



Woodbridge

Plan of Conservation & Development

Existing Conditions Inventory

September 2024

Town Hall – Photo from Town of Woodbridge



Table of Contents

- This analysis is meant to establish an inventory of existing community infrastructure and facilities in Woodbridge.
- The content of this section is informational and does not include field verification.
- Data was collected from a variety of sources including but not limited to, the Town of Woodbridge, the South-Central Council of Governments, the State of Connecticut, and UCONN, among others.

Existing Conditions Inventory

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Land Use & Zoning

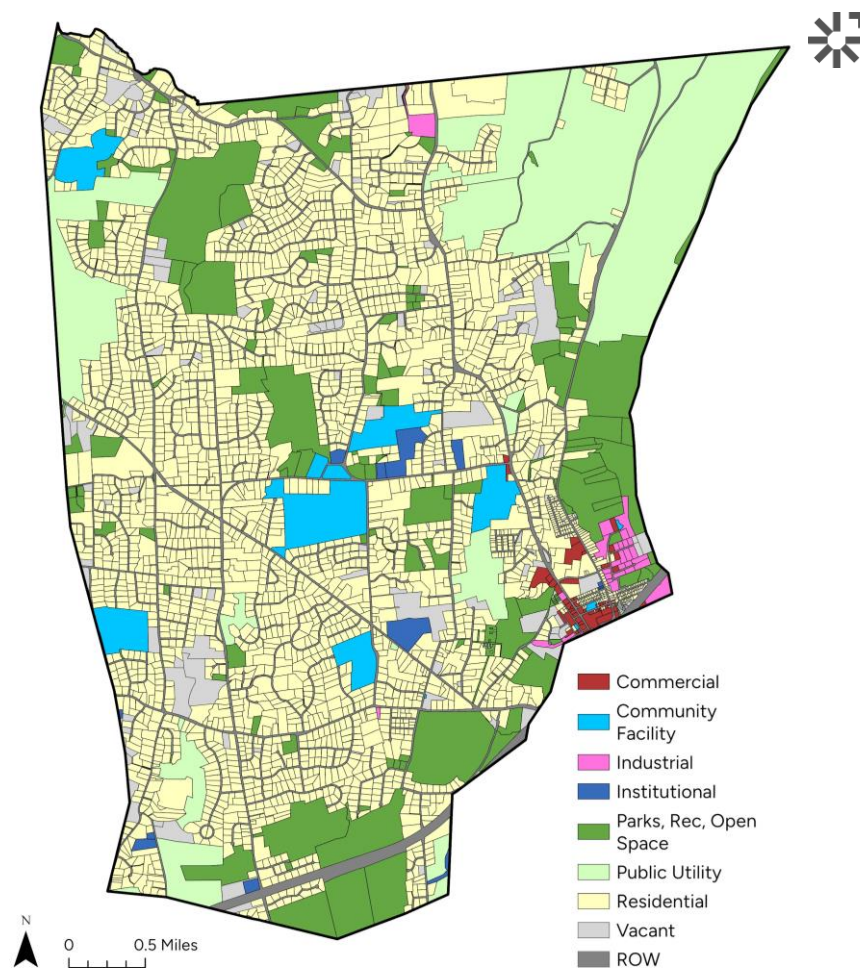
Welcome Sign - Photo from NY Times



Land Use

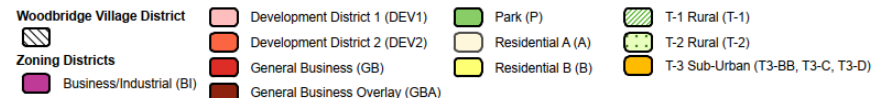
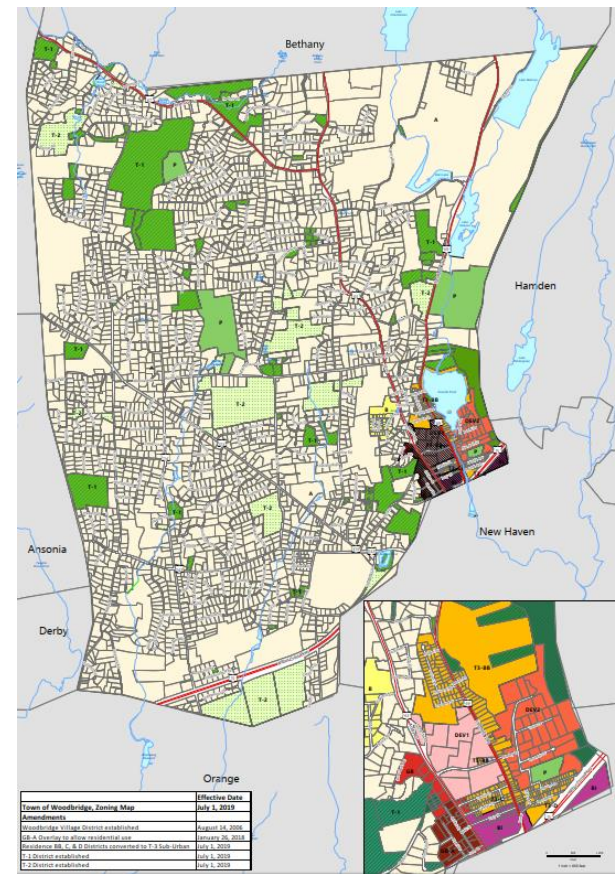
- Woodbridge's land use (by area) includes:

- Residential, 51.5%
- Public Utility, 16.2%
- Parks, Recreation, & Open Space, 16.1%
- Right-of-Way, 6.6%
- Vacant Land, 4.3%
- Community Facilities, 3.4%
- Industrial, 0.7%
- Institutional, 0.7%
- Commercial, 0.5%



Zoning

- Residential Districts (A, B, T-3 Sub-Urban) permit low density residential uses on lots ranging from 15,000-65,000 sf.
 - Residential districts allow higher density development when served by public sewer and water and not within a public water supply watershed.
- Commercial & Industrial Districts (GB, BI) allow for business and industrial uses, with no permission for residential uses.
 - The GBA overlay zone allows some residential uses within the General Business zone.
- Mixed-Use Districts (DEV1, DEV2) allow for mixed-use configurations.
 - DEV1 accommodates commercial and limited residential uses, while DEV2 allows for mixed commercial and industrial, with connections to recreational spaces.
- The Woodbridge Village District is an overlay zone with distinctive character, landscape, and historic value.
- Woodbridge also has two Rural Districts (T-1, T-2), one Park District (P), and a Flood Hazard Overlay.





Plan of Conservation & Development (2015)

- Woodbridge's 2015 POCD analyzed community data and existing conditions, conducted a build-out analysis, established a future land use plan, and made various recommendations for municipal action, some of which include:
 - Simplify, Update, and Modernize Zoning Regulations
 - Diversify the Housing Stock (Age-Restricted Housing, Multifamily, Starter Homes, Accessory Apartments)
 - Build the Commercial Base (Engagement with Existing Businesses, Business Improvement District, Marketing)
 - Increase Pedestrian & Bicycle Connectivity (Bike Lanes, Pedestrian Corridors, Village Sidewalks, Parking Configurations)
 - Natural Resource, Park, Recreation, and Open Space Protections (Vulnerable Species, Water Quality, Scenic Character, Wetlands, Soils, Inventories, Classification System(s), Maintenance Plans, etc.)



Regional Plan of Conservation & Development (2018)

- The South-Central Regional Council of Governments adopted its Regional POCD in 2018, organized around three broad themes:
 - The Human Environment, the Region's People and Housing;
 - The Natural Environment, the Region's Coastal, Agricultural, and other Natural Resources;
 - The Built Environment, the Region's Land Use, Economic Development, Transportation, Ports, Utilities, etc.
- Overarching strategies for the Region include:
 - Promoting growth and transit-oriented development within existing town and village centers.
 - Ensuring the protection and preservation of natural resources for the ecological, economic, and cultural benefits they offer.
 - Increasing housing diversity where it can be supported.
 - Promoting easy access to job centers.



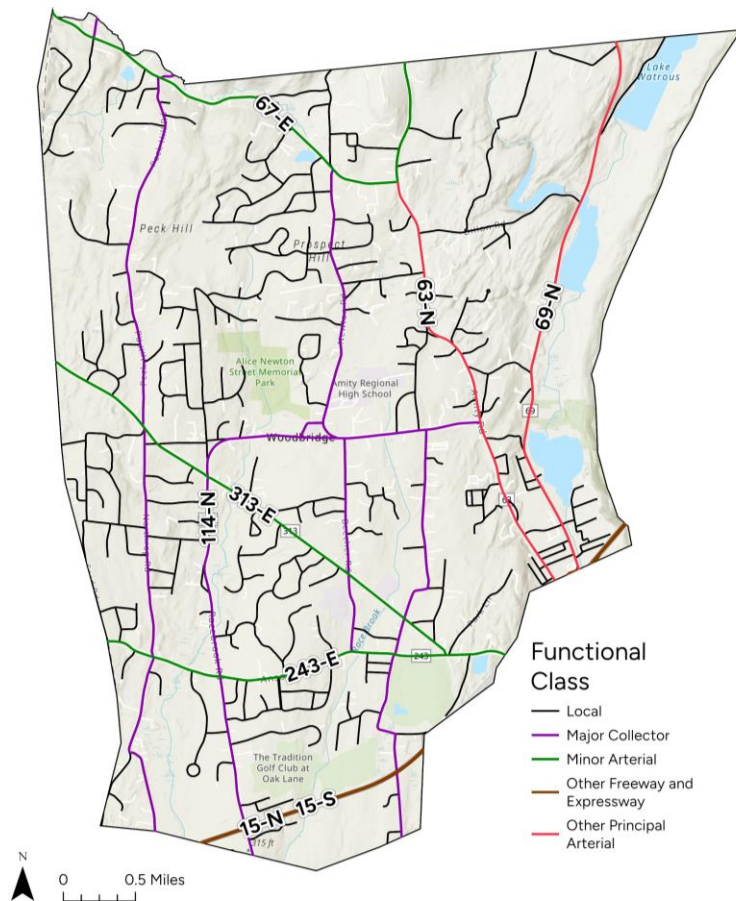
Transportation Infrastructure

Photo from Homes.com



Functional Class

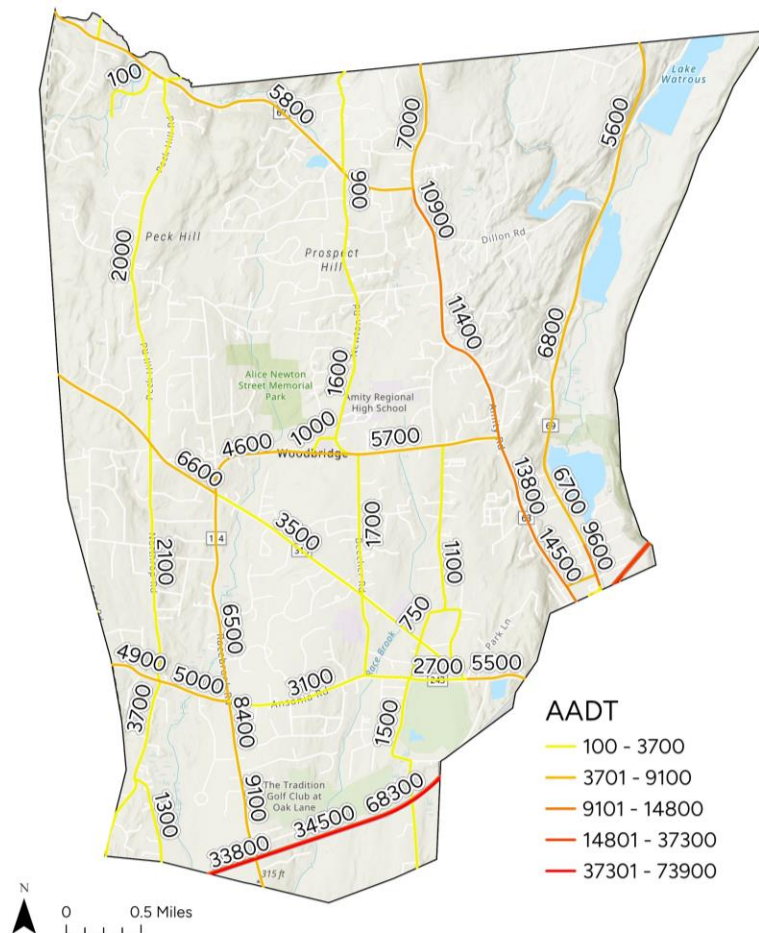
- Functional Classification is a roadway hierarchy used to determine eligibility for State and Federal transportation funds. Roads classified as collectors and arterials may be eligible for State and Federal funding programs, including:
 - Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG)
 - Local Transportation Capital Improvement Program (LOTICIP)
- Principal Arterials in Town include Amity Road (Route 63) and the Litchfield Turnpike (Route 69), while the Merritt Parkway (Route 15) is the only other freeway / expressway.
- Woodbridge has a number of major collector, minor arterial, and local roads.





Traffic Volumes

- The State of Connecticut collects annual average daily traffic (AADT) counts, which measures the annual total vehicular traffic along a route, averaged over 365 days.
- The Merritt Parkway (Route 15) has the highest AADT in Woodbridge, with 73,900 vehicles / day.
- Amity Road (Route 63) had the second highest AADT, ranging from 11,400-14,500 vehicles / day, with the larger end of the range occurring closest to the New Haven line.
- Local roads have significantly less traffic volume.

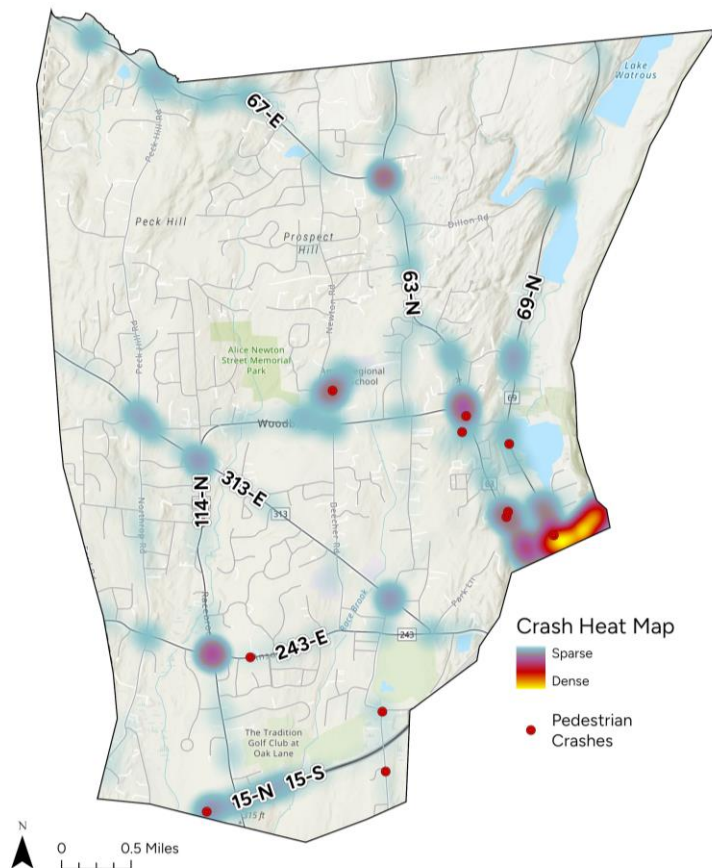




Traffic Safety

- Since 2019, 79.2% of motor vehicle accidents occurred on State roads and 12.8% on local roads (8% unknown).
 - Accidents are most common on the Merritt Parkway and on roads within the Business and T-3 Districts.
- Most accidents involve property damage only, however, there have been 10 fatal accidents since 2019.
- There have been 14 pedestrian accidents since 2019, but 2024 has the highest rate of pedestrian crashes to date.

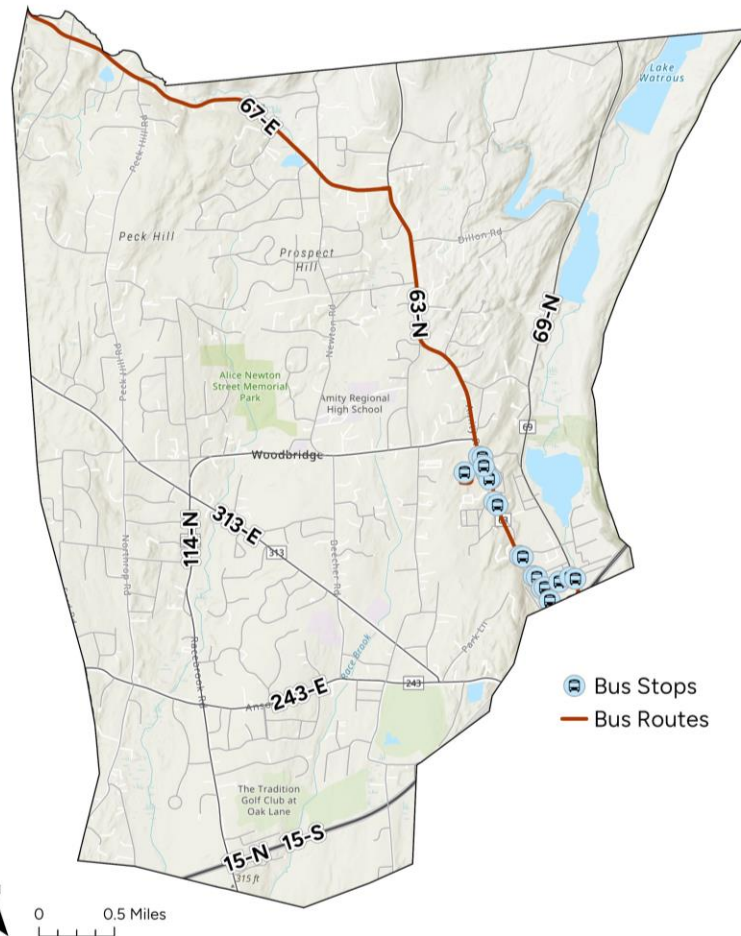
Year	Property	Injury	Fatal	Total	Pedestrian Crashes	% of Accidents
2019	251	81	1	333	1	0.3%
2020	157	74	3	234	2	0.9%
2021	198	92	3	293	3	1.0%
2022	266	76	1	343	4	1.2%
2023	229	74	2	305	1	0.3%
2024	2	31	-	33	3	9.1%





Public Transportation

- Woodbridge has multiple bus stops along the CT Transit 243 & 243A Routes, connecting the Town's higher-density area to Downtown New Haven.
- Stops are primarily located along Amity Road and Lucy Street, with multiple stops near the Jewish Community Center and Amity Shopping Center.





Regional Transportation Planning

- The SCRCOG Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) is a 20-year regional transportation plan, adopted in 2023 and in effect until 2050. Major policies included in the MTP are:
 - Accessibility and Mobility, Safety, Complete Streets, Economic Vitality, Environmental Protection, and System Integration, Efficiency, and Preservation
- In addition to the MTP, SCRCOG has developed a four-year (FY25-28) Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP). Projects included within the TIP are eligible for federal funding.
 - Woodbridge is scheduled for interchange improvements at Exit 59 of the Merritt Parkway and Route 69.

Community Facilities & Infrastructure

Photo from Homes.com





Community Facilities

- Community Facilities include Town-owned buildings and sites, used for the purposes of Town operations and public amenities. These include:

Town Hall & Recreation Department. 11 Meetinghouse Lane

Police Department & The Woodbridge Center (Senior Center). 4 Meetinghouse Lane

Volunteer Fire Department. 100 Center Road

Public Library. 10 Newton Road

Parks & Public Works Departments. 15 Meetinghouse Lane

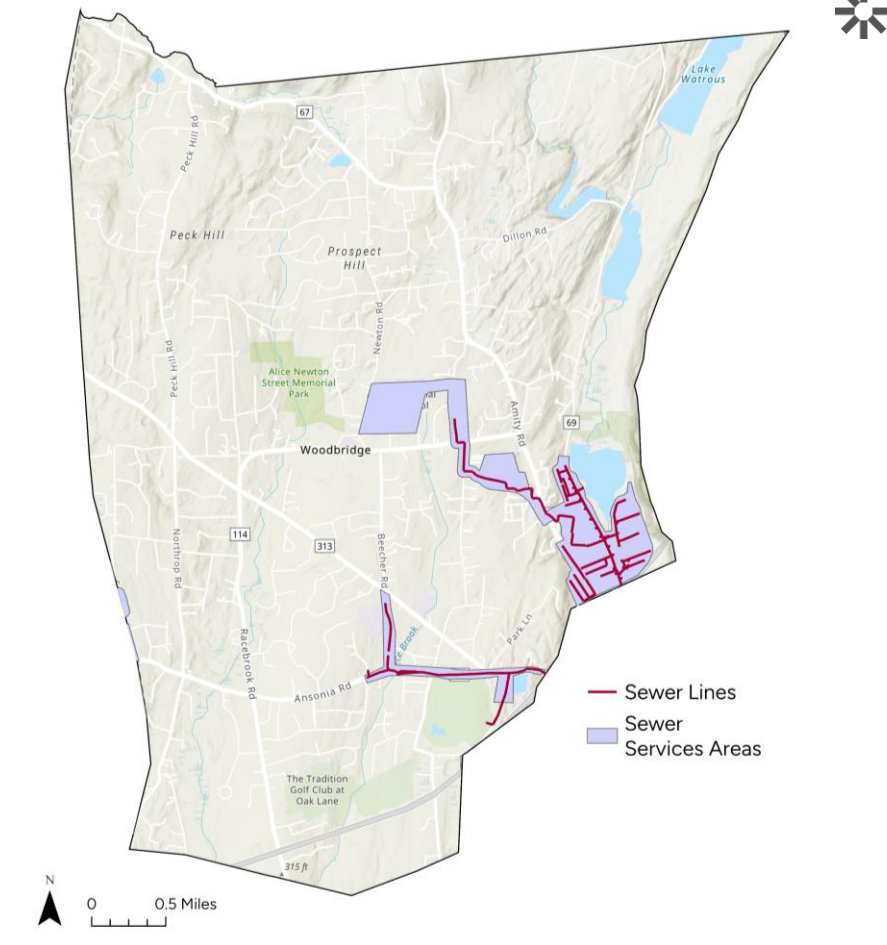
Transfer & Recycling Station. 85 Acorn Hill Road Ext.

Beecher Road School. 40 Beecher Road

Amity Regional High School. 25 Newton Road

Sewer Infrastructure

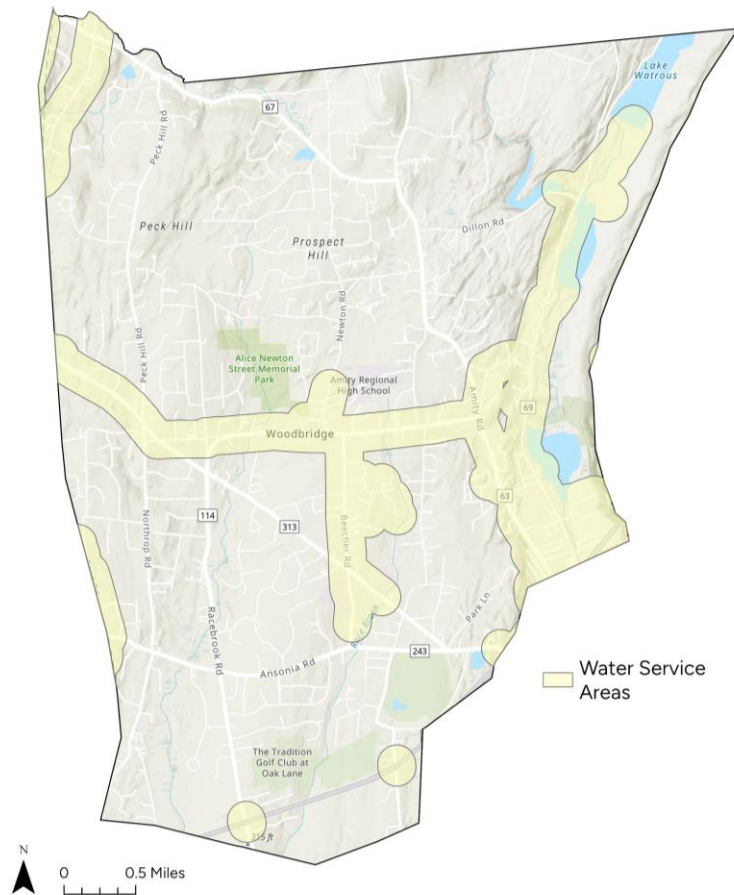
- Woodbridge has approximately 8 miles of sewer lines, primarily found in the southeast portion of the Town, along its border with New Haven.
- Sewer lines coming from New Haven are owned, operated, and maintained by the Greater New Haven Water Pollution Control Authority (GNHWPCA).





Water Infrastructure

- Woodbridge has some public water infrastructure, provided by the Regional Water Authority (RWA).
- Public water is accessible along Center and Beecher Roads, and portions of Route 313, 63, and 69.
- The RWA's 2023 Water Quality Report indicates that water quality meets, or exceeds, all state and federal requirements.
 - The RWA also participates in EPA monitoring for unregulated contaminants, including PFOA & PFAS, which found that levels were within current acceptable ranges.





Capital Improvements Plan

- Woodbridge includes a 1-year and 6-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) in its annual budget.
- According to the preliminary FY25 budget there are 23 CIP projects planned for 2025, 17% of which is proposed to be funded by grants. Major budget components include:
 - 45% directed towards Public Works, for road & bridge projects
 - 24% directed towards the Fire Commission, for vehicle and equipment replacements
 - 10% directed towards the Board of Education, for an ADA playground and facility feasibility study
- The 6-year CIP list other major projects to be undertaken through 2030, including but not limited to:
 - Beecher School Enhancements
 - Town Building Improvements
 - Demolition & Environmental Remediation at the Country Club
 - Miscellaneous Equipment Replacement across Departments
 - Pool, Gym, and Court/Field Repairs



Parks, Recreation, & Open Space

Photo from WoodbridgeDogPark.org





Park & Recreational Facilities

- Woodbridge has numerous parks, fields, and preserves that contribute to its park and recreation facilities, including:
 - Town Green
 - The Fitzgerald Property, including the Woodbridge Dog Park and Community Gardens
 - Woodbridge Athletic Fields
- The Recreation department offers various youth and adult programming year-round, including sports and educational programs.
- The Town is also converting the “Old Firehouse” into a Community Center, which is anticipated for completion in 2025.
- West Rock Ridge State Park is also partially located within the Town, along its borders with Hamden and New Haven.

Fields

Pease Road (2)

Center Road (2)

West River (3)

Acorn Hill (2)

Courts

Pease Road (1)

Center Road (4)

Beecher Road (3)

Former Country Club (2)

Playgrounds

Pease Road (1)

Center Road (1)

West River (1)

Beecher Road(2)



Open Space Plan

- Woodbridge updated its Open Space Plan in 2020, which defines open spaces as any area, including forest and farmland, that when set aside for preservation:
 - Maintains and enhances the conservation of the natural and scenic resources, Protects biodiversity and habitats, Protects natural streams and water supply, Protects conservation soils and wetlands, Protects against erosion, Enhances the value to the public of abutting or neighboring parks, forest, wildlife preserves, greenways, trails, land trust properties, or other open spaces, Enhances public active and passive recreation opportunities, Preserves historic and archeological sites, Promotes orderly suburban development, or Maintains and enhances scenic value, thus preserving the rural character of the Town.
- The Open Space Plan includes fully-protected and unprotected open land.
 - Fully protected open spaces include town parks, state and federally protected areas, deed restricted properties, and land trust properties, as well as Regional Water Authority (RWA) land.
 - Unprotected open land includes municipally and RWA managed land that is not permanently protected, PA-490 land, and other privately-owned lands which are not protected but contribute to open spaces.
- The Plan also identifies various open space objectives (including property classifications and management plans) and identifies properties worthy of acquisition by the Town.



Greenways

- Greenways are defined by the State as an open space corridor that may:
 - Protect natural resources, preserve scenic landscapes and historical resources or offer opportunities for recreation or nonmotorized transportation;
 - Connect existing protected areas and provide access to the outdoors;
 - Be located along a defining natural feature, such as a waterway, along a man-made corridor, including an unused right-of-way, traditional trail routes or historic barge canals or;
 - Be a greenspace along a highway or around a village.
- The 12-mile Woodbridge Greenway was officially designated in 2002 and serves as an important link within the regional greenway system, connecting New Haven, Hamden, Bethany, Seymour, Ansonia, and Derby.
 - According to the Town's Open Space Plan, the Greenway begins in West Rock Ridge State Park, travels through the Regional Water Authority's land, and across numerous municipal parcels and utility easements.
- The West River Greenway was officially designated in 2015 and traverses five towns - Bethany, Hamden, New Haven, West Haven and Woodbridge.
 - In Woodbridge, the Greenway is proposed to travel along the West River and extend to Konolds Pond.



Trails

- Woodbridge has over 35 miles of trails within the Town, including Town-managed, Land Trust, and State trails. Trail systems include:
 - Regional Water Authority Trails, Alice Newton Memorial Park, Bethany & Massaro Community Farms, Bishop & Race Brook Estates, Fitzgerald & Meadows Tracts, Pine Hill, Elderslie Preserve, among others.
- The goal of the Town's trail system is to provide a usable and safe experience for residents and visitors and provide connectivity to other trails and amenities.
- The Town has developed a Trails Handbook to guide trail maintenance and management.
 - Trails are maintained throughout the year, including blaze maintenance, brush cutting, drain cleaning, and trail use evaluation, among other activities.



Historic & Cultural Resources

The Darling House – Photo from Wikipedia





Town History

- Originally known as Amity Parish, Woodbridge was incorporated in 1784 and included Bethany Parish until 1832, when Bethany seceded and became its own community.
- Woodbridge (named after the first settled minister in the community, Benjamin Woodbridge) attracted residents from nearby New Haven, looking for a quieter and healthier lifestyle.
- The Town was primarily an agricultural community with cattle, dairy, ice, and hay being the primary products produced within and shipped out of the community.
- The Town's population remained limited through the late 1800s, but residential development increased following the expanded use of automobiles, and Woodbridge became a modern suburb following World War I.



Historic Districts

- The Woodbridge Green Historic District was listed on the National Register in 2003 and encompasses the Town's historic center along Meetinghouse Lane.
 - The District is home to various government, educational, and religious structures, featuring mid-19th century Greek Revival, 20th century Colonial Revival, and Neo-Classical Revival architecture.
 - Some specific structures within the District include the Town Hall (1919), Center School (1928), the Clark Memorial Library (1940), and the Woodbridge Fire Station (1930).

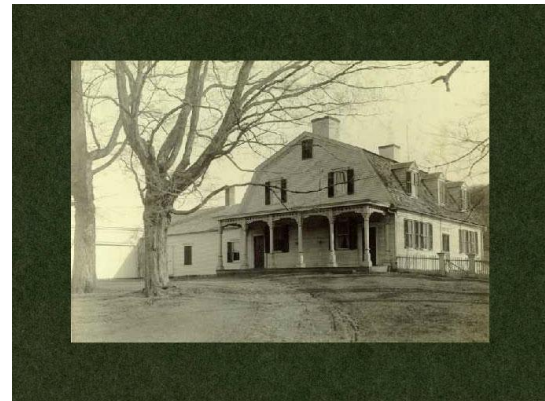


*The First Church of Christ - Photo by Tony Cenicola /
New York Times*



Historic Structures

- The **Darling House**, located on the Litchfield Turnpike, is a 1770's Colonial Cape residence. The property is owned by the Town and home to the Amity & Woodbridge Historical Society.
- The **Castle-Russell House**, located on Amity Road, is a mid-19th century dwelling featuring Greek Revival architecture.
- The **Chatfield Farmstead**, located in northwest Woodbridge, was historically part of a working dairy farm but is now an active horse farm. The Farmstead features Gothic Revival and Late Victorian/Italianate architecture and contributes to the Town's agricultural history.
- The **Cement Kiln**, built in 1874, is a national landmark and an example of early industry within the area.
- The **Old South School**, is a one-room schoolhouse located on Johnson Road. The schoolhouse was renovated in 2013 and currently serves as an interactive classroom for local students to learn about the Town's history.



The Darling House, Photo from the Amity & Woodbridge Historical Society website



The Chatfield Farmstead, Photo from Historic Barns of Connecticut website

Cultural Facilities & Resources

- Woodbridge is home to the first Palestinian museum in North American, the ***Palestine Museum US***. The museum maintains a permanent collection of Palestinian art and a library of Palestinian history and culture.
- The Amity Creative Theatre, located within the Amity Regional High School, produces local theatre productions featuring students and broader community members.



**PALESTINE
MUSEUM**



Exhibit at the Palestine Museum US. Photo by Meg Dalton at Connecticut Public



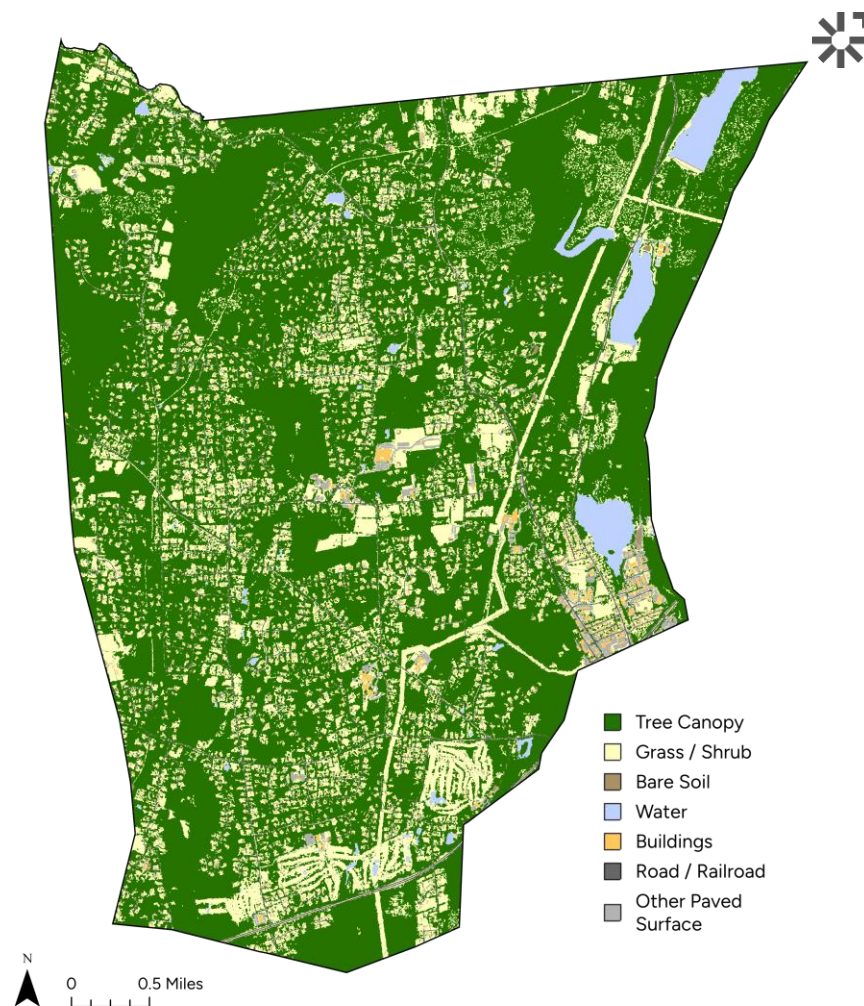
Natural Resources

Photo from WoodbridgeLandTrust.org



Land Cover

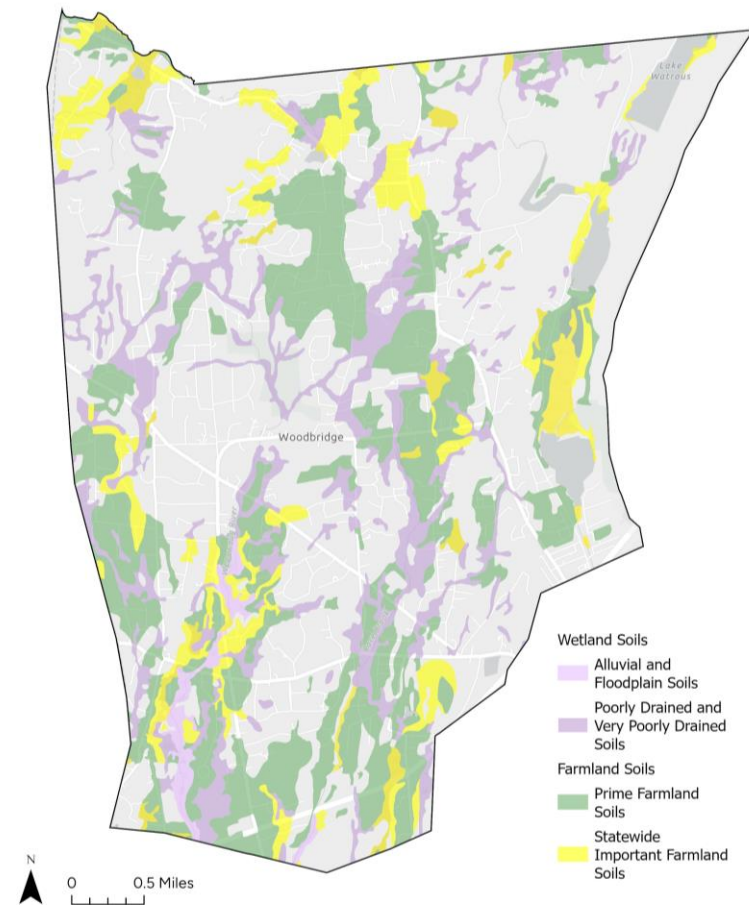
- Woodbridge is predominately forested, with significant tree cover, and grass / shrub cover.
- There are approximately 1,075 acres of impervious cover, which includes buildings, pavement, and impervious unpaved areas.
 - Impervious cover is most concentrated in Woodbridge's commercial, industrial, and mixed-use districts.





Soils

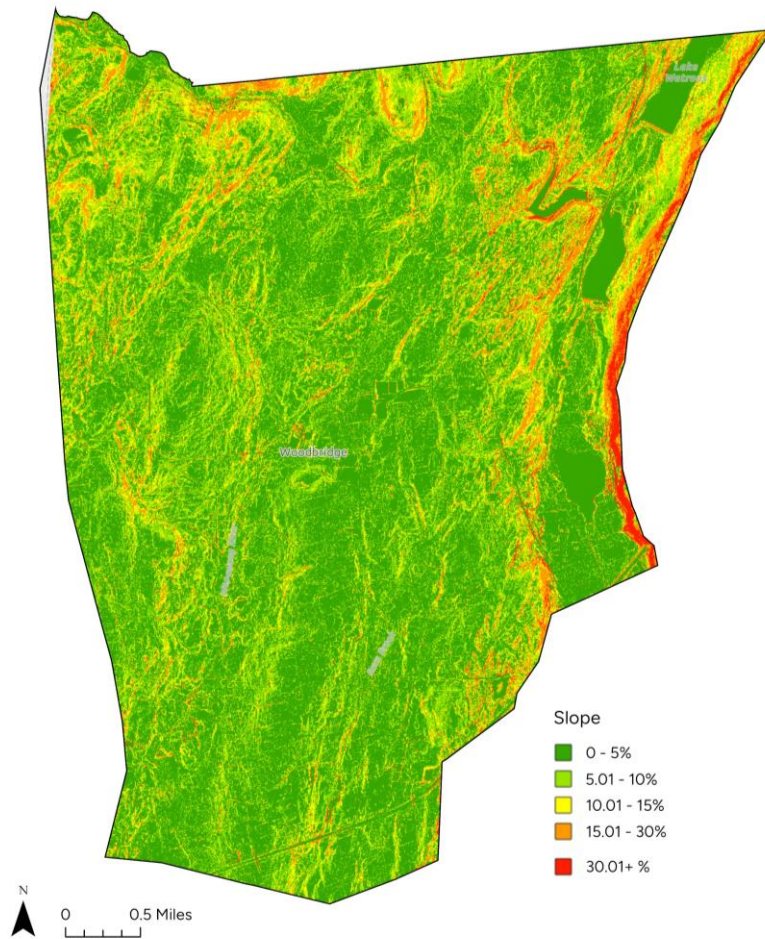
- The Soil Survey Geographic Database classifies soils for their potential for farming, flooding, subsurface sewage disposal systems, and stormwater runoff management.
 - Wetland soils are typically found along streams and in floodplains.
 - Hydric/Wetland soils are not suitable for development or subsurface sewage disposal systems.
 - Wetlands provide numerous ecosystem services such as groundwater retention, water quality improvement, and fish and wildlife habitat.
 - Farmland soils are those that have the best physical and chemical make up to support food production.
 - These soils are generally more suitable for stormwater runoff management techniques (dry and wet basins).





Steep Slopes

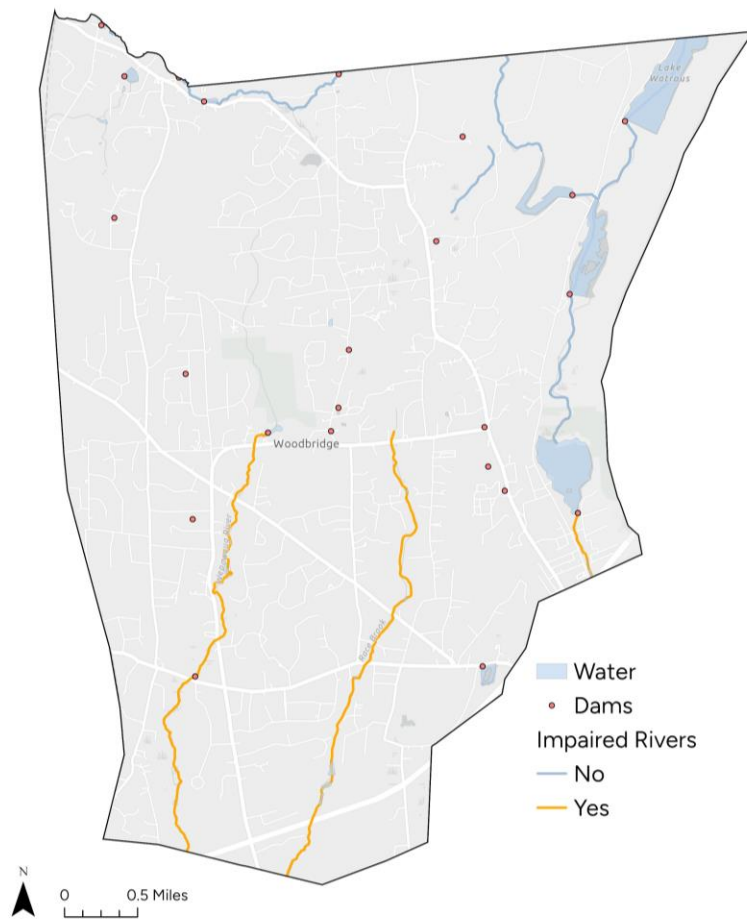
- Steep slopes provide wildlife habitat, recreational opportunities, and scenic views within the community, but are more susceptible to erosion.
- Steep slopes, according to the Town's Zoning Regulations, are those equal to or greater than 25%.
- The Woodbridge Open Space Plan includes a steep slope protection goal to "control soil erosion and water runoff, as well as to maintain scenic views of and from areas such as bluffs, hills, ridges, and mountains, etc."





Surface Water Resources

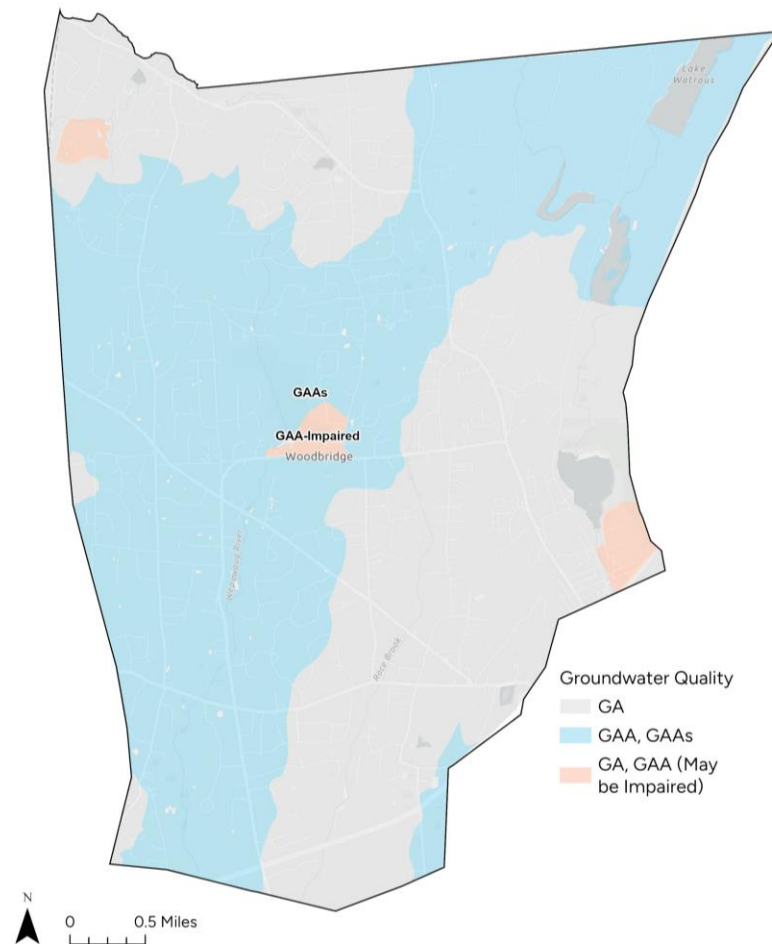
- There are multiple subregional watersheds within the Town; however, the largest include the Wepawaug River, West River, Bladen's River, and Sargent River watersheds.
- There are three reservoirs in Woodbridge – Lake Watrous, Glen Lake, and Lake Dawson.
- CT DEEP assesses waterbodies for their quality related to aquatic habitat, recreation, fish consumption, and drinking water. In 2022:
 - The Wepawaug River was noted as impaired for recreational quality.
 - The West River was noted as impaired for fish consumption and recreation.





Ground Water Resources

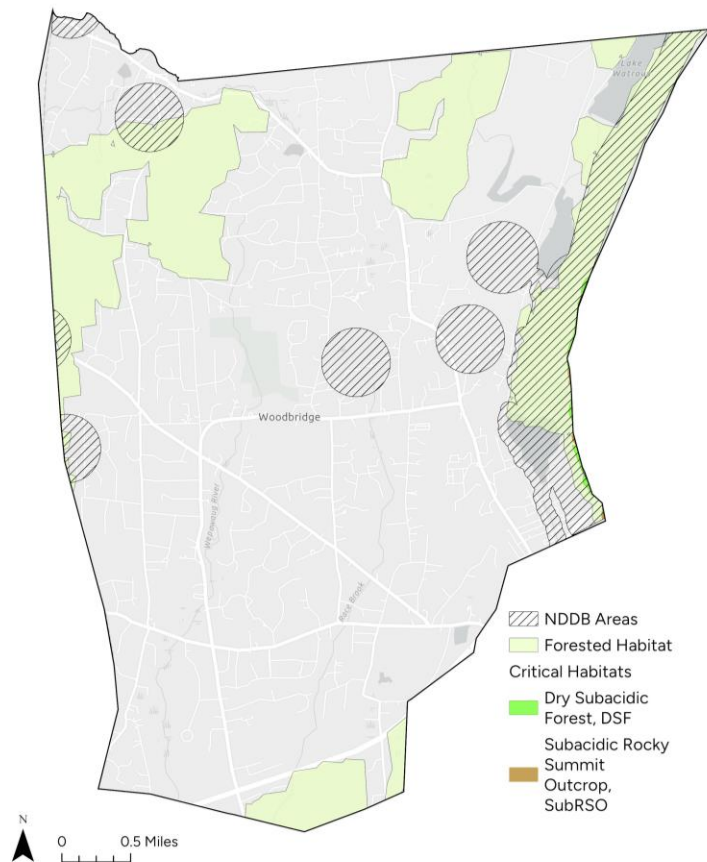
- Despite some access to public water, many Woodbridge residents get their daily water (and drinking water) from private wells.
- CT DEEP has classified groundwater in Woodbridge as:
 - GA: Existing private and potential public or private supplies of water suitable for drinking without treatment
 - GAA: Existing or potential public supply of water suitable for drinking without treatment. Some areas are noted as GAA but may be impaired.
- There are no recognized aquifers within Woodbridge.





Flora & Fauna

- A community's flora and fauna are important for a balanced ecosystem. Flora refers to the collection of plants, while fauna refers to the wildlife within an area.
- The Natural Diversity Database (NDDDB) shows approximate locations of endangered, threatened, or special concern species within a community.
 - Woodbridge has numerous NDDDB and critical habitat areas, primarily within the West Rock Ridge State Park.
- Critical habitats in Woodbridge include Dry Subacidic Forest (typically near mountain summits, and dominated by white ash, hickory, and hophornbeam trees) and Subacidic Rocky Summit Outcrops (exposed ledges and outcrops, with low vegetation).
- Identified wildlife species in Woodbridge include the eastern box turtle, eastern hognose snake, wood snake, peregrine falcon, and northern goshawk, among others.





Climate Resilience & Sustainability

Photo from CT Trail Finder

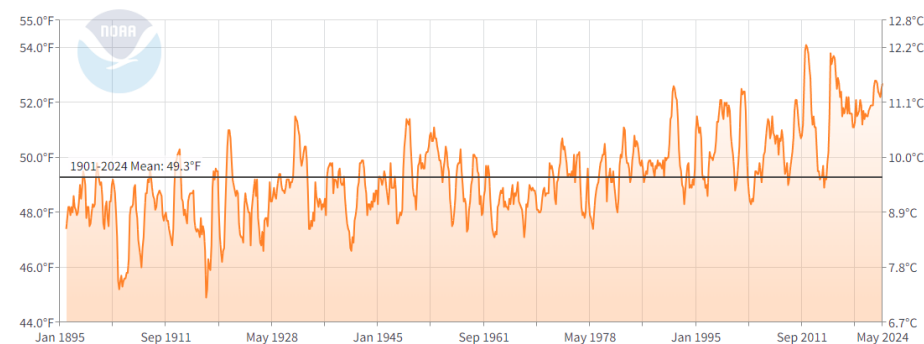




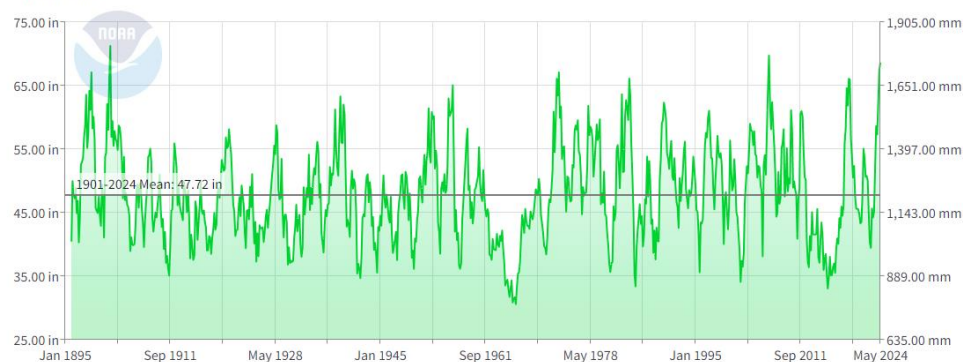
Climate Projections

- By 2050, the average temperature in Connecticut is expected to increase about 5°F, and average precipitation is expected to increase by 8% (4 in/year).
 - Extreme temperature events, like summer nights, heat wave days, and tropical nights are expected to increase in quantity, while frost days are expected to decrease by 2050.
- Droughts are expected to increase in frequency and intensity over the next century despite increased precipitation levels.
- Flood risk is expected to increase adjacent to increases in the frequency and intensity of heavy precipitation events.

New Haven County, Connecticut Average Temperature
12-Month Period



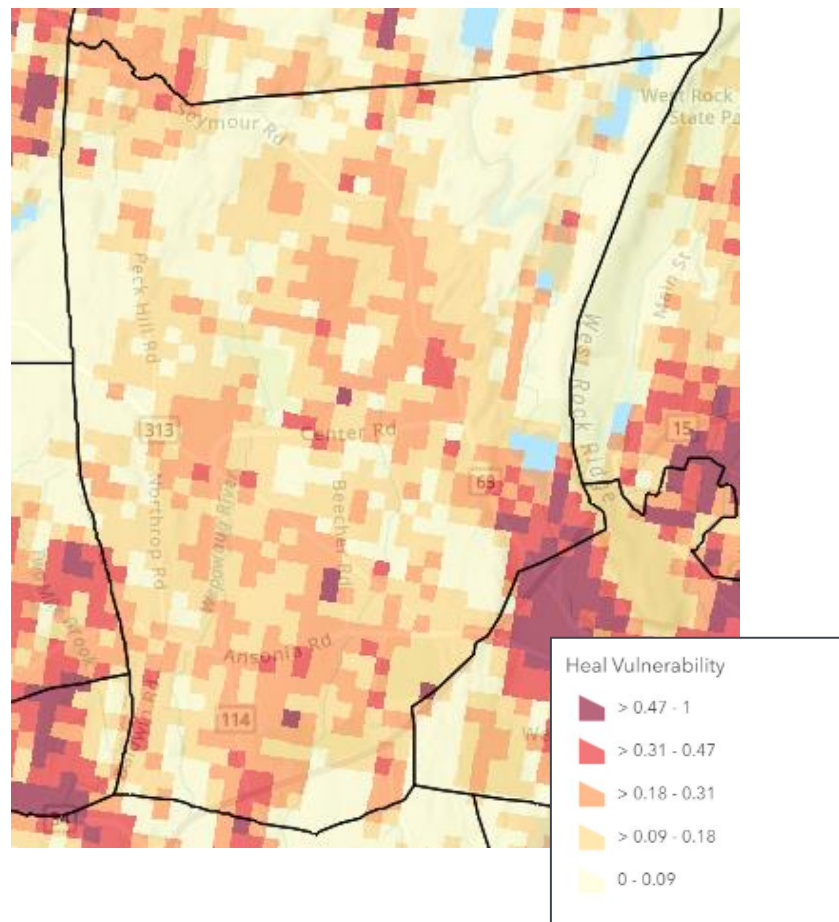
New Haven County, Connecticut Precipitation
12-Month Period





Heat Vulnerability

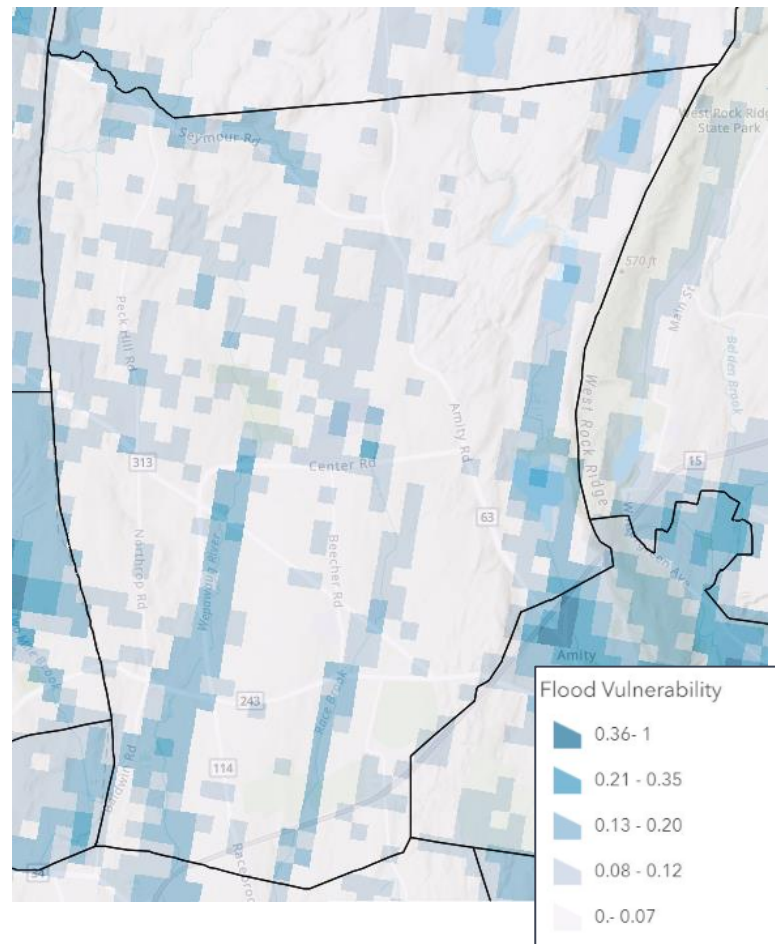
- Vulnerability is measured by combining an area's exposure, sensitivity, and adaptive capacity relative to a specific threat.
 - Exposure: The degree of the stress that a certain asset is going through. Includes changes to the magnitude and frequency of extreme events.
 - Sensitivity: The degree to which a built, natural, or human systems will be impacted by changes in climate conditions.
 - Adaptive Capacity: The ability of a system to adjust to changes, manage damages, take advantage of opportunities, or cope with consequences.
- A Town's mean heat vulnerability score (scale 0-1) is based on the mean value of all pixels that make up the Town in the CCVI analysis. A lower score indicates a less vulnerable community.
 - Mean scores in CT range from 0.04 to 0.53. Woodbridge's mean heat vulnerability score is 0.14.





Flood Vulnerability

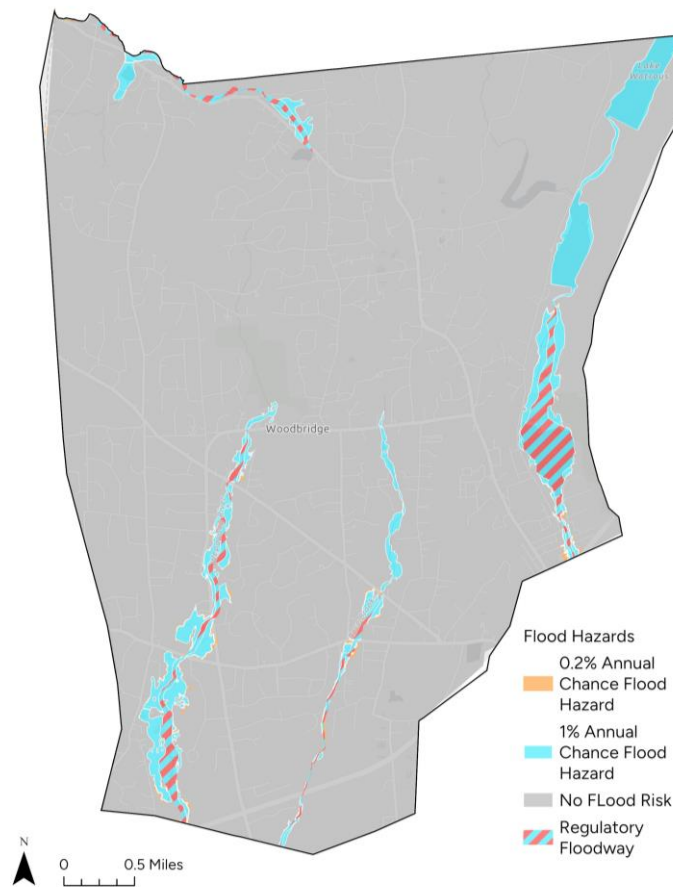
- Vulnerability is measured by combining an area's exposure, sensitivity, and adaptive capacity relative to a specific threat.
 - Exposure: The degree of the stress that a certain asset is going through. Includes changes to the magnitude and frequency of extreme events.
 - Sensitivity: The degree to which a built, natural, or human systems will be impacted by changes in climate conditions.
 - Adaptive Capacity: The ability of a system to adjust to changes, manage damages, take advantage of opportunities, or cope with consequences.
- A Town's mean flood vulnerability score (scale 0-1) is based on the mean value of all pixels that make up the Town in the CCVI analysis. A lower score indicates a less vulnerable community.
 - Mean scores in CT range from 0.04 to 0.31. Woodbridge's mean flood vulnerability score is 0.07.





Flood Risk

- Woodbridge has four regulatory floodways: Bladen's River, Wepawaug River, Race Brook, and West River.
 - The FEMA 100-year (1%) and 500-year (0.2%) flood zones generally following these riverbanks.
 - A property within a 100-year (1%) flood zone has a 1-in-4 chance of flooding during a 30-year mortgage.
- According to the Town's GIS data, there are approximately 86 structures located within, or partially within, the 100- and 500-year flood zones.
 - These structures are at the greatest risk of flooding within the community.





Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan

- The SCRCOG adopted its Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) in 2023, providing a regional mitigation strategy, projects, and a framework for decision making related to mitigation.
- The Regional HMP's mission is to reduce or eliminate risk to people and property from natural hazards and climate change. Goals for doing so include:
 - Reduce the impact of natural hazards by integrating mitigation policies and practices into local community planning;
 - Minimize flood hazards, through the National Flood Insurance Program, regulatory standards, and flood mitigation projects;
 - Support the proper care of healthy, native trees in the Region to reduce associated hazards and increase resilience;
 - Build capacity for natural hazard mitigation and climate adaption at the local level; and
 - Increase public awareness and preparedness for natural hazards through community-based public education.

Sustainability



- Woodbridge is registered with Sustainable CT and received a Bronze Certification in 2018; however, Certification is valid for 3 years, and the Town has not been recertified.
 - The 2018 Bronze Certification included the development of an open space plan, implementation of low impact development, creation of agricultural-friendly practices, and high energy performance achievements, among others.
- The Town established a Sustainability Committee in 2017, charged with making recommendations to the Board of Selectmen for consideration on sustainability initiatives, including:
 - Town Building Energy Use
 - Recycling, Waste, and Food Systems
 - Vehicles and Transportation
 - Community Education and Outreach
- The Sustainability Committee is currently investigating implementing a composting/food waste pilot program at the Transfer and Recycling Station.



Community Programs

- Woodbridge offers various local and regional sustainability initiatives:
 - The Transfer & Recycling Station accepts household waste and recycling, including that of larger appliances, tires, demolition debris, and brush, for various fees.
 - Woodbridge offers a Bulky Waste Curbside Collection program, where residents can schedule pick up from March-May and October-November.
 - The Town participates in the Regional Water Authority's HazWaste Central Program, where residents can drop off their household hazardous waste from May – October.