



**Town of Cromwell
Planning and Zoning Commission**

**REGULAR MEETING
7:00 P.M. TUESDAY APRIL 18, 2023
COUNCIL CHAMBERS CROMWELL TOWN HALL
41 WEST STREET**

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Seating of Alternates
4. Approval of Agenda
5. Development Compliance Officer Report:
6. Director of Planning and Development Report:
7. New Business:
 - a. POCD Update
 - b. Zoning Regulations Update
8. Commissioner's Comments:
9. Adjourn:

RECEIVED FOR RECORD
Apr 13, 2023 09:19A
JoAnn Doyle
TOWN CLERK
CROMWELL, CT

VISION FOR CROMWELL'S FUTURE

The Town of Cromwell is a residential community with a commercial and industrial presence in central Connecticut. Residents value their small-town feel and appreciate the convenient location, sense of community, and natural resources. The Town acknowledges the need for growth and change but recognizes that it must be done responsibly and with intention and take into consideration the interests and concerns of all residents. Therefore, Cromwell will pursue a balanced approach to growth over the next planning period that puts an emphasis on the people and their quality of life, the Town's economy and the surrounding natural environment.

Quality of Life or Community. The Town of Cromwell remains primarily residential and should continue to be a desirable location for people of all stages of life. The Town has a responsibility to maintain and improve community assets that enhance residents' quality of life. Cromwell will continue to encourage appropriate housing options for all stages of life and lifestyles, including a focus on diversity and affordability. In addition, the Town will provide enhanced community facilities and infrastructure to support a safe, active, and engaging community.

Economy or Balanced Growth. Cromwell's growth strategy will include thoughtful development that utilizes existing infrastructure to maintain and supplement commercial and/or industrial opportunities, while preserving the character of residential areas. This sustainability strategy will continue to diversify the tax base and improve the range of goods and service available to residents. Successful economic growth and development will be measured through business attraction and retention. Infill development, redevelopment of underutilized properties, and adaptive reuse will be critical tools for success. The Town will also seek opportunities to revitalize the Main Street corridor and develop lively, mixed-use commercial corridors.

Environment or Conservation. The Town of Cromwell was shaped by its natural resources and residents are passionate about protecting the quality and quantity of environmental features. The floodplains, wetlands, and riparian zones that make up much of Cromwell's southern and eastern borders provide critical ecosystem services that protect life and property in the community. The Town will work to protect the quality of these resources and preserve remaining open spaces from future development. The Town will also investigate means to make the community and its infrastructure more resilient to climate events like flooding and storm surge.

Cromwell POCD Update 2023

Example Vision Statements from other CT communities' POCDs and the Regional POCD

A. Vernon POCD Vision Statement (2021) (SLR)

As a regional destination to live, work, and play in Tolland County, Vernon offers a sustainable, high quality of life centered around a vibrant downtown Rockville, diverse employment opportunities, a broad mix of housing types, and accessible natural and recreational resources.

Vernon's diverse range of housing options invite a mix of households, including young adults, families with children, and senior citizens, supported by continued investment in existing Town infrastructure.

Residential neighborhoods connect to commercial and open space areas through a well-maintained network of roads, sidewalks, bicycle routes, greenways, trails, and public transportation.

Economic activity provides employment opportunities for local and regional residents of varying skills and educational levels. Thriving commercial corridors provide residents with convenient access to goods and services, while generating municipal revenue.

Vernon's historic resources, farmlands, and environmentally sensitive areas are preserved for the enjoyment of current and future generations.

B. Southbury POCD Visions Statement (2022) (SLR)

There is only one Southbury in the United States, and that unique claim to the name is emblematic of the town's strong community spirit. Valuing the community is central to our community's values, thus input should be sought and encouraged at every turn for the betterment of the community.

Careful planning has made Southbury what it is today: a beautiful suburban town with strongly supported rural traditions, a pristine commercial corridor with an award-winning streetscape, highly desirable residential areas, strong education system, steady fiscal conditions and rolling green hills of public open space. The area's panoramic scenery preserved farms and forests, and historic village architecture offer residents and visitors alike an environment that is attractive and charming. The town's abundant culture, long-standing community events, vibrant business community, dedication to sustainable practices and wonderful schools make for an unparalleled lifestyle.

Southbury will continue to strive to diligently maintain the conservation and preservation of all remaining elements of its rich history including its rural roots. It will provide for economic development that supports in an advantageous manner, a sound property tax base as the resident population grows and local government service needs and desires emerge. As infrastructure improvements and technological advances become available, the Town will evaluate if and how they may align and support Southbury's small town, rural charm.

This Plan will be used to guide and advise land use decisions in Southbury over the next 10 years, providing a framework for consistent decision-making regarding quality of life, environmental conservation, economic vitality, and the overall well-being of our citizens.

C. Bethel POCD Visions Statement (2019) (SLR)

The Town of Bethel is a thriving community based on village values. At its heart is a flourishing village center that is distinct in Fairfield County for its unique New England architecture, green spaces, and arts and cultural opportunities. The village center and train station area form a fully integrated Downtown that supports diverse housing options within walking distance to shops, restaurants, employment, amenities, and transit facilities. High-quality transportation infrastructure serves the Downtown, allowing residents and visitors to get around on foot, on a bike, or using public transportation.

Bethel continues to pursue responsible economic growth in areas with existing infrastructure. In addition to the Downtown, the Town supports lively mixed-use commercial districts along Route 6 and Grassy Plain Street. The Clarke and Berkshire Business Parks provide diverse employment opportunities for residents and support a range of businesses from small manufacturers to large corporate entities. The Town is a welcoming community renowned for its excellent quality of life for people of all ages and income levels. Bethel remains the best value in Fairfield County for its combination of schools, town services, location, amenities, and reasonable cost of living.

The Town provides a diversity of housing options to support all life stages and income levels, including young adults, families with children, and seniors. Bethel prides itself on its ability to provide high-quality educational, recreational, and social opportunities for all residents.

While the Town recognizes the need to grow and change over the coming decade, it also recognizes that this growth should not occur unchecked. Bethel's many forests, wetlands, streams, rivers, and rural lands contribute to the Town's identity and quality of life. Recognizing that these resources are finite, the Town, in conjunction with local conservation partners, continues to work to protect these sensitive lands so that their environmental and recreational benefits can be enjoyed by future generations. The Town's growth strategy, with its focus on infill development and the redevelopment of underutilized properties, also helps achieve the Town's conservation goals by steering development away from sensitive natural resources.

D. New Britain POCD Vision Statement (2021) (SLR)

Live: New Britain's greatest asset is its people. The City will continue to embrace its longstanding culture of diversity and innovation. The City will maintain strong residential neighborhoods that provide safe and affordable housing choices for all households. These neighborhoods are anchored by vibrant and unique neighborhood business districts. High-quality community facilities and efficient public services will ensure access to opportunity for all residents.

Grow: New Britain will continue to pursue smart and deliberate growth, with an emphasis on its Downtown, TOD districts around CTfastrak station areas, and business parks. The City will prioritize grand list growth, while pursuing the "highest and best" use on remaining development sites. Through redevelopment, rehabilitation, and adaptive reuse, the City is committed to returning underutilized and obsolete properties to productive use. New Britain will provide an educated workforce that meets local needs and promotes business retention and expansion.

Play: New Britain is a statewide center for arts and culture. Visitors are drawn to the City from throughout the region and state, bolstering local economic activity. As part of revitalization efforts, historic buildings and sites are preserved and enhanced, helping foster a unique sense of place. New Britain's excellent public park system and strong program offerings enhance public health and quality of life for all residents.

Connect: New Britain is a recognized leader in complete streets improvements, ensuring that the transportation network is balanced and serves all users and connects residents with employment, services, and shopping. Investments have been made to utility infrastructure, ensuring that it continues to meet resident and business needs. 21st century internet and telecommunications infrastructure will be expanded throughout the City, providing equitable access to digital opportunities.

Sustain: New Britain is a state leader in sustainability promoting policies that meet the City's environmental, social, and fiscal goals. The City has accomplished a reduction in waste and energy consumption, promoted green energy, and invested in technologies that result in more efficient service delivery. New Britain supports policies that bolster health and wellness and make the City more resilient to natural hazards.

E. Naugatuck POCD Vision Statement (SLR)

In the future, the Borough of Naugatuck will preserve its traditional character with a core downtown area along the Naugatuck River; a mix of businesses along existing major roadways and a mix of homes throughout. This will be complemented by a rich diversity of housing within the Borough core, to meet the needs of residents of all incomes. It will be economically stable and vibrant. There will remain a variety of open spaces; in particular, access to the Naugatuck River as a scenic and recreational resource. Open spaces are envisioned to be linked to one another by a series of both on and off-road routes so that they can be well accessed and enjoyed.

The Downtown and community core along Route 8 will become a more vibrant center of activity and a destination. It will offer places to live, work, shop, eat, find entertainment, and cultural enrichment. It will provide a diversity of services that enhance the quality of life for residents and invite travelers to stop. The downtown will continue to be well defined visually and aesthetically, providing a positive experience for residents and visitors, with a distinctive identity that is well known throughout the central Naugatuck Valley region. Development throughout the community core will have complementary scale, character and density that will contribute to a sense of both history and vitality. This character will build on the historic themes represented by the Borough's historic architecture. Most new commercial development will occur in the core and result from infill and from reuse or redevelopment of existing sites. Any new large-scale commercial developments will be located along major thoroughfares and adjacent to similar scale developments of today.

The Borough will be easy to access and navigate by car, bicycle, transit, and on foot. There will be a variety of opportunities to travel by all these means along all roads within the Borough core, along with key connections among those means. The train station will be actively used and will draw visitors as well as commuters from around the region to Naugatuck. Streets in the downtown will offer a balance among motor vehicle and pedestrian and bicycle traffic, with an enhanced streetscape that is pedestrian friendly and complementary to the character of the area.

F. Portland POCD Vision Statement

Incentives will be created, and adaptive reuse strategies instituted to preserve Portland's character while making it more energy efficient. Town policies will promote preservation as a community revitalization tool. The historic resources listed in The History and Architecture of Portland will serve as the inventory of resources to be preserved.

Commercial development of the Elmcrest property will result in Village District "place making," complement existing businesses and strengthen economic development.

Design improvement of both state and town roads will make them safer and more accessible for motorists, pedestrians (including those with mobility challenges), cyclists and transit users. Improvements will promote the economy and have a positive impact on the health and well-being of individuals.

Development of the Air Line Trail and a Town Park on Route 17, along with increased protection of open space in partnership with State and non-profit groups will enhance recreation opportunities, protect and preserve rural wildlife assets and safeguard our lakes, ponds, streams and Connecticut River.

This Vision Statement serves as a keystone for implementation and accomplishment of the 2016-2026 Plan of Conservation and Development. It represents the "Spirit" of Portland's citizens.

G. RiverCOG Regional POCD

The Lower Connecticut River Valley Council of Governments (RiverCOG) was formed in 2012 from a voluntary merger of the Midstate and Connecticut River Estuary planning regions. Work on its first RPOCD began in 2016. After substantial public outreach with Regional residents and stakeholder groups, it was determined that this RPOCD would center around four key themes that define the Regional vision: Sustainable, Connected, Innovative, and Community. The Vision of each key theme are below.

Sustainable

Sustainability is paramount to this plan and is woven throughout the four themes. The Region's residents, stakeholders, and leaders value the landscape that we have inherited, and place significant value in stewardship of the land and its communities that call this place home. As such, the Region will grow and develop in balance with its natural, economic, and social resources. The Region's sustainable policies, practices, infrastructure, and development will make it resilient to environmental and economic threats, and will provide the stability necessary to support social equity across the Region. Sustainability also extends to the Region's residents and the need for their adaptability and resilience given environmental, economic, and social changes underway.

Connected

The Region will be a well-connected place with strong internal and external connections. Those connections will take all forms: social, cultural, physical, environmental, and digital. Municipalities will have strong connections within their communities and with surrounding towns. The Region will become better connected to surrounding regions and metropolitan centers via multimodal transportation infrastructure and enhanced communications technology, as well as open space and greenways, and the social and cultural connections that such infrastructure facilitates. The Region will be intentional in its efforts to become a better-connected place, accessible by all modes of travel and for all types of people. It will be an attractive place to live, work, learn, and play because of the ease of access that all residents, workers, and visitors enjoy.

Innovative

The Region has a long history of innovation that will continue to be central to its identity well into the future. Innovation in the Region has taken many forms over time beginning with a rich industrial history which emerged from mills along the Connecticut River and its tributaries, to industries that thrived from the Region's transportation connections whether water, rail, or highway. Innovation is diverse across the Region, which is home to advanced manufacturing, technology, aerospace, bioscience, arts, and education. The Lower Connecticut River Valley will foster an environment of growth and opportunity that supports, encourages, and attracts innovation. Additionally, the Region will provide a high-quality of life that is attractive to a highly skilled workforce.

Community

The Lower Connecticut River Valley is a welcoming and inclusive place. Communities are formed in neighborhoods, villages, and town centers, and also across town and city boundaries. These communities are situated across the Region's landscape including along the Connecticut River, the hills that define the river valley, and the Long Island Sound shoreline. The Region's communities are formed by and connected through social bonds established in its schools, workplaces, cultural institutions, social spaces, and neighborhoods. The Region is home to diverse communities that reflect the many cultures, ethnicities, and traditions of its peoples. These communities are inextricably linked, and it is this foundation of community that gives the Region its strength.



Cromwell

Community Survey

Results

Prepared By: **SLR** 

Introduction

The Town of Cromwell released a Community Questionnaire to gather public input for developing an update to the Town's Plan of Conservation and Development. The survey ran for five months from November 1, 2022 – March 31, 2023. The collected responses (325, 2.3% of Total Population), provide valuable insights for shared values and priorities for the Town's future. The results of the survey are presented in this report.

- 01** Quality of Life
- 02** Open Space & Parks
- 03** Historic & Natural Resources
- 04** Residential Development
- 05** Economic Development
- 06** Transportation
- 07** Community Facilities
- 08** Visioning
- 09** About You

Quality of Life

Section Overview

Quality of Life questions asked respondents about their perspective of Cromwell as a resident, business owner, or property owner.

Questions

- How would you rate the overall quality of life in Cromwell?
- How has the quality of life in Cromwell changed in the last 10 years?
- What makes living in Cromwell special?
- What do you think will be the most important development issues in Town for the next decade?
- Please indicate whether you have any concerns with the following issues in the area where you live or throughout Cromwell:
 - Roads
 - Sidewalks
 - Traffic
 - Noise
 - Parks & Places to Walk
 - Nearby Services & Stores
 - Town Facilities
 - Environmental Issues
 - Blight
 - Speeding

Takeaways

Just over 85% of survey respondents feel the quality of life in Cromwell is good or excellent, and 16.9% feel it has gotten better in the last decade.

Survey respondents feel strongly about Cromwell's small-town feel and find its central location in the state to be a large factor in making the Town special. Respondents also noted that the convenience of being near Interstate 91 and State Route 9 is important in the community.

When asked about the biggest concerns for the future of the Town, survey respondents were concerned about preserving and maintaining open spaces and supportive of the Town acquiring more. Respondents also expressed concerns for overdevelopment, but also voiced interest in more commercial development in the downtown and riverfront areas.

A large majority of respondents are concerned with blight (87.8%), traffic (87%) and environmental issues (82.8%) in Town. Road, sidewalk, and Town facility maintenance also appear to be a significant concern for residents.

Quality of Life

Question 1: How would you rate the overall quality of life in Cromwell?

Excellent	15.9%
Good	69.5%
Fair	13.7%
Poor	0.9%

Question 2: How has the quality of life in Cromwell changed in the last 10 years?

Gotten Better	16.9%
About the Same	50.8%
Gotten Worse	23.5%
Don't Know/Not Sure	8.8%

Question 3: What makes Cromwell special?

There were 275 responses – the following lists the four most common themes discussed by survey participants.

38.9% of respondents mentioned the "small town feel"
31.3% of respondents mentioned "location"
24.4% of respondents mentioned "the community"
20.7% of respondents mentioned "convenience"

Other common themes included open space, quality of schools, and safety.

Some direct quotes include:

- "Quality education, quiet neighborhoods, low density neighborhoods"
- "Small, friendly, safe community"
- "Location on CT River and lovely parks"
- "It's clean, safe, and has a great location"
- "Responsive town government, good public schools and services"
- "Strong sense of community, green and wooded spaces, good playgrounds"
- "Has a small town feel without being remote or isolated"
- "Small town, comfortable split between commercial and residential, although it has some limited mixed use. The fact that we are not overly commercialized"
- "The town is taken care of with pride"
- "The balance of small town community with a lot of modern conveniences"
- "Small and quiet town with scattered open land/farm land still around. Easy access to highways and shopping essentials"
- "It's a nice small town with side walks connecting neighborhoods, several nice parks with beautiful hiking trails, a diverse selection of restaurants and shopping centers"

Quality of Life

Question 4: What do you think will be the most important development issues in Town for the next decade?

There were 289 responses – the following lists the four most common themes discussed by survey participants.

27% of respondents discussed preserving and maintaining open spaces

22.2% of respondents discussed concerns related to overdevelopment

19.7% of respondents discussed attracting the right commercial opportunities

13.2% of respondents discussed issues related to the school system

Other common themes included community facilities, infrastructure, development on Main Street, and Parks & Recreational development.

Some direct quotes include:

- *"Cromwell needs to acquire additional open space. We should be acquiring open space for future town needs such as schools and parks before it is gone"*
- *"Allowing mixed resident , affordable housing and conserving the nature of Cromwell as rural/suburban"*
- *"Improve the commercial and industrial development to raise our tax base to help fund new schools"*
- *"Keep financial burden of school costs reasonable based on youth demographics tracking and projecting to determine needed educational opportunities"*
- *"Too much development, not enough respect for wetland resources and open space"*
- *"Careful planning to keep neighborhoods residential"*
- *"Safety for Pedestrians who like to run and walk on side streets with no sidewalks"*
- *"We need to attract a more diverse portfolio of businesses"*
- *"Promoting business on Main Street and by the River"*
- *"Updates to current schools as well as better infrastructure"*
- *"Preserving and expanding the parks/recreational areas"*
- *"Balancing business/economic development with over development and losing too much open space"*
- *"A real town center- we're sort of spread out"*
- *"It's important that the town recognize that although something a property is zoned for something, it may not be in the best interest of the community for it to be there"*
- *"Main Street could be so cute with the right businesses, and we should utilize our waterfront for small businesses as well"*

Quality of Life

Question 5: Please indicate whether you have any concerns with the following issues in the area where you live or throughout Cromwell

Road Maintenance

In my Neighborhood	41.6%
In Cromwell	79.2%

Lack of Nearby Services or Stores

In my Neighborhood	23.5%
In Cromwell	83.8%

Sidewalk Maintenance and/or Lack of Sidewalks

In my Neighborhood	55.1%
In Cromwell	72.8%

Maintenance of Town Buildings and Facilities

In my Neighborhood	11.3%
In Cromwell	93.0%

Traffic Congestion

In my Neighborhood	31.2%
In Cromwell	87.0%

Environmental Issues (Flooding, Pollution, Etc.)

In my Neighborhood	37.3%
In Cromwell	82.8%

Noise

In my Neighborhood	69.6%
In Cromwell	56.3%

Blight (Vacant and Dilapidated Building and/or Properties)

In my Neighborhood	25.2%
In Cromwell	87.8%

Lack of Parks or Places to Walk

In my Neighborhood	47.5%
In Cromwell	78.3%

Speeding

In my Neighborhood	68.1%
In Cromwell	68.1%

Participants also had the opportunity to write in their responses. The following are some direct quotes:

- "I think we need more sidewalks on 372, 3, and Main Street"
- "Congestion in the Schools"
- "Waste Management"
- "No real walkable and vibrant center"
- "Volume of vehicles has exacerbated noise and congestion"

Note: Participants had the choice to choose multiple options or none at all. Percentages will not add up to 100%.

Open Space & Parks

Section Overview

For this survey, open space referred to protected lands available for public use or conservation. The Open Space & Parks section asked respondents to share their opinions on the quantity and prioritization of specific types of open space in Cromwell.

Questions

- The Town has enough...
 - Trails & Hiking Areas
 - Farmlands or Land Suitable for Farming
 - Active Recreation Areas
 - Passive/Open Space Recreation Areas
 - Water Access
- What kinds of open space should the Town prioritize over the next ten years?
 - Trails & Hiking Areas
 - Farmlands or Land Suitable for Farming
 - Active Recreation Areas
 - Passive/Open Space Recreation Areas
 - Water Access
 - Wetlands
 - Critical Habitat Areas
- The Town is doing enough to protect...
 - Wetlands
 - Rivers & Streams
 - Lakes & Ponds
 - Wells, Groundwater, and Aquifers
 - Scenic Views
 - Significant Plant & Animal Habitats
 - Air Quality
 - From Noise Pollution
 - Steep Slopes & Erosion Control

Takeaways

Survey respondents feel that the Town has enough active recreation areas, but 56.2% of participants felt there are not enough passive/open space areas and 59.9% felt there are not enough trails and hiking areas.

74.1% of respondents believe that critical habitat areas should be a significant priority for the future.

Open Space & Parks

Question 6: The Town has enough...

Trails & Hiking Areas

Strongly Agree	3.3%
Agree	19.2%
Neutral/No Opinion	17.6%
Disagree	43.6%
Strongly Disagree	16.3%

Passive, Open Space Recreation (parks & natural areas)

Strongly Agree	4.6%
Agree	25.7%
Neutral/No Opinion	13.6%
Disagree	39.9%
Strongly Disagree	16.2%

Farmlands or Land Suitable for Farming

Strongly Agree	4.0%
Agree	27.6%
Neutral/No Opinion	27.6%
Disagree	25.7%
Strongly Disagree	15.1%

Water Access (boat launch, public beach)

Strongly Agree	5.9%
Agree	30.3%
Neutral/No Opinion	23.1%
Disagree	26.7%
Strongly Disagree	14.0%

Active Recreation Areas (ballfields, playgrounds)

Strongly Agree	11.4%
Agree	45.1%
Neutral/No Opinion	14.0%
Disagree	24.0%
Strongly Disagree	5.5%

Open Space & Parks

Question 7: What kinds of open space should the Town prioritize over the next 10 years?

Trails & Hiking Areas

No Priority, Not Worthwhile	2.7%
Low Priority, But Worthwhile	25.9%
Medium Priority	39.5%
High Priority	31.9%

Farmlands or Land Suitable for Farming

No Priority, Not Worthwhile	9.9%
Low Priority, But Worthwhile	33.8%
Medium Priority	31.5%
High Priority	24.8%

Active Recreation Spaces (ballfields, playgrounds)

No Priority, Not Worthwhile	8.6%
Low Priority, But Worthwhile	35.6%
Medium Priority	32.7%
High Priority	23.1%

Passive, Open Space Recreation Areas (parks and natural areas)

No Priority, Not Worthwhile	3.9%
Low Priority, But Worthwhile	18.1%
Medium Priority	38.5%
High Priority	39.5%

Water Access (boat launch, public beach)

No Priority, Not Worthwhile	12.2%
Low Priority, But Worthwhile	38.1%
Medium Priority	27.2%
High Priority	22.5%

Wetlands

No Priority, Not Worthwhile	6.6%
Low Priority, But Worthwhile	26.9%
Medium Priority	25.3%
High Priority	41.2%

Critical Habitat Areas

No Priority, Not Worthwhile	5.3%
Low Priority, But Worthwhile	20.6%
Medium Priority	22.3%
High Priority	51.8%

Participants also mentioned interest in:

- More community garden plots, including a community orchard
- A multiuse trail connecting Cromwell and Middletown
- Field & court improvements
- "Right-to-Farm" regulations

Open Space & Parks

Question 8: The Town is doing enough to protect...

Wetlands

Strongly Agree	6.0%
Agree	26.4%
Neutral/No Opinion	22.2%
Disagree	29.6%
Strongly Disagree	15.8%

Significant Plant & Animal Habitats

Strongly Agree	4.3%
Agree	18.6%
Neutral/No Opinion	31.8%
Disagree	29.3%
Strongly Disagree	16.0%

Rivers & Streams

Strongly Agree	4.6%
Agree	25.3%
Neutral/No Opinion	33.1%
Disagree	24.2%
Strongly Disagree	12.8%

Air Quality

Strongly Agree	2.2%
Agree	23.3%
Neutral/No Opinion	43.0%
Disagree	18.6%
Strongly Disagree	12.9%

Lakes & Ponds

Strongly Agree	4.0%
Agree	22.3%
Neutral/No Opinion	40.6%
Disagree	21.6%
Strongly Disagree	11.5%

From Noise Pollution

Strongly Agree	2.8%
Agree	17.6%
Neutral/No Opinion	32.0%
Disagree	30.0%
Strongly Disagree	17.6%

Wells, Groundwater, and Aquifers (Drinking Water)

Strongly Agree	4.2%
Agree	28.3%
Neutral/No Opinion	36.8%
Disagree	19.4%
Strongly Disagree	11.3%

Steep Slopes & Erosion Control

Strongly Agree	2.9%
Agree	20.7%
Neutral/No Opinion	54.6%
Disagree	15.4%
Strongly Disagree	6.4%

Scenic Views

Strongly Agree	2.8%
Agree	26.2%
Neutral/No Opinion	33.6%
Disagree	25.4%
Strongly Disagree	12.0%

Historic & Natural Resources

Section Overview

The Historic & Natural Resources section of the survey asked participants for their opinions on resource protection and resiliency and sustainability.

Takeaways

Respondents are generally supportive of furthering resiliency and sustainability efforts in Town; for example, 81.8% of respondents agree or strongly agree that Cromwell should invest in capital improvements to protect Town property from storms.

53.5% of respondents feel that the Town should create additional local historic resources.

Questions

- The Town...
 - Is doing enough to protect historic resources
 - Should create additional local historic resources
- To encourage resiliency and sustainability, the Town should...
 - Invest in capital improvements to protect Town property from storms
 - Assess the energy needs and efficiency of all Town buildings, facilities, and fleets
 - Invest in capital improvements to reduce energy usage
 - Conduct more robust recycling and composting programs, Town-led donation or reuse drives, etc.
 - Invest in renewable energy generation
 - Create a "green" procurement policy to purchase more efficient materials
 - Direct the Planning and Zoning Commission to amend codes to encourage Low Impact Development
 - Engage in best management practices at the municipal level for in-ground water treatment, irrigation, land use practices, and/or stormwater runoff
 - Hold events to educate the public about multiple facets of sustainability
 - Install electric vehicle charging stations on one or more Town properties
 - Encourage businesses to install electric vehicle charging stations on their properties

Historic & Natural Resources

Question 9: The town...

Is doing enough to protect historic resources in town

Strongly Agree	3.9%
Agree	33.0%
Neutral/No Opinion	36.1%
Disagree	20.0%
Strongly Disagree	7.0%

Should create additional local historic resources

Strongly Agree	14.1%
Agree	39.4%
Neutral/No Opinion	35.6%
Disagree	8.8%
Strongly Disagree	2.1%

Question 10: To encourage resiliency and sustainability, Cromwell should...

Invest in capital improvements to protect Town property from storms

Strongly Agree	26.2%
Agree	55.6%
Neutral/No Opinion	13.6%
Disagree	3.5%
Strongly Disagree	1.1%

Assess the energy needs and efficiency of all Town buildings, facilities, and fleets

Strongly Agree	23.9%
Agree	52.3%
Neutral/No Opinion	21.0%
Disagree	2.8%
Strongly Disagree	0.00%

Invest in capital improvements to reduce energy usage

Strongly Agree	27.0%
Agree	53.7%
Neutral/No Opinion	15.1%
Disagree	4.2%
Strongly Disagree	0.00%

Conduct more robust recycling and composting programs, Town-led donation or reuse drives, etc.

Strongly Agree	35.4%
Agree	43.2%
Neutral/No Opinion	16.5%
Disagree	4.6%
Strongly Disagree	0.3%

Invest in renewable energy generation

Strongly Agree	31.0%
Agree	32.4%
Neutral/No Opinion	22.9%
Disagree	8.8%
Strongly Disagree	4.9%

Create a "green" procurement policy to purchase more efficient materials

Strongly Agree	24.3%
Agree	39.5%
Neutral/No Opinion	23.2%
Disagree	8.8%
Strongly Disagree	4.2%

Historic & Natural Resources

Question 10: (Continued)

Direct the Planning & Zoning Commission to amend codes to encourage Low Impact Development

Strongly Agree	38.5%
Agree	39.9%
Neutral/No Opinion	19.2%
Disagree	1.0%
Strongly Disagree	1.4%

Install electric vehicle charging stations on one or more Town properties

Strongly Agree	25.3%
Agree	34.4%
Neutral/No Opinion	21.4%
Disagree	11.2%
Strongly Disagree	7.7%

Engage in best management practices at the municipal level for in-ground water treatment, irrigation, land use practices, and/or stormwater runoff

Strongly Agree	35.8%
Agree	47.0%
Neutral/No Opinion	15.4%
Disagree	0.7%
Strongly Disagree	1.1%

Encourage businesses to install electric vehicle charging stations on their properties

Strongly Agree	24.0%
Agree	35.9%
Neutral/No Opinion	25.0%
Disagree	9.1%
Strongly Disagree	6.0%

Hold events to educate the public about multiple facets or sustainability

Strongly Agree	21.7%
Agree	44.3%
Neutral/No Opinion	24.1%
Disagree	8.5%
Strongly Disagree	1.4%

Residential Development

Section Overview

The Residential Development section asked respondents for opinions about housing quantity and variety.

Questions

- Indicate how much of the following Cromwell has...
 - Large, Single-Family Homes
 - Small, Single-Family Homes
 - Condominiums
 - Apartments
 - Senior Housing
 - Assisted Living
 - Mixed-Use
 - Duplexes
 - Affordable Housing
 - Age-Restricted Housing
 - Accessory Dwelling Units

- Indicate how much of the following housing options Cromwell has...
 - For seniors
 - For individuals living alone
 - For its workforce
 - For empty nesters
 - For families with children
 - For low income individuals or families
 - For young adults

Takeaways

Survey respondents generally feel there are about the right amount of single family houses, senior and assisted living, and affordable housing options.

Survey respondents feel there are too many condominiums and apartments.

Survey respondents feel there are about the right amount of housing options for all categories of residents.

Residential Development

Question 11: Indicate how much of the following Cromwell has...

Large, Single-Family Homes

Too Many	25.2%
About the Right Amount	65.6%
Too Few	3.9%
Don't Know/Not Sure	5.3%

Small, Single-Family Homes

Too Many	4.3%
About the Right Amount	67.7%
Too Few	23.8%
Don't Know/Not Sure	4.2%

Condominiums

Too Many	59.0%
About the Right Amount	35.3%
Too Few	2.8%
Don't Know/Not Sure	2.9%

Apartments

Too Many	39.7%
About the Right Amount	34.7%
Too Few	16.0%
Don't Know/Not Sure	9.6%

Senior Housing

Too Many	8.4%
About the Right Amount	50.0%
Too Few	27.5%
Don't Know/Not Sure	14.1%

Assisted Living

Too Many	5.7%
About the Right Amount	51.8%
Too Few	23.0%
Don't Know/Not Sure	19.5%

Mixed-Use (Apartments above Commercial Uses)

Too Many	7.8%
About the Right Amount	33.1%
Too Few	22.8%
Don't Know/Not Sure	36.3%

Duplexes

Too Many	7.5%
About the Right Amount	41.4%
Too Few	11.1%
Don't Know/Not Sure	40.0%

Affordable Housing

Too Many	9.6%
About the Right Amount	33.8%
Too Few	32.0%
Don't Know/Not Sure	24.6%

Age-Restricted Housing

Too Many	5.0%
About the Right Amount	34.0%
Too Few	17.6%
Don't Know/Not Sure	43.4%

Accessory Dwelling Units

Too Many	2.9%
About the Right Amount	21.1%
Too Few	15.4%
Don't Know/Not Sure	60.6%

Residential Development

Question 12: Indicate how much of the following housing options Cromwell has...

For Seniors

Too Much	4.6%
About the Right Amount	41.8%
Not Enough	30.5%
Don't Know/Not Sure	23.1%

For Families with Children

Too Much	3.2%
About the Right Amount	72.1%
Not Enough	11.4%
Don't Know/Not Sure	13.2%

For Individuals Living Alone

Too Much	3.6%
About the Right Amount	35.4%
Not Enough	35.7%
Don't Know/Not Sure	25.3%

For Low Income Individuals/Families

Too Much	8.8%
About the Right Amount	33.9%
Not Enough	30.4%
Don't Know/Not Sure	26.9%

For its Workforce (police, teachers, grocery workers)

Too Much	0.7%
About the Right Amount	42.8%
Not Enough	22.6%
Don't Know/Not Sure	33.9%

For Young Adults

Too Much	2.1%
About the Right Amount	40.4%
Not Enough	31.2%
Don't Know/Not Sure	26.2%

For Empty Nesters

Too Much	2.5%
About the Right Amount	48.2%
Not Enough	21.3%
Don't Know/Not Sure	28.0%

Economic Development

Section Overview

The Economic Development section asked respondents to share their opinions on the quantity of different types of facilities (stores, offices, etc.), as well as their attitudes about the Cromwell Commercial Areas.

Questions

- Indicate how much of the following Cromwell has...
 - Retail Stores
 - Small Offices
 - Research & Development Facilities
 - Corporate Offices
 - Light Industrial & Manufacturing Facilities
 - Assisted Living
 - Mixed-Use
 - Medical Facilities
 - Entertainment & Cultural Facilities
 - Restaurants
 - Warehousing/Distribution
- Would you agree with the following statements about Cromwell's commercial areas?
 - There is a good mix of shops, restaurants, offices, and amenities
 - It is thriving
 - It is visually attractive
 - I feel safe from passing traffic while walking there
 - Sidewalks are properly separated from traffic
 - Sidewalks are wide enough
 - It is easy to cross the street
 - I feel safe from passing traffic while biking there
 - Parking is easy
 - The buildings feel like the right size relative to the setting
 - It is well lit

Takeaways

Survey respondents generally feel that there is a good mix of businesses in commercial areas. 80.2% of respondents feel there are not enough entertainment & cultural facilities.

Respondents generally do not feel safe from passing traffic while walking (58.7%) & biking (60.7%) in commercial areas but agree that parking is easy enough (70.3%).

Economic Development

Question 13: Indicate how much of the following Cromwell has...

Retail Stores

Too Many	13.4%
About the Right Amount	62.0%
Too Few	24.3%
Don't Know/Not Sure	0.3%

Small Offices

Too Many	7.3%
About the Right Amount	60.8%
Too Few	15.8%
Don't Know/Not Sure	16.1%

Research & Development Facilities

Too Many	1.4%
About the Right Amount	21.1%
Too Few	30.6%
Don't Know/Not Sure	46.9%

Corporate Offices

Too Many	4.3%
About the Right Amount	46.4%
Too Few	22.8%
Don't Know/Not Sure	26.5%

Light Industrial & Manufacturing Facilities

Too Many	10.9%
About the Right Amount	46.0%
Too Few	19.2%
Don't Know/Not Sure	23.9%

Assisted Living

Too Many	4.0%
About the Right Amount	47.3%
Too Few	23.8%
Don't Know/Not Sure	24.9%

Mixed-Use (Apartments above Commercial Uses)

Too Many	4.8%
About the Right Amount	34.3%
Too Few	21.5%
Don't Know/Not Sure	39.4%

Medical Facilities

Too Many	1.4%
About the Right Amount	57.5%
Too Few	32.4%
Don't Know/Not Sure	8.7%

Entertainment & Cultural Facilities

Too Many	0.00%
About the Right Amount	12.5%
Too Few	80.2%
Don't Know/Not Sure	7.3%

Restaurants

Too Many	5.1%
About the Right Amount	49.5%
Too Few	44.0%
Don't Know/Not Sure	1.4%

Warehousing & Distribution

Too Many	38.5%
About the Right Amount	40.7%
Too Few	6.2%
Don't Know/Not Sure	14.6%

Economic Development

Question 14: Would you agree with the following statements about Cromwell's commercial areas?

There is a good mix of shops, restaurants, offices, and amenities

Strongly Agree	5.1%
Agree	47.5%
Neutral/No Opinion	15.6%
Disagree	28.2%
Strongly Disagree	3.6%

I feel safe from passing traffic while biking

Strongly Agree	0.4%
Agree	7.6%
Neutral/No Opinion	31.3%
Disagree	42.9%
Strongly Disagree	17.8%

It is thriving

Strongly Agree	2.9%
Agree	35.8%
Neutral/No Opinion	25.5%
Disagree	32.1%
Strongly Disagree	3.7%

Sidewalks are properly separated from traffic

Strongly Agree	1.5%
Agree	42.0%
Neutral/No Opinion	19.2%
Disagree	27.2%
Strongly Disagree	10.1%

It is visually attractive

Strongly Agree	0.7%
Agree	26.0%
Neutral/No Opinion	24.2%
Disagree	40.4%
Strongly Disagree	8.7%

Sidewalks are wide enough

Strongly Agree	2.6%
Agree	53.5%
Neutral/No Opinion	19.2%
Disagree	19.2%
Strongly Disagree	5.5%

I feel safe from passing traffic while walking

Strongly Agree	2.9%
Agree	23.2%
Neutral/No Opinion	15.2%
Disagree	39.1%
Strongly Disagree	19.6%

It is easy to cross the street

Strongly Agree	1.1%
Agree	24.5%
Neutral/No Opinion	17.7%
Disagree	40.8%
Strongly Disagree	15.9%

Economic Development

Question 14: (Continued)

Parking is easy

Strongly Agree	6.5%
Agree	63.8%
Neutral/No Opinion	20.6%
Disagree	8.7%
Strongly Disagree	0.4%

It is well lit

Strongly Agree	4.4%
Agree	58.3%
Neutral/No Opinion	22.9%
Disagree	12.2%
Strongly Disagree	2.2%

The buildings feel like the right size relative to the setting

Strongly Agree	3.3%
Agree	61.1%
Neutral/No Opinion	24.0%
Disagree	9.4%
Strongly Disagree	2.2%

Transportation

Section Overview

The Transportation section of the survey asked participants for their feelings about different elements of Cromwell's transportation system and infrastructure.

Questions

- Do you agree or disagree with the following statements about Cromwell's transportation system?
 - Traffic congestion is a problem on major roads.
 - Cromwell needs more sidewalks.
 - Cromwell needs more bike infrastructure.
 - There are adequate active transportation options.
 - It is safe for students to walk or bike to school.
 - There are adequate transit options.
 - There are adequate transit options for seniors and people with disabilities.

Takeaways

The majority of respondents (78.3%) feel that traffic and congestion is an issue in Cromwell.

60.7% of respondents disagree with the statement that there are adequate active transportation options in town. The majority of respondents agree that Cromwell needs more sidewalks (75.8%) and bike infrastructure (69.5%).

54.7% of respondents disagree with the statement that it is safe for students to walk and/or bike to school.

Transportation

Question 15: Do you agree or disagree with the following statements about Cromwell's transportation system?

Traffic congestion is a problem on major roads in Cromwell

Strongly Agree	36.8%
Agree	41.5%
Neutral/No Opinion	9.0%
Disagree	12.3%
Strongly Disagree	0.4%

It is safe for students to walk or bike to school

Strongly Agree	2.2%
Agree	21.4%
Neutral/No Opinion	21.7%
Disagree	37.0%
Strongly Disagree	17.7%

There are adequate active transportation options (walking & biking)

Strongly Agree	1.5%
Agree	17.1%
Neutral/No Opinion	20.7%
Disagree	46.9%
Strongly Disagree	13.8%

There are adequate transit options (e.g., busses)

Strongly Agree	0.7%
Agree	23.2%
Neutral/No Opinion	44.9%
Disagree	25.4%
Strongly Disagree	5.8%

Cromwell needs more sidewalks

Strongly Agree	35.4%
Agree	40.4%
Neutral/No Opinion	16.3%
Disagree	7.2%
Strongly Disagree	0.7%

There are adequate transit options for seniors and people with disabilities

Strongly Agree	2.9%
Agree	23.7%
Neutral/No Opinion	45.3% *
Disagree	22.6%
Strongly Disagree	5.5%

Cromwell needs more bike infrastructure

Strongly Agree	30.2%
Agree	39.3%
Neutral/No Opinion	20.7%
Disagree	8.4%
Strongly Disagree	1.4%

* Note: A neutral opinion here may indicate a lack of awareness on the subject. Public education on the matter may be beneficial.

Community Facilities

Section Overview

The Community Facilities section asked respondents about the quality and quantity of facilities and the frequency with which they use such facilities.

Questions

- Rate the quality of the following town facilities:
 - Public Schools
 - Public Library
 - Town Hall
 - Sports & Recreation Programs
 - Police Department
 - Cromwell Fire District
 - Local Roads
 - Sidewalks
 - Park Facilities
 - Senior Services
- Indicate how much of the following public facilities Cromwell has:
 - Multipurpose Fields
 - Ball Fields
 - Tennis Courts
 - Pickleball Courts
 - Basketball Courts
 - Playgrounds and Playscapes
 - Places to Bike and Skate
 - Hiking Trails
 - Recreational Programs for young children, teens, and adults
- Are there any community amenities, recreational facilities, programs, or services that Cromwell is lacking?

Takeaways

Respondents generally feel that community facilities are of adequate quality; however, most feel that sidewalks, senior services, and town park facilities need improvement. There are also mixed opinions on the public schools.

Participants feel there are not enough hiking areas (65.9%) or places to bike and skateboard (40.2%).

There is significant interest in a town pool (53.4%) and community center (43.6%).

- How often do you or a member of your household visit the following places?
 - Town Hall
 - Library
 - Post Office
 - Cromwell Dog Park
 - Cromwell Landings Park
 - Cromwell Meadows State Wildlife Management Area
 - River Highland State Park
 - Evergreen Hill Park
 - Pierson Park
 - Riverport Park at Frisbee Landings
 - River Road Boat Launch
 - Watrous Park
 - Cromwell Community Garden
 - Main Street Historic Area
 - School Athletic Fields
- Are there barriers keeping you from using community facilities?

Community Facilities

Question 16: Rate the quality of the following town facilities:

Public Schools

Excellent	21.5%
Adequate	39.4%
Needs Improvement	29.4%
Don't Know	9.7%

Cromwell Fire District

Excellent	34.9%
Adequate	51.3%
Needs Improvement	6.0%
Don't Know	7.8%

Public Library

Excellent	41.8%
Adequate	44.4%
Needs Improvement	9.7%
Don't Know	4.1%

Local Roads

Excellent	8.2%
Adequate	64.4%
Needs Improvement	27.0%
Don't Know	0.4%

Town Hall

Excellent	26.2%
Adequate	53.2%
Needs Improvement	18.0%
Don't Know	2.6%

Sidewalks

Excellent	3.0%
Adequate	36.2%
Needs Improvement	58.6%
Don't Know	2.2%

Sports & Recreation Programs

Excellent	16.8%
Adequate	44.8%
Needs Improvement	28.7%
Don't Know	9.7%

Town Park Facilities

Excellent	12.7%
Adequate	44.0%
Needs Improvement	42.2%
Don't Know	1.1%

Police Department

Excellent	29.8%
Adequate	54.9%
Needs Improvement	9.3%
Don't Know	6.0%

Senior Services

Excellent	16.0%
Adequate	30.1%
Needs Improvement	30.5%
Don't Know	23.4%

Community Facilities

Question 17: Indicate how much of the following public facilities Cromwell has:

Multipurpose Fields (soccer, football, etc.)

Too Many	3.0%
About the Right Amount	59.2%
Too Few	25.8%
Don't Know/Not Sure	12.0%

Ball Fields (baseball, softball)

Too Many	4.8%
About the Right Amount	62.7%
Too Few	20.2%
Don't Know/Not Sure	12.3%

Tennis Courts

Too Many	1.5%
About the Right Amount	58.6%
Too Few	19.8%
Don't Know/Not Sure	20.1%

Pickleball Courts

Too Many	2.2%
About the Right Amount	30.2%
Too Few	22.4%
Don't Know/Not Sure	45.2%

Basketball Courts

Too Many	1.1%
About the Right Amount	42.5%
Too Few	29.5%
Don't Know/Not Sure	26.9%

Playgrounds & Playscapes

Too Many	0.8%
About the Right Amount	63.5%
Too Few	27.4%
Don't Know/Not Sure	8.3%

Places to Bike, Skate, and Skateboard

Too Many	1.9%
About the Right Amount	37.6%
Too Few	40.2%
Don't Know/Not Sure	20.3%

Hiking Trails

Too Many	0.4%
About the Right Amount	25.8%
Too Few	65.9%
Don't Know/Not Sure	7.9%

Recreational Programs for Young Children

Too Many	1.1%
About the Right Amount	51.5%
Too Few	18.7%
Don't Know/Not Sure	28.7%

Recreational Programs for Teens

Too Many	1.5%
About the Right Amount	27.4%
Too Few	33.3%
Don't Know/Not Sure	37.8%

Recreational Programs for Adults

Too Many	0.7%
About the Right Amount	39.0%
Too Few	34.5%
Don't Know/Not Sure	25.8%

Community Facilities

Question 18: Are there any community amenities, recreational facilities, programs, or services that Cromwell is lacking?

There were 163 responses – the following lists the four most common themes discussed by survey participants:

53.4% of respondents mentioned a Town pool
43.6% of respondents mentioned a community center
17.2% of respondents mentioned improved recreational facilities

Other common themes included a senior center, hiking and walking trails, riverfront improvements, and more parking at public parks.

Question 19: How often do you or a member of your household visit the following places?

Town Hall

Daily	4.4%
Monthly	18.9%
More than Once a Month	17.8%
A Few Times a Year	57.0%
Never	1.9%

Cromwell Dog Park

Daily	1.1%
Monthly	3.0%
More than Once a Month	5.6%
A Few Times a Year	14.2%
Never	76.1%

Library

Daily	3.7%
Monthly	28.4%
More than Once a Month	20.5%
A Few Times a Year	34.3%
Never	13.1%

Cromwell Landings Park

Daily	5.6%
Monthly	9.3%
More than Once a Month	11.6%
A Few Times a Year	50.4%
Never	23.1%

Post Office

Daily	2.6%
Monthly	29.5%
More than Once a Month	25.4%
A Few Times a Year	39.2%
Never	3.3%

Cromwell Meadows State Wildlife Management Area

Daily	0.0%
Monthly	5.0%
More than Once a Month	3.3%
A Few Times a Year	29.3%
Never	62.4%

Community Facilities

Question 19: (Continued)

River Highland State Park

Daily	1.1%
Monthly	9.7%
More than Once a Month	9.0%
A Few Times a Year	46.5%
Never	33.7%

Evergreen Hill Park

Daily	2.7%
Monthly	5.0%
More than Once a Month	3.5%
A Few Times a Year	20.5%
Never	68.3%

Pierson Park

Daily	7.1%
Monthly	17.2%
More than Once a Month	16.0%
A Few Times a Year	46.6%
Never	13.1%

Riverport Park at Frisbee Landing

Daily	3.8%
Monthly	11.6%
More than Once a Month	13.1%
A Few Times a Year	50.9%
Never	20.6%

River Road Boat Launch

Daily	3.8%
Monthly	2.6%
More than Once a Month	6.4%
A Few Times a Year	26.3%
Never	60.9%

Watrous Park

Daily	10.5%
Monthly	17.2%
More than Once a Month	16.5%
A Few Times a Year	39.7%
Never	16.1%

Cromwell Community Garden

Daily	2.3%
Monthly	1.9%
More than Once a Month	4.5%
A Few Times a Year	19.5%
Never	71.8%

Main Street Historic Area

Daily	7.8%
Monthly	11.5%
More than Once a Month	16.4%
A Few Times a Year	37.2%
Never	27.1%

School Athletic Fields

Daily	10.8%
Monthly	10.8%
More than Once a Month	14.2%
A Few Times a Year	28.4%
Never	35.8%

Community Facilities

Question 20: Are there any barriers keeping you from using community facilities?

Hours of Operation are too Limited or do not Work with my Schedule	14.6%
Location	17.1%
Lack of Programming or Events of Interest	57.9%
Lack of Communication about Programming	50.6%
Accessibility (ADA Design, Interpretation, Translation)	5.0%
Other	26.8%

- *"Programming is hindered due to small size of buildings"*
- *"Condition of fields"*
- *"Don't know what exists. Need more marketing of current facilities to increase awareness"*
- *"Lack of lighting and parking"*
- *"Some of the Town-owned parks need more care"*

Note: Participants had the choice to choose multiple options or none at all. Percentages will not add up to 100%.

Visioning

Section Overview

The Visioning section of the survey asked participants to prioritize focus areas for Cromwell over the next decade.

Questions

- Rate the following in terms of priority focus areas for Cromwell over the next 10 years
 - Encourage more variety of housing options
 - Encourage more housing affordability options
 - Maintain and improve existing roads
 - Continued support and improvement of education system
 - Preserve historic buildings, properties, and districts
 - Preserve farmland and agriculture
 - Preserve undeveloped land for open space
 - Provide more biking and walking amenities
 - Support and increase recreational programs and activities
 - Encouraging more non-residential development

Takeaways

Survey respondents noted the highest priorities for focus areas across the next 10 years should be supporting and improving the education system (58.6%), preserving undeveloped land for open space (58.7%), preserve farmland and agriculture (49.1%), and provide more biking and walking amenities (47%).

Medium priorities included maintaining and improving existing roads and supporting/increasing recreational programs and activities.

Lower priority concerns included the encouragement of more variety in housing, encouragement of more affordable housing, and encouragement of non-residential development.

Visioning

Question 21: Rate the following in terms of priority focus areas for Cromwell over the next 10 years:

Encourage More Variety of Housing Options

No Priority, Not Worthwhile	24.7%
Low Priority, But Worthwhile	36.9%
Medium Priority	27.6%
High Priority	10.8%

Encourage More Housing Affordability Options

No Priority, Not Worthwhile	24.2%
Low Priority, But Worthwhile	36.0%
Medium Priority	24.9%
High Priority	14.9%

Maintain & Improve Existing Roads

No Priority, Not Worthwhile	1.1%
Low Priority, But Worthwhile	13.5%
Medium Priority	44.0%
High Priority	41.4%

Continued Support & Improvement of Education System

No Priority, Not Worthwhile	2.6%
Low Priority, But Worthwhile	9.3%
Medium Priority	29.5%
High Priority	58.6%

Preserve Historic Buildings, Properties, and Districts

No Priority, Not Worthwhile	3.8%
Low Priority, But Worthwhile	29.2%
Medium Priority	36.3%
High Priority	30.7%

Preserve Farmland & Agriculture

No Priority, Not Worthwhile	4.1%
Low Priority, But Worthwhile	18.2%
Medium Priority	28.6%
High Priority	49.1%

Preserve Undeveloped Land for Open Space

No Priority, Not Worthwhile	4.5%
Low Priority, But Worthwhile	14.3%
Medium Priority	22.6%
High Priority	58.6%

Provide More Biking & Walking Amenities

No Priority, Not Worthwhile	1.9%
Low Priority, But Worthwhile	18.3%
Medium Priority	32.8%
High Priority	47.0%

Support & Increase Recreational Programs & Activities

No Priority, Not Worthwhile	3.0%
Low Priority, But Worthwhile	20.1%
Medium Priority	43.7%
High Priority	33.2%

Encourage More Non-Residential Development

No Priority, Not Worthwhile	24.5%
Low Priority, But Worthwhile	34.7%
Medium Priority	26.1%
High Priority	14.7%



Visioning

Question 21: (Continued)

Other comments related to priority focus areas included:

- *"The plan of 'Conservation' should have as a high priority conserving natural plant and wildlife habitats, and minimizing existing light and noise pollution and ensuring that there are no incremental sources of such pollution"*
- *"Non-residential Development should be restaurants and shopping but not warehouse or corporate offices. It should be something the community can enjoy"*
- *"The town has always encouraged open space, and is one of the reasons we moved here. We'd like to see that continue. Not every square inch of land needs to be developed"*

Question 35: Do you have any other comments or concerns that you would like to share with us, or was there something we missed?

There were 95 responses that addressed other comments. Some comments included:

- *"Overall, we love our neighborhood, house, location, etc. Our biggest complaint is Cromwell commercial services do not support and serve the young, affluent community"*
- *"Cromwell should make it a priority to explore development of its river location which would greatly benefit town and residents"*
- *"Rehab downtown housing and businesses to reflect the River Town we were and are"*
- *"In my opinion the town should consider that more and more working professionals with families are moving to Cromwell. They want high quality schools, open space, parks, recreational and athletic programs, etc. They also want an attractive place to live that is well kept"*
- *"Please consider improving Evergreen Hill Park as a more park-like landscape that retains its agricultural history and aesthetic"*
- *"Please prioritize maintaining existing open spaces and wooded areas. They are central to the beauty of the town, and improve the quality of life here. Creating paths, especially through open or wooded areas, suitable for biking and jogging should be a high priority"*
- *"I would like to see less development of land and a better, more inviting main street, more small, family owned businesses. A main street you could spend a day walking around"*

About You

Section Overview

Respondents were asked to share information about themselves to better understand the population responding to the survey. Questions related to personal information and their history with/in the community.

Please refer to Section 8 – Visioning for responses to question 35.

For question 36, **76 respondents** provided their contact information, indicating they are interested in future information related to the POCD update.

Questions

- What is your age?
- Where do you work?
- How long have you lived in Cromwell?
- Where do you live? (neighborhood)
- Do you rent or own your home?
- Describe your household
- Why do you choose to live in Cromwell?
- Do you see yourself living in Cromwell in 10 years?
- How do you find out about community events? Which events do you attend?
- Do you currently serve on any Town boards, commissions, etc.?

Takeaways

The majority of respondents were ages 65-74 (27.7%) followed by ages 45-54 (18.2%)

41.1% of respondents are retired. 27.2% work outside of Cromwell, but within 20 miles.

58.9% of respondents have lived in Cromwell for 20+ years. 59.1% see themselves living in Cromwell 10 years from now. 54.8% of respondents live in the central "neighborhood" of Cromwell (between Routes 3 and 99)

91.6% of respondents own their own home. 26.5% of respondents live in a household described as "Couple with Children Under 18 at Home." 23.5% of respondents described their household as "Couple with no Children."

The most popular reasons for living in Cromwell included:

- Location – 79.0%
- Quality of Life – 45.8%
- Housing or Neighborhood – 43.9%
- Sense of Community – 38.9%

About You

Question 22: What is your age?

Under 18	0.0%
18-24	0.0%
25-34	6.4%
35-44	17.8%
45-54	18.2%
55-64	16.3%
65-74	27.7%
75+	13.6%

Question 23: Where do you work?

In Cromwell	9.1%
Outside of Cromwell, but within 20 miles	27.2%
More than 20 miles outside of Cromwell	4.5%
Travel for Work (3 or more days/week)	3.0%
Work from Home (Temporary, Short-term)	2.3%
Work from Home (Permanent)	10.9%
Currently Not Working	1.9%
Retired	41.1%

Question 24: How long have you lived in Cromwell?

Less than 2 years	2.3%
2-5 years	4.6%
5-10 years	11.8%
11-20 years	22.4%
20+ years	58.9%

Question 25: Where do you live?

Neighborhood A (West of Route 3)	29.3%
Neighborhood B (East of Route 3 & West of Route 99)	54.7%
Neighborhood C (East of Route 99)	16.0%

Question 26: Do you own or rent your home?

Rent	6.9%
Own	91.6%
Other	1.5%

About You

Question 27: Please describe your household

I live alone	15.5%
Couple w/ No Children	23.5%
Couple w/ Children under 18 (at Home)	26.5%
Couple w/ Children over 18 (at Home)	8.3%
Single Parent w/ Children under 18 (at Home)	2.3%
Single Parent w/ Children over 18 (at Home)	1.1%
Couple w/ Children over 18 (Not at Home, including College)	13.3%
I live with Others (Unrelated)	2.6%
Multi-Generational Home	4.6%
Other	2.3%

Question 28: Why do you choose to live in Cromwell?

Location	79.0%
Public Schools	30.2%
Housing or Neighborhood	43.9%
Employment in Town	3.8%
Family and/or Friends	38.2%
Sense of Community	38.9%
Quality of Life	45.8%
Cultural Offerings & Events	3.1%
Affordability and/or Cost of Living	19.5%
Other	12.6%

- "Size of Community"
- "Low Taxes"
- "Covenant Living of Cromwell"
- "Born & Raised"
- "Convenience"

Note: Participants had the choice to choose multiple options or none at all. Percentages will not add up to 100%.

About You

Question 29: Do you see yourself living in Cromwell 10 years from now?

Yes	59.1%
No	11.4%
Don't Know/Not Sure	29.5%

Question 30: If you answered "Yes" to the previous question, what kind of housing do you see yourself in?

My Current Home	79.0%
Large Single Family Home	5.7%
Small Single Family Home	6.3%
Condominium	0.0%
Apartment	1.7%
Duplex	0.0%
Age-Restricted	2.8%
None of the Above	4.5%

Question 31: If you answered "No" to the previous question, why don't you see yourself living in Cromwell in the future?

Commute (Closer to Employment)	2.3%
Lack of Adequate Transportation Options	4.6%
New Job or Relocation	6.9%
Move Closer to Family	8.1%
Lack of Adequate Housing Options	11.5%
Cost of Living	21.8%
Lifestyle Opportunities	24.1%
EmptyNesters	25.3%
None of the Above	9.2%
Other	31.0%

- "Blight"
- "Continuous building is taking away from the small town vibe"
- "Prefer a more open minded, respectful, and environmentally conscious community"

Note: Participants had the choice to choose multiple options or none at all. Percentages will not add up to 100%.

About You

Question 32: How do you find out about community events?

Social Media	53.3%
Town Website	30.4%
Public Access TV	1.6%
Word of Mouth	54.1%
The Middletown Press	8.2%
The Chronicle	42.8%
Cromwell Life	46.7%
Cromwell CT Families – Public Page	23.4%
Cromwell CT Community Positive News & Local Happenings (Facebook)	23.4%
Cromwell Uncensored	19.8%
Rare Reminder	33.9%
Other	14.0%

- "Senior Center Newsletter"
- "School Announcements"
- "Email"
- "Town Hall"

Question 33: What community events do you attend?

Farmer's Market	78.4%
Memorial Day Parade	43.2%
Summer Concert Series	41.7%
Holiday Events (Trunk or Treat)	36.7%
Veteran's Day Event	15.8%
Sporting Events	39.4%
None	6.2%
Other	12.0%

- "Fireworks at the River"
- "Movie Nights at Pierson Park"
- "Winter Tree Lighting"
- "Church & School Events"
- "Library Events"

Question 34: do you currently serve on any Town boards, commissions, or volunteer for other organizations in town?

Yes	24.6%
No	75.4%

Note: Participants had the choice to choose multiple options or none at all. Percentages will not add up to 100%.



ZONING CONCEPTS FOR CROMWELL'S CONSIDERATION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Zoning regulations are a cornerstone to implementing the municipal goals outlined in a Plan of Conservation and Development. It's important to regularly review the existing regulations for shortcomings and consider adjusting for new concepts. Not all up-and-coming zoning practices are suitable for every municipality, but they should be considered for relevancy to the municipality's vision for the future. It should be noted that while this report is written towards the planning and zoning perspective, other Town departments will have an impact on making these recommendations a reality (engineering, public works, parks and recreation, etc.).

The following report is designed to give a brief overview of various zoning concepts that might be suitable for Cromwell, related to environmental protections and standards, transportation planning, and infrastructure and land use. Each concept will address how Cromwell has already incorporated some aspects of the concept and offer suggestions for further implementation of these ideas. Additional resources are also provided to review each concept in greater depth.

Low Impact Development

What is it? Low Impact Development (LID) is a site design approach that aims to minimize the impacts of development by mimicking predevelopment hydrology and managing runoff volume close to the source. Four basic principles of LID include: (1) minimizing site disturbance, (2) working with existing site hydrology, (3) minimizing and disconnecting impervious surfaces from the stormwater system, and (4) applying small-scale controls at the source of runoff.

Why is it important? LID principles benefit the community through increased stormwater management system efficiency, reduced overall runoff, and improved water quality. LID techniques might include using engineered systems to filter and/or retain stormwater, creating water collection systems, and using low-tech vegetated areas, among others, to treat site runoff.

How can it be incorporated into zoning? Low Impact Development has become a common zoning standard over the last few decades. The benefits LID presents to a municipality are well known, but implementation is often hindered by complex local codes that unknowingly discourage LID practices. Two key practices to increase the use of LID techniques locally include reviewing existing codes for barriers to implementation and including standalone LID policies that are incorporated into planning and zoning reviews.

Cromwell's existing zoning code has successfully incorporated some elements of low impact development. The "Stormwater Runoff Control" and "Erosion and Sediment Control" sections are well aligned with LID principles and regulates infiltration, detention, and release rates. Additionally, the Town Engineer requires a LID Checklist to be submitted for site plan review, which covers numerous LID principles and technologies. The Planning & Zoning Commission will want to consider ways to codify the use of LID into the zoning code to further enforce its use in new development and redevelopments.

Zoning Recommendations

- Evaluate the "Basic Standards" section (Landscaping & Parking) for inconsistencies with LID principles and practices. Consider whether the current regulations hinder the implementation of LID techniques. For example, are vegetated LID technologies an allowable buffer option?
- Review the "Definitions" section and identify LID concepts that should be defined throughout. For example, pervious and impervious surfaces, low impact development, etc.
- Consider adding a "Low Impact Development" section to the existing "Basic Standards" regulations to standardize the use of LID in new projects. Identify if the Town would be interested in offering incentives for projects that go above and beyond with LID technology, for example, utility discounts.

Other Recommendations

- Support the use of LID practices and technologies in all municipal projects. Examples include adding bioretention in rights-of-way and rain gardens in parking lots.

Green Infrastructure

What is it? Green Infrastructure (GI) can be thought of as one of the primary techniques for implementing Low Impact Development practices. The EPA refers to green infrastructure as "engineered-as-natural ecosystems that largely rely on using soil and vegetation to infiltrate, evapotranspire, and/or harvest stormwater runoff and reduce flows to drainage collection systems"

Why is it important? Green Infrastructure has environmental, social, economic, and public health benefits, all derived from including natural features into the built environment. Green Infrastructure reduces impervious surfaces, decreases infrastructure costs, improves water quality, provides wildlife habitat, mitigates flooding, and improves aesthetics. Specific examples include green roofs, rain harvesting, tree boxes, rain gardens, bioswales, permeable pavement, no/low mow areas, and many others.

How can it be incorporated into zoning? Green infrastructure is often incorporated into zoning regulations by addressing the issues it can mitigate, for example, impervious surfaces and stormwater runoff. Intentionally promoting the use of green infrastructure throughout regulations is essential to its widespread adoption and can easily be done so by amending landscaping and parking regulations to allow for creative alternatives to traditional site design elements.

Green Infrastructure is commonly tied to low impact development regulations, and therefore, some elements of green infrastructure are already included in the zoning code. For example, the "Stormwater Runoff Control" regulations call for systems that minimize impervious surfaces and maximize runoff travel time, and specifically acknowledges the use of rain gardens for treating roof surface drainage. Additionally, the "Landscaping" and "Off-Street Parking" regulations discuss stormwater quality remediation through basin landscaping and alternative parking surfaces, however, implementing these technologies requires Commission approval. The Planning & Zoning Commission should consider amendments to the zoning code that will further regulate stormwater treatment and impervious surfaces, particularly by increasing the use of green infrastructure.

Zoning Recommendations

- Evaluate the existing "Basic Standards" section for any barriers towards implementing green infrastructure options in new projects and redevelopment. For example, is commission approval always necessary for using alternative parking surfaces in a project?
- Consider incorporating specific green infrastructure measures into a "Low Impact Development" section of the existing "Basic Standards" regulations. For example, consider requiring projects of a certain size to treat X% of site runoff with green infrastructure. Also determine if incentives would be suitable for increasing the use of green infrastructure in projects, for example, utility fee discounts or reduced application fees.

Other Recommendations

- Support the use green infrastructure technologies in municipal projects, such as in bioswales in rights-of-way and permeable pavement in municipal parking lots.

Green Development Standards

What are they? Green Development Standards (GDS) encourage environmentally, socially, and economically sustainable design for new development and significant redevelopment. GDS account for the environmental and health performance of the final development as well as the efficiency and performance of the construction process itself.

Why are they important? Green Development Standards encourage more efficient use of municipal infrastructure by conserving energy and water, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve the health and wellness of the community, and increase community resilience, among other benefits. Examples of Green Development Standards might include maintaining existing tree canopy, requiring certain levels of energy efficiency for buildings, generating renewable energy, and providing infrastructure for electric vehicles.

How can they be incorporated into zoning? Green Development Standards are most often incorporated into zoning regulations through incentives tied to development. Other opportunities can include making a "green code" the main framework of the zoning ordinance; however, this often involves a full overhaul of the existing regulations.

Green Development Standards are typically voluntary efforts but may be mandated in the building and zoning codes. Cromwell's zoning code has examples of green development standards, particularly in its "Landscaping" regulations, where they allow for existing vegetation to be utilized for landscaping requirements. These regulations even call for significant trees to be preserved during construction, which is an excellent GDS practices. The existing "Off-Street Parking" regulations also allows for the incorporation of electric vehicle charging infrastructure, which supports the concept of green development and sustainability.

Zoning Recommendations

- Evaluate if Cromwell is interested in mandating green development standards or if voluntary measures are sufficient. If voluntary measures are decided on, consider incentive programs for developers that choose to build sustainably, such as an awards/recognition program with the Town or increased density allowances.
- Identify if dimensional standards for green space (minimums) and/or impervious surfaces (maximums) would be suitable for certain zones in Cromwell.

Other Recommendations

- Discuss the possible adoption of a green building standards code with other municipal departments. Such codes might include International Code Council's 2012 International Green Construction Code (IgCC) or the US Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED®), among others.

Nonpoint Source Pollution Management (MS4)

What is it? Nonpoint Source Pollution Management is the practice of protecting waterbodies by ensuring the stormwater entering them through municipal systems is clean. This is often achieved through obtaining a Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4) permit, which is an extensive permitting process mandated by the federal government to protect water quality and educate the public about stormwater impacts. "Nonpoint" refers to the concept that the pollution cannot be traced to one source. The most common example is stormwater runoff – which collects pollutants as it travels through natural and manmade systems and deposits them into waterbodies.

Why is it important? Nonpoint Source Pollution Management is critical to managing environmental health. Examples of nonpoint source pollution include fertilizers used on lawns and agricultural lands, sedimentation from construction sites, and salt from road treatments. These pollutants are carried to public waters by stormwater and degrade water quality. Managing nonpoint source pollution improves water quality and protects community health as well as maintains our ability to use public waters for recreation.

How can it be incorporated into zoning? Nonpoint Source Pollution Management is best implemented into zoning through stormwater management, erosion and sediment control, and low impact development standards and regulations

Cromwell received its MS4 Permit from the State of Connecticut and has been conducting annual reporting since 2017. The Town's Stormwater Management Plan, as required by the MS4, calls for land use planning that will improve water quality and watershed protection. The current zoning regulations in Cromwell include "Stormwater Runoff Control" and "Erosion and Sediment Control" regulations, which are two key elements to nonpoint source pollution management.

Zoning Recommendations

- Review the "Basic Standards" section for any inconsistencies with nonpoint source pollution management principles. Consider landscaping requirements that encourage stormwater treatment on site and/or regulate the use of fertilizers, pesticides, and herbicides on residential and commercial lawns.
- Assess sample "Transfer of Development Rights" (TDRs) regulations to determine if implementing TDRs would further the Town's goals of protecting sensitive areas and reducing nonpoint source pollution.

Other Recommendations

- Work with the Department of Public Works to determine if there are any gaps in zoning regulations that could further protect the municipal system from illicit discharges.

Transit-Oriented Development (TOD)

What is it? Transit-Oriented Development is the planning of urban spaces around transit areas to support vibrant, equitable, and sustainable communities. TOD focuses on connectivity, mobility, and density around existing and future transit hubs. It is designed to make public transit successful, increase pedestrian and bicyclist safety, and provide vibrant, livable communities involving mixed uses.

Why is it important? TOD is an excellent way to create successful and diverse communities. Communities that build through TOD can successfully improve public health, strengthen their local economy, and create a more sustainable community in the long run. The promotion of TOD also assists in neighborhood revitalization, the creation of affordable housing, and improvements to safety and congestion-related issues.

How can it be incorporated into zoning? TOD is an expansive concept and needs to be approached from a range of perspectives including local, regional, and state planning. At the local level, communities should ensure they are supporting mixed-use development around transit hubs and providing infrastructure for multiple modes of transportation. When amending regulations to account for TOD, a community should consult their regional transportation plan(s) to evaluate their role related to transportation and determine the extent to which TOD might be suitable for the community.

Cromwell has limited public transportation options within the town and therefore transit-oriented development may not be fully compatible with the existing conditions. The Regional Metropolitan Transportation Plan, developed by the RiverCOG, identifies transportation priorities for Cromwell with the focus being on road and bridge improvements and further development of pedestrian facilities. The Town has taken initiative to increase their pedestrian facilities through various sidewalk connectivity projects over the last few years. While Cromwell is not a home to a transportation hub, the Town can still choose to implement TOD policies that would increase density and mixed uses in commercial centers and along roads that are serviced by existing public transportation (CT Transit along Main Street).

Zoning Recommendations

- Evaluate density and use regulations along Cromwell's heavier travel corridors and ensure mixed-use development is encouraged where public transportation options are available (or likely could be in the future).
- Focus on increasing pedestrian-facilities to support regional transportation goals. This may include requiring sidewalks with new development in more zoning districts.
- Review the existing parking regulations and consider areas where reduced parking requirements would align well with walkable and multimodal transportation goals.

Other Recommendations

- Communicate with regional groups and neighboring communities to better understand their transportation planning direction and how their goals may impact Cromwell.

Complete Streets

What are they? Complete Streets is an approach to planning, designing, and building streets that enables safe access for all users. It ensures that all modes of transportation are considered and is generally a more efficient use of road space and resources. Developing a Complete Streets Policy takes coordination between various municipal departments and should consider the surrounding community's current and expected land use and transportation needs as well.

Why are they important? Complete Streets reduce motor vehicle-related crashes, which improves pedestrian and bicyclist safety. Areas with Complete Streets also tend to see an increase in property values, which may spur private development and support new businesses. Complete Streets vary and may include sidewalks, bike lanes, bus lanes, crossings, islands, accessible signals, streetscapes, and more.

How can they be incorporated into zoning? Complete Streets are most often incorporated into a municipality's long-term planning through a stand-alone policy that applies to public and private developments, where a project's compliance with the policy is reviewed by the Planning & Zoning Commission and staff. Smart Growth America is a leader in Complete Street Policy and has developed guides for writing policies and provides a "grading" system to evaluate policy effectiveness.

Cromwell has not adopted its own Complete Streets Policy but has incorporated elements of complete streets into its planning and zoning practices. For example, the 2016 Road Safety Audit completed with the CTDOT around Main, Geer, and Court Streets evaluated existing conditions and created action items for upgrading pedestrian facilities. In 2022, the Town completed the sidewalk connectivity project in the area, which addressed safety, accessibility, and connectivity. In addition, the Town's zoning regulations call for all new construction or significant modifications in the Downtown Cromwell District to build sidewalks to increase pedestrian facilities in desired areas.

Zoning Recommendations

- Develop a town-wide Complete Streets Policy that utilizes the Smart Growth America's Policy Elements for Complete Streets.
- Evaluate the need for pedestrian infrastructure throughout Cromwell. If there are areas where increased facilities are desirable, consider requiring sidewalks for new development. Currently this requirement is only applicable to the downtown Cromwell District.
- Review the existing bicycle-related infrastructure in the Town. Infrastructure can include bicycle parking, bike lanes in roads, and bike-specific trails. If more infrastructure is desired, consider incentives for new development to include provisions for bicyclists.

Other Recommendations

- Discuss street construction requirements with Public Works and determine if amendments can encourage the development of more pedestrian and bicycle facilities. For example, street widths often hinder the inclusion of bike lanes.

Active Mobility Planning

What is it? Active mobility refers to the use of regular physical activity as a means of transportation within and across communities. It is particularly valuable in residential and suburban communities where increasing community connections is desired. Pedestrian accommodations and trail systems are effective ways to do so. They are often connected through existing and proposed street infrastructure, may include paved and unpaved sections, and are ideally accessible for people of all abilities.

Why is it important? Active mobility is an important concept to be considered in transportation and open space planning. The benefits of an active mobility-focused community include increased intercommunity connectivity and recreational opportunities, the preservation of natural areas, and the promotion of a healthy and active lifestyle in the community.

How can it be incorporated into zoning? Active mobility is best incorporated into a town's long-term transportation and open space planning. Pedestrian accommodations are often accounted for in complete street policies and road construction regulations, while trails may be planned through a general open space plan or directly through a community comprehensive trail system plan. Zoning regulations can support these initiatives by reducing barriers to construction and promoting linkages across existing infrastructure.

Cromwell has already taken initiative to implement active mobility within the community. One of the most notable efforts was the sidewalk project that increased connectivity around Main, Geer, and Court Streets – adding more pedestrian accommodations around the school facilities in the area. Additionally, the 2012 Open Space Plan discusses interest in developing a comprehensive trail system on town-owned open space and the importance of connecting existing trails. Some zoning regulations are also aimed at providing for recreational opportunities - like the "Conservation Subdivision" section, which notes one of its main purposes is to provide land for recreational use, either active or passive, that is compatible with open space preservation. The "Biking Facilities" section of the "Off-Street Parking" regulations is also an excellent way to increase infrastructure associated with active mobility.

Zoning Recommendations

- Determine areas in Town where increasing pedestrian accommodations would allow for connections between existing and proposed trails. Consider requiring sidewalks for new development and substantial redevelopment in areas that would be suitable for this type of expansion.
- Consider specifying trails as a preferred use of open space within the "Conservation Subdivision" regulations.

Other Recommendations

- Consider developing and adopting a comprehensive trail system plan for the Town that evaluates the usability of existing open space parcels and land adjacent to inactive rails and utility lines.
- Work with RiverCOG and surrounding municipalities to determine if there are appropriate areas to link existing trail systems across municipal boundaries.

Adaptive Reuse

What is it? Adaptive Reuse is a flexible zoning concept that allows for the redevelopment of an existing building to be used as something other than its originally designated use, while maintaining compatibility with nearby uses.

Why is it important? Adaptive Reuse can have significant impact on a community's character and revitalization. It also contributes to smart growth, reduces energy consumption and construction costs, and can increase property values. Adaptive reuse can reduce sprawl by redirecting investment back into communities and is often considered to be more efficient and environmentally friendly by utilizing existing infrastructure. Specific examples could include repurposing office buildings for affordable housing or industrial buildings for breweries and restaurants.

How can it be incorporated into zoning? Adaptive reuse is often used as a tool to repurpose historic, vacant, and underutilized buildings. The two main ways a community can encourage this type of redevelopment includes amending standards to allow for more flexibility (uses, densities, setbacks, etc.) and establishing districts/overlays where compatible redevelopment is allowed by right.

Individual zones in Cromwell incorporate the concept of adaptive reuse into their stated purpose. For example, the Downtown Cromwell District states two of its purposes are to “facilitate the maintenance and upgrading of the neighborhood and to encourage the appropriate development of vacant and underutilized lots” which are perfectly aligned with the idea of adaptive reuse. Additionally, Cromwell permits a variety of uses across zoning districts and has responded well to applications that propose adaptive reuse in other areas where it is not explicitly stated in the district’s purpose. For instance, the floating mixed-use district and the inclusion of brewery-type businesses in the Industrial zone.

Zoning Recommendations

- Revisit the allowable uses in each zone and determine if the existing permitting process for each use is suitable, or if any uses can be transitioned to a use-by-right. For example, the LB and BP zones are generally on the outskirts of residential zones and may be suitable for allowing multifamily by-right, in the form of apartments above retail/businesses.
- Include terms in the “Definitions” section for adaptive reuse, vacant, and underutilized.
- Examine the existing bulk and dimensional standards for each zone to determine if there are any areas where more flexibility would promote adaptive reuse and redevelopment.
- Consider if the existing Mixed-Use District can or should be a model for a larger multi-lot zone rather than applying it to single developments.

Affordable Housing

What is it? Affordable Housing is housing that costs 30% or less of the household's income for those making less than 80% of the area's median income. Affordable units are typically protected in some way, whether that be through deed restriction or government assistance and includes all housing types, like single family homes, duplexes, apartments, and townhomes.

Why is it important? There are many myths surrounding affordable housing, like its effects on surrounding property values or looking undesirable, that hinder its development. A municipality must dispel these myths in order to increase its affordable housing stock – which is essential to maintaining a diverse population. Affordable housing is critical for young adults and senior citizens who wish to return to or remain in the area and provides workforce housing to individuals across industries.

How can it be incorporated into zoning? Affordable Housing is often addressed in a stand-alone document called the Affordable Housing Plan. These plans outline goals and objectives for a municipality to increase their stock in affordable housing and often includes recommendations for zoning code amendments to do so. One of the most common methods is to use inclusionary zoning, which requires and/or incentivizes the development of affordable housing into residential developments.

Cromwell adopted an Affordable Housing Plan in June of 2022 that identifies objectives, strategies, and action steps for the Town to take to reach a suitable affordable housing stock. This plan suggested zoning code amendments to incentivize developers and promote middle housing conversions. Cromwell has not made these amendments yet, but the existing code does allow for some affordable housing tools to be implemented, such as attached accessory dwelling units.

Zoning Recommendations

- Review other municipality's regulations for Inclusionary Zoning to determine if this method would be suitable for adoption in Cromwell. Specifically, evaluate the various methods to incentivize and regulate the inclusion of affordable housing in residential development projects.
- Promote middle-housing by allowing the conversions of two-family and single-family units in residential zones.
- Consider allowing detached accessory dwelling units as an accessory use in residential zones in addition to attached ADUs.

Other Recommendations

- Establish a town Housing Committee that is responsible for evaluating current and future needs for diverse housing across Cromwell.

Urban Agriculture & Farming

What is it? Urban Agriculture is the cultivation, processing, and distribution of agricultural products in urban and suburban areas. Urban Agriculture has grown in recent years through the increased interest in locally grown food and awareness of its benefits to the urban environment. Urban Agriculture is not meant to replace traditional farming but rather serves as an additional method to further support food security.

Why is it important? Urban Agriculture can improve local food security, increase economic development and green space, and strengthen community bonds. Urban Agriculture can include community gardens, rooftop farms, hydroponic facilities, and vertical production.

How can it be incorporated into zoning? Urban Agriculture is a newly recognized land use option for municipalities and can be utilized as a strategy to reach social and environmental goals - for example, the conversion of vacant land in an underserved community into productive urban farming land. Urban Agriculture may be restricted by local codes but creating provisions that promote its development can increase the awareness of its practice and benefits.

Cromwell has significant prime farmland soils and recognizes its historical agriculture community. The Town has successfully implemented a Community Gardens Program at the Evergreen Park, which is a key element of urban agriculture. The zoning ordinance also defines numerous agriculture-related terms, permits farms by-right in nearly all zoning districts, and allows additional farm-related practices by obtaining a use permit. This is consistent with Cromwell's history of farming but should be updated to reflect more current practices as well. Any updates to the zoning code should be careful not to negatively impact traditional farming practices, but rather expand the options for those interested in both traditional and new farming techniques.

Zoning Recommendations

- Review all farming-related definitions in the "Definitions" section of the ordinance for inconsistencies and possible hinderances to adopting urban farming practices. For example, the current regulations define a farm as a parcel of land that is at least five acres, which is a major roadblock for those interested in small-scale urban and suburban farms. Add other related terms to the section, such as urban agriculture and gardens.

Other Recommendations

- Evaluate the public interest in creating an Agricultural Commission that can vouch for the farming community in Cromwell.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

LOW IMPACT DEVELOPMENT

- [EPA: Revising Local Code to Facilitate LID](#)
- [LID: A Design Manual for Urban Areas](#)
- [Incorporating LID into Municipal Stormwater Programs](#)

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

- [Hartford, CT: Green Infrastructure Handbook](#)
- [EPA: Municipal Handbook, Incentive Mechanisms](#)
- [EPA: Water Quality Scorecard](#)

GREEN DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

- [Creating Municipal Green Development Standards](#)
- [EPA: Green Building Standards](#)

NONPOINT SOURCE POLLUTION MANAGEMENT (MS4)

- [CT Nonpoint Source Management Program Plan](#)
- [CT General Permit for MS4](#)

TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

- [The Transit-Oriented Development Standard](#)
- [Danbury Branch Transit Oriented Development Report](#)

COMPLETE STREETS

- [CT: Complete Streets Central](#)
- [Smart Growth America: Elements of a Complete Streets Policy](#)
- [Fairfield, CT: Complete Streets Policy](#)

ACTIVE MOBILITY

- [Trail Planning & Development](#)

ADAPTIVE REUSE

- [Infill Development & Adaptive Reuse](#)
- [Meriden, CT: Adaptive Reuse Policies](#)

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

- [RiverCOG Affordable Housing Plan: Appendix - Cromwell](#)
- [CT Fair Housing Center: A Guide to Zoning for Fair & Open Communities](#)

URBAN AGRICULTURE

- [USDA: Urban Agriculture](#)
- [Planning for Agriculture: A Guide for CT Municipalities](#)

The proposed 2023 Zoning Regulations Outline is a restructured version of the existing regulations. The proposed outline addresses organizational changes that can make the regulations more user-friendly and intuitive.

A Few Notes on Content:

1. Restructuring headings and subheadings may make it appear that some sections are being deleted, but **No content is proposed to be deleted at this point, just relocated.**
2. Numerous headings and subheadings will be renamed.
3. The proposed outline does not include any of the new zoning concepts yet (LID, Complete Streets, etc.).

Proposed Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction

The introduction chapter will consist of the philosophy, authority, purposes, zoning map, interpretation of regulations, conformity required, and nonconformities.

Chapter 2: Terms & Definitions

Terms and definitions are proposed to be separated from the introduction in a standalone chapter.

Chapter 3: Zoning Districts

The zoning districts chapter will house all the different zoning districts, in their respective categories, as well as the permit types. The permit types will be a brief statement on where to find information about each process. The Residential and Business subheadings will have the following categories: purpose, bulk requirements, principal uses and structures, accessory uses and structures, and any other additional requirements (dependent on the section). There will now be consolidated and condensed use table(s)

Chapter 4: Use-Related Standards

Chapter four outlines the standards for specific uses (previously called "Special Permits"). Each subheading will have different categories, but common ones will be "general requirements" and "additional requirements", as needed. For existing subheadings that do not have a 'purpose' section, one will be added. (Note: the use-related standards will be put in alphabetical order)

Chapter 5: Site Development Standards

The site development standards chapter has a similar structure to the existing regulations, with some areas condensed and reorganized.

Chapter 6: Additional Standards

This chapter (previously titled Special Requirements) will follow site development standards so that all standards are generally located together.

Chapter 7: Procedures

The procedures chapter will be reorganized based on the application type and reviewing party. "Staff Reviews" includes the existing content from use permits, change of use permits, zoning signoff, and certificate of zoning. "Planning and Zoning Commission Reviews" includes the site plan, special permits, regulation amendments, and zoning map amendments sections.

Chapter 7: Administration

There are no major changes proposed for this chapter, other than removing the "impact statement" subheading. This is proposed because it only applies to two types of uses and was incorporated into Chapter 4.