A Strategic Plan for Old Saybrook's Thriving Local Economy

Town of Old Saybrook
Plan of Conservation and Development
July 2020
We believe that Old Saybrook is a wonderful community, which is why we choose to live or work here: one of us grew up here; one of us moved here to raise a family; and one of us moved here in retirement.

We also believe that Old Saybrook must respond to immediate and impending changes. This is why we volunteer to serve on Town commissions: two of us on the Planning Commission and one of us on the Economic Development Commission. It is also why we volunteered to serve as members of the Economic Development Strategy Group to write what we believe is a comprehensive strategic plan for economic development to guide our efforts over the next decade.

We worked together over the past two years to research current and anticipated conditions, strengths, challenges, and needs that will affect our community in the coming decade. The research included: analyzing state, regional and local existing conditions; gathering input from fellow community members; and reviewing existing plans, relevant studies and recommendations. From that research, we identified factors affecting the local economy that we can influence at the local level. We then formulated goals related to each factor and tactics to meet those goals. Our work is this Strategic Plan for a Thriving Local Economy.

We propose this plan as a guide for the Planning Commission, the Economic Development Commission and their partners to expand the local tax base. This Plan has three headings that follow the format of the Old Saybrook Plan of Conservation and Development:

- Our research into current and anticipated conditions is summarized by answering the question, “Where Are We?”
- After understanding the conditions, we articulate the goals we formulated by answering the question, “Where Are We Going?” or “Where Do We Want to Go?”; and
- We then prescribe implementable, measurable and “fresh” tactics including realistic programs to answer the question, “How do we get there?”.

Section 1: Economic Goals

Seven factors emerge as those we can influence at the local level. Old Saybrook demonstrates strengths and challenges within each factor when we examine them in the context of the local economy. This section of the Plan answers the question, “Where Are We Going?” with factor-specific economic strategies:

- Business & Industry—A Strong Business Sector that ensures Old Saybrook remains the regional commercial hub ......................... 8-9
- Employment—Empowered Employment offers workers skill development and sustainable compensation .......................... 10-11
- Transportation—Accessible Transportation provides reliable, safe, cost-effective, and efficient mobility options .................. 12-13
- Housing—Versatile Housing creates a variety of lifestyle options available and affordable for all residents ......................... 14-15
- Lifestyle—Vibrant Living enhances community, art, culture, and history ................................................................. 16-17
- Resilience—A Resilient Economy prepares to bounce back rapidly after disruption .......................... 18-19
- Sustainability—A Sustainable Saybrook meets today’s needs without compromising those of the future .......................... 20-21
Section 2: Business Areas

We examine how the seven factors affect nine business areas in Old Saybrook that differ and function as places unto themselves. Each makes a unique contribution to the local economy with enduring characteristics creating a place brand* and targeted marketing opportunities to attract development appropriate for each place. The Plan answers the question, “Where do we want to go?” with area-specific economic objectives:

- **Town Center**—A traditional New England Main Street in a charming seaside town ............................................................... 24-25
- **Saybrook Junction**—A center point connecting regional innovation districts ................................................................. 26-27
- **Research Parkway**—A concentration of entrepreneurial and industrial endeavors ......................................................... 28-29
- **Mariner’s Way**—A premiere destination for recreation, shopping, living and business .................................................... 30-31
- **Ferry Point**—A hub of the Connecticut River’s maritime economy .................................................................................. 32-33
- **Middlesex Turnpike**—A commercial corridor and gateway to Old Saybrook and the Lower Connecticut River Valley .... 34-35
- **Saybrook Point**—A picturesque, historic waterfront where the Connecticut River meets Long Island Sound .......... 36-37
- **School House**—A center of education, workforce training and industry ........................................................................ 38-39
- **Spencer Plain**—A unique mix of retail shopping, dining and living less than half a mile from Interstate 95 ................. 40-41

Bringing together functional and geographic aspects of economic development in the Strategic Plan makes for a comprehensive approach in implementation. From here, as goals evolve and objectives adapt...our local economy will thrive.

This Plan replaces the 2006 Economic Development section of the Old Saybrook Plan of Conservation & Development, as well as the previously adopted Town Image and Town Center sections of the Town Plan.

This long-range plan was prepared generally prior to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. This matter is addressed in the Business Resiliency section of this document. Should that pandemic last for an extended period, than changes are likely to be needed to this document to reflect the same.

The Economic Development Strategy Group

Matthew Pugliese, Selectman, Economic Development Commission
Thomas Cox, Chairman, Planning Commission
Kathleen Sugland, Member, Planning Commission

* A compendium of terms as used in this Plan is included at the back.
Section 1: **Economic Goals**

**Strong Business Sector** .......................................................... 8-9
...to extend the tourist season.
...to retain a diverse base of businesses.
...to attract new businesses to build strong industry clusters.
...to protect and nurture cottage Industries, agriculture, and aquaculture.

**Empowered Employment** .................................................. 10-11
...to retain and grow successful local businesses that provide quality long-term employment opportunities.
...to increase jobs that provide financial security.
...to align workforce development with the talent needs of growing and emerging industries.

**Accessible Transportation** ................................................ 12-13
...to champion aesthetically landscaped complete streets and connections.
...to support Transit-Oriented Development (TOD).
...to encourage smart commuting and alternative transportation options for visitors.

**Versatile Housing** ............................................................. 14-15
...to develop housing that fits the lifestyles of young workers and residents entering retirement.
...to increase attainable housing options that are permanent, safe, affordable and conveniently located.
...to encourage sustainable practices in housing development.

**Vibrant Living** ........................................................................ 16-17
...to connect residents, workers and visitors to nature, culture and history.
...to increase equity and inclusion among all community members.
...to enhance a sense of place with arts and cultural activities and places.
...to expand and promote recreation opportunities.

**Resilient Economy** .............................................................. 18-19
...to provide adequate capacity for expected growth outside of natural hazard areas.
...to continue to study risks and to plan for impacts of natural hazards and changing climate conditions.
...to mitigate against disaster to allow rapid recovery and continuity in business operations.

**A Sustainable Saybrook** ...................................................... 20-21
...to improve community life by appreciating diversity and cultural contributions and committing to equity.
...to create economic value by encouraging sustainable business practices.
...to support remediation and redevelopment of former industrial brownfield properties.
Section 2: Business Areas

Town Center ................................................................. 24-25
A traditional New England Main Street in a charming seaside town
...for TOD investment and an enhanced pedestrian experience that attracts residents, visitors and businesses.

Saybrook Junction Innovation Intersection .............. 26-27
A center point connecting regional innovation districts
...to attract entrepreneurs from Innovation Districts and to support Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) to attract talent and build business density.

Research Parkway ...................................................... 28-29
A concentration of entrepreneurial and industrial endeavors
...for a better connection from Research Parkway to the Town Center and to promote its role as an entrepreneurial center.

Mariner’s Way ............................................................. 30-31
A place for in-town living, recreation, and business destinations
...for "lifestyle destinations" that could not succeed but for the proximity of Mariner’s Way to Old Saybrook’s transportation network, town center or water resources.

Ferry Point Marina District ........................................ 32-33
A hub of the Connecticut River’s maritime economy
...for “adaptive infill” that supports marine-related activities and businesses that attract visitors by boat and land-based modes of transportation.

Middlesex Turnpike ..................................................... 34-35
A path to the historic and cultural attractions of Connecticut’s lower river valley
...to create an inviting gateway to Old Saybrook, strengthen and expand existing business clusters that thrive in the corridor, attract new industries, and enhance recreation opportunities for residents and visitors.

Saybrook Point .......................................................... 36-37
A picturesque, historic waterfront where the Connecticut River meets Long Island Sound
...for increasing tourism during the fall, winter and spring to enjoy Saybrook Point and to redevelop underperforming properties as destinations that attract visitors year round.

School House ............................................................. 38-39
...to support workforce and business development in a location with diverse retail and housing options to create a thriving campus-like neighborhood.

Spencer Plain ............................................................ 40-41
A unique mix of retail shopping, dining and living less than half a mile from Interstate 95
...for “experience-driven design” that anchors and blends uses at the Spencer Plain gateway.
Economic Goals—Overview

A thoughtful and adaptable plan assures Old Saybrook will maximize its ability to reach economic development goals by focusing on the factors it has the ability to influence at the local level.
Economic Goals—Overview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHERE ARE WE?</th>
<th>WHERE ARE WE GOING?</th>
<th>HOW DO WE GET THERE?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FACTORS</td>
<td>STRATEGY</td>
<td>GOALS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Economic Development concerns the well-being of people and their quality of life.

The overall well-being and quality of life in Old Saybrook are highly rated. With careful planning, the Town can maintain and improve the well-being and quality of life for all members of the community. A thoughtful and adaptable plan assures the Town will maximize its impact on the factors it has the ability to influence at the local level. The Town can impact the following factors that contribute to the well-being and quality of life for members of the community.

**Business & Industry** — A commercial sector that provides a strong commercial tax base, employment opportunities, and the availability of a variety of goods & services.

**Employment** — Jobs that sustain individuals and families.

**Transportation** — Mobility options that offer alternatives to the single-occupancy vehicle.

**Housing** — Housing options at a variety of price points to meet the housing needs of a diverse population.

**Lifestyle** — Arts, culture and heritage woven into everyday experiences that enrich and celebrate the community.

**Resilience** — An ability to prepare for and recover quickly from natural and man-made disruptions.

**Sustainability** — Environmental, community and economic security over the long-term.

With improving Economic Development as a goal, it is the Town's strategy to...

…to enhance and improve the economic well-being and quality of life for all members of the Old Saybrook community.

The Town will focus on the seven factors it has the ability to impact in order to continually improve the well-being and quality of life for all of its community members.

The Town sets these goals to influence the factors that affect economic development in Old Saybrook....

**A Strong Business Sector** that ensures Old Saybrook remains the regional commercial hub providing jobs, goods, and services

**Empowered Employment** that offers workers continual skill development, advancement opportunities and sufficient income to meet housing, food, health care and transportation needs without risk of falling into poverty

**Accessible Transportation** that provides a variety of reliable, safe, cost-effective, and efficient mobility options for people to use to get to work, school, shop and recreate

**Versatile Housing** that creates a variety of lifestyle options available and affordable to all residents

**Vibrant Living** that enriches the lives of everyone who lives, works or visits Old Saybrook by: enhancing the sense of community; supporting local arts and culture; and preserving the heritage and character that defines Old Saybrook

**A Resilient Economy** that enables the business community to rapidly restore operations after disruptions

**A Sustainable Saybrook** that meets today's needs without compromising those of the future
Strong Business Sector

A Strong Businesses Sector ensures Old Saybrook remains the regional commercial hub.
Where are we?

Old Saybrook serves as the commercial hub of the central Connecticut shoreline.

Diversity—Old Saybrook is proud to be a “beach town” with its tourism industry flourishing every summer as visitors flock here by boat, car, and train to enjoy miles of coastline along the Connecticut River and Long Island Sound. Although the end of the summer season brings a slow-down in tourism, year-round retail, restaurants, services, recreation and entertainment draw residents from the region, which has made Old Saybrook the commercial hub of the central shoreline. A variety of other industries strengthen the local economy including bioscience, robotics, digital media, e-commerce and advanced manufacturing operations, 25 of which have enjoyed over $32 million in contracts with the DOD since 2000.

Growth—Since 2015, at least half a dozen Connecticut-based companies have recognized the growth opportunity of opening a branch location in Old Saybrook. Home-based cottage industries, agriculture and aquaculture businesses can grow because of Old Saybrook’s role as a regional commercial hub and central location for access to regional markets within Connecticut and along the Northeast Corridor to Canada.

Leverage—Innovators and entrepreneurs in emerging industries such as bioscience, robotics, digital media, e-commerce and advanced manufacturing find Old Saybrook a welcome alternative to nearby cities due to its low municipal tax rate, well-educated workforce, and incomparable central location. Working with the Chamber of Commerce and using these attributes and examples of businesses choosing Old Saybrook as their HQ do and will continue to help attract more innovators and entrepreneurs in these industries.

Where are we going?

With a Strong Business Sector as a goal for Old Saybrook, it is the Town’s strategy…

…to extend the tourist season. September may bring the end of the summer season, but the beaches, hiking trails, biking paths, birding, boating, The Kate, retail and restaurants are accessible to visitors year-round. The Town will seize these opportunities to increase tourism beyond the summer to attract visitors to enjoy activities in and the beauty of Old Saybrook throughout the year.

…to retain a diverse base of businesses. Although hidden from the main thoroughfares, bio-science, advanced manufacturing, robotics, digital media, e-commerce and marine-related industries thrive here. Further strengthening and diversifying the local business sector will ensure Old Saybrook’s economy remains strong into the future. The Town will nurture these businesses to ensure their continued success.

…to attract new businesses to build strong industry clusters. Compatible businesses located in clusters create an ecosystem that draws talent and generates innovation in a self-perpetuating cycle. Attracting new businesses to town that are compatible with the existing industry base will strengthen those industries and enhance economic activity. Therefore, the Town will actively recruit businesses compatible with the existing industry base.

…to protect and nurture cottage industries, agriculture, and aquaculture. Home, land and water based businesses provide access to fresh and unique products; preserve open space and habitats; celebrate historical and cultural systems; and provide tourism opportunities. The Town will protect the natural resources needed for these entrepreneurial endeavors and provide an environment in which these industries and complementary businesses will thrive.

How do we get there?

The Town prescribes these tactics as its plan for the next decade:

Business Attraction—Focus attraction efforts on businesses or entrepreneurs seeking the benefits of Old Saybrook’s location and vibrant lifestyle.

Business Growth—Ensure businesses are aware of local and state support resources that foster growth, such as free counseling and workforce development.

Business Retention—Talk with business owners regularly to respond to their needs. Celebrate their contributions to the town’s economic health and quality of life.

Foreign Trade Zone—Encourage FTZ site activation for exporters, importers, manufacturers or 3rd party logistics firms.

Link To Academia—Partner public/private academic institutions to support local industry with product/workforce development.

Partner With The Chamber—Work with and support the Old Saybrook Chamber of Commerce.

Permitting—Expedite processes for business start-up/expansion, especially for low impact development (LID).

Revitalization Incentives—Use tax increment financing (TIF) or other tools to encourage private investment in adaptive reuse, transit improvements, facade updates, or commercial blight remedy.

Technology—Ensure business areas have advanced technology infrastructure.
Empowered Employment

Empowered Employment offers workers skill development and sustainable compensation.
### Where are we?

**Local companies offer more than jobs; they create careers with sustainable wages and benefits that allow employees to thrive in our community.**

**Options**—The local business community offers employment options in a variety of industries. Tourism, the largest local industry, provides jobs in hotels, restaurants, retail and local attractions. Tucked away in business parks and industrial areas throughout town are advanced manufacturing, bio-medical, robotics, media, e-commerce, and healthcare industries providing employment for workers with a variety of skills. Currently, some employers respond to the tight labor market by increasing wages to attract talent, but that is not true for lower skill positions in the service sector.

**Security**—It is estimated that jobs in Old Saybrook are meeting the financial needs of about two-thirds of those who are employed. But, for close to one third of the Old Saybrook workforce, their jobs leave them below the ALICE* threshold. The Middlesex County United Way’s ALICE Report brings attention to this portion of our local population that is employed but not financially secure and thus needing opportunities to improve their situation.

**Empowerment**—Among Old Saybrook’s most valuable assets is its dynamic workforce. Continual investment in worker education and skill development offers economic empowerment. By responding to the hiring needs of employers, we align our education and training investments to ensure our labor force’s competencies remain competitive within the company and industry in which they work.

---

### Where are we going?

**With Empowered Employment as a goal for Old Saybrook, it is the Town’s strategy...**

—*to retain and grow successful local businesses that provide quality long-term employment opportunities.* Old Saybrook’s role as the shoreline’s commercial hub rests upon successful, long-term businesses that provide for the needs of the region. The Town will strive to support the continued success and growth of these enterprises as well as the attraction of new businesses in emerging industries so they may continue to provide employment opportunities for community members.

—*to increase jobs that provide financial security.* To mitigate the potential for financial crisis among those community members whose earnings are below the ALICE threshold, the Town’s business recruitment efforts will focus on attracting businesses that create a variety of jobs with wages high enough to provide financial security through full-time, long-term employment for community members.

—*to align workforce development with the talent needs of growing and emerging industries.* The workforce is aging across Connecticut and the unemployment rate is low. The manufacturing and trades industries struggle to fill jobs as workers retire. Emerging industries require specialized skills in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) fields. The Town will address the current and impending labor shortfall by supporting programs that help train job seekers, especially unemployed and under-employed individuals, preparing workers to fill job vacancies.

### How do we get there?

**The Town prescribes these tactics as its plan for the next decade:**

**Business Recruitment**—Increase employment opportunities by identifying growing and innovation-based businesses, and recruit them to open operations in or relocate to Old Saybrook.

**Business Retention**—Talk with business owners regularly to understand their evolving talent needs; recognize businesses providing diverse, sustainable, year-round living wage employment; and assist retiring small business owners with succession planning so their business continues and retains existing jobs after the owner’s transition to retirement.

**Incubation & Co-Working Space**—Develop space to support and attract small businesses and entrepreneurs.

**Livable Employment**—Attract industry offering full-time, long-term, or year-round jobs beyond the ALICE threshold.

**Training-To-Jobs Pipeline**—Work with schools and local agencies to connect students and adults with training programs to develop the skill sets identified to fill local job vacancies.

**Workforce Capacity Assessment**—Inventory employment opportunities; assess factors of participation; and identify training for industry skill demand.
Accessible Transportation

Accessible Transportation provides reliable, safe, cost-effective, and efficient mobility options.
**Old Saybrook's economy runs on its marinas, highways, roads, rail, sidewalks, bikeways and trails.**

**Completing**—The Town has been improving streets to provide safer travel for users of all ages and abilities, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders in response to growing demand for a greater variety of safe, healthy and sustainable transportation options. Sidewalk projects, especially, create new connections between neighborhoods, Town Center and other areas of town. These initiatives connect residents to goods and services, workers to employment and visitors to points of interest.

**Commuting**—Old Saybrook embraces the movement away from gas-powered vehicles toward more healthy and sustainable commuting options. The new 200 car parking lot adjacent to the train station and Saybrook Junction positions Old Saybrook to accommodate more AMTRAK and Shoreline East riders traveling to points along the entire Eastern Seaboard. Public and commuter bus services provide travel alternatives to single-occupancy vehicles.

**Connecting**—Demand for Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) is leading to the creation of walkable, vibrant, mixed-use business areas connected to transit hubs throughout Connecticut. The successful leasing of 186 apartments at Saybrook Station on North Main Street adjacent to the train station demonstrates the demand for housing in Old Saybrook that connects residents to rail service and Town Center. Nearby amenities—retail, office, recreation and civic uses—round out TOD for the convenience of residents, commuting workers and visitors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Where are we?</th>
<th>Where are we going?</th>
<th>How do we get there?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>STRENGTH</strong></td>
<td><strong>STRATEGY</strong></td>
<td><strong>ACTION</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With Access to Transportation as a goal for Old Saybrook, it is the Town's strategy…

…to champion aesthetically landscaped complete streets and connections. A policy of “complete streets” formalizes the Town's strong commitment to the public health and economic benefits of streets that serve pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders and motorists of all ages and abilities. Going a step further to aesthetically landscape our complete streets will create an attractive thoroughfare for all users and demonstrate the Town's commitment to preserving its character. For new and retrofitted projects, the Town will identify mobility and transportation barriers for all members of the community such as economic means, physical ability, age, or geographic location within the town, plan solutions to overcome these barriers, and improve the aesthetics of Route 1 within rights-of-way and between Old Saybrook and other towns.

…to support Transit-Oriented Development (TOD). Areas within one mile of Old Saybrook's train station provide TOD opportunities including multi-family housing coupled with commercial space. A market feasibility study completed for the Mariner’s Way Discovery + Action Plan (MW-D+AP) project indicated sufficient regional demand for another 330 apartments within walking distance of the train station. The Town will support redevelopment efforts to serve both the state's TOD focus and local demand for the TOD lifestyle.

…to encourage smart commuting and alternative transportation options for visitors. Old Saybrook enjoys access to both AMTRAK and Shoreline East rail service in addition to public bus service for commuters and visitors. Improving connections between the train station and marinas, beaches and other points of interest, and promoting public transit options will increase use of these services by commuters and attract visitors to explore, eat, shop and stay. The Town will offer information, encouragement, and incentives to help commuters and visitors choose alternatives to the single-occupancy vehicle.

The Town prescribes these tactics as its plan for the next decade:

**Commuter Options**—Promote rail/bus service and highway commuter lots along the shoreline and points north; add EV charging stations to public parking areas.

**Landscaped Complete Streets**—Implement the 2015 Tri-Town Route 1 Study’s “complete street” for all users with landscaping improvements along the entire length of the Route 1 corridor.

**Evolving Mobility Team**—Audit the inclusivity of all transportation offerings and the ability to support infrastructure needs of potential future modes.

**First/Last Mile Connection**—Continue to make mobility connections for rail users; extend 9-Town Transit service.

**Footbridge**—Build a footbridge over the freight track between Saybrook Junction and Research Parkway.

**LIS Ferry**—Grow ferry service to serve passengers between Old Saybrook–Plum Island–Orient Point, NY.

**Loop Roads**—Construct sidewalks, parking and bike lanes on streets that return near their start in the Ferry Pt., Research Pkwy. and Saybrook Pt.

**Right-Size Parking**—Continue to customize parking requirements where possible; exact fees in lieu of parking.

**Small Harbor Dredging**—Sustain use of our harbors, waterways and marinas.

**Wayfinding, Parking & Self-Guided Tours**—Direct travelers to points of interest and public parking. Develop digital self-guided tours.
Versatile Housing

Versatile Housing creates a variety of lifestyle options available and affordable for all residents.
Old Saybrook’s housing stock has adapted to emerging needs and preferences.

**Varied**—Changing demographics and challenges in affordability have resulted in an expanded mix of housing options. Pockets of compact growth offer walkable neighborhoods and transit-oriented development. Demand continues to shift toward smaller, multi-unit dwellings or continuum of care centers within walking distance of entertainment, restaurants, shopping, employment and public transportation hubs. A 2017 review of market capacity for rentals indicated demand for an additional 330 units in the local region.

**Attainable**—Permanent housing helps people stabilize their lives by eliminating the financial and emotional stress of frequent moves thus allowing people to focus on other basic needs such as education and employment. Affordable housing options with access to public transportation hubs, employment opportunities and nearby amenities are a necessity for many rather than a lifestyle choice. Over the last decade, Old Saybrook has seen an increase in its affordable housing (2.6% of the housing stock). However, Youth and Family Services observe significant growth in the need for attainable housing over the same period, which the housing stock does not currently support.

**Sustainable**—When applied to housing, sustainability pertains to emotional and physical safety. To meet both needs, Old Saybrook encourages development of housing that attracts a broad demographic to create a welcoming, diverse, supportive community and increase the use of sustainable products and building techniques to protect the environment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STRENGTH</th>
<th>STRATEGY</th>
<th>ACTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Where are we?</strong></td>
<td><strong>Where are we going?</strong></td>
<td><strong>How do we get there?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Old Saybrook’s housing stock has adapted to emerging needs and preferences.</strong></td>
<td>With Versatile Housing as a goal for Old Saybrook, it is the Town’s strategy...</td>
<td>The Town prescribes these tactics as its plan for the next decade:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Varied</strong>—Changing demographics and challenges in affordability have resulted in an expanded mix of housing options. Pockets of compact growth offer walkable neighborhoods and transit-oriented development. Demand continues to shift toward smaller, multi-unit dwellings or continuum of care centers within walking distance of entertainment, restaurants, shopping, employment and public transportation hubs. A 2017 review of market capacity for rentals indicated demand for an additional 330 units in the local region.</td>
<td>...to develop housing that fits the lifestyle demands of young workers and residents entering retirement. Meeting the unmet demand in this housing market will attract both empty nesters wanting to downsize within their community as well as young adults seeking a walkable lifestyle. Mariner’s Way West, Main Street, and Spencer Plain at Boston Post Road are business areas where this type of housing could thrive. <strong>To meet demand, the Town will encourage multi-unit, mixed-use redevelopment near entertainment, restaurants, shopping, employment opportunities and public transportation hubs to offer a walkable lifestyle.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Central Efficiency</strong>—Expand opportunities to fill gaps in the Town Center by increasing building height for a mix of uses at a density that supports walkable/bikeable development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Attainable</strong>—Permanent housing helps people stabilize their lives by eliminating the financial and emotional stress of frequent moves thus allowing people to focus on other basic needs such as education and employment. Affordable housing options with access to public transportation hubs, employment opportunities and nearby amenities are a necessity for many rather than a lifestyle choice. Over the last decade, Old Saybrook has seen an increase in its affordable housing (2.6% of the housing stock). However, Youth and Family Services observe significant growth in the need for attainable housing over the same period, which the housing stock does not currently support.</td>
<td>...to increase attainable housing options that are permanent, safe, affordable and conveniently located. Ensuring lifetime residents can retire in Old Saybrook and workers at a variety of income levels, especially the ALICE population, can afford to live here enhances the quality of life for all. <strong>To accomplish this, the Town will increase the variety of housing options and prices within walking distance of the train station, employment opportunities, and neighborhood services.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Housing Authority</strong>—Assess housing needs and address housing gaps while promoting equity, self-sufficiency and neighborhood revitalization; consider creation of a housing authority.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sustainable</strong>—When applied to housing, sustainability pertains to emotional and physical safety. To meet both needs, Old Saybrook encourages development of housing that attracts a broad demographic to create a welcoming, diverse, supportive community and increase the use of sustainable products and building techniques to protect the environment.</td>
<td>...to encourage sustainable practices in housing development. We are just beginning to understand the potential challenges of climate change, sea level rise and extreme weather events on the built environment. As the town addresses the need for housing security by providing a greater variety of housing options and prices, the Town will also ensure developments meet the highest standards of safety and encourage greater use of sustainable products and techniques in building to minimize negative environmental impacts and improve physical resilience.</td>
<td><strong>Housing Options</strong>—Encourage creation of multi-unit housing integrated into walkable neighborhoods to fill the gap in housing options.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Live/Work Lofts</strong>—Integrate uses in live/work units for occupations benefiting from proximity to a specific setting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Pedestrian Node</strong>—Allow a mix of uses at intersections with Route 1 to encourage street-oriented development that includes accessory and affordable apartments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Senior Lifestyle</strong>—Support continuum of care/assisted living development along with associated amenities and services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Sustainable Building</strong>—Incentivize green design with density allowances.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Transit-Oriented Development</strong>—Permit high-density mixed-uses in the business areas within walking/biking distance of Saybrook Jct. transit facility.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Vibrant Living enhances community, art, culture, recreation and history.
Old Saybrook creates a vibrant, supportive community by connecting people to each other, to art, to culture, to nature and to our local heritage. 

**Preserved**—Respecting and preserving the history and cultures of all people who have called Old Saybrook home, from before colonization to more recent immigrants, creates a sense of shared experience. Similarly, protecting the natural ecosystem that sustains us is recognized as a shared responsibility. These principles shape municipal policies, volunteer efforts and community commitments, as well as encourage investment by supportive businesses as they develop or grow, drawing residents and other patrons to places and offerings in the community. 

**United**—Public, private, not-for-profit and community sectors partner to shape the physical and social character of Old Saybrook’s walkable, iconic town center around arts and cultural activities. The Town thrives because its center unites people— with history, with goods and services, with transportation, with employment, and with each other. There is a mix of complementary community activities and services, such as housing, retail, food and public spaces that are enhanced through strategic linking to the town’s arts and culture as a central feature. 

**Engaged**—Residents and visitors engage in and contribute to the vibrant lifestyle and creative places found in Old Saybrook. An active life that includes recreation and entertainment for all demographics changes with the seasons to stimulate interest year-round. Volunteers sustain civic organizations and municipal operations including a Volunteer Fire Department. A strong commitment to community also brings residents, students and businesses together to provide multiple support systems when needs arise among fellow community members. 

With Vibrant Living as a goal for Old Saybrook, it is the Town’s strategy... 

...to connect residents, workers and visitors to nature, culture and history. A connection becomes more than a route from one point to another when it offers an enjoyable, enriching experience. The addition of seating, digital “way points” of interest or public art displays are simple enhancements to new and existing pathways. The Town will create more walkable connections throughout the town leading past natural, cultural or historic places via walkways and bikeways. 

...to increase equity and inclusion among all community members. Mutual appreciation and understanding leads to better connections, stronger respect, and vibrant lifestyles within a community. The Town will promote equity (i.e. fairness and impartiality) for, and understanding of, all community members by inviting them to share their perspectives, histories, stories, skills and needs to enrich Old Saybrook’s quality of life overall. 

...to enhance a sense of place with arts and cultural activities and places. Public art contributes to making spaces vibrant and interesting for residents and visitors. It expresses different perspectives on common experiences and encourages greater understanding of others. The Town will work strategically with diverse partners to use arts and culture to shape the physical and social character of the town, to spur economic development, to promote enduring social change, and to improve the physical environment. 

...to expand and promote recreation opportunities. Recreation benefits the body and mind, but also provides economic benefits, creating places that are vital and fun, where people want to live and visit. The Town will look for deficiencies in the existing recreation inventory and explore ideas for enhancement, including for the winter months. 

The Town prescribes these tactics as its Plan for the next decade: 

**Arts & Culture District**—Establish an Arts District to focus collaborative efforts between artists, businesses and the Town in developing Old Saybrook as a regional destination for visual and performing arts. 

**Artscape and Creative Culture**—Establish a “1% for Art” program by committing 1% of the municipal budget to enhance public space with the work of local artists. Support arts and culture programs including programs for youth. 

**Crosswalk Art**—Cross Main/side streets with cultural celebrations by local artists. 

**Enhanced Recreation**—Improve existing parks and public spaces, including directional signage from main roadways. Provide new opportunities for residents and visitors to be active. Build sustainable public restrooms in areas that attract visitors. 

**Heritage & Character Preservation**—Support facade improvement and adaptive reuse of notable properties, especially in natural hazard areas; nominate historic or architectural sites to the Register of Historic Places. 

**Place Branding**—Coordinate with local/regional partners to use consistent messaging to market the recognizably unique experience of Old Saybrook’s business area. 

**Year-Round & Extended Events**—Coordinate complementary programs to promote Old Saybrook’s story, nature-based activities, special event venues, and weekend getaways, especially off-season.
Resilient Economy

A Resilient Economy prepares to bounce back rapidly after disruption.
Old Saybrook bounces back rapidly in the face of the array of threats that undermine business operations whether caused by nature, man-made error, or malicious intent.

**Planning**—Local businesses are integral to the economic base of Old Saybrook providing products and services, jobs and municipal revenue. To protect these interests, trade and industry perspectives are at the core of pre-disaster community recovery planning. The Town assesses predictable natural and man-made hazards through regular and frequent updates to the municipal hazard mitigation and emergency management plans. Although unforeseen hazards will continue to pose a risk, these plans ensure the Town is reducing the vulnerability of business and industry and is prepared to respond quickly.

**Adaptation**—Old Saybrook looks beyond survival to adapt and improve from sudden change. In fact, this “anticipate-and-evolve” cycle provides a continual feedback loop allowing the Town to better predict events, improve response and prepare to protect lives and property from total devastation and thus speed recovery after a disaster.

**Recovery**—The Town's hazard mitigation and emergency response plans prescribe coordination with the business community in all phases of emergency management —preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation —in a sustained effort to minimize business disruption and help businesses recover after a disaster.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Where are we?</th>
<th>Where are we going?</th>
<th>How do we get there?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>STRENGTH</strong></td>
<td><strong>STRATEGY</strong></td>
<td><strong>ACTION</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With Economic Resilience as a goal for Old Saybrook, it is the Town's strategy...

...to provide adequate capacity for expected growth outside of natural hazard areas. Federal and State laws have long regulated the safety and security of transportation and public facilities in areas vulnerable to natural hazards. Recent laws have also begun to limit public investment, and thus development, in these areas. For its own infrastructure and service planning, the Town will maintain current maps of known and projected hazard areas to optimize land use in Old Saybrook.

...to continue to study risks and to plan for impacts of environmental and health hazards and changing conditions. Particularly with changes in climate, Old Saybrook's renowned economy and lifestyle can anticipate risk from intensifying environmental and health hazards—physical, chemical, biological and cultural. Considering the potential increasing frequency and intensity of changing conditions, the Town will report the likely impacts, giving businesses and residents the opportunity to make informed decisions about mitigation investment over the short and long term.

...to mitigate against disaster to allow rapid recovery and continuity in business operations. The array of threats that undermine business operations goes beyond natural hazards—man-made error and malicious intent is growing in complexity. Because businesses vary in vulnerability to potentially disastrous impacts, self-identification and remediation of the risks is a policy of self-insurance every business should undertake. The Town will provide access to tools and resources to assist businesses in assessing enterprise risk, planning for business continuity and quickly recovering from disaster to minimize downtime.

The Town prescribes these tactics as its Plan for the next decade:

**Business Continuity**—Increase business awareness of local, state and federal resources available to manage emergencies.

**Climate Resiliency Fund**—Pay for resilience projects through a combination of funding mechanisms (e.g. special assessments, TIF, alternative bonds or “rainy day” savings of budget surpluses).

**Coastal Resilience Corridor**—Protect infrastructure, critical facilities or historic resources in business areas via raised roadways, low bridges or greenways.

**Emergency Energy**—Identify the options and costs of emergency energy generation such as micro-grids.

**Emergency Services**—Assist the Town’s Emergency Management Office as a liaison to businesses during hazard events.

**Enterprise Risk & Recovery**—Help businesses restore operations and vital support systems in the shortest time possible after a disaster.

**Municipal Mitigation & Adaptation**—Evaluate public buildings and assets to estimate costs for physical projects to mitigate or adapt to climate change and public health risks.

**Pre-Disaster Conditions Survey**—preand post-storm conditions for efficient and optimal public/business disaster assistance.

**Underground Utilities**—Bury the overhead utility lines to clear the view of interruptions and to protect the services from severe weather.
A Sustainable Saybrook

A Sustainable Saybrook meets today’s needs without compromising future needs.
### Where are we?

One of the first municipalities to be certified as a Sustainable CT community, Old Saybrook works toward meeting today’s needs without compromising needs to be met in the future.

**People**—Local public institutions along with Old Saybrook’s collaborative support systems contribute to the physical, mental and economic well-being of community members. Equity—being fair and impartial—also needs to be considered in the physical environment (e.g. ADA accessibility) and in the opportunities to participate in, and contribute to, all aspects of community life.

**Profit**—Profit and sustainability are not mutually exclusive. When approached in a mindful and strategic way, they are symbiotic. Old Saybrook’s businesses understand the competitive advantage of embracing sustainable practices and products and are benefitting from the increased demand for locally produced items, nature-based tourism and efforts to minimize the negative impacts on the environment.

**Planet**—Appreciation for and protection of the natural resources and beauty that are an essential component of Old Saybrook are woven into all aspects of community life. Focus has turned to cleaning and redeveloping brownfield sites, preserving open space, and protecting natural resources. Agriculture and aquaculture thrive providing locally-sourced foods while preserving historic traditions and supporting native ecosystems. Old Saybrook must anticipate and react to the changing environment. Protecting the natural systems that absorb stormwater and rising tides must balance with development pressures for the long term health and resilience of our coastal town.

### Where are we going?

With A Sustainable Saybrook as a goal for Old Saybrook, it is the Town’s strategy…

...to improve community life by appreciating diversity and cultural contributions and committing to equity. Sustainability encompasses more than preservation of natural surroundings. It supports the well-being of residents by providing a safe environment, recognizing the needs of all residents, and respecting their unique contributions. Equity—being fair and impartial—needs to be considered in providing access to the physical environment (e.g. ADA accessibility) and opportunities to otherwise participate in, and contribute to, all aspects of community life. *The Town will enrich the quality of life for all by encouraging and welcoming the participation of all residents in all aspects of community life.*

...to create economic value by encouraging sustainable business practices. The shift in market demand for more sustainable business practices and products creates opportunities for Old Saybrook’s business community. Not all businesses, however, may be positioned to adapt to these market shifts. *The Town will help existing businesses understand these changes, the short and long term impacts on their operations, and how they may take advantage of opportunities arising from the same. It also will focus on marketing strategies to attract new businesses that use sustainable practices.*

...to support remediation and redevelopment of former industrial brownfield properties. With experience in addressing environmental concerns in site remediation, the *Town will continue to participate in actualizing redevelopment projects on former industrial and brownfield sites in keeping with the community’s vision for housing, recreation, commercial development, government or other productive uses.*

### How do we get there?

The Town prescribes these tactics as its Plan for the next decade:

- **Brownfield Redevelopment**—Partner public/private entities in remediation, marketing and redevelopment efforts.
- **C-Pace Municipality**—Encourage commercial property owners to lower energy costs and reduce greenhouse gases and other pollutants.
- **Municipal Purchasing Policy**—Use an up-to-date list of locally-owned businesses to encourage local purchasing. Purchase from vendors that reduce waste and pollution, increase efficiency, and use renewable products.
- **Public Restrooms**—Build sustainable restroom facilities throughout Town Center.
- **Sustainable Ct Community**—Implement Sustainable CT best practices to be thriving, resilient, collaborative, and forward-looking, to build community and the local economy, to equitably promote the health and well-being of current and future residents, and to respect the finite capacity of the natural environment.
- **Wastewater Options**—Allow off-site disposal for redevelopment of Old Saybrook’s business areas.
- **ZEV Transition**—Transition the Town’s automobile fleet to Zero Emission Vehicles. Install vehicle charging stations in public parking areas.
Business Areas—Overview

Old Saybrook is made up of nine business areas, each with a distinct character and appeal of its own.
### Business Areas—Overview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VISION</th>
<th>OBJECTIVE</th>
<th>PLACES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Where are we?</strong></td>
<td><strong>Where are we going?</strong></td>
<td><strong>How do we get there?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From a quintessential town center to a world-class coastal destination business areas here fit every lifestyle and deliver a world of opportunity.</td>
<td>As relates to economic development of key Business Areas of Old Saybrook, it is the Town’s objective to partner public and private interests looking for opportunities...</td>
<td>The Town identifies these business areas in which to apply its goals for the next decade:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vision</strong>—Old Saybrook has a vision for sustaining the overall health, natural environment, and quality of life that characterize each of its business areas. To do so, the Town reinforces the strength of its infrastructure network and guides market investment with forethought in layout and design.</td>
<td>...to “complement and enhance” programs, improvements and standards that sustain the character of Old Saybrook’s places of industry, employment, and lifestyle.</td>
<td>The Town sets these goals to influence the factors that affect economic development in Old Saybrook....</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Opportunity</strong>—The business areas in Old Saybrook are ideally suited for new growth. While relatively small, there has been great success in using specific methods to maintain and strengthen the human-scale and charm of commercial, residential, or mixed-uses as infill and redevelopment occurs. New, high-density uses especially offer the ability to complement and enhance Old Saybrook through thoughtful scale, massing and organization to honor the integrity of neighborhood patterns and to harmonize with the varied composition of the town.</td>
<td>The Town identifies nine business areas of town that are “key” to unlocking further economic potential in partnership with the private sector. This Economic Development section of the municipal Plan of Conservation &amp; Development sets forth a plan to enhance these business areas.</td>
<td><strong>Town Center</strong>—A traditional New England Main Street in a charming seaside town</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Saybrook Junction</strong>—Innovation Intersection A center point connecting regional innovation districts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Research Parkway</strong>—A concentration of entrepreneurial and industrial endeavors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Mariner’s Way</strong>—A premier destination for recreation, shopping, living and business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Ferry Point</strong>—Marina District A hub of the Connecticut River’s maritime economy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Middlesex Turnpike</strong>—Connecticut Route 154 A commercial corridor and gateway to Old Saybrook and the Lower Connecticut River Valley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Saybrook Point</strong>—A picturesque, historic waterfront where the Connecticut River meets Long Island Sound</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Schoolhouse</strong>—Workforce Development Center A center for education, workforce training and industry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Spencer Plain</strong>—Gateway A unique mix of retail shopping, dining and living less than half a mile from Interstate 95</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Town Center

A traditional New England Main Street in a charming seaside town
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OPPORTUNITY</th>
<th>OBJECTIVE</th>
<th>ACTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Town Center, with its train station, boutique shopping, and adjacent neighborhoods, is among New England’s most charming.</td>
<td>As relates to the Town Center business area of Old Saybrook, it is the Town’s strategy to partner public and private interests looking for opportunities...</td>
<td>The Town prescribes these tactics as its Plan for the next decade:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transit-Oriented Development (TOD)—Old Saybrook’s walkable, iconic Main Street reflects its history as a traditional New England Village charming residents, business owners and visitors. Main Street is the epicenter of the community and thrives because it connects people—to history, to goods and services, to transportation, to employment, and to each other. Continued implementation of the Town’s Sidewalk Plan has improved pedestrian connections between Main Street, the train station, Route 1 and Town Center neighborhoods further strengthening these community connections.</td>
<td>...for TOD investment and an enhanced pedestrian experience that attracts residents, visitors and businesses.</td>
<td>Crosswalk Art—Cross Main/side streets with cultural celebrations by local artists.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>These connections and the proximity of the train station have attracted TOD investment from both the State and private developers: the state built a new parking lot with park-like amenities and EV charging stations next to the train station; and a private developer built a 186-unit rental complex with market rate and affordable units adjacent to that new parking lot. The success of both projects demonstrates the potential of TOD investments to meet the growing demand for walkable lifestyles near public transit in community centers.</td>
<td>Continuing efforts to create complete streets, improve utilities, enhance public parks and increase public water access will help attract additional TOD investment.</td>
<td>Heritage &amp; Character Preservation—Support facade improvement and adaptive reuse of notable properties; nominate historic or architectural sites to the Register of Historic Places; promote sites of interest.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity—There are development opportunities in uniquely positioned and underperforming properties within walking distance of the train station for civic, business, residential and recreational uses. Taking advantage of these opportunities while respecting the Town Center’s community character and valued historic architecture will attract businesses, visitors and new residents to enjoy the accessible, walkable, livable, and workable Town Center.</td>
<td>Updating zoning regulations to allow for multi-use development, higher density housing and flexible parking options will do the same. The Town will pursue support for infrastructure investments and regulation adjustments that catalyze revitalization through TOD.</td>
<td>Incubation &amp; Co-Working Space—Develop space to support and attract small businesses and entrepreneurs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old Saybrook’s Main Street invites pedestrians to stroll its length enjoying the historic buildings, boutique shops and restaurants. Continued improvements will enhance this experience. For example, the width of Main Street supports increased building heights, which reinforce the sense of security and comfort by pedestrians walking along such a wide boulevard. Allowing increased building heights will create a more comfortable pedestrian experience with the added benefit of attracting TOD investment. In addition, improving aesthetics, preserving historic character and creating more opportunities for public art installations will create a cohesive sense of place along the entire length of Main Street.</td>
<td>Old Saybrook’s Main Street reflects its history as a traditional New England Village charming residents, business owners and visitors. Main Street is the epicenter of the community and thrives because it connects people—to history, to goods and services, to transportation, to employment, and to each other. Continued implementation of the Town’s Sidewalk Plan has improved pedestrian connections between Main Street, the train station, Route 1 and Town Center neighborhoods further strengthening these community connections.</td>
<td>In-Town Recreation Trail—Create a walking/biking loop from Main Street to Founders Memorial Park on South Cove.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>These connections and the proximity of the train station have attracted TOD investment from both the State and private developers: the state built a new parking lot with park-like amenities and EV charging stations next to the train station; and a private developer built a 186-unit rental complex with market rate and affordable units adjacent to that new parking lot. The success of both projects demonstrates the potential of TOD investments to meet the growing demand for walkable lifestyles near public transit in community centers.</td>
<td>These connections and the proximity of the train station have attracted TOD investment from both the State and private developers: the state built a new parking lot with park-like amenities and EV charging stations next to the train station; and a private developer built a 186-unit rental complex with market rate and affordable units adjacent to that new parking lot. The success of both projects demonstrates the potential of TOD investments to meet the growing demand for walkable lifestyles near public transit in community centers.</td>
<td>Place Brand—Use consistent messaging to market the recognizably unique experience of the Town Center business area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity—There are development opportunities in uniquely positioned and underperforming properties within walking distance of the train station for civic, business, residential and recreational uses. Taking advantage of these opportunities while respecting the Town Center’s community character and valued historic architecture will attract businesses, visitors and new residents to enjoy the accessible, walkable, livable, and workable Town Center.</td>
<td>Opportunity—There are development opportunities in uniquely positioned and underperforming properties within walking distance of the train station for civic, business, residential and recreational uses. Taking advantage of these opportunities while respecting the Town Center’s community character and valued historic architecture will attract businesses, visitors and new residents to enjoy the accessible, walkable, livable, and workable Town Center.</td>
<td>Small Harbor Dredging—Sustain and increase our harbors, waterways and marinas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old Saybrook’s Main Street invites pedestrians to stroll its length enjoying the historic buildings, boutique shops and restaurants. Continued improvements will enhance this experience. For example, the width of Main Street supports increased building heights, which reinforce the sense of security and comfort by pedestrians walking along such a wide boulevard. Allowing increased building heights will create a more comfortable pedestrian experience with the added benefit of attracting TOD investment. In addition, improving aesthetics, preserving historic character and creating more opportunities for public art installations will create a cohesive sense of place along the entire length of Main Street.</td>
<td>Old Saybrook’s Main Street reflects its history as a traditional New England Village charming residents, business owners and visitors. Main Street is the epicenter of the community and thrives because it connects people—to history, to goods and services, to transportation, to employment, and to each other. Continued implementation of the Town’s Sidewalk Plan has improved pedestrian connections between Main Street, the train station, Route 1 and Town Center neighborhoods further strengthening these community connections.</td>
<td>Road Diet &amp; Streetscape Improvement—Implement the 2015 Tri-Town Route 1 Study’s “complete street” for all users with reduced lanes and landscaping improvements on Main Street and Route 1 in the Town Center.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As relates to the Town Center business area of Old Saybrook, it is the Town’s strategy to partner public and private interests looking for opportunities...</td>
<td>As relates to the Town Center business area of Old Saybrook, it is the Town’s strategy to partner public and private interests looking for opportunities...</td>
<td>Town Campus Recreation—Engage townspeople in deciding the recreation program behind the pickle ball parking lot.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...for TOD investment and an enhanced pedestrian experience that attracts residents, visitors and businesses.</td>
<td>...for TOD investment and an enhanced pedestrian experience that attracts residents, visitors and businesses.</td>
<td>Transit-Oriented Development—Permit high-density mixed-uses within walking distance of the transit center.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuing efforts to create complete streets, improve utilities, enhance public parks and increase public water access will help attract additional TOD investment.</td>
<td>Continuing efforts to create complete streets, improve utilities, enhance public parks and increase public water access will help attract additional TOD investment.</td>
<td>Wastewater Options—Allow off-site disposal for the Town Center business area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Updating zoning regulations to allow for multi-use development, higher density housing and flexible parking options will do the same. The Town will pursue support for infrastructure investments and regulation adjustments that catalyze revitalization through TOD.</td>
<td>Updating zoning regulations to allow for multi-use development, higher density housing and flexible parking options will do the same. The Town will pursue support for infrastructure investments and regulation adjustments that catalyze revitalization through TOD.</td>
<td>Wayfinding, Parking &amp; Self-Guided Tours—Direct travelers to points of interest and public parking. Develop digital self-guided tours.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Saybrook Junction Innovation Intersection

A center point connecting regional innovation districts
Saybrook Junction is a robust economic center ideally positioned to connect with and support regional Innovation Districts.

**Location**—Old Saybrook is centrally located midway between urban innovation centers in New Haven, Groton/New London and Middletown making our town a natural junction where business and innovation in multiple urban centers intersect. Saybrook Junction is one of only six AMTRAK stops in Connecticut and a stop for the Shore Line East commuter rail. It is adjacent to Interstate 95 and less than 2 miles to Connecticut’s Route 9 corridor. Because of its central location, Old Saybrook attracts well educated residents who desire access to business opportunities and an easy commute to nearby urban centers. Businesses headquartered in Old Saybrook are innovators in the fields of bioscience, robotics, digital media, e-commerce, and advanced manufacturing for the military and other industries. Their success results from access to local and regional resources, including talent and services, as well as larger metropolitan markets. Here, too, the “not-quite-ready-to-retire” hang their shingle in home-based offices to share their experience and wisdom as consultants.

**Opportunity**—Housing and businesses cluster around Saybrook Junction allow residents, workers and visitors to enjoy the walkable Town Center. With restaurants, retail, the Kate, events, the train station, exceptional schools, and increasing housing options in a desirable, scenic shoreline location, Saybrook Junction has the potential to serve as the nexus where Innovation Districts in nearby urban centers intersect, creating a place where entrepreneurs can meet, network, collaborate, and partner to build or expand their business ventures.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OPPORTUNITY</th>
<th>OBJECTIVE</th>
<th>ACTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Saybrook Junction Innovation Intersection</td>
<td>Where are we?</td>
<td>Where are we going?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As relates to the Saybrook Junction business area of Old Saybrook, it is the Town’s strategy to partner public and private interests looking for opportunities...

...to support Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) that builds business density and attracts talent and entrepreneurs from Innovation Districts.

Old Saybrook is an ideal meeting place for entrepreneurs seeking collaboration with colleagues from other Innovation Districts. The Town will capitalize on its central location and transit access to create an Innovation Intersection that facilitates co-working, collaboration, and networking.

As innovators investigate, discover and test potential new products, proximity to urban innovation hubs is critical. However, once businesses move those innovations to clinical trials, production, marketing and distribution, business operations can be located farther afield. Old Saybrook offers an ideal location for this business expansion phase with low taxes, affordable office space, support services, talent, and transit links to regional and international markets. The Town will position itself as a lower cost alternative to urban centers needed for business expansion.

The Research Parkway business area, Town Center and Mariner’s Way all offer significant redevelopment potential within walking distance of the train station. Integrating more office space, retail, restaurant, and housing options at higher density into the area surrounding Saybrook Junction will attract more talent and businesses in a self-perpetuating cycle of improvement and growth. The Town will support additional TOD within a one mile radius of the train station, where appropriate, to further reinforce Saybrook Junction as a center for business development.

The Town prescribes these tactics as its plan for the next decade:

- **Essex Steam Train**—Extend recreational tourism to activities at Saybrook Junction.
- **First/Last Mile Connection**—Continue to make mobility connections for rail users; extend 9-Town Transit.
- **Footbridge**—Build a footbridge over the freight track to/from Research Parkway.
- **Heritage & Character Preservation**—Support facade improvement and adaptive reuse of notable properties; nominate sites to the Register of Historic Places; promote sites of interest.
- **Innovation Events**—Coordinate existing talent and experience of successful residents to mentor young businesses via symposia, summits, trade shows or events.
- **Landmark Streetscape**—Implement the 2015 Tri-Town Route 1 Study’s “complete street” for all users with landscaping improvements; beautify the rail overpass bridge to create a landmark.
- **Place Brand**—Market a recognizably unique experience for Saybrook Junction. Innovation Intersection.
- **Revitalization Incentives**—Use TIF or other tools to encourage adaptive reuse, transit improvements, facade updates or commercial blight remedy.
- **Underground Utilities**—Bury overhead utility lines to clear visual interruptions and protect services from severe weather.
- **Wastewater Options**—Allow off-site disposal for the Saybrook Jct. business area.
Research Parkway

A concentration of entrepreneurial and industrial endeavors
Nestled at the heart of Old Saybrook between the interstate and the railway, Research Parkway is home to entrepreneurial and industrial endeavors.

**Enterprising**—Growing businesses, whether well-established or start-ups, base their operations in the Research Parkway business area for many reasons:
- CEOs are attracted to Old Saybrook’s unparalleled lifestyle, scenic beauty, recreational opportunities, exceptional public schools, and educated workforce;
- Located less than 1 mile from both Interstate 95, Route 9 and the train station, the Research Parkway area is an easy commute for workers and accessible to major highways, rail and ports for multiple freight shipping options;
- The area is an ideal mid-way point for a regional office out of New York or Boston and less than 500 miles from the Canadian border;
- Main Street and Route 1 provide workers with access to a variety of restaurants, retail, service and entertainment offerings; and
- Affordable flex space in this industrial zone provides quality accommodations to bioscience, e-commerce, media, advanced manufacturing, and warehousing at a fraction of the rents and local tax rates of nearby cities.

**Opportunity**—The Research Parkway area offers existing industrial, office and flex space in an industrial zone, much of it in the Old Saybrook Business Park complex. The quality of existing space varies creating redevelopment opportunities for infill or renovation on Research Parkway, Mill Rock Road East and Elm Street Extension.

As relates to the Research Parkway business area of Old Saybrook, it is the Town’s strategy to partner public and private interests looking for opportunities...

...for a better connection from Research Parkway to the Town Center and to promote its role as an entrepreneurial center.

Business recruitment should focus on industry sectors that are already growing in Connecticut. The state has identified financial services technology, aerospace/defense manufacturing, biosciences and health care as growing industries. The Town will focus business recruitment efforts on attracting businesses in those industries that will strengthen existing local industry clusters as well as support state-wide business development goals.

Commuter rail and bus services at Saybrook Junction have capacity to serve more riders, and more people will use those modes of transportation as pedestrian-oriented infrastructure allows commuters a safer walk to Research Parkway. The Town will focus on Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) to improve the physical connections between Saybrook Junction, Town Center and Research Parkway to encourage the use of transportation alternatives and better serve commuters working in Research Parkway businesses.

Affordable business space, transportation options, a highly skilled workforce, experienced consultants, low tax rates, regional market access, enjoyable lifestyle and central location make Old Saybrook an excellent business location. The Town will market this unique combination of assets to attract businesses seeking space for expansion, co-working opportunities, shared offices, manufacturing locations, manufacturing incubator space, and satellite offices.

The Town prescribes these tactics as its Plan for the next decade:

**Footbridge**—Build a footbridge over the freight track to/from Saybrook Junction.

**Foreign Trade Zone**—Encourage FTZ site activation for exporters, importers, manufacturers or 3rd-party logistics firms.

**Business Incubator & Co-Working**—Develop space with amenities that support and attract businesses and entrepreneurs.

**Innovation Loop**—Construct sidewalks, on-street parking and a multi-use path from Saybrook Junction to Research Parkway; extend 9-Town Transit service.

**Link To Academia**—Partner public/private/academic institutions to support local industry with product/workforce development.

**Livable Employment**—Attract industry offering full-time, long-term, or year-round jobs beyond an ALICE threshold.

**Live/Work Lofts**—Integrate the uses of Research Parkway business area has access to the most advanced technology infrastructure.
Mariner’s Way

*A premiere destination for recreation, shopping, living and business*
**Where are we?**

Old Saybrook’s long-term economic development goals make Mariner’s Way a place for recreation, shopping, living and business destinations.

**Potential**—This prime stretch of Route 1 East is Old Saybrook’s gateway to the Connecticut River, a natural focal point for destination living, entertainment and recreation. Situated within reach of multiple major domestic markets and millions of consumers arriving at the state’s top visitor spots and minutes off nearby highways, Mariner’s Way is a potential destination for those seeking the “authentic experience” of an iconic, waterfront New England town.

**Opportunity**—Old Saybrook envisions three redevelopment concepts within the Mariner’s Way corridor for residence and recreation opportunities to support existing businesses and to grow new ones that take full advantage of the town’s waterfront location and natural resources. The State recently supported a market feasibility study of these concepts and the results indicate these concepts have significant potential to succeed and stimulate further revitalization of the corridor. The Town demonstrated its commitment to revitalization by making Mariner’s Way a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District in January of 2019 creating an incentive to support these concepts and other redevelopment efforts. Additional studies include a brownfields assessment on nine Mariner’s Way properties and a risk assessment of the impact of climate change indicating Mariner’s Way is not likely to be constrained by the threat of flooding or sea level rise.

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OPPORTUNITY</th>
<th>OBJECTIVE</th>
<th>ACTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Where are we going?</strong></td>
<td><strong>Where are we going?</strong></td>
<td><strong>How do we get there?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As relates to the Mariner’s Way business area of Old Saybrook, it is the Town’s strategy to partner public and private interests looking for opportunities…</td>
<td>…for “lifestyle destinations” that could not succeed but for the proximity of Mariner’s Way to Old Saybrook’s transportation network, town center or water resources.</td>
<td>The Town prescribes these tactics as its Plan for the next decade:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Western</strong>—Supporting specialty retail, dining, and destination amenities will attract empty nesters, Millennials, and others who want to live in multi-family environments with easy access to transportation options and connections to all the unique assets that make Old Saybrook special. The Town will support opportunities for such high-density mixed-use transit-oriented development (TOD) living to attract and serve these demographics.</td>
<td><strong>Brownfield Redevelopment</strong>—Partner public/private entities in remediation, marketing and redevelopment efforts.</td>
<td><strong>Boulevard Streetscape</strong>—Construct a tree-lined “complete street” from Town Center to Ferry Point; champion I-95 access.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Central</strong>—In some of the deeper parcels along Mariner’s Way, marine-related uses and businesses continue to thrive. Additional “destination” development such as dining, specialty retail, recreation, sport and marine activities would offer even more opportunities for visitors and residents to Mariner’s Way. The Town will support destination development to attract residents and visitors and create a thriving center that offers unique experiences.</td>
<td><strong>Mariner’s Way Discovery+Action Plan (MW-D+AP)</strong>—Implement the concepts tested and refined by the 2018 MW-D+AP as a program of the Town Plan.</td>
<td><strong>Brownfield Redevelopment</strong>—Partner public/private entities in remediation, marketing and redevelopment efforts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Eastern</strong>—Life-long residents of Old Saybrook want to downsize and simplify their lives while staying connected with the community and continuing to be a vital part of civic life. The Town will support senior lifestyle and continuum of care/assisted living development along with associated amenities and services in new and existing operations.</td>
<td><strong>Elevated Recreation</strong>—Connect a greenway between Town Center, Mariner’s Way, and Ferry Point to attract nature-based tourists with scenic estuary views.</td>
<td><strong>Mariner’s Way Discovery+Action Plan (MW-D+AP)</strong>—Implement the concepts tested and refined by the 2018 MW-D+AP as a program of the Town Plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Western</strong>—Supporting specialty retail, dining, and destination amenities will attract empty nesters, Millennials, and others who want to live in multi-family environments with easy access to transportation options and connections to all the unique assets that make Old Saybrook special. The Town will support opportunities for such high-density mixed-use transit-oriented development (TOD) living to attract and serve these demographics.</td>
<td><strong>Technical Transfer &amp; Workforce Development</strong>—Partner public, private &amp; academic institutions to support product and talent development.</td>
<td><strong>Technical Transfer &amp; Workforce Development</strong>—Partner public, private &amp; academic institutions to support product and talent development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Revitalization Incentives</strong>—Use TIF or other tools to encourage adaptive reuse, transit improvements, facade updates, and commercial blight remedy.</td>
<td><strong>Senior Lifestyle</strong>—Support continuum of care/assisted living development along with associated amenities and services.</td>
<td><strong>Revitalization Incentives</strong>—Use TIF or other tools to encourage adaptive reuse, transit improvements, facade updates, and commercial blight remedy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transit-Oriented Development</strong>—Permit high-density mixed-uses in the business areas within walking/biking distance of Saybrook Jct. transit facility.</td>
<td><strong>Wastewater Options</strong>—Allow off-site disposal for Mariner’s Way.</td>
<td><strong>Senior Lifestyle</strong>—Support continuum of care/assisted living development along with associated amenities and services.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Ferry Point Marina District

A hub of the Connecticut River’s maritime economy
Ferry Point’s riverfront location, its rich array of natural amenities, and maritime history make it a premiere setting for housing, recreation, and marine business.

**Live-Work-Play**—This business area is the pinnacle of an esteemed conservation zone encircling the 8 “gateway” towns at the end of the Connecticut River’s 400-mile path from Canada. Recreational marinas and their amenities continue as a vibrant traditional use of the riparian coast, and the only development seen through the vegetative buffer. To leverage the natural attributes of Ferry Point, the town reserves the marine industrial district for water-dependent industrial and recreational purposes. Notable within the traditional riverway scene are the remarkably preserved home of early-American ferry owner John Whittlesey, Jr., as well as the iconic red-and-white smokestack of the coal-fired powerhouse for the trolley cars that once ran along the Shore Line Electric Railway. State investments in access to the working waterfront via the State boat launch and the Town’s recently enhanced commercial dock complement the 5 marinas and 3 fishing charter boats. Year-round, the State maintains its concrete slab ramp under the Baldwin Bridge to launch boats; the adjacent fishing pier is accessible from the 75-car parking lot. During the boating season, the Town permits dockage in 22 slips along the floating and fixed-wood pier at its Ferry Road Marine Facility, with preference for any resident with a commercial fishing license.

**Opportunity**—This historic marina district is poised for revitalization that will reinvigorate the Riverfront Neighborhood by integrating and connecting housing, restaurants, businesses, childcare, historic points and hospitality into a new destination for residents and visitors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OPPORTUNITY</th>
<th>OBJECTIVE</th>
<th>ACTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Where are we?</td>
<td>Where are we going?</td>
<td>How do we get there?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ferry Point Marina District</td>
<td>As relates to the Ferry Point business area of Old Saybrook, it is the Town’s strategy to partner public and private interests looking for opportunities...</td>
<td>The Town prescribes these tactics as its Plan for the next decade:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Live-Work-Play</strong>—This business area is the pinnacle of an esteemed conservation zone encircling the 8 “gateway” towns at the end of the Connecticut River’s 400-mile path from Canada. Recreational marinas and their amenities continue as a vibrant traditional use of the riparian coast, and the only development seen through the vegetative buffer. To leverage the natural attributes of Ferry Point, the town reserves the marine industrial district for water-dependent industrial and recreational purposes. Notable within the traditional riverway scene are the remarkably preserved home of early-American ferry owner John Whittlesey, Jr., as well as the iconic red-and-white smokestack of the coal-fired powerhouse for the trolley cars that once ran along the Shore Line Electric Railway. State investments in access to the working waterfront via the State boat launch and the Town’s recently enhanced commercial dock complement the 5 marinas and 3 fishing charter boats. Year-round, the State maintains its concrete slab ramp under the Baldwin Bridge to launch boats; the adjacent fishing pier is accessible from the 75-car parking lot. During the boating season, the Town permits dockage in 22 slips along the floating and fixed-wood pier at its Ferry Road Marine Facility, with preference for any resident with a commercial fishing license.</td>
<td><strong>Live-Work Lofts</strong>—Integrate uses benefitting from the river marina setting.</td>
<td><strong>Heritage &amp; Character Preservation</strong>—Support facade improvement and adaptive reuse of notable properties, especially in natural hazard areas; nominate sites to the Register of Historic Places; promote sites of interest.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Opportunity</strong>—This historic marina district is poised for revitalization that will reinvigorate the Riverfront Neighborhood by integrating and connecting housing, restaurants, businesses, childcare, historic points and hospitality into a new destination for residents and visitors.</td>
<td><strong>Re-establishing native vegetation within the developed areas of the Connecticut River’s banks will enhance the traditional riverway scene. Formalizing roadside views of the Connecticut River from all properties—State-, Town-, or privately-owned—will set the tone for branding Ferry Point as a destination of value that will attract residents and visitors. The Town will encourage the conservation of the riverine features of Ferry Point to preserve the riverfront while providing public access to viewing areas.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Pedestrian Node</strong>—Offer the Zoning Regulations’ setback benefit at Ferry Point.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Revitalization of this historic marina district will create a thriving Riverfront Neighborhood. Incorporating historic character into new development and uses will ensure this area reaches its potential as a destination of note to access and appreciate the beauty of the Connecticut River Estuary. Renovation of buildings will reflect the historical vernacular of materials, and new architecture will reflect the maritime-nature of the local setting. The Town will support redevelopment of a mixed-use working riverfront neighborhood in keeping with the history and character of the area.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Place Brand</strong>—Use consistent messaging to market the recognizably unique experience of the Ferry Point Marina District.</td>
<td><strong>LIS Ferry</strong>—Grow ferry service for passengers between Old Saybrook–Plum Island–Orient Point, NY.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creating a pedestrian node with complete streets that provide sidewalks, bicycle lanes and a connection to other points in town will attract residents and visitors to the area by multiple modes of transportation. Visitors arriving by boat will be able to enjoy Ferry Point and Town Center via these new connections. The Town will keep stride with private investment by improving the streetscape to connect with the Town Center.</td>
<td><strong>Railroad Bridge River Recreation</strong>—Coincident with bridge replacement, convert the current abutment for public access; include a public restroom facility.</td>
<td><strong>Live/Work Lofts</strong>—Integrate uses benefitting from the river marina setting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-establishing native vegetation within the developed areas of the Connecticut River’s banks will enhance the traditional riverway scene. Formalizing roadside views of the Connecticut River from all properties—State-, Town-, or privately-owned—will set the tone for branding Ferry Point as a destination of value that will attract residents and visitors. The Town will encourage the conservation of the riverine features of Ferry Point to preserve the riverfront while providing public access to viewing areas.</td>
<td><strong>Small Harbor Dredging</strong>—Sustain and increase the use of our harbors, waterways and marinas.</td>
<td><strong>Pedestrian Node</strong>—Offer the Zoning Regulations’ setback benefit at Ferry Point.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Support facade improvement and adaptive fill</strong> that supports marine-related activities and businesses that attract visitors by boat and land-based modes of transportation.</td>
<td><strong>Technology</strong>—Ensure the Ferry Point business area has access to the most advanced technology infrastructure.</td>
<td><strong>Re-establishing native vegetation within the developed areas of the Connecticut River’s banks will enhance the traditional riverway scene. Formalizing roadside views of the Connecticut River from all properties—State-, Town-, or privately-owned—will set the tone for branding Ferry Point as a destination of value that will attract residents and visitors. The Town will encourage the conservation of the riverine features of Ferry Point to preserve the riverfront while providing public access to viewing areas.</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Middlesex Turnpike—Connecticut Route 154

A commercial corridor and gateway to Old Saybrook and the Lower Connecticut River Valley
Where are we?

Regional Access—This section of the Middlesex Turnpike (Connecticut State Route 154) is a gateway to Old Saybrook and the Lower Connecticut River Valley. Because of its location, Middlesex Turnpike offers exceptional access to the regional market in the Lower Connecticut River Valley attracting clusters of medical offices, car dealers, renovation specialists, and farming suppliers mixed with innovators along the corridor. These clusters are unique in a region of small towns and draw customers from a wide area.

This area also serves as the southern gateway of State Route 154 that winds northward through the historic and charming towns along the western bank of the Lower Connecticut River Valley and provides access to neighborhoods that connect to preserved open space used for recreation.

Opportunity—Several properties in this business corridor have great potential for redevelopment to attract additional businesses to the area. Building upon the existing business clusters by attracting businesses dealing in related goods and services will lead to creating a supportive, sustainable ecosystem of complementary businesses.

Improving the aesthetics of the Middlesex Turnpike corridor will make businesses more eager to move to the location. Streetscape improvements will have the added benefit of creating a positive impression for all motorists traveling into Old Saybrook using this route.

Commercial activity serves the needs of the smaller towns in the lower Connecticut River valley.

Where are we going?

As relates to the Middlesex Turnpike business area of Old Saybrook, it is the Town's strategy to partner public and private interests looking for opportunities...

...to create an inviting gateway to Old Saybrook, strengthen and expand existing business clusters that thrive in the corridor, attract new industries, and to enhance recreation opportunities for residents and visitors.

Specialized businesses have found success by locating along Middlesex Turnpike near similar and complementary businesses. The Town will focus business attraction in the Middlesex Turnpike business area on similar or complementary businesses and entrepreneurs to build on the strength of the existing industry sectors that do best when clustered.

Middlesex Turnpike serves as a gateway to Old Saybrook. The experience of travelling this corridor should make a good impression on anyone driving through. The Town will improve the streetscape by investing in street trees and landscaping; consolidating curb cuts; and developing merchandise display guidelines.

Preservation and recreation opportunities make a significant contribution to the quality of life of residents and attract visitors who seek experiences that connect them with history and nature. The Middlesex Turnpike business area serves as a gateway to scenic Route 154 and to neighborhoods with access to preserved open space used for recreation. The Town will support efforts to preserve historic and open space assets in the Middlesex Business area that enhance recreation and attract visitors.

How do we get there?

The Town prescribes these tactics as its Plan for the next decade:

Exchange Club & Ingham Pond Recreation—Allocate funds for acquisition of the former quarry land to expand dedicated open space and recreation.

Grow Business—Support the growth of businesses in the Middlesex Turnpike area by providing information about business development resources such as free counseling and workforce development.

Outdoor Merchandise Display—Encourage compliance with guidelines to minimize any negative visual impact on Middlesex Turnpike as a gateway to town.

Place Brand—Use consistent messaging to market the recognizably unique experience of the Middlesex Turnpike business area.

Senior Lifestyle—Support continuum of care/assisted living development along with associated amenities and services.

Turnpike Streetscape—Construct a tree-lined ‘complete street’ between ‘Town Center and Essex Road; consider a dumb-bell round-about in State plans for interchange expansion.

Wayfinding, Parking & Self-Guided Tours—Direct travelers to points of interest and public parking. Develop digital self-guided walking tours.

Technology—Ensure the Middlesex Turnpike business area has access to the most advanced technology infrastructure.
Saybrook Point

A picturesque, historic waterfront where the Connecticut River meets Long Island Sound
Where are we?

With remarkable views of the River flowing into the Sound, Saybrook Point offers history, leisure and natural beauty attracting residents and visitors.

**Tourism**—Saybrook Point served a significant role in Connecticut's colonial history as the site of the first Fort erected on its shores. Today, visitors and summer residents flock to the Point to enjoy cool temperatures, scenic views, historic sites, boating, fishing, dining, walking, biking and mini golf. The historic Fort Saybrook Monument Park, Gardiner's Landing Park, town-owned pavilion and mini golf, and walkable Causeway provide incomparable public waterfront access and open space enabling all residents and visitors to experience the spectacular beauty of the Connecticut River as it flows into Long Island Sound.

**OPPORTUNITY**—Old Saybrook's location and reputation as a "Beach Town" brings a near constant flow of visitors by boat, train and car during the summer season. Visitor traffic slows after Labor Day making retail, restaurant and hospitality businesses reliant on one season to support operations all year. Promoting Old Saybrook's beauty, history, amenities and events in the "off season" can build the Town's reputation as a year-round destination showcasing Saybrook Point and other unique places within the town.

Where are we going?

As relates to the Saybrook Point business area of Old Saybrook, it is the Town's strategy to partner public and private interests looking for opportunities...

...for increasing tourism during the fall, winter and spring to enjoy Saybrook Point and to redevelop underperforming properties as destinations that attract visitors year round.

Saybrook Point draws visitors from nearby neighborhoods as well as from around the world. On any given day during the summer fishermen cast lines from its shore, boaters dock at Harbor One or Saybrook Point Marina, events are happening at the Pavilion, history buffs wander the fort location and all ages play mini golf. Many tourism opportunities remain when cooler temperatures arrive including nature-based, history-based, recreation-based and culture-based. The Town will promote the tourism assets of Saybrook Point to capture a share of travelers seeking these experiences year round.

Creative redevelopment of available space and connecting existing points of interest will draw a diverse clientele to enjoy Saybrook Point. Semi-permanent structures for artisans, a floating restaurant, an outdoor entertainment pavilion and fully connected pathways are some examples.

The Town will support efforts to continue developing visitor destinations that blend with the existing businesses, historic sites, scenic setting and character of Saybrook Point to enhance the visitor experience.

How do we get there?

The Town prescribes these tactics as its Plan for the next decade:

**Coastal Loop**—Construct sidewalks, on-street parking and bike lanes on Rte. 154 from Saybrook Pt. to each end of Old Boston Post Rd; extend 9-Town Transit service.

**Coastal Resilience Corridor**—Protect infrastructure, critical facilities or historic resources in business areas via raised roadways, low bridges or greenways.

**Heritage & Character Preservation**—Nominate eligible sites to the Register of Historic Places; support adaptive reuse of buildings or appropriate landscaping of cemeteries and parks recognized as significant contributors, especially in natural hazard areas; promote sites of interest.

**Live/Work Lofts**—Integrate the multiple uses of Saybrook Pt. in live/work units for occupations benefiting from proximity to natural, parklike or recreational settings.

**Restaurant and Open Air Market**—Encourage development of a new restaurant; allow small retail kiosks and food trucks to create an adaptive place of interest.

**Riverwalk Recreation**—Acquire vacant property to develop a riverside destination at Saybrook Pt.; build a sustainable restroom.

**Small Harbor Dredging**—Sustain and increase the use of our harbors, waterways and marinas.

**Underground Utilities**—Bury overhead utility lines to clear visual interruptions and protect services from severe weather.

**Wayfinding, Parking & Self-Guided Tours**—Direct travelers to points of interest and public parking. Develop digital self-guided tours.
School House Workforce Development Center

A center of education, workforce training and industry
The School House business area offers the high school, restaurants and housing in a campus setting for life-long learning and workforce development.

**Workforce Development**—The Old Saybrook High School campus and successful businesses here sit adjacent and across Route 1 from neighborhoods of single family homes. Adjacent to the school but tucked behind houses out of sight of Route 1 sits a 300,000 square foot industrial building on a 30 acre property. Formerly the home of Donnelley Printing, the building sold at auction with plans to make needed repairs to the neglected building and lease unused space to tenants. Just west of School House Road, other properties sit with significant potential for mixed-use development to diversify existing housing options and complement the existing restaurant and retail amenities that attract students, residents and workers.

**Opportunity**—Creating a more comfortable, welcoming and safe pedestrian environment is key to making the School House Pedestrian Node a pedestrian-friendly campus-like live/learn/work neighborhood. Incorporating the Donnelley building into a broader plan to create affordable live/work space for artists and entrepreneurs, business incubator space, maker space, and training opportunities for students of all ages would give renewed purpose to this area.

As relates to the School House business area of Old Saybrook, it is the Town’s strategy to partner public and private interests looking for opportunities...

...to support workforce and business development in a location with diverse retail and housing options to create a thriving campus-like neighborhood.

Mixed-use development of properties here will offer a greater selection of housing options. Adding a broader mix of retail goods and services would foster the creation of a complete live/work neighborhood. The Town will encourage redevelopment that provides a mix of retail and housing needed support students and budding entrepreneurs.

School House Road needs an improved environment for walking and biking to become a true Pedestrian Node. Students, residents and workers need sidewalks and improved traffic management to access existing and potential housing, retailers, restaurants, educational facilities and business space from any direction around the intersection of School House Road and Route 1. The Town will support the development of complete streets to serve the neighborhood.

The massive Donnelley building could house any number of education-related businesses, artist live/work space, or training facilities to supplement the education of high school students and others wanting to improve or gain new skills. Partnerships with local businesses and manufacturers could bring specialized training to the space. Universities and colleges could lease space to establish satellite educational centers. All of these would complement the high school and expand it to create a Workforce Development and Business Incubator Campus. The Town will encourage efforts to create a campus that provides workforce training and affordable business development space.

The Town prescribes these tactics as its plan for the next decade:

**Coastal Resilience Corridor**—Protect infrastructure, critical facilities or historic resources in business areas via raised roadways, low bridges or greenways.

**Landscaped Complete Streets**—Implement the 2015 Tri-Town Route 1 Study’s “complete street” for all users with landscaping improvements along the entire length of the Route 1 corridor.

**Heritage & Character Preservation**—Allocate funds for acquisition of the Beacon Hill landmark peak as dedicated open space.

**Link To Academia**—Partner public/private/ academic institutions with local industry for product or workforce development.

**Pedestrian Node**—Allow a mix of uses at intersections with Route 1 to encourage street-oriented development that includes accessory and affordable apartments.

**Place Brand**—Use consistent messaging to market a recognizably unique experience for School House Workforce Development Ctr.

**Revitalization Incentives**—Use TIF or other tools to encourage private investment in adaptive reuse, transit improvements, facade updates, and commercial blight remedy.

**Incubation & Co-Working Space**—Develop space to support and attract small businesses and entrepreneurs.

**Training-To-Jobs Pipeline**—Connect students and adults to skill-building programs needed to fill local job vacancies.
Spencer Plain Gateway

A unique mix of retail shopping, dining and living less than half a mile from Interstate 95
Where are we?  | Where are we going?  | How do we get there?
---|---|---
**OPPORTUNITY** | **OBJECTIVE** | **ACTION**

Excellent access from Interstate 95 and a powerful mix of national and regional retailers in the area make the shops at Spencer Plain a destination.

**Gateway**—The intersection of the Boston Post and Spencer Plain roads is, in essence, the southern gateway to Old Saybrook. Traffic calms here as motorists stop off the interstate highway to arrive at shoreline points of interest—beaches, summer homes and shopping. New and refreshed commercial buildings line the sidewalks, and adjacent clusters of planned neighborhoods and seashore communities lie within walking distance of this Route 1 node of activity.

Working with developers over the last decade, the Town effectively reimagined, redesigned and redeveloped the layout of traditional strip-center shopping in an automobile-dominated place of business. Today, these simple design choices accentuate how businesses put their customer’s “feet on the street.” Major retailers line the streets with wide decorative sidewalks, safe street crossings, colorful awnings and shared driveways for cars at this community center.

**Opportunity**—Spencer Plain offers close proximity to established neighborhoods, other nearby shopping venues, and highway access. Residents and visitors support the array of retail, restaurants, and housing. Businesses draw patrons from the larger regional market. Additional development potential lies in well-placed yet underperforming properties as transformed into first class retail, office and living space.

As relates to the Spencer Plain business area of Old Saybrook, it is the Town's strategy to partner public and private interests looking for opportunities...

...for “experience-driven design” that anchors and blends uses at the Spencer Plain gateway.

The shoreline area’s assembly of outlet shopping, tourist retreats and recreational entertainment supplements the specialized purpose of this compact community center. The evolving streetscape lends itself to a more complex open-air design. Mixed-use development will round out the existing mix of retail and neighborhoods of single family homes. Living and working in-place supports high-end retailers, sit-down restaurants, fitness centers, theaters, salons, and more. The Town will encourage development of first-class retail, office, and living space at the Spencer Plain Gateway.

To enhance Spencer Plain’s identity as a mixed-use destination, developers should be encouraged to accommodate both autos and pedestrians. Driveways should be consolidated and internal parking lots accessible from multiple sites. Once motorists arrive, they should be able to walk comfortably between buildings and shopping centers. Buildings should be along the roadway and clustered to create open spaces inviting outdoor seating for restaurants and safe pathways for pedestrians and bikers. The Town will encourage the development of buildings along the streetscape clustered to create open spaces for seating and pathways and shared parking.

The Town prescribes these tactics as its Plan for the next decade:

**Coastal Resilience Corridor**—Protect infrastructure, critical facilities or historic resources in business areas via raised roadways, low bridges or greenways.

**Landscaped Complete Streets**—Implement the 2015 Tri-Town Route 1 Study’s “complete street” for all users with landscaping improvements.

**Heritage & Character Preservation**—Support facade improvement and adaptive reuse of notable properties; nominate sites to the Register of Historic Places; promote sites of interest.

**Pedestrian Node**—Allow a mix of uses at intersections with Route 1 to encourage street-oriented development that includes accessory and affordable apartments.

**Place Brand**—Use consistent messaging to market the recognizably unique experience of the Spencer Plain Gateway.

**Powerline Greenway Trail**—Formalize the footpath as a multi-use trail southeast of Route 1 at Schoolhouse to a spur at Spencer Plain or beyond to Westbrook.

**Summer Sidewalk Sale**—Extend this 3-day shopping promotion to include the shops at Spencer Plain.

**Technology**—Ensure the Spencer Plain business area has access to the most advanced technology infrastructure.

**Wastewater Options**—Allow off-site disposal for Spencer Plain business area.
## TERMS

A compendium of terms as used in this Plan.

**Adaptive Infill** means development of vacant parcels within previously built areas. Revitalization means instilling new life and vitality into a community through activities such as infill and redevelopment.

**Attainable Workforce Housing** means housing that is affordable to workers and close to their jobs. It is homeownership, as well as rental housing, that can be reasonably afforded by a moderate to middle income, critical workforce and located in acceptable proximity to workforce centers.

**Brownfield** means a property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant.

**Complete Streets** means streets designed and operated to enable safe use and support mobility for all users. Those include people of all ages and abilities, regardless of whether they are travelling as drivers, pedestrians, bicyclists, or public transportation riders.

**Continuum of Care Living** means the increasing level of care services you may need as you continue to age from independent living options to assisted living, rehabilitation, skilled nursing and memory care services.

**Cottage Industry** means an industry whose labor force consists of family units or individuals working at home with their own equipment.

**C-PACE** is a financing program that allows Connecticut commercial building owners to spread the cost of cleaner, cheaper, and more reliable energy improvements—such as energy efficient boilers, upgraded insulation, new windows, or solar installations—over the expected life of the improvements.

**Crosswalk Art** means any freeform design to draw attention to the crosswalk.

**Multi-Modal** means the variety of transportation modes used by humans including personal vehicles, trains, public buses, bicycles, and walking.

**Financial Security** means having an income sufficient for living expenses, emergencies and financial goals for the future.

**First/Last Mile** means the beginning or end of an individual trip made primarily by public transportation with a nearby connection to home/work.

**Foreign Trade Zone (FTZ)** is a geographical area, in a United States Port of Entry, where commercial merchandise, both domestic and foreign, receives the same Customs treatment it would if it were outside the commerce of the United States. Old Saybrook falls within the FTZ area around Bradley International Airport.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A Strategic Plan for Old Saybrook’s Thriving Local Economy section of the Old Saybrook Plan of Conservation & Development adopted: 2020 effective: 2020

The Planning Commission maintains this comprehensive economic development strategy as a section of the Town’s Plan of Conservation & Development. Through this plan, the Economic Development Commission identifies the town’s strengths in a manner that promotes economic opportunity and housing availability, fosters effective transportation access, improves workforce development, enhances and protects the environment, balances resources through sound management of development, and encourages responsible growth and development.

To prepare, the Planning and Economic Development Commissions teamed up in 2018 to study the factors affecting economic development in Old Saybrook.

The Planning Commission consists of:
- Thomas R. Cox, *Chairman*
- Paula S. Kay, *Vice Chairman*
- Robert D. Missel, *Secretary*
- Kathleen A. Sugland
- Mark M. Patterson
- Douglas S. McCracken

The Economic Development Commission consists of:
- Matthew J. Pugliese, *Chairman*
- Carol A. Conklin, *Vice Chairman*
- John F. DeCristofo foro, *Secretary*
- David Cole
- Judy Ganswindt
- Sandra Roberts
- Elizabeth Swenson
- Joseph J. Arcari
- David O. Prendergast

The Committee held community forums on the morning of March 5, and midday and the evening of March 6, 2019, to gather concerns and ideas from residents and businesses about the factors affecting economic development in Old Saybrook. This Report integrates some of this information throughout.

This plan offers orientation to existing standards, recommendations to update long-held or to codify new policies, and guidance for implementation of physical improvements. As with all plans, the Board of Selectmen must champion not only the vision but also the allocation of resources necessary to leverage opportunities, both offered and created, on an ongoing basis. The Board’s approval of this report is the beginning of its pledge to do so.

Both commissions are grateful for staff assistance from: Lynette Wacker, Project Assistant; Christine Nelson, Town Planner; and Susan Beckman, Economic Development Director.
This section of the Town Plan incorporates relevant material, references real data or borrows recommendations from the following resources:


**Community Economic Resilience Toolkit**—Prepared for the Business Council of Fairfield County by the Connecticut Small Business Development Center at the UCONN School of Business. 2016.

**Connecticut Economic Development Strategy**—Department of Economic and Community Development. 2015.


**Cultural & Historic Resources**—section of the Town Plan. 2003.

**Economic Development**—section of the Town Plan. 2006.

**Ferry Point Additional Planning Concepts**—Prepared for the Land Use Department by Planimetrics. 2005.


**Mariner’s Way Route 1 East**—section of the Town Plan. 2014.


**Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan**—Updated by the Old Saybrook Planning Commission with GZA GeoEnvironmental and adopted by the Board of Selectmen, effective October 2, 2019.

**Old Saybrook Route 1 Corridor Study**—Prepared for the Board of Selectmen by the Yale Urban Design Workshop. December 2005.


**Saybrook Point Enhancement Plan**—Prepared for the Board of Selectmen by East Wharf Architects. 1998.


**Scenic Roads Plan**—section of the Town Plan. 2014.

**Scenic Route 154 Petition**—Prepared for the Board of Selectmen by the Connecticut River Estuary Regional Planning Agency. Approved by the Connecticut Department of Transportation. 2005.

**Sea Level Rise Climate Adaptation Report of Findings**—Prepared by the Land Use Department for the Board of Selectmen. 2015.

**Sidewalk Plan**—Prepared for the Planning Commission by the Land Use Department; adopted by the Board of Selectmen. 2006.

**Town Center**—section of the Town Plan. 2000.

**Transportation**—section of the Town Plan. 2003.

**Zoning Regulations**—of the Town of Old Saybrook. Updated through 2019.