

INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGIES BRIEFING BOOKLET

Overview

This “briefing booklet” has been prepared as part of the process of preparing an update to the 2010 Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) for Ridgefield.

This booklet is intended to familiarize members of the Planning and Zoning Commission and others with existing and potential future strategies related to:

- Community facilities and services,
- Vehicular transportation,
- Pedestrian, bicycle, transit and overall accessibility, and
- Utility infrastructure.

*“Infrastructure
creates the
form of a
[community]”*

Paul Goldberger
American writer / educator

Community Facilities / Services



Vehicular Transportation



Pedestrianism / Accessibility



Utility Infrastructure



Community Services

The POCD does not get involved in the day-to-day operation of local departments but does look at:

- the adequacy of local facilities to meet anticipated community needs during the planning period (to 2030 or so) and beyond, and
- whether the potential exists to expand such facilities in the future should the need arise.

Maintain And Enhance Community Services

POSSIBLE NEW GOAL STATEMENT

Provide appropriate community services and facilities to maintain and enhance the overall quality of life in Ridgefield.

Community services (such as education, public works, public safety, and recreation) contribute significantly to Ridgefield's character and quality of life. For the purposes of the POCD, community facilities are considered to include municipal buildings and other facilities which are used to provide services to residents.

The map on the facing page shows the location of existing community facilities:

General (blue)

10. Town Hall
14. Town Hall Annex
11. Ridgefield Library
15. Ridgefield Playhouse
11. Prospector Theater

Education / Schools (yellow)

1. Ridgefield High School (9-12)
2. East Ridge Middle School (7-8)
3. Scotts Ridge Middle School (7-8)
4. Barlow Mountain Elementary School
5. Branchville Elementary School
6. Farmingville Elementary School
7. Ridgebury Elementary School
8. Scotland Elementary School
9. Veterans Park Elementary School

Public Safety (light red)

13. Police Station
29. Fire/EMS Headquarters
30. Ridgebury Fire Station

Public Works (gray)

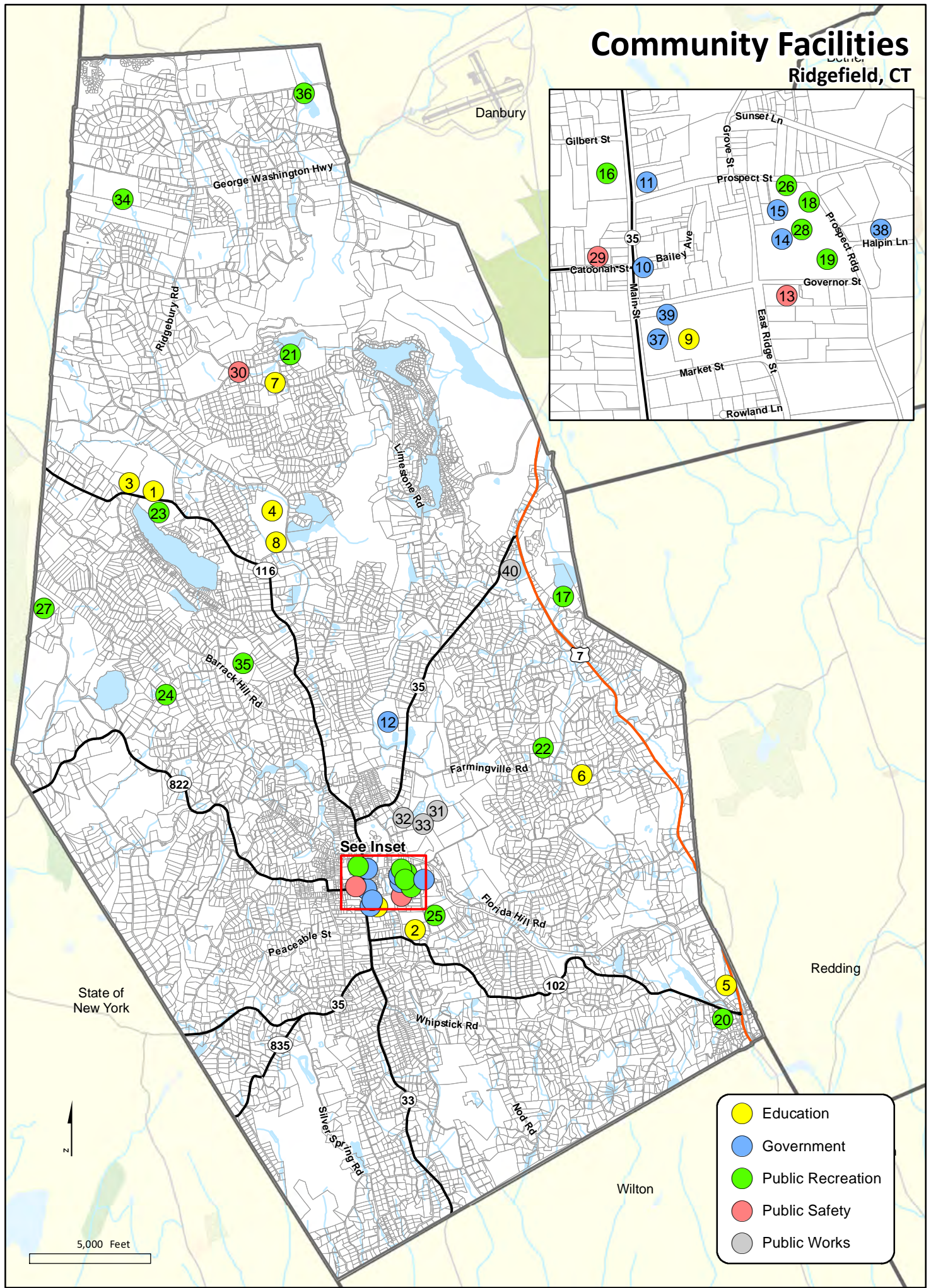
31. Public Works Garage
32. Wastewater Treatment Plant #1
33. Transfer Station
- 40 Wastewater Plant #2 (to be closed)

Parks / Recreation (green)

12. Recreation Center / Senior Center
4. Pool At Barlow Mountain ES
16. Ballard Park
17. Martin Park Beach
18. Skate Park
19. Ciuccoli Field
20. Branchville Civic Field
21. Lake Windwing
22. Aldrich Park / Field
23. Richardson Park
24. Sachem Field /Park
25. Scalzo / Diniz Fields
26. East Ridge II (Rink) Field
27. Sturges Park
28. Yanity Gym
34. Ridgefield Golf Course
35. Levy Park
36. Shadow Lake Park
37. Community Center
38. Ridgefield Theatre Barn
39. Teen Center

Community Facilities

Ridgefield, CT



Legend

- Not expected to be adequate for community needs to 2030
- Some issues to be considered through 2030
- Expected to be adequate for community needs to 2030

The following tables provide a macro-level overview of community facility needs and issues in Ridgefield (grouped alphabetically by assessment):

Function	Assessment
 Fire Department / Emergency Medical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Currently operate out of two stations 6 staff at HQ and 2 at Ridgebury (24/7/365) 70% of call are medical / 30% are fire HQ station is undersized for modern equipment Insufficient room to expand HQ Preferred option is build public safety complex with police department
 Police Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current building is not adequate for department needs Space needs study is underway Options may include renovate / expand, build new police facility, build public safety complex with fire dept.

Housing Facilities

The Ridgefield Housing Authority is an independent organization which operates three housing developments in Ridgefield:

- Ballard Green on Gilbert Street (elderly / handicapped),
- Prospect Ridge Congregate (elderly / handicapped), and
- Prospect Ridge (family, affordable and handicapped) housing.

The need for additional housing units for the target communities is discussed in the Housing section of the POCD.

Function	Assessment
 Public Works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing buildings / sites are intensively used and are experiencing space challenges Adequacy of staffing can also present challenges Limited room for expansion / reconfiguration (adjacent land was sold by Town) A satellite site in northern Ridgefield might alleviate some space constraints and improve efficiency for winter snow clearing and storage of equipment / materials
 Recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recreation facilities / programs are generally adequate Investigating turf / lights for outdoor fields to meet current needs and expand capacity / capabilities Improvements desired at indoor pool Would like to add pool / splash pad at Rec Center Lack of parking is an issue at some facilities
 Ridgefield Playhouse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Playhouse is seeking ways to improve and enhance their facility More backstage / hospitality spaces are desired Parking can be a problem, especially when other activities are occurring in the vicinity




Fire Headquarters



Police Station



DRAFT – Planimetrics Material For PZC Discussion

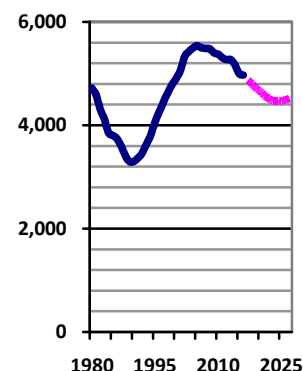
Function	Assessment
 Buildings / Grounds Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building / grounds maintenance expected to be adequate if can maintain funding Would like to be more proactive (instead of reactive) Recreation department is charged with maintenance of school facilities and this creates funding conflicts (capital requests for school / Town buildings are seen as P&R requests and can displace P&R improvements)
 Senior Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facility is well utilized and suffers from lack of parking (shares site with Recreation Center) Utilization is expected to grow in the future due to growing number of older residents
 Town Hall / Town Hall Annex	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Town departments have been split up between multiple buildings due to space challenges Space at the Town Hall Annex has been leased to others and is not available for consolidation Arrangements are not optimal for governmental function but are expected to be adequate to 2030

Legend







-  Not expected to be adequate for community needs to 2030
-  Some issues to be considered through 2030
-  Expected to be adequate for community needs to 2030

School Enrollments

Enrollment projections prepared for the Board of Education suggest a decrease in overall enrollment for the near future.



Most of the decrease is expected at the high school and middle schools. Enrollment at elementary schools may increase after about 2023 or so.

FUNCTION	Assessment
 Community Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Lounsbury House (Town-owned but operated by a non-profit entity) is used for a number of functions Expected to be adequate for community needs to 2030
 Education / Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing facilities are expected to have adequate capacity through 2030 (and perhaps beyond) Board of Education continues to monitor school enrollment projections Long term enrollment trends (see sidebar) may result in facility adjustments in the future (consolidation, redistricting, consolidation, grade realignment, etc.)
 Library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Library was recently improved and expanded Utilization has increased and parking can be an issue when programs coincide with other activities Are undertaking a new strategic plan
 Prospector Theater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expected to be adequate (in terms of size) for community needs to 2030
 Solid Waste / Recycling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current arrangements for collection / disposal of solid waste considered adequate Solid waste arrangements can be extended as needed Collection of recyclables is adequate Economics of recycling are challenging at present and future attention may be needed
 Teen Center / "The Barn"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Barn is expected to be adequate (in terms of size) for community needs to 2030 Upgrades (such as outdoor activity space) are desired

Legend

On this page (and similar pages in the POCD, the bold text (with a letter designation) identifies a potential POCD “strategy” intended to provide overall direction.

The black text in the tables are “policies” which provide general guidance for local actions. Policies are generally on-going and may never be considered “implemented.

The red text in the tables are “action steps” which outline specific tasks which can be taken to implement POCD strategies.

Do these policies and action steps make sense for Ridgefield?

Are there any policies or action steps you feel should be added?

Possible Strategies For 2020 POCD

A. Address Overall Community Facility Needs

1. Maintain and manage community facilities and services:
 - a. to meet current community needs,
 - b. to adapt to future community needs,
 - c. to maximize their utility, and
 - d. in an efficient and cost-effective way.
2. Undertake improvements to improve accessibility (mobility, sight, hearing, etc.) to all municipal facilities and services.

B. Address Near-Term Needs / Issues

1. Address the space needs of the Fire / EMS Department in an efficient and cost-effective way.
2. Address the space needs of the Police Department in an efficient and cost-effective way.
3. Investigate the possibility of establishing a public safety complex for police and fire in an appropriate location.

C. Address Medium-Term Needs / Issues

1. As circumstances dictate, proceed with adding turf / lights at outdoor recreation facilities to expand capacity and capabilities.
2. Evaluate the town-wide maintenance function for municipal facilities to ensure that all capital needs (Town, school, recreation, etc.) are being adequately addressed.
3. Support improvements at the Ridgefield Playhouse - both to the facility and the parking availability.
4. Seek opportunities to address parking challenges at the Recreation Center / Senior Center.
5. Seek opportunities to address parking challenges at the Library / Prospector Theater.

D. Address Long-Term Needs / Issues

1. Continue to monitor school enrollments in order to anticipate future enrollment trends well in advance.
2. Monitor usage of the Senior Center in order to anticipate the need to expand the facility, if needed, in the future.
3. When and where appropriate, acquire properties (if they become available) adjacent to existing facilities in order to allow for future expansion / renovation of existing facilities rather than having to develop entirely new sites.
4. Continue to monitor how the changing age composition of the community affects the demand for emergency medical services, dial-a-ride, and other services.
5. Investigate ways to relieve some of the space constraints at the public works facilities, including the possibility of establishing a satellite public works site in northern Ridgefield.

Do these policies and action steps make sense for Ridgefield?

Are there any policies or action steps you feel should be added?

Recreation Center / Senior Center



Autonomous Vehicles

For over 100 years, the roadway system has been designed and managed for operator-driven motor vehicles. If pedestrians and horses are considered, the history goes back much further.

Now, in the next 10 years or so, it is anticipated that autonomous vehicles operated by artificial intelligence will take to the roads in Ridgefield and elsewhere.

How this will affect traffic operations, traffic safety, parking, and other planning considerations remains to be seen.

Road Function

Address Vehicular Transportation Issues

POSSIBLE NEW GOAL STATEMENT

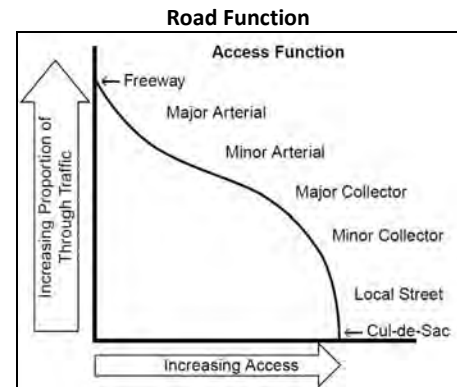
Provide a safe and efficient vehicular transportation network that meets the needs of the community.

The roadway system in Ridgefield is important in the day-to-day life of the community. This section of the POCD looks at the roadway system to ensure that it will continue to meet community needs, efficiently and cost effectively, into the future.

Road Form and Function

Ridgefield's system of public roads fulfills three basic functions:

- Primarily accessing individual properties (local roads),
- Conveying traffic from local roads to main roads (collector roads), and
- Primarily connecting Ridgefield to other areas (arterial roads).



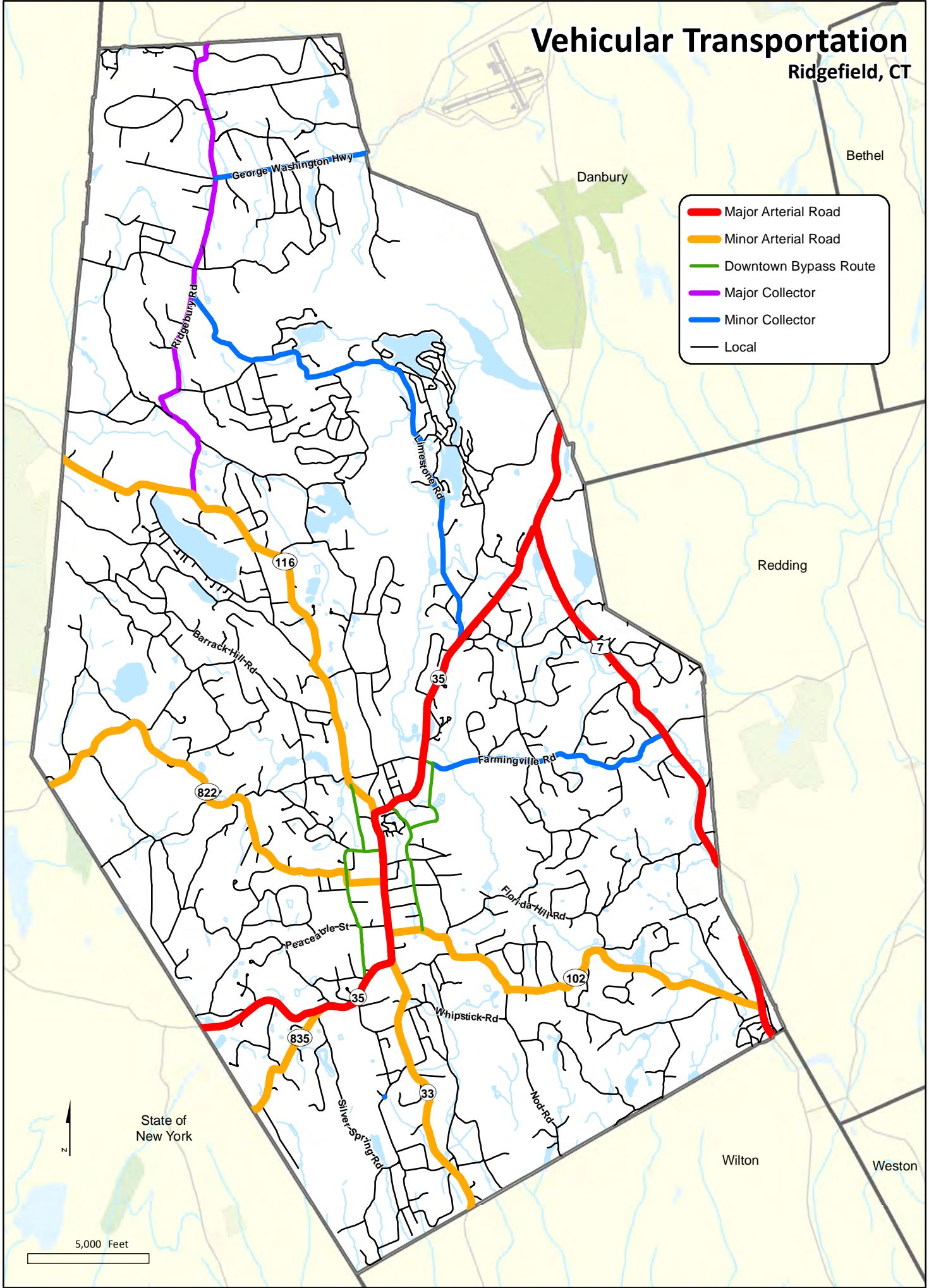
As shown on the map on the facing page, roads are categorized as follows:

Functional Class	Road	
Major Arterial Roads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Route 7 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Route 35
Minor Arterial Roads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Route 33 Route 102 Route 116 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Route 822 Route 835
Downtown Bypass Routes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grove Street East Ridge Street Ligi's Way 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High Ridge Avenue Gilbert Street New Street
Major Collector Roads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ridgebury Road 	
Minor Collector Roads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> George Washington Tpke. Limestone Road 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Farmingville Road Cairn's Hill Road
Local Roads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All other roads in Ridgefield 	

Vehicular Transportation

Ridgefield, CT

- Major Arterial Road
- Minor Arterial Road
- Downtown Bypass Route
- Major Collector
- Minor Collector
- Local



Roads And Character

The majority of Ridgefield's roads, laid out prior to today's engineering standards, are narrow, tree-lined, winding and/or steep.

These features contribute greatly to Ridgefield's character and require a careful balance between safety and roadway aesthetics when improvements are undertaken.

Traffic Operations / Safety

Traffic capacity and safety are an important consideration in the POCD. At certain times (hours, days, and/or months), high traffic volume and/or congestion can be evident in some locations. The Police Department is monitoring traffic accident locations and trends. Areas or locations which exhibit significant accident concentrations should be addressed by the Town or State as expeditiously as possible.

In recent years, the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CT-DOT) has been working with the Town to make improvements to Route 35 in Ridgefield Center to improve the operation of certain intersections (such as the reconfiguration of the intersection at Prospect Street / CVS driveway) and balance traffic capacity with on-street parking and pedestrian improvements.

Access Management

Roadway capacity is essentially fixed by the configuration of the roadway (number of lanes, etc.). Continuing to increase driveways, turning movements, and other potential impediments to traffic flow is one of the main causes of congestion and accidents. To help preserve traffic capacity on roadways and reduce accident potential, the Commission has adopted specific access management provisions in the Zoning Regulations Section 7.7). These provisions should be maintained.

in addition, there have been some access management studies conducted (all or parts of Route 7, Route 35, etc.) and these studies provide specific recommendations related maintaining the capacity of the roadway and reducing safety issues due to turning movements. The following studies are hereby incorporated into the POCD in order to help guide access management strategies along these major roadways:

- Route 35 Driveway and Curb Cut Management Plan (HVCEO, 2005), and
- Route 7 Transportation and Land Use Study, (SWRPA / HVCEO, 2011)

While these corridor plans only apply to Routes 7 and 35, principles of access management should be a consideration for all future development along all arterial and collector roads.

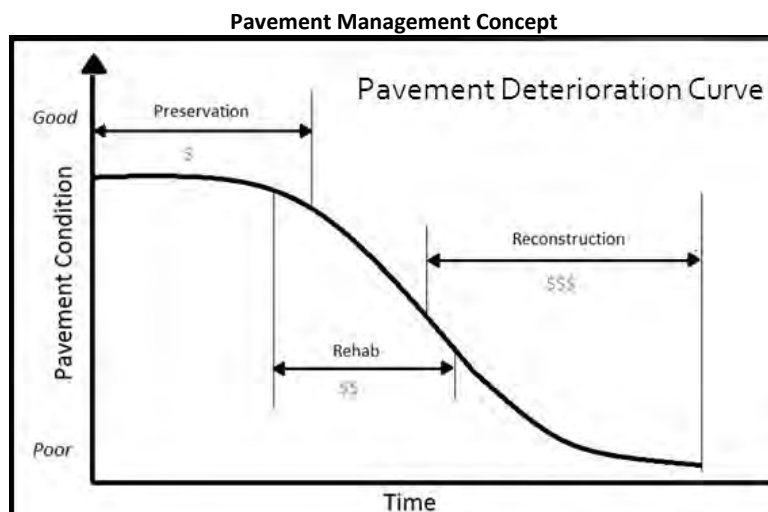
Pavement Management

The POCD recommends that Ridgefield continue to maintain roadway pavement as efficiently and economically as possible. Pavement has a useful life and it is cheaper to preserve pavement quality by on-going crack-sealing and chip-sealing activities rather than let a road deteriorate until it needs to be rebuilt.

While the Public Works Department used to revisit each road on a regular schedule to maintain the roads in adequate condition, this is no longer the case due to fewer available resources (staff, time, and money).

A number of communities have adopted a pavement management system to help track pavement condition, increase useful life, and fund maintenance in the most cost-effective manner. If pavement conditions are deteriorating over time, the tracking of pavement condition helps focus attention on the fact that reducing funding today increases the costs significantly in the future. Ridgefield should consider establishing a pavement management system so that the maintenance / deterioration of the road system can be tracked and monitored over time.

Studies over the years have shown that roadway pavement deteriorates in an “S-shaped” fashion and that minor expenditures up front (in the “preservation” phase) can avoid major expenditures later (in the “rehab” or “reconstruction” phases). Ridgefield should continue to implement and fund a long-term pavement management program. Overall, Ridgefield may not be devoting adequate funding to pavement management to avoid deterioration of the pavement and a larger cost in the future.



“Traffic Calming”

According to the Institute of Transportation Engineers, traffic calming is the “combination of mainly physical measures that reduce the negative effects of motor vehicle use, alter driver behavior and improve conditions for non-motorized street users. This can include:

- reducing or eliminating cut-through traffic,
- reducing or eliminating speeding,
- reducing accident incidence, and/or
- creating a safer environment for pedestrians and bicyclists.

“Traffic Calming”

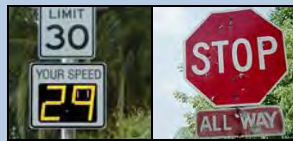
Due to the overall configuration of the road system, there are a number of situations in Ridgefield (especially near the Center) where traffic travels through local streets to get to other parts of the community. This is unfortunate since it can turn what was intended and built as a local street into the functional equivalent of a collector street (more traffic seeking to travel at higher speeds).

To counteract this, Ridgefield may wish to consider implementing “traffic calming” measures, *as appropriate*, along certain streets as a way to deter through traffic and manage it more effectively. Traffic calming should generally allow for through traffic provided it occurs in ways that are respectful of the nature of the local streets and abutting uses.

Sample Of Possible Traffic Calming Techniques



Awareness - A neighborhood meeting can raise awareness of the issue and involve residents in identifying possible approaches.



Signage – Signage informs motorists of acceptable speeds and/or behavior. Roads can be marked for “no trucks.” Unreasonably low speed limits are not recommended.



Speed Enforcement – Enforcement of speed limits and other traffic laws in neighborhoods can help slow traffic and help police learn when and where to focus their traffic calming efforts.



Narrowing Travel Lanes - Narrowing travel lane width can calm traffic. A constriction (choker, chicane, etc.) can also be effective although it can hamper snow plows and emergency response.



Mini-Roundabouts - A mini-roundabout is a street intersection feature which requires vehicles to slow down and navigate around the island in an intersection and yield to vehicles already in the roundabout.



Speed Bump / Hump – Temporary or permanent raised sections of roadway which can deter speeding and cut-through traffic. However, this can also create issues for snow plowing and emergency response.

Possible Strategies For 2020 POCD

A. Address Issues On Major Roadways

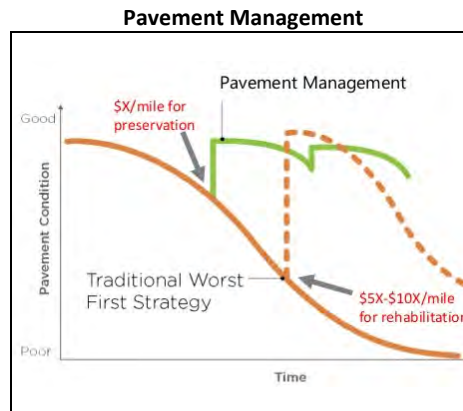
1. Continue to work with CTDOT and WestCOG in identifying and addressing traffic issues (congestion, accident concentrations, etc.) along main transportation corridors.
2. Implement effective access management strategies along major roadways in order to limit the number and size of driveways, share driveways, share parking areas, and improve traffic operations on the roadway while enhancing vehicular and pedestrian safety.

B. Address Issues On Town Roadways

1. As necessary, address safety and capacity issues on Town roadways in Ridgefield.
2. Continue to implement pavement management techniques on Town roads to reduce long-term maintenance costs.
3. Consider preparing and maintaining a formal pavement management plan (inventory, assessment, and recommendations) to monitor pavement condition and reduce long-term maintenance costs.
4. Consider implementing traffic calming to address traffic issues on local roads, in residential neighborhoods, and other areas, as appropriate.

Do these policies and action steps make sense for Ridgefield?

Are there any policies or action steps you feel should be added?



Norwalk River Valley Trail

The Norwalk River Valley Trail is a proposed 33 mile greenway trail system connecting Danbury to Long Island Sound in Norwalk.

This trail is being constructed in stages and several segments in Norwalk and Wilton have been completed and additional segments are in the planning and pre-construction phases.

Attention is now turning to Ridgefield and the first segment (referred to as “Ridgefield Ramble”) will be located on the east side of Route 7 and extend from Simpaug Turnpike to Fire Hill Road.

The entire trail will intersect with the Branchville Rail Trail near the Branchville Elementary School and this will be a significant amenity for the community and the region.

Ridgefield should continue to support the efforts to establish the entire Norwalk River Valley Trail system.

Promote Walking, Cycling & Transit

POSSIBLE NEW GOAL STATEMENT

Promote and support pedestrian, bicycle, transit, and other forms of transportation.

Promoting Pedestrianism and Accessibility

Parts of Ridgefield are very walkable and pedestrian activity is evident. In fact, Ridgefield Center has a “walk score” of 77 (due to proximity and variety of potential destinations) and the pedestrian-friendliness of this area helps attract shoppers and visitors. People often travel to the Center to walk and get exercise due to the wide sidewalks and attractive streetscape.

Still, Ridgefield can do more to maintain and enhance overall accessibility in the community for pedestrians and for mobility-impaired people:

- Maintain and enhance the sidewalk network in the Center (including crosswalks).
- Seek ways to improve the sidewalk network from the Center to Copps Hill (and even beyond to the Recreation Center / Senior Center).
- Seek to enhance and expand the sidewalk network in Branchville.
- Make sidewalk / crosswalk improvements to improve accessibility for mobility-impaired people (and for an aging population in general).

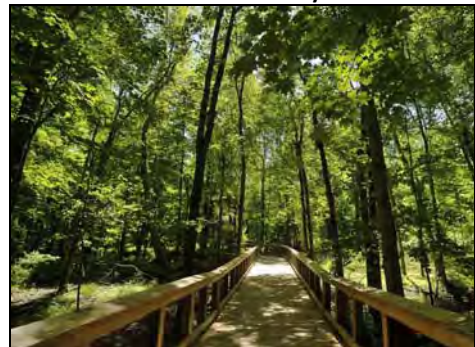
In outlying areas where sidewalks may not yet be practical, pedestrian trails provide opportunities to walk. Connecting destinations such as schools, recreational amenities and commercial areas with pathways should be encouraged.

The Norwalk River Valley Trail (Norwalk to Danbury) is an excellent example of efforts to create greenway trails which enhance the community and the region.

Pedestrian-Friendly Downtown



Norwalk River Valley Trail



Providing For Bicycle Usage

A number of roads in Ridgefield are not well configured for bicycle riders since they are narrow, have constricted shoulders, are steep, have speeding traffic, and/or have heavy traffic. Despite these impediments, on-road bicycle usage and interest is increasing in Ridgefield and elsewhere. Ridgefield also has a number of locations that accommodate off-road bicycle use.

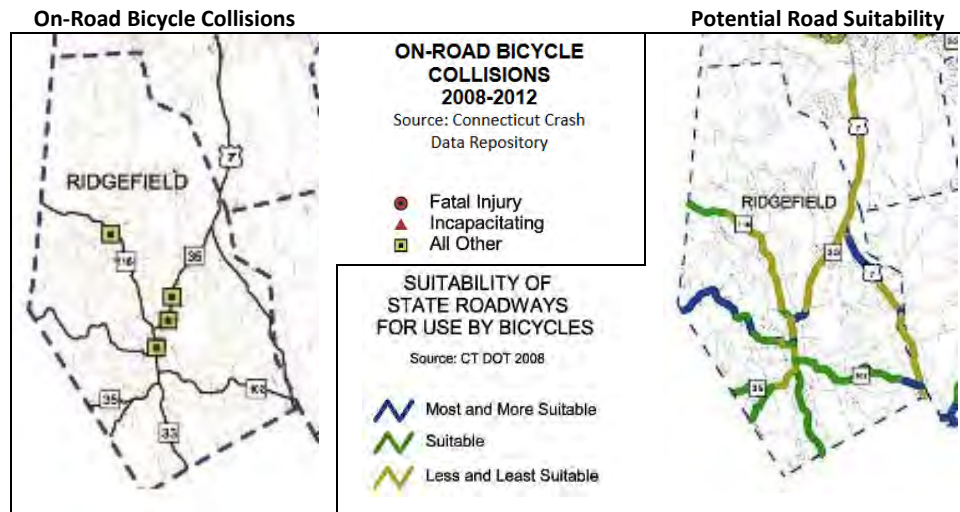
The POCD encourages safe, convenient, comfortable, and secure bicycle-riding environments and encourages bicycle use (on-road and off-road) as an important transportation mode and recreation activity. During the planning period, it would be beneficial if maps of on-road and off-road bicycle routes could be prepared and shared. A system of route markings or difficulty (color-coded or letter-coded on street name poles or stop sign poles) could also help people be comfortable navigating through parts of Ridgefield on bicycles. With the train station in Branchville, bicycle riders could come to Ridgefield from other areas and enjoy rides and the many amenities Ridgefield has to offer.

“Complete Streets”

The term “complete streets” refers to a new way of thinking about enhancing the overall transportation network. For years, roadways were treated as an area exclusively for vehicles. Now, communities around the country are using existing road rights-of-way to enable safe, convenient and comfortable travel and access for users of all ages and abilities regardless of their mode of transportation.

Regional, state and federal transportation agencies (and funding programs) have been turning their attention to “complete streets.”

Ridgefield may wish to consider adopting a “complete streets” policy. Doing so would show a commitment to improving non-vehicular transportation within the community and taking advantage of the transportation network already in place (existing roadways) to make provision for a wider variety of transportation modes than just focusing on vehicles.



On-Road Bicycle Use



Off-Road Bicycle Use



Enhancing Transit Services

Commuter Rail - The Branchville train station is located on the Metro-North Danbury Line and passenger rail service is available northwards to Danbury and southwards to Norwalk where passengers can connect to New Haven or to Stamford / New York City. Ridgefield residents also use stations (such as the Katonah station) on the Metro-North Hudson Line in New York State due to the more frequent and faster train service. The POCD recommends that Ridgefield continue to support service improvements on the Danbury Line and seek ways to improve and enhance the Branchville station.

Scheduled Bus / Shuttle Services – As part of their service within the Danbury region, Housatonic Area Regional Transit (HART) provides bus services in Ridgefield:

- Route 7 Link providing service between Danbury and Norwalk with three trips northbound and southbound in the morning and two trips north-bound and south-bound in the evening.
- Ridgefield-Katonah Shuttle (due to the more frequent trains on the Metro-North Hudson Line) with 8 trips to Katonah and four trips back in the morning and 6 trips to Katonah and 9 trips back in the evening.

Para-Transit – In addition, there is a SweetHART program for Ridgefield providing weekday dial-a-ride (paratransit) service for the elderly and disabled. The program provides door-to-door service. Usage of the program should be monitored since there may be a need to provide more vehicles and/or service more needs (residents, workers, commuters, other age groups) as Ridgefield's population ages.

Branchville Train Station



Route 7 Link



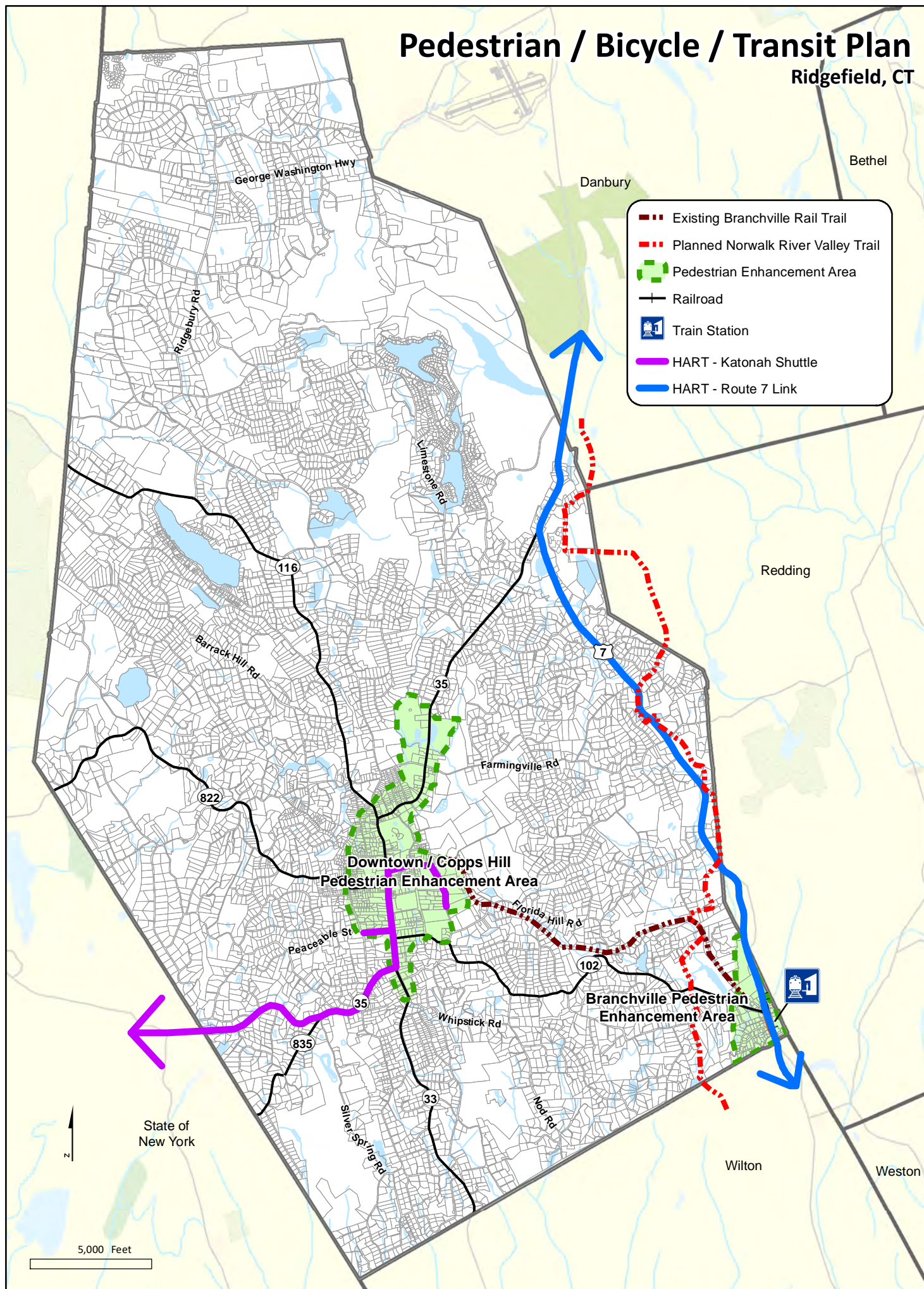
Katonah Shuttle



SweetHART Dial-A-Ride



Ridgefield, CT



Do these policies and action steps make sense for Ridgefield?

Are there any policies or action steps you feel should be added?

Possible Strategies For 2020 POCD

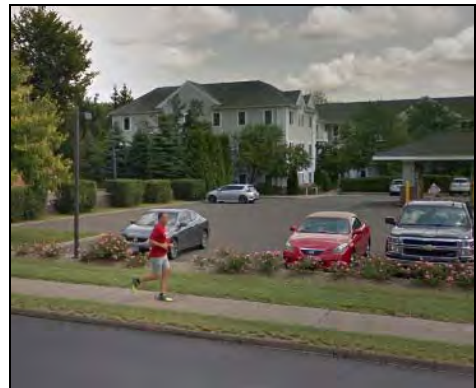
A. Promote Pedestrianism and Accessibility

1. Maintain and enhance overall accessibility in the community for pedestrians and for mobility-impaired people (and for an aging population in general).
2. Maintain and enhance the sidewalk network in the Center (including crosswalks).
3. Seek ways to extend the sidewalk network from the Center to Copps Hill (and even beyond to the Recreation Center / Senior Center).
4. Seek to enhance and expand the sidewalk network in Branchville.
5. Seek to enhance and expand the trail network in Ridgefield including the Branchville Rail Trail and the Norwalk River Valley Trail.
6. Continue to support the Norwalk River Valley Trail which will eventually extend from Norwalk to Danbury.
7. Promote pedestrian trails in outlying areas of Ridgefield where sidewalks may not yet be practical.
8. Encourage new development and redevelopment to provide pedestrian amenities (sidewalks and/or trails).
9. Consider adopting a “complete streets” policy in Ridgefield.

Sidewalk Users



Sidewalk User



B. Enhance Provisions For Bicycles

1.	Support accommodations and improvements which will enhance bicycle use in Ridgefield (on-road and off-road).
2.	Continue to educate cyclists and motorists about appropriate road use and etiquette.
3.	Prepare and share maps of on-road and off-road bicycle routes in Ridgefield.
4.	Investigate ways to create a system of signs and/or pavement markings to identify appropriate on-road (and off-road) bicycle routes in Ridgefield.
5.	Seek to enhance bicycle connections from the Branchville train station to other parts of Ridgefield.
6.	Continue to participate in regional bicycle planning efforts and seek to implement Ridgefield recommendations (such as those from the Greater Danbury Regional Bike Plan and successor documents prepared by WestCOG).
7.	Encourage new development and redevelopment to provide bicycle amenities.

C. Enhance Transit Services

1.	Continue to support rail service improvements on the Danbury Line and seek ways to improve and enhance the Branchville station (including parking).
2.	Continue to support fixed route bus services in Ridgefield (Route 7 Link and the Katonah Shuttle).
3.	Continue to support paratransit bus services in Ridgefield (such as the SweetHART “dial-a-ride”).
4.	Support the construction of bus shelters, bike racks, and benches at fixed route transit stops.
5.	Monitor the SweetHART “dial-a-ride” program since there may be a need to provide more vehicles and/or service more needs (residents, workers, commuters, other age groups) as Ridgefield’s population ages.

Sewer Service Areas

The map identifies different types of sewer service areas:

Existing Sewer Service Area
– areas where public sewer service generally exists at the present time.

Septic Monitoring Area– areas where water quality and septic system operations are being monitored in the event that sewerage may be necessary to address public health issues .

Potential Future Sewer Service Area– areas where sewer service may be investigated and/or provided for economic development purposes .

Planned Sewer Avoidance Area – areas not identified above where properties are expected to rely on on-site septic systems.

Address Utility Infrastructure

POSSIBLE NEW GOAL STATEMENT

Seek to ensure that adequate utility services are available to meet community needs.

In the POCD, utility infrastructure refers to utility services such as:

- piped utilities (sewer, water, storm drainage, and natural gas),
- wired utilities (electric, telephone, and cable), and
- wireless services (communications).

The availability and/or capacity of utility infrastructure should serve the needs of the community and the desired community structure. However, utility infrastructure should not, by itself, dictate community structure or density patterns.

Piped Infrastructure - Public Sewer

Sewer service is available in several key areas of Ridgefield:

- Service area #1 in Ridgefield Center (where a \$48 million upgrade to the wastewater treatment system to expand capacity to meet community needs for 20+ years, address nitrogen and phosphorous, address infiltration / inflow, etc. was approved by voters in 2018).
- Service area #2 in the Route 7/35 area (which is in the process of being connected to the treatment facility in service area #1).
- Service area #3 in the far northern section of Ridgefield (where effluent is treated in Danbury through an inter-local agreement).
- Boehringer-Ingelheim is connected directly to the Danbury sewer system (and is not shown as a “sewer service area” in Ridgefield).

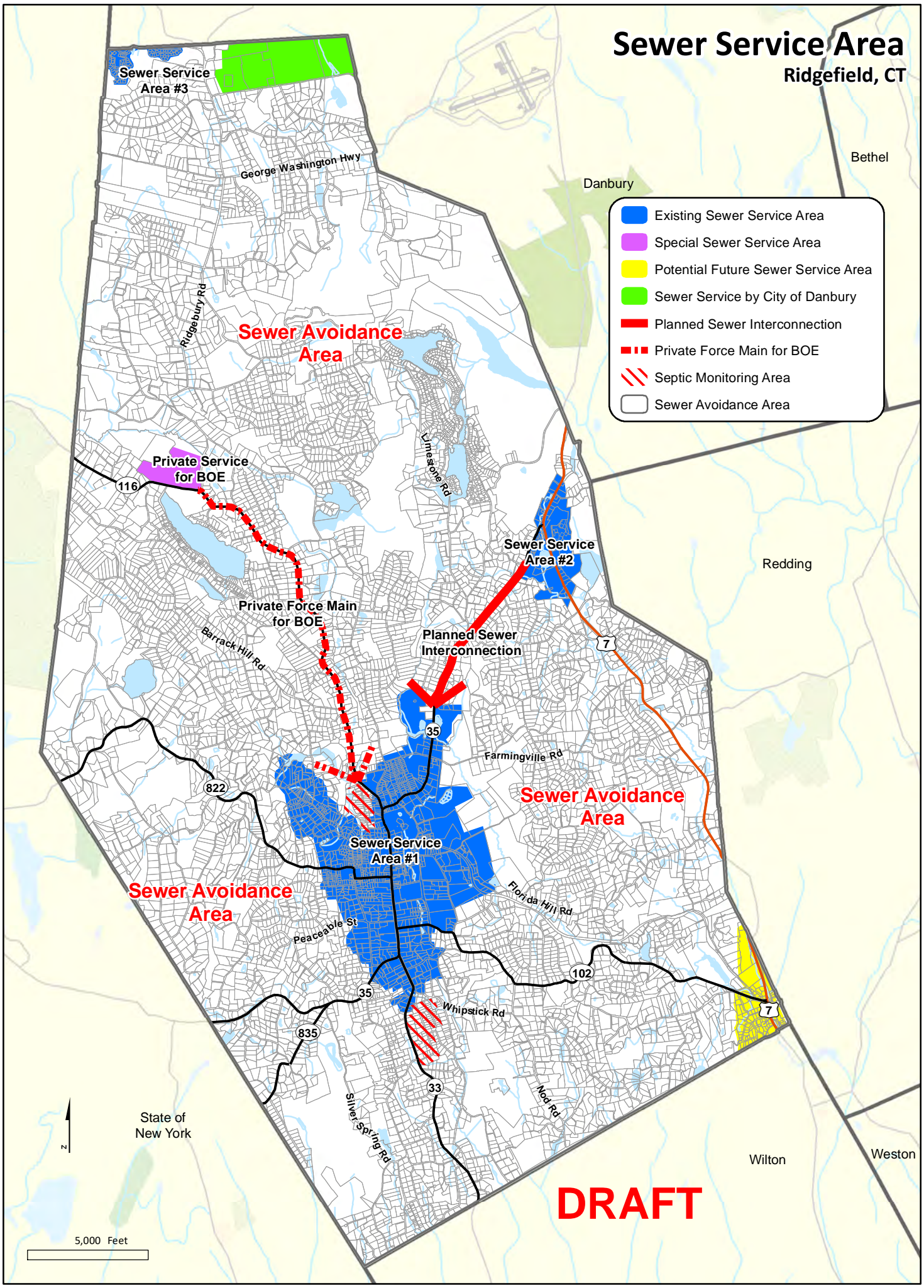
In addition to the above, there are several special situations of note:

- Ridgefield High School and Scott’s Ridge Middle School are part of service area #1 by virtue of a private sewer connection installed, owned, and maintained by the Board of Education.
- There are two areas (Soundview and Marcardon) where septic performance is being monitored and where sewer service (or an alternative approaches to addressing failed septic systems) may be proposed in the future to address public health issues.
- Future transit-oriented development in Branchville may require sewer service to accommodate potential growth and provision for wastewater treatment and discharge will need to be addressed (ground discharge, Ridgefield, Redding, Wilton, etc.)

Sewer Service Area

Ridgefield, CT

- Existing Sewer Service Area
- Special Sewer Service Area
- Potential Future Sewer Service Area
- Sewer Service by City of Danbury
- Planned Sewer Interconnection
- Private Force Main for BOE
- Septic Monitoring Area
- Sewer Avoidance Area

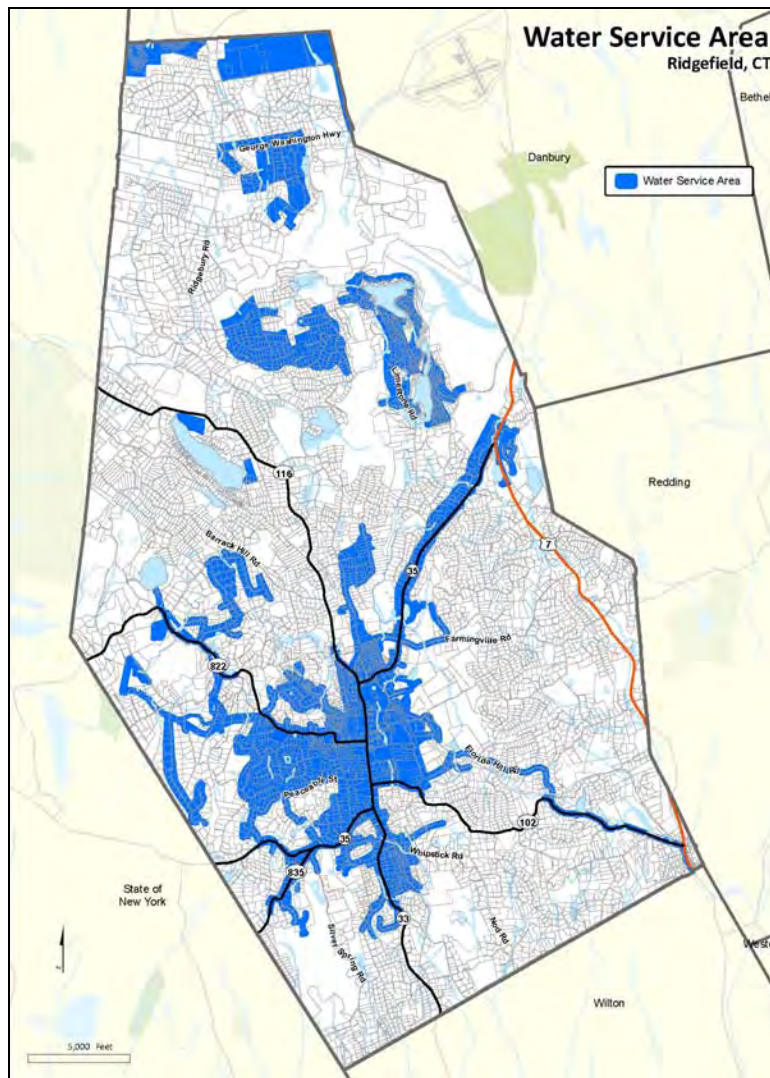


DRAFT

Piped Infrastructure - Public Water

Public water service in Ridgefield is provided primarily by Aquarion Water Company (recently acquired by Eversource). Over the past decade or so, Aquarion has acquired several smaller water companies that had been serving Ridgefield. Should there be a need or desire to expand water service to new areas of town, Aquarion has exclusive rights to provide water in areas in Ridgefield not currently served.

The water system is expected to be adequate during the planning period in terms of water quantity and water quality. Available information indicates that Aquarion has adequate water supply from its wellfields in Ridgefield (and from interconnections to adjacent water systems) to meet community needs through 2030 and beyond.



Piped / Other Infrastructure - Storm Drainage

Storm drainage is an important infrastructure issue and is becoming more visible to residents and property owners since climate change is producing more intense storms which can overwhelm the capacity of storm drainage systems installed in years past.

At the same time, there are increasing concerns about the quality and quantity of stormwater runoff and how to address it. The state and federal governments have established new standards for municipalities to address stormwater runoff (called “MS-4” regulations) and Ridgefield will need to do more in the future to comply with these standards

The best way to address these requirements is to implement “low impact development” (LID) techniques. These techniques, also referred to as “green infrastructure”, seek to:

- Capture stormwater as close as possible to where the raindrop falls,
- Clean the stormwater as much as possible using natural means (such as vegetation), and
- Infiltrate as much rainfall as possible back into the ground.

Ridgefield has made some progress in implementing LID and these efforts should be continued. In addition, Ridgefield should adopt update stormwater management regulations to provide appropriate standards and requirements.

Piped Infrastructure - Natural Gas

Natural gas service in Ridgefield is provided by Eversource (successor to Yankee Gas):

- Along Main Street in Ridgefield Center between Catoonah Street and the Copps Hill area.
- Along Route 7 from the Danbury line to just south of the Route 35 intersection.

Within these service areas, adequate natural gas supplies are expected to be available to meet future demands. New service connections can be accommodated for those in close proximity to the existing service area (the property owner generally pays for the extension). They do not expect to expand service to areas that are not in proximity to the current service area.

LID Approaches

Residential Rain Garden



Parking Lot Infiltration Basin



Street Lighting And LED

The conversion of street lights to LED lighting is an important consideration.

While the potential savings in electricity costs are significant, the “temperature” of the LED lights can have a significant impact on community character and even have negative environmental / health effects.

Ridgefield should strive to ensure that new or replacement LED lighting is rated at 3000 degrees Kelvin or similar standard.

Wired Infrastructure - Electricity

In this day and age, the electrical system consists of a generation component and a distribution component.

Electrical generation generally occurs elsewhere and is transmitted to Ridgefield. Solar, wind, and other localized generation is being deployed but is not widespread. Adequate electrical power is expected to be available in the future to meet the needs of local users and accommodate new technologies and uses (such as electric vehicles and electric charging stations).

Electrical distribution in Ridgefield is provided by Eversource (successor to Connecticut Light and Power or “CL&P”). Over the years, Eversource improved the reliability of its distribution service through equipment upgrades, tree trimming, and other approaches. Major storms and other events can still cause service disruptions but periodic tree trimming and other approaches have helped reduce power outages due to storms and other events.

Most of the distribution system in Ridgefield involves overhead wires although there are some areas where the electrical wires are contained in underground conduits. As service upgrades and renovations take place in the future, power lines should be placed underground to enhance community character, especially in Ridgefield Center and Branchville.

Wired Communications

Wired communication services (land-line telephone and cable communication) in Ridgefield are provided by Comcast / Xfinity and Frontier Communications.

Most people are now obtaining telephone, internet, and cable television service through “bundled services” from these providers. While wired communication service is adequate to meet the basic needs of residents, it is a key objective of Ridgefield to promote high speed / high capacity broadband service for all parts of the community. The Town should continue to work with providers to find ways to upgrade and improve the wired communications network.

Address Wireless Infrastructure

Most people are using mobile phones and other wireless devices (some people are relying exclusively on them) and the capacity of the wireless system is an important consideration. Residents and town officials have expressed concerns about gaps in wireless coverage. The Town should continue to work with providers to fill gaps in ways that have minimal impact on character (e.g., placing antenna on existing tall structures, careful placement to minimize impacts, etc.).

Overall, Ridgefield would like to support the improvement of wireless coverage throughout the community using the least visually obtrusive means possible. This can include “stealth” technologies and a transition to newer approaches which use smaller installations (with smaller service areas per installation) on existing utility poles in high usage areas.

**Common Tower
With No Camouflage**



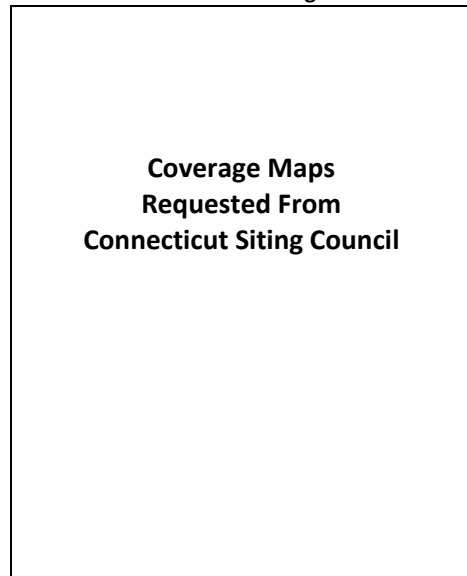
**Stealth Monopole
As Flagpole**



**Tower With
Tree-Type Camouflage**

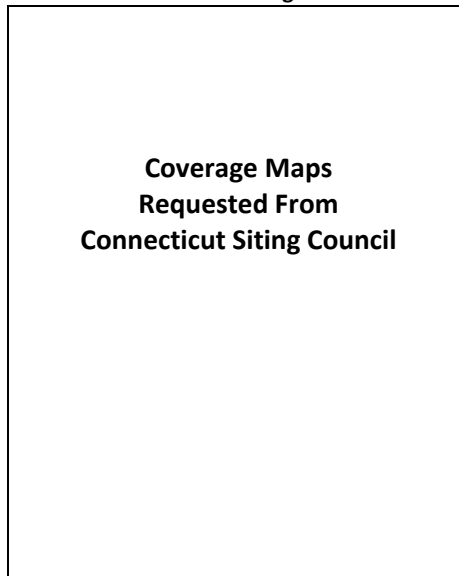


Cellular Coverage



**Coverage Maps
Requested From
Connecticut Siting Council**

PCS Coverage



**Coverage Maps
Requested From
Connecticut Siting Council**

Do these policies and action steps make sense for Ridgefield?

Are there any policies or action steps you feel should be added?

Possible Strategies For 2020 POCD

A. Use Utilities To Support Overall Structure

1. Guide and manage utility availability to support desired community structure and character and implement the recommendations of the POCD.

B. Address Piped Utility Services

PUBLIC SEWER

1. Maintain adequate sewer service to meet community needs within identified service areas.
2. Complete the improvements to sewer service area #1.
3. Continue to monitor the Soundview and Marcardon areas in order to address any future public health issues.
4. Investigate options for wastewater treatment and discharge for the Branchville area (ground discharge, Ridgefield, Redding, Wilton, etc.).
5. Continue to maintain sewer avoidance areas in other parts of Ridgefield.

PUBLIC WATER

6. Encourage the provision of adequate water service to meet community needs.

STORMWATER DRAINAGE

7. Continue to address stormwater drainage issues in Ridgefield and prepare for issues which may from more frequent and more intense storm events.
8. Continue to require the use of “low impact development” (LID) techniques.
9. Update the zoning regulations to incorporate LID standards and requirements as necessary to help address the quantity and quality of stormwater runoff.
10. Conduct a Town-wide drainage study to provide a comprehensive evaluation of drainage needs and issues within each drainage basin in Ridgefield.

NATURAL GAS

11. Encourage the provision of adequate natural gas service to meet community needs during the planning period.

C. Address Wired Utility Services

GENERAL	
1.	Continue to require underground utilities in all new development and explore opportunities to relocate wired utilities underground where opportunities arise.
2.	Work with utility companies to “balance” tree trimming with aesthetic and other concerns.
ELECTRICITY	
3.	Continue to work with Eversource to ensure adequate electric service and electrical reliability in Ridgefield.
4.	Continue to transition streetlights to LED streetlight technology while avoiding any negative character / environmental / health effects.
WIRED COMMUNICATION	
5.	Encourage the provision of adequate wired communication service (land line telephone, cable television, wired internet) to meet community needs.
6.	Promote provision of high speed internet access (enhanced broadband capacity) in Ridgefield for the benefit of businesses and residents.

Do these policies and action steps make sense for Ridgefield?

Are there any policies or action steps you feel should be added?

D. Address Wireless Utility Services

1.	Continue to work with telecommunication providers and the Connecticut Siting Council to provide for wireless services to fill local coverage gaps and meet local needs in the least visually intrusive manner.
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Notes & Comments

[illegible]

Planimetrics

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