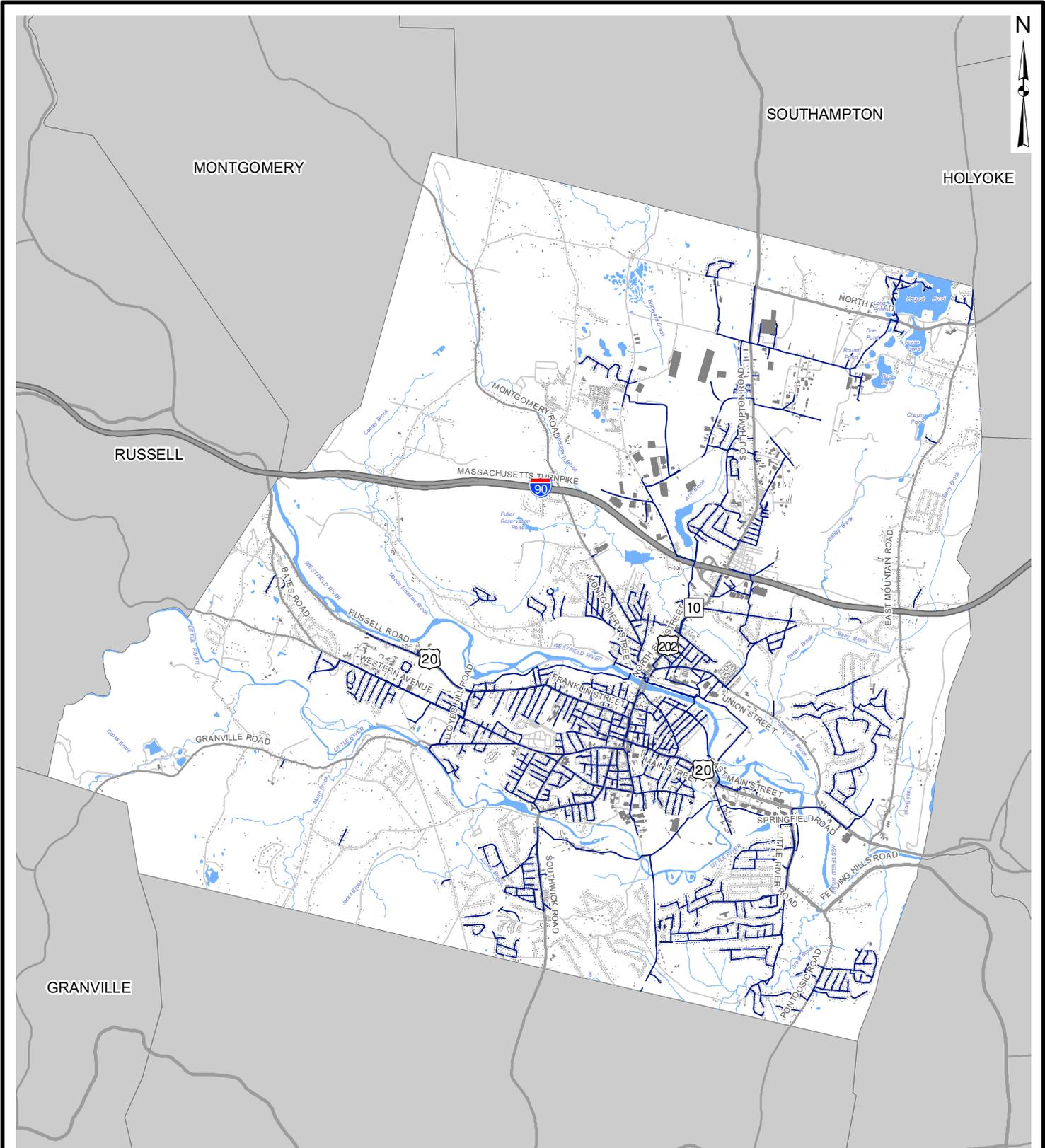


- High Hazard
- Significant Hazard
- Low Hazard
- N/A
- █ Open Water
- ~ Streams
- █ Wetlands

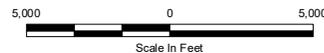
DATASOURCE: MassGIS, 2022



MAP 7-3	
WESTFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS WESTFIELD MASTER PLAN UPDATE	
DAMS	
May 2023	SCALE: NOTED

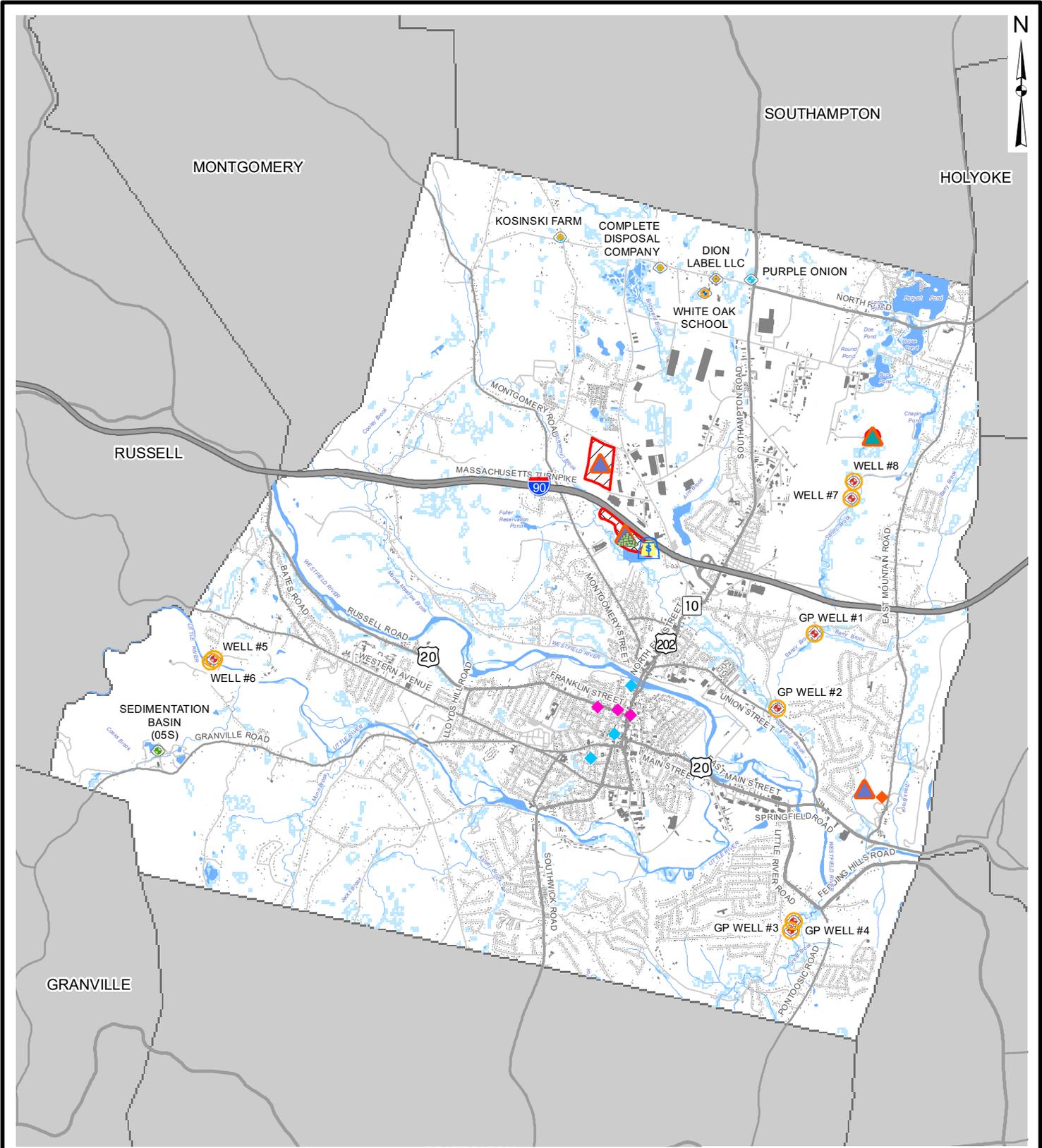


DATASOURCE: City of Westfield, MassGIS, 2022



- Sewer Mains
- Open Water
- ~ Streams

MAP 7-4	
WESTFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS WESTFIELD MASTER PLAN UPDATE	
Wastewater System	
May 2023	SCALE: NOTED



Water Supplies Public & Private

- Ground Water
- Surface Water
- Tansient Non-community
- Non-transient/Non-community
- DEP ZONE1 Wellhead Protection Areas
- MADEP Wetlands

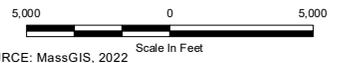
Landfills

- Municipal Solid Waste
- Construction/Demolition
- Inactive
- Closed
- Small Transfer Stations
- Registered Compost Sites

Chapter 21E

Tier Classified Sites

- TIER I
- TIER II
- TIER1D



DATASOURCE: MassGIS, 2022

MAP 7-3

WESTFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS
WESTFIELD MASTER PLAN UPDATE

WATER RESOURCES RISK

May 2023 SCALE: NOTED

CHAPTER 8. CIRCULATION, TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY



8.0 CIRCULATION, TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY

8.1 Vision

We envision an affordable, accessible, interconnected transportation system, which provides safe and well-maintained multiple transportation options for all with a focus on pedestrians and cyclists.

8.2 Introduction

Transportation is the movement of people and goods and may involve circulation by passenger vehicle, truck or trailer, railcar, plane, boat, bus, subway, bicycle, or other means. In the City of Westfield (referred to as “the City” throughout this section), the predominant means of transportation includes passenger vehicles and trucks for goods and services. A local rail service (Pioneer Valley Railroad) provides local freight shipment. While there is no public rail service, Westfield is serviced by the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA), providing local and regional bus service.

This section discusses the current transportation network available in the City including highway and roadway infrastructure, bridges, mass transit, biking, and pedestrian facilities. Effective transportation of people and goods allows for more productivity and is important to the functionality of a municipality. Planning for transportation allows a community to align long-term goals with other aspects of city planning such as land use, economic development, and housing.

Relevant circulation patterns include routes both within City boundaries as well as larger routes that link Westfield to the region and to the State. These circulation routes support connectivity of local goods and services to regional and Statewide markets and connect residents to regional job centers. The scale and location of the road network contributes to both existing and future development patterns within the community. This chapter of the plan ties in closely with the land use, economic development, agriculture, and housing chapters and will reference data from each that helps to inform transportation goals.

8.3 Existing Conditions

The following factors will affect the City’s transportation network and have continual impacts on the City’s influx in traffic volumes and future development.

8.3.1 Roadways

Westfield has two major highways that service the City, Route 202/Route 10 that runs north to south, and Route 20, running east to west. The Massachusetts Turnpike (Interstate 90) bisects the center of Westfield. All three fall under the jurisdiction of the Massachusetts Department of Transportation, with the exception of some street segments (MassDOT).

Table 8-1. Functional Classification of Westfield Roadways	
Classification	Miles
Limited Access Highway	13.24
Multi-Lane Highway, not limited access	2.71
Other Numbered Route	19.5
Major Road	28.77
Minor Street or Road	255.92
Minor Street or Road (minimal info & no street name)	0.51
TOTAL	320.65

Source: MassDOT, MassGIS

The City maintains all municipal roads within the City's boundaries. Additionally, there are several private ways (often subdivision streets that were never accepted as public ways) that the City has historically dedicated incidental maintenance efforts to, such as snowplowing.

8.3.2 Traffic Volume

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation collects and publishes traffic count data throughout the Commonwealth. In Westfield, the heaviest traffic volume occurs around the intersections of the 3 major highways that run through the City. The greatest volume appears at the intersection of the Turnpike (exit 41) and Route 202. The City has studied layout alternatives near the Turnpike to improve traffic flow, including an eastbound slip ramp and roundabout at Southampton Road. There is also significant traffic volume at the intersection of Route 202/10 and Route 20.

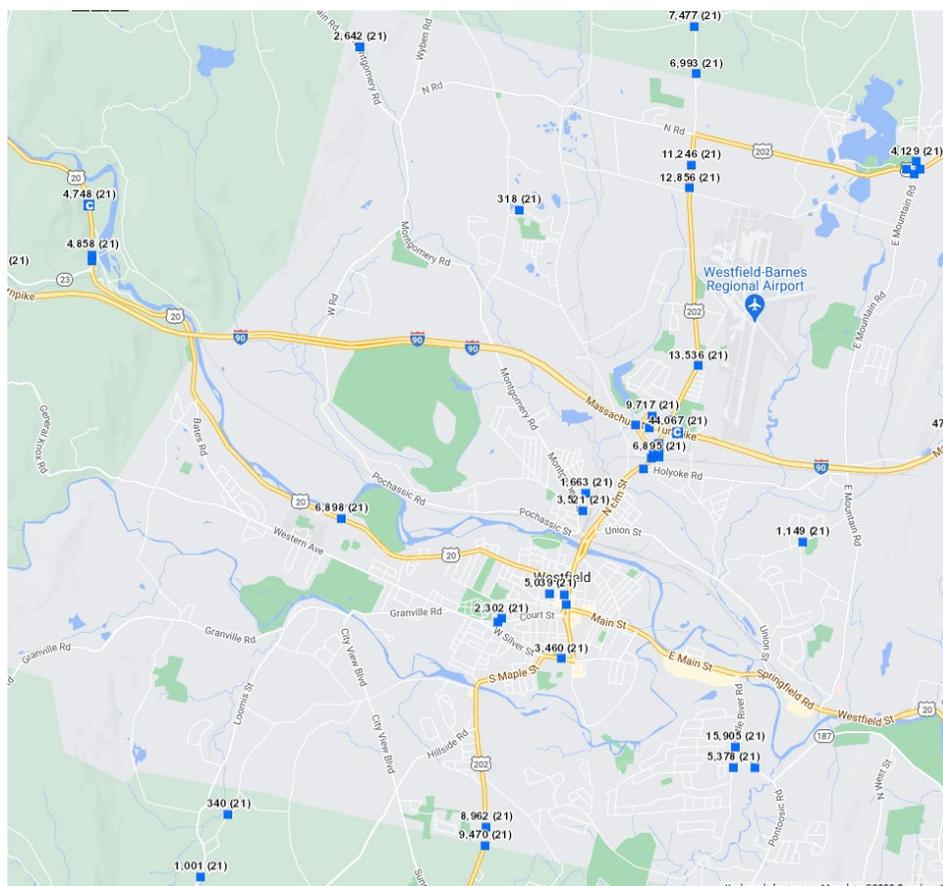


Figure 8-1. Westfield Traffic Volume Map

Source: MassDOT Transportation Data Management System

8.3.3 Roadway Safety

The MassDOT crash data indicates approximately 702 crashes per year from the years 2012 to 2021. The total number of crashes have remained somewhat inconsistent since 2012, with number of crashes between 2012-2013 and 2015-2017 remaining relatively steady. As shown in Figure 8-2, the City experienced a low of 608 crashes in 2014 and a high of 767 crashes in 2016. There was a surge in total number of crashes in 2019 before a downward trend from 2019 to 2021. This downward trend

can be attributed to fewer drivers on the road during the COVID-19 pandemic. The total number of crashes in 2021 (613) remained steady compared to 2020 (611).

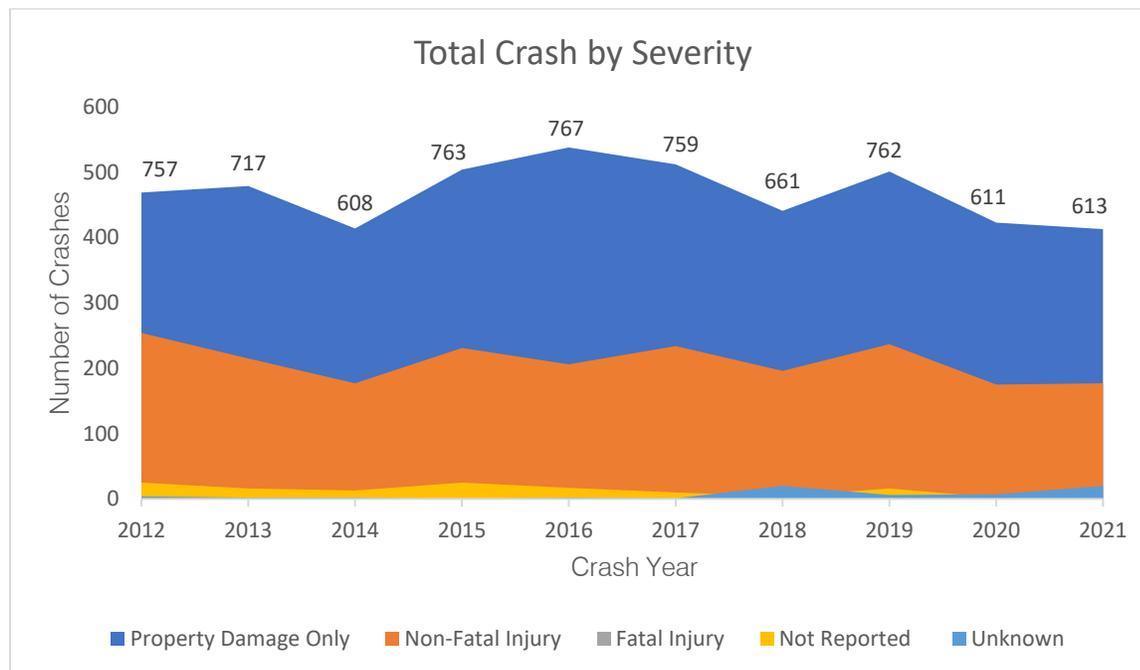


Figure 8-2. Westfield Crashes by Severity

Source: MassDOT Crash Query and Visualization

8.3.4 Crash Type

Of the 7,018 crashes from 2012 to 2021, 217 crashes involved non-motorist actions such as persons walking, running, or cycling. Between 2012 to 2021, 29 crashes resulted in fatalities. Out of the 29 fatal crashes, seven crashes involved a non-motorist walking, running, cycling, or working. The seven fatal crashes involving non-motorists occurred on the following street/roadways:

- 44 Pontoosic Road
- 95 Notre Dame Street
- 177 Main Street Rte 20 E
- 577 Western Ave
- Montgomery Street / Prospect Street
- Mechanic Street / Bartlett St / Mechanic St
- Western Avenue

Between 2012 to 2021, 40 crashes resulted in a suspected serious injury. Of the 69 crashes resulting in a suspected serious or fatal injury, 4 involved an older adult driver (65+ years) and 3 involved a younger driver (less than 18 years old).

Figure 8-3 shows crash locations in the City within the last 3 years. The majority of crashes occur along the main arterial routes within the City.

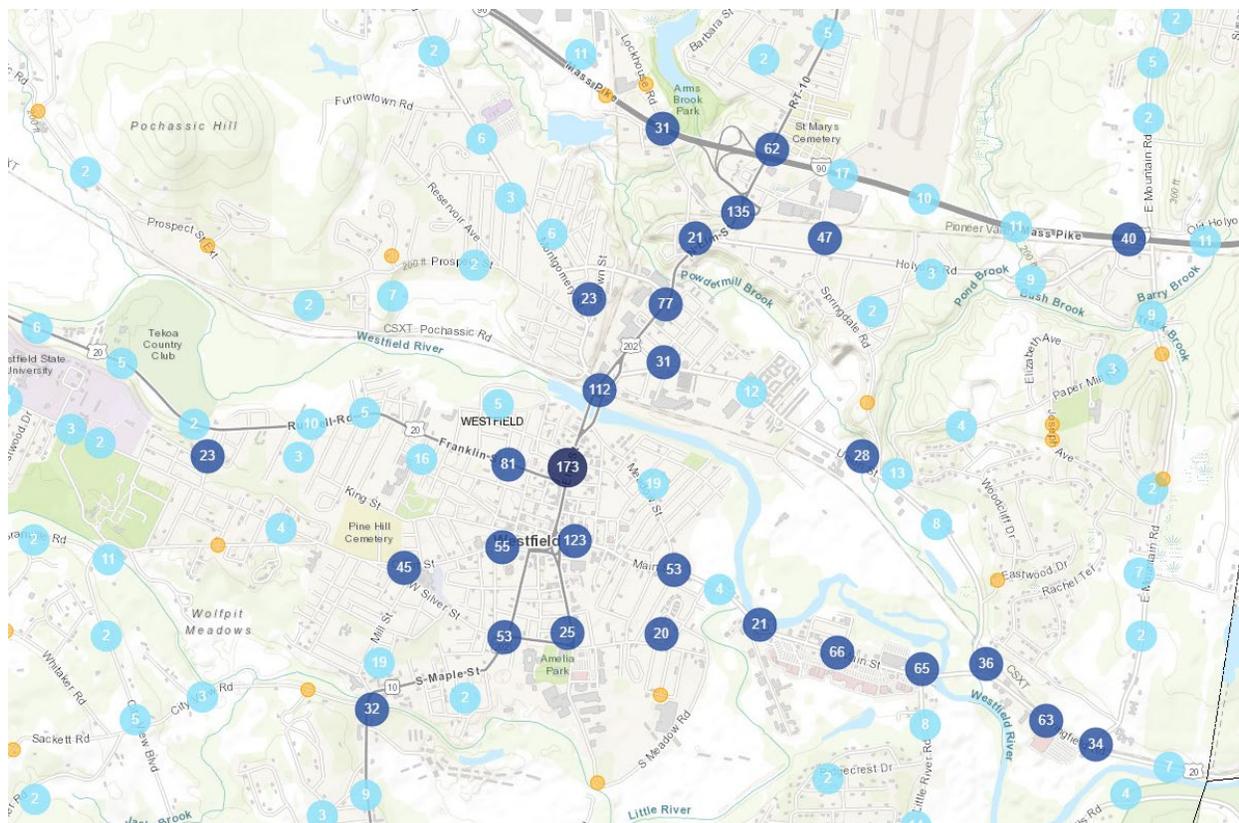


Figure 8-3. Westfield Crashes by Location
 Source: MassDOT: Crash Data Portal

8.3.5 Bridges

There are 35 maintained bridges in Westfield. Each bridge is rated based on bridge condition. Bridge condition is determined by the lowest rating of National Bridge Inventory (NBI) condition ratings for deck, superstructure, substructure, or culvert. If the lowest rating is greater than or equal to 7, the bridge is classified as Good; if it is less than or equal to 4, the classification is Poor. Bridges rated 5 or 6 are classified as Fair. Twenty-seven (27) bridges are rated Fair, 7 are rated Good, and only 1 is rated Poor.

The two oldest bridges were constructed in 1850, while the newest bridge was constructed in 2005.

Table 8-2. Westfield Bridge Location and Condition ^a				
Bridge Location	AADT	Date Constructed	Construction	Condition
Little River Road over Water Great Brook	13,190	1850	Concrete Tee beam	Fair
Notre Dame over PVR	6,500	1850	Steel Stringer/Multi-beam or girder	Fair
Hwy Pochassic St over Comb Access Rd & PVR	7,758	1904	Steel Girder and floorbeam system	Good

Table 8-2. Westfield Bridge Location and Condition^a

Hwy Loomis St over Water Munn Brook	776	1916	Concrete Tee beam	Fair
Cowles Bridge *currently being replaced	21,800	1916	Concrete Arch - Deck	Poor
Hwy Lockhouse Rd over RR PVRP	647	1923	Wood Stringer/Multi- beam or girder	Fair
Hwy Dry Bridge Rd over RR PVRP	50	1923	Wood Slab	Fair
Hwy Russellville Rd over Water Powder Mill Brook	2,327	1934	Concrete Tee beam	Fair
Hwy Granville Rd over Water Munn Brook	3,100	1935	Concrete Slab	Fair
Us202 St10/Elm Sb over Water Westfield River	27,300	1938	Steel Truss - Thru	Fair
Hwy Lr Sandy Hill over Water Powdermill Brook	129	1939	Steel Stringer/Multi- beam or girder	Fair
Hwy Pochassic Rd over Water Moose Meadow Brook	129	1939	Steel Stringer/Multi- beam or girder	Fair
20 E Main St over Water Little River	31,293	1951	Steel Stringer/Multi- beam or girder	Fair
Hwy Shaker Rd over Water Great Brook	9,181	1955	Steel Culvert	Fair
Hwy Shaker Rd over Water Great Brook	7,100	1956	Prestressed Slab	Good
Us202 /St10/N Elm over Water Powder Mill Brook	29,000	1956	Prestressed Slab	Good
Hwy Montgomery Rd over Water Powder Mill Brook	2,715	1957	Prestressed Slab	Fair
I 90 over Water Cooley Brook	48,370	1957	Concrete Culvert	Fair
I 90 over Water Moose Meadow Brook	29,416	1957	Concrete Culvert	Fair

Table 8-2. Westfield Bridge Location and Condition^a

US202 /ST10 over I 90	18,491	1957	Steel Stringer/Multi-beam or girder	Fair
I 90 Ramps Int 3 over I 90	13,680	1957	Steel Stringer/Multi-beam or girder	Fair
I 90 Wb over Hwy E Mountain Rd	31,191	1957	Steel Stringer/Multi-beam or girder	Fair
I 90 WB over RR PVR	21,613	1957	Steel Stringer/Multi-beam or girder	Fair
I 90 EB over HWY Lockhouse Rd	16,940	1957	Steel Stringer/Multi-beam or girder	Fair
I 90 WB over Hwy E Mountain Rd	31,191	1957	Steel Stringer/Multi-beam or girder	Fair
I 90 EB over RR PVR	21,613	1957	Steel Stringer/Multi-beam or girder	Fair
I 90 WB over Hwy Lockhouse Rd	17,845	1957	Steel Stringer/Multi-beam or girder	Fair
Hwy Montgomery Rd over I 90	6,892	1957	Steel Stringer/Multi-beam or girder	Fair
Hwy West Rd over I 90	600	1957	Steel Stringer/Multi-beam or girder	Fair
Hwy Lockhouse Rd over Water Arm Brook	9,569	1980	Concrete Culvert	Good
US202 /ST10/SHMPTN over RR PVR	25,690	1997	Prestressed Box Beam or girders - Single or Spread	Fair
Hwy Northwest Rd over Water Little River	600	1999	Prestressed Box beam or girders – Multiple	Good
Hwy Granville Rd over Water Little River	6,724	2004	Concrete Arch - Deck	Fair
US 20 Springfield Rd over Water Powder Mill Brook	14,000	2005		Good

Table 8-2. Westfield Bridge Location and Condition^a

			Steel Stringer/Multi-beam or girder	
US 20 Springfield Rd over Water Westfield River	20,504	2005	Steel Stringer/Multi-beam or girder	Good

Source: National Bridge Inventory (2019 edition)

Note:

- a. Bridge Condition is determined by the lowest rating of National Bridge Inventory (NBI) condition ratings for deck, superstructure, substructure or culvert. If the lowest rating is greater than or equal to 7, the bridge is classified as Good; if it is less than or equal to 4, the classification is Poor. Bridges rated 5 or 6 are classified as Fair.

The City's non-vehicular bridges include a railroad overpass at East Mountain Road operated by the Pioneer Valley Road. The 103-year-old East Mountain train bridge is narrow with low clearance, which impacts the City's traffic patterns. In 2020, the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Railroad administration provided funds for beam installation, signage and warning lights, and replacement of 10,000 feet of rails and ties at the Mountain Road bridge (22 News, 2020). The City recently added or rehabilitated several bridge overpasses for the Columbia Rail Trail, including Little River with overlooks, South Meadow Road, and East Silver Street (City of Westfield). The most recent phases of the trail included the following:

- A new trademark bridge over Main Street
- Rehabilitation to Thomas Street, Chapel Street, Elm Street, and Orange street bridges
- Rehabilitation to the Westfield River railroad bridge

8.3.6 Transportation Users

An important component of understanding and planning for a community's transportation network is having a baseline of information on the network's users. Those that use the network are going to drive the demand for certain types of transportation in certain areas. Table 8-3 provides information related to how Westfield residents get to work.

Table 8-3. Commuting to Work Data in Westfield^a

Primary Transportation Mode	Percentage of Population
Car, truck, or van	75.6%
Public transportation (excluding taxicab)	2.5%
Walking	2.2%
Bicycle	0.4%
Taxicab, motorcycle, or other means	1.5%

Source: U.S. Census 2021

Note:

- a. 17.9% of the population worked from home.
b. Data is for workers 16 years and over with +/- 0.1 margin of error.

The majority of residents in Westfield commute to work by personal vehicle (i.e., car, truck, or van). A similar percentage of residents walk or take public transportation to work. Since there is no

commuter rail service in the City, public transportation is by means of the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVRTA) bus system.

According to the U.S. Census American Community Survey 2021 Five-Year Estimate, 18 percent of households in Westfield have access to one vehicle, 43 percent have access to two vehicles, 37 percent have access to 3 or more vehicles, and 2 percent has no access to vehicles.

The average commuting travel time is 25.6 minutes, with only 7.7% traveling an hour or more.

Table 8-4. Commuting Time for Westfield Residents ^a	
Commuting Times	Percentage of Population
Less than 10 minutes	13.2
10 to 14 minutes	13.6
15 to 19 minutes	15.7
20 to 24 minutes	14.7
25 to 29 minutes	6.9
30 to 34 minutes	13.7
35 to 44 minutes	6.9
45 to 59 minutes	7.6
60 or more minutes	7.7
Mean travel time to work (minutes)	25.6

Source: U.S. Census 2019

Note:

- a. Data is for workers 16 years and over who did not work from home.

Figure 8-4 demonstrates the areas that a Westfield resident could drive to in 30 minutes. Many towns and cities within the region are accessible within this travel time including regional destinations such as Springfield, Chicopee, and Holyoke.

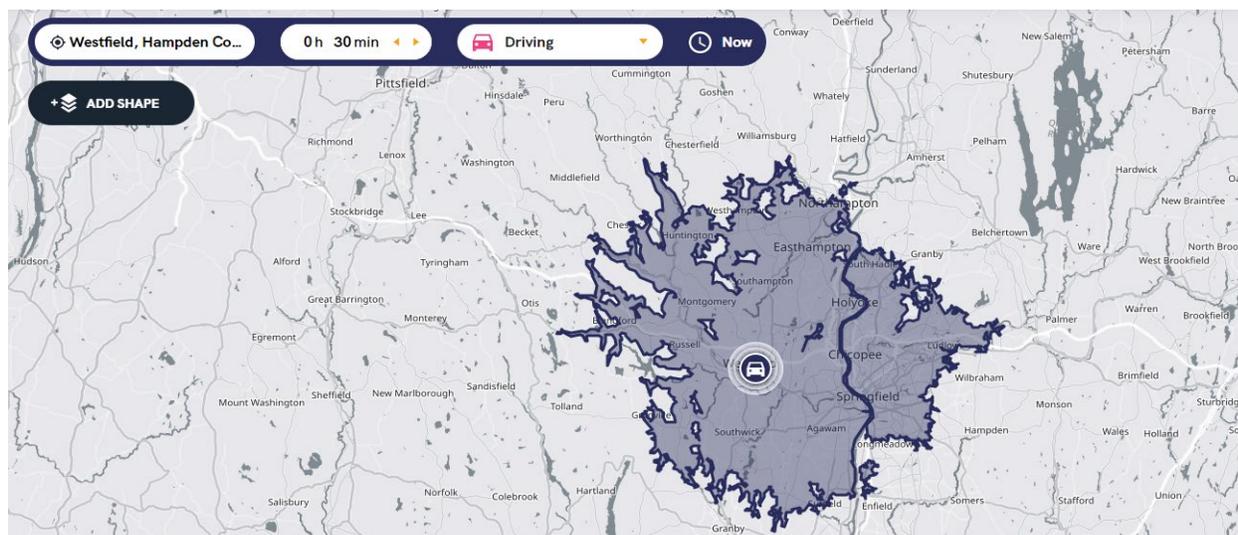


Figure 8-4. Westfield Travel Times
Source: TravelTime (app.traveltime.com)

8.3.7 Parking

The City maintains public parking lots in the central business district and offers a map of downtown public parking on its website. There are 8 separate lots in the downtown area offering 2-3 free hours

of parking. The Main Street 1 Lot offers free parking for nearby restaurant patrons. The Downtown Lots are all within the vicinity of Route 20. The City also maintains the Northside Parking Lots, along Union Ave and North Elm Street. There are three lots available here, all offering 2-3 hours of free parking in addition to on-street parking. The City has planned parking improvements for a gravel lot on Elm Street as an interim measure until the area can be redeveloped.

8.3.8 Public Transportation Services

The Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA) provides bus services to the City. The PVTA is the largest regional transit authority in Massachusetts with 186 buses, 132 vans and 24 participating member communities. The PVTA was created by Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 161B in 1974 as a funding source and to provide oversight and coordination of public transportation within the Pioneer Valley region. There are 24 member communities of the PVTA, including Westfield. The PVTA has three local Routes: R10, which serves Westfield, Westfield State University, and West Springfield via Route 20 (beginning at Union Station in neighboring Springfield, with three stops in Westfield); B23 which serves neighboring Holyoke and Westfield via Holyoke Community College (with beginning and end stops at Westfield Center); and the Westfield State University Shuttle (with four stops) that runs on an academic schedule. The PVTA ridership has seen an increase in ridership with FY22 ridership increasing to 60.1% of the 2019 ridership levels (Pioneer Valley Transit Authority, 2022).

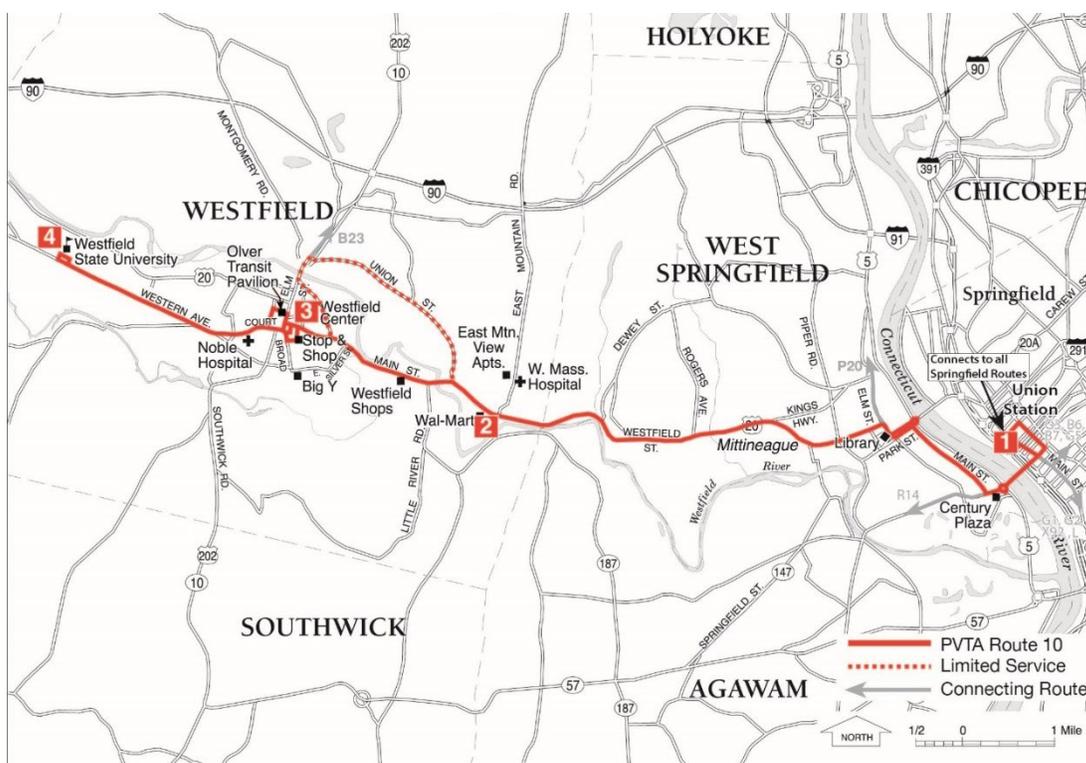


Figure 8-5. Westfield PVTA Route 10 (not to be confused with State Route 10)

Source: Pioneer Valley Transit Authority

Hulmes Transportation services, in conjunction with the PVTA, provides shuttle services for seniors and people with disabilities. The Westfield Council on Aging provides a direct phone number to arrange pickup and drop-off by Hulmes.

8.3.9 Westfield-Barnes Regional Airport

The Westfield-Barnes Regional Airport (Barnes Air National Guard Base) is one of Massachusetts' largest airports. The joint civil-military airport is home of the 104th Fighter Wing, which serves Massachusetts and the Nation at Barnes Air National Guard Base (104th Fighter Wing). In the year ending March 2022, the airport had 47,815 aircraft operations (U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Aviation Administration, 2023):

- 44.38% general aviation local
- 41.20% general aviation international
- 11.99% military
- 0.08% air carrier
- 2.35% air taxi

The airport also includes the following facilities:

- One fixed-base operator and one GA maintenance facility
- Three flight schools approved by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)

8.3.10 Rail

While there is no public rail service in Westfield, the Pioneer Valley Railroad (PVRT) does provide freight service. The PVRT was formed in 1982 and serves industries, warehouse operations, and transload facilities in the cities of Westfield and Holyoke. Rail traffic moves via the CSX interchange in Westfield and a PAS interchange in Holyoke. The Amtrak route passes through the City non-stop. A plan for east-west passenger/commuter rail service has been advancing at the State level, though at present Westfield is not envisioned to have a transit stop (Massachusetts Department of Transportation, 2021).

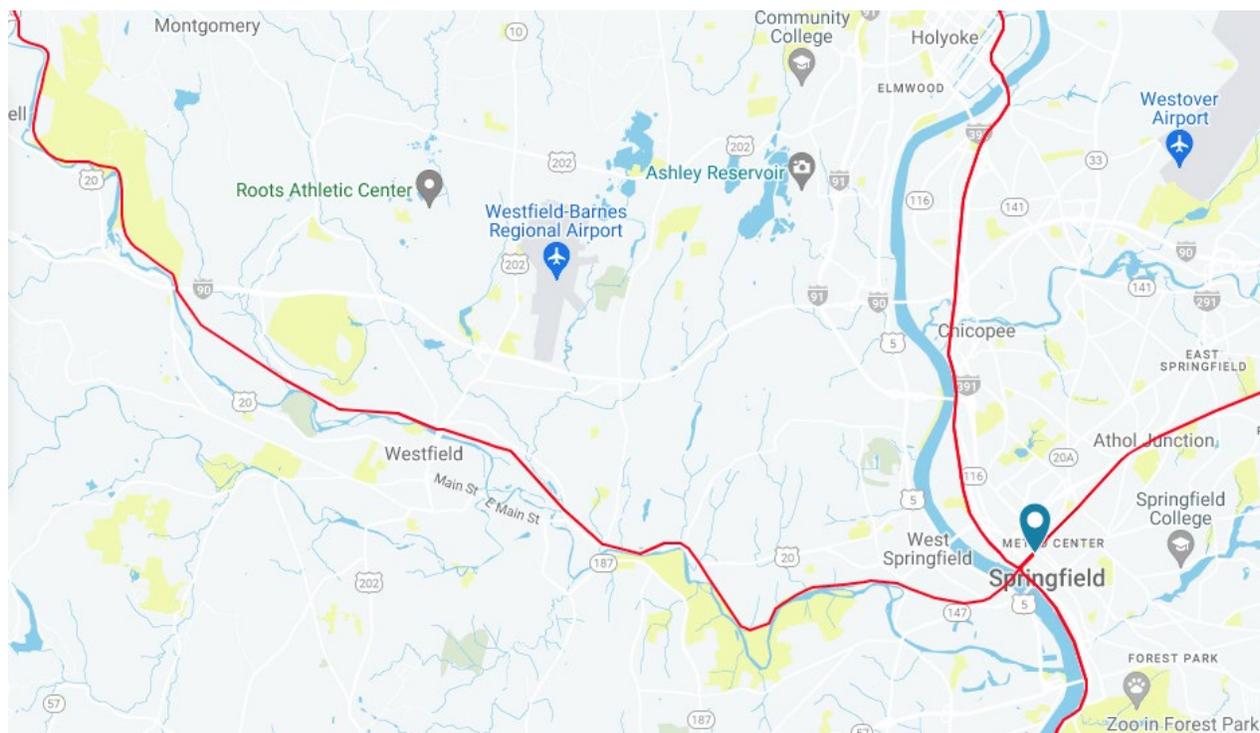
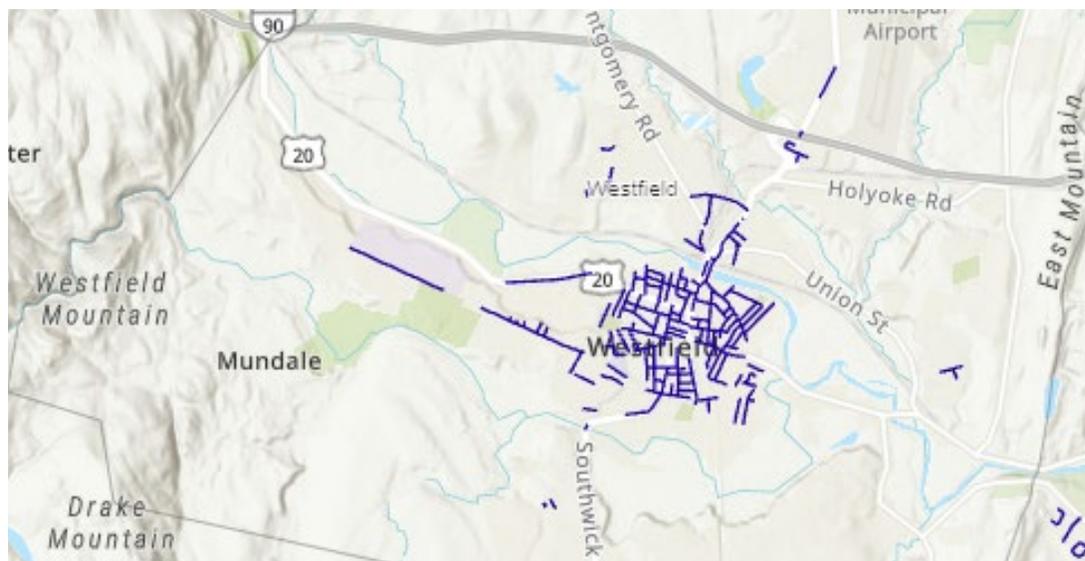


Figure 8-6. Amtrak Route Passing Westfield

Source: Amtrak

8.3.11 Sidewalks, Trails, & Bike Paths

The pedestrian facilities database from MassDOT indicates that there are over 43 miles of roadway with sidewalks in the City (MassDOT, 2020). Majority of these sidewalks are in downtown. Several projects with ongoing efforts towards sidewalk, trails, and bike path improvements are detailed in the Current Measures section of this chapter.

**Figure 8-7. Sidewalks**

Source: MassDOT

8.4 Challenges and Opportunities**8.4.1 Challenges**

Westfield is serviced by PVRTA with transportation routes to Westfield, Westfield State University, West Springfield, and Holyoke. Despite these options, residents of Westfield typically depend on cars to travel (75.6%). According to Census ACS 5-year estimates, only 2.5% of residents used public transportation to commute to work. This is primarily due to the infrequency of service. Over the past few years, PVRTA has reduced the number of bus trips through the City. However, fewer buses leads to fewer people trusting the system.

The City experiences the majority of its crashes along the main arterial routes within the City and heaviest traffic volume around the intersections of the major highways that run through the City. These areas need traffic improvements to improve roadway safety.

8.4.2 Opportunities

The City can work with the PVRTA to further expand transportation routes to better connect the City with Westfield State University and continue its efforts towards infrastructure improvements to improve unsafe and vulnerable roadways, explore options for trail extensions into new neighborhoods to promote use of recreational areas, and increase walking and biking accommodations to improve pedestrian and bicyclist safety.

8.5 Current Measures and Practices

There are several projects with ongoing efforts towards infrastructure improvements. These projects are taking place simultaneously and include the following (City of Westfield):

- American Rescue Plan Act Funded Improvements
- Old Town Roads Improvements
- East Main Street/Route 20 - MassDOT Project
- Southampton Road Improvements (Route 10/US 202) - MassDOT Project
- Western Avenue Improvements
- Westfield River Levee Multi-Use Trail
- Columbia Greenway Rail Trail
- Cowles Bridge Replacement - MassDOT Project
- Mill Street - South Maple Street - Crane Avenue Intersection Improvements

American Rescue Plan Act Funded Improvements

In 2022, a combination of American Rescue Plan Act and community development funds were allocated to repair and revitalize downtown sidewalks (Currier, 2022). Orange Street, Sackett Street, and White Street areas were identified in need of most sidewalk improvements.

Old Town Road Improvements

Over the last decade, the City has been selecting streets to address sidewalk improvements and other key elements as part of the Old Town Roadway effort (City of Westfield). This project was originally designed in 2014 to address neighborhoods along the north and south sides of Main Street and has since been phased. Phase 1 of the efforts include Georgia Street, Fredrick Street, and Parkside Avenue. Construction for this phase is anticipated to complete in early 2023. Future phases of this effort may include the following:

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------|
| • Cleveland Ave | • Lozier Ave |
| • Clinton Ave | • Noble Street |
| • Cycle Street | • Ashley Street |
| • East Silver Street | • Cross Street |
| • Exchange Street | • State Street |
| • Lindbergh Boulevard | • Taylor Ave |

East Main Street/Route 20 - MassDOT Project

In April 2022, the City voted to implement the MassDOT Complete Streets program. The Complete Streets Policy has been developed and codified into an ordinance by the City and approved by the Commonwealth. Westfield is currently working to implement the program, including developing a prioritization plan. A current State project is the Westfield Main/East Main Street (Route 20) Complete Streets Improvements. This is a priority corridor because it was identified as having a high potential for everyday walking and biking. There is sidewalk on only one side of the roadway between Meadow Street and Delmont Ave., and minimal shoulders exist in many areas. The project is reviewing pedestrian and bike accommodations along East Main Street/Route 20 from Meadow Street to Delmont Avenue. The project, both design and construction, will be fully funded by MassDOT. Some of the sidewalk improvements and bike lanes have recently been completed in East Main Street Corridor and East of Delmont (2023).

Southampton Road (Route 10/US 202) - MassDOT Project

This project includes roadway alignment and new pavement curbing, dedicated turning lanes, new crosswalks, traffic signal improvements, an 8- to 10-foot shared use path along the west side of the right-of-way, sidewalk improvements along sections of the east side, utility pole relocation, and drainage improvements (City of Westfield).

Western Ave Improvements

The City has been improving bicycle and pedestrian connections between Westfield State University and downtown by constructing a multi-use path along Western Ave. Valley Bike rental stations will be installed near the University and at the PVTA terminal downtown. These are the first Westfield locations for this regional bike share network, with potential for additional stations to expand micro mobility in the City. Western Avenue roadway project includes improvements along Western Ave, west from intersection Llewellyn Drive, east to the intersection of Court, High, and Mill streets, and improvements on Lloyds Hill Road and West Silver Street between Western Avenue and Mill Street.

Westfield River Levee Multi-Use Trail

The Westfield River Walk is a stone-dust levee walking path which provides views of the Westfield River and connects downtown neighborhoods, the Great River Bridges and various city parks. The path can be accessed with parking from Whitney Playground, Kane/Wojtkiewicz Park, and Chapman Playground or from various streets if walking. The path also intersects with the Columbia Greenway Rail Trail near Sackett Street and informally continues westward past Shepard Street. The City is proceeding with improvement plans for a 2-mile multi-use levee trail from Ellsworth Street to the Williams Riding Way pump station off Meadow Street.



Photo 8-8. Westfield River Walk – Access from Chapman Playground

Columbia Greenway Rail Trail

The Columbia Greenway Rail Trail is a multi-use rail trail that connects at its south end to the Southwick Rail Trail and into Connecticut and extends north, through downtown to and over the Westfield River. This was a phased project constructed over a decade which primarily converted a pre-existing railroad to a newly constructed ten-foot-wide multi-use trail elevated, including throughout the downtown area. The unique elevated nature of the trail minimizes conflict with motor vehicles and is one of the first and only of this kind of urban system in the United States.

Improvements and additions to the rail trail include kiosks, benches, lighting, and the rehabilitation or construction of several bridges, including Little River (w/ overlooks), South Meadow Road, Westfield River, Elm Street and Main East Silver Street.

The trail includes several direct connections to streets and neighborhoods and a dedicated parking area off Shaker Road. A newly constructed underpass connects the Taylor Avenue neighborhood to the St. Dennis Street and Hedges Avenue neighborhood. Connections include Thomas Street, Chapel Street, Elm Street, with a final connection to the recently completed Westfield River Esplanade, an extension of the Columbia Greenway. The City is exploring options for a trail extension to the north. However, as the rail line is active on the North Side, such options are often limited to parallel street or utility corridor routes.

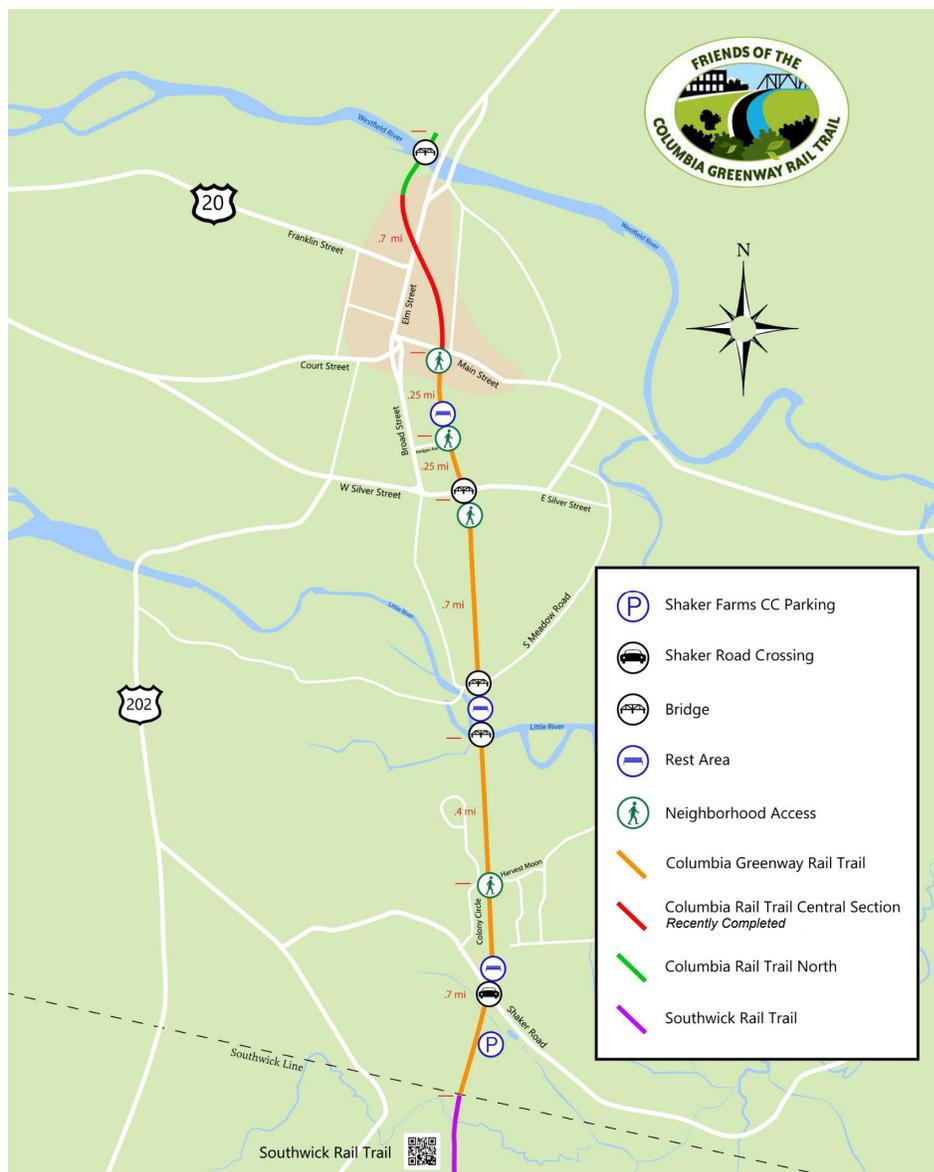


Figure 8-9. Westfield Columbia Greenway Rail Trail
 Source: Friends of the Columbia Greenway Rail trail

8.6 Goals & Policies

8.6.1 Goals

1. Maintain and enhance a cost-effective, efficient, safe, and accessible multi-modal transportation system.
2. Support efforts to enhance and increase alternative modes of transportation such as ride shares, bicycling, walking and public transportation.

8.6.2 Policies

1. Implement road-design and maintenance standards and procedures that protect and promote neighborhood character while minimizing the impacts of development patterns.

2. Maintain a proactive and forward-looking program for street needs, maintenance, reconstruction, and accompanying infrastructure that is fiscally responsible and implementable.
3. Promote cooperative state and local efforts in transportation planning to help ensure that the City's mix of urban and rural character is contextually considered as part of transportation planning and construction projects.
4. Encourage alternative modes of transportation and increase opportunities in the City for access to biking, walking, and carpooling, especially for a growing senior population.
5. Implement policies and actions that will promote safety through reducing traffic conflicts and crashes.
6. Ensure that both new development and redevelopment is consistent with the City's Complete Streets program.
7. Alleviate traffic congestion and mitigate impacts from truck traffic, especially as affecting residential areas.

8.6.3 *Actions*

1. Submit project applications based on the City's Complete Street Prioritization Plan to maximize Complete Streets funding opportunities.

Lead Party: Engineering

Support Party: Planning, DPW

Timeframe: Short-term/Ongoing

2. Continue to actively participate in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) through the Pioneer Valley MPO, to ensure that transportation infrastructure in the City is adequately maintained and improved, including advocating for local priorities for inclusion on the TIP.

Lead Party: Engineering

Support Party: Planning, DPW

Timeframe: Ongoing

3. Maintain relationships with the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA) and the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) to continually assess and update the level of bus service in the City.

Lead Party: Community Development

Support Party: Engineering, Mayor

Timeframe: Ongoing

4. Identify opportunities to improve access to safe and convenient alternative modes of transportation such as biking/bike share stations, walking, and carpooling.

Lead Party: Engineering

Support Party: Planning, DPW, City Council, Friends of the Columbia Greenway Rail Trail

Timeframe: Short-term/Ongoing

5. Continue to provide increased funding for locally maintained transportation infrastructure (roadways and drainage) to ensure a high level of services to the community.

Lead Party: DPW

Support Party: City Council, Mayor

Timeframe: Short-term/Ongoing

6. Continue to further the Department of Public Works' mission by securing and maintaining the necessary equipment and personnel to maintain roadways, sweep streets, remove snow, and maintain drainage infrastructure.

Lead Party: DPW

Support Party: City Council, Mayor

Timeframe: Ongoing

7. Undertake a downtown municipal parking study to assess needs in order to improve capacity and convenience.

Lead Party: Off-Street Parking Commission

Support Party: Community Development, Consultant, DPW

Timeframe: Short-term/Medium-term

8. Advocate for expansion of public transportation, including bus routes and access, and options for local access to existing and proposed passenger rail lines.

Lead Party: Community Development

Support Party: Mayor

Timeframe: Ongoing

9. Work with the Westfield Police Department, DPW, and MassDOT to identify roadways and intersections with high crash rates in order to develop prioritized measures which improve pedestrian and vehicular safety.

Lead Party: Traffic Commission

Support Party: Police Department, Engineering, Board of Public Works

Timeframe: Short-term/Ongoing

10. Engage with MassDOT to offer input on improvement projects on state-owned and operated roads and their associated rights-of-way to promote consistency with this Master Plan, and

to ensure proper operation and maintenance of transportation infrastructure outside the City's purview.

Lead Party: Engineering

Support Party: DPW, Mayor

Timeframe: Short-term/Ongoing

11. Continue to advocate for improvements and redesign to the Southampton Road/MassPike interchange/jug handle area, such as an eastbound I-90 slip ramp and a roundabout at this gateway to the City.

Lead Party: Mayor

Support Party: Engineering, MassDOT

Timeframe: Ongoing

12. Facilitate the acceptance of contemporary private subdivision roads that meet City standards but that were never accepted as public ways.

Lead Party: Ward Councilors

Support Party: Engineering, Board of Public Works, Planning

Timeframe: Medium-term

13. Work with warehouses, distribution center operators and other sizable truck-generating facilities to identify and promote appropriate trucking routes and shipping/delivery times in order to comprehensively minimize impacts to City traffic and residential neighborhoods.

Lead Party: Ward Councilors

Support Party: Police Department, Board of Public Works, Traffic Commission

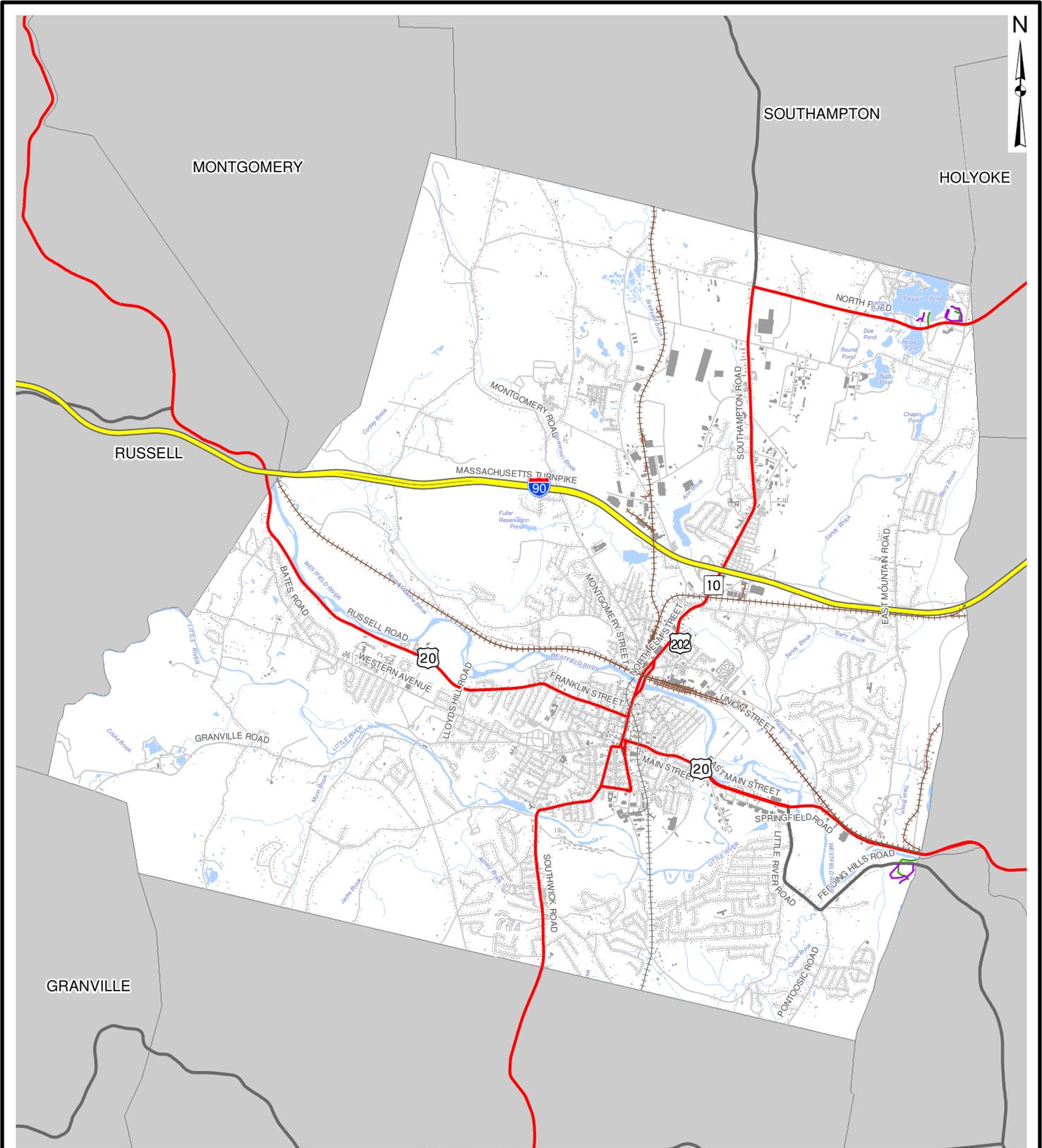
Timeframe: Short-term/Ongoing

14. Investigate, advocate for and support improvements to railroad under/overpasses that presently limit vehicular traffic flow due to height, weight, and/or width inadequacies (East Mountain Road (2), Lockhouse Road)

Lead Party: Mayor

Support Party: Engineering, MassDOT, Railroads (CSX & PVRT)

Timeframe: Short-term/Medium-term



MassDOT Roads

- Interstate
- U.S. Highway
- State Route
- Local Road

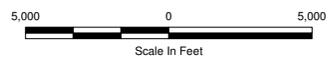
Railroads - Type of Service

- + + + + Active Rail Service
- + + + + Abandoned Service ROW in Public Interest

DCR Roads and Trails

- Natural Surface
- Gravel Surface

DATASOURCE: MassGIS



MAP 8-1	
WESTFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS WESTFIELD MASTER PLAN UPDATE	
TRANSPORTATION	
May 2023	SCALE: NOTED

CHAPTER 9. AGRICULTURE



9.0 AGRICULTURE

9.1 Vision

We envision a vibrant, economically viable, and sustainable farming industry, which will continue to be an important part of our community's landscape, providing high quality, locally sourced food products with landowners supported in preserving and protecting their farmland.

9.2 Introduction

Agricultural land is an important land use that can provide economic development opportunity and community character. The agriculture industry employs 25,920 individuals in Massachusetts, with an annual market value of \$475 million in agriculture sales. The City of Westfield has an important history as an agriculture center, with the Westfield River playing a defining role in the City's physical character, historic settlement patterns, and more recent development. The river cuts through lowlands consisting of fertile soils which provide productive agriculture land to its residents. Additionally, the aesthetic character of farms contributes to the scenic quality of Westfield.

Residents of Westfield enjoy a variety of crops and farm products that contribute to the City's agriculture economy and are available directly to consumers at several farmstands, through home-based sales and at the seasonal Westfield Farmers Market. This chapter provides information on farm products and farmed land in Westfield. Because agriculture resources span so many topic areas it is important that this common theme is reflected in other elements of this plan. As an example, land use, open space, and natural resources are inextricably linked to the agriculture chapter.



Photo 9-1. Westfield Farming Operations

9.3 Existing Conditions

The existing conditions analysis describes current conditions in Westfield. This section summarizes the acreage of land that supports agriculture and the types of agriculture that exist in the City in order to develop relevant actions and strategies that will help sustain the agricultural industry. The agriculture industry historically was and continues to be an essential part of the City and includes several operating farms. According to the 2020 U.S. Census, agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining directly employ around 88 workers (or about 0.4% of the population) in Westfield, but 10% (3,013 acres) of the community's land is in agriculture use.

Agricultural lands help maintain the City's rural character in the face of growing development pressures. The City has seen new development on lands that were once occupied by farms. Agricultural land uses have decreased by 488 acres (2% of the total land area) between 1999-2021 and become fragmented throughout the City. The City's residential land area has increased by 714 acres between 1999 and 2021, with 25% of all developed land in the City now consisting of residential development. Land use changes between 2001-2021 are summarized in Chapter 1: *Land Use*.

Prime farmland in Westfield represents 18% of land and farmland of statewide importance represents 37% of the land. Land area in Westfield that is actively farmed is comparable to farmland in Massachusetts. Today, 3,013 acres, or about 10% percent of Westfield, is land under active agricultural use. In comparison, 491,653 acres, or about 10% percent of Massachusetts consists of land that is actively farmed. Proper soil conditions are key to successful agricultural practices that concentrate on the growing of crops, and 82% of the current agricultural land uses are located on prime farmland soils. Prime farmland, farmland of statewide importance, and agriculture land uses are mapped in Map 9-1, *Agriculture*. These prime soils are important to the future of farming in Westfield and should be considered when allocating future land uses to preserve current and future farming activities.

9.4.1 Types of Agricultural Operation

Agriculture can include cultivating crops and raising animals for food or resource production. Westfield's farms produce a variety of crops including fruits and vegetables, plants, eggs, and maple products. Farmland in Westfield consists of primarily pasture areas (40% of agricultural land) and cropland areas (60% of agricultural land). Pasture areas are commonly associated with animal grazing or for growing hay and cropland areas are generally tilled land used to grow row crops. The primary farm types in Westfield are consistent with the top farm types in Massachusetts. The top two farm types (by number of farms) in Massachusetts are hay farming and vegetable and melon farming. Hay farming is related to dairy farming as it provides forage. Dairy farms account for the largest land area of farms in Massachusetts at 49,744 acres or 10% of the total farmland.



Photo 9-2. Prospect Valley Farm Livestock

9.4.2 Availability of Locally Grown Food

Farm products are available directly to consumers at several farmstands or home-based sales. Bonnieventure Farms, Arnold Farm, and Prospect Valley Farm are a few of the largest farms in Westfield today. Almost all active farms in Westfield have farm products available to local visitors and at regional farmers markets. Compared to other parts of Hampden County, the City offers better access to farm fresh foods (only 25% of County farms typically sell directly to consumers). In addition to commercial operations, smaller, more informal farmstands and sales occur widely across the community, for maple syrup, flowers, vegetables, and eggs. This includes the Westfield Farmers Market which supports local agriculture, farmers, and businesses.

Table 9-1 provides information on farms and farmstands in Westfield.

Table 9-1. Farm and Farmstand Inventory			
Farm	Products	Location	Distribution
Pomeroy Farm	Dairy, Maple Syrup	Russellville Rd	Farmstand
Kosinski Farms	Produce, Fruit, Flowers, Maple Syrup, Honey, Dairy, Eggs	Russellville Road	CSA, Farmstand
Pignatare's	Flowers, Produce, Fruit, Eggs, Honey, Maple Syrup	East Mountain Road	Farmers Market, New England Apiaries and Billy C's Raw Honey
Westfield Farmer's Market		Court Street	Farmers Market
Yellow Stonehouse Farm	Fruit, Flowers, Produce	Root Road	CSA, Farmstand
Quarter Acre Farm		Wood Road	
Wolfe Path Farm	Dairy	Prospect Street	
Hickory Hill Farm	Christmas Trees	Montgomery Road	
West Parish Orchards	Fruit	Granville Road	Farmstands
Prospect Valley Farm	Beef, Eggs, Christmas Trees	Pochassic Road	On-Farm Pickup
Valley View Acres	Flowers, Produce	Valley View Drive	CSA, Farmers Market, Suppliers
Bonnieventure Farms			
Arnold Farm			
Fini's Farm Produce		Fini Road	
Hinckley Harvest	Fruits, Trees, Produce	Russell Road	Farmers Markets
Allen Tree Farm			

Source: City of Westfield

9.4.3 Programs to Support Farming

State and federal grants and incentives and initiatives from non-profit land conservation organizations help support farming operations. There are organizations and governmental entities that encourage farming and consumer support of agricultural producers in the Hampden County. For example, the Massachusetts Farm Service Agency's local office, an offshoot of the United States Department of Agriculture, assists farmers in getting funding and technical support from the federal government for providing local foods and farming continuity.

A state agricultural preservation program, Agriculture Preservation Restrictions (APR), offers a non-development alternative, paying farmers and owners of important agricultural land to permanently preserve it for farming. The Massachusetts Department of Agriculture Resources describes APR as,

A voluntary program which is intended to offer a non-development alternative to farmers and other owners of "prime" and "state important" agricultural land who are faced with a decision regarding future use of their farms. Towards this end, the program offers to pay farmland owners the difference between the "fair market value" and the "agricultural value" of their farmland in exchange for a permanent deed restriction which protects the farmland for future agricultural use.

The operation of 19 farms in Westfield is thereby limited to agriculture use as set forth in the state program. Additional farms can benefit from this restriction, preserving and protecting them from development in perpetuity. Table 9-2 and Map 9-1, *Agriculture*, provide information on farms with an APR.

Site Name	Fee Owner	Area (Acres)
Arnold Farm APR	Stuart Arnold Real Estate LLC	138
Bailey Paul J APR	Bailey Paul J	87
Boisseau Harold D APR	Boisseau Harold D and Pauline	78
Bonnieventure Farms APR	Bonnieventure Farms Inc	432
Chrzanowski Constanty and WRLC APR	Chrzanowski Constanty	69
Davies John B APR	Davies John B and Sharon	46
Fowler Farms APR	Fowler Farms APR	4
Gnacek Stanley APR	Gnacek Stanley and Jennie And Emil	5
Hartley George S APR	Hartley George S and Clara B	220
Janisieski WRLC APR	Janisieski Wesley J and Evelyn J	53
Kosinski WRLC APR	Kosinski Gene M and Susan J	57
L R Pomeroy and Sons WRLC APR	Pomeroy Harlow and Lewis And Seth	87
McLaughlin APR	McLaughlin Thomas J	38
Northern Nurseries APR	Northern Nurseries Inc	71
Pitoniak John P APR	Pitoniak John P	38
Prospect Valley Farm APR	Phelon James F	86
Tarnauskas Paul N APR	Tarnauskas Paul N and Janice M	19
Tomasko Gerald R APR	Tomasko Gerald R	13
W S Westfield Properties LP APR	W S Westfield Properties LP	37

Source: MassGIS Protected and Recreational OpenSpace

Massachusetts' Chapter 61 program provides landowners an opportunity to reduce their property taxes in exchange for public benefits. Chapter 61A under this program aims to keep land undeveloped for agricultural and horticultural products. Types of eligible land are dependent on minimum acreage and agricultural product sales. Farmland protected through the Chapter 61A tax relief program in Westfield is mapped on Map 9-1, *Agriculture*.

An innovative organization called Community Involved in Sustaining Agriculture (CISA) was founded by community members who recognized the value of regional soils for agriculture. CISA has developed programs to advance a sustainable regional food system, including offering business assistance, tip sheets, and promoting sustainable agriculture within the Pioneer Valley.

At present, Westfield does not have a Right-to-Farm ordinance or an agricultural commission.



Photo 9-3. Westfield Farmer's Market

9.4.4 Economic Importance of Agriculture in the Region

Westfield's farms are part of Hampden County's agricultural economy, which contributed \$25,892,000 in sales in 2017. City-level sales information was not available at the time of this writing.

Westfield's farms follow the composition of Hampden County in terms of farm types and products. Approximately 73% of farms in the county consists of crop production including hay and vegetables, with 65% consisting of livestock and poultry products. The top crops produced are nursery, greenhouse, floriculture, sod, vegetables, melons, and potatoes; the top livestock activity is dairy cows, followed by cattle/calves.

Westfield is unusual compared with the county because so much of its farmland is used for pasture (40%). Pastureland in the County accounts for only 7% of land in farms. Cropland covers 33% of land in farms in Hampden County. In comparison, cropland covers 60% of the land in Westfield. Land coverage of cropland in the County by type is detailed in Table 9-3. Livestock inventory in the County is detailed in Table 9-4.

Crop Type	Acres	Percentage of Cropland
Forage (hay/haylage)	5,281	56%
Vegetables harvested	1,719	18%
Corn for silage or greenchop	1,442	15%
Sweet corn	536	6%
Tobacco	373	4%

Source: USDA Ag Census, 2017

Livestock Type	Livestock Inventory
Meat-type chickens	1,235
Cattle and calves	2,407
Goats	444
Hogs and pigs	142
Horses and ponies	552
Layers	3,909
Pullets	594
Sheep and Lambs	776
Turkeys	392

Source: USDA Ag Census 2017

9.4 Challenges and Opportunities

Westfield's lowlands consist of fertile soils that provide opportunities for productive agriculture land. However, these lands are shrinking due to growing development pressures. Over the years, the City has seen new development on lands that were once occupied by farms. Agriculture lands are also facing repercussions from the changing climate. Preserving and sustainably managing agriculture lands in Westfield will provide economic stability, ensure food security, preserve the City's rural character, and enhance its landscape integrity.

9.4.5 Challenges

With growing development pressures, the City can experience loss of productive agriculture land, open space, and critical ecosystems. According to the United Nations, the world will need 70 percent more food than the food available today to feed a global population of 9.6 billion in 2050. To this end, we must preserve agricultural and prime farmland for food security. Prime soils are important to the future of farming in Westfield and should be considered when allocating future land uses to preserve current and future farming activities. The agriculture industry can also face a variety of economic and climate change related challenges. Climate scientists are expecting western Massachusetts' to get hotter and wetter over the next century. Variability in weather changes can negatively impact agriculture resources. As an example, increased precipitation events can impact crop production, high intensity rainfall can lead to agricultural runoff and nonpoint source pollution, and increased drought periods can lead to less grass for grazing.

9.4.6 Opportunities

The City can take several proactive steps to support and preserve farming in Westfield. The operation of 19 farms in Westfield is currently limited to agriculture use as set forth in the state APR program. Additional farmland in Westfield can benefit from agriculture preservation restrictions, preserving and protecting them from development in perpetuity. At present, Westfield does not have an agricultural commission. The City can create an agricultural commission to promote agricultural business and protect farmlands. A Right-to-Farm ordinance can prevent conflicts between farm operations and neighbors. A Food System Toolkit for Hampden and Hampshire Counties provides an agricultural commission model ordinance and Right-to-Farm declaration. The City can also work with farmers to prepare for and adapt to climate change impacts and adopt sustainable agricultural practices to address additional environmental concerns.

9.5 Current Measures and Practices

The Westfield ordinance defines agriculture as an allowed use throughout the City. Section 3-40 Rural Residential District of Article III is intended to accommodate agriculture, horticulture or floriculture and defines permitted and prohibited uses and area and density regulations for this purpose. Section 5-90 Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) of Article V is intended to protect farmland, water supply resources, and rural areas in Westfield. The process of TDR includes proposing to develop specified land in a receiving area, illustrating land parcels in sending area and/or parcels in the receiving area proposed for TDR, and the number of development rights proposed for transfer.

Sending Area

An area established by the City Council in which use or development should be limited, which shall be comprised of all parcels of land located within the Rural Residential District and, regardless of zoning district, all land within a 400-foot radius of each Westfield Water Department public drinking water wellhead.

Receiving Area

An area established by the City Council as suitable by virtue of availability of existing infrastructure to receive transferred development rights, which shall be comprised of all parcels of land located within the Business A, Business B, Industrial A and Industrial Park Districts.

Development Rights

Those rights to develop, expressed as the number of residential or commercial/industrial building lots, that could be permitted on a designated sending parcel under the applicable zoning and subdivision rules in effect on the date of the transfer of development rights.

The process for Transfer of Development Rights for agriculture is created by recording of a Conservation Restriction or Agriculture Preservation Restrictions (APR).

9.6 Goals, Policies, and Actions

9.6.1 Goals

1. Protect agricultural and prime farmland, for the benefit of Westfield for economic development, community character, community agriculture and local food security.
2. Support agriculture and related businesses and minimize the impacts on and conflicts with other land uses.
3. Ensure the farming community is prepared for climate change impacts and employs adaptation strategies.

9.6.2 Policies

1. Protect and preserve farmlands through landowner outreach and ordinance updates.
2. Encourage sustainable agriculture practices and operations for environmental and natural resource protection.
3. Ensure that agricultural and related businesses are educated on best practices and are effectively communicating and working with their neighbors.

9.6.3 *Actions*

1. Establish a program to work regionally with farmers to provide them with up-to-date tools and techniques for resilience against the impacts of climate change.

Lead Party: Conservation Department

Support Party: Conservation Commission, Planning, MVP program

Timeframe: Short-term

2. Protect and preserve vulnerable existing farmlands under the state Agriculture Preservation Restriction (APR) program.

Lead Party: Conservation Department, (Agricultural Commission)

Support Party: Conservation Commission, City Council, Planning, MDAR, Community Preservation

Timeframe: Medium-term

3. Establish an Agricultural Commission to support existing farms, promote new agricultural business, and provide a link between farmers and business owners to the community and the City.

Lead Party: City Council

Support Party: Conservation Commission, Conservation Department, Mayor

Timeframe: Short-term

4. Establish Westfield as a “Right-to Farm” community to codify agricultural support and prevent conflicts between farm operations and neighbors.

Lead Party: City Council, (Agricultural Commission)

Support Party: Conservation Commission, Planning, Mayor

Timeframe: Medium-Term

5. Provide proactive outreach to establish agricultural best practices, such as integrated pest management techniques, to ensure that Westfield farms are minimizing impacts to neighboring land uses and the environment.

Lead Party: Conservation Department

Support Party: Conservation Commission, City Council, Mayor

Timeframe: Short-term

6. Incentivize farmers with cost considerations on sustainable agricultural practices such as conservation tillage to help reduce erosion and improve water infiltration.

Lead Party: Conservation Department

Support Party: Conservation Commission

Timeframe: Short-term

7. Review and update zoning and land use ordinances to allow, incentivize, and/or facilitate agricultural land uses (including supporting activities such as farm stores, agritourism, venue events, etc.)

Lead Party: Planning Department

Support Party: Planning Board, City Council

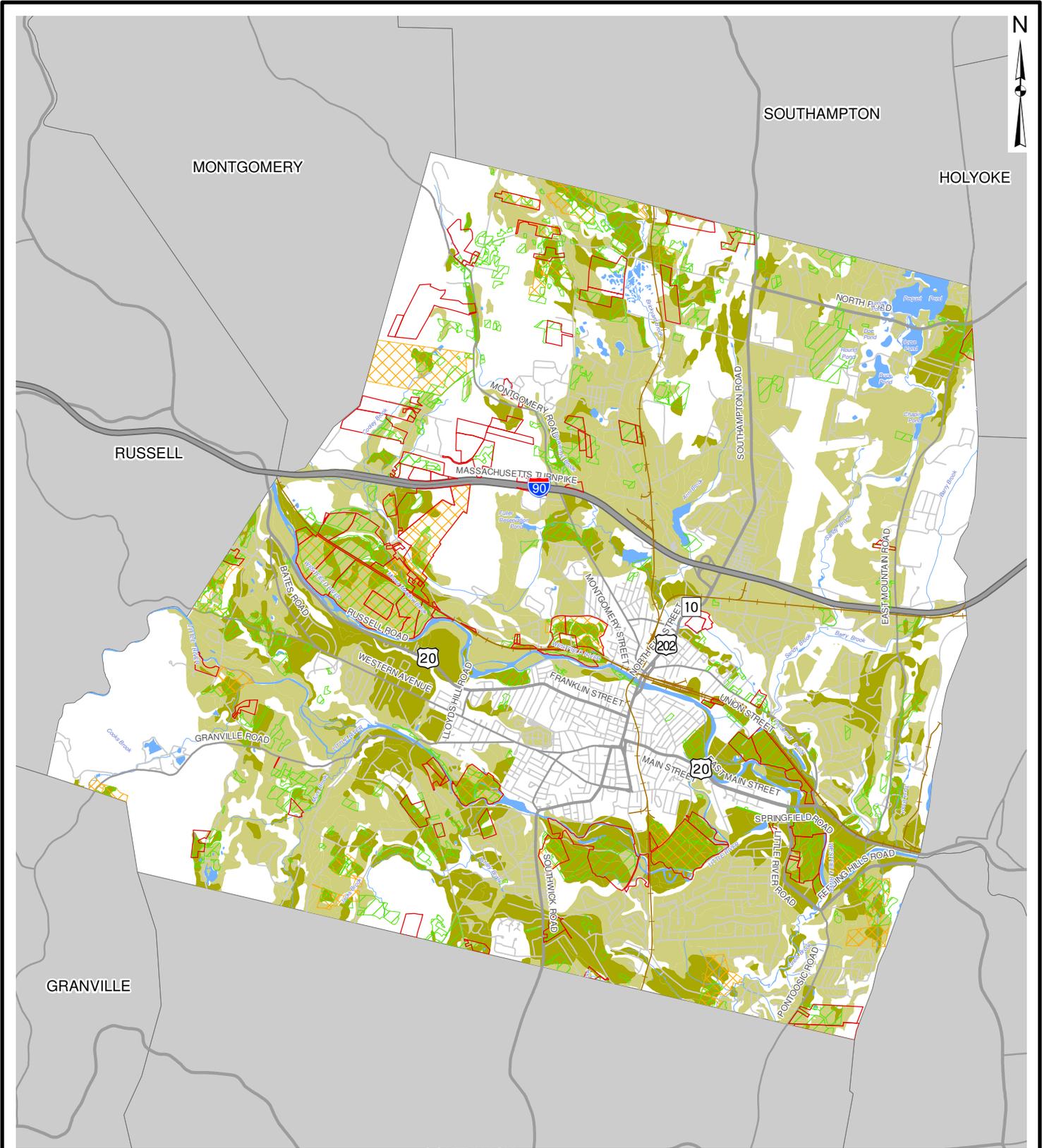
Timeframe: Medium-term

8. Establish community gardens to increase availability of nutritious food in the community.

Lead Party: Conservation Department, (Agricultural Commission)

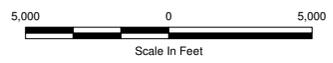
Support Party: City Council, Planning Department, Community Preservation

Timeframe: Long-term



- Current Land Use - Agriculture
- Agricultural Preservation Restriction Lands
- Chapter 61A Lands
- Railway Lines
- Prime Farmland Soils**
- All Areas are Prime Farmland
- Farmland of Statewide Importance

DATASOURCE: MassGIS, Weston & Sampson



MAP 9-1	
WESTFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS	
WESTFIELD MASTER PLAN UPDATE	
AGRICULTURE	
May 2023	SCALE: NOTED

CHAPTER 10. ENERGY



10.0 ENERGY

10.1 Vision

We envision our City converting municipal facilities to renewable energy, reducing our carbon footprint and striving to achieve net-zero carbon emissions by 2050, consistent with the State Energy Plan, while supporting similar goals for residents and businesses.

10.2 Introduction

This section includes a summary of existing conditions regarding current energy utilities, systems, usage, and renewable energy in Westfield. Energy, within the context of this chapter, refers to utility services which generate electricity, transmit, distribute, and meter energy usage. The existing conditions summary is intended to help develop meaningful actions that support and sustain adequate energy service, emergency back-up energy, and identify potential opportunities for the creation of renewable energy. Adequate energy services are a crucial component of everyday City functions to sustain essential facilities and services, economic activities, school system, and food supply systems. Energy service is an essential aspect of emergency preparedness and response, and utilities may be impacted by climate change, due to severe weather events which cause service disruptions or extreme temperatures that cause outages due to brownouts. By understanding current energy usage, the City can better predict future needs and potential vulnerabilities.

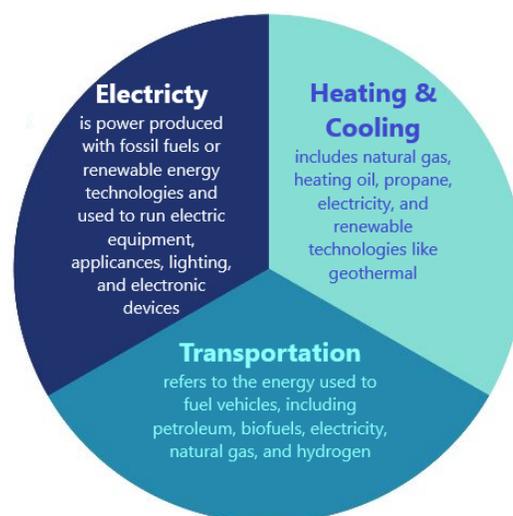
The remainder of this section addresses:

- Energy consumption in the City.
- Availability sources of renewable energy.
- Energy-use reduction programs the City has implemented.
- Energy rebates and programs available in Westfield.
- Energy-efficiency upgrades that the City has adopted.

10.3 Existing Conditions

10.3.1 Energy Efficiency

Energy efficiency can be described as the practice of using less energy to provide the same amount of useful output from a device (such as heating water, lighting, or cooling a fridge). Energy efficiency measures come at a wide range of cost and effort, but simple measures, such as replacing conventional light bulbs with LED fixtures and turning off lights when they are not in use, are easy, low effort measures every resident can take to effect change. How energy is produced and consumed has become an increasingly critical topic of discussion as energy has become a more in-demand and expensive resource throughout Massachusetts.



10.3.2 Energy Consumption

A major area of energy consumption under the control of the City is its own energy usage. The first step in increasing energy efficiency at municipal facilities is understanding how much energy the City uses.

City Usage

The City's primary form of energy use is through oil heat, gas, and electricity. National Grid and the Westfield Gas & Electric Light Department (WG+E) are the utility providers for City of Westfield. WG+E purchases a range of energy sources. Around 15% of energy comes from solar or wind and another 10% comes from hydroelectric power. In 2021, the City had an average residential consumption of 785 hundred cubic feet (CCF) for gas and 9000 kilowatt-hours (kWh) for electricity. According to the 2014 Pioneer Valley Climate Action and Clean Energy Plan, the solar photovoltaic (PV) production from 2008-2012 was 216,042 kWh/Year.

10.3.3 Renewable Energy

Several different types of renewable energy sources can replace or supplement traditional forms of energy production. Two sources of renewable energy available within the City are solar and wind production.

COMMON RENEWABLE ENERGY SOURCES

Solar - Solar energy is sunlight collected and converted to electricity through solar panels. Solar energy systems can be installed on the roofs of existing and new structures or on the ground. In many circumstances, solar energy systems have the capacity to generate enough electricity to meet the needs of a building or home and produce excess energy to be sold back to the electric grid.

Wind - Wind energy is generated with the use of wind energy conversion systems, most commonly in the form of wind turbines. Conversion systems convert the kinetic energy of the wind into electricity.

Geothermal – Geothermal energy utilizes the heat contained in rocks and fluids beneath the Earth's crust by digging wells to access steam and hot water, then used to drive turbines connected to electricity generators.

Hydroelectric – Hydropower is generated by converting the force of moving water into electricity by spinning a generator's turbine blades.

Biomass – Biomass is organic material that comes from plants and animals, including crops, waste wood, and trees. When biomass is burned, the chemical energy is released as heat and can generate electricity with a steam turbine.

Solar Energy

According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, there are three solar power plants located in Westfield.

1. The CED Westfield Solar, LLC is a solar photovoltaic installation with a 2.0-megawatt capacity located at Russellville Road.
2. The GSPP Terrawatt Westfield LLC is a solar photovoltaic installation with a 3.6-megawatt capacity located at Southampton Road and Summit Lock Road.
3. The Twiss Street Solar is a solar photovoltaic installation with a 1.5-megawatt capacity located on a closed and capped landfill at Twiss Street.

The Green Street Power Partners installed a large-scale community solar farm that provides 4.8-megawatt capacity at the intersection of Routes 10 and 202 with Medeiros Way in Westfield. The community project provides an opportunity for residents to transfer energy back to their electric companies and receive a rebate check. This is referred to as net-metering. A 10-acre solar farm facility is located on a former hayfield at 994 Western Ave. The 10-acre of solar array is a 2.4-megawatt facility leased to Sunfarm Solar, LLC.

WG+E provides a checklist for installing solar power with rules and procedures for creating a connection between solar electric systems and WG+E. At present, the City of Westfield does not have a solar ordinance per se but has adopted restrictions and Planning Board review requirements for large ground-mounted solar energy facilities. These land uses are allowed by right in four non-residential districts and by special permit in the Rural Residential District.

Wind Energy

Article V, Section 5-30 in the Zoning Ordinance includes regulations governing erection of energy-generating wind power devices. According to Section 5-30.D – Specific Regulations under Article V, Section 5-30, certain windmills are permitted through issuance of permits by the Inspector of Buildings and forwarded to the Airport Commission to determine proposed devices present no navigational hazards. The maximum heights, rotor dimensions, and setbacks for freestanding and roof mounted windmills are outlined in Section 5-30.D – Specific Regulations.

10.3.4 Energy-Use Reduction

Reducing energy use through behavior modification, efficient facilities and equipment, and focused design can lower costs and reduce greenhouse gases. The City has received funding through the Department of Energy Resources Green Communities Division and Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection's Gap Energy Grant program to implement energy efficiency measures and reduce fossil fuel energy consumption.

- In 2017, Westfield was designated a green community and awarded \$266,565 through the Green Communities Designation and Grant Program.
- In 2018, the Baker-Polito Administration awarded \$39,242 in State Gap II Grant to Westfield's water and wastewater facilities for energy efficiencies and renewable power generation.
- In 2019, the City was awarded \$202,525 through the Green Communities Designation and Grant Program.
- In 2020, the City was awarded \$168,740 through the Green Communities Designation and Grant Program.

The Green Communities program provides a designation and grant funding to incentivize cities to reduce municipal energy consumption by 20 percent over five years. The City is currently employing the following strategies and tools to reach this goal:

Stretch Codes

Westfield adopted stretch codes at a City Council meeting in October 2016. Stretch Codes are building performance standards for energy efficiency that are intended to result in more cost-effective construction and higher energy efficiency.

Hybrid or Electric Vehicles

The City complied with one of the five criteria (purchase only fuel-efficient vehicles) to become a designated Green Community. Cities can purchase fuel efficient vehicles off the statewide contract, VE110.

Additionally, WG+E offers incentives for current electric vehicle (EV) drivers. There are several public charge point stations located throughout Westfield.

10.3.5 Energy Rebates and Programs

WG+E offers several rebates and other incentive programs to save energy. These programs include:

- Commercial EV Level 2 Charger Rebate and Marketing Partnership
- Express Lighting Program
- Commercial Gas Heating and Hot Water Rebates
- Commercial - Industrial Retrofit Program
- LED Light Rebate

There are several programs available in Westfield to assist residents manage their utility bills. These include:

- Low Income Heating Energy Assistance Program
- The Salvation Army Good Neighbor Energy Program
- Westfield Warm Fund

10.4 Challenges and Opportunities

The strong focus on solar energy in Western Massachusetts provides Westfield with an opportunity to serve as a location for new solar developments. To support these efforts, the City can enact a solar ordinance and eliminate potential conflicts that may arise between solar development and other land uses. The City can additionally initiate measures and partnerships to improve their energy efficiency.

10.4.1 Challenges

In rural communities, potential conflicts can arise between agriculture land and solar development. A Solar@Scale sponsored learning lab at the 2022 American Planning Association (APA) National Planning Council has identified perceived conflicts between solar development and agriculture lands and ideas to eliminate threats. Project design such as landscaping and fencing that blend into rural scenery, incorporating native vegetation to preserve local ecology, and combining shade-grown

crops with solar facilities can strike balance between the two land uses and minimize impact on the City's scenic and natural resources.

10.4.2 Opportunities

The City has taken several steps related to renewable energy sources and energy efficiency upgrades that produce less greenhouse gas. The City can additionally enact a more comprehensive solar ordinance that provides policy recommendations and address development regulations to clarify the types of solar energy systems (roof-mount systems and ground mount solar photovoltaic installations) that are permissible in areas of Westfield. A solar best practice guide prepared by the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission can assist Westfield in providing standards for development of solar photovoltaic installations, their placement, design, construction, operation, monitoring, modifications, and removal while addressing public safety and minimizing impacts on natural resources. A Community Planning for Solar Toolkit by UMass Clean Energy Extension is also available for rural communities to proactively plan for solar PV development. Additionally, the City can support WG+E efforts and publicize rebates and other incentive programs on saving energy.

10.5 Current Measures and Practices

The City has taken several measures to improve energy efficiency. The energy conservation measures as a result of the 2018 State Gap II grant were estimated to reduce the influent wastewater pumping electricity use by 24% per year. The 2017, 2019, and 2020, they City received funds through the Green Communities Designation and Grant Program for several energy conservation measures including lighting in Middle School, DPW Garage, Airport, Westfield Technical Academy, Fire Headquarters, Southampton Road Fire Station, and High, Munger Hill and Papermill Elementary Schools. Additionally, the program funded weatherization, steam traps, refrigeration controls, and electric vehicle acquisition and charging stations in Westfield Intermediate School, Westfield Middle Schools, Munger Hill, Paper Mill, Vocational (Technical Academy), and High Schools, Twiss St. Garage, Fire Headquarters, and Head Start Building.

The Westfield State University has two Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Certified buildings: University Hall (certified Gold in 2014) and the Science Center (certified Silver in 2018). The City is currently planning reconstruction of Franklin Avenue Elementary School, which is targeted to be LEED Silver certified. The LEED program is administered by the Green Building Institute and provides a framework for healthy, efficient, carbon and cost-saving green buildings. To meet the national criteria, the buildings must meet standards for energy conservation and sustainability.

10.6 Goals, Policies, and Actions

3.6.1 Goals

1. Ensure equitable, safe, cost effective, and plentiful energy for all residents and efficient energy usage at City facilities and evaluate opportunities for diverse and innovative sources of energy.
2. Strike a balance between renewable energy production, neighborhood character, agricultural operations, and natural resource protection.

3. Encourage retrofitting of existing infrastructure and parking lots (particularly with solar power) to raise awareness and also become more sustainable.
4. Provide resources and set policies to achieve the City's energy efficiency goals and be a model of best practice within the region.
5. Transition from fossil fuel to renewable energy sources to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve sustainability.

3.6.2 *Policies:*

1. Support renewable energy development that is sustainable, environmentally sensitive, appropriately scaled and sited, and is in keeping with neighborhood character. This can include utilizing public spaces, large parking lots, schools, and Westfield State University
2. Encourage residents and businesses to reduce their energy consumption and implement energy-efficiency measures through public education and awareness and sharing successful examples in frequented areas of Westfield.
3. Increase energy efficiency of municipal and school department facilities and vehicles.
4. Support a net-zero policy to achieve a sustainable balance between energy production and usage by the City.

3.6.3 *Actions:*

1. Expand the number and location of public charge point stations located throughout Westfield.

Lead Party: WG+E

Support Party: City Council, Mayor, Planning

Timeframe: Medium-term

2. Amend the zoning ordinance to support the Enhanced Stretch Code requirements and adopt or update performance standards and siting guidelines for the development of renewable energy production.

Lead Party: Planning

Support Party: City Council, Mayor, Planning Board

Timeframe: Medium-term

3. Work with federal, state, regional, and utility partners to capitalize on grants and other incentives to help fund public and private energy efficiency and renewable energy projects.

Lead Party: Community Development

Support Party: City Council, Mayor

Timeframe: Medium-term

4. Develop a City-wide energy efficiency program where residents, businesses, and other entities can be rewarded with certification and recognition based on a set of established energy efficiency criteria.

Lead Party: City Council

Support Party: Mayor, WG+E, Community Development

Timeframe: Short-term

5. Implement a renewable energy and energy resilience education program through the City and School Department to increase public awareness of the importance of energy conservation and resiliency practices and the City's progress toward such efforts.

Lead Party: Mayor

Support Party: School Department, City Council

Timeframe: Medium-term

6. Work with WG+E to provide consumers with rebates and other incentive programs to save on home heating and electricity expenses.

Lead Party: City Council

Support Party: Mayor, WG+E

Timeframe: Short-term

7. Consider adoption of a net-zero policy for City energy consumption and production.

Lead Party: City Council

Support Party: Mayor, Community Development

Timeframe: Medium-term

8. Whenever practicable, use renewable-energy-generation infrastructure on public facilities to reduce reliance on fossil fuel.

Lead Party: Building Department

Support Party: Department of Public Works, City Council

Timeframe: Medium-term

CHAPTER 11. WATER SUPPLY



11.0 WATER SUPPLY

11.1 Vision

We envision that our City will protect and provide a clean, safe, reliable, long-term supply of drinking water for the benefit of current and future residential, agricultural, commercial, and industrial uses.

11.2 Introduction

Water supply is an essential utility, providing potable water that residents drink, water that is used for emergency response and fire-fighting purposes, for cleaning, cooling, and production of many essential goods and services.

The Water Supply element of Westfield's Master Plan describes the water distribution system and service, including number of customers, volume of usage, size, and age of the system. Additionally, this element discusses Westfield's maintenance and management of the system. Other considerations include water conservation efforts and regulations, the system's risk and resilience to potential threats, emergency response planning efforts, and pollutants and protection of water quality. This element also discusses the natural water resources that supply the system, their quality, and efforts to conserve them.

Each of these considerations related to the water distribution system can have an impact on the health, safety, and wellbeing of Westfield residents as well as the economic success of the City. Continuous water supply is critical to maintain essential services like schools, hospitals, and assisted living facilities, infrastructure, and business operations, and to supply residences with potable drinking water.

Additionally, sustainable management and usage of the water distribution system can contribute to reductions in energy and carbon emissions and supporting a healthier environment. Protection and management of the natural water supply, such as reservoirs and groundwater sources, is essential as well to protecting the amount of water available and its quality.

The purpose of the Water Supply element is to establish programs and policies for: (1) ensuring continuous water supply and quality to Westfield residents; (2) water conservation; and (3) watershed management, aquifer recharge area, and pollution reduction.

11.3 Existing Conditions

The existing conditions section of the Water Supply element includes information on Westfield's Water Distribution System as well as its natural water sources. An overview is provided on the following:

1. Water Distribution System Overview, Drinking Water Quality and Monitoring, and Water Conservation Efforts.
2. Water Sources, Water Source Quality, and Water Source Protection Measures.

Closely related elements include Natural Resources, Facilities and Services, Land Use, and Natural Hazards and Climate Adaptation.

11.3.1 Water Distribution System Overview

Westfield's Department of Public Works Water Division is responsible for producing and delivering drinking water that meets or exceeds the federal and state standards. The Division owns and operates more than 220 miles of underground piping that serves over 11,000 properties. The remaining one-third of the City relies on private wells for their water supply. The main water supply comes from two reservoir watersheds and eight ground water wells which are described further in the Water Supply section of this element. There are two drinking water treatment facilities in Westfield.

The distribution system includes 200 miles of water mains, 1,600 fire hydrants, and 10,300 metered service connections. The City is responsible for the water mains in the City's streets and for the water connections off these mains up to the curb valve at the property line. Installation, maintenance, and repair of the remainder of the service line to the shutoff valve in the building are the responsibility of the property owner.

Four registered public wells pump from the Barnes aquifer are approved to pump 2 million gallons per day (MGD) each, totaling 8 MGD. In 2020, the City replaced the aging East Mountain Tank which is used to store water. The 2.7-million-gallon water storage tank was replaced with a 2.1-million-gallon storage tank which is connected to a 16-inch water main. The City has two pumping stations that help ensure adequate water pressure.

In 2021, Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MADEP) authorized the City to pump 72 gallons per capita per day from groundwater aquifers. "RGPCD [Residential Gallons per Capita Day] is the number of gallons of water used, on average, each day by a resident for purposes such as washing clothes, flushing toilets, showering and lawn watering. RGPCD is computed for a public water supply system by dividing the total metered residential use by the number of residents served by that system." This is lower than RGPCD standard set for Westfield in past years by the state, which have been as high as 98 RGPCD in 2020.

The Water Division works to provide adequate volume and pressure to residents while also conserving water. Monitoring leaks is an important factor in water conservation.

11.3.2 Water Supply

Westfield's public drinking water supply comes from several sources that feed into one distribution system. The Granville Reservoir, which is a main water source for the Westfield system, was built in 1899 and is located in the neighboring town of Granville. All water from this source is treated and filtered at the City's treatment facility, which is in Southwick.

The City also has eight groundwater wells. The eight wells serving the Westfield Water Department tap three different aquifers. Water sources are described in more detail in Chapter 4, *Natural Resources*.

The Westfield water distribution system has interconnections with the City of Springfield water system in three locations, with two connections at Shaker Road and one at Southwick Road. Springfield has a water pipeline that traverses through Westfield. Interconnections can be used during a water supply emergency such as a contamination event, low-pressure event, or if there is low water supply. Although water is available for purchase from the City of Springfield system, no water has been purchased over the past decade. The Shaker Road interconnect is used to pump water directly from

the Springfield system to Westfield's, while the other two are only activated on low pressure conditions in Westfield's system. Water supply from Springfield's interconnections comes from the Cobble Mountain Reservoir surface water source and is treated at their West Parish Filter facility in Westfield. See Map 11-1, *Drinking Water System*, for additional information.

11.3.3 Drinking Water Quality

To ensure that tap water is safe to drink, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Massachusetts DEP prescribe limits on concentrations of certain pollutants in drinking water. Westfield treats and tests all water supply in accordance with these EPA and MADEP regulations.

In 2021, the Westfield Department of Public Works Water Division had several contamination issues with PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances) and previously with Ethylene Dibromide (EDB), and a turbidity spike caused the Water Division to shut down the surface water treatment plant. According to the EPA, PFAS and other contaminants can pose threats to human health when ingested. Water supply also had total Trihalomethanes (TTHMs) levels that were over the Massachusetts Maximum Contaminant Level. Westfield has made significant efforts to reduce TTHM levels and continues to monitor and improve the quality of its water.

A full summary of pollutants found in Westfield's water supply can be found in Westfield's Water Quality Report. The City monitors the following pollutant categories:

- Disinfection By-Products
- Inorganic Contaminants
- Volatile Organic Contaminants
- Secondary Contaminants
- Lead and Copper

Iron, which is a secondary contaminant, was the only pollutant found to be above the allowable level. Wells 2,7, and 8 are filtered to remove PFAS.

11.3.4 Water Conservation

Water conservation is important for supporting continuous water supply as well as reducing the costs and amount of energy used to treat, pump, and heat water. Water supply is limited, and sources replenish at varying rates based on factors like season, average temperatures, and rainfall. The City disseminates information to residents about efforts they can take to conserve water.

11.3.5 Source Water, Quality, and Protection Measures

Sources of drinking water can include rivers, lakes, streams, ponds, reservoirs, springs, and groundwater wells. As previously mentioned, the water supply in Westfield comes from both groundwater supply—via eight public wells—and the Granville reservoir in Montgomery. This section of the existing conditions analysis includes an overview of groundwater, surface water, and watersheds in Westfield. In addition, there is information about the quality of these sources as well as measures and actions that have been taken to protect them.

Groundwater

Groundwater is water that is below the land surface within saturated zones of geological materials such as rock, soils, or silt. The saturated zone starts at and goes below the water table. Large volumes of underground water-saturated soil materials are referred to as aquifers or groundwater reservoirs. See Map 11-2, *Public Water Supply*, and Chapter 4, *Natural Resources*, for additional information on groundwater and other important public water sources.

As mentioned, Westfield has eight public wells that are sourced from groundwater.

“The aquifers utilized by the Westfield Water Department are part of a series of prolific, buried bedrock valley aquifer systems trending north-south. Portions of the aquifer flow north discharging into the Connecticut and Westfield River and some portions flow south discharging to the Westfield River. The aquifers were formed when bedrock valleys were filled with sand and gravel during the recession, (melting) of the glaciers approximately 14,000 years ago. The aquifer area north of the Westfield River is known as the Barnes Aquifer and the Broad Brook Basin of the Barnes Aquifer has been designated by EPA as a Sole Source Aquifer. Groundwater from the aquifer tapped by wells 01G, 02G, 07G, and 08G, flows south to the Westfield River while groundwater from the aquifer tapped by wells 03G and 04G, flows north to the Westfield River.”

EXAMPLE OF CONSERVATION EDUCATION FOR RESIDENTS

Residents can also help support water conservation efforts by doing the following:

- Cover your swimming pool when not in use; this will reduce loss of water through evaporation.
- Don't let water run while brushing your teeth.
- Don't use your garden hose for cleaning off driveways – Clean the driveway with a broom or leaf blower.
- If you wash the dishes by hand, use two bowls or basins – one for washing and one for rinsing. Don't let the water run while washing the dishes.
- Apply pesticides and fertilizers minimally and according to manufacturer's instructions.
- Only run your washing machine and dishwasher when they are fully loaded.
- Replace your old toilet with a new water saver toilet (1.6 gallon per flush) can save a lot of water over an older toilet that uses approximately 3.6 gallons per flush.
- Use low-flow shower heads that use approximately 2.5 gallons per minute.

Well Number	Location	Operational Status	Additional Information or Impairments
Well 1	Holyoke Road	Offline	Well 1 was taken offline in March 2019 and remains offline.
Well 2	Union Street	Online	Filtered to remove Per and Poly Fluorinated Alkyl Substances (PFAS)
Well 3	Shaker Road	Online	Treated to remove the fungicide Ethylene DiBromide (EDB)
Well 4	Shaker Road	Online	Treated to remove the fungicide Ethylene DiBromide (EDB)
Well 5	Northwest Road	Online	
Well 6	Northwest Road	Online	
Well 7	East Mountain Road	Online	Filtered to remove Per and Poly Fluorinated Alkyl Substances (PFAS)
Well 8	East Mountain Road	Online	Filtered to remove Per and Poly Fluorinated Alkyl Substances (PFAS)

Source: City of Westfield Water Quality Report (2021), <https://www.Cityofwestfield.org/DocumentCenter/View/11167/2021-Water-Quality-Report>, accessed July 28, 2022

11.4 Challenges and Opportunities

11.4.1 Challenges

Westfield currently supplies water to its residents adequately to meet maximum daily demand, but several factors could threaten the continuous service of potable water to the community in the future.

The world's changing climate is resulting in increases in average temperatures and variations in precipitation patterns. Droughts threaten to diminish water supplies in the reservoir and wells, which are fed by groundwater and surface water. Although Westfield has an interconnection agreement, it is likely that severe drought would threaten regional supplies, causing cascading impacts. Water conservation, or the contentious preservation of water by reducing usage during everyday activities like showering, washing dishes, or watering a lawn, is an important effort in preparing for drought.

Natural hazards such as weather- or climate-related events cause inclement conditions and pose a threat to human life, human-made structures, and the surrounding natural environment. Earthquakes, landslides, and prevailing winds can cause physical damage to the water system. Natural hazards may also jeopardize the Westfield drinking water system if microbial or chemical contamination is directed to the source or finished water caused by floodwater or debris. As precipitation events are predicted to increase due to climate change, unmanaged stormwater runoff may introduce contaminants that impact the water supply system. The United States Environmental

Protection Agency (USEPA) has determined that municipal separate storm sewer systems (MS4s)¹ are a major pathway for the introduction of pollutants to waterways and are a leading cause of the impairment of ambient water quality, for both fresh and coastal waters. Because the watershed draining to Westfield's water supply reservoir includes land outside of the City's control, land development and other sources of contamination may be difficult for the City to regulate.

The water distribution system includes treatment measures to limit contaminants, but they can still become an issue if there is not a treatment process for a specific contaminant, if testing is not completed frequently enough, or if contamination affects multiple sources of supply. Contamination can also come from the many materials we as human beings consume and use daily. Westfield has experienced elevated levels of PFAS, EBD, and TTHMs in some water sources. PFAS refers to human-made chemicals that often come from materials such as cleaners, textiles, leather, paper and paints, fire-fighting foams, and wire insulation (EPA).

Onsite wastewater treatment systems (OWTS), which include both septic systems and cesspools, have the potential to contaminate ground and surface water if they fail to function properly. Similarly, improperly managed agricultural practices can cause erosion, degrade soil, pollute waterways, and reduce ecological resilience. Other causes of contamination besides environmental or climate related events include water main breaks, low pressure in the piped system, exposure to hazardous waste, or a malevolent event to intentionally contaminate.

11.4.2 Opportunities

Protection and management of the natural water supply is essential to protecting the amount and quality of drinking water available to the community in the face of various issues. Water conservation is already a City initiative that helps to extend existing supplies. The City can continue to encourage residents to use efficient fixtures, grey water reuse systems, and other sustainable methods, while transitioning its own systems to better conserve water as well. Public outreach and education are important components of conservation efforts. Also, sustainable management and usage of the water distribution system can contribute to reductions in energy and carbon emissions and supporting a healthier environment.

Protecting the aquifer and watershed from contamination is a high priority for Westfield residents, indicating potential local support for needed measures. One measure that supports mitigation of contaminants is land use and development regulations. Areas surrounding the water source should be protected from pollutants carried in runoff. Impervious area and developed area can exacerbate run-off issues. By enforcing the rules of the Water Resource Protection District, the City can limit its water supply contaminants. The City can review this regulation and determine whether amendments or additions are needed based on new climate and environmental factors, developments in Westfield, and goals for reducing impervious area. Additionally, investments in stormwater management and green infrastructure can help reduce contamination and erosion from runoff.

¹ An MS4 is a drainage system in an urbanized area. See <https://www.epa.gov/npdes/stormwater-discharges-municipal-sources> for more information about the regulation of MS4s.

Investments in expanding the local sewer system to properties with septic systems may help reduce the potential for contamination of water supplies from OWTs. Additionally, community education about responsible management of septic and sewer drains can also support water quality.

Residents can help support water quality by doing the following:

- If your property uses a septic tank, have it pumped every two years
- Never dump hazardous substances down sewer or storm drains
- Properly dispose of pet waste
- Apply pesticides and fertilizers minimally and according to manufacturer's instructions.

The City's Environmental Protection Agency Risk and Resilience Assessment provides detail on how to mitigate the presence of contaminants and impact on finished water. In addition to enhancing monitoring and treatment processes for chemicals like PFAS, the City can ensure that a communication protocol is in place for contamination events. A communication protocol helps the City to provide residents with essential information about service disruptions or supplemental treatment procedures needed at home (such as a "boil water order") until an issue is resolved.

11.5 Current Measures and Practices

11.5.1 Existing Regulations

Water Resource Protection Overlay District

The purpose of this overlay district is to protect and preserve Westfield's groundwater resources from potentially damaging pollution or environmental degradation by regulating certain uses within the district. The regulations state specific prohibited and restricted uses, regulates drainage, and details special permit procedures.

Several other measures in place also address the City's goals for water supply:

- Westfield's Watershed Protection Action Plan
- Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System Program (MS4) and Stormwater Management Plan
- Westfield Source Water Assessment and Protection Program (SWAP)
- Water Resources Department Rules and Regulations

These measures are discussed further in Chapter 4, *Natural Resources*.

11.5.2 Existing Policy

The City disseminates information to residents about efforts they can take to conserve water through their website and other outreach channels. The City also completed a Hazard Mitigation Plan in 2016, to identify vulnerabilities, strengths, and mitigation measures for water supplies in the face of natural hazards and the impacts of climate change.

11.6 Goals, Policies, and Actions

11.6.1 Goals

1. Protect Westfield's water supply to support the community's long-term health, safety, and resilience.
2. Conserve water use and promote conservation to avoid exceeding safe yield of water supply waters.
3. Protect the drinking water system and groundwater aquifers from land use, climate change, or natural hazards contamination and degradation.
4. Increase comprehensive oversight and monitoring of conditions and potential threats to water supply.

11.6.2 Policies

1. Manage development and minimize impervious surfaces to prevent it from damaging water supplies and degrading water quality.
2. Improve wastewater management to reduce risk posed by wastewater in groundwater aquifer recharge areas and water supply watersheds.
3. Promote water conservation to ensure ample supply and preparedness for future increase in drought conditions.
4. Adopt and implement policies, programs, and strategies to protect water supplies. Focus on including green infrastructure as part of stormwater management.

11.6.3 Actions

1. Adopt and enforce advanced standards (e.g., to address emerging contaminants) for land use management in the Water Resource Protection District. As part of this effort, develop standards for use of green infrastructure to help manage stormwater.

Lead Party: Planning Board

Support Party: City Council, Non-profits (e.g., Westfield Residents Advocating for Themselves)

Timeframe: Medium-term/Ongoing

2. Conduct study of groundwater aquifer and water supply to determine whether additional land use restrictions are needed on development that might affect the aquifer.

Lead Party: Water Commission

Support Party: City Council, Department of Public Works

Timeframe: Medium-term

3. Create and administer a public education campaign on septic systems, alerting individuals to maintenance requirements and the possible warning signs related to failures. Consider including a yearly mailing to residents.

Lead Party: Health Department

Support Party: City Council

Timeframe: Short-term/Ongoing

4. Develop a sewer expansion plan to expand access to sewers for residents where sewers will help to protect water supply.

Lead Party: Engineering

Support Party: City Council, Department of Public Works

Timeframe: Medium-term

5. Continue to promote water conservation and reuse using public education and improvement to municipal facilities.

Lead Party: DPW Water Division

Support Party: City Council, Health Department, Water Commission, School Committee

Timeframe: Medium-term

6. Continue monitoring and reporting on drinking water quality to all users (on the system and well users) and distribute emergency communications protocol for service disruptions.

Lead Party: Planning

Support Party: City Council, Department of Public Works

Timeframe: Medium-term

7. Identify priority areas for land preservation and natural resource protection at local parks and lands in water supply watersheds and groundwater aquifer recharge areas.

Lead Party: City Council

Support Party: Conservation Commission, Land Conservation Organizations as needed.

Timeframe: Medium-term

8. Advocate for reinstating the Barnes Aquifer Protection Advisory Committee (BAPAC) to promote collaborative regional protection of groundwater aquifers through education, study, and policy recommendations.

Lead Party: Mayor

Support Party: City Council, Department of Public Works, PVPC/Other Barnes Aquifer municipalities

Timeframe: Medium-term

9. Obtain funding for stormwater improvements and promote improved stormwater management to protect water supplies. Prioritize use of green infrastructure where practicable.

Lead Party: Engineering

Support Party: City Council, Department of Public Works

Timeframe: Medium-term

10. Consider new, and improve upon existing, land use techniques that encourage the conservation of the City's forestland and key watershed lands including the purchase of

development rights, promotion of the tax abatement, innovative zoning techniques, and outright purchase.

Lead Party: Planning

Support Party: City Council, DPW Water Division, Planning Board, Conservation Commission, Land Trust

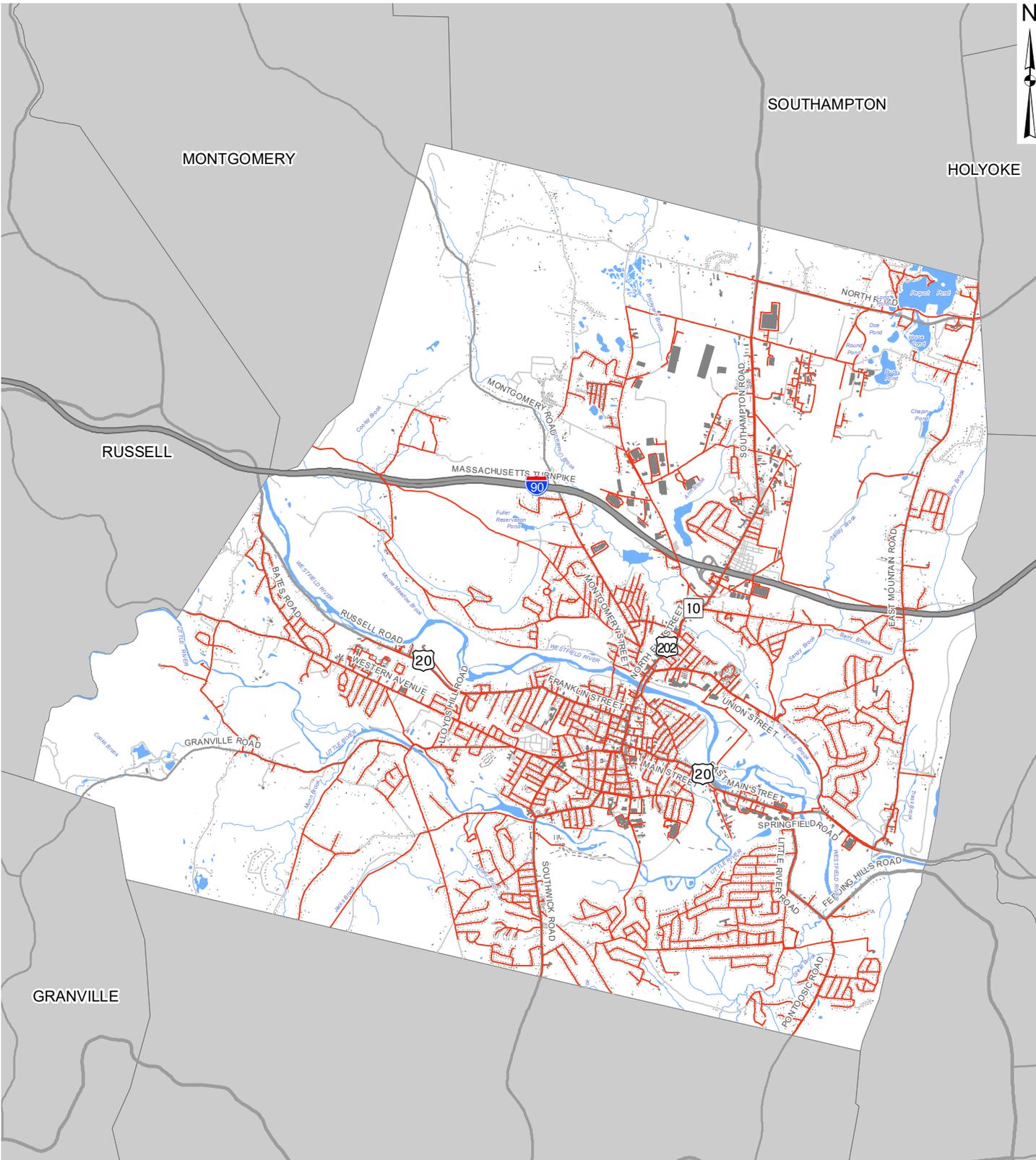
Timeframe: Long-term

11. Assess the results of the Source Water Assessment, completed by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection. Determine potential solutions for sources of contamination.

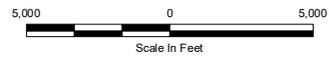
Lead Party: DPW

Support Party: City Council, Mayor

Timeframe: Short-term/Ongoing

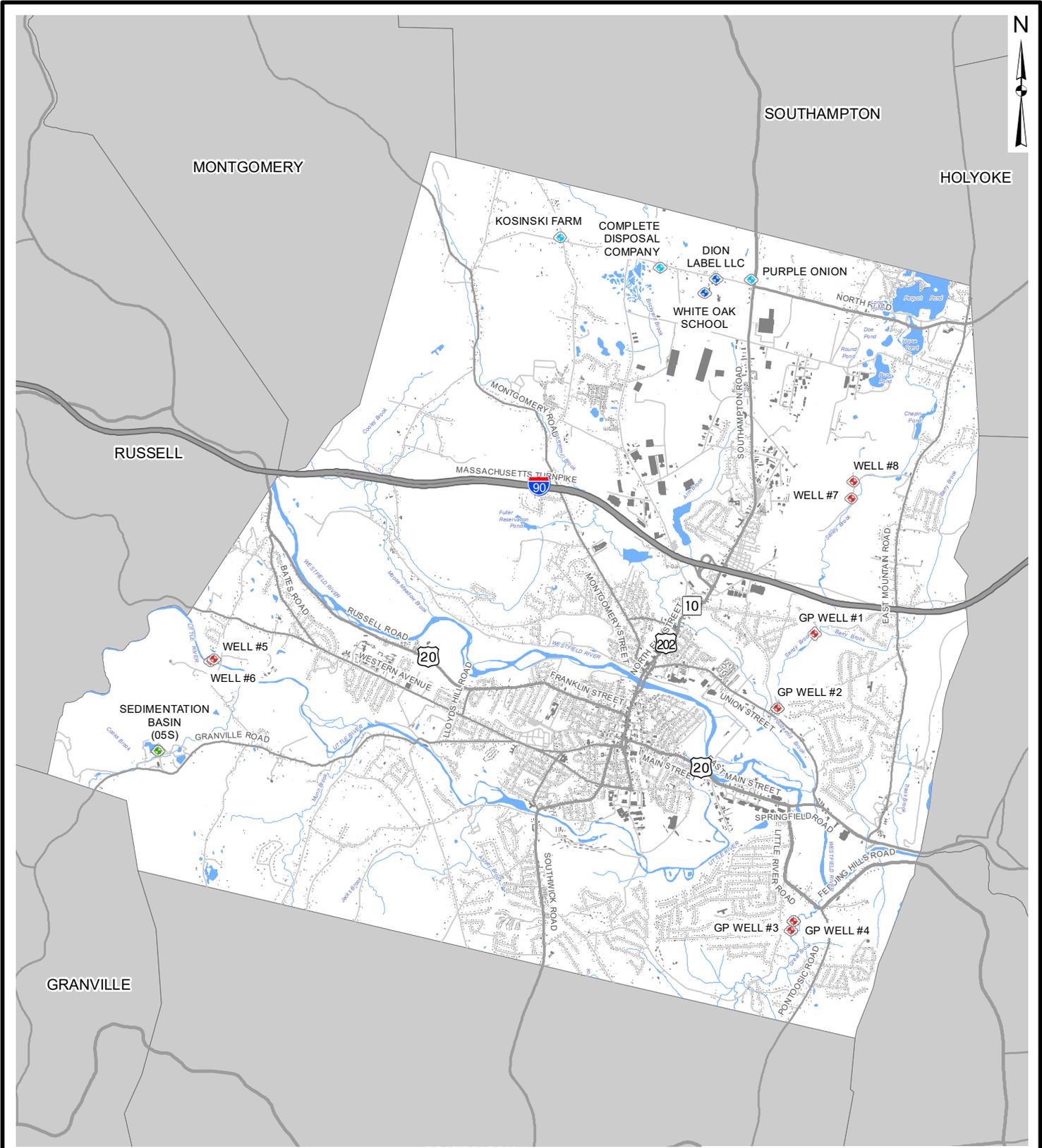


DATASOURCE: City of Westfield, MassGIS, 2022

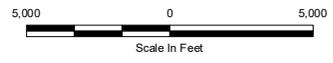


-  Water Mains
-  Open Water
-  Streams

MAP 11-1	
WESTFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS WESTFIELD MASTER PLAN UPDATE	
Drinking Water System	
May 2023	SCALE: NOTED
	



DATASOURCE: MassGIS, 2022

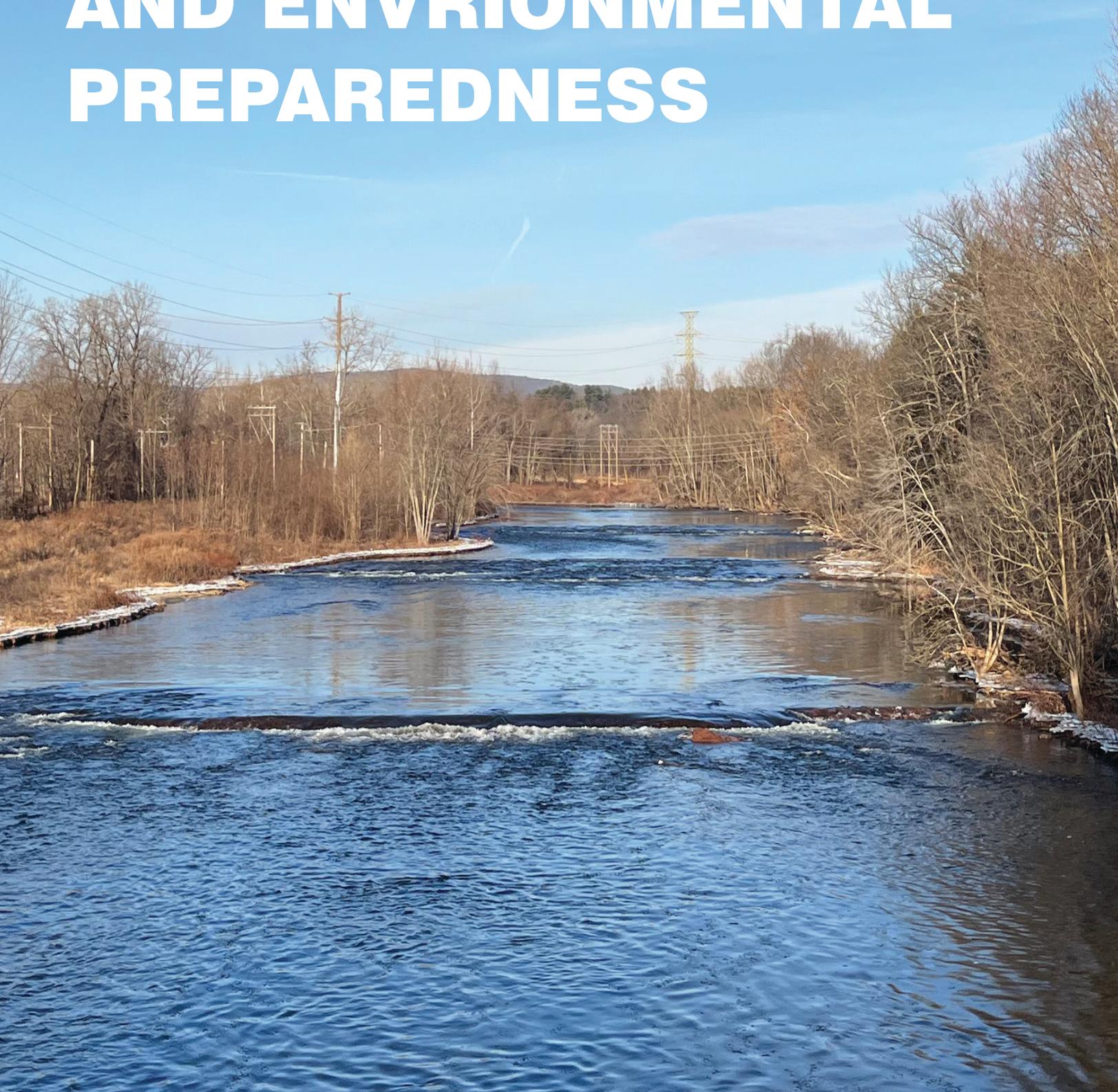


Water Supplies Public & Private

-  Ground Water
-  Surface Water
-  Tansient Non-community
-  Non-transient/Non-community

MAP 11-2	
WESTFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS WESTFIELD MASTER PLAN UPDATE	
PUBLIC WATER SUPPLY	
May 2023	SCALE: NOTED
	

CHAPTER 12. NATURAL HAZARDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL PREPAREDNESS



12.0 NATURAL HAZARDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL PREPAREDNESS

12.1 Vision

We envision that our City will fully adapt and prepare its vulnerable areas, assets, and populations in a way that will minimize the effects of natural hazards, particularly flooding, in a changing climate.

12.2 Introduction

In 2020, Westfield completed a Community Resilience Building workshop and plan to identify climate vulnerabilities and strategies for adaptation. One of the recommendations that arose from that process was an update to the City's Master Plan with a focus on climate change throughout the plan and a dedicated chapter on natural hazards, climate impacts and adaptation. This chapter provides an overview of climate impacts and natural hazards that may impact Westfield in the future and provides potential actions that the city can take to prepare for a "new normal" under future climate conditions.

There are many ways that Westfield could be impacted by climate-related events. Residents' homes, facilities and services, infrastructure, businesses, natural resources, and open spaces are just some examples of physical assets that may be stressed or damaged during such an event. For example, climate change can stress energy infrastructure by increasing demand for energy consumption due to extreme hot and cold temperatures or causing outages during storms. Climate change can also stress stormwater infrastructure and flood control systems due to increased precipitation events and volumes of stormwater, making roadways and buildings vulnerable to damages caused by flooding. This chapter will expand upon the critical assets and the potential vulnerabilities the City will experience.

Climate change is caused by increased greenhouse gases in the atmosphere which trap solar heat and cause long-term shifts in climate and climate-related weather patterns. There are several types of action that Westfield can take to address natural hazards and climate impacts.

Climate mitigation refers to activities that help reduce the impacts of climate change by reducing carbon emissions, creating renewable energy sources, storing carbon, and supporting energy efficiency. However, such actions may be most impactful as part of a broader or regional strategy instead of isolated municipal-level initiatives.

Climate adaptation refers to actions that can be taken to adjust and evolve the way we live, build, and operate to sustain a safe and productive quality of life despite climate change.

Climate resilience refers to the ability of the community to prepare, respond, and recover from climate impacts and climate-related events.

Climate mitigation, adaptation, and resilience complement many aspects of traditional master planning. For example, the creation of green infrastructure and maintenance of open spaces and parks help to reduce urban heat island impacts and manage stormwater while also creating a more appealing visual public realm and spaces for recreation.

Throughout the rest of the century, Westfield is projected to experience more frequent precipitation events and an increase in annual precipitation volume, more frequent heat waves, and an increase in extreme temperature, drought, and winter storms, like Nor'easters resulting in severe wind, rain,

snow, and ice. Westfield is vulnerable to riverine flooding from the Westfield and Little Rivers, which run centrally through the city east-to-west. Because of Westfield's inland location, it is not vulnerable to the same sea-level rise and storm surge impacts that the eastern part of the Commonwealth is experiencing. This could make Westfield an appealing future location for residents relocating from coastal Massachusetts due to climate change impacts.

The following section provides an overview of each of these climate hazards.

12.3 Future Effects of Climate Change

Because climate change is projected to intensify, this chapter provides a "Future Climate Change Projections" overview rather than an "Existing Conditions" overview. Data on projected climate impacts is provided by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA), Resilient MA Mapping Tool (2022) and the City's Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Report (2020). This section of the Master Plan provides the basis of understanding for identification of adaptation actions.

12.3.1 Precipitation and Stormwater Flooding

Across the Northeast, extreme wet-weather events (at least one inch of rain or frozen-precipitation equivalent in 24 hours) increased by more than 70% between 1958-2010. This change in precipitation patterns led to increased riverine and stormwater flooding causing property damage, road closures, stress to stormwater infrastructure, utility outages, erosion, and damage to ecosystems.

Intense wet-weather events are expected to increase in frequency. Projections suggest there will be an additional 8% increase in extreme precipitation events by midcentury, and a 13% increase by 2100. The City can prepare for more extreme precipitation events by assessing whether the current stormwater system can handle projected water volumes, retrofitting existing buildings and building new buildings above projected flood elevations, and ensuring that emergency response services and programs have adequate capacity to respond during extreme precipitation events.

Future precipitation impacts were assessed using data published by EEA from data created by the Cornell Hydrorisk Model. The maps below indicate the projected maximum annual daily rainfall, which refers to projections for the highest volume of rainfall on any given day in a year. The projected maximum annual daily rainfall in 2030 is 10 inches in Westfield. In 2050, the projected maximum annual daily rainfall in 2050 is 14 inches.

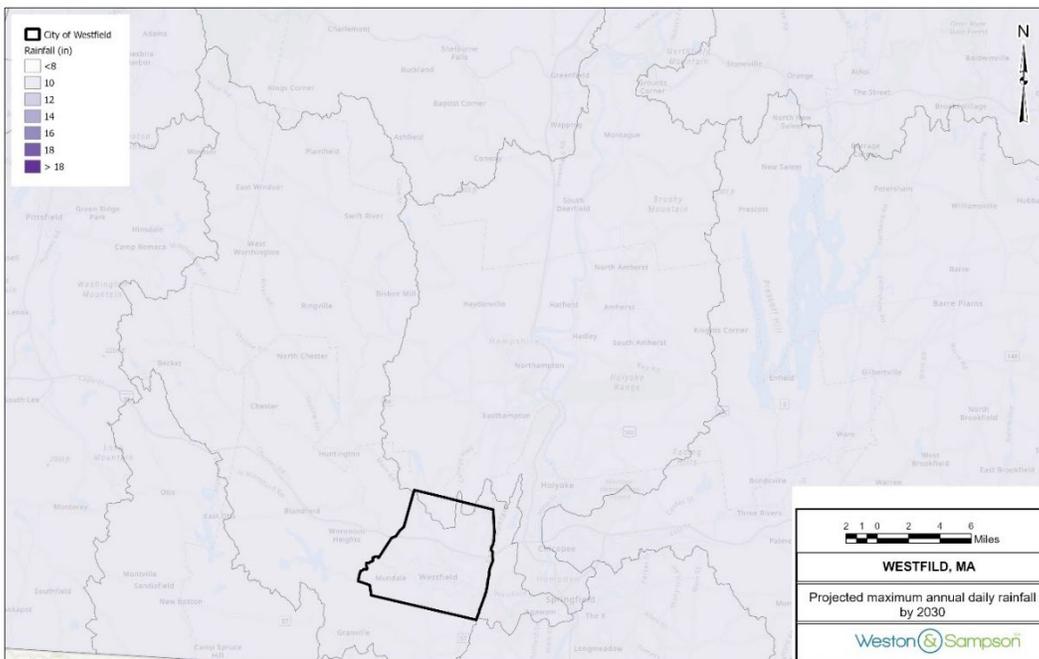


Figure 12-1. Westfield Projected Maximum Annual Daily Rainfall by 2030
 Source: MassGIS, 2023

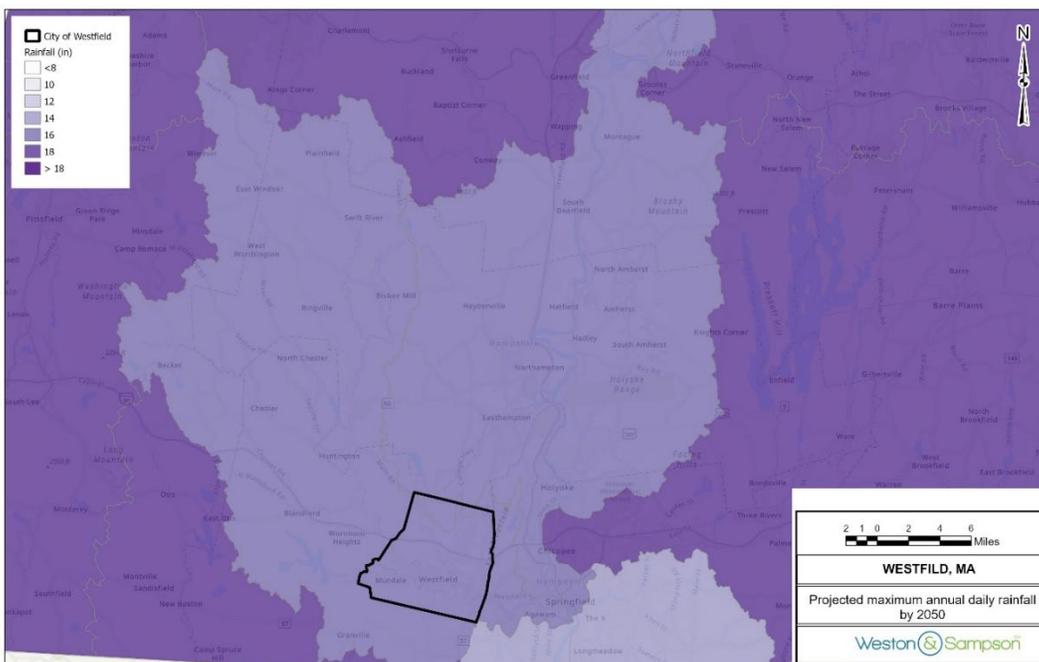


Figure 12-2. Westfield Projected Maximum Annual Daily Rainfall by 2050
 Source: MassGIS, 2023

12.3.2 Riverine Flooding

Riverine flooding occurs when the depth of water in a watercourse overtops the banks. When riverine flooding occurs, water levels rise, overflowing the riverbank and inundating areas that are usually

dry. Flood intensity varies based on the duration of a storm or extreme precipitation event and the amount of time that it takes for water to recede. The main waterbody in Westfield is the Westfield River. The river has flooded often, including several times recently, such as during a July 2021 rain event. One of the City's most significant flood events occurred in 1955 after two Hurricanes Connie and Diane hit Westfield within a week of one another. In 1955 the average annual precipitation was 40 inches in the Connecticut River Valley. In 1955, Westfield got 78 inches of rain, 40 of which occurred across two days in August and October of that year.

In the future, precipitation events such as rain and snow are likely to occur more frequently and with greater intensity because of climate change. Extreme rain and snow events are becoming increasingly common and severe. Large rain or snow events that happened once a year in the middle of the 20th century now occur approximately every nine months. Additionally, the largest annual storm events now generate 10% more rain than in 1948.

According to the same study, New England has experienced an increase in frequency of extreme rain and snow events. These events now occur 85% more frequently than they did 60 years ago, and a storm that used to occur every 12 months now occurs every 6.5 months on average. These types of events result in riverine flooding in Westfield when the volume of water in the Westfield River and other streams exceeds the capacity of the waterbody and overtops the banks.

FEMA designates river flooding by the zones identified in Table 12-1 based on level of risk and recurrence interval. A 100-year flood has a 1% annual chance of recurring, while a 500-year flood has a 0.2% chance of recurring. The geographic boundaries of the flood zone describe what areas may be at risk of experiencing flooding.

Table 12-1. FEMA Riverine Flood Zones			
	Risk	Floodplain	Annual Chance of Recurrence
Zone A	High	100-year	1%
Zone X	Moderate/Low	500-year	0.2%

Source: MassGIS FEMA National Flood Hazard

The FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) below illustrates a select area of Westfield. The hatched areas in blue indicate 'Zone AE', high flood risk, 1% annual chance, with base flood elevations determined for this area. The areas with block dotted hatch indicate areas with moderate flood risk equivalent to the 0.2% annual chance flood event.

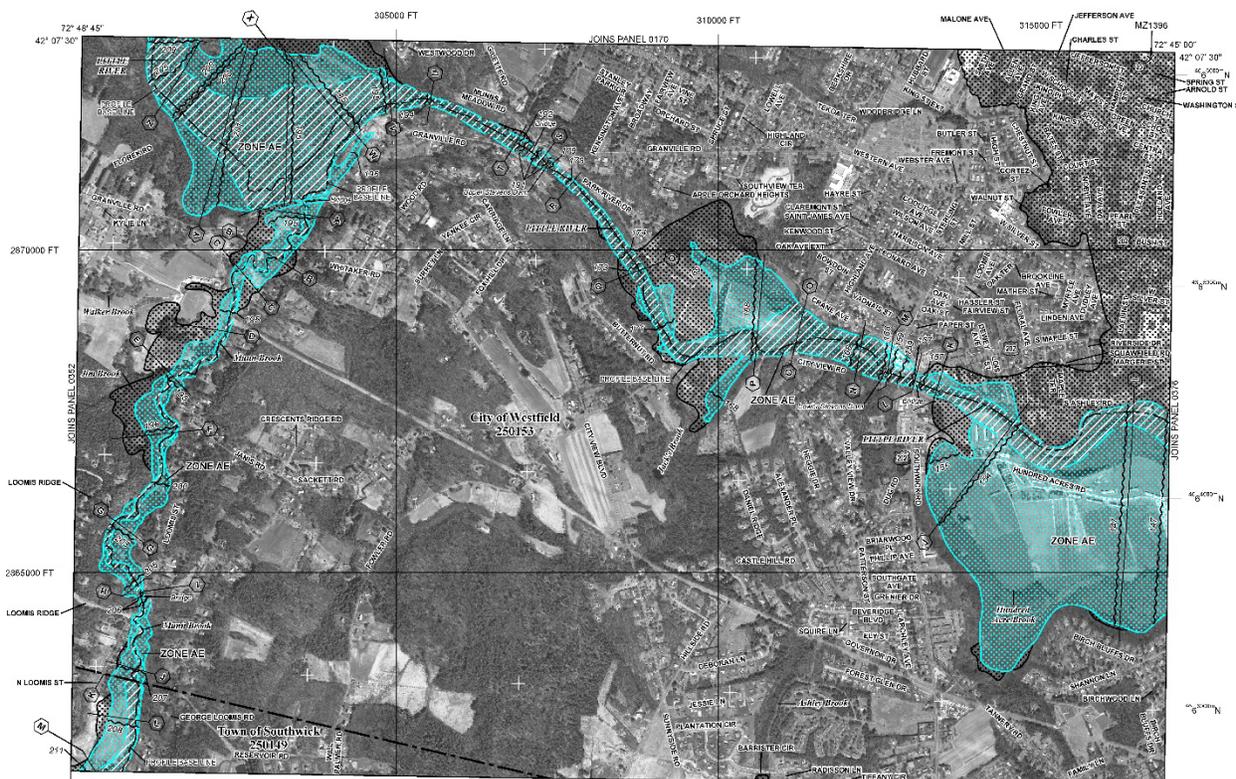


Figure 12-3. FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map to the west of Downtown Westfield (2023)
 Source: FEMA, 2023

12.3.3 Extreme Temperatures and Heat Waves

One manifestation of climate change is an increase in average temperatures and longer, hotter summer seasons. As experienced in summer 2022, the world has had record heat waves. Summers in Massachusetts will feel more like summers in the southern portion of the East Coast by the end of the century. Heat is the leading cause of climate-related deaths in the country. Heatwaves are defined as periods with three or more consecutive days with highs above 90°F. Using data from EEA, it is projected that by 2030 there will be around 10 to 15 days above 90 degrees in Westfield. By 2050, that number will have increased to around 15 to 30 days above 90 degrees. This is compared to a historical average of 3.6 days in the 1980s, 2.4 days in the 1990s and 3.1 days in the 2000s. Westfield experienced 15 days above 90 degrees as of August 18, 2022.

While Westfield is predicted to have slightly less hotter days than surrounding cities, heat stress is still a potential risk for older adults, exposed workers, like construction workers, individuals with health issues, young children, and residents without access to air conditioning. Heat-related illnesses and mortalities occur when a person is exposed to extreme heat over many hours or a period of days without an opportunity for their bodies to cool.

Hotter temperatures can also impact infrastructure service continuity. Brownouts may result from high electricity usage when ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) systems are running for long durations on maximum settings.

Another potential impact of hotter temperatures is changes to growing seasons and impacts on local ecology. Hotter annual temperatures are also contributing to an increase in non-native invasive species, plant diseases, and disease-carrying insects and arachnids, like mosquitos and ticks.

Open space and natural areas such as the Wyben Woods and the Stanley Park Wildlife Sanctuary can help to keep Westfield cooler. Land areas that have vegetated cover and high tree canopy density provide natural cooling through shade and evapotranspiration. However, areas of Westfield that have higher percentages of impervious land cover, like parking lots, roads, and buildings have a higher land surface temperature, referred to as 'urban heat island' or 'hot spots.'

12.3.4 Droughts

Episodic droughts (i.e., droughts lasting one to three months) are predicted to recur more frequently in summer and early fall because of climate change. Under a high emissions scenario, episodic drought frequency could increase as much as 75%. Droughts may present serious adverse impacts to public health as well as natural systems. For example, in 2017, Westfield experienced a drought that lasted almost an entire year impacting public water supplies and the environment.

Low presence of ground and surface water can result in weakened root systems, unviable growing conditions, and loss of vegetation and agricultural crops. Additionally, drought can impact ponds, vernal, pools, and wetlands which require certain water-volumes to sustain aquatic and water-tolerant plant species and animals. Low amounts of water in water bodies also impacts wildlife that rely on these sources for their drinking water. In Westfield, the main public water supply is provided through groundwater wells and a reservoir, each of which can be impacted by drought, as experienced already in the city.

Droughts may exacerbate related climate-impacts such as brushfire. Brushfires are much more likely to occur when there is low humidity in the air, groundwater is depleted, and vegetation is dry.

The map below summarizes Westfield and Hampden County's history of droughts (EEA). Between 2000 and 2022 there have been 73 weeks of drought, a higher amount than the nearby Hampshire and Berkshire Counties.

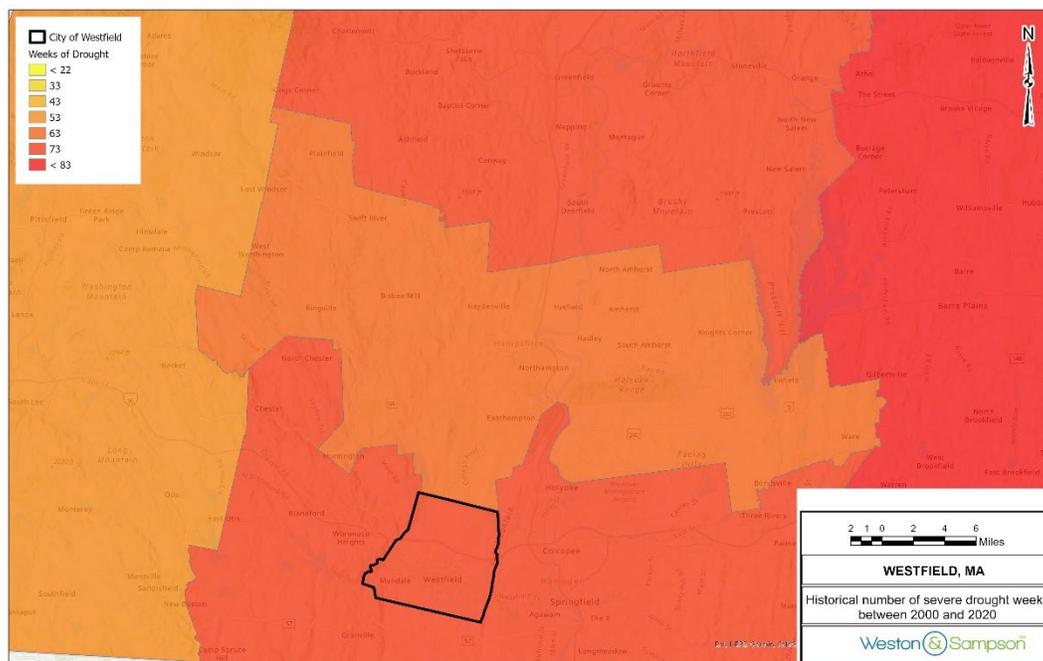


Figure 12-4. Historical number of severe drought weeks between 2000 and 2020

Source: MassGIS

12.3.5 Fire Hazard

According to the online database, 'Risk Factor,' Westfield is moderately vulnerable to wildfires (2022). 13,260 properties have some risk of exposure to wildfire over the next 30 years. Risk Factor bases its scoring off the nonprofit First Street Foundation wildfire model, which is a behavioral wildfire model, meaning it considers the real-world conditions that create wildfires and then outputs the likelihood for wildfire at any given location based on over 100 million simulated wildfire events.

Westfield is classified as a wildland urban interface. The U.S. Forest Service defines the wildland urban interface (WUI) as any area where “humans and their development meet or intermix with wildland fuel.” Communities that are within a half-mile of this mix are included. The WUI is split into two categories: Interface WUI — where structures are adjacent to the wildland vegetation; and Intermix WUI — where structures intermingle with wildland vegetation.

12.3.6 Cold Temperatures and Winter Storms

Although climate change is causing an increase in average temperatures, cold temperatures and storms are still common during winter seasons in New England. Because the number of days that fall below 32°F are decreasing, annual snowfall is also predicted to decrease; however, climate predictions indicate that snow events may become increasingly intense and produce heavier individual snowfalls. During the City’s Community Resilience Building Workshop participants cited winter storms as a top concern: “Severe storms seem to be more frequent and have a great impact on the city. Attendees recalled many blizzards including the “Snowtober” event in October 2011, winter storms in February 2013 and January 2015.”

Residents should be cautious of being out in low temperatures without proper protective clothing. Sustained exposure to low winter temperatures can result in frostbite, hypothermia, or death. Residents who are financially under-resourced or who have unstable housing are more vulnerable to the impacts of low temperatures, due to the high cost of energy bills or not having a safe place to shelter during these events.

The Massachusetts Energy Savings Program can help residents weatherize their home and prepare for the heating loads required to sustain livable indoor temperatures during a period of below freezing temperatures. The city can also provide emergency assistance to those who are most vulnerable to health impacts caused by cold weather, through warming centers.

Winter storms often result in power outages and can cause road blockages as well, which cause an increase in emergency response services needed to clear roadways, respond to vehicular accidents, protect exposed residents from low-temperature health emergencies, and restore power.

Ice storms and repeated freeze-thaw cycles are two types of events that impact growing seasons and the health of vegetation. Repeated freeze-thaw cycle disrupts natural cycles (spring buds) and deteriorates infrastructure exposed to the elements, such as roadways. Ice storms can down trees, which can damage homes and infrastructure.

12.3.7 Wind-related Hazards

Wind-related hazards include hurricanes and nor'easters, both of which have the potential to impact Westfield even when their paths may not pass directly through the city. North Atlantic hurricane activity has been on an upward trend since 1970. Nor'easters are characterized by large counterclockwise wind circulation around a low-pressure center that often results in heavy snow, high winds, and rain and flooding along the East Coast of North America. Nor'easters can have significant impacts and are currently the most frequently occurring natural hazard in Massachusetts, generally recurring on an annual basis, some years bringing up to four nor'easter events. High winds from these events can lead to fallen trees and downed powerlines, cutting off electricity to residents and critical facilities that do not have backup alternative electric sources. Downed trees can also block roadways, potentially impacting evacuation routes and increasing emergency management personnel response times.

12.4 Challenges and Opportunities

12.4.1 Challenges

Natural hazards and extreme weather due to climate change, such as snowstorms, wind, extreme heat and cold events, and flooding will strain community infrastructure including roads, power lines, and buildings. The Westfield River and other streams will increasingly flood under larger rain and precipitation events caused by climate change. Riverine and stormwater flooding can damage structures or block usage of roads during precipitation events if it cannot be managed. Downed trees also pose a threat to power lines and structures during wind events, snowstorms, and thunderstorms, especially if trees are not particularly healthy. Hotter temperatures can also impact infrastructure service continuity if brownouts result from high electricity usage.

Drought is also likely to strain the community's natural resources. Water bans have become more and more common in Westfield and surrounding communities, and Westfield residents have expressed concern about water usage during recent dry spells and heat waves. Changing weather has also impacted growing seasons and local farm and flower stands - not only impacting biodiversity, habitat, environment, but livelihoods and quality of life.

Natural and climate hazards also disrupt community facilities and services. Winter storms often result in power outages and can cause road blockages as well, which cause an increase in emergency response demands. Emergency services are needed to clear roadways, respond to vehicular accidents, protect exposed residents from extreme temperature health emergencies, and restore power. Homes and residents with health or mobility challenges may be especially vulnerable to extreme low or high temperatures, power outages, road blockages, and lack of access to water, food, shelter, or other supplies. Heat stress is another risk for this area, because older adults, exposed workers, like construction workers, individuals with health issues, young children, and residents without access to air conditioning may be in danger during heat waves, especially if cooling is affected by power outages.

12.4.2 Opportunities

The City can prepare for extreme precipitation events by developing more resilient infrastructure, facilities, and services. Resilient stormwater infrastructure is designed to minimize the impacts of major flooding and other extreme precipitation events and can handle projected water volumes. Existing buildings and roads can be retrofitted to withstand projected natural and climate hazards, and new buildings can be directed to stay above projected flood elevations.

Residents can be supported in understanding and preparing for climate-related emergencies, by evaluating possible vulnerabilities. The city can also provide emergency assistance to those who are most vulnerable to health impacts caused by cold weather, through warming centers. Emergency response services and programs need to be evaluated to ensure adequate capacity to respond during extreme weather events.

Open space and natural areas such as the Wyben Woods and the Stanley Park Wildlife Sanctuary are essential to protect to help to keep Westfield cooler in future heat waves. Land with vegetated cover and high tree canopy density provides natural cooling through shade and evapotranspiration. Forests also regulate water flows from extreme precipitation. Given the frequency of downed trees, the City can evaluate trees to ensure trees are healthy and are not near power lines and built areas. The City can also support land and forest preservation efforts to protect existing trees.

The City can promote clean energy generation within the public and private sectors to mitigate climate change. The Massachusetts Energy Savings Program can help residents weatherize their homes and prepare for the heating loads required to sustain livable indoor temperatures during a period of below freezing temperatures.

12.5 Current Measures and Practices

12.5.1 Existing Regulations, Policies, or Plans

Westfield has several regulations and plans in place to address climate change and hazard mitigation.

Floodplain Management District

The flood zone overlay applies to those areas within the boundary of the one-hundred-year flood based on FEMA's Flood Insurance Rate Maps. The Westfield maps were last updated and adopted in 2013. The city assumes that these maps will continue to be updated by FEMA when new data and methodologies are available and is prepared to adopt new maps as they become available.

Water Resource Protection

The purpose of this overlay district is to protect and preserve Westfield's groundwater resources from potentially damaging pollution or environmental degradation by regulating certain uses within the district. The regulations state specific prohibited and restricted uses, regulates drainage, and details special permit procedures.

Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Plan, Community Resilience Building Workshop

In 2020, the City completed a workshop and plan to discuss climate vulnerabilities, concerns, and priorities with residents to develop potential actions that could be taken to mitigate and adapt to climate change. The development of this Master Plan was one of the actions.

FEMA Hazard Mitigation Plan

The City completed its Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) update in 2016. FEMA requires HMPs to be updated every five years, and the city is due to update this plan.

12.6 Goals, Policies, and Actions

12.6.1 Goals

1. Plan development for more intense natural hazards and adapt mitigation strategies for a changing environment.
2. Protect water resources, conserve water use, and restore water quality as needed.
3. Evaluate and update policies, programs, and ordinances to ensure sustainability and resilience across all critical facilities and public infrastructure.
4. Promote emergency preparedness for climate-change-related events through hazard mitigation planning.
5. Address climate-change-related vulnerabilities.

12.6.2 Policies

1. Avoid development in the floodplain and in environmentally sensitive areas and encourage infill development where possible to protect natural resources and promote resilience to climate change.
2. Educate residents on the hazards of climate change and support residents in addressing vulnerabilities to improve emergency preparedness.
3. Evaluate City's facilities, services, and infrastructure to address climate vulnerabilities and to minimize service disruptions from climate-change-related events.
4. Enhance tree and vegetative cover and protect trees in the urban core to help minimize urban heat island effect, manage stormwater, and improve air quality.

5. Upgrade infrastructure to manage increased precipitation due to climate change. Focus on converting grey infrastructure to green infrastructure and incorporating climate projections into design and retrofit of infrastructure improvements.
6. Require implementation of green infrastructure for new development to better manage stormwater and urban heat island effect.
7. Adopt and implement programs to protect natural resources, including open space, through acquisition, conservation easements, and other measures.
8. Promote clean and renewable energy as well as energy efficiency projects on private properties through land use policies and plans. Streamline project review and approval process for development that uses renewable energy.

12.6.3 Actions

1. Conduct a resilient regulatory audit, and update code to eliminate barriers to climate resilient development or encourage climate adaptation in new projects. Regulatory updates could include language to encourage low impact development and best management practices for infrastructure and nature-based solutions; language to limit development in floodplains and sensitive areas; design guidelines for adapted development; additional regulations to encourage clean energy generation and reduced emissions; or other updates.

Lead Party: Planning Board

Support Party: City Council, Conservation Commission

Timeframe: Short-term

2. Develop and implement a Climate Community Outreach Program. The outreach program can spread awareness of climate impacts and preparedness measures, in addition to helping residents connect with one other.

Lead Party: Emergency Management

Support Party: Health Department, Public Works, Non-Profit Organizations

Timeframe: Medium-Term

3. Educate residents, especially those who reside in flood hazard areas, about the risks associated with flood events.

Lead Party: Emergency Management

Support Party: Health Department

Timeframe: Medium-Term

4. Implement and document enhanced floodplain management actions to address flood vulnerabilities and reduce National Flood Insurance Program rates for property owners through the Community Rating System.

Lead Party: Emergency Management

Support Party: Conservation Commission, Building Department

Timeframe: Medium-Term

5. Update Westfield's Hazard Mitigation Plan (2016). The HMP is due for an update every five years and should prioritize environmental justice communities throughout its creation and implementation.

Lead Party: Emergency Management

Support Party: City Council

Timeframe: Short-term

6. Develop a citywide climate action resilience plan (CARP) that includes a vulnerability assessment of City facilities and infrastructure to inform Capital Improvement Program (CIP) and asset management. Vulnerability assessment can help inform priority projects for retrofits and adaptations to minimize disruptions of facilities, services, or assets during a climate-related heat or flooding event. The vulnerability assessment should include an assessment to ensure the proper distribution of emergency centers. The CARP should also include an assessment of City standards and regulations to ensure advancement of policy to address climate-related issues.

Lead Party: Planning

Support Party: Department of Public Works, Emergency Department, Engineering Department

Timeframe: Medium-Term

7. Replace underperforming and undersized culverts with appropriately sized culverts that meet Massachusetts River and Stream Crossing Standards, including road crossing for wildlife.

Lead Party: Department of Public Works

Support Party: Engineering Department

Timeframe: Medium-term

8. Create a resilient stormwater management planning program that includes a vulnerability and capacity assessment of the grey infrastructure system and a master plan for upgrades including incorporating green infrastructure techniques. Assess the vulnerability of levees and dams to projected heavier and more frequent storms and align upgrades with useful life considerations through capital planning processes.

Enhance erosion controls or add backflow prevention on vulnerable stormwater outfalls.

9. Identify locations for green infrastructure to help reduce stormwater and heat impacts and protect and improve water quality.

Lead Party: Department of Public Works

Support Party: Planning Department, Engineering Department

Timeframe: Medium-term

10. Building on the existing tree program, develop an urban forest master plan to target locations for tree preservation measures, planting of new trees, and a program for tree care. As part of this, consider opportunities to work with surrounding communities.

Lead Party: DPW Natural Resources Division/Tree Warden

Support Party: Planning Department

Timeframe: Medium-term

11. Adopt the Massachusetts State Energy Stretch Code update (2022-2023).

Lead Party: City Council

Support Party: Building Department

Timeframe: Short-term

12. Apply for grant funding (e.g., through FEMA) to support private homeowners in high-risk flood areas retrofit their homes.

Lead Party: Community Development

Support Party: Building Department

Timeframe: Medium-term

13. Identify public facilities that can act as heating and cooling centers on both sides of the City to provide relief from extreme weather patterns.

Lead Party: Community Development

Support Party: Building Department, Emergency Management

Timeframe: Medium-term

14. Report tree-related issues and remove hazard trees to help reduce the risk of power outages.

Lead Party: DPW Natural Resources Division/Tree Warden

Support Party: WG+E

Timeframe: Ongoing

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APPENDIX A

Master Plan Committee Meeting
Agendas and Minutes



City of Westfield



MEETING NOTICE

Wednesday, November 17, 2021

At 5:30 P.M. in Room 315, Municipal Building, 59 Court St., Westfield, MA, the Master Plan Committee will conduct its kickoff meeting concerning the following business:

AGENDA

- A. Introductions
- B. Public Participation
- C. Review of committee organization, procedures, officers
- D. Overview of the master planning process & committee's role
- E. Discussion/brainstorming for master plan scope and focus
- F. Future meeting schedule

*The above-listed items are those reasonably anticipated to be discussed at the time of agenda publication;
other items may be discussed to the extent permitted by law.*

MGL Chapter 30A, Section 20(f) requires any person making an audio or visual recording of the meeting to first notify the Chair.



City of Westfield

MEETING MINUTES

RECEIVED

MAR 22 2022

WESTFIELD CITY CLERK

Master Plan Committee - November 17, 2021 City Hall Room 315

City Planner Jay Vinskey called the first meeting of the Master Plan Committee to order at 5:30PM and introduced himself. He stated he would be conducting the first meeting of the Master Plan Committee in order to get things rolling. He explained his role with the Master Plan Committee is as administrative day-support for the committee. Currently there are 12 members that were appointed by Mayor Humason with possible additional members being appointed by Mayor-Elect McCabe next year. Members introduced themselves:

Rich Salois - Member of the Planning Board
Jay Ducharme - Resident, Western Avenue
Rick Barry - Carol Drive, Childrens Museum and International Volleyball Hall of Fame
Bernie Puza - Member of the Planning Board
Rania Kfuri - Live near Munger Hill, Director of Development, Smith College
Melissa Trzasko - High School teacher in Southwick, coaches.
Jillian Battles - Westfield High School student
Jennifer Battles - Jillian's mother
Brent Bean - Westfield City Council President
Harrison Stefano - Belleview Drive
Les Pooler - Feeding Hills Road
Bill Schneeloch - Duane Street

Mayor Donald Humason stated he is excited to be here tonight and pleased to be kicking off this meeting. This planning process should be open to Westfield residents to participate. He thanked the members for their willingness to serve.

City Planner Vinskey added the committee should follow the Open Meeting Law and city meeting procedures, one of which is to allow for public participation. He asked if there was anyone who would like to speak during the public participation portion of the meeting:

Albert Giguere, Jr. 34 South Gate Avenue Chair of the Flood Commission.
Mr. Giguere felt there should be someone representing the Flood Control Commission and the Conservation Commission, the city has significant flood plain issues that need to be addressed.

Peter Miller, 247 Steiger Drive, Community Development Director
In the past 2 years he's seen development projects go through his office and he is pleased to see the Economic Development occurring but that is a process that comes with a lot of stress. This Committee will have a challenge to protect Westfield and protect its ability to be stay strong and yet encourage new opportunities. What does Master Plan mean for schools, watershed, business, people living here, seniors,

public safety all contribute to the Master Plan. He is pleased to be here and plans on attending as many meetings as possible. This should be a community driven process, it should come from the community itself. Mr. Miller thanked everyone for their willingness to put time in to this.

Matthew Crosby – Union Street

Felt it is important to have the younger generation involved.

In response to Mr. Giguere's comment, City Planner Vinskey noted the Conservation Commission was asked to send a representative to this Committee, but choose not to participate.

City Planner Vinskey asked the committee if they want to appoint a chair? Mr. Bean nominated Jay Ducharme to serve as chair, seconded by Ms. Kfuri. With no other nominations, all voted in favor.

The Committee inquired if there could be a google doc's group? Mr. Miller stated this is a public body and subject to open meeting law and deliberations. Mr. Ducharme asked if there could be a space on the web site that could be used. Planner Vinskey noted he was planning to set up a page on the web site, similar to the open space plan.

The Committee further discussed how they would like to conduct their meetings in person or on zoom, which will be broadcast. After discussion, the Board felt in person would be best.

Planner Vinskey gave a brief summary of the open meeting law, an example given was members (quorum) cannot deliberate amongst themselves outside of the meetings.

The meeting schedule was then discussed. Planner Vinskey felt the process would take a year or so, and may consist of monthly meetings and include workshops/outreach for the community. Councilor Bean expressed skepticism at the timeline; Vinskey acknowledged it may be longer depending on how soon things get started.

Councilor Bean also voiced concerns regarding zoom meetings in regards to the open meeting laws, his concerns regarded the framework of the open meeting law. Mayor Humason suggested having the City Solicitor come to one of the meetings to present a primer on the open meeting law. City Planner Vinskey added all business has to be made available for the public can observe it; but he didn't expect the committee's work would lend itself to too much controversy or scrutiny. Also discussed was how the public would be aware of meetings and how and where these meetings would be held whether by sections of the city or by discussion topic. Planner Vinskey also noted there will be a consultant working with the Committee and will lead the project on outreach.

Member Puza felt it would be useful if other members had an opportunity to review the current Master Plan to see what the vision of Westfield was when it was written and compare to the vision of today. Planner Vinskey to E Mail the current Master Plan (1962).

Planner Vinskey presented a slide show for the committee members to view which gave a summary of the items to be considered in preparing a Master Plan. He further noted the Planning Board is legally charged with the Master Plan and \$125,000 has been budgeted; it may be on the lower end for what some comparable communities might spend. There is possible additional funding from some grants that could be sought.

Mr. Ducharme stated it is important for him to know where the city has been and where we are going before he can proceed, he would like to review all the paperwork provided (Master Plan, Open Space Plan, Downtown Plan).

Ms. Kfuri asked if climate could be included in the project? Planner Vinskey informed her climate change is not one of the requirements of the state, but if it is something the Committee feels should be addressed it could be put in the scope of the RFP.

Councilor Bean felt the City's zoning issue is a top issue, the City has always reacted rather than planning ahead. Planner Vinskey replied the Master Plan is the set up for a zoning overhaul, the zoning changes will come to support the Master Plan.

Mr. Berry voiced concerns regarding hiring a consultant, how long would it take to hire someone? Planner Vinskey asked if the committee wanted to be involved in the interviewing process of the consultant, or he could do things administratively. Chair Ducharme felt the committee should have a sense of what they want before the Consultant comes in and felt they should be involved in the hiring process and that everyone should read all the information prior to the next meeting. Member Salois agreed everything should be reviewed as a first step.

Planner Vinskey stated he could write a draft RFP project scope prior to the next meeting and send it out for review. After discussion Member Berry MOTIONED, seconded by Chair Ducharme to have Planner Vinskey write up a draft RFP scope prior to the next meeting and distribute to members for review. All in favor.

Chair Ducharme discussed possible dates for the next meeting. It was decided to be December 16th at 5:30. Also if there is any communication for the Committee to email to Planner Vinskey. Some members expressed interest in setting up a city email account; Vinskey will pursue that.

Chair Ducharme asked if there should be any additional officers? No further officers were elected. Planner Vinskey noted that Christine Fedora from the Community Development Office was taking minutes of the meeting and will also provide assistance to the committee.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:00.



City of Westfield

MEETING NOTICE

Thursday, December 16, 2021



At 5:30 P.M. in Room 315, Municipal Building, 59 Court St., Westfield, MA, the Master Plan Committee will conduct a meeting concerning the following business:

AGENDA

- A. Public Participation
- B. Review of master plan consultant's scope of services (to be issued with request for proposals)
- C. Discussion/brainstorming for master plan process
- D. Consultant selection process and project schedule
- E. Future meeting schedule

*The above-listed items are those reasonably anticipated to be discussed at the time of agenda publication;
other items may be discussed to the extent permitted by law.*

MGL Chapter 30A, Section 20(f) requires any person making an audio or visual recording of the meeting to first notify the Chair.



City of Westfield

MEETING MINUTES

RECEIVED

MAR 22 2022

WESTFIELD CITY CLERK

Master Plan Committee - December 16, 2021 City Hall Room 315

Master Plan Committee members in attendance: Chair Jay Ducharme, Bernie Puza, Brent Bean, Les Pooler, Melissa Trzasko, Jennifer Battles, Bill Schneeloch, Harrison Stefano, Jillian Battles, Rich Salois, Rick Barry. Staff attending: Jay Vinskey, City Planner and Christine Fedora, Secretary.

Chair Ducharme called the meeting to order at 5:34PM and asked if anyone would like to speak during the public participation portion of the meeting.

Joshua Ouellette - voiced concerns regarding urban sprawl that is occurring in the city giving reference to the proposed Data Center. He presented a slide show of the area stating "Big Tech is not our Friend." The slide show included various photos of animals, insects, wildlife, and endangered species. He felt there are many misunderstandings about how this will affect the environment. There being no further participants, Chair Ducharme thanked Mr. Ouellette for coming to the meeting.

Planner Vinskey noted he had distributed the Draft Scope of Services for the master plan consultant, including a full RFP draft from the Purchasing Director, to all members.

Chair Ducharme inquired as to the timeline? Planner Vinskey replied after the scope gets finalized it was his hope it would be put out in January. After discussion regarding the procedures that should be followed regarding the reviewing process, the Committee was in agreement that Chair Ducharme, Planner Vinskey and Committee Member Trzasko would review the proposals received and select 2 or 3 for the full committee to select from. Planner Vinskey's thoughts were to have the consultant selected by February- March, with a possible plan completion date a year from this coming June (June 30, 2023). Member Salois felt that would be a good timeline.

Planner Vinskey gave a summary of the following tasks/scope of services to be included in the RFP.

Task 1: Project Initiation, Outreach and Management - Establishes project start up actions and ongoing activities associated with project management and public outreach which includes the following:

- Project management plan
- Community outreach and engagement
- Work with Master Plan Committee
- Establish Web presence

Task 2: Existing Conditions Report - as a basis for development of the plan.

- Subject areas and themes
- Literature review and coordination
- Observational studies and fieldwork
- Data analysis and mapping

Task 3: Master Plan - actual plan development, informed by Tasks 1 & 2, with the following components:

- A vision
- Goals
- Objectives
- Alternative futures
- Cross-cutting themes throughout; Vinskey suggested possibly:
 - An inclusive approach
 - A Healthy Community
 - A Sustainable Future
- Subject areas (per MGL)
 - Land Use and Zoning
 - Housing
 - Economic Development
 - Natural Resources
 - Art, Cultural and Historic Resources
 - Open Space and Recreation
 - Public Services and Facilities
 - Transportation and Mobility
- Needs and Opportunity identification
- Actions and Recommendations
- Evaluation
- Precedents and best practices

Task 4: Implementation Program

- Define Ongoing Planning Program
- Develop Implementation Plan

Task 5: Final Report

- Draft Plan
- Final Plan
- Technical appendices

Planner Vinskey stated he tried to cover a broad range of issues under the subject areas upfront in the scope. He asked for other thoughts/topics.

Mr. Ouellette asked if the city is trying to acquire any land? Planner Vinskey responded not very proactively, but the Community Preservation Committee would be the group that typically funds conservation land. Other issues discussed were how to retain natural land natural and be sustainable. Planner Vinskey added that if that is an expressed concern, the need for open space should be highlighted in the Master Plan, with certain metrics, such as protecting some amount of acres each year.

Councilor Bean felt there is land that needs to be marketed and developed as well. Member Salois felt businesses should be compatible to the environment and the city should be selective and to how they do it and where they allow them.

Chair Ducharme felt the RFP has to be up front and a sustainable focus should be in there. Vinskey noted the RFP is just for establishing the consultant's broad scope of service, but things will likely be adjusted as the process unfolds.

The Committee also felt there should be a balance between the Route 20 strip malls versus the downtown, there should also be low impact industries, preserving rural character.

Committee members were agreeable to the drafted scope as discussed, but felt that open space preservation should also be specifically mentioned in the sustainable theme description. Councilor Bean suggested zoning revision is a needed focus. In reviewing the proposal evaluation criteria from Ms. Tefft, Vinskey suggested we may want to add or stress an economic development specialization as a rating factor, as well a zoning specialization. A committee consensus was noted.

Vinskey noted when the final plan is completed it will be presented to the Planning Board (televised), for adoption. The Committee discussed the implementation of the plan and the need for vigilance to see it materialize.

The Committee agreed the Draft Scope of Services is good as discussed and should proceed. Member Salois MOTIONED, duly seconded, to have Planner Vinskey and Procurement Officer Tefft move forward with finalizing and putting out the RFP. All in favor.

The next meeting to likely be conducted in February.

Councilor Bean MOTIONED, seconded by Member Puza to adjourn at 6:43. All in favor.



City of Westfield



MEETING NOTICE

Thursday, March 17, 2022

At 5:30 P.M. in Room 315, Municipal Building, 59 Court St., Westfield, MA, the Master Plan Committee will conduct a meeting concerning the following business:

AGENDA

- A. Welcome new members
- B. Public participation
- C. Approval of previous meeting minutes (11/17/21, 12/16/21)
- D. Review of recommendations for the master plan consultant and vote to authorize contract execution
- E. Review of previous (1962) master plan
- F. Discussion/brainstorming for upcoming master plan process – schedule, possible community photo solicitation, website presence, other ideas
- G. Future meeting schedule

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other items may be discussed to the extent permitted by law.*

MGL Chapter 30A, Section 20(f) requires any person making an audio or visual recording of the meeting to first notify the Chair.



City of Westfield

MEETING MINUTES

RECEIVED

AUG - 8 2022

WESTFIELD CITY CLERK

Master Plan Committee – March 17, 2022 City Hall Room 315

Master Plan Committee members in attendance: Chair Jay Ducharme, Rick Barry, Jennifer Battles, Brent Bean (CC), Sharon Greany, Rania Kfuri, Les Pooler, Richard Salois, (PB), Alexandra Smialek, Agma Sweeney (@ 5:33), Melissa Trzasko, Bill Schneeloch. Also attending: Mayor Michael McCabe, Jay Vinskey (City Planner) and Christine Fedora (Secretary).

Members not attending Jillian Battles, Rania Kfuri, Bernie Puza, Harrison Stefano.

Chair Ducharme called the meeting to order at 5:30 P.M.

A. Welcome new members

New members Greany and Smialek introduced themselves, as did the previous members (Member Sweeney not yet present). Chair Ducharme thanked the new members for their interest in serving on committee.

B. Public Participation

Chair Ducharme asked if anyone would like to speak during the public portion of the meeting. None.

C. Approval of previous meeting minutes (11/17/21, 12/16/21)

Chair Ducharme asked if everyone had an opportunity to review the 11/17/21 and 12/16/21 minutes that were emailed? Motion made and duly seconded to approve the minutes as drafted. All in favor.

D. Review of recommendation for the master plan consultant and contract authorization

Chair Ducharme updated members on the consultant selection working group (Ducharme, Trzasko, Vinskey, Tammy Tefft (Purchasing Director)). There were 2 proposals received one from Stantec and one from Weston & Sampson. He further stated the plans were similar in some ways and much different in other ways. Planner Vinskey stated the review committee felt the Weston & Sampsons proposal was the strongest, that is what they are recommending to this group. Chair Ducharme felt on Stantec's there were typo's that stood out, it was not as well organized, but he did mention it was very nice to look at. Planner Vinskey also noted that he rated Weston & Sampson stronger in the economic development portion having a specialized sub-consultant, but liked Stantec's better in the graphics criteria. He did not that the RFP requires robust graphics. Chair Ducharme also felt that Weston & Sampson was stronger in the zoning issues, which is something that needs to be addressed.

Councilor Bean inquired if they have done Master Plans before. Planner Vinskey replied they are both well-established firms and listed a number of Master Plans they completed.

Both of the submissions proposed social media campaigns to address the public engagement. Chair Ducharme stated an important portion of the project will be public outreach, workshops and social media.

Chair Ducharme noted that the respondents to the RFP would need to be available for interviews. The selection committee felt that was not necessary as there were only two received, and less time would be taken up.

Chair Ducharme asked if there was a motion? Planner Vinskey noted the motion should be to authorize the Purchasing Director to enter into the master plan contract with Weston & Sampson. So moved, with Member Sweeney seconding.

Councilor Bean voiced his concerns regarding the funding amount and only 2 firms submitted proposals, he does not want to short change this, he was a little uncomfortable supporting this. Vinskey stated firms may be busy or the somewhat modest budget might not attract more bidders, but he was comfortable with both responses. Chair Ducharme understood the concerns but felt they have done a lot of these, they are an established firm and have been doing this locally, they are familiar with the area, working with PVPC. Planner Vinskey also noted he called a master plan reference (Hamilton, MA) and they only had good things to say about Weston & Sampson.

There being no further discussion, all were recorded in favor. Planner Vinskey to notify Purchasing.

E. Review of previous (1962) master plan

Planner Vinskey presented a PowerPoint (prepared by his intern) showing progress made on some matters identified in 1962. Some of the highlights were the population trends, schools, playgrounds, recreational areas, traffic flow. Discussion regarding the current traffic issue that exists and how pedestrian traffic can be increased downtown. Members discussed how many concerns back then are relevant today.

F. Discussion/brainstorming for upcoming master plan process

A brief review of some of the items to be addressed in the new Master Plan. Members mentioned traffic, maintenance of city property, more open space, housing, infrastructure.

Vinskey showed a draft city web page for the Master Plan, (to be at cityofwestfield.org/masterplan). He also suggested a call for photos that could be used in the plan, also a way to engage the community. Remembers discussed how schools, art works, park and recreation could get involved. Members were agreeable to the web page and photo solicitation idea. Outreach discussion included popup tents at the Farmers Market and other events, surveys.

G. Future Meeting Schedule

Planner Vinskey stated this is probably the last meeting before the consultant takes over; next meeting may be late April or May; 5:30 on Thursdays was amenable. Chair Ducharme asked if the consultant needed anything from us in advance, reminded members of housekeeping items: review of open meeting law, cyber security survey/training

The meeting was adjourned at 6:55.



City of Westfield

RECEIVED

By City Clerk's Office at 2:49 pm, 5/3/22

MEETING NOTICE

Thursday, May 5, 2022

At 5:30 P.M. in Room 315, Municipal Building, 59 Court St., Westfield, MA, the Master Plan Committee will conduct a meeting concerning the following business:

AGENDA

- A. Public participation
- B. Approval of previous meeting minutes (3/17/22)
- C. Project kickoff discussion with master plan consultant to establish preliminary priorities, expectations, schedule, outreach and other project tasks; project brainstorming
- D. Future meeting schedule

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other items may be discussed to the extent permitted by law.*

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City of Westfield

MEETING MINUTES

RECEIVED

AUG - 8 2022

WESTFIELD CITY CLERK

Master Plan Committee – May 5, 2022 City Hall Room 315

Master Plan Committee members in attendance: Chair Jay Ducharme, Rick Barry, Jennifer Battles, Jillian Battles, Sharon Greany, Les Pooler, Richard Salois (PB), Bernie Puza (PB), Alexandra Smialek, Agma Sweeney, Bill Schneeloch, Maureen Socha (WSU). Also attending: Jay Vinskey (City Planner) and Christine Fedora (Secretary).

Members not attending Brent Bean (CC), Melissa Trzasko, Rania Kfuri, Harrison Stefano.

Chair Ducharme called the meeting to order at 5:30 P.M. The committee welcomed new member Maureen Socha (appointed by Mayor McCabe), representing Westfield State.

A. Public participation

No members of the public were present to address the committee.

B. Approval of previous meeting minutes (3/17/22)

Chair Ducharme and Planner Vinskey noted there were a couple amendments to the draft: Member Kfuri was noted as present and absent (was absent); also, Paragraph D, 2nd to last sentence “not” should be “note.” On a motion made and duly seconded to approve the minutes as edited, all in favor except new Member Socha abstaining.

C. Project kickoff discussion with master plan consultant to establish preliminary priorities, expectation, schedule, outreach and other project tasks; project brainstorming.

Mr. Jim Riordan from Weston & Sampson introduced himself; works out of their Foxborough office. He is the project manager for this project and is very excited to be working with this committee. He further noted the contract has been signed and he has subcontracts with the PVPC and RKG, an economic firm they have worked with. Invoicing will be done monthly per contract, they will be billing on the percent of completion.

Project Goals and Objectives

Mr. Riordan reviewed project goals and objectives with participants. As part of this discussion, he included an overview of the proposed master plan outline, coordination with City staff, and outreach/engagement with the public and stakeholders.

Mr. Riordan reviewed the proposed master plan outline provided to the committee. He noted that four of the items on the outline (Agriculture/ Energy/ Water Supply/ Natural Hazards and Climate Change) were optional for the plan, but members agreed that they should be included.

Principal engagement elements will include public workshops, an online survey, and project webpage, which will be hosted on the City's website. Riordan and Vinskey agreed to work out the details of an engagement plan in draft for review by the committee. (A draft engagement plan will be provided). The following are several items of note that came from discussion:

- Media outlets including WWLP/Springfield TV, MassLive, Westfield on Weekends, Farmers Market
- On line material posted on the City's website/master plan page
- Public outreach to engage local college students from Westfield State University, possibly as workshop facilitators.
- Print media
- City newsletters
- Community channel
- Facebook pages, Experience Westfield & More
- Radio interview

Mr. Riordan said they would start working on the survey. Mr. Riordan further noted one of the challenges with the surveys are creating too much information it gets too complicated and people don't want to do it. He felt they should be limited to 10 minutes. A dozen or two dozen questions, some of them compound questions; he further felt that avoiding paper surveys is preferable as it adds a lot of cost and effort. He further felt that surveys are useful in that they give ideas of what they like to see in the community, and if they spend time on the surveys they are more likely to come and participate in the meetings. Poster/postcards with QR codes could be used at events.

Participants discussed the need to communicate with people who may have difficulty with English. The committee agreed that available translation software would limit the need for the consulting team to provide written translation.

The committee agreed that project coordination should occur through Riordan and Vinskey to avoid potential cross communication, inadvertent loss of communication, etc.

Scope of Work, Schedule, Budget, and Deliverables

Mr. Riordan provided a PowerPoint presentation to the group that included a discussion of scope of work, project schedule, budget, and deliverables. During each committee meeting a status report will be presented.

Chair Ducharme asked members if they received the email requesting any questions/issues/expectations they would like considered. Vinskey stated he only got a couple members' responses. Chair Ducharme felt it is necessary to create a vision of what Westfield should be. Mr. Riordan felt the background work should be first and then build a vision.

Project timetable - Mr. Riordan felt 12 months is an aggressive time table for this sort of project, but possible; he also added it's not unusual to extend the time frame, they hope is to get it completed within the time frame the City wants. Member Salois felt the Committee should be aggressive and have it completed within the year. Member Socha asked if the fee would increase if it went longer than 12 months. Mr. Riordan replied no, it's a lump sum unless the scope is changed. Vinskey noted the RFP allowed 14 months (to June 2023), but the deadline could be flexible.

Planner Vinskey noted there is a web page for the Master Plan on the Planning Department page that can be used for the survey with links to other info. The Board discussed how they would want the web page to work, also suggested a google translator. Vinskey stated he had limited capabilities in webpage management. It was agreed to use the city webpage, vs. a standalone page, for the project.

Member Salois asked when should we start public meetings? Further discussion regarding possible dates for visioning session. Planner Vinskey noted it's a challenge to get people to attend these things, especially in summer. After discussion it was felt that a Fall visioning session would be preferable. Member Salois suggested using public participation at the City Council meetings to get the word out.

Member Puza asked if there are any actions between now and next meeting that has to be accomplished? Initiating outreach tasks, cable station, radio, newspaper, newsprint, graduate students, things that were brought up this evening that would be good to pursue. Member Sweeney inquired as to when the surveys start? Mr. Riordan to put together public engagement plan will include what was mentioned so we can start to plan out sub tasks.

D. Future meeting schedule

The participants discussed the scheduling of meetings and felt the second Thursdays of the month would work best (June 9th, July 14th, and August 11).

Member Salois departed early. Vinskey provided some background documents (via USB drive). Mr. Riordan felt they could set up a google drive.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:05.



City of Westfield

RECEIVED

By City Clerk's Office at 4:28 pm, 6/6/22

MEETING NOTICE

Thursday, June 9, 2022

At 5:15 P.M. in Room 315, Municipal Building, 59 Court St., Westfield, MA, the Master Plan Committee will conduct a meeting concerning the following business:

AGENDA

- A. Public participation
- B. Approval of previous meeting minutes (5/5/22)
- C. Master plan development
 - General project timeline
 - Public engagement plan
 - Outreach coordination with other City events
 - Public visioning workshop planning
 - Online survey development
 - Marketing materials/project awareness
 - Other ideas/project brainstorming
- D. Next tasks/future meeting schedule



Our Master Plan is now in the works! Learn more & participate:

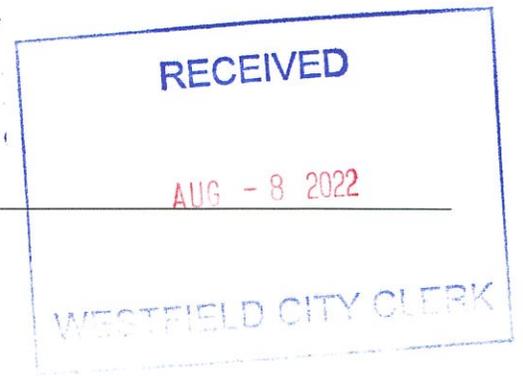
www.cityofwestfield.org/masterplan

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City of Westfield
MEETING MINUTES



Master Plan Committee - June 9, 2022
City Hall Room 315

Master Plan Committee members in attendance: Chair Jay Ducharme, Jennifer Battles, Jillian Battles, Sharon Greany, Les Pooler, Melissa Trzasko (remotely), Agma Sweeney (remotely). Also attending: Jay Vinsky (City Planner) and Christine Fedora (Secretary).

Members not attending: Brent Bean (CC), Rick Barry, Rania Kfuri, Harrison Stefano, Bill Schneeloch, Richard Salois (PB), Bernie Puza (PB), Alexandra Smialek, Maureen Socha (WSU).

(5:15 PM) A quorum not being present, no committee meeting was conducted.



City of Westfield

MEETING NOTICE

Tuesday, July 19, 2022



At 5:30 P.M. in Room 315, Municipal Building, 59 Court St., Westfield, MA, the Master Plan Committee will conduct a meeting concerning the following business:

AGENDA

- A. Public participation
- B. Approval of previous meeting minutes (5/5/22)
- C. Master plan development
 - General project timeline
 - Public engagement plan
 - Outreach coordination with other City events
 - Public visioning workshop planning
 - Online survey development
 - Marketing materials/project awareness
 - Other ideas/project brainstorming
- D. Next tasks/future meeting schedule



Our Master Plan is now in the works! Learn more & participate:

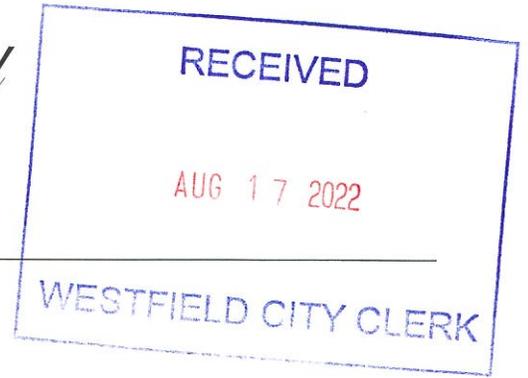
www.cityofwestfield.org/masterplan

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City of Westfield
MEETING MINUTES



Master Plan Committee – July 19, 2022
City Hall Room 315

Master Plan Committee members in attendance: Chair Jay Ducharme, Jennifer Battles (remotely), Jillian Battles (remotely), Les Pooler, Melissa Trzasko, Bill Schneelock, Sharon Greany, Bernie Puza (PB) Alexandra Smialek, Maureen Socha (WSU). Also attending: Jay Vinskey (City Planner) and Christine Fedora (Secretary), James Riordan (Weston & Sampson (remotely))

Members not attending Richard Salois (PB), Brent Bean (CC), Harrison Stefano, Agma Sweeney, Rick Barry, Rania Kfuri.

A. Public participation

Chair Ducharme called the meeting to order at 5:41PM (after some technical issues with remote connections) and asked if anyone would like to speak during the public participation.

Kristen Mello addressed the Committee speaking as the director of W.R.A.F.T. in regards to artificial turf that municipalities are using which contains a polymer processing aid that leaches off the fields and into the groundwater. She asked the Committee to consider limiting turf playing fields as something that should be considered in the Master Plan.

Mr. Riordan suggested including a recommendation in the recreation portion that could say something in effect that the policy of the City going forward is that artificial turf be avoided to limit contamination.

B. Approval of previous meeting minutes (5/5/22)

It was noted the June meeting did not have a quorum and so there were not minutes to approve. On a motion made and seconded to approve the May 5, 2022 minutes.

By Roll, call vote:

Rick Barry	-	not present
Jennifer Battles	-	yes
Jillian Battles	-	yes
Brent Bean	-	not present
Sharon Greany	-	yes
Les Pooler	-	yes
Bernie Puza	-	yes
Richard Salois	-	not present
Bill Schneelock	-	yes
Alexandra Smialek	-	yes

Maureen Socha	-	yes
Harrison Stefano	-	not present
Agma Sweeney	-	not present
Melissa Trzasko	-	yes
Rania Kfuri	-	not present
Jay Ducharme	-	yes

C. Master Plan Development

Chair Ducharme turned the meeting over to Mr. Riordan, who reviewed the topics for the meeting.

- Postcard
- Poster
- Project Calendar
- Land use portion
- The draft survey will be sent to the members following the meeting. Prior to submitting the survey, he would like the survey reviewed.

He did mention they have an updated survey card postcard; there will be a QR code, which will direct the participants to the web page for the survey. The Committee felt it would be best to have the QR Code for the survey as well as a link to the one web page. A brief discussion regarding having a device at the events for the people to use was discussed, it was noted there are none easily available.

Mr. Riordan presented the Committee with the revised poster noting it has more images and less text as previously designed. It explains what is in a Master Plan and why it is important. In addition, a little bit about the process of a Master Plan is included. Member Smialek mentioned the Master Plan section icons, does not line up with the order of what is in a Master Plan, she felt it might clean things up for people if they were more in line. Mr. Riordan was thinking about how they would rearrange that, after discussion he felt the housing and energy are out of order. Vinskey felt bigger graphics and smaller text would be better. Also discussed changing the color darker to read easier. Vinskey felt the proportions do not lend to a 11 x 17 size. Members felt the word Westfield should be more at the top of the poster and Master Plan 2022-2023 underneath that as well as deleting the word update. Also discussed was rearranging the bottom of the poster by moving the seals over in order to allow for bigger fonts and graphics. Mr. Riordan to resize/reorganize.

Updated calendar also, with a couple events added in.

Land Use Update

The major part of a Master Plan is land use, which is central. How will land use be regulated and used around the city, zoning discussion as part of this as well, he showed zoning throughout the community there is a lot zoned residential. Large portion commercial and large portion is residential, land area there is over 30,000 acres and residential is about a 1/3 of that. There are several residential types of about 14 different zoning districts. There is a good amount of restrictions, conservation and agricultural land that are preserved.

Mr. Riordan then explained definitions for conservation areas and the different types of protection. Some conservation area are in perpetuity, other areas have limited protection and are not in perpetuity so it is subject to change, open space is unprotected which means it's privately held and is currently being used for golf courses or scout camps.

Mr. Riordan went on to explain where the data has been coming from over the past decades; a lot of the information is coming from Mass GIS. Mass GIS updated coverage in 2000 and changed methodology to categorize the land. He presented a Comparison table 2016 to 1971, and 2005, 2016 he felt these comparisons are out of whack; he has reached out to them to get data and incorporate it into the land use section.

He felt the outside source he contacted could get real land use data that is analyzed from year to year and do a good comparison.

Members inquired as to how the States GIS could be so far off? In recent Master Plans that have been done you can see they have problems, ignored the data in the 2016.

Another option considered was gathering data from the Assessor but with the different methodologies used, they are quite different within each community, which leads to poor consistency. He is hoping he will hear back from the company within a few weeks and have it available for another meeting.

Land use community character- Based on existing conditions, residential is the city's principal form of development, much of that consists of single-family housing

Landscape uplands and low lands and forest land - The increase in density of industrial and commercial areas have an impact on natural resources, they have seen a trend from 1971 - 2005 which shows a decline in forest land, have a lot in conservation in perpetuity. He suggested projecting how to balance the need for economic development and the need to keep natural resources in good shape.

Overlay zoning - The City has three overlay districts consisting of floodplain, water resource and smart growth. The city may want to look at utilizing or expanding them to protect the natural resources.

Survey review

Mr. Riordan ran through the draft survey; it is best to keep it brief. Survey questions to be included

Residence status; how long lived in Westfield; What makes Westfield a great place to live?

Three positive words to describe Westfield, could become a word cloud

Needs more/less types of development? - list to include reference to tiny homes? Agreed

Rate various aspects

Assessment of how good a job Westfield's doing

Open ended question

Some discussion about adding respondent age demographics and clarifying wording of residency question. Chair Ducharme stated he would like to review the survey prior to being submitted. Planner Vinsky further noted he would like it available for August 6th for Westfield's Big Day event. Members will review individually by the 21st and comments/suggestions will be compiled by the City Planner, for communication to Mr. Riordan.

D. Next Steps/Future meetings

Members will staff a tent at the Big Day to promote awareness, survey; will need a poster/banner and survey postcards.

Next meeting will be 3rd Tuesday, August 16 (5:30)

Chair Ducharme declared the meeting adjourned at 7:00.



City of Westfield

MEETING NOTICE

Tuesday, August 16, 2022



At 5:30 P.M. in Room 315, Municipal Building, 59 Court St., Westfield, MA, the Master Plan Committee will conduct a meeting concerning the following business:

AGENDA

- A. Public participation
- B. Approval of previous meeting minutes (7/19/22)
- C. Master plan development
 - Consultant's presentation & base data review
 - General project timeline review
 - Public engagement plan review; Big Day outreach and survey assessment, future outreach/coordination with other events, promoting awareness
 - Fall public visioning workshop planning
 - Other ideas/project brainstorming
- D. Next tasks/future meeting schedule



Our Master Plan is in the works! Learn more & take the survey:

www.cityofwestfield.org/masterplan



City of Westfield
MEETING MINUTES

RECEIVED

MAY 16 2023

WESTFIELD CITY CLERK

Master Plan Committee – August 16, 2022
City Hall Room 315

Master Plan Committee members in attendance: Chair Jay Ducharme, Jennifer Battles, Jillian Battles @6:39, Sharon Greany @5:32, Les Pooler, Richard Salois (PB), Bernie Puza (PB) @5:43, Alexandra Smialek, Agma Sweeney, Bill Schneeloch, Melissa Trzasko, Rania Kfuri. Also attending: Jay Vinskey (City Planner) and Christine Fedora (Secretary).

Members not attending: Rick Berry, Brent Bean, Maureen Socha (WSU), Harrison Stefano

A. Public participation- No members of the public were present to address the committee.

B. Approval of previous meeting minutes (07-19-22)

Upon a motion made and seconded to approve the July 19 minutes, all were in favor.

C. Master plan development.

Mr. Jim Riordan from Weston & Sampson gave a brief summary of the items to be discussed:

- Existing conditions
Land Use- Natural Hazards/Climate Change – Natural Resources – Water Supply
- Survey responses have received 195 responses to date
- Planning for vision workshops scheduled for 11-2-22

Ashley Sweet (W&S) presented the members with further data:

- Land Use
Westfield has 30,000 acres of land area consisting of various uses: 25% is residentially developed 45% forested land consisting of 13,700 acres; 4.5% is commercial or industrial land; 10% agricultural land use.
The city lost 484 acres of agricultural land, 303 of forest and 133 recreational open space; total 924 acres have been converted since 1999. She then proceeded to show a graph indicating the changes in the above by acreage. Mr. Riordan mentioned the chart presented was compiled by Primis Engineering rather than the State GIS that was presented at the last meeting. Member Salois asked how they determined agricultural use? MA GIS initiated the categories and by looking at aerial photos in time; they determined the closest accuracy by how the land is being used.

Actions to be taken to look at existing conditions and to categorize them and refine them over time. The Board should think about action items, housing opportunities, mixed use and other options in applicable areas.

Housing – opportunity mixed use and accessory apartments in appropriate areas, looking at the fact the city has lost open space, recreational, agricultural land. Is there a way the city can

increase the housing without taking away from the open space, recreation and agricultural land by possibly increasing the density in appropriate areas?

Agricultural lands - Have decreased since 1999; are there ways to protect the agriculture and support the farms in the city?

Commercial & Industrial land - Are there ways to promote and support industrial lands in the city and develop other companies to come to the city and opportunities to promote mixed use.

Forested land - 45% of land, resource and habitat protection.

Member Sweeny asked for clarification as to how they would be increasing residential uses by combining residential, commercial and residential zoning. Would this require some type of zoning change? Member Sweeney was concerned about housing and bringing a family into commercial, industrial areas. Mr. Riordan explained if you look at cities and towns you find these types of uses increase on their own, if they are allowed to do that. If the city tries to manage these types of land uses it would benefit the city and not detract, that would be a way to protect the uses you want to protect, he further noted this is just a point of analysis nothing has been decided, something for the committee to review.

He further added in the surveys that have been received most of the interest is in open space, natural resources. He anticipates in order to do that, he would rather encourage development in the area it already exists, referring to multi-family buildings and development. By doing this, it would enable the city to get what it wants rather than letting sprawl roll over the city.

Ms. Sweet noted there are 6 residential districts that overlap on the 45% of forested area, which means they are available for development. There has been a steady amount of residential development. Do you want to accommodate the building permits or are there ways to consolidate natural growth into existing areas to give more opportunity to preserve the open space areas?

- Climate Change & Natural Hazards

There has been intensifying rain storms in Westfield from 1958-2010, and will increase, flooding of Westfield River has occurred. The heat wave events that have occurred recently have already surpassed the 2030 projection, there have been 16 days of 90 degrees or higher. He further added Westfield is moderately vulnerable to wildfires over the next 30 years. With overall warming fewer snowing events will occur, but will intensify.

Opportunities & Potential Actions

Develop and implement a climate action plan, which would address these events.

Implementation of nature-based solutions, Reduce Stormwater, Urban heat islands, Cooling centers, Urban Forestry plans -downtown and urban developed areas

Planner Vinsky stated the city has received a tree grant from the state for the downtown. Ms. Sweeney noted there has been 200 trees planted in the downtown and there are additional trees that are available for the residents of the city.

Mr. Riordan asked if there was a web site where they could put this in the master plan. The address is www.MAurban canopy.org. He further stated if there are several grants out there if the city needs any help, they could assist the city.

- Natural Resources

Agricultural land, forest, water and wetland, the City has open space and natural resources. 34% city considered core habitat, 13% city habitat is endangered, 36 species found 10% ponds and lakes and river segments with a total daily load analysis of concern. None of these affects the drinking water.

Opportunities and potential actions: Preserving open space, manage existing forest land and tree program.

Design and implementation to address environmental stressors, manage invasive species. Chair Ducharme agreed this is something to manage before it gets out of hand.

Member Salois felt there should be some type of management in place to clean up the wooded areas. Mr. Riordan agreed especially with the drought conditions. There is increasing storm activity and a warmer temps., not that there is less rain but more plant activity that tends to dry out the land, with the rain less opportunity for the water to run into the soil. In addition, more impervious surfaces interrupts infiltration, causing more run off. This stresses out ecology, invites more invasive plants. The city needs to preserve green spaces and add green spaces. Other invasive plant areas are at Hampton Ponds.

- Water Supply

Connection between water and natural resources, water service has 11,000 connections

Opportunities and Actions: Manage land uses to prevent adverse impact on water, Implement public education and outreach to enhance public water supply, Protect watershed and aquifer area, and expand opportunities by adding to additional protection areas around existing water supplies. Implement water conservation efforts.

Planner Vinskey also noted the largest aquifer sits under airport and it has heightened sensitivity due to PFAS contamination. Mr. Riordan stated W&S have people who deal with PFAS issues.

- Survey Responses - Received 195 to date; The city has received a decent amount of amount of responses compared to the community demographics.

The residency statistics show they are mostly homeowners - many single-family homes. Age of respondents were 30 + even across different age groups. How long keep survey open? Planner Vinskey noted currently it is through November.

The top response was Westfield is a great place to live which had 69% reasons given was central area in MA, nearby cities, the city offers many services, nearby natural resources and open space. Character of community and rural landscape came in close as did sense of community; Recreational opportunity was number five. Schools was 6th on the list.

Areas to address in the Master Plan:

Quality home and schools came out as most significant, safety and security came out second Public works. Recreational resources and opportunities, Open space and natural wildlife resource protection.

Basic themes:

More
Smaller scale industrial
Mixed use
Renewable energy
Alternate housing
Commercial use

Less
Single Family residential
Multi Family

Policies - Improving schools, Roadway upgrades, Conserving water, Wildlife, Flood protection, Agriculture

Response to statements

Top choice for family to move to Pioneer Valley

Adequate recreational opportunities for residences and opportunity to still build

Good job of protecting historical and cultural resources

Members were not surprised at the results of the survey.

The Visioning workshop is scheduled for November 2 from 6 - 8 at South Middle School. Planner Vinsky to finalize with the School Dept. Mr. Riordan gave a summary of the first visioning workshop. The workshop would be broken down into groups. The workshop will begin with a brief presentation where the committee will introduce themselves, a description of how the Master Plan process works and how everything comes together.

Next step breakout sessions - 8 -10 people each group. Tables will be set up there will be a large piece of paper similar so the participants can write down their thoughts, following that it will be opened up for discussion amongst each group to share their ideas amongst themselves, this helps to make it more engaging. Post it notes and write out actions they feel are most important and a schedule to be completed. Once that is completed then one person from each table to review what their group came up with. Then will have a good breakdown of actions to move forward with the plan.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:55.



MEETING NOTICE

Tuesday, September 20, 2022

At 5:30 P.M. in Room 315, Municipal Building, 59 Court St., Westfield, MA, the Master Plan Committee will conduct a meeting concerning the following business:

AGENDA

- A. Public participation
- B. Approval of previous meeting minutes (8/16/22)
- C. Master plan development
 - Consultant's presentation & existing conditions review
 - New chapter drafts: Agriculture, Historic/Cultural Resources, Open Space & Recreation, Public Services & facilities
 - Reviewed chapter drafts: Land Use, Natural Hazards & Climate Change, Water Supply, Natural Resources
 - General project review & assessment
 - Outreach: survey, public engagement, coordination with other events
 - Nov. 2 public visioning workshop planning
 - Other ideas/project brainstorming
- D. Next tasks/schedule



Our Master Plan is in the works! Learn more & take the survey:

www.cityofwestfield.org/masterplan

*The above-listed items are those reasonably anticipated to be discussed at the time of agenda publication;
other items may be discussed to the extent permitted by law.*

MGL Chapter 30A, Section 20(f) requires any person making an audio or visual recording of the meeting to first notify the Chair.



City of Westfield

MEETING MINUTES

RECEIVED

MAY 16 2023

WESTFIELD CITY CLERK

Master Plan Committee – September 20, 2022 City Hall Room 315

Master Plan Committee members in attendance: Chair Jay Ducharme, Jennifer Battles, Sharon Greany Les Pooler, Richard Salois (PB), Agma Sweeney, Bill Schneeloch, Melissa Trzasko, Rania Kfuri (remotely). Also attending: Jay Vinskey (City Planner) and Christine Fedora (Secretary).

Members not attending: Jillian Battles, Rick Berry, Brent Bean (CC), Bernie Puza (PB), Alexandra Smialek, Maureen Socha (WSU), Harrison Stefano

The meeting came to order at 5:52 when a quorum was noted.

- A. Public participation- No members of the public were present to address the committee.
- B. Approval of previous meeting minutes (8/16/22) - No action taken
- C. Master plan development

Jim Riordan & Ashley Sweet from Weston & Sampson reviewed the draft historic/cultural resources chapter. 894 historic properties listed; mostly from the downtown district. Riordan discussed as an opportunity to attract people. Members suggested the Historical Commission Chair be invited to the next meeting. Vinskey also suggested that commission would benefit from a staff person. Some discussion about restrictions to protect historic properties. The services and facilities chapter was briefly reviewed.

Joanna Nadeau from W&S reviewed the Nov. 2 workshop planning/ community engagement: Vision, goals, strategies, actions. Chair Ducharme asked how goals differ from strategies? Vision more broad, goals more specific, strategies are more specific ways realize goals. Workshop sessions: 1- SWOT, 2- vision, 3- establish priorities. Small group breakout sessions, reconvene.

The group discussed organizing the session/facilitators to avoid dominating personalities, unproductive ranting. Structure and timing will help. Committee members would act as facilitators.

With members Schneeloch and Sweeney departing at 6:30, the meeting was adjourned by lack of a quorum.



City of Westfield

MEETING NOTICE

Tuesday, October 18, 2022



At 5:30 P.M. in Room 315, Municipal Building, 59 Court St., Westfield, MA, the Master Plan Committee will conduct a meeting concerning the following business:

AGENDA

- A. Public participation
- B. Approval of previous meeting minutes (8/16/22, 9/20/22)
- C. Master plan development
 - Consultant's presentation & existing conditions review
 - New topics/chapter drafts
 - Reviewed chapter drafts: Land Use, Natural Hazards & Climate Change, Water Supply, Natural Resources, Agriculture, Historic/Cultural Resources, Open Space & Recreation, Public Services & facilities
 - General project review & assessment
 - Outreach: survey, public engagement, coordination with other events
 - Nov. 2 public visioning workshop planning
 - Other ideas/project brainstorming
- D. Next tasks/schedule



Our Master Plan is in the works! Learn more, take the survey, and attend the November 2nd Public Visioning Session:

www.cityofwestfield.org/masterplan

The above-listed items are those reasonably anticipated to be discussed at the time of agenda publication; other items may be discussed to the extent permitted by law.

MGL Chapter 30A, Section 20(f) requires any person making an audio or visual recording of the meeting to first notify the Chair.



City of Westfield

MEETING MINUTES

RECEIVED

NOV 16 2022

WESTFIELD CITY CLERK

Master Plan Committee – October 18, 2022 City Hall Room 315

Master Plan Committee members in attendance: Chair Jay Ducharme, Jennifer Battles (remotely), Jillian Battles (remotely), Melissa Trzasko, Sharon Greany, Bill Schneeloch, Richard Salois (PB), Les Pooler, Rania Kfuri (remotely, at 5:55), Alexandra Smialek. Also attending: Jay Vinskey (City Planner), Christine Fedora (Secretary), and Jason Florek for WSU.

Members not attending: Brent Bean (CC), Rick Barry, Harrison Stefano, Maureen Socha (WSU), Bernie Puza, Agma Sweeney.

The meeting was called to order at 5:36.

- A. Public participation. None (no members of the public were present)
- B. Approval of previous meeting minutes (8/16/22, 9/20/22).

Upon a motion made and seconded to approve the minutes.

Richard Salois -	yes
Jennifer Battles-	yes
Jillian Battles -	yes
Sharon Greany-	yes
Les Pooler -	yes
Bill Schneeloch-	yes
Alexandra Smialek-	yes
Melissa Trasko-	yes
Jay Ducharme -	yes

C. Master Plan development

Jim Riordan from Weston & Sampson gave an introduction of the draft energy chapter (distributed prior), which includes a summary of existing conditions regarding the current energy utilizes, systems, usage and renewable energy in Westfield. The existing conditions summary is intended to help develop meaningful actions that support and sustain adequate energy services, emergency backup and identify potential opportunities for the creation of renewable energy. By understanding current energy usage, the City can better protect future needs and potential vulnerabilities. Summarized points:

Energy Efficiency

The City's primary form of energy use is through oil heat, gas, and electricity, National Grid and the Westfield Gas and Electric are the utility providers for the City. The Westfield Gas & Electric purchases a range of energy sources. Around 15% of energy comes from solar or wind and another 10% comes from hydroelectric power. In 2021, the City had an average residential consumption of 785 hundred cubic feet for gas and 9000-kilowatt hour for electricity.

Energy Use Reduction

The City has received funding through the Department of Energy Resources Green Communities Division, MA Department of Environmental Protection's Gap Energy Grant program totaling \$677K. Westfield is a 'Green Community' which provides for that designation and grant funding as an incentive to cities to reduce municipal energy consumption by 20% over five years. The City is currently employing strategies and tools to reach this goal.

Stretch Codes

The city adopted stretch codes in 2016. Stretch codes are building performance standards for energy efficiency are intended to result in more cost-effective construction and higher energy efficiency.

Other opportunities also mentioned were solar farms. Planner Vinskey noted solar farms are addressed in the zoning ordinance despite what draft narrative stated, though he felt this could possibly be expanded on in the future.

It was suggested that environmental justice population should be considered as well. It was also noted that renewables should be discussed further as well as more discussion regarding codes. Planner Vinskey felt following the November 2nd workshop there will be a better understanding of how the community feels.

- General project review & assessment

The Committee discussed the upcoming workshop (Nov. 2, 6-8PM at the Middle School Cafeteria) and how to further publicize it. Suggested ideas: Posting the workshop notices, Updating the website, Posting on Facebook, Posting on the rotary sign by Mestek? Planner Vinskey to go through the Mayor's office for usual outreach publicity efforts, yard signs are also posted around the City.

- Workshop agenda: Set up time would be 5:00. Start/Introductions at 6:00 – City Planner, committee members. Several members volunteered to be facilitators. Facilitator guides will be on the tables. Vinskey stated there would be screen and a microphone available for use.

D. Next Tasks/Schedule

The survey will be open through November 30th. The next meeting is scheduled for Nov. 15th.

The Chair declared meeting adjourned at 6:32.



City of Westfield

MEETING NOTICE

Tuesday, November 15, 2022

At 5:30 P.M. in Room 315, Municipal Building, 59 Court St., Westfield, MA, the Master Plan Committee will conduct a meeting concerning the following business:



AGENDA

- A. Public participation
- B. Approval of previous meeting minutes (10/18/22)
- C. Master plan development
 - Consultant's presentation
 - Review of visioning workshop/public outreach
 - Other ideas/project brainstorming
- D. Next tasks/schedule



Our Master Plan is in the works! Learn more and take the survey by **November 30**:

www.cityofwestfield.org/masterplan



City of Westfield
MEETING MINUTES

RECEIVED

MAR 29 2023

WESTFIELD CITY CLERK

Master Plan Committee – November 15, 2022
City Hall Room 315

Master Plan Committee members in attendance: Chair Jay Ducharme, Jennifer Battles, (remotely) Jillian Battles, (remotely), Bernie Puza (PB) @6:39, Melissa Trzasko, Les Pooler, Alexandra Smialek, Richard Salois (PB), Brent Bean (CC), Bill Schneeloch, Sharon Greany @5:54. Also attending: Jay Vinskey (City Planner) and Christine Fedora (Secretary), and Jason Florek for WSU.

Members not attending: Agma Sweeney, Rick Barry, Maureen Socha (WSU), Harrison Stefano, Rania Kfuri

The meeting was called to order at 5:30.

- A. Public participation. None (no members of the public were present)

Introductions

Jim Riordan from Weston & Sampson introduced consultant Eric Halvorsen, RKG Associates, who would be presenting the draft Economic Development, Housing chapters (distributed prior)

- B. Approval of previous meeting minutes (10/18/22).

Member Schneeloch MOTIONED, seconded by Member Salois to approve the 10/18/22 minutes.

Bill Schneeloch	-	yes
Les Pooler	-	yes
Alexandra Smialek	-	yes
Brent Bean	-	yes
Richard Salois	-	yes
Jillian Battles	-	yes
Jennifer Battles	-	yes
Melissa Trzasko	-	yes
Jay Ducharme	-	yes

- C. Master Plan Development

Mr. Halvorsen, gave a brief presentation regarding Economic Development and Housing.

Economic Development

In 2021, Westfield was home to over 21,900 jobs, a 6% growth rate since 2012. Some of the employment industries in Westfield: Manufacturing, Health Care, Education, Social Assistance, Government, Retail Trade and Construction. Of the top five the occupations, Healthcare Support Occupations grew at the fastest rate. Other industries that have seen significant growth include wholesale trade, transportation and warehousing.

The city's work force is at 62% which is lower than the 65% avg. He felt this could be associated with early retirements. He further noted there have been early retirements since the pandemic and 19-24 year olds have declined in the workforce, which could be due to returning to school and living with their parents. The Westfield workforce is highly educated over peers in Hampden County, but it does lag behind the state's number.

About 11,500 residents leave the city for their jobs, while 10,000 workers travel to Westfield for their jobs. 3,400 both live and work in the city, which represent about one-fifth of the jobs.

Employers and local economy - Mfg. and health care lead the way with employment; several of the businesses that employ some of the higher numbers, which create clusters to support businesses to come to Westfield include Baystate Noble, MA Air National Guard, Mestek, Walmart, Western MA Hospital, Advance Mfg. Big Y, Cadence Aerospace, Commercial Distributing.

Small Business concentrated in Downtown Westfield/Elm Street Corridor - Westfield has a dense, walkable, and historic downtown that has been the traditional center of commerce and residence, the downtown contains a small and midscale commercial buildings that date back to the 19th and 20th century. While retail vacancy remains high, there are existing small retail, dining establishments along the Elm Street corridor, and surrounding the Westfield Green. There remains significant redevelopment opportunity along Elm Street including the lot adjacent to the bus terminal. There also has been recent renovation of the streetscape/Park Square.

Transportation- the city has state roads, airport, walking and bike paths. Also taking advantage of bike path to serve as a regional transportation hub and connect to towns; recreational as well as an economic development driver. Diversity in transportation is a great economic development tool.

Housing

Population Profile - According to the US Census, Westfield's population was 41,303 in 2020. Since 1970, the population has been steadily rising, growing by 10,000 residents over the past 50 years. Despite the steady growth, the 10-year growth rate has been decreasing. From 2010-2020 the population grew by just under 1%. The current population is projected to increase by about 1,100 additional residents over the next 20 years, continuing the trend of slow and steady growth for a continued need for housing.

Housing Units - The vast majority (87%) of owner-occupied units are single family structures with another 11% spread across 1-unit attached, 2-unit and mobile homes. There are very few alternative ownership unit types in Westfield such as townhomes, three or four unit structures, or larger multi-family condominiums. The renter occupied housing stock is spread across a number of different residential structure types; with little permitting of new multi-family residential has led to a tight rental market. This rental market tightness, has led to increases in rents out of affordable ranges for many households.

Vacancy - Over the past decade, Westfield has seen its vacancy rate drop from 3.8% to 1.7%. This means that of the total available housing stock less than 4% has been available for sale or for rent over the last ten years. These vacancy rates are quite low and may not be allowing households to move into or within the City. This can be attributed to the general lack of new housing construction, particularly rental units, which coupled with rising prices; and changes in demand have led to consistently low vacancy rates.

The medium household income in Westfield in 2020 was \$74,456 which was an increase of over \$13,000 Since 2015. While this figure is higher than Hampden County's median income of \$57,623 it does remain lower than the statewide median of \$84,435.

Within Westfield, the median income varies by the area of the City: Downtown Westfield has the highest concentration of lower income census tracts, with a significant portion of tracts having median incomes between \$30- 50K/year. Higher income tracts are primarily on the edges of the City corresponding to where the newer housing and neighborhoods have been developed. These areas show median household incomes over \$100,000, which is more than double the median income in the downtown area.

After addressing some questions, Mr. Halverson departed the meeting.

Visioning Workshop

Mr. Riordan noted there were 40-50 public attendees at the workshop. Some common themes & issues:

Natural Resources

Strengths - resources, water/aquifer

Weaknesses - Aquifer PFAS, Climate Change, Lack of access to river

Built systems

Strengths - G & E, Airport

Weaknesses - Roadways, Flooding, Outdated Schools

Actions - Funding Schools, Bike paths

(Members Schneeloch and Bean departed at 6:30 and 6:45, respectively)

D. Next Tasks/Schedule

Planner Vinsky informed the committee the Planning Board will hold their annual introspective planning meeting on December 6th and would like to present workshop findings to them.

The next meeting of the Master Plan Committee to be held on December 20th.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:49.



City of Westfield

MEETING NOTICE

Tuesday, December 20, 2022

RECEIVED

By City Clerk at 12:04 pm, 12/15/22

At 5:30 P.M. in Room 315, Municipal Building, 59 Court St., Westfield, MA, the Master Plan Committee will conduct a meeting concerning the following business:

AGENDA

- A. Public participation
- B. Approval of previous meeting minutes (11/15/22)
- C. Master plan development
 - Consultant's presentation
 - Review of visioning workshop/action items/survey
 - Other ideas/project brainstorming
- D. Next tasks/schedule



Our Master Plan is in the works! Learn more:

www.cityofwestfield.org/masterplan

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MGL Chapter 30A, Section 20(f) requires any person making an audio or visual recording of the meeting to first notify the Chair.



City of Westfield
MEETING MINUTES

RECEIVED

MAR 29 2023

WESTFIELD CITY CLERK

Master Plan Committee - December 20, 2022
City Hall Room 315

Master Plan Committee members in attendance: Chair Jay Ducharme, Sharon Greany, Bill Schneeloch, Les Pooler, Richard Salois (PB), Bernie Puza (PB) (5:43), Rania Kfuri (remotely). Also attending: Jay Vinsky (City Planner) and Christine Fedora (Secretary).

Members not attending: Brent Bean (CC), Rick Barry, Harrison Stefano, Jennifer Battles, Jillian Battles, Agma Sweeney, Alexandra Smialek, Melissa Trzasko, Maureen Socha (WSU).

(5:30 PM) A quorum not being present, no committee meeting was conducted.



City of Westfield

RECEIVED

By City Clerk at 3:09 pm, 1/12/23

MEETING NOTICE

Tuesday, January 17, 2023

At 5:30 P.M. in Room 315, Municipal Building, 59 Court St., Westfield, MA, the Master Plan Committee will conduct a meeting concerning the following business:

AGENDA

- A. Public participation
- B. Approval of previous meeting minutes (11/15/22)
- C. Master plan development
 - Consultant's presentation
 - Review of visioning workshop/ survey/ goals, polices and action items
 - Other ideas/project brainstorming
- D. Next tasks/schedule

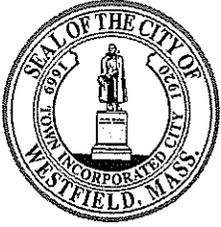


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City of Westfield
MEETING MINUTES

RECEIVED

MAR 29 2023

Master Plan Committee - January 17, 2023
City Hall Room 315

WESTFIELD CITY CLERK

Master Plan Committee members in attendance: Chair Jay Ducharme, Sharon Greany, Bill Schneeloch, Richard Salois (PB), Bernie Puza (PB) (at 5:40), Rania Kfuri (remotely), Alexandra Smialek, Jennifer Battles, Rick Berry, Melissa Trzasko. Also attending: Jay Vinskey (City Planner) and Christine Fedora (Secretary).

Members not attending: Brent Bean (CC), Harrison Stefano, Jillian Battles, Agma Sweeney, Maureen Socha (WSU), Les Pooler

A quorum being present, Chair Ducharme called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

A. Public participation

Chair Ducharme asked if anyone would like to speak.

Maryann Babinski –voiced concerns regarding public outreach that has been done regarding the Master Plan update. She felt there are other venues that could be used for outreach to all neighborhoods of the city. She also felt 5:30 is not a good time to be holding these meetings; people on the North Side should have more of an opportunity to be involved.

B. Approval of Minutes. No action taken.

C. Master Plan Development

Consultant Jim Riordan gave a review: the main focus will be Goals, Policies and Actions. Planner Vinskey noted we have not received the final survey data results or final workshop findings. Mr. Riordan then proceeded to summarize the key strengths, weaknesses and actions that came were outlined in from the workshop; it was noted that much of this had been previously presented, but he will compile a complete summary get it out to members. It will also be in master plan. In the interest of time, it was decided to skip the survey results review.

It was noted that the idea of developing a cultural identity for Westfield was important. Member Smialek asked about the term 'cultural' as referring to arts versus heritage; Westfield has both types. The cultural identity is so diverse, unique populations.

Chair Ducharme noted walkability, pedestrian friendly is a strength -there needs to be a decision as to where activities are to be held in the city. The area at the old J.J. Newberry site? , Park Square can be a problem. The actions need to consider if this is walkable downtown, how do we plan the flow of people?

Mr. Riordan felt Westfield should prioritize more walkability, should try to incorporate bike trail more. Certain areas within the city may allow accessibility to the trail.

It was mentioned there is free but limited bus travel between Westfield State and Downtown; not always at convenient or desirable times. This was also noted in the meetings with the college.

Mr. Riordan proceeded to review the draft goals and action items for Climate Change; documents will be reviewed tonight;, member can send their comments over the next couple of weeks.

Goals for Climate Change topic, summarized:

1. Plan development to be resilient
2. Protect water resources
3. Evaluate update policies, programs and ordinances to match up with actions doing.
4. Promote emergency preparedness climate hanger.
5. Address climate change related vulnerabilities.
6. Educate residents especially those residing in flood areas.
7. Convert from fossil fuel to renewable energy sources.

Member Smialek felt the committee should educate all the community members about vulnerability, climate change events. Mr. Riordan also felt all residents should be made aware of climate change and its adverse effects as well as opportunities to improve it.

Vinskey noted he has heard some pushback with the term 'climate change' and felt the committee should avoid any political nuances. Members discussed how this should be worded. It was also brought out sometimes there are problems when presentations are being made when the phrase climate change is mentioned, it sometimes causes immediate shut downs, what should the verbiage be? Mr. Riordan agreed the verbiage can be an issue. Councilor Mello (audience) felt the using the words 'extreme weather events' can be a good substitute.

Member Salois also noted we are not only talking about extreme weather events, but also talking about fossil fuels here and felt it does not all fall under this category. How change to preparedness, energy efficiency, how to title this portion something other than climate change to remove a trigger? Goal Number 7 has nothing to do with weather. After discussion it was felt that fossil fuel goal could be put under renewable energy section; most members agreed.

Members did not come to a consensus on use of the 'climate change' term. Vinskey thought the chapter title was "Natural Hazards and Climate Change' which takes some focus away; actions should be limited to local adaption to a changing climate versus trying to affect any global movement or get into climate change causes. Riordan stated sometimes for grant funding it is important the term 'climate change' is used.

Mr. Riordan started to review the climate change action items, but with Members Kfuri and Schneeloch departing at 6:35, the meeting adjourned by lack of quorum.

(matters of Natural resources, Water supply, Housing, Economic Development were not discussed in the meeting; Mr. Riordan to send out the presentation)



City of Westfield

RECEIVED

By City Clerk at 1:11 pm, 2/16/23

MEETING NOTICE

Tuesday, February 21, 2023

At 5:30 P.M. in Room 315, Municipal Building, 59 Court St., Westfield, MA, the Master Plan Committee will conduct a meeting concerning the following business:

AGENDA

- A. Public participation
- B. Approval of previous meeting minutes (11/15/22, 1/17/23)
- C. Master plan development
 - Consultant's presentation
 - Review of comments received
 - Review of draft goals, policies, and actions - land use and open space
 - Climate Action Resiliency Plan/MVP action grant proposal
 - Other ideas/project brainstorming
- D. Next tasks/schedule



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www.cityofwestfield.org/masterplan

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City of Westfield
MEETING MINUTES

RECEIVED

MAR 24 2023

Master Plan Committee - February 21, 2023
City Hall Room 315

WESTFIELD CITY CLERK

Master Plan Committee members in attendance: Chair Jay Ducharme, Sharon Greany (remotely), Bill Schneeloch, Les Pooler, Alexandra Smialek, Jennifer Battles, Jillian Battles (6:00), Rick Barry. Also attending: Jay Vinskey (City Planner) and Christine Fedora (Secretary).

Members not attending: Brent Bean (CC), Harrison Stefano, Rania Kfuri, Agma Sweeney, Richard Salois (PB), Bernie Puza (PB) Maureen Socha (WSU), Melissa Trzasko.

(5:30 PM) A quorum not being present, no committee meeting was conducted.



City of Westfield

MEETING NOTICE

Tuesday, March 21, 2023

At 5:30 P.M. in Room 315, Municipal Building, 59 Court St., Westfield, MA, the Master Plan Committee will conduct a meeting concerning the following business:



AGENDA

- A. Public participation
- B. Approval of previous meeting minutes (11/15/22, 1/17/23)
- C. Master plan development
 - Consultant's presentation
 - Review of plan drafts/comments
 - Planning for public workshop/distribution for draft plan
 - Climate Action Resiliency Plan/MVP action grant proposal
 - Other ideas/project brainstorming
- D. Next tasks/schedule



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City of Westfield
MEETING MINUTES

RECEIVED

AUG 7 2023

WESTFIELD CITY CLERK

Master Plan Committee - March 21, 2023
City Hall Room 315

Master Plan Committee members in attendance: Chair Jay Ducharme, Sharon Greany, Bill Schneeloch, Richard Salois (PB), Jennifer Battles, Jillian Battles (@6:08), Alexandra Smialek (remotely), Les Pooler, Agma Sweeney (remotely @ 5:32), Melissa Trzasko (remotely). Also attending: Jay Vinskey (City Planner) and Christine Fedora (Secretary).

Members not attending: Brent Bean (CC), Bernie Puza (PB), Harrison Stefano, Maureen Socha (WSU), Rania Kfuri, Rick Berry.

A quorum being present, Chair Ducharme called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m.

- A. Public participation Chair Ducharme asked if anyone would like to speak. None
- B. Approval of Minutes. On a motion to approve the minutes of 11/15/22 & 1/17/23:

Bill Schneeloch	-	yes
Les Pooler	-	yes
Alexandra Smialek	-	yes
Richard Salois	-	yes
Jennifer Battles	-	yes
Melissa Trzasko	-	yes
Jay Ducharme	-	yes
Agma Sweeney	-	yes
Sharon Greany	-	yes

C. Master Plan Development

Consultant Jim Riordan gave a review of the topics to be discussed:

- Comments on Goals, Policies, and Actions
- Goals, Policies, and Actions for Transportation
- Introductory Section Outline
- Next Steps

Comments will be incorporated into updated sections. They are working on putting the plan together and hoping to get that out prior to the next meeting and schedule the public session.

Mr. Riordan reviewed the Goals, Polices, Actions for the Transportation Section:

Goals

1. *Maintain and enhance a cost-effective, efficient, safe, and accessible multi-modal transportation system.*
2. *Support efforts to enhance and increase alternative modes of transportation such as ride shares, bicycling, and public transportation.*

Ms. Sweeney mentioned the John Olver transportation center was designed with a vision that there would be a building next to it, which never happened. She felt there is a vacuum, she suggested it needs to be reworked. Plantings something to make it less disconnected, she suggested this could possibly be something in the plan.

Chair Ducharme also mentioned the parking garage that was proposed at one time. There is a plan for the area being turned into a more of a public gathering space. Planner Vinskey stated this would be an interim solution and the building development is still envisioned.

Ms. Smialek felt there should be a distinction between downtown transportation/transit and city-wide transportation issues. The actions and goals should be specific as to what type of transportation was being discussed.

Mr. Ducharme felt another item would be to rethink the traffic flow in downtown. A lot of pressure points and rethinking the flow of traffic could alleviate some of that. He mentioned Arnold Street with the bus station; suggested making it one way towards Elm Street. Other areas of concern mentioned were: Mass Pike Jug Handle, North Elm Street corridor. The possibility of a walkway bridge was also discussed in the area of Mestek.

Mr. Riordan suggested a city wide analysis of traffic might be better than specific locations in the Master Plan- by doing so you could be committing the city to a specific area without context. He felt these items discussed should actions. Walkability could be added to Goal 2. Mr. Riordan suggested a city-wide traffic audit or traffic safety audit would look at different forms of transportation and how to make better pedestrian access, bicycle access within the context of existing traffic flow as well as a safety audit.

Policies

1. *Implement road-design and maintenance standards and procedures that protect, promote, and encourage existing development patterns and neighborhood character.*
2. *Maintain a formal program for road maintenance, new road construction, and accompanying drainage infrastructure that is economically responsible and implementable.*
3. *Promote cooperative state and local efforts in transportation planning to help ensure that the City's mix of urban and rural character is considered as part of transportation planning and construction projects.*
4. *Encourage alternative modes of transportation and increase opportunities in the City for access to biking, walking, and carpooling, especially for a growing senior population.*
5. *Implement policies and actions that will promote safety through reducing traffic conflicts and crashes.*
6. *Ensure that new development and redevelopment is consistent with the City's Complete Streets program.*

Chair Ducharme asked if the City maintains a formal program for road maintenance. Planner Vinskey mentioned the city was thinking of purchasing a software program that would prioritize/track road maintenance projects; he could check with the City Engineer. Ms. Smialek felt this would be beneficial to the environment as well. Mr. Salois noted a proactive program takes a lot of effort it needs someone driving it, that is why most communities have a reactive approach. Salois felt that the proactive program is something the city should pursue.

Planner Vinskey mentioned there was 5 million dollars allocated before last winter (citing a Masslive article), the city's plan for next year is another 5 million for the roads. These allocations were based on assessments based on a 2019 comprehensive road analysis plan.

Mr. Riordan stated the complete streets program envisions right of way use for vehicle traffic, public transportation, cycling, foot traffic and set up to make sure all can be used safely and not conflicting with one another.

Actions

1. *Submit project applications based on the City's Complete Street Prioritization Plan for up to \$400,000 in Complete Streets funding.*

Chair Ducharme inquired if \$400,000 is the maximum? Following discussion it was suggested the amount be changed to read "As much as eligible to apply for." Lead Party: change to Engineering

2. *Continue to actively participate in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) through the Pioneer Valley MPO, to ensure that state roads in the City are adequately maintained and improved, including maintaining a local priority list for inclusion on the TIP.*

Vinskey noted Engineering would be the lead party on both. The DPW maintains things, big projects the funding would go through the Engineering

3. *Maintain relationship with the Pioneer Valley Transportation Authority and the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission to continually assess and update the level of bus service in the City.*

Change lead party to Community Development/Mayor

4. *Work to improve access to safe and convenient alternative modes of transportation such as biking, walking, and carpooling.*

Lead party should be Engineering; City Council as support party (funding). Friends of Rail trail Greenway could also be a support group. Mr. Riordan noted the reason for not putting a lot of these separate agencies is because the City has no control over them.

Vinskey felt this was more of a policy rather than action; suggested change of wording to "identify opportunities for..."

5. *Continue to provide and increase funding for locally maintained transportation infrastructure (roadways and drainage) to ensure a high level of services to the community.*
6. *Continue to support the Department of Public Works by providing and maintaining the necessary equipment and personnel to maintain roadways, sweep streets, remove snow, and maintain drainage infrastructure.*

Lead party on these should be Mayor or DPW; if Mayor not on board won't get funding in budget.

Vinskey suggested adding something about improvements to the jug handle area/MassPike slip ramp.

Mr. Riordan briefly discussed the outline for the introductory chapter.

D. Next tasks

Members to review and get any additional comments to the City Planner within 2 weeks.

It was suggested the public plan rollout session be sometime in May. Members felt it should be held on the North Side, possibly at the Intermediate School. Planner Vinskey will try to arrange a venue by the next meeting.

Mr. Salois departed at 6:58PM. The meeting was adjourned at 7:00PM



City of Westfield

RECEIVED

By City Clerk at 12:10 pm, 4/14/23

MEETING NOTICE

Tuesday, April 25, 2023

At 5:30 P.M. in Room 315, Municipal Building, 59 Court St., Westfield, MA, the Master Plan Committee will conduct a meeting concerning the following business:

AGENDA

- A. Public participation
- B. Approval of previous meeting minutes (3/21/23)
- C. Master plan development
 - Consultant's presentation
 - Review of plan draft
 - Public presentation session planning (May 11)
 - Climate Action Resiliency Plan/MVP action grant proposal
 - Other ideas/project brainstorming
- D. Next tasks/schedule



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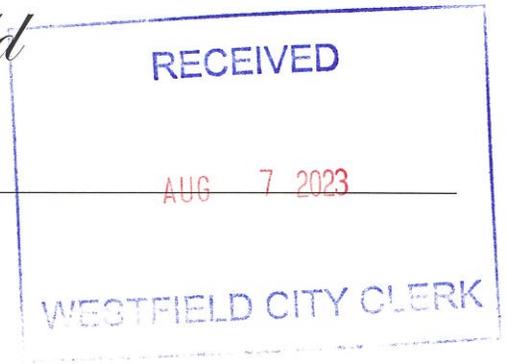
www.cityofwestfield.org/masterplan

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City of Westfield
MEETING MINUTES



Master Plan Committee - April 25, 2023
City Hall Room 315

Master Plan Committee members in attendance: Chair Jay Ducharme, Sharon Greany, Melissa Trzasko (remotely), Agma Sweeney, Les Pooler, Jennifer Battles, Jillian Battles. Also attending: Jay Vinskey (City Planner) and Christine Fedora (Secretary).

Members not attending: Brent Bean (CC), Harrison Stefano, Rania Kfuri, Bill Schneeloch, Rick Barry, Alexandra Smialek, Richard Salois (PB), Bernie Puza (PB) Maureen Socha (WSU).

(5:35 PM) A quorum not being present, no committee meeting was conducted.



City of Westfield

MEETING NOTICE

Tuesday, June 20, 2023

RECEIVED

By City Clerk at 1:00 pm, 6/15/23

At 5:30 P.M. in Room 315, Municipal Building, 59 Court St., Westfield, MA, the Master Plan Committee will conduct a meeting concerning the following business:

AGENDA

- A. Public participation
- B. Approval of previous meeting minutes (3/21/23)
- C. Master plan development
 - Consultant's presentation
 - Review/endorsement of final plan draft
 - Other/related projects
- D. Next tasks
- E. Disbandment



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City of Westfield
MEETING MINUTES

RECEIVED

AUG 7 2023

WESTFIELD CITY CLERK

Master Plan Committee – June 20, 2023
City Hall Room 315

Master Plan Committee members in attendance: Chair Jay Ducharme, Sharon Greany, Agma Sweeney, Alexandra Smialek, Bill Schneeloch, Jennifer Battles, Jillian Battles, Richard Salois (PB), Bernie Puza (PB). Also attending: Jay Vinskey (City Planner) and Christine Fedora (Secretary).

Members not attending: Brent Bean (CC), Harrison Stefano, Rania Kfuri, Les Pooler, Rick Barry, Melissa Trzasko, Maureen Socha (WSU).

A quorum being present, Chair Jay Ducharme called the meeting to order at 5:35 PM.

A. Public Participation

Albert Masciadrelli asked that the section of the draft describing the Fire Commission be expanded, as he had mentioned to the City Planner. Planner Vinskey stated he had forwarded the information to Weston & Sampson and that the revision was made.

B. Approval of previous meeting minutes (03/21/23)

Member Sweeney motioned, seconded by Member Jennifer Battles to approve the 3/21/23 minutes. All in favor.

C. Master plan development

Consultant Jim Riordan summarized the changes made following the public comments and other updates.

- The cover page updated; graphics were added to make visually more interesting.
- Each section has cover pages with photos to represent the content of that chapter.
- Acknowledgement section explaining why updating.
- History of Westfield, where the City has been and is going in terms of the population and demographics information.
- Public involvement part of project, listening to community and workshops.
- Information about survey and responses that were received.

He scrolled through the plan including the goals, policies and action sections and the lead party, support party and timeframe, by chapter:

- ✓ Chapter 1) Land use
- ✓ Chapter 2) Housing section. Some photos were added to this chapter.
- ✓ Chapter 3) Economic development

- ✓ Chapter 4) Natural resources. The vision statement for the Natural Resources section has been updated per comment, to give more detail.
- ✓ Chapter 5) Art, Historic and Cultural Resources.
- ✓ Chapter 6) Open Space and Recreation
- ✓ Chapter 7) Services and facilities
- ✓ Chapter 8) Circulation, Transportation and Mobility
- ✓ Chapter 9) Agriculture
- ✓ Chapter 10) Energy
- ✓ Chapter 11) Water Supply
- ✓ Chapter 12) Natural hazards and Environmental Preparedness

Chapter photos were reviewed, and Planner Vinskey asked if they are credited photos, as some were submitted from the public solicitation. It was decided a photo credit list and locations/descriptions should be added at the end; Vinskey to work with Riordan in confirming crediting info.

The references section was also reviewed.

Planner Vinskey noted there were probably 8-10 comments that were received on the public draft. Member Smialek mentioned the goals, policies and actions section of Chapter 1's numbering was off; Riordan to correct and check other sections. Appendices to be included: meeting minutes, raw survey results, letters of support. Also add photo credits.

Planner Vinskey stated this is on the Planning Board's agenda tonight to possibly adopt and endorse. Member Schneeloch motioned, duly seconded, to formally present the Master Plan (with discussed revisions) to the Planning Board for their adoption and endorsement. All in favor.

D. Next Tasks

Vinskey noted once adopted, the plan will be posted online, printed, and sent to the State and City Council; paper copies to places like the Athenaeum, Senior Center.

E. Disbandment

With the committee's work completed, at 6:15 PM Member Sweeney motioned, duly seconded, to adjourn the meeting and disband the committee All in favor

Minutes recorded by C. Fedora

APPENDIX B

Survey Results

MEMORANDUM

DATE: December 9, 2022
SUBJECT: Westfield Master Plan Survey Results
TO: Jay Vinskey
FROM: Ashley Sweet, James Riordan, Weston & Sampson

Introduction

This memorandum provides an analysis of the results from the Westfield Master Plan Survey that was issued to the community from August 4, 2022 through November 30, 2022. The survey received 612 responses, approximately 1.5% of the population (40,575 per the U.S. Census Bureau, Population Estimates Program (PEP) (V2021)). The margin of error is 4% based on a 95% level of confidence. The analysis is organized by survey question.

Findings

Question 1: What best describes your residence status?

Participants were asked to review four options for residence status. Most respondents indicated that they are Westfield homeowners (83.33%). Other selections included Westfield renters (8.66%), non-resident with business, family, or other Westfield connection (6.70%), and part-year Westfield resident (1.31%).

Question 4: What do you think makes Westfield a great place to live?

Participants were asked to review 12 options for aspects that make Westfield a great place to live. Most respondents indicated that the location of Westfield makes it a great place to live (62.58%). Less than half of all respondents indicated the following:

- Rural landscape (42.65%)
- Character of the community (33.33%)
- Sense of community (31.86%)
- Recreational opportunities (27.29%)
- Schools (23.04%)
- Cost of living (20.75%)

The following aspects received a lower response rate:

- Downtown/Urban areas (13.89%)
- Diversity of population (11.60%)
- Economic/job opportunities (8.66X%)
- Housing availability (4.90%)

Only 3.10% respondents indicated that taxes make the City a great place to live. Write-ins included the following great aspects of living in the City:

- Westfield State University
- Stanley Park
- Amelia Park
- Columbia Greenway Rail Trail
- Hampton Ponds
- Westfield River
- Westfield-Barnes Regional Airport
- Westfield Athenaeum
- Westfield Gas+Electric
- Housing market
- Public safety and low crime rates
- Access to Turnpike
- Walkability
- Police and Fire departments

Question 5: Please provide up to three words or short phrases that you feel best describe Westfield (good and/or bad). Each of the three entries is limited to no more than 50 characters.

A word-cloud was generated using Survey Monkey with words and phrases that respondents provided to describe Westfield. Words and phrases that appear larger in the word cloud occurred more frequently in the responses. “Community” and “downtown” were some of the most frequently occurring phrases. Respondents frequently described Westfield as a safe, friendly, and strong community that lacks a downtown identity. Additionally, respondents strongly supported actions for roadway upgrades and traffic improvements.



Question 6: Below are some of the areas that a Master plan can address. On a scale of “very important” to “not important” please indicate how important is it that the City take measures to address the following:

Participants were asked to review 28 options for areas that a master plan can address with either “very important,” “important,” “somewhat important,” or “not important”. Respondents indicated the following measures as “very important” to “important”:

- Natural resource protection (79.02% very important; 16.89% important)
- Quality of public schools (69.95% very important; 22.17% important)
- Public Works (DPW) Services (58.40% very important; 31.61% important)
- Safety and security (55.81% very important; 31.73% important)
- Recreational resources and opportunities (43.19% very important; 44.33% important)
- Emergency services (59.91% very important; 25.69% important)
- Agriculture and local food production (41.68% very important; 43.16% important)
- Traffic and transportation improvements (54.43% very important; 29.18% important)
- Sustainability & energy efficiency (48.93% very important; 33.44% important)
- Open space (49.75% very important; 30.78% important)
- Job creation (36.18% very important; 42.93% important)
- Shopping convenience (37.81% very important; 41.29% important)
- Scenic resources and aesthetic character (38.83% very important; 40.00% important)
- Senior services (23.67% very important; 45.11% important)
- Economic development and promoting the City (43.28% very important; 34.10% important)
- Cultural activities (29.19% very important; 41.63% important)

Respondents indicated the following measures as “somewhat important” to “not important”:

- Public transportation (PVRTA) (34.21% somewhat important; 15.54% not important)
- (Future) East-West passenger rail service (25.46% somewhat important; 61.81% not important)
- Diversity and availability of housing (26.72% somewhat important; 13.77% not important)
- Stricter regulation of development (25.00% somewhat important; 12.25% not important)
- Ease of parking downtown (25.62% somewhat important; 9.98% not important)
- Local adaptation for climate change (19.28% somewhat important; 16.14% not important)
- Westfield State University (23.84% somewhat important; 10.26% not important)
- Westfield-Barnes Regional Airport (20.27% somewhat important; 13.46% not important)
- Preservation of historic character (27.84% somewhat important; 5.77% not important)
- Senior housing (24.87% somewhat important; 7.68% not important)
- Shopping convenience for other items (25.17% somewhat important; 7.00% not important)
- Affordability of housing (24.18% somewhat important; 7.07% not important)

Question 7: Do you feel Westfield needs more, less, or the same amount of the following types of development?

Survey participants were asked to react to ten statements regarding development in City with either “more,” “less,” or “same amount”. Respondents indicated that Westfield needs “more” of the following types of development:

- Commercial scale renewable energy facilities (56.62%)
- Smaller-scale industrial (55.70%)
- Alternative housing options (44.33%)
- Commercial (41.98%)

Respondents indicated a need for “less” of the following types of development:

- Larger-scale industrial (42.60%)
- Single-family residential in new subdivisions (36.61%)
- Multi-family residential (34.65%)

Respondents indicated “same amount” of single family residential along existing roads and streets (60.30%). Respondents diverged regarding other types of development:

- 29.32% indicated need for “more” mixed use development, while 28.83% indicated “less” mixed use development. 41.85% of respondents indicated a neutral disposition on this topic.
- 19.08% indicated need for “more” office development, while 21.47% indicated “less” office development. 59.45% of respondents indicated a neutral disposition on this topic.

Question 8: Below are examples of actions and policy that Westfield may consider recommending through its Master Plan. Please rate how supportive you are of following.

Participants were asked to review 16 options for areas that a master plan can address with either “my top priority!” “very supportive,” “supportive,” “neutral,” “opposed,” or “don’t know”. Respondents indicated the following as “top priority” actions and polices:

- Improving public schools (35.32%)
- Prioritizing roadway upgrades & traffic improvements (33.17%)
- Conserving wildlife habitat, aquifers, wetlands, and forested areas (25.70%)

Respondents indicated the following as “very supportive” and “supportive” actions and polices:

- Improving and maintaining recreation resources (49.01% very supportive; 31.74% supportive)
- Promoting and supporting agriculture (43.11% very supportive; 31.64% supportive)
- Supporting historic preservation (32.45% very supportive; 38.06% supportive)
- Promoting economic development (35.69% very supportive; 33.55% supportive)
- Improving flood protection, stormwater, wastewater, and water infrastructure (38.16% very supportive; 30.92% supportive)
- Enhancing sustainability and energy efficiency (39.14% very supportive; 29.11% supportive)
- Increasing walkability (34.10% very supportive; 30.64% supportive)

- Promoting development of vacant or underutilized properties (33.99% very supportive; 30.54% supportive)
- Updating land development regulations and zoning (29.00% very supportive; 35.42% supportive)

Respondents were most neutral to the following actions and polices:

- Supporting public transportation (28.78%)
- Addressing the affordability of housing (24.55%)

Respondents were most “opposed” to the following actions and polices:

- Adapting for climate change (13.04%)
- Expanding bicycle access (10.84%)

Question 9: How do you feel about the following statements?

Survey participants were asked to react to 7 statements regarding the City with either “strongly agree,” “agree,” “neutral,” “disagree,” “strongly disagree,” or “don’t know”. Respondents “agreed” or “strongly agreed” with the following statements:

- I would recommend Westfield as a top choice for a family planning a move to the Pioneer Valley. (17.60% strongly agree; 41.78% agree)
- The City has done a good job protecting its historic and cultural resources. (6.10% strongly agree; 48.93% agree)
- The City provides adequate recreational opportunities for its residents. (5.08% strongly agree; 48.69% agree)
- The City has done a good job protecting its local character. (6.39% strongly agree; 44.75% agree)

Respondents were most neutral to the following statements:

- The City has done a good job protecting its agricultural resources and supporting the farming community. (39.93%)
- The City has done a good job supporting local economic expansion. (39.17%)

Respondents “disagreed” or “strongly disagreed” with the following statements:

- The City has done a good job protecting its natural and environmentally sensitive features. (16.09% disagree; 9.36% strongly disagree)

Question 10: Are there any additional comments or concerns that you would like to make us aware of?

Participants were asked to share any additional comments or concerns as an open-ended response. A summary of comments and concerns:

Concerns

- Poor roadway, sidewalk, and traffic conditions
- Lack of walking and biking accommodation
- Lack of downtown identity
- Water quality issues
- Lack of affordable housing
- Outdated school buildings
- Over development and sprawl

Comments

- Protect extensive recreational and natural resources
- Protect undeveloped land
- Gas & Electric along with Whip City Fiber are a great asset
- The City has strong history, a university, extensive resources
- The City has significant natural habitats and developed lands

Demographic Question Summaries

Q2: What is your age group?

The list below indicates the percentage of respondents reporting age under each age category.

- Under 18 (1.15%)
- 18-29 (8.03%)
- 30-49 (29.18%)
- 50-64 (33.61%)
- 65+ (28.03%)

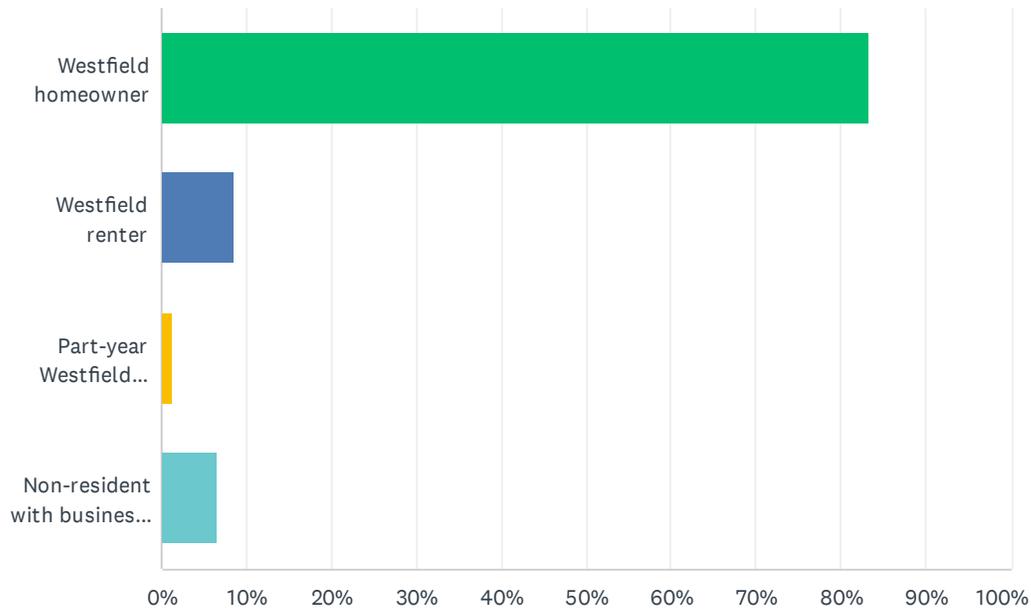
Q3: How long have you lived in Westfield?

The list below indicates the percentage of respondents reporting length of residency under each residency category.

- Less than 1 year (3.27%)
- 1 to 5 years (8.99%)
- 6 to 10 years (9.97%)
- 11-20 years (13.73%)
- More than 20 years (59.15%)
- I don't live in Westfield (4.90%)

Q1 What best describes your residence status?

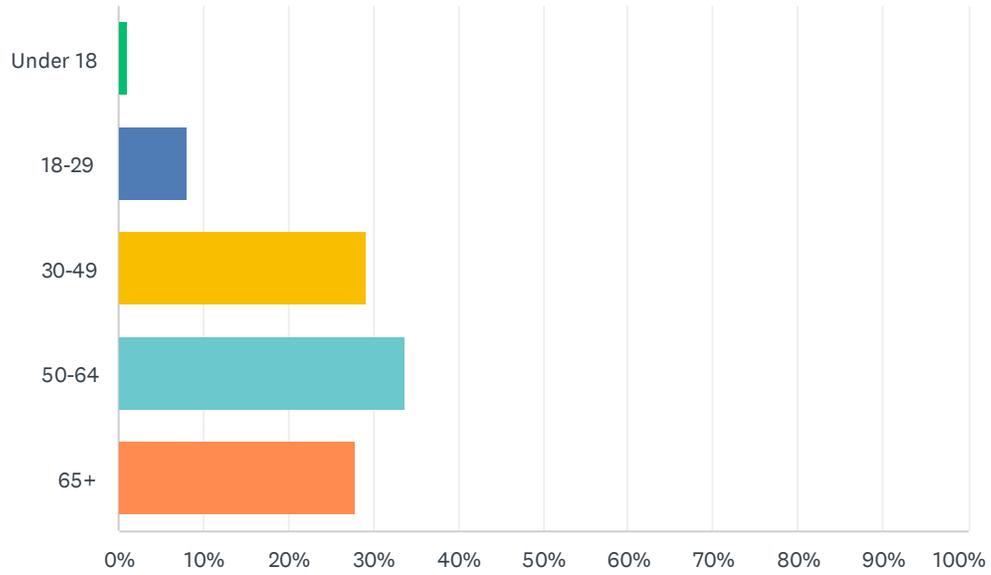
Answered: 614 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Westfield homeowner	83.39%	512
Westfield renter	8.63%	53
Part-year Westfield resident (e.g., college student, snowbird)	1.30%	8
Non-resident with business, family, or other Westfield connection	6.68%	41
TOTAL		614

Q2 What is your age group?

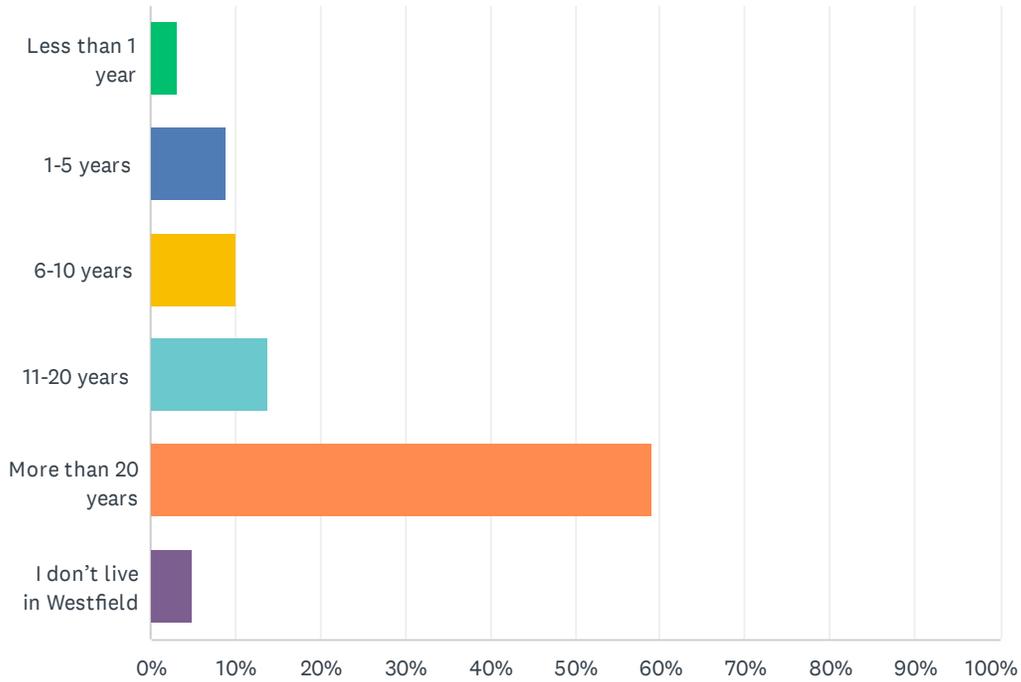
Answered: 612 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Under 18	1.14%	7
18-29	8.01%	49
30-49	29.25%	179
50-64	33.66%	206
65+	27.94%	171
TOTAL		612

Q3 How long have you lived in Westfield?

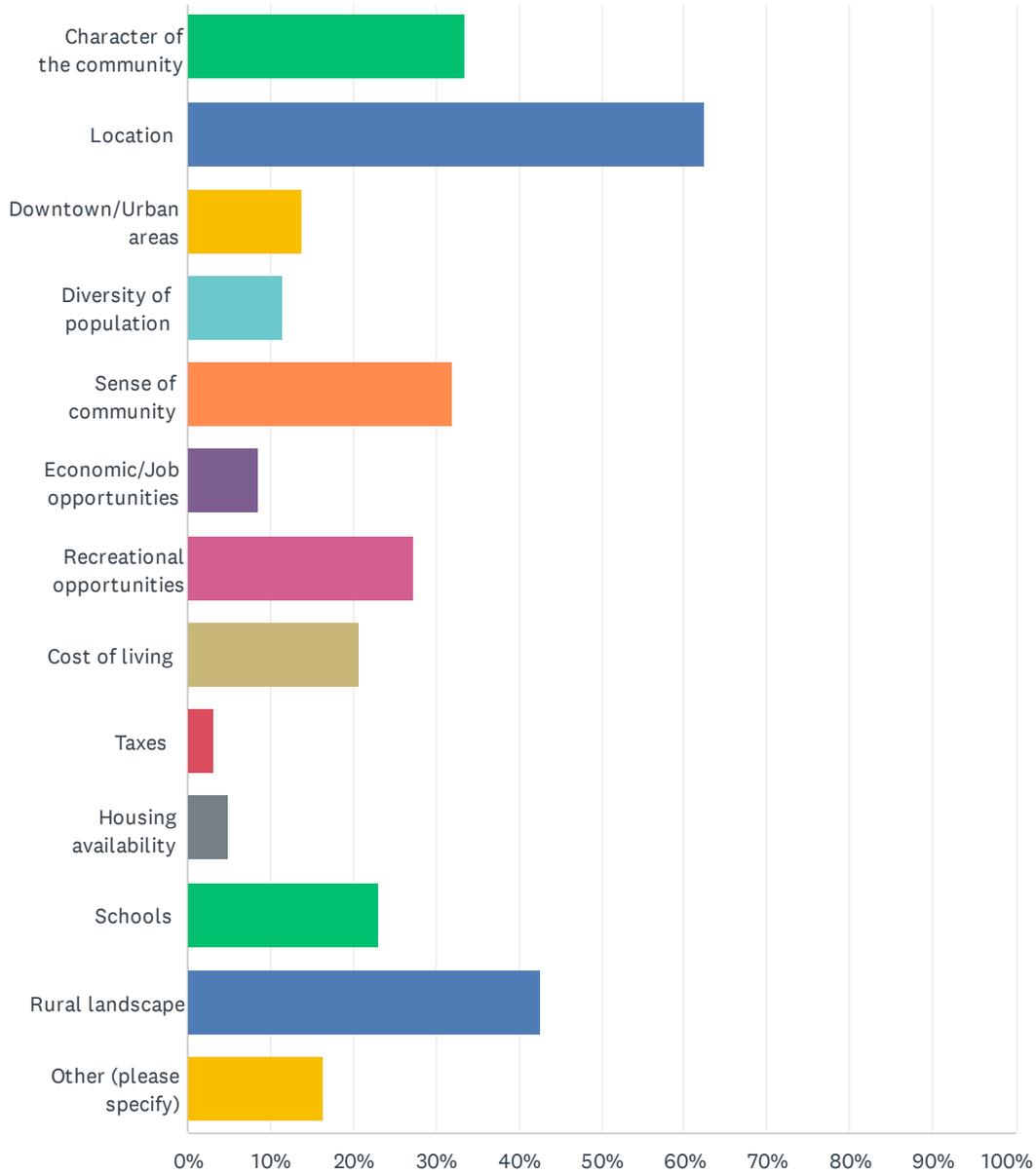
Answered: 614 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Less than 1 year	3.26% 20
1-5 years	8.96% 55
6-10 years	9.93% 61
11-20 years	13.84% 85
More than 20 years	59.12% 363
I don't live in Westfield	4.89% 30
TOTAL	614

Q4 What do you think makes Westfield a great place to live? (Choose your top 3)

Answered: 614 Skipped: 0



City of Westfield, Master Plan Update

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Character of the community	33.55%	206
Location	62.38%	383
Downtown/Urban areas	13.84%	85
Diversity of population	11.56%	71
Sense of community	31.92%	196
Economic/Job opportunities	8.63%	53
Recreational opportunities	27.36%	168
Cost of living	20.68%	127
Taxes	3.09%	19
Housing availability	4.89%	30
Schools	22.96%	141
Rural landscape	42.67%	262
Other (please specify)	16.45%	101
Total Respondents: 614		

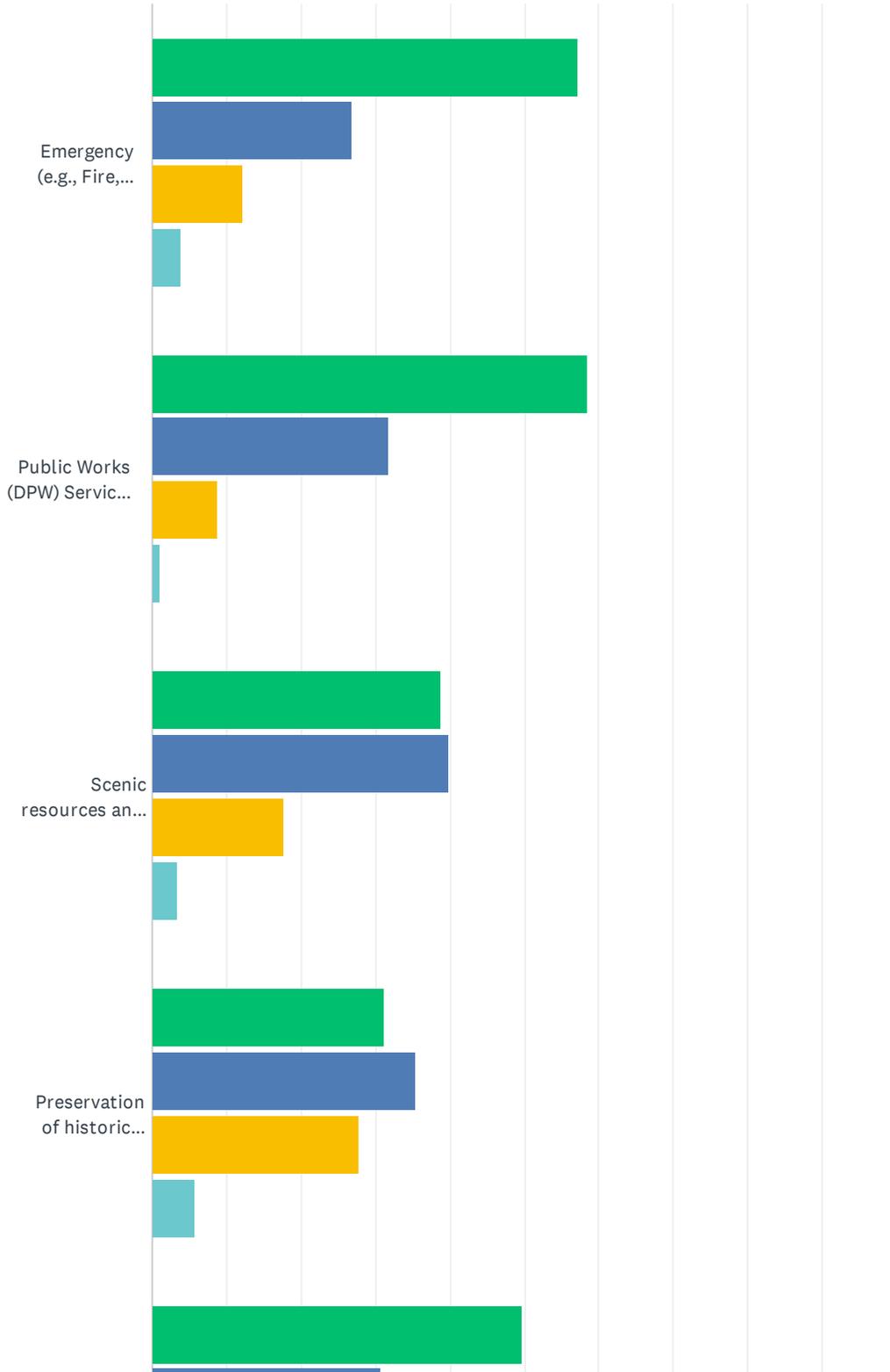
Q5 Please provide up to three words or short phrases that you feel best describe Westfield (good and/or bad). Please keep your three entries to no more than 50 characters each.

Answered: 522 Skipped: 92

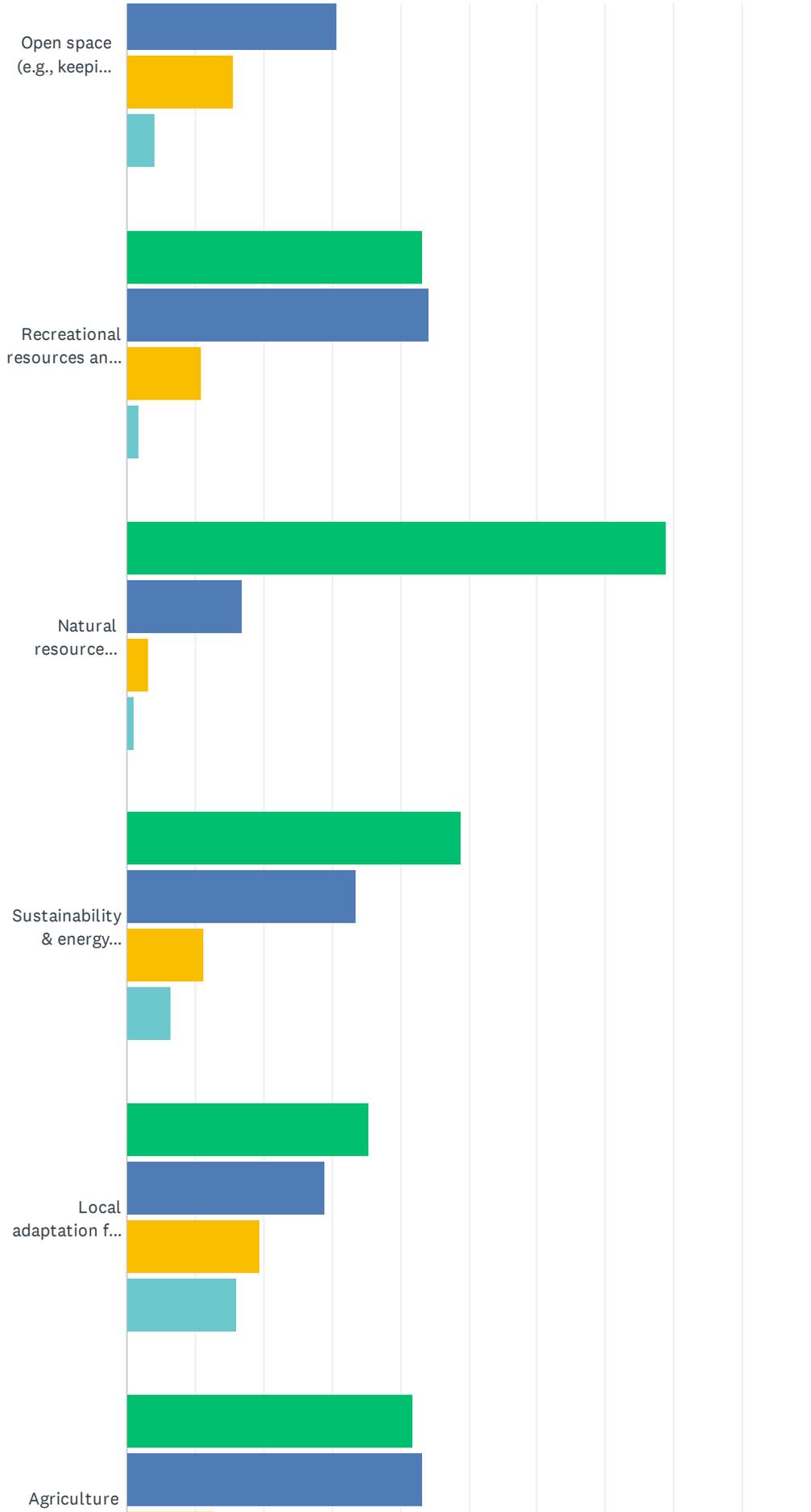
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Word or phrase 1	98.47%	514
Word or phrase 2	97.32%	508
Word or phrase 3	97.13%	507

Q6 Below are some of the areas that a Master plan can address. On a scale of “very important” to “not important,” please indicate how important is it that the City take measures to address the following:

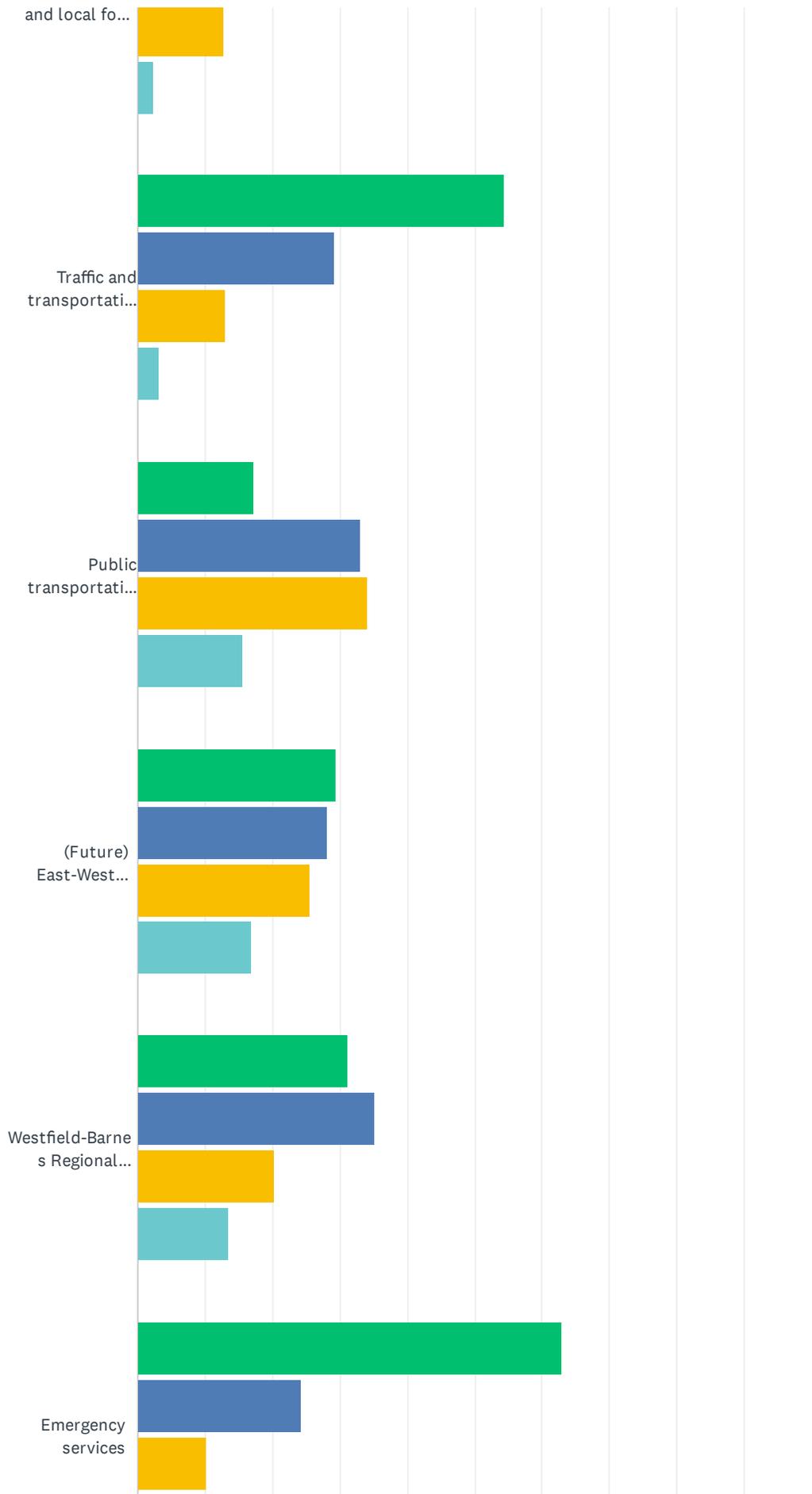
Answered: 614 Skipped: 0



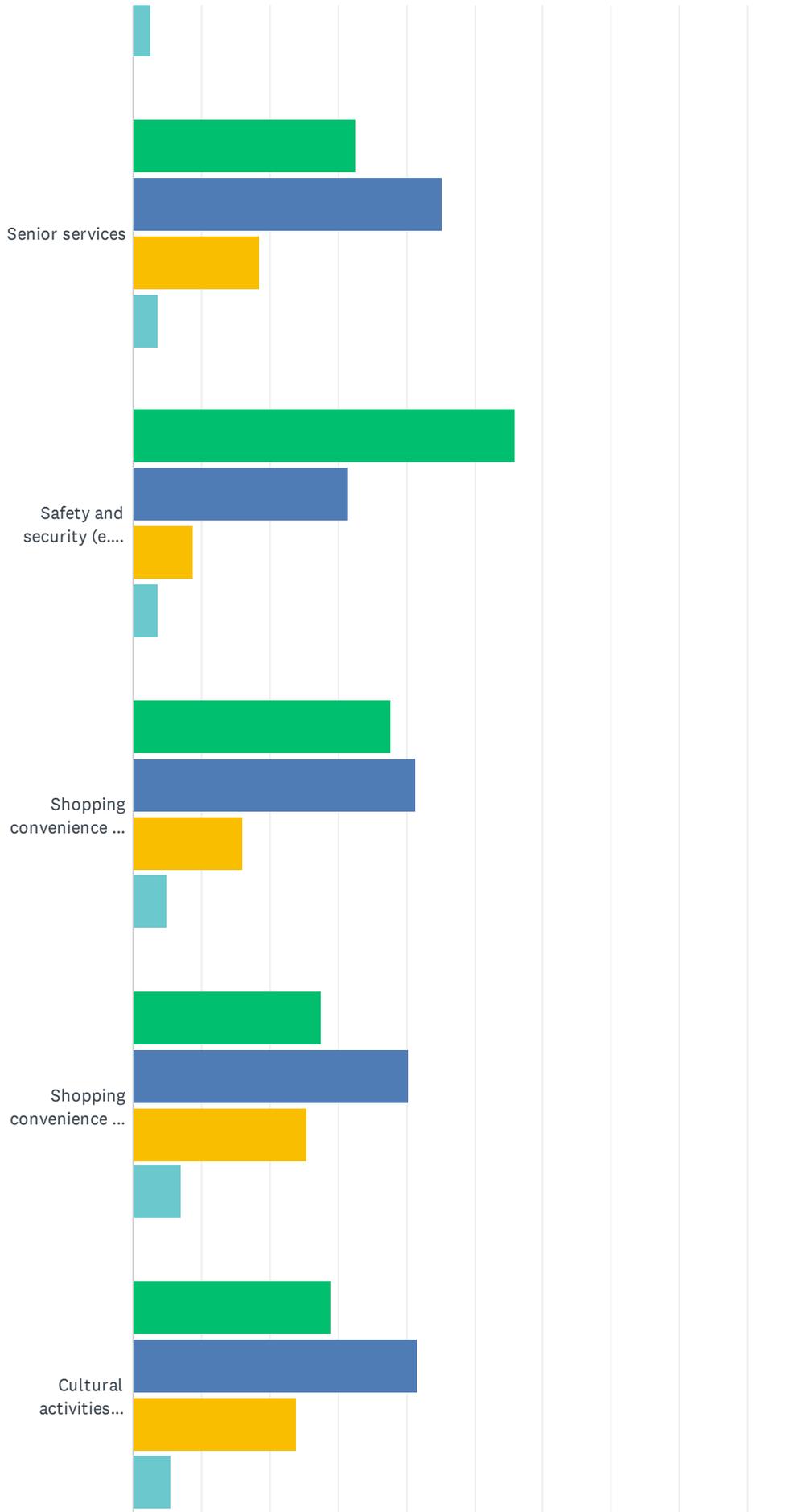
City of Westfield, Master Plan Update



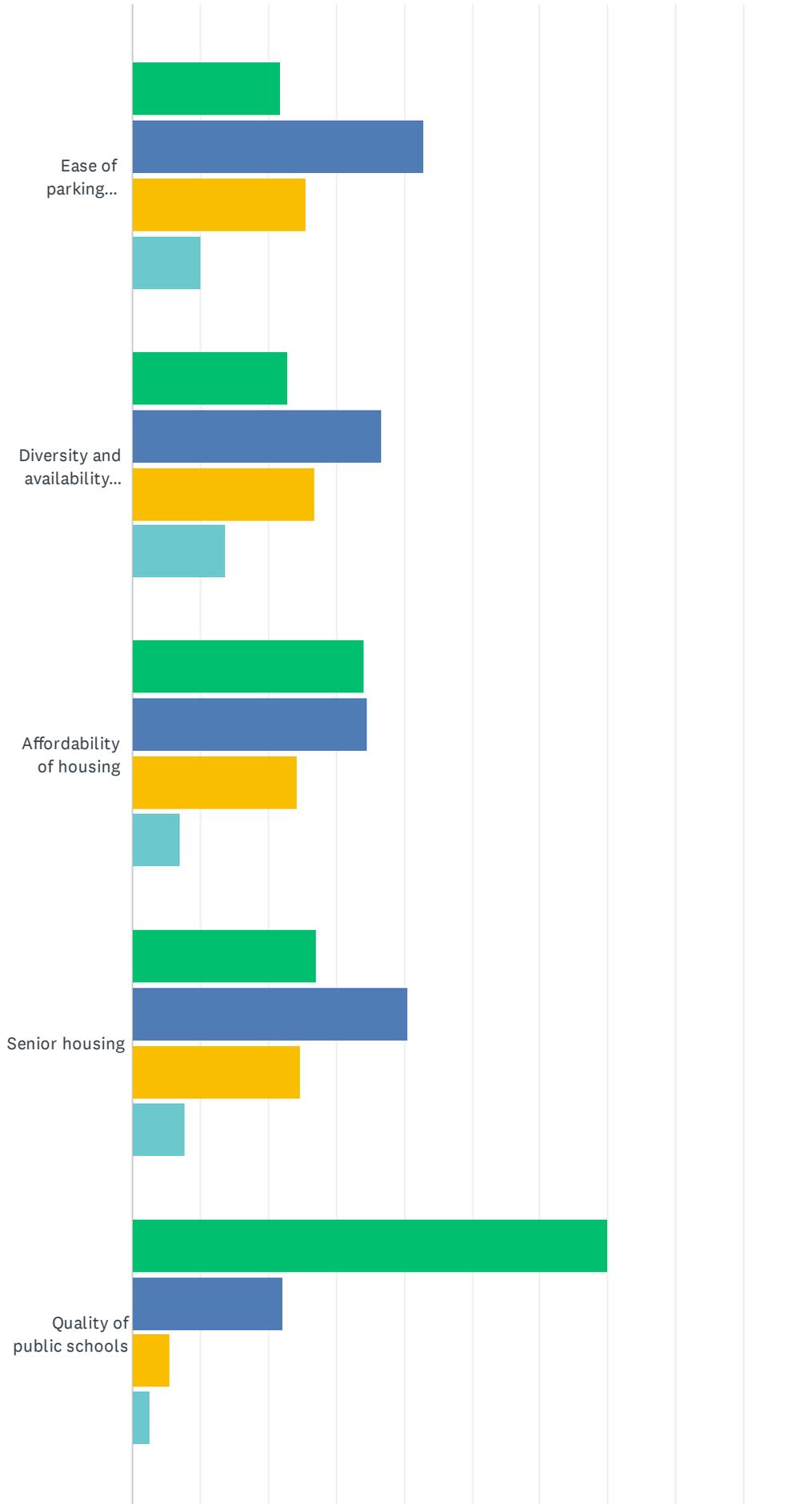
City of Westfield, Master Plan Update



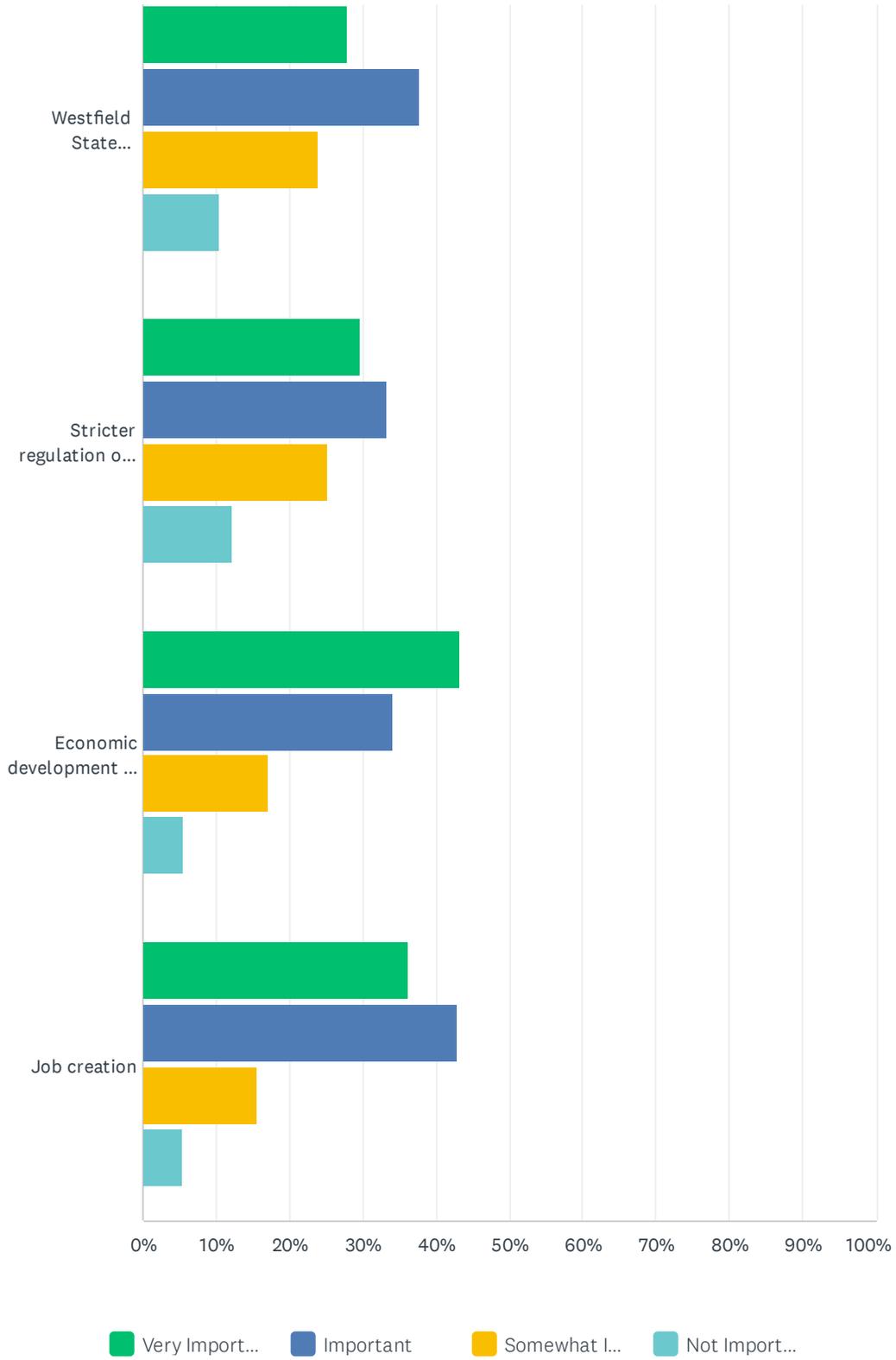
City of Westfield, Master Plan Update



City of Westfield, Master Plan Update



City of Westfield, Master Plan Update



City of Westfield, Master Plan Update

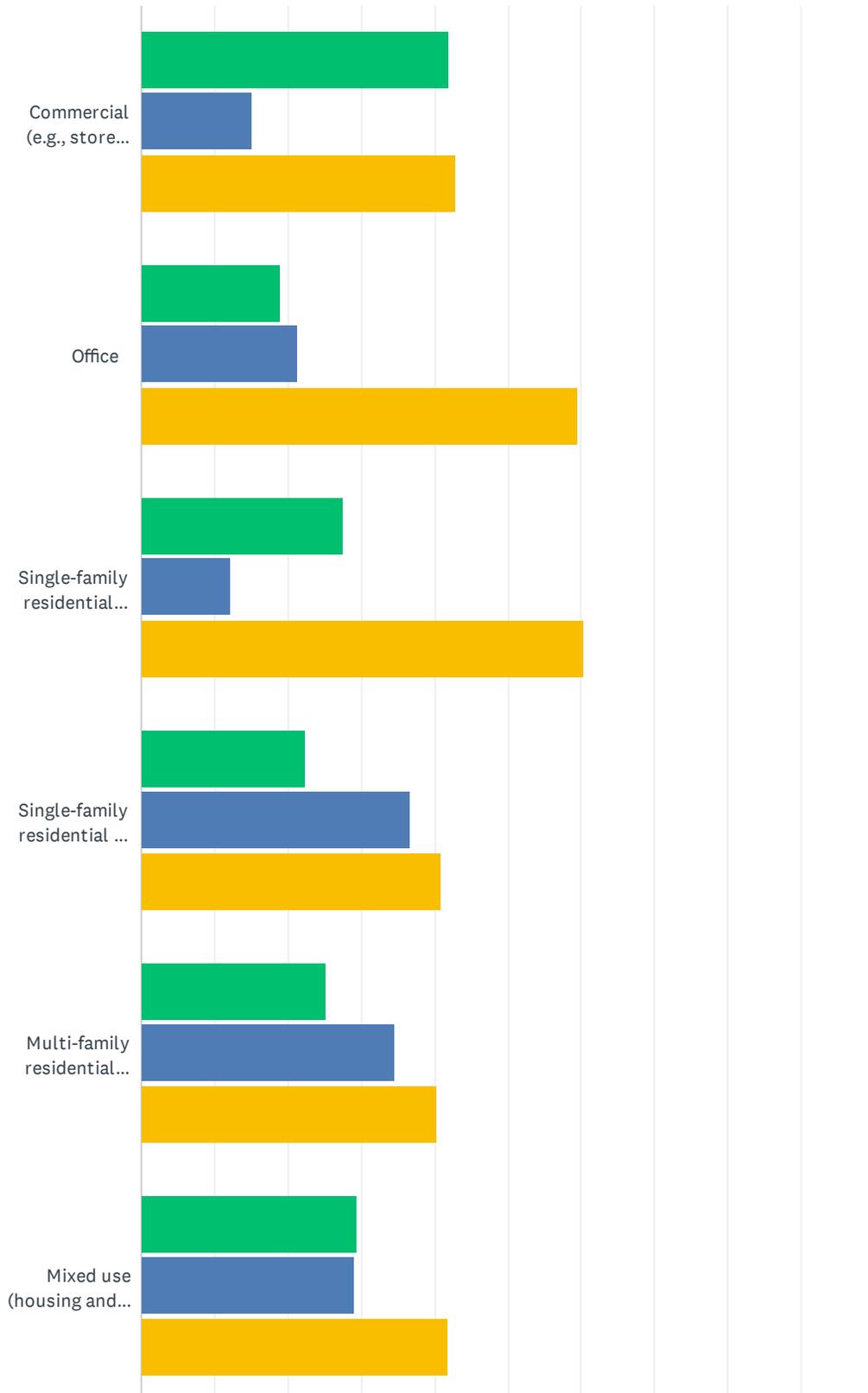
	VERY IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT	SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT	NOT IMPORTANT	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Emergency (e.g., Fire, Police) Services	57.14% 348	26.93% 164	12.15% 74	3.78% 23	609	1.63
Public Works (DPW) Services (e.g., trash collection, plowing, etc.)	58.37% 352	31.67% 191	8.79% 53	1.16% 7	603	1.53
Scenic resources and aesthetic character	38.87% 234	39.87% 240	17.77% 107	3.49% 21	602	1.86
Preservation of historic character	31.20% 190	35.30% 215	27.75% 169	5.75% 35	609	2.08
Open space (e.g., keeping some land undeveloped)	49.75% 300	30.68% 185	15.59% 94	3.98% 24	603	1.74
Recreational resources and opportunities	43.21% 264	44.19% 270	10.80% 66	1.80% 11	611	1.71
Natural resource protection (e.g., drinking water/aquifers, wildlife, air quality, etc.)	78.92% 483	16.83% 103	3.27% 20	0.98% 6	612	1.26
Sustainability & energy efficiency	48.77% 297	33.50% 204	11.33% 69	6.40% 39	609	1.75
Local adaptation for climate change	35.47% 216	29.06% 177	19.38% 118	16.09% 98	609	2.16
Agriculture and local food production	41.71% 254	43.19% 263	12.81% 78	2.30% 14	609	1.76
Traffic and transportation improvements (including walking and cycling accommodations)	54.41% 333	29.25% 179	13.07% 80	3.27% 20	612	1.65
Public transportation (PVTA)	17.30% 105	32.95% 200	34.10% 207	15.65% 95	607	2.48
(Future) East-West passenger rail service	29.35% 177	28.19% 170	25.54% 154	16.92% 102	603	2.30
Westfield-Barnes Regional Airport	31.13% 188	35.26% 213	20.20% 122	13.41% 81	604	2.16
Emergency services	62.82% 49	24.36% 19	10.26% 8	2.56% 2	78	1.53
Senior services	32.73% 198	45.12% 273	18.51% 112	3.64% 22	605	1.93
Safety and security (e.g., do you feel Westfield is a safe place to live?)	55.96% 338	31.62% 191	8.77% 53	3.64% 22	604	1.60
Shopping convenience for everyday needs (groceries, etc.)	37.69% 228	41.32% 250	16.03% 97	4.96% 30	605	1.88
Shopping convenience for other items	27.41% 165	40.20% 242	25.42% 153	6.98% 42	602	2.12
Cultural activities (e.g., festivals, parades, concerts, theater, etc.)	29.09% 176	41.65% 252	23.80% 144	5.45% 33	605	2.06
Ease of parking downtown	21.72% 131	42.79% 258	25.54% 154	9.95% 60	603	2.24
Diversity and availability of housing	22.71% 139	36.76% 225	26.80% 164	13.73% 84	612	2.32
Affordability of housing	34.10%	34.59%	24.26%	7.05%		

City of Westfield, Master Plan Update

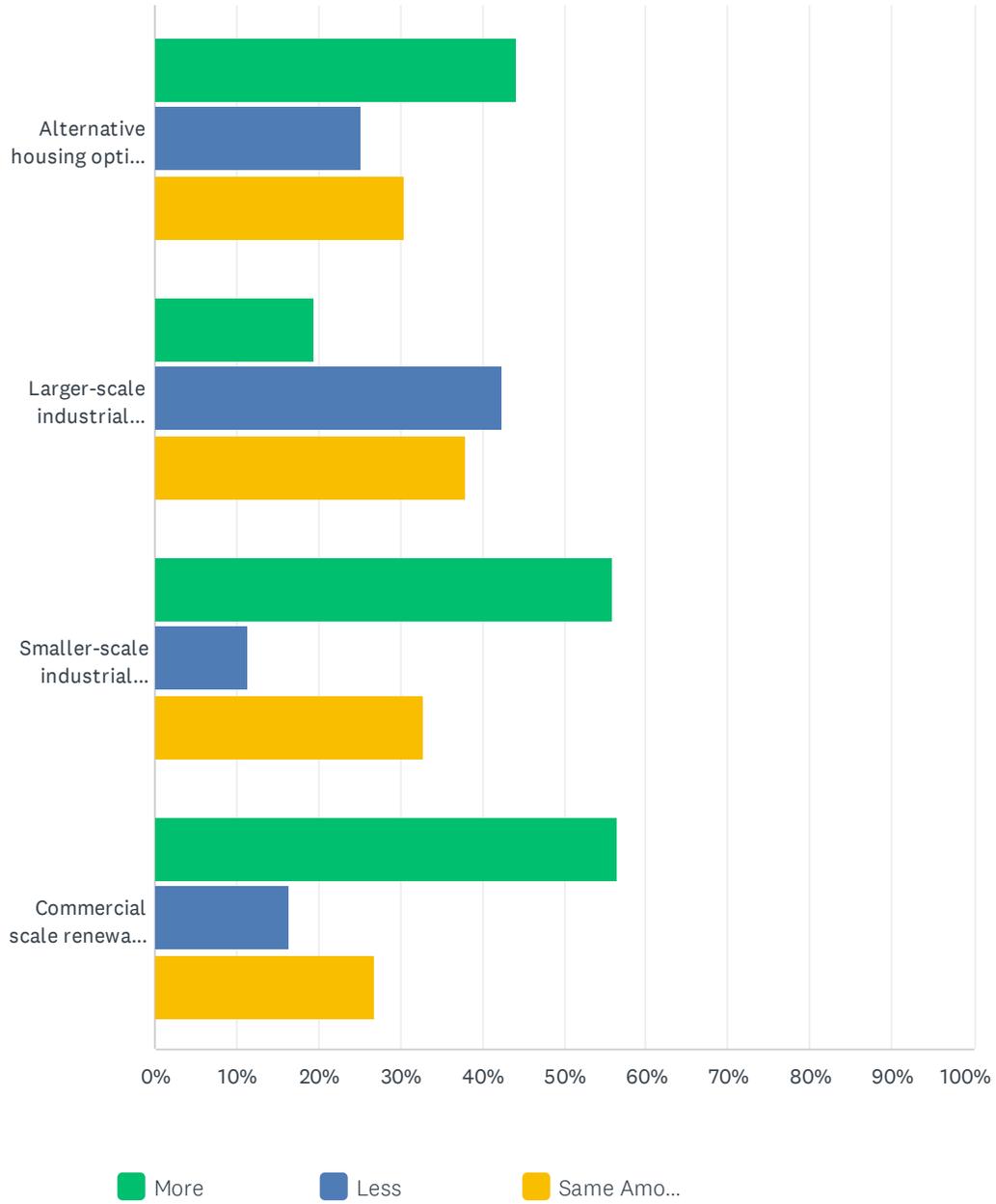
	208	211	148	43	610	2.04
Senior housing	27.12% 163	40.43% 243	24.79% 149	7.65% 46	601	2.13
Quality of public schools	69.89% 427	22.09% 135	5.56% 34	2.45% 15	611	1.41
Westfield State University	27.89% 169	37.79% 229	23.93% 145	10.40% 63	606	2.17
Stricter regulation of development	29.54% 179	33.17% 201	25.08% 152	12.21% 74	606	2.20
Economic development and promoting the City	43.30% 265	34.15% 209	16.99% 104	5.56% 34	612	1.85
Job creation	36.23% 221	42.95% 262	15.57% 95	5.25% 32	610	1.90

Q7 Do you feel Westfield needs more, less, or the same amount of the following types of development?

Answered: 614 Skipped: 0



City of Westfield, Master Plan Update

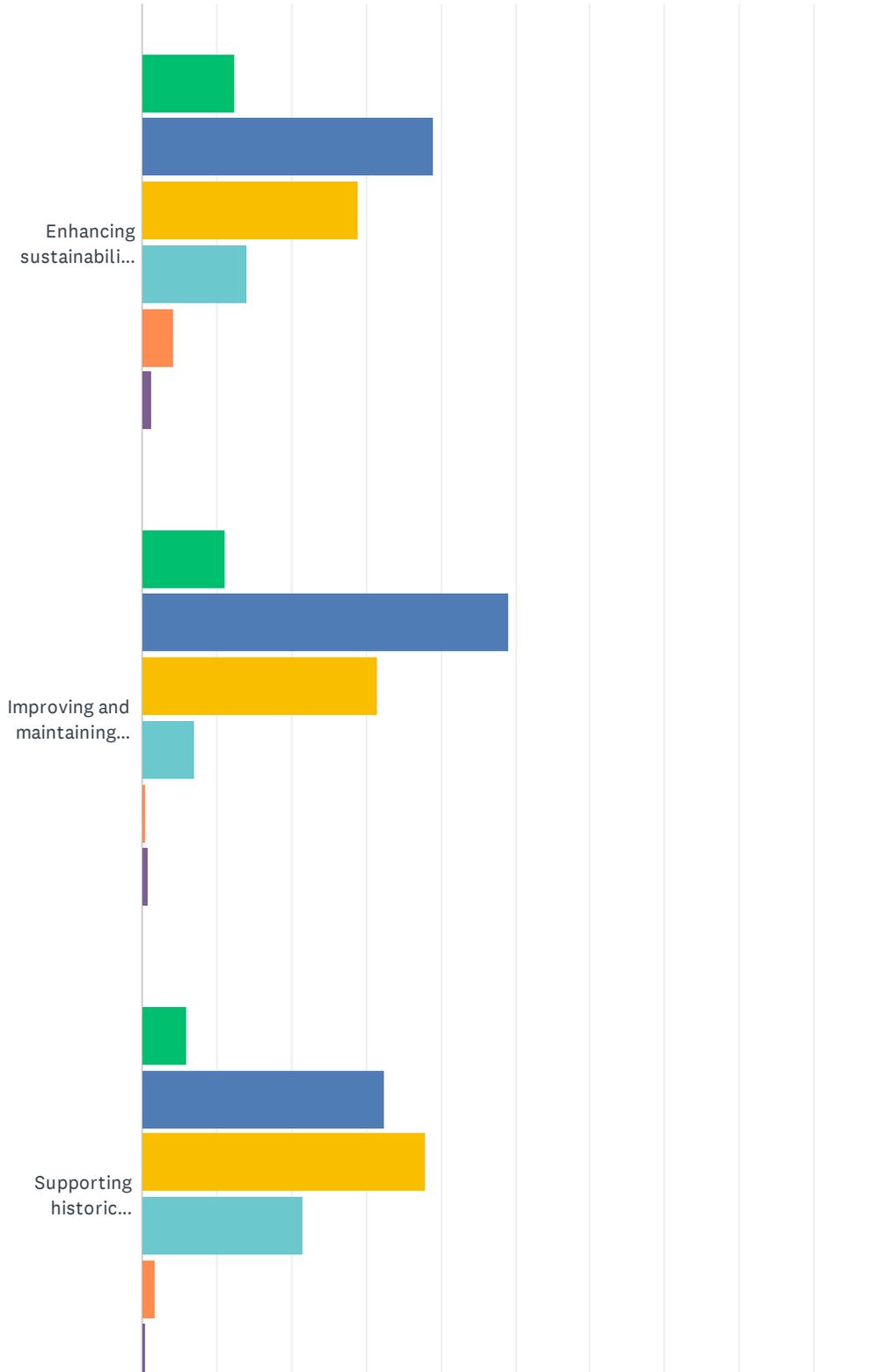


City of Westfield, Master Plan Update

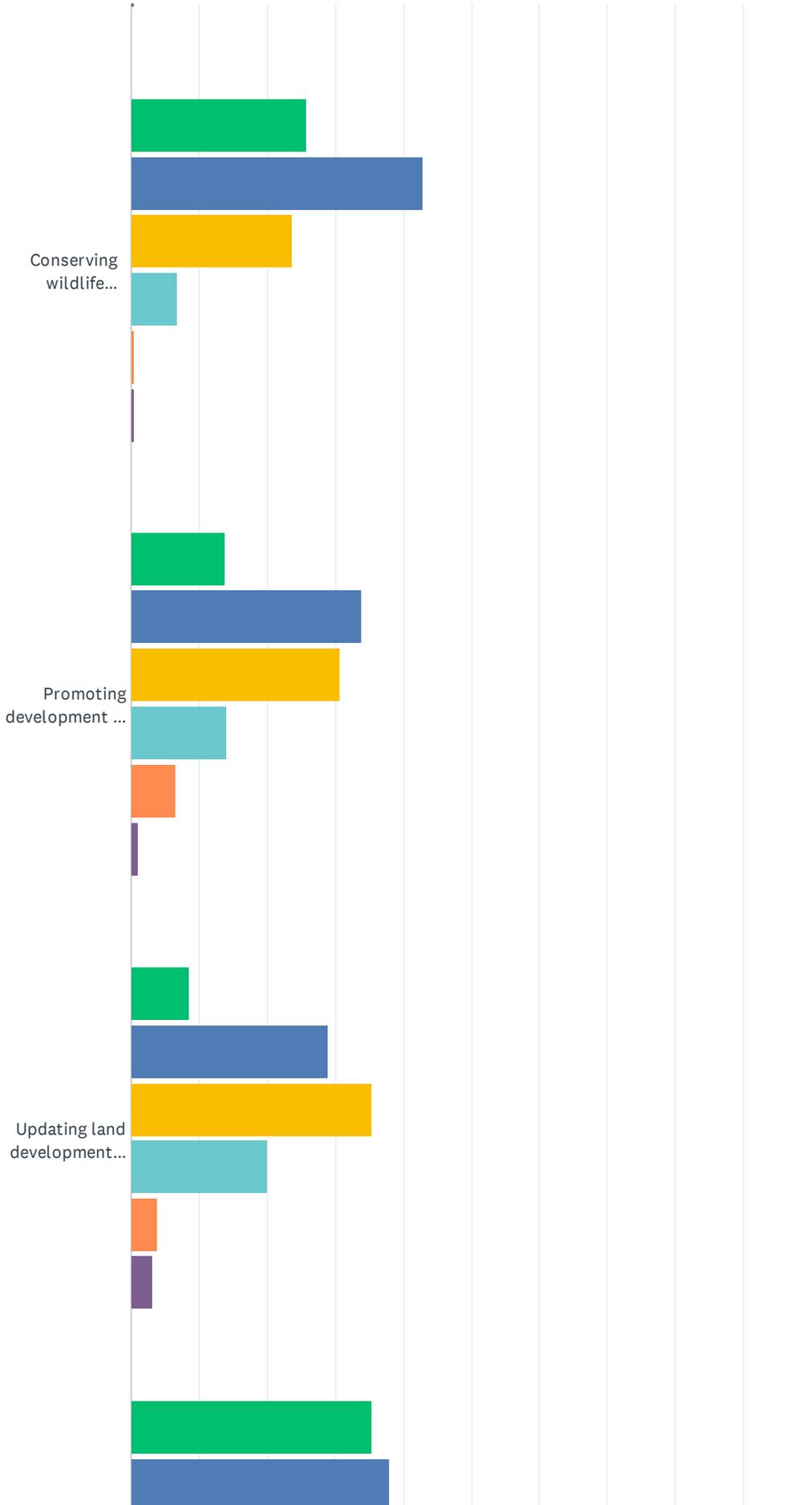
	MORE	LESS	SAME AMOUNT	TOTAL
Commercial (e.g., stores, consumer services)	42.01% 255	15.16% 92	42.83% 260	607
Office	19.02% 112	21.39% 126	59.59% 351	589
Single-family residential along existing roads and streets	27.59% 168	12.15% 74	60.26% 367	609
Single-family residential in new subdivisions	22.39% 135	36.65% 221	40.96% 247	603
Multi-family residential (including apartments and condominiums)	25.20% 154	34.53% 211	40.26% 246	611
Mixed use (housing and commercial together)	29.39% 179	28.90% 176	41.71% 254	609
Alternative housing options (e.g., tiny homes, accessory/in-law apartments, co-housing)	44.19% 266	25.25% 152	30.56% 184	602
Larger-scale industrial (e.g., warehousing, processing, manufacturing operations)	19.51% 119	42.46% 259	38.03% 232	610
Smaller-scale industrial (e.g., light manufacturing, specialty trades)	55.85% 339	11.37% 69	32.78% 199	607
Commercial scale renewable energy facilities (e.g., solar, wind, geothermal)	56.60% 343	16.50% 100	26.90% 163	606

Q8 Below are examples of actions and policy that Westfield may consider recommending through its Master Plan. Please rate how supportive you are of following.

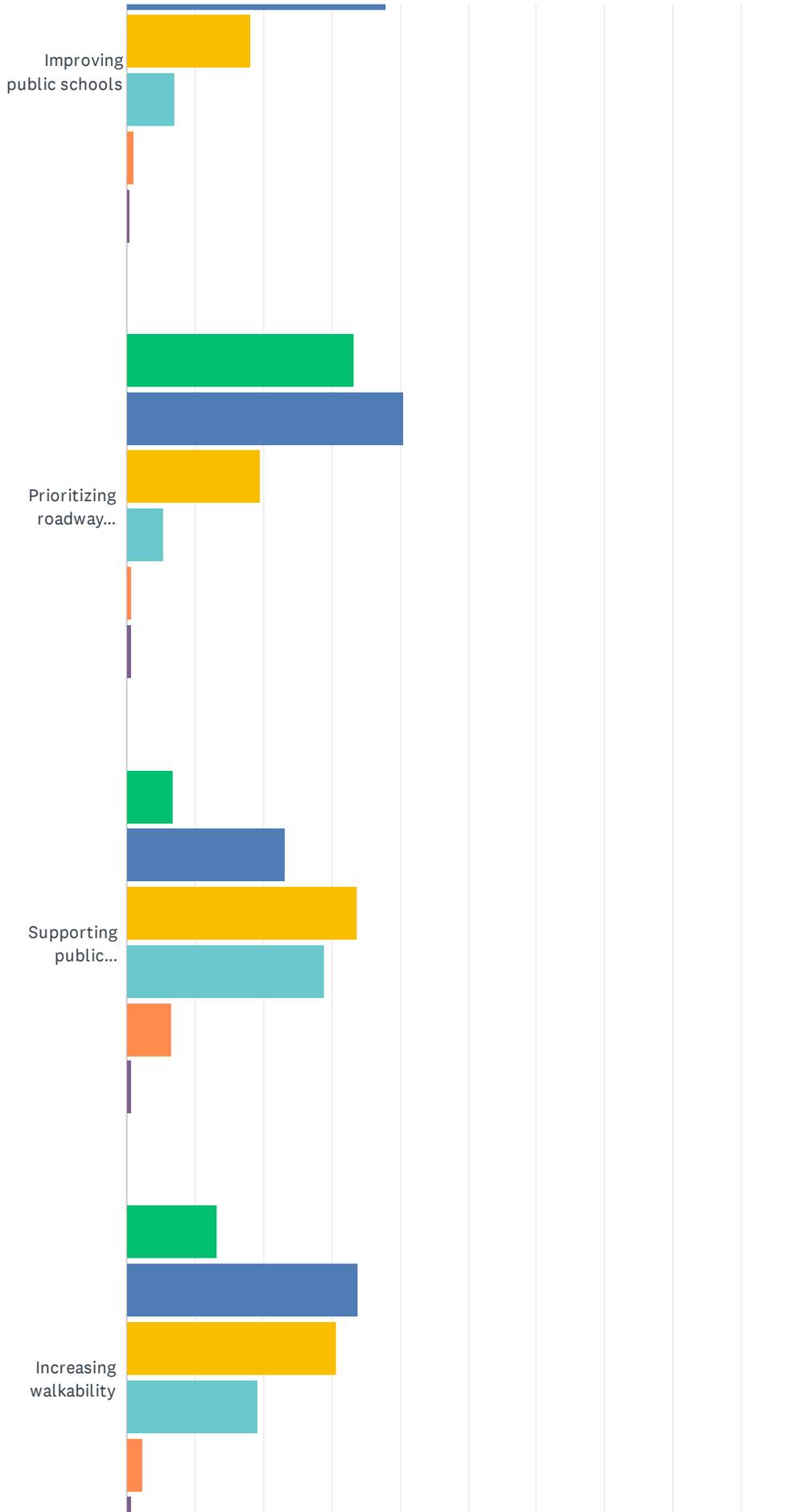
Answered: 613 Skipped: 1



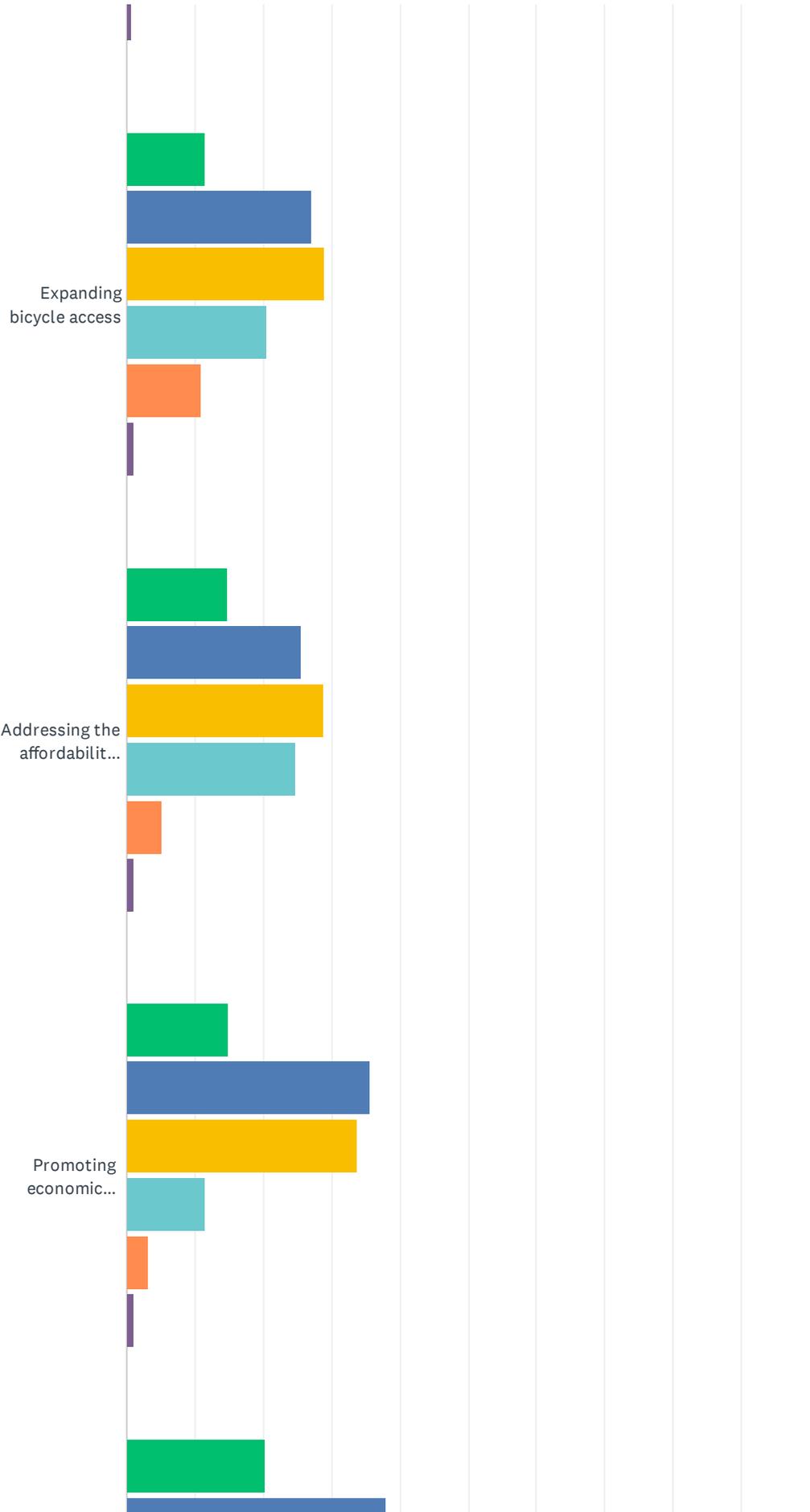
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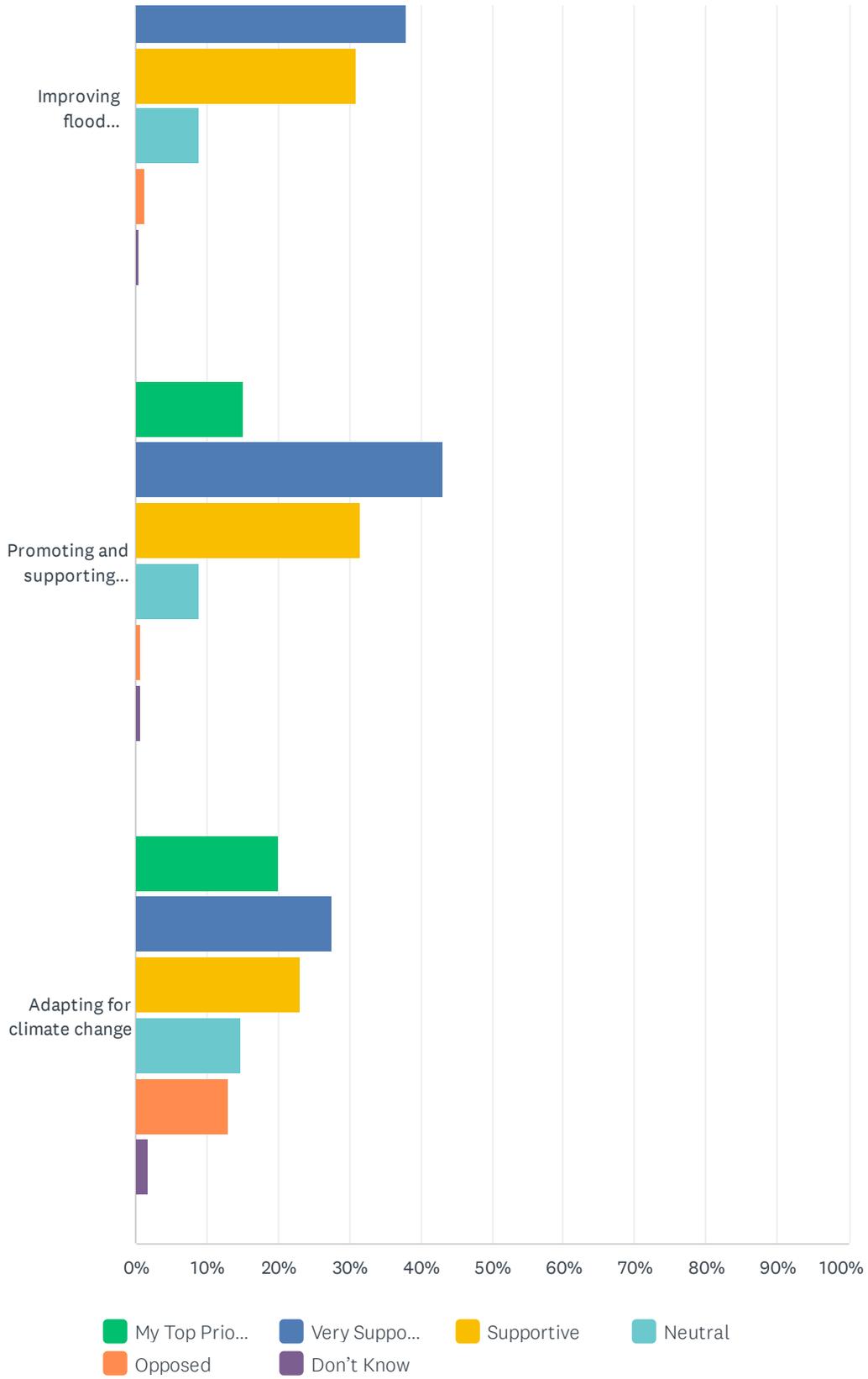
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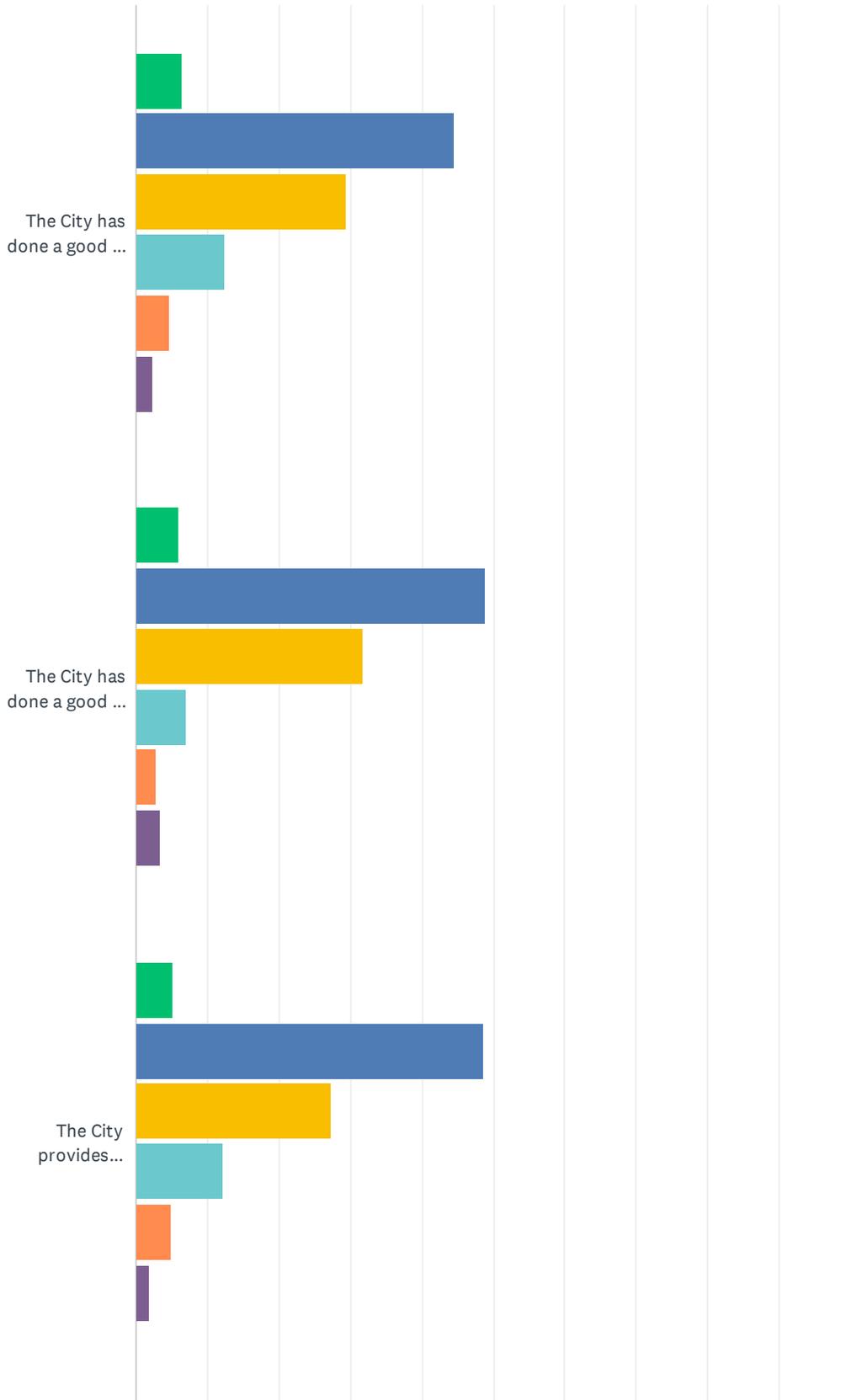


City of Westfield, Master Plan Update

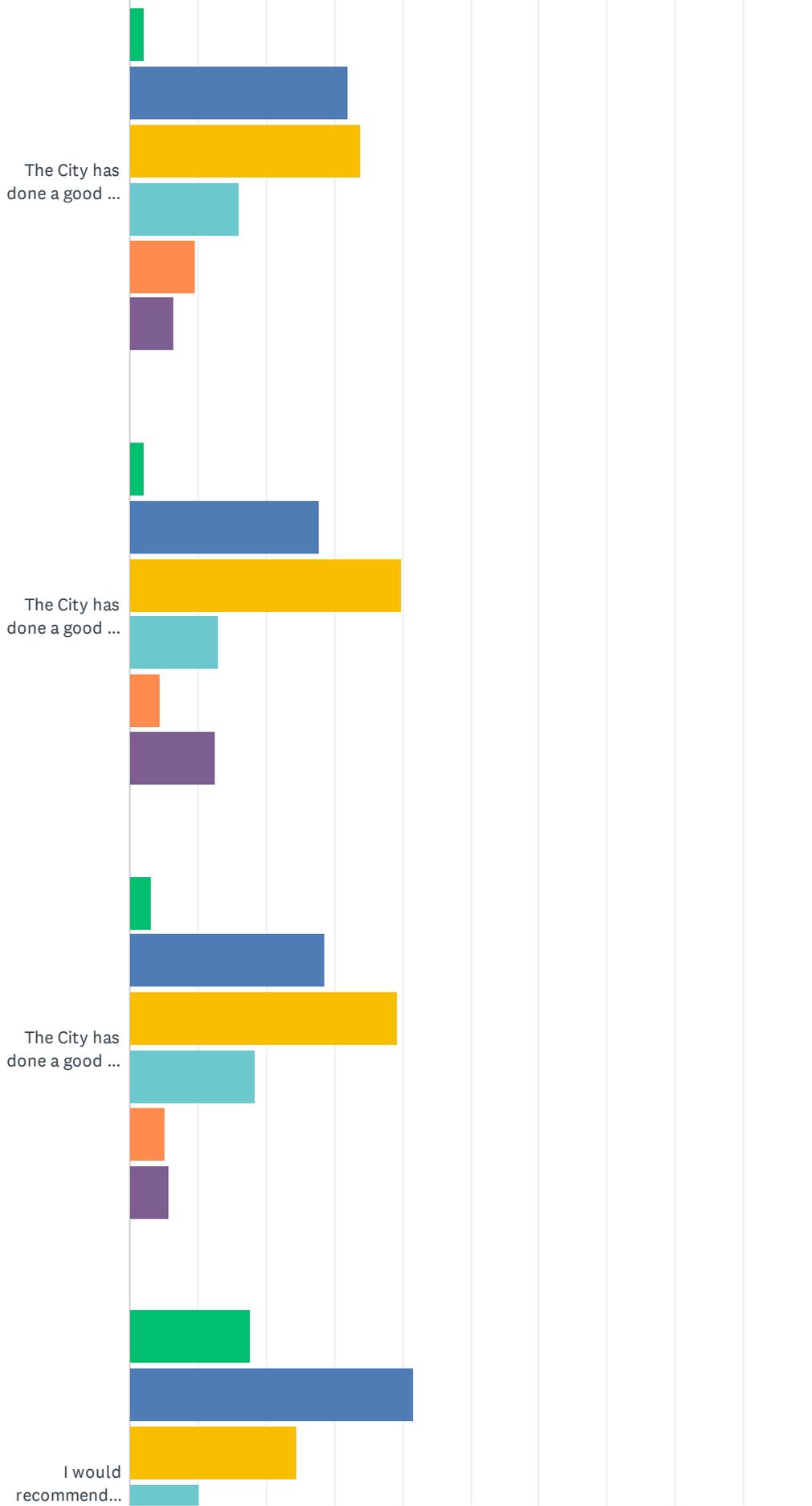
	MY TOP PRIORITY!	VERY SUPPORTIVE	SUPPORTIVE	NEUTRAL	OPPOSED	DON'T KNOW	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Enhancing sustainability and energy efficiency	12.30% 75	39.02% 238	29.02% 177	14.10% 86	4.26% 26	1.31% 8	610	2.63
Improving and maintaining recreation resources	11.15% 68	49.02% 299	31.64% 193	7.05% 43	0.33% 2	0.82% 5	610	2.39
Supporting historic preservation	6.08% 37	32.35% 197	37.93% 231	21.51% 131	1.64% 10	0.49% 3	609	2.82
Conserving wildlife habitat, aquifers, wetlands, and forested areas	25.78% 157	42.86% 261	23.65% 144	6.73% 41	0.49% 3	0.49% 3	609	2.15
Promoting development of vacant or underutilized properties	13.91% 85	33.88% 207	30.61% 187	14.08% 86	6.55% 40	0.98% 6	611	2.68
Updating land development regulations and zoning	8.54% 52	28.90% 176	35.47% 216	20.03% 122	3.94% 24	3.12% 19	609	2.91
Improving public schools	35.37% 214	37.85% 229	18.18% 110	7.11% 43	0.99% 6	0.50% 3	605	2.02
Prioritizing roadway upgrades & traffic improvements	33.22% 203	40.43% 247	19.64% 120	5.40% 33	0.65% 4	0.65% 4	611	2.02
Supporting public transportation	6.89% 42	23.28% 142	33.61% 205	29.02% 177	6.56% 40	0.66% 4	610	3.07
Increasing walkability	13.14% 80	33.99% 207	30.71% 187	19.21% 117	2.30% 14	0.66% 4	609	2.66
Expanding bicycle access	11.62% 71	27.00% 165	28.97% 177	20.46% 125	10.97% 67	0.98% 6	611	2.95
Addressing the affordability of housing	14.78% 90	25.62% 156	28.74% 175	24.63% 150	5.09% 31	1.15% 7	609	2.83
Promoting economic development	14.92% 91	35.57% 217	33.77% 206	11.48% 70	3.28% 20	0.98% 6	610	2.56
Improving flood protection, stormwater, wastewater, and water infrastructure	20.33% 124	38.03% 232	30.98% 189	9.02% 55	1.31% 8	0.33% 2	610	2.34
Promoting and supporting agriculture	15.03% 92	43.14% 264	31.54% 193	8.99% 55	0.65% 4	0.65% 4	612	2.39
Adapting for climate change	20.07% 122	27.47% 167	23.03% 140	14.64% 89	12.99% 79	1.81% 11	608	2.78

Q9 How do you feel about the following statements?

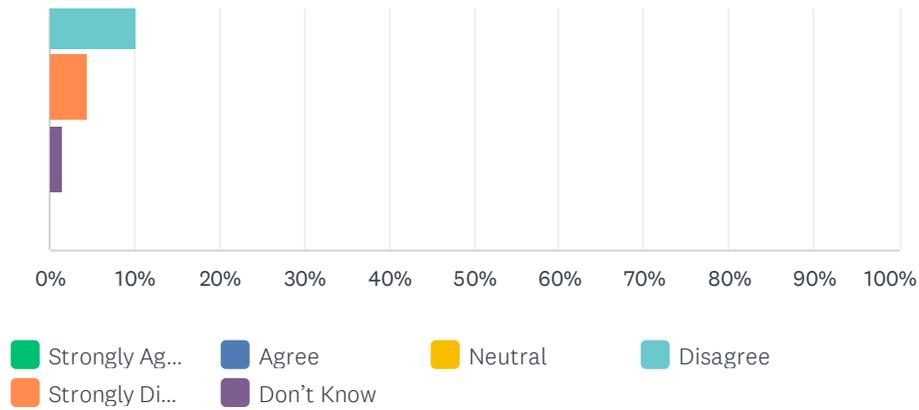
Answered: 613 Skipped: 1



City of Westfield, Master Plan Update



City of Westfield, Master Plan Update



	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEUTRAL	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DON'T KNOW	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
The City has done a good job protecting its local character	6.37% 39	44.61% 273	29.41% 180	12.42% 76	4.74% 29	2.45% 15	612	2.72
The City has done a good job protecting its historic and cultural resources	6.08% 37	48.77% 297	31.86% 194	7.06% 43	2.79% 17	3.45% 21	609	2.62
The City provides adequate recreational opportunities for its residents	5.07% 31	48.69% 298	27.29% 167	12.09% 74	4.90% 30	1.96% 12	612	2.69
The City has done a good job protecting its natural and environmentally sensitive features (forests, aquifers, wetlands, etc.)	2.13% 13	32.08% 196	33.88% 207	16.04% 98	9.49% 58	6.38% 39	611	3.18
The City has done a good job protecting its agricultural resources and supporting the farming community	2.14% 13	27.80% 169	39.97% 243	12.99% 79	4.44% 27	12.66% 77	608	3.28
The City has done a good job supporting local economic expansion (e.g., jobs, business development, tax base)	3.13% 19	28.50% 173	39.21% 238	18.29% 111	5.11% 31	5.77% 35	607	3.11
I would recommend Westfield as a top choice for a family planning a move to the Pioneer Valley	17.70% 108	41.64% 254	24.43% 149	10.33% 63	4.43% 27	1.48% 9	610	2.47

Q10 Are there any additional comments or concerns that you would like to make us aware of?

Answered: 313 Skipped: 301

APPENDIX C

Letters of Support



City of Westfield
PLANNING BOARD

William Carellas, Chair
Cheryl Crowe, Vice Chair
John Bowen
Robert Goyette, Jr.
Jane Magarian
Philip McEwan
Raymond St. Hilaire
Bernard Puza, Associate
Richard Salois, Associate

June 20, 2023

Ed Augustus, Secretary
Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 300
Boston, MA 02114

RE: City of Westfield Master Plan

Dear Secretary Augustus,

The Westfield Planning Board is pleased to have unanimously endorsed and adopted the City's *2023 Master Plan Update*. The enclosed copy is being furnished to your office in conformance with the requirements of Chapter 41, Section 81D of the General Laws. The plan will also be available for viewing on the City's website.

The Board would be remiss without formally thanking and acknowledging the City's volunteer Master Plan Committee for focusing on this important duty of our Board and in guiding the development of the plan. This has been a long overdue effort, since our last master plan was undertaken several decades ago. We are confident that this new document is responsive to the many contemporary challenges and opportunities facing the City, and also that it comports with many broader policies and initiatives being pursued by the Commonwealth.

We now look forward to prioritizing and championing many of the action items identified as we embark on a well-planned course for Westfield's future.

Sincerely,

William Carellas
Chair



City of Westfield Conservation Commission

59 Court Street Westfield, MA 01085

Phone: 413-572-6281

Email: anna.meassick@cityofwestfield.org

Memorandum

To: Mr. Jay Vinskey, City Planner

From: Dr. David A. Doe, Chairman of the Westfield Conservation Commission

Date: June 27, 2023

Re: City of Westfield Master Plan

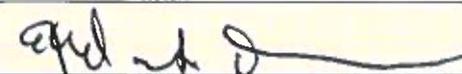
At the June 27, 2023 meeting, the Westfield Conservation Commission (the “Commission”) voted unanimously to endorse the City of Westfield Master Plan (the “Plan”) as adopted by the Westfield Planning Board on June 20, 2023. The Subject-Matter Elements of the Plan align with the motivation and intent of the Commission to secure, promote, and develop natural resources through future policy, operations, and programs within the community. The Commission looks forward to taking part to achieve the goals and take the actions described in the Plan, to secure Westfield’s continued growth and future.

The undersigned, members of the Conservation Commission of Westfield, hereby certifies that at a meeting on June 27, 2023, the Conservation Commission voted all-in-favor to endorse the City of Westfield Master Plan.


_____ Dr. David A. Doe, Chairman


_____ James-R. Murphy, Vice Chairman


_____ Carl E. Grobe, Commissioner


_____ Robert F. Florek, Commissioner


_____ James Prystowski, Commissioner


_____ Edward Finnie, Commissioner



City of Westfield

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

Richard Sullivan III, Chair
Sofia Bitzas, Member
Christine Webster, Member
Jennifer Gilbert, 1st Alternate

June 28, 2023

Planning Board
59 Court St.
Westfield MA 01085

RE: Master Plan

Dear Planning Board,

The Westfield Zoning Board of Appeals fully endorses the City's 2023 Master Plan. The final product clearly represents an in-depth and comprehensive analysis of contemporary concerns, in addition to a well-articulated path forward.

While his Board has had representation at some public workshops for the plan, we are all intimately aware of many issues relating to some seemingly unnecessary, illogical or obsolete provisions in our current zoning ordinance. Consequently, we support an updating of that document, as the Master Plan suggests. Realizing this may be a daunting task, we are happy to offer input, assistance and support of any targeted or compressive revisions to Westfield's land use regulations.

Congratulations to all involved in completing this long-overdue effort, and we look forward to the plan materializing over the coming years.

Sincerely,

Richard Sullivan, III
Chair

(reserved for additional letters)

Photograph Credits

Photograph Number or Location in Plan	Subject	Source
Cover	City Hall	City of Westfield
Inside cover	Park Square Green	City of Westfield
Introduction Title Page	Westfield River at Half Mile Falls Park	Weston & Sampson
Photo I-1	Audience Members at the Master Plan First Workshop	Weston & Sampson
Chapter 1 Title Page	Westfield River Esplanade	Weston & Sampson
Chapter 2 Title Page & Photo 2-1	New Condominiums at Union Street	Jay Vinskey
Chapter 3 Title Page	School Street Shops	Jay Vinskey
Chapter 4 Title Page	Crane Pond Dam on the Little River	Jay Ducharme
Chapter 5 Title Page	PumpkinFest 2022	Jay Vinskey
Chapter 6 Title Page	Westfield River Watershed Association Canoe Cruise 2022	Heather Wyman
Chapter 7 Title Page	City Hall Holiday Illumination	Jay Vinskey
Chapter 8 Title Page	Great River Bridges	Weston & Sampson
Photo 8-8	Westfield River Walk—Access from Chapman Playground	City of Westfield
Chapter 9 Title Page & Photo 9-1	Westfield Farming Operations—Tobacco Field off South Meadow Road	Weston & Sampson
Photo 9-2	Prospect Valley Farm Livestock	Prospect Valley Farm
Photo 9-3	Westfield Farmer's Market	Jay Ducharme
Chapter 10 Title Page	Solar Field at Southampton Road & Medeiros Way	Jay Vinskey
Chapter 11 Title Page	Granville Reservoir	Unavailable
Chapter 12 Title Page	Westfield River near Whitney Playground	Jay Ducharme
Back Cover	Westfield River Bridge from Half Mile Falls Park	Weston & Sampson

