



Vision 2034

New Haven's Comprehensive Plan

Draft 7/24/25

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Plan Produced By:



Acknowledgments

Land Acknowledgment

The land of our state is the territory of the Sequin including Quinnipiac and Tunxis, Matabesec, Mohegan, Mashantucket Pequot, Eastern Pequot, Schaghticoke, Golden Hill Paugussett, Nipmuc, and Lenape Peoples. These peoples have stewarded this land through many generations. We thank them for their strength and resilience in protecting this land and aspire to uphold our responsibilities according to their example.

General Acknowledgments

The Vision 2034 plan was made possible through the dedication of thousands of individuals across New Haven. Its development was led by the City Plan Department with support from many City departments and the consultant team of FHI Studio and subconsultants Led By Us, RKG, Resilient Land & Water, and CH Planning. The process was guided by a Steering Committee of over twenty members representing City departments, the Board of Alders, local schools and organizations, and neighborhoods. The Plan's content was developed with assistance from six Co- Creation Teams, made up of individuals with professional expertise, lived experience, and interest in the topic areas. A Community Navigator program and Youth Leadership Team were established to engage residents as partners in the planning process.

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A Message from the Mayor

Dear Residents of New Haven:

While I always feel proud of our city, at this moment in time I feel particularly proud of New Haven. We are tackling difficult challenges head on and serving as an example to communities around the state. We are working together – from the Mayor’s office to the Board of Alders to our state and federal delegations, to local organizations and members of our community – to ensure we make progress toward our shared vision where everyone in our city has the opportunity to thrive. Vision 2034, New Haven’s Comprehensive Plan, captures this shared vision, and provides a guide for how to get there.

New Haven is growing. Vision 2034 envisions a city of 150,000 people, with safe, affordable housing for all, inclusive economic opportunities, vibrant, connected neighborhoods, equitable zoning, and resilience to social, economic, and environmental challenges.

Vision 2034 is incredibly responsive to the input of the thousands of residents that participated in the planning process. The plan builds upon work the city and partners have already initiated, with flexibility to adjust strategies in response to the realities of available funding and adapt to the unique needs of each neighborhood. I am immensely grateful to all the residents who engaged with the planning process; your enthusiasm, advocacy, and imagination led to the creation of a plan that reflects the diverse needs and priorities of all our residents.

In an era with many forces that seek to divide our community, where we will be tested and we will have to make difficult decisions, New Haven will not waiver from our values, including the Vision 2034 principles of Equity and Resilience. We will proudly stand as one. In these difficult times, I’m so grateful and proud to live in this city we all call home. We have much work ahead of us, but I’m confident we are ready for the next ten years, whatever they may bring, because we are united together, working toward a city where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

Very Truly Yours,

Justin Elicker
Mayor

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1. Introduction



Source: New Haven Night Market

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Role of the Comprehensive Plan

Vision 2034, New Haven's Comprehensive Plan, is both a vision of the future and a guide on how to reach that vision. It will be a decision-making and policy guide for matters related to land use, housing, transportation, sustainability, economic development, neighborhood planning, public investments, and capital improvement programs. Equity and resilience are guiding principles of the plan.

Requirements of the Comprehensive Plan

Connecticut law (Connecticut General Statutes, Section 8-23) requires every city and town to update their plan of conservation and development (comprehensive plan) at least once every ten years to remain eligible for discretionary state funding. In addition to satisfying this requirement, the comprehensive plan and planning process provides communities with an opportunity to assess current conditions and important trends, engage in discussions with residents and other stakeholders about the community and its future, and identify priorities and make recommendations that will guide decision making over a period of ten years or more.

Vision 2034 is New Haven's Plan of Conservation and Development. This comprehensive plan will guide the City's leadership, departments, staff, boards, commissions, and committees in decision-making over the next ten years. It expands upon the City's former plan (Vision 2025) by directly addressing important issues such as equity and resilience as they apply to multiple aspects of life in New Haven. The Plan provides a framework for managing growth and investment while maintaining a focus on critical social and environmental issues that should be addressed. Vision 2034 meets the following State requirements as it:

- ✓ Is a statement of policies, goals and standards for the physical and economic development of the municipality.
- ✓ Provides for a system of principal thoroughfares, parkways, bridges, streets, sidewalks, multipurpose trails and other public ways as appropriate.
- ✓ Is designed to promote, with the greatest efficiency and economy, the coordinated development of the municipality and the general welfare and prosperity of its people and to identify areas where development is feasible and prudent.
- ✓ Recommends the most desirable use of land within the municipality for residential, recreational, commercial, industrial, conservation, agricultural and other purposes and include a map showing such proposed land uses.
- ✓ Recommends the most desirable density of population in the municipality.
- ✓ Notes any inconsistencies with the State's growth management principles.
- ✓ Makes provision for the development of housing opportunities, including opportunities for multifamily dwellings, consistent with soil types, terrain and infrastructure capacity, for all residents of the municipality.
- ✓ Promotes housing choice and economic diversity in housing, including housing for both low- and moderate-income households and encourages the development of housing which will meet the housing needs identified in the State's consolidated plan for housing and community development.
- ✓ Considers allowing older adults and persons with a disability the ability to live in their homes and communities whenever possible.

1.2 State and Regional Plans

The State Conservation and Development Policies Plan (Draft 2025-2030) identifies four guiding principles, which are common themes in Vision 2034. These include: Sustainable, Equitable and Just, Vibrant, and Resilient. The State Plan is organized around a vision for Connecticut's future that includes: A Thriving Economy, Housing for Current and Future Residents, Stewardship of Resources, Healthy People and Places, Connected and Inclusive Communities. These topic areas and the vision statements and targets identified for each are entirely consistent with the recommendations of Vision 2034.

Similarly, the South Central Regional Plan of Conservation and Development (2018-2028) establishes a vision for a region **with:**

- strong urban cores and thriving suburban/rural communities.
- several vibrant and livable "centers."
- diverse housing choices.
- high quality transportation and infrastructure systems.
- a balanced and globally competitive economy.

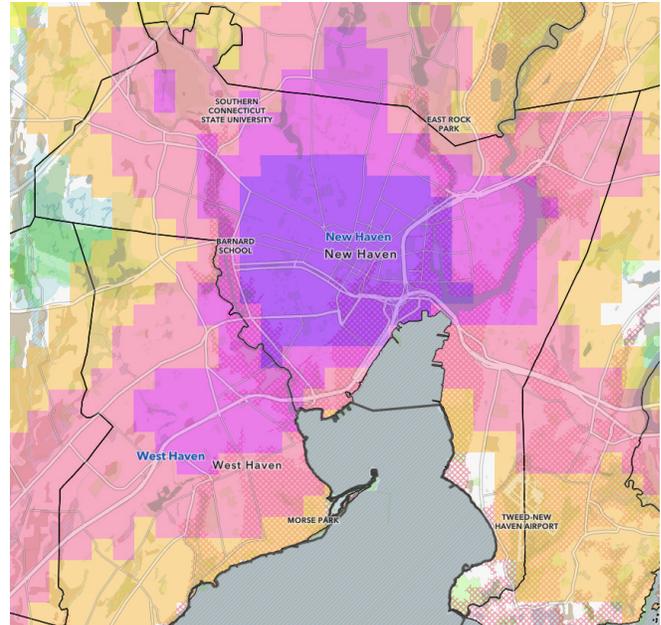
that:

- preserves the character of its unique centers, villages, neighborhoods, and places.
- fosters a sense of pride and belonging.
- is sustainable and healthy.
- is safe and resilient.

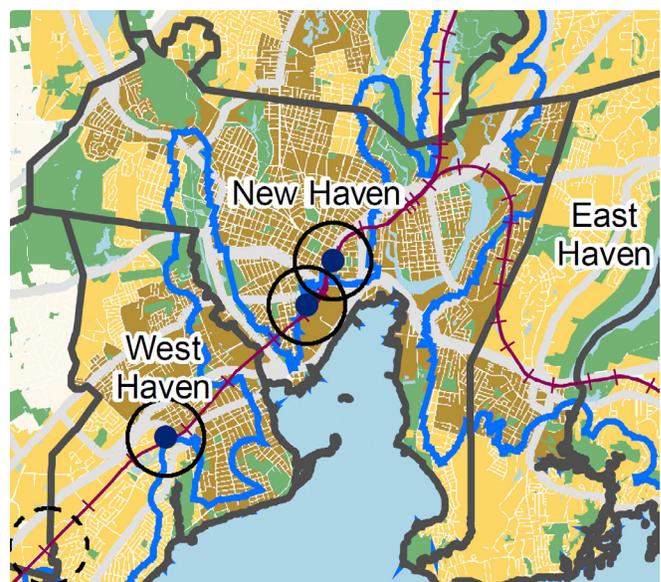
The state and regional plans also identify preferred land use across the state and region with much of New Haven identified as "High Activity" or "High Intensity" areas, respectively. These designations reflect the high concentration employment, medical and educational institutions, civic and commercial uses, cultural attractions, and transportation assets in New Haven and reinforce New Haven's role as a center for the region. The purpose of this designation in the state and regional plans is to support investment in high activity or high intensity areas.

Vision 2034 is consistent with the State Plan's guiding principles and all aspects of the regional vision as expressed by the South Central Plan. The Vision 2034 Plan seeks to reinforce New Haven's role as economic and cultural center of the region.

The regional plan future development intensity map (at right) shows much of New Haven as "high intensity" development (shown in brown/olive). Transit station areas are identified as transit oriented development areas.



The State plan locational guide map (above) identifies much of New Haven as a "high activity" area (shown in purple and pink), which means that these areas are prioritized for growth and investment.



Plan Organization

1.3

Vision 2034 is organized around six topic areas, each of which has a vision statement. Goals and strategies are used to organize the recommendations of this Plan into a structured agenda. The themes of Equity and Resilience were guiding principles in the development of this Plan.

Mission Statement

The mission statement is an expression of commitment on behalf of the City towards the use of this plan as a guide in decision making and towards implementation of its recommendations.

Topics and Vision Statements

This Plan is organized by six topic areas listed below.

Great Places
to Live

Economic
Opportunity
for All

Move
Together

Climate &
Ecological
Connections

Arts & Cultural
Identity

Civic Services
& Experiences

A vision statement describes the aspirations of the community for each of these topic areas.

Goals

Goals are commitments towards achieving the Plan's vision statements.

Themes

The themes of Equity and Resilience are woven throughout the Plan and across topic areas. They are intended to link goals across topic areas to ensure alignment across these important issues.

Strategies

Strategies are the methods by which the goals will be achieved. They describe the approach that is required to achieve a specific goal.

Equity:

Equity refers to fairness, justice, and impartiality in social policy, taking into account systemic inequalities to ensure everyone in a community has access to the same opportunities and outcomes. An equitable approach to planning or governance first acknowledges that inequalities exist, that planners and other government officials were responsible for creating them, and then works to eliminate them. In Vision 2034, we acknowledge the racist and classist land use policies of the past, both for its own sake and so that we can move toward a more equitable future.

Resilience:

"The capacity of a dynamic system to adapt successfully to challenges that threaten the function, survival, or future development of the system".

-Ann Masten, University of Minnesota

Vision 2034 sets a framework for the City to adapt and thrive in a time of climate change acceleration, in the wake of the Covid-19 global pandemic, and in the face of great uncertainty at the federal level. Now more than ever we need an economy, built environment, and community support system that is resilient and leaves no one behind.

1.4 Mission Statement

This Plan is supported by a commitment towards achieving its recommendations in the form of a mission statement.

The people of New Haven will use Vision 2034 as a tool to create a promising shared future, focusing on the needs of the whole community and honoring voices and experiences, particularly of those who have been historically undervalued and excluded from facets of community life. This Plan is the outcome of a process that was community-driven, representative, collaborative, and transparent. In the face of upcoming uncertainties, the Plan's concrete and actionable goals will serve as benchmarks for addressing systemic inequities and opening greater opportunities for all.

This statement was developed in coordination with the Vision 2034 Steering Committee and is intended to establish guiding principles for decision-making and action steps.



2. New Haven Today



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Demographic Profile

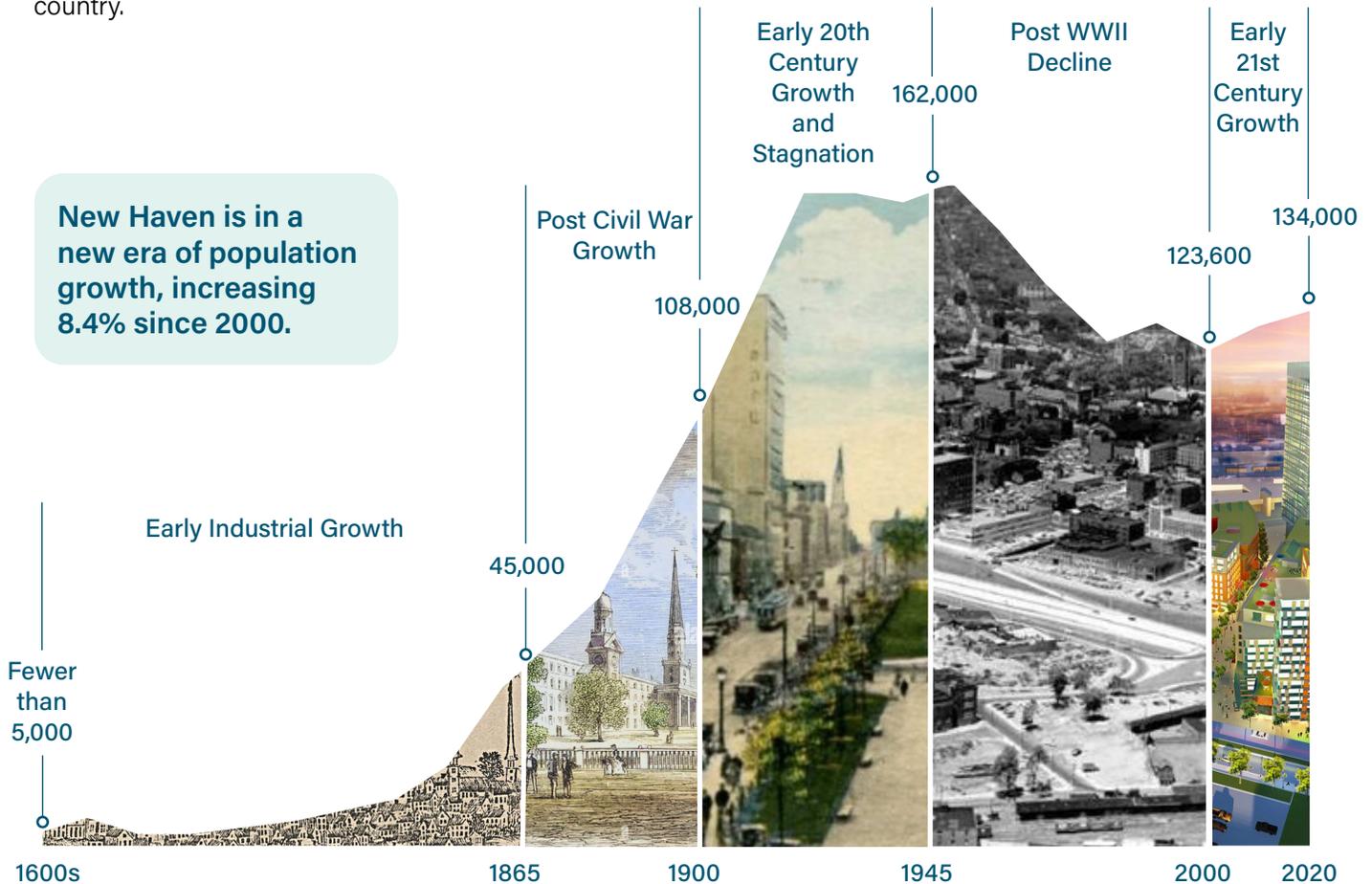
2.1

New Haven's Population 1600s-2020

New Haven was built on the ancestral lands of the Quinnipiac People. For thousands of years, these Algonquian-speaking people stewarded the beautiful land with its red rock formations to the east and west and three rivers flowing into Long Island Sound. Their territory encompassed 300 square miles of the region. The Quinnipiac were skilled farmers and artisans who deeply valued the natural beauty of their land. European settler-colonists arrived in the area in the 1630s and killed up to 90% of the Indigenous population with violence and disease. With the settlement of New Haven in 1638, Puritans forced the Quinnipiac people onto the first Native American reservation in America located on what is now the East Shore neighborhood and East Haven area. They were continuously displaced in the decades to follow. The Quinnipiac Tribe is not currently a recognized tribe in Connecticut, but numerous descendants of the Quinnipiac still live in the state and across the country.

New Haven's population remained small and relatively stable from settlement in 1638 until the turn of the 19th Century. Always benefiting from and economically tied to the waterfront, with the advent of the Industrial Revolution, New Haven also emerged as an attractive destination for larger-scale manufacturing. The expansion of manufacturing, improved transportation (including its coastal location and later railroad connections), and increased immigration fueled significant population growth during the 19th century. This era saw the City transform into an urban center with expanding infrastructure and industry.

This growth was fueled in part by the Great Migration of African Americans moving north, resulting from the end of the Civil War and Reconstruction. By the early 1900s, New Haven had become a thriving industrial and educational hub. Its population continued to increase, reaching a peak in 1950, including waves of



Puerto Ricans moving to New Haven. The City's economy, bolstered by manufacturing and the presence of Yale, supported a diverse and robust community.

Following World War II, New Haven, like many industrial cities in the northeast, began to experience economic shifts. Deindustrialization, suburbanization, and urban flight led to a gradual population decline. Urban renewal and highway construction policies destroyed neighborhoods and reduced available housing stock. The loss of manufacturing jobs and changing economic conditions contributed to population loss.

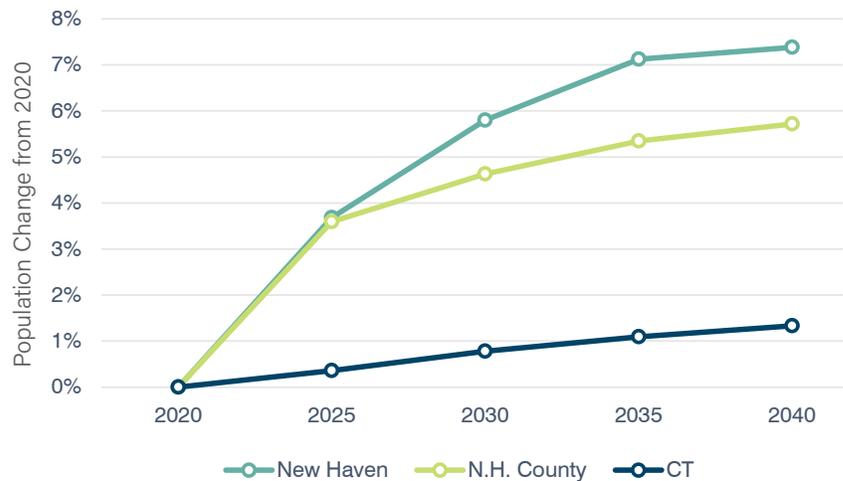
Since 2000, New Haven has experienced steady population growth. Reinvestment in urban centers, investments in education and healthcare, and a growing cultural scene have helped attract new residents. Having largely been home to Irish, Italians, Puerto Ricans and African Americans from the American South, New Haven is becoming more culturally diverse, with the Latinx, Middle Eastern and Asian populations growing and as a hub in the region for refugee resettlement. Spanish, Pashto, and Arabic are the most commonly spoken languages in the public school system after English. While the population today is lower than its mid-20th century peak, statewide and regional population trends as well as State population projections suggest that New Haven will continue to gain population over the next decade.

This City's population is relatively young and is projected to continue to grow through 2040.

Population Growth and Age

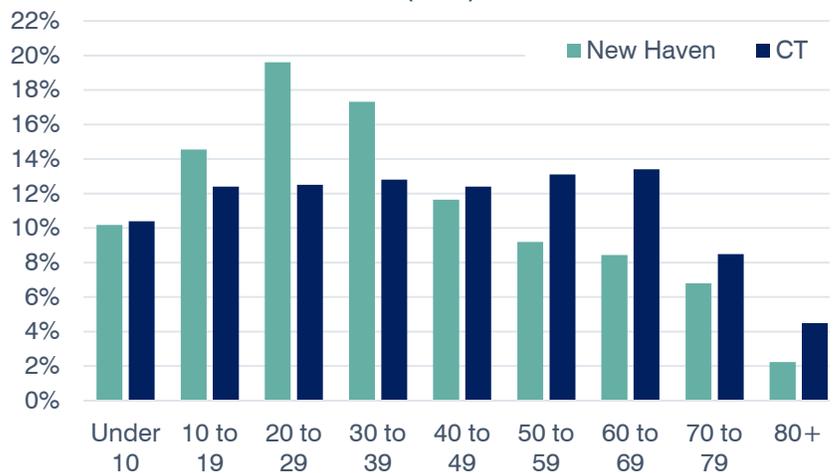
New Haven's population is growing faster than the county and the state. It also has a greater share of young people than the state, with a median age of 30.7 years, which is about 10 years younger than the state median. By 2040, the City's population is expected to reach approximately 144,000 persons, with growth to a population of 150,000 or more possible with a continued focus on housing and economic development. This would be the largest population in New Haven since 1960.

Projected Population Change (2020-2040)



Source: State of Connecticut Office of Policy and Management

Age Distribution (2023)



Source: 2019-2023 ACS, US Census Bureau

School Enrollment

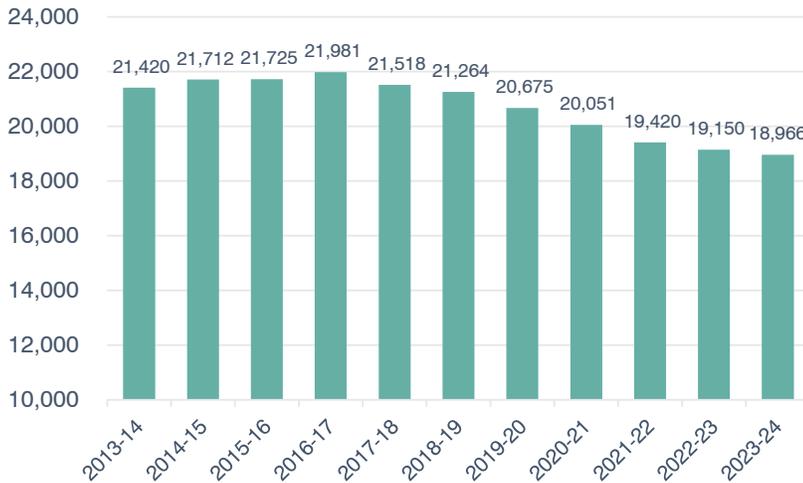


Source: New Haven Federation of Teachers

While New Haven's population has grown consistently over the last twenty years, school enrollment has decreased since 2016. For the 2023-2024 school year, New Haven Public Schools had a K-12 enrollment of 18,966 students, a 14% decrease from the 2016-2017 school year.

These trends are primarily related to a decrease in household sizes, fewer school-aged children per household, and out of district enrollment of New Haven's school aged children. While the City's population is projected to grow, school enrollment is projected to continue its decline through the 2031-2032 school year, with a projected enrollment of about 17,000 students in that year.

New Haven Public Schools K-12 Enrollment (2013-2024)



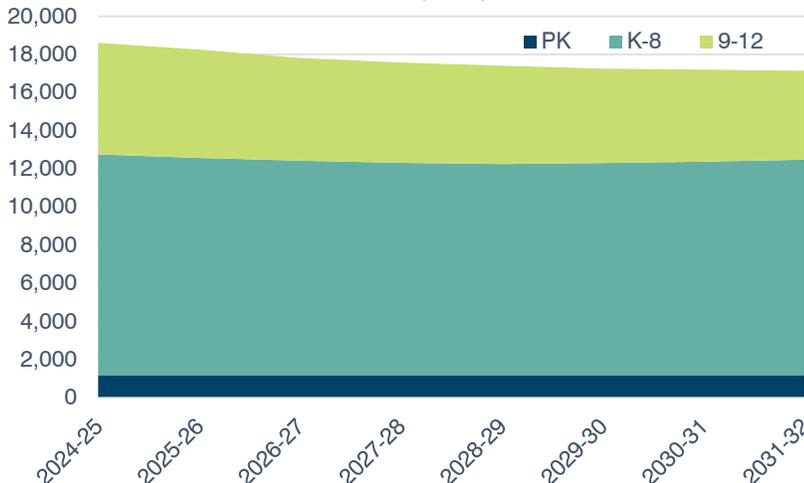
Source: State of Connecticut Department of Education

New Haven's public school enrollment has declined since 2017 and is projected to continue to shrink through 2032.

"Our kids deserve an equal education so that they can participate in our economy."

- Survey participant

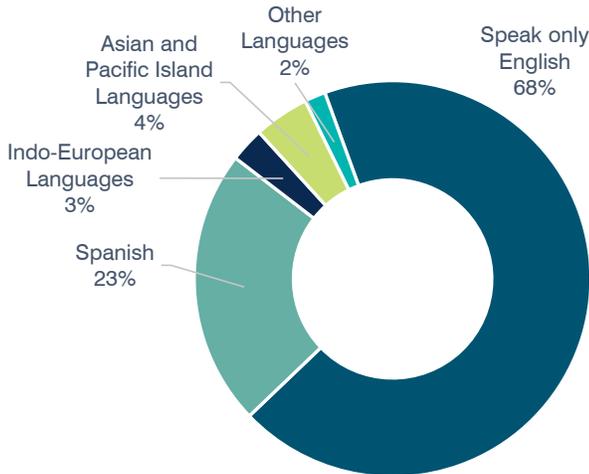
New Haven Public Schools Enrollment Projections (2023)



Source: New Haven Public Schools

Diversity

Languages Spoken at Home in New Haven (2023)



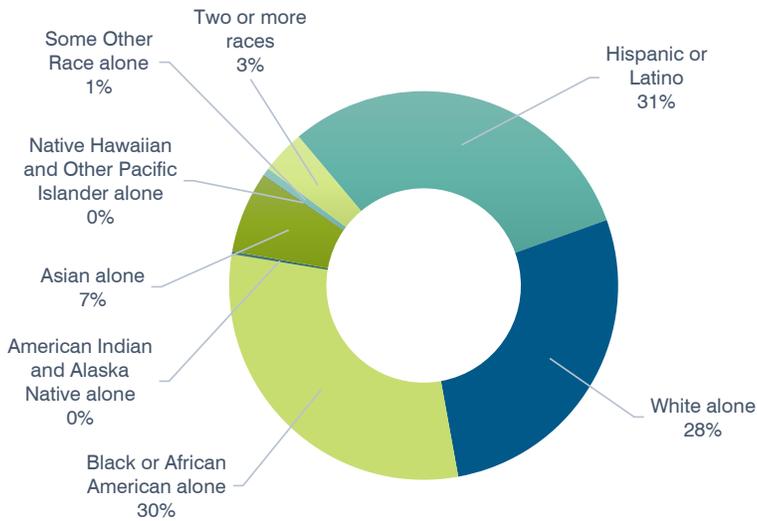
Source: 2019-2023 ACS, US Census Bureau

New Haveners consistently cite the City's racial and cultural diversity as its greatest asset, and it is becoming more diverse. Today in New Haven, 32% of households speak a language other than English at home.

Nearly one-third (31%) of New Haven residents identify as Hispanic or Latino, 30% identify as Black or African American, 28% identify as White, 7% identify as Asian, with the remaining residents identifying as Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander, some other race, or two or more races. Compared to 2010 New Haven has fewer residents that identify as White and fewer that identify as Black or African American. Populations experiencing growth since 2010 include people identifying as Hispanic and Latino, Asian, Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander, some other race, and people identifying as two or more races. Additionally, New Haven has a greater share of Blacks or African Americans, Hispanics or Latinos, and Asians than both the county and the state.

Over 23,000 residents of New Haven (17% of the population) are foreign-born. The largest number of immigrants living in New Haven were born in Mexico, followed by Jamaica and China.¹

New Haven's Population by Race & Ethnicity (2020)



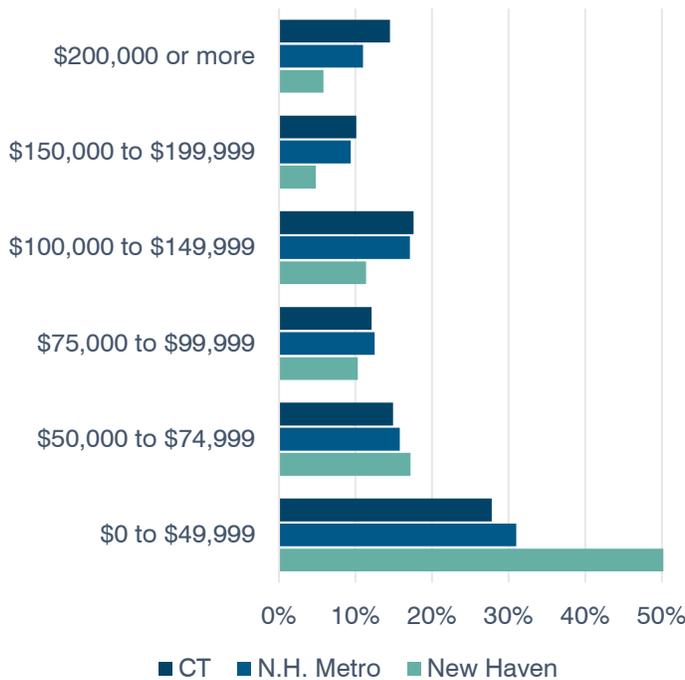
Source: 2020 US Census

New Haven is becoming an even more racially and culturally diverse City.

"[Provide] further support for Spanish-speaking elderly in partnership with CASA Otoñal"

- Survey participant

Share of Households by Income (2023)



Source: 2019-2023 ACS, US Census Bureau

Household Income

Like most of Connecticut's cities, New Haven's median household income (\$51,158) is lower than its metropolitan area (New Haven Metro, \$80,733) and the State (\$93,760).¹

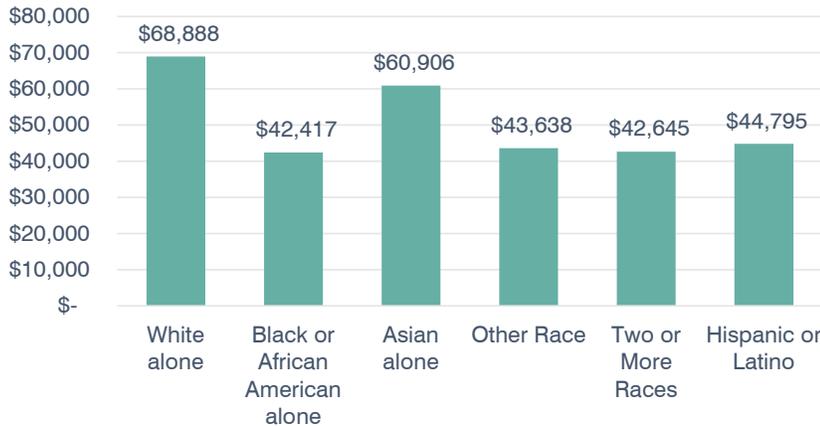
Median household income in New Haven varies by race and ethnicity with White households having the highest annual median income (\$68,888) and households identifying as Black or African American having the lowest annual median income (\$42,417). This income inequality highlights that poverty and economic justice in New Haven is a racial justice issue.

New Haven's poverty rate in 2023 was 25%; the poverty rate across the state in that year was 10%.¹ Additionally, 29.8% of students in New Haven's public schools were in poverty in 2023. This is a comparable rate to Hartford's (29.6%) but higher than Bridgeport's (23.5%) and more than double Stamford's (14.2%) student poverty rate.²

¹ 2019-2023 ACS, US Census Bureau

² US Census Small Area Income and Poverty Estimate (SAIPE)

New Haven Median Household Income by Race & Ethnicity (2023)



Source: 2019-2023 ACS, US Census Bureau

Households in New Haven earn significantly less than those across the region or state and within New Haven there are race and ethnicity based disparities in household income.

Education

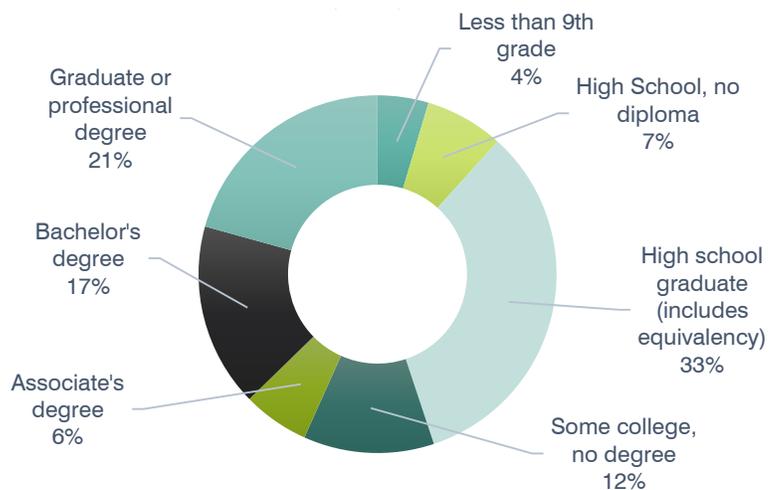
New Haven residents are relatively well-educated, with a higher proportion holding graduate or professional degrees compared to both the county and the state. As of 2023, more than 38% (14,583) of New Haven residents had earned a Bachelor's degree or higher and 7.8% of residents (5,255) had an Associate's degree. Additionally, only 11% of residents (10,289) had not attained a high school diploma or equivalent, down from 26% in 2000. Across all of these measures, educational attainment has improved since 2000.



Wilbur Cross Graduation Day Source: NHPS

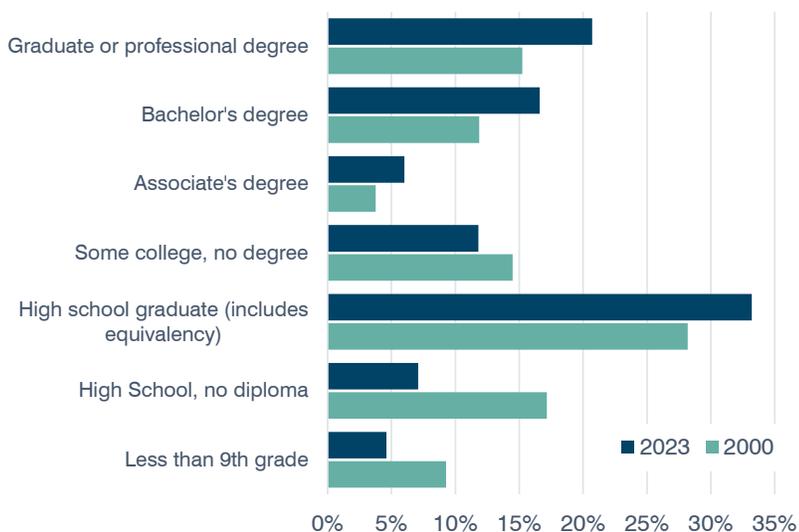
Educational attainment of the City's residents has increased by all measures since 2000.

New Haven Educational Attainment (2023)



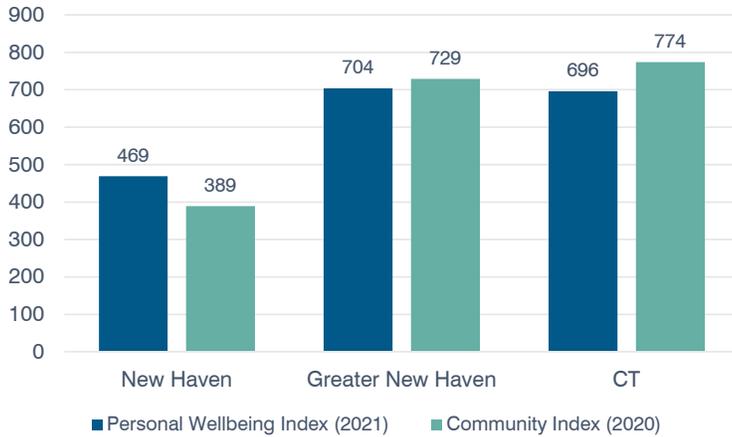
Source: 2019-2023 ACS, US Census Bureau

New Haven Educational Attainment Trends (2023)



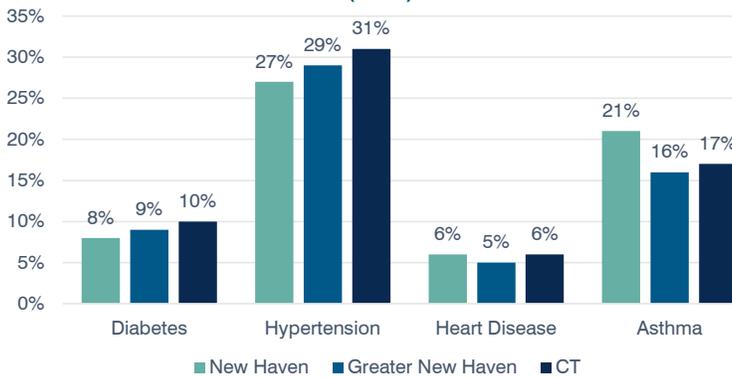
Source: 2019-2023 ACS, 2000 US Census Bureau

Personal Wellbeing and Community Index (2020, 2021)



Source: Datahaven

Chronic Disease (2021)



Source: Yale Community Health Needs Assessment

Community Health and Wellbeing

Datahaven, a local nonprofit, has tracked community well-being over the past decade via a community index, which measures economic, health-related, and educational well-being.

New Haven's residents report lower personal wellbeing than residents of Greater New Haven or the state. This self-reported score is based upon factors including life satisfaction, self-rated health, anxiety, and happiness. Additionally, New Haven's community index, a measure of economic, health-related, and educational well-being, is lower than the region's and state's.

New Haven's life expectancy rate of 78.2 years is close to that of Greater New Haven's (79.8 years) and the state's (80.3 years). Similarly, the City's residents have relatively comparable rates of chronic disease as residents across Greater New Haven or the state. Diabetes and hypertension rates are lower in New Haven but asthma is higher in New Haven than in the region or the state.

Measures of public health such as chronic disease are comparable to the region and state, but residents report significantly lower personal well-being.



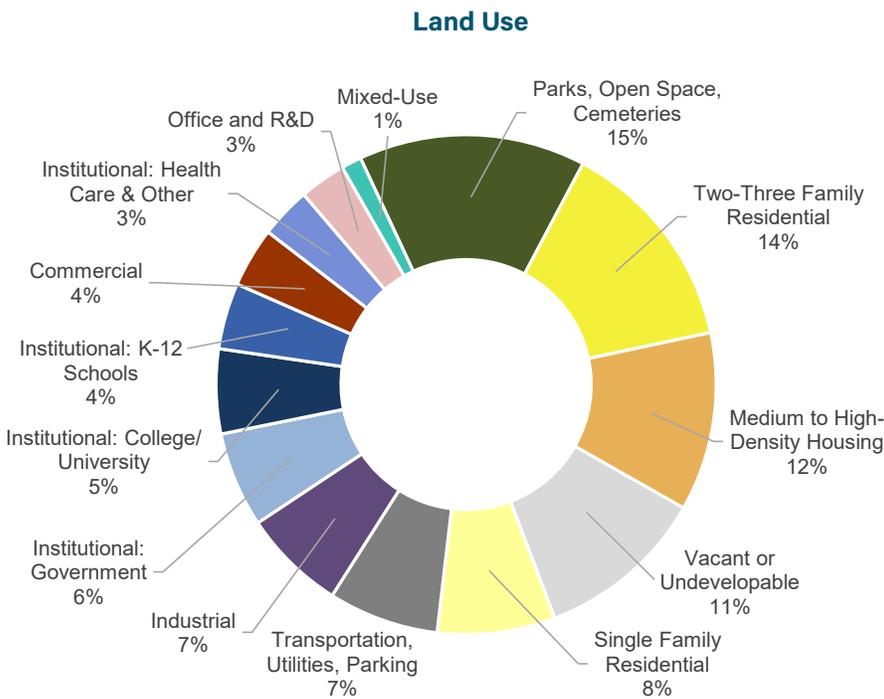
Farm Based Wellness Program. Source: Gather New Haven

2.2 Land Use and Zoning

Land Use

The City of New Haven is 20.1 square miles in total. Of that area approximately eight square miles are covered by rights of way including local streets, state roadways, interstate highways, and bodies of water such as the Mill River and portions of the New Haven Harbor. The remaining 12.1 square miles is occupied by parcels (lots) that are privately owned, owned by institutions such as Yale, or owned by the City, State, or Federal government.

These properties comprise a range of land uses that are organized here into 14 land use categories ranging from commercial to vacant land. New Haven has a range of land uses including commercial, office, industrial, institutional, parks and open space, government, schools, residential, and others. Of these categories, parks, open space, and cemeteries combine to occupy more space than any other land use category (15%) with two- and three-family homes occupying nearly as much land area (14%). Commercial properties have an impactful presence in the City but occupy a relatively small share of the City's parcels. Commercial, office, research and development, and industrial uses combined comprise only 14% of the City's land area. Vacant properties comprise 11% (849 acres) of the City's land area and are spread over hundreds of parcels. However, 109 acres of that land is classified as undevelopable, usually due to environmental conditions, leaving 740 acres as developable.



Source: City of New Haven Assessor's Database

Although New Haven is the economic and cultural center for the region, its land use is heavily residential.

Commercial includes auto sales and service, general retail, hotels, restaurants, specialty commercial, and commercial recreation.

Industrial includes manufacturing & production and storage & warehousing.

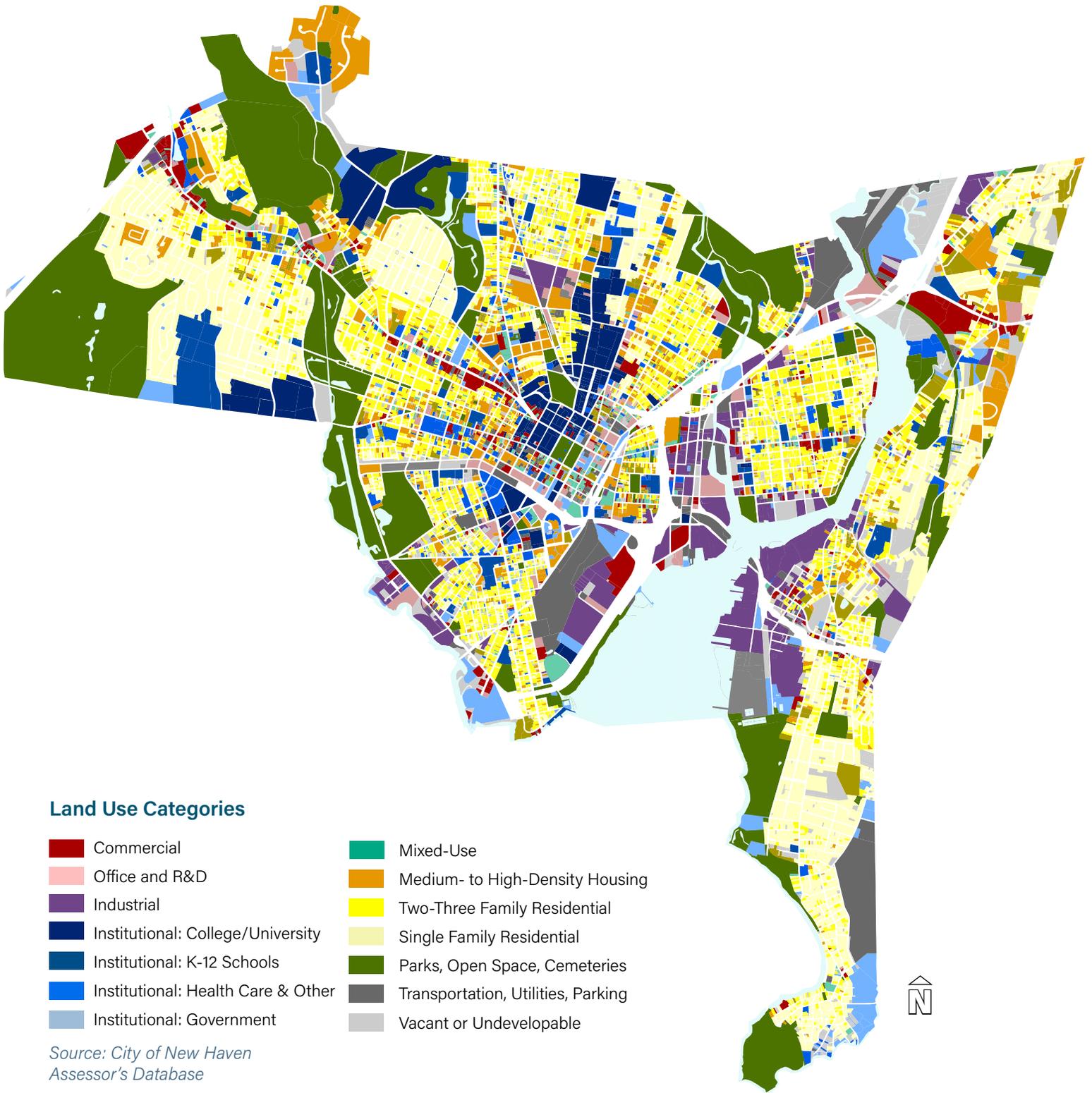
Institutional: Health Care & Other includes cultural, religious, charitable, non-profit organizations, hospitals, and health care facilities.

Medium- to High-Density Housing includes apartments, townhouses, Housing Authority properties, and condominium housing with more than three units.

Parks, open space, and cemeteries include City and state parks, privately held open space, cemeteries & burying grounds, and golf courses.

Vacant or undevelopable includes vacant commercial, industrial, residential, university, and undevelopable properties.

Transportation, utilities, & parking includes the New Haven Rail Yard, Tweed New Haven Airport, the Port of New Haven, utility company properties, parking garages, and large parking lots, but does not include roads and highways.



Zoning

New Haven's zoning districts and its zoning regulations guide and restrict how land is used and developed across the City. Like many cities which were developed largely before their first zoning code, New Haven's zoning rubric reflects the existing land use, more or less, rather than a specific expression of future development goals. In total, New Haven has over 20 zoning districts that include single-family, higher density residential, multiple central business, general, neighborhood commercial, light and heavy industrial, marine, park, and other specialty districts. Additionally, the City's zoning includes overlay zones such as the Coastal Area Management zone.

Though the New Haven Zoning Ordinance has seen some minor changes, it has not had a comprehensive update since 1962. At that time planning was focused on prioritizing lower density housing areas, accommodating automobile rights of way and parking, and creating zoning districts that supported discriminatory land use patterns established by a history of redlining. The impacts of these decisions are visible in the built infrastructure across New Haven's neighborhoods today.

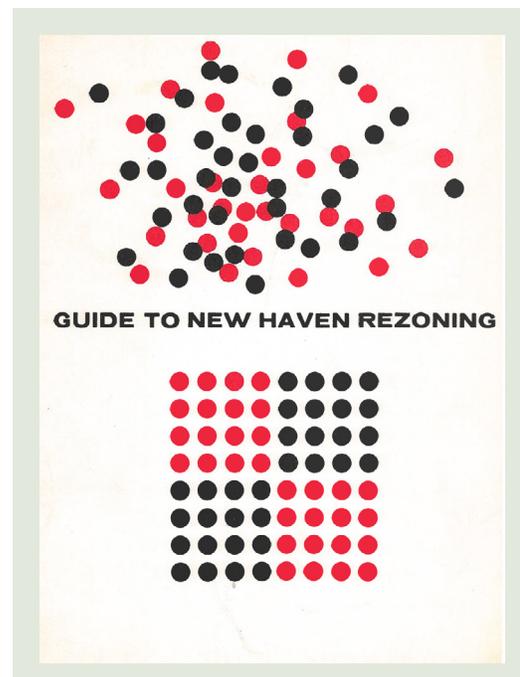
The City has been actively working to update the New Haven Zoning Ordinance to provide regulations that are more equitable and supportive of development that will be beneficial to New Haven. Recent zoning changes include:

- Creation of a transit-oriented community zone around Union Station.
- Creation of a new mixed-use zone at Long Wharf as recommended by the Long Wharf Responsible Growth Plan.
- Adoption of inclusionary zoning and accessory dwelling unit regulations.
- Reduction of minimum lot size to 4,000 square feet in all residential zones.
- Adoption of the Whalley Avenue Commercial Gateway District
- Rezoning of properties in Westville Village from General Business to Village Center Mixed Use.
- Creation of the Special Heritage Mixed Use zoning District permitting special uses in low-density areas.
- Updates to the lighting and sign regulations.
- New regulations for uses such as cannabis establishments, smoke shops, and self-storage facilities.

Future Zoning Work

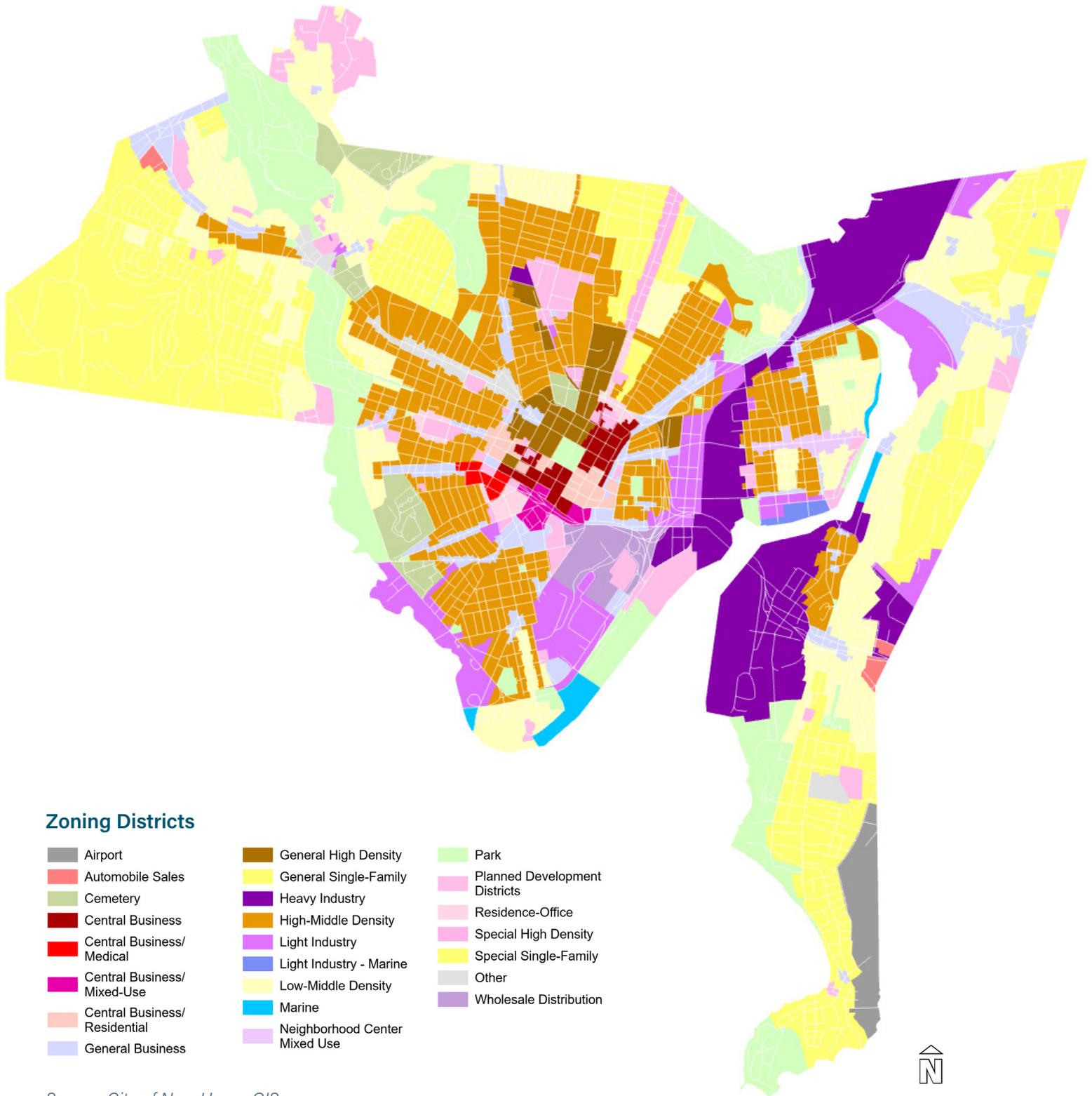
The New Haven Zoning Ordinance will need to be updated to reflect the Vision 2034 values of equity and resilience with a focus on lowering barriers to housing creation; creating inclusive, walkable neighborhoods with access to services; and climate-change adaptation/mitigation. In support of this, the City intends to amend the zoning to:

- Reduce barriers to housing creation and projects that must go through the Board of Zoning Appeals for bulk, yard, density, and parking variances.
- Adopt additional inclusionary zoning and anti-displacement policies as needed.
- Amend the "green ordinances" (Section 60, 60.1, 60.2, 60.3) to strengthen and add new site requirements related to resilience and sustainability.
- Revise the use table to reflect modern uses and revise the Neighborhood Convenience Use regulations to reflect the types of small businesses that are desired in neighborhood residential zones.
- Amend the parking regulations to reduce excessive parking requirements.



New Haven's 1962 Rezoning Guide

New Haven's zoning reflects the outdated and discriminatory land use practices of the 1960s.



Source: City of New Haven GIS

Not an authoritative zoning map. Official map available at:
<https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/cb55a6bc76794e45a76a60d392fa205b/>

2.3 Housing

New Haven is facing a severe affordable housing crisis. Currently, more than half of residents spend more on housing than they can afford, forcing many to choose between paying rent and meeting other basic needs. As rents and homeownership costs continue to rise, longtime residents are being pushed out of their neighborhoods, leading to the displacement of families and the erosion of community connections.

Increasingly, families are driven into homelessness in their search for affordable housing. Without stable, safe places to live, individuals struggle to succeed in school, engage in civic life, and maintain their health and well-being. Housing instability also increases the risk of involvement with the criminal legal system, creating further obstacles to long-term economic and personal stability.

The lack of affordable housing in New Haven does not only affect a few, it has far-reaching consequences. While those directly impacted feel the crisis most deeply, the effects ripple throughout the community. When our neighbors cannot access safe, quality, and affordable homes, the entire City feels the impact.

- Adapted from the 2024 Affordable Housing Commission Report

In addition to affordability, maintenance of landlord-owned housing remains a major issue in the City. Housing code and anti-blight enforcement have been major focuses of the City, through the Livable City Initiative, over the last decade.

Housing Supply

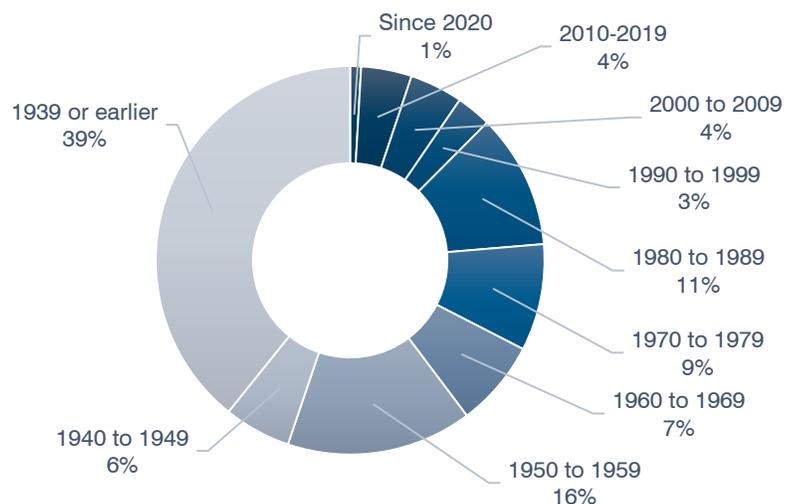
Nearly one-half (45%) of New Haven's housing stock was built prior to 1950 and the City's housing stock grew consistently at a rate of 10% to 11% per year between 1950 and 1979. Development fell sharply in the 1980s. Only 9% of the City's housing stock has been constructed since 2000 with 3% to 5% of housing stock built per decade since 1990.

Nearly half of New Haven's housing stock was built prior to 1950 and only 9% has been built since 2000.



Source: Neighborhood Housing Services

New Haven Housing by Year Built (2023)



Source: 2019-2023 ACS, US Census Bureau

Accessible Housing

The need for accessible housing in New Haven is significant and growing. As the City's population ages, more individuals will require homes that are safe, navigable, and suited to residents with a wide range of physical and cognitive abilities. According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC Places Program), 13.8% of New Haven's residents have a disability that impairs their mobility.

While statistics on accessible housing are not available for all housing units in the City, there are known shortcomings in supply with thousands of individuals on wait lists for years for accessible public housing units.

"I have been on the waiting lists for all of the Elm City facilities that have accessible units for a little over a year. I was and still am around number 5,180 on all of the lists, so that's the chronic shortage on the public housing side."

-New Haven resident

Homelessness

Homelessness in New Haven reflects a growing crisis seen across Connecticut, with rising need and limited resources. Statewide, the annual Point-in-Time count (a count of sheltered and unsheltered people experiencing homelessness on a single night) rose by 13% from January 2023 to January 2024, identifying 3,410 people experiencing homelessness on a single night. In the Greater New Haven area, the number of unsheltered individuals more than doubled over the past year—from 257 to 633. Youth homelessness has also surged, with the number of students in the New Haven School District experiencing homelessness increasing by 51%, from 719 in the 2022–23 school year to 1,084 in 2023–24¹.

As of February 2025, New Haven operated eight shelters and three warming centers. In 2023, the City purchased a former hotel to convert into supportive crisis housing. In the fiscal year 2024–2025, the City increased its homelessness services budget by over \$300,000, bringing the total to \$1.77 million.

In testimony before the Connecticut Legislature, Mayor Elicker emphasized the ongoing need for long-term housing solutions, noting that approximately 300 New Haven residents return to homelessness each year. He identified the need for at least 250 additional units of permanent supportive housing to meet the City's urgent needs.

¹ Connecticut Department of Education: EdSight

Gentrification and Displacement

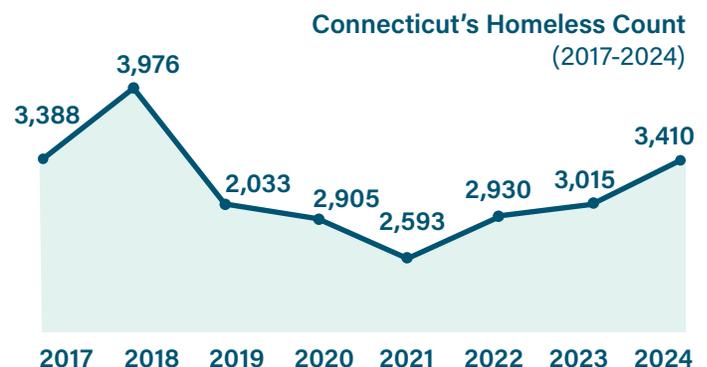
Gentrification in New Haven has been driven largely by rising demand for housing near the downtown, leading to both socioeconomic and demographic shifts. As median household incomes, rents, and home values have increased in New Haven, the share of residents with college degrees and professional jobs has also increased. These socioeconomic trends often result in the migration into and displacement of residents in historically lower-income, predominantly Black and Latino neighborhoods.

New Haven is experiencing issues that commonly lead to displacement. A 2020 Yale Law School² report identified three primary forms of involuntary displacement in New Haven:

- Evictions and deteriorating rental conditions, as absentee landlords evict longtime tenants and neglect upkeep.
- Indirect displacement, where rising housing costs and limited supply leave low-income residents with no viable housing choices.
- Municipal foreclosures on tax-delinquent properties, which often result in ownership transfers to developers rather than to existing occupants.

A persistent shortage of available housing, evidenced by 3.5% vacancy rate in 2024, has driven rents and home prices upward, placing longtime residents at risk of losing their homes. At the same time, many rental units suffer from substandard conditions, and the City's tenant-protection laws are difficult to enforce, especially when properties are owned by limited liability companies or absentee landlords. These pressures are compounded by early signs of gentrification, as higher-income newcomers compete for the same limited housing stock.

² Preventing Displacement: Three Approaches to Protect New Haven Residents A Report from the Jerome N. Frank Legal Services Organization, May 2020



Source: CT HMIS Point-In-Time Counts

Housing Type

The majority (75%) of dwelling units in New Haven are in a building with two or more units and the remaining 25% of housing units are attached or detached single-family units. According to the U.S. Census Bureau's 2023 American Housing Survey, 88% of single-family homes are owner occupied compared to 12% of homes in buildings with five or more units.

New Haven's home ownership rate (28.4%) is slightly higher than Hartford's but much lower than Bridgeport's or Stamford's. Both Bridgeport and Stamford have a significantly higher share of single-family homes than New Haven. Additionally, home ownership in New Haven (28.4% in 2023) was nearly three percentage points lower than it was in 2013 when the rate was 31.1%.¹

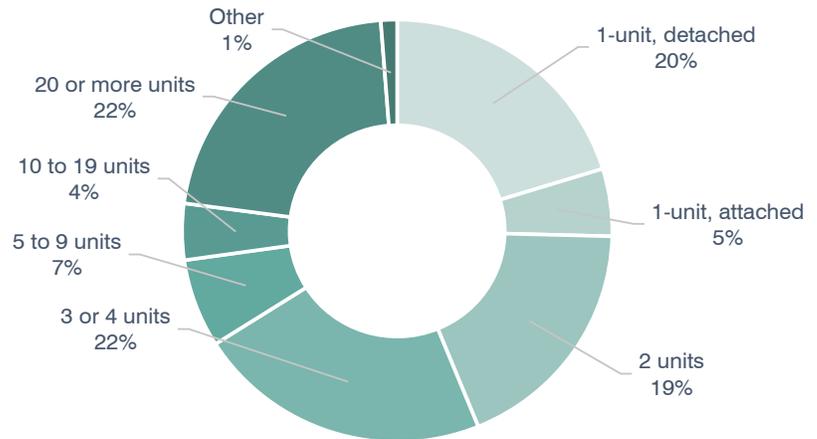
¹ACS, 2009-2013, US Census Bureau



Source: Compass Real Estate

75% of New Haven's dwelling units are in multi-family buildings and the City has a homeownership rate of 28.4%.

New Haven Housing Type (2023)

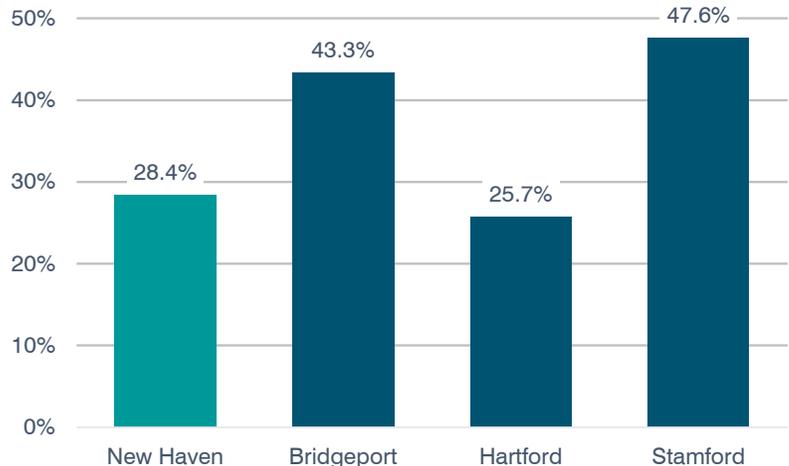


Source: 2019-2023 ACS, US Census Bureau

“[Increase] affordable housing for single people who would like to own”

- Survey participant

Home Ownership Rate (2023)



Source: 2019-2023 ACS, US Census Bureau



9 Tower Lane, Pierpont at City Crossing in New Haven
Source: Apartments.com

Nearly 4,000 housing units were constructed in New Haven since 2020 and 1,980 units were under construction in 2024 and early 2025. Most of these residences have been or are being constructed in buildings with 15 or more units.

Housing Development

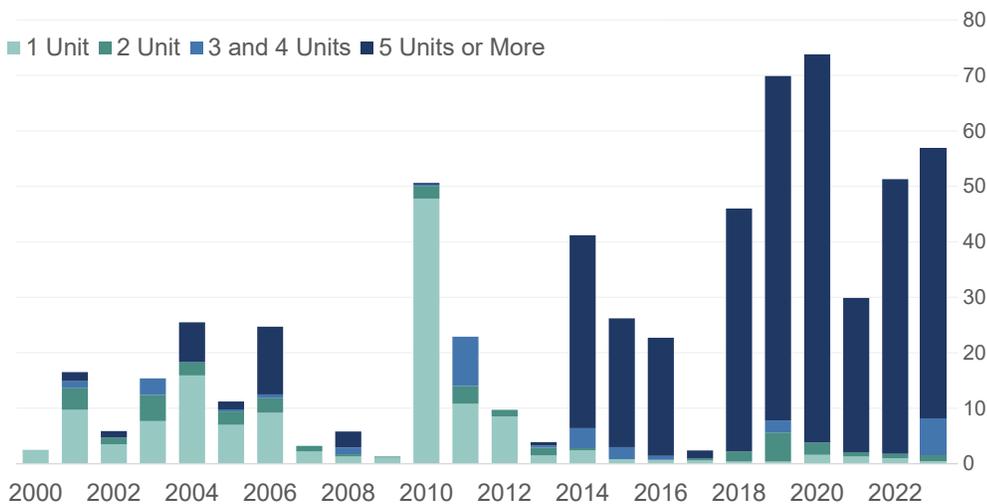
New Haven has experienced an increase in residential development activity since 2010 as measured by permitted dwelling units (units under construction or constructed). Since 2014, permitted dwelling units have been almost exclusively in buildings with five or more units whereas prior to 2014 permitted units were primarily in the form of single-family homes. New Haven has also led the state in housing permits, with 573 permits issued in 2024 and over 3,200 permits issued since 2019.¹

Since 2020, the City, through the Housing and Administrative Services team, has overseen the development of 3,993 units of housing (approximately 1,890 of those are affordable).¹ In 2024 and early 2025, 1,980 units of housing were under construction with approximately 423 of them qualifying as affordable rental units.¹

Most of this residential development activity in New Haven has occurred in the form of large scale developments located in or close to Downtown with most dwellings constructed in buildings with five or more units.

¹ New Haven Economic Development Administration

Housing Permits in New Haven (2000-2023)



Source: CT Department of Economic and Community Development

Housing Market Trends

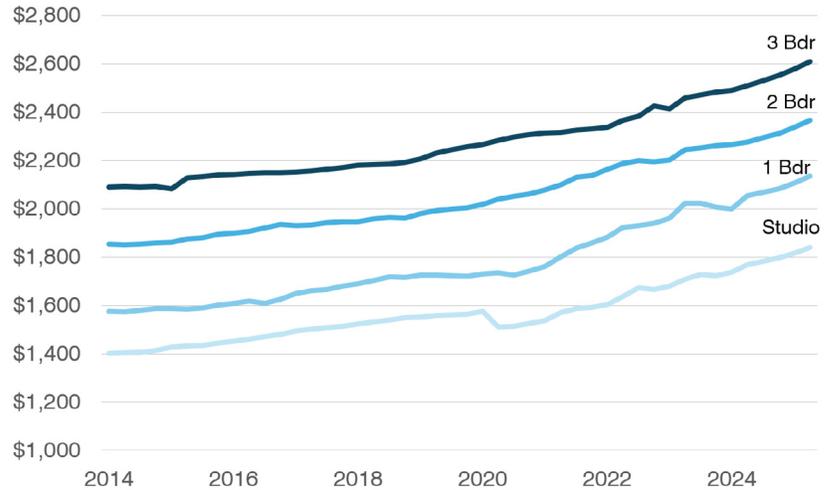
Home values and rental rates have increased year over year in New Haven over the past decade, but those increases have been most pronounced since 2021 following a nationwide trend of housing cost escalation coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic. From 2016 to 2021, multi-family asking rents in New Haven increased at a rate of 2.2% or lower per year. Since 2022 those year-over-year increases ranged from 2.2% to 4.6%. Average monthly rental asking prices increased from approximately \$1,760 in 2016 to \$2,170 in 2024, an increase of 23% over the eight-year period which is below the inflation rate (30%) over the same period.

Similarly, median home values have been rising with the greatest increases since 2021. This trend follows home value increases in the county and across the state although home values in New Haven are consistently lower than those in the county and state. Between 2016 and 2024, the median home value in New Haven increased by 172% from \$162,800 to \$279,600 while inflation increased by 31% over the same period.

The escalation in home values has placed the purchase of a home in New Haven out of reach for many residents and the increase in rental costs, while consistent with inflation, has placed pressure on households that have not experienced equivalent increases in wages or income. Additionally, there is a shortage of over 8,000 housing units in New Haven that are affordable to households earning less than 50% of the area median income (AMI)¹.

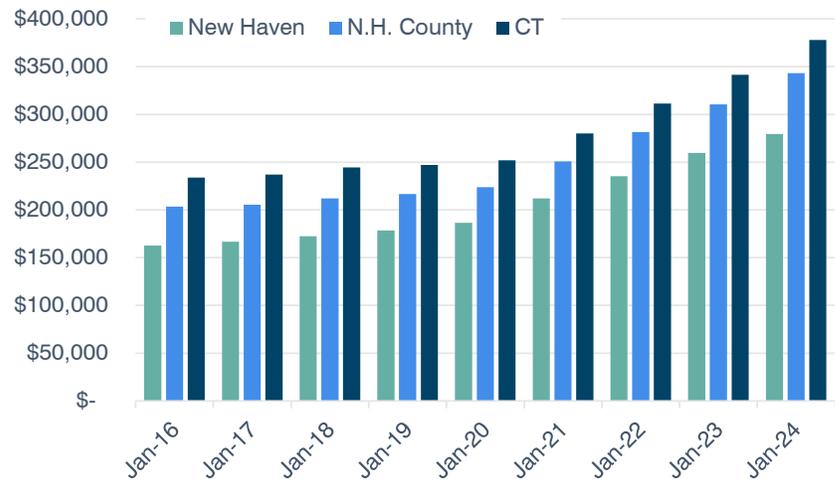
¹ Source: HUD Income Limits, US Census Bureau ACS 5-Year 2022 Estimates, RKG Calculations

New Haven Asking Rent by Bedroom Size
(2014-2025)



Source: Costar, Oxford Economics

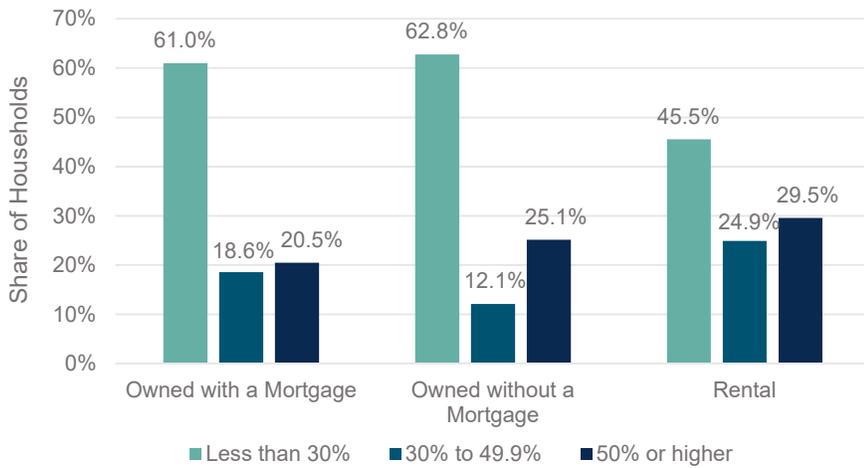
Home Value Index
(2016-2024)



Source: Zillow.com

The median home value in New Haven increased by 172% over the last eight years. This cost escalation has placed the purchase of a home in New Haven out of reach for many residents. Asking rents increased by 23% over the same period.

New Haven Housing Cost as a Share of Income per Household Type (2023)



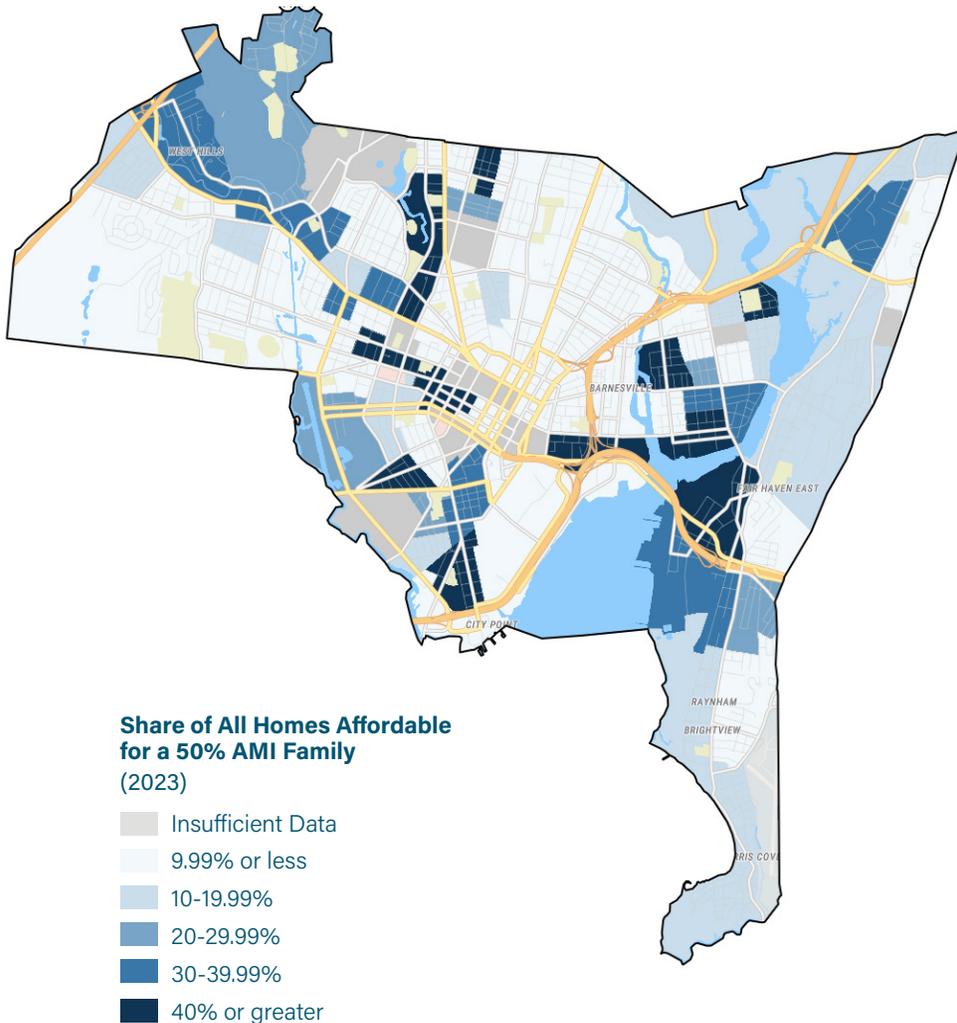
Source: 2019-2023 ACS, US Census Bureau

Housing Cost and Affordability

As of 2023, half (49.8%) of households in New Haven spend 30% or more of their annual income on housing related costs.¹ Compared to households that own their home, rental households on average spend more on housing relative to their income than ownership households.

Households that own their home spend a smaller share of their household income on housing, however 39.1% of households that have a mortgage and 37.2% of those without a mortgage spend more than 30% of their annual income on housing costs. Many of these homeowners are seniors or people with disabilities that live on a fixed income.

The affordability of a home, whether rented or owned, varies across the City's neighborhoods. Throughout most of New Haven, less than 10% of homes are affordable for families earning 50% of the area median income (AMI) or less (AMI is the income at which half of households earn more and half of households earn less in the New Haven region). The AMI for the New Haven area was \$110,800 in 2023, more than twice the median household income for New Haven (\$53,716) in that year.



Source: PolicyMap, US Census, HUD

Half of New Haven's households spend more than 30% of their income on housing related costs.

¹2019-2023 ACS, US Census Bureau

2.4 Economic Trends

New Haven is experiencing economic growth, with exciting advancements in major sectors and new opportunities for entrepreneurs and creatives. At the same time, the rising cost of living has left many families struggling more than ever. The City, partner institutions, and residents recognize that it is critical to ensure the City's growth is inclusive and no one is left behind.

Economic Performance

New Haven has undergone significant economic expansion over the past decade, emerging as an economic leader among cities in Connecticut. The City's longstanding relationship with Yale University has evolved into a strong engine for innovation, with research and academic partnerships supporting an ecosystem of startups and advanced industries. This collaboration has spurred a surge in investments, particularly within the technology and biotech sectors, where new ventures are driving growth.

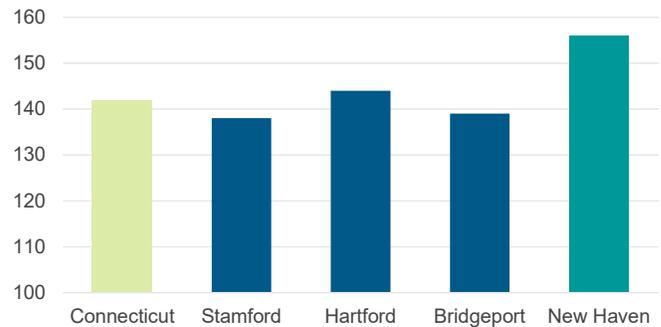
At the same time, New Haven has reinvested in its downtown, strengthening its role as a hub of commerce, culture, and community life. Multiple redevelopment projects have occurred in the downtown, attracting a diverse array of businesses and mixed-use developments. Strategic infrastructure improvements have played a pivotal role in supporting redevelopment.

According to the Connecticut Department of Labor, New Haven has exceeded the state as a whole and cities such as Stamford, Hartford, and Bridgeport in economic performance. Another positive indicator of economic performance is New Haven's employed labor force relative to its unemployed labor force. In the ten years from 2014 to 2023 the number of unemployed residents in New Haven dropped by half while its resident labor force increased by approximately 5,000 workers. Although the COVID-19 pandemic was heavily impactful to the service industry, the City overcame a brief drop of employment associated with the pandemic and rebounded with higher resident labor force employment than in 2019.



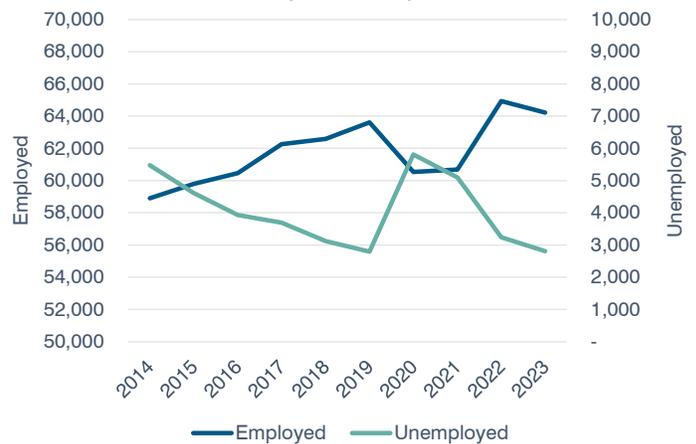
Source: New Haven Night Market

Connecticut Economic Index (2022)



Source: CT Department of Labor

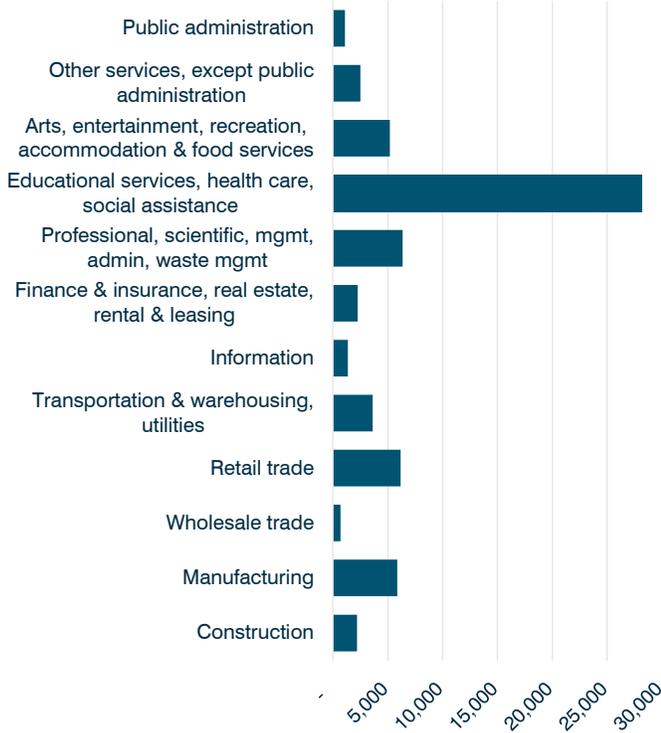
New Haven's Resident Labor Force (2014-2023)



Source: CT Department of Labor

New Haven has economically outperformed other cities in Connecticut and economic trends over the past ten years have been positive.

New Haven's Resident Employment by Sector (2023)



Source: 2019-2023 ACS, US Census Bureau

Jobs and Workers

New Haven is home to approximately 97,000 full and part-time jobs (not including people who are self-employed). Of those jobs, over three-quarters (78%) are held by people that live outside of New Haven and commute to the City for work.

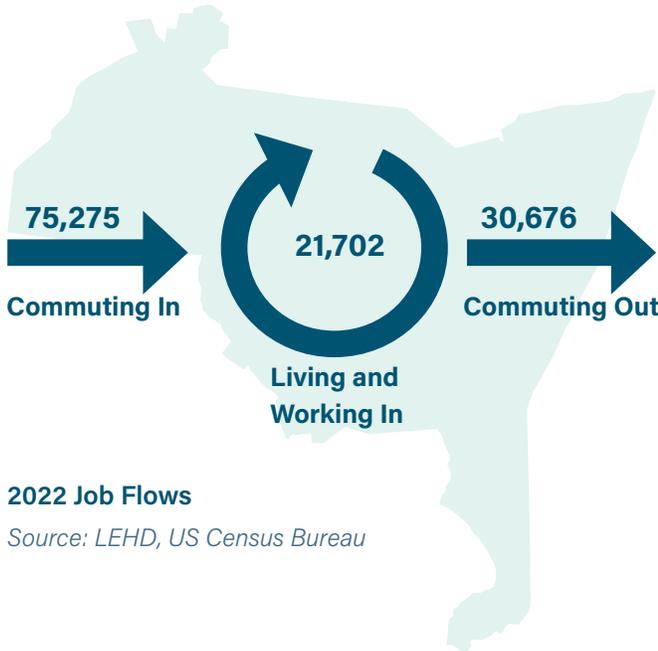
New Haven's workforce has steadily grown over the past decade with more than 64,000 residents employed or actively seeking employment in 2023¹, nearly two-thirds of the population. A sizable share of those residents (approximately 12,000) are either self-employed or have a source of employment that is considered non-employee. Of the City's workers with jobs, 41% are employed in New Haven while the remaining travel outside of the City for work.

The unemployment rate in New Haven has averaged around 5%, although this rate varies across the city. Local workforce development programs have successfully matched workers based upon their skills with jobs within and outside of New Haven, helping to maintain this relatively low unemployment rate.

However, in 2020, unemployment rates skyrocketed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, with workers who were self-employed or in the food service or arts and entertainment industries hit the hardest. Workers of Color, lower earners, and undocumented workers were also disproportionately impacted. While employment has bounced back, many families still struggle with lasting economic impacts

New Haven's employment landscape is dominated by the educational services, health care, and social assistance sectors which comprise nearly 40% of the jobs held by the City's residents. Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation & food services, retail trade, professional, scientific, management, and manufacturing combined represent nearly 37% of jobs held by residents.

¹ Connecticut Department of Labor



Source: LEHD, US Census Bureau

An overwhelming share of the New Haven's residents are employed in the educational services, health care, and social assistance sectors and most of the City's residents travel outside of New Haven for work.

Key Industries

New Haven has a diverse job market supported by several major sectors including education, healthcare, service and retail, and manufacturing and technology, including digital tech and bio/life sciences. Over the past two decades most of the job growth in the City has been driven by growth in the educational, health care, and social assistance sectors. There has been a minor contraction in jobs in industries such as information and manufacturing, but job growth greatly exceeds losses across employment sectors.

Education and Research

Yale University is the City's largest employer. Yale provides numerous academic and administrative positions supports jobs in related sectors such as technology, consulting, and professional services. Yale employs thousands of faculty and staff, and its research activities attract additional support from private and public organizations. In addition to Yale, the New Haven Public Schools District, Southern Connecticut State University, Albertus Magnus College, and the Connecticut State Community College Gateway are major educational employers. In total, there are nearly 33,000 educational jobs in New Haven comprising 36.8% of jobs in the City.

Healthcare

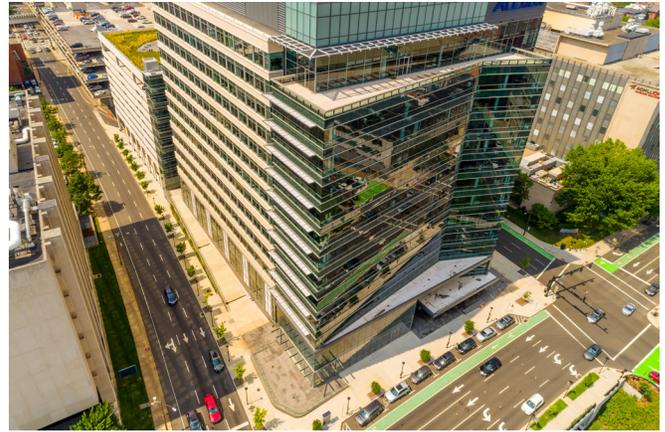
Healthcare is another cornerstone of New Haven's economy. Yale New Haven Hospital, one of the leading healthcare facilities in the region, employs a broad range of professionals—from doctors and nurses to technical and administrative staff. Healthcare remains one of the fastest-growing sectors in the state, contributing significantly to employment in New Haven.

Service and Retail

The service sector, which includes retail, hospitality, and food services, plays an important role in the City's economy. Local businesses cater to both long-term residents and the sizable student population. The number of small businesses in New Haven has been gradually expanding driven by growth in the service and retail sector creating additional job opportunities.

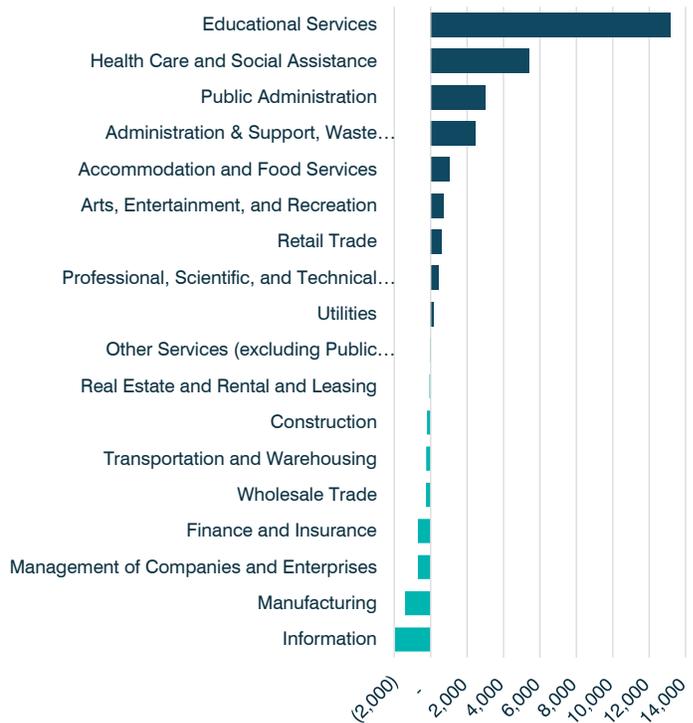
Manufacturing and Technology

New Haven also has a strong presence of manufacturing and technology-related jobs. Efforts by the City and its partners have been successful in supporting tech startups and the development of local manufacturing in an environment of shrinking manufacturing jobs related to automation and changing industrial practices. These initiatives are part of a broader strategy to diversify the economy and create new employment opportunities.



New AztraZeneca Alexion Division headquarters

New Haven Industry Sector Job Growth and Losses (2023)



Source: LEHD, US Census Bureau

Job growth is New Haven over the past two decades has primarily been driven by the educational services, health care, and social assistance sectors. Educational jobs comprise over one-third (36.8%) of the jobs in New Haven.



On weekdays, a passenger train departs New Haven an average of once every 16 minutes.

“Develop the public transportation infrastructure to support economic growth.”

- Survey participant

Shifting away from decades of car-centric planning, including highway construction that devastated and divided many neighborhoods in the City, New Haven is working to build and improve on its active transportation infrastructure. This is driven by a need to better accommodate the one-quarter of households that do not have a car and to shift to more sustainable forms of transportation. Additionally, 34% of the City's residents commute to work using a means other than a car, one of the highest rates of any City in New England.

The City has invested in bicycle infrastructure and bike-sharing programs and is taking a Complete Streets approach to improving and maintaining its streets, placing emphasis on all modes of travel including pedestrian needs, bicycle mobility, transit users, and vehicular traffic. While these investments have benefited residents, considerable improvements are needed to the City's transportation infrastructure to make it more bike, walk, and transit friendly.

CTtransit provides an extensive bus network that reaches many neighborhoods and connects to regional transit hubs. Rail services are also an integral part of the infrastructure, as New Haven serves as a key hub on the Northeast Corridor; Amtrak offers both regional and long-distance services to cities like New York, Boston, and Washington, D.C., and the Metro-North Railroad's New Haven Line provides daily commuter service to New York City with the Hartford Line providing service to Hartford and Springfield and Shore Line East providing service to towns east of the City.

Major highways such as Interstates 95 and 91, link the City to other regional centers along the Northeast Corridor, and local and state roads facilitate movement in and around the City.

The City is also home to Tweed-New Haven Airport, located partially in New Haven and East Haven. The City entered into a public-private partnership with the Tweed New Haven Airport and Avports, which has led to significant growth in scheduled passenger service to approximately 30 destinations. A recent update to the Tweed Master Plan includes upgrades to the airfield infrastructure and construction of a new passenger terminal in East Haven. The Airport is also working with the municipalities and other partners to improve shuttle and bus access to the airport.



Pedestrian Mobility

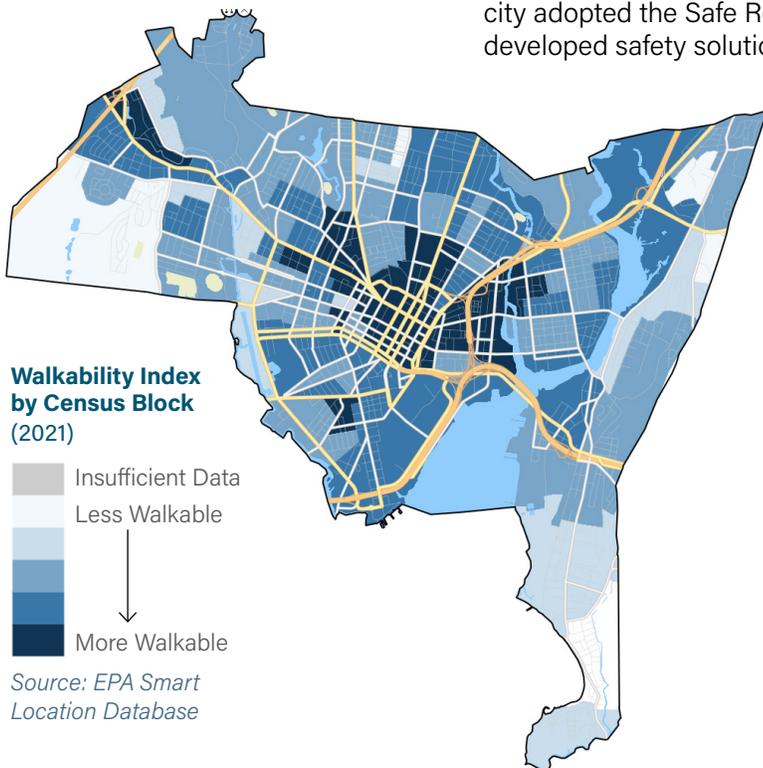
New Haven has an extensive pedestrian network comprised of sidewalks on both sides of most streets and crossing facilities such as curb ramps, crosswalks, and pedestrian signals. This network varies in its age and condition from street to street and neighborhood to neighborhood. The Downtown and surrounding areas are generally more walkable due to street and sidewalk density and more roadway crossing opportunities. Sidewalk issues such as cracked or heaved sidewalks are common, even within highly walkable areas such as Downtown, and there are small and large gaps in the sidewalk network in the outer areas of the City.

Pedestrian infrastructure improvements are needed to ensure that all residents have safe, accessible routes to work, school, polling places, and neighborhood amenities. As a critical aspect of this, the city needs to better accommodate people with physical limitations as required by the American with Disabilities Act (ADA). Many of the city's sidewalks, curb ramps, and pedestrian signals do not fully comply with ADA requirements whether due to maintenance needs or aging infrastructure that was constructed prior to new requirements taking effect. Improvements required to comply with the ADA include repairing or replacing uneven sidewalks, improving curb ramps to provide proper slopes and tactile warning strips, and upgrading pedestrian crossing signals to provide audible alerts. These improvements have been made by the City on a project by project basis, but New Haven has not completed an ADA Transition Plan, which would identify citywide needs and provide a strategic plan for upgrading the city's infrastructure, buildings, and other interfaces that the public has with the city such as communications materials and platforms.

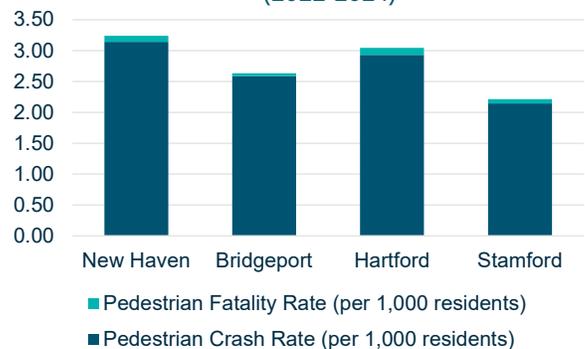
Pedestrian safety is an important issue for the city and has been the focus of recent transportation planning and improvements. In 2022, the city adopted the Safe Routes for All active transportation plan, which developed safety solutions and prototypes for improving pedestrian

safety across New Haven. While progress is being made to address this issue, New Haven has a significantly higher pedestrian crash rate and pedestrian fatality rate than any large city in Connecticut. Between 2021 and 2023 an average of 50 pedestrians a year were hit by a car in New Haven per year, with an average of six pedestrians killed per year.

Improving pedestrian safety and the accessibility of streets and sidewalks are the most critical pedestrian needs in New Haven.



Pedestrian Crash and Fatality Rate (2022-2024)



Source: Connecticut Crash Data Repository

Bicycle Mobility

New Haven has been a leader within Connecticut in the development of a bicycle facility network and accommodations, however there is still a lot of work to do to make the city truly bike-friendly. Currently, there is a mix of separated bike lanes, on-street bike lanes, shared roadways, and off-road trails that connect neighborhoods and local destinations, with recent additions to the network such as Yale and Edgewood Avenues.

While New Haven's recent efforts in these areas reflect a commitment to improving connectivity, the city's bicycle network is not comprehensive or complete, with many neighborhoods lacking bicycle facilities and a need for more separated bike lanes.

Off-street trails and multi-use paths also play a crucial role in the bicycle network. These trails, typically found in parks and green spaces, offer recreational opportunities and serve as vital connectors between neighborhoods and downtown. The Farmington Canal Heritage Trail connects downtown New Haven to Dixwell, Newhallville, and then Hamden, continuing north all the way to Northampton Massachusetts. The city recently completed a new section downtown, which will eventually connect to the Vision Trail to Long Wharf and the Shoreline Greenway up the coast.

Supportive facilities complement the bicycle network. Bike racks and secure parking options are provided near public transit hubs, major attractions, institutional centers and downtown business districts. This integration facilitates first- and last-mile connectivity, allowing cyclists to easily combine cycling with other modes of transportation. Additionally, a recently launched electric bike-share program (Ride New Haven) will provide access to e-bikes throughout the city and includes equity membership options for those with financial hardships.

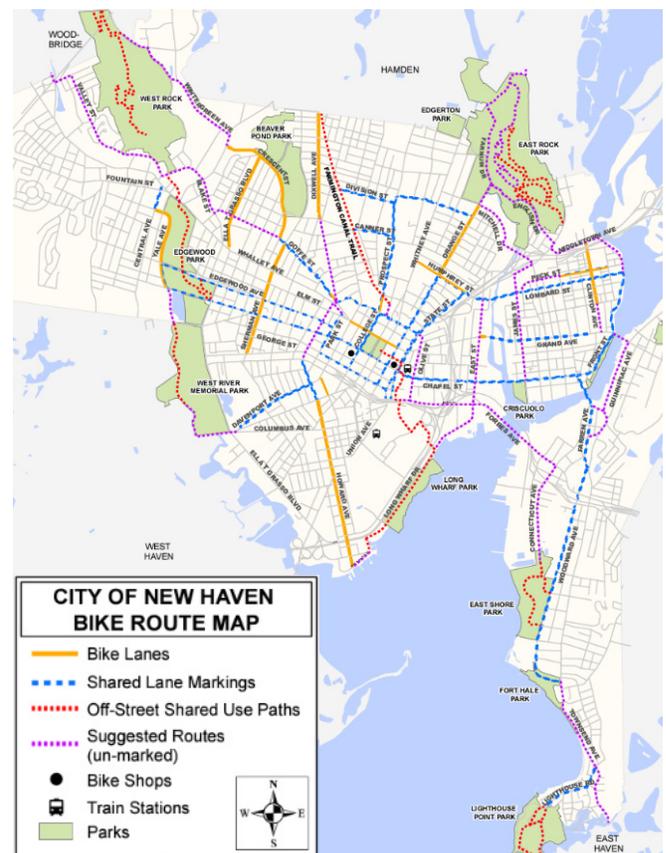
New Haven's bicycle network is supported by ongoing community engagement and local advocacy. Various local organizations and municipal initiatives work together to promote cycling through events, safety workshops, and public awareness campaigns. These efforts aim to educate the community about the benefits of cycling—ranging from improved public health to environmental sustainability—while ensuring that the infrastructure evolves to meet growing demand.

Overall, New Haven's bicycle network is an evolving system that combines on-street lanes, shared routes in quieter neighborhoods, and off-road trails, moving toward creating a cohesive framework for cyclists. The city's continued investment in bicycle

facilities demonstrates its commitment to sustainable transportation, enhancing urban mobility, reducing environmental impacts, and contributing to the overall quality of life in the community.



Debut of the Ride New Haven E-Bike share program



New Haven leads the state in the development of bicycle facilities and accommodations but the network remains incomplete.

Transit

New Haven's transit system includes local buses, university-operated shuttles, several commuter rail lines, and a shared e-bike system, which together provide connectivity within the City and to the wider region. The transit system serves a wide range of users from high school students, to commuters, to retired seniors accessing services and provides a vital service to those that do not own vehicles or cannot drive. Residents with physical disabilities depend upon reliable transit and the accommodation of those users varies between services and elements of those services.

CTtransit is the public intercity bus operator in New Haven and is operated by the State. Its routes cross the City and extend into the surrounding areas, linking key employment centers, educational institutions, and neighborhoods. Buses run seven days a week with increased frequency on weekdays and during peak travel hours. The bus system is based upon a "spoke and hub" network with most routes ending and beginning in Downtown. There is limited connectivity between neighborhoods on the outer edges of the City. A planned bus rapid transit (BRT) route will partially address this by improving connections between Downtown and northern parts of the City.

The Greater New Haven Transit District supplements the CTtransit service by providing on-call ADA paratransit service in the Greater New Haven area. The service is available within a $\frac{3}{4}$ mile of CTtransit routes, excluding express or commuter routes.

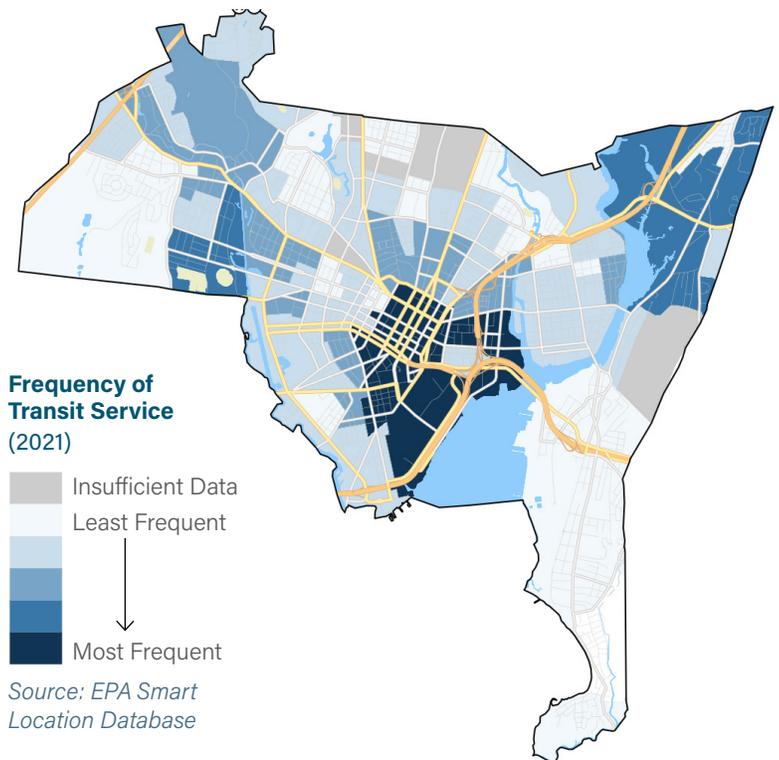
Yale University runs its own shuttle service for the university community. These shuttles operate on a fixed schedule, providing transportation for students and staff across the Yale campus and to certain adjacent neighborhoods.

New Haven also functions as an important hub in the regional commuter rail network. Ridership on that network continues to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic but has not yet returned to 2019 levels. Metro-North's New Haven Line offers frequent service between New Haven and New York City with multiple stops at towns and cities between. This service is heavily used as an alternative to I-95 and serves both outbound trips from New Haven and inbound trips to New Haven. It primarily operates from Union Station with some service to State Street Station.

Shore Line East provides rail service to towns along the state's eastern coastline and is used by regular commuters and occasional travelers. It is operated independently from Metro-North but adds to the overall connectivity of the region. It operates from both Union and State Street Station.

The Hartford Line links New Haven with Hartford and Springfield and the communities in between. The Hartford Line operates on a fixed schedule and is designed to integrate with Metro North and Shore Line East service allowing for transfers and extended travel options across Connecticut. It provides service from both Union and State Street Station.

In addition to these commuter rails services, Amtrak provides regional rail service connecting New Haven to cities along the Northeast corridor such as New York and Boston as well as Vermonter service to Massachusetts and Vermont.



Transit in New Haven is based on a "spoke and hub" network with Downtown and neighborhoods near Downtown provided with the highest level of transit service. Transit service in neighborhoods on the outer edges of the City is more limited and less direct.



Roadway Network

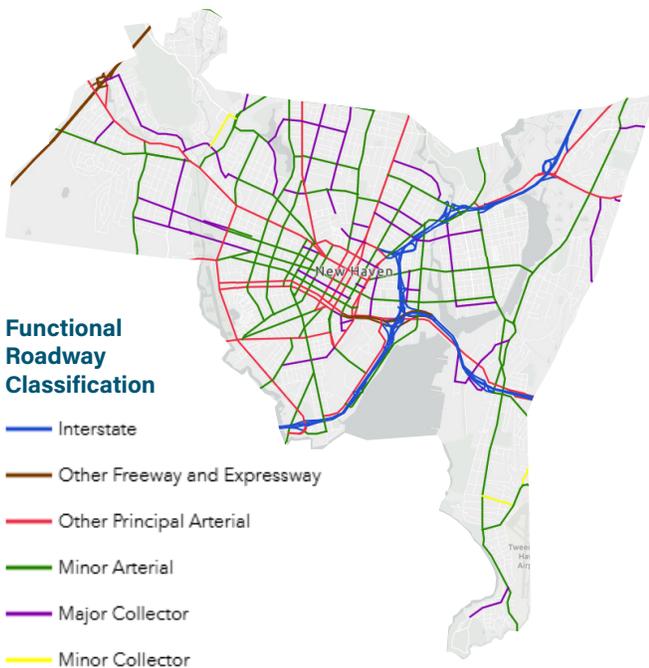
New Haven's roadway network is a layered system that integrates state-maintained highways with City streets. The network includes major highways such as Interstate 95 and 91, Route 15, and U.S. Route 1, which are maintained by the Connecticut Department of Transportation. These roads are designed for high-speed, high-volume travel, connecting New Haven with neighboring cities and the broader region. They function as the primary arteries for long-distance commuters and freight movement, facilitating rapid access to and from the City. While the highways act as important regional connectors, they also divide neighborhoods within the City and cut off the City from its waterfront. Excluding interstate highways, state roadways comprise 8.6% (21.3 miles) of New Haven's roads, a higher share than any other large city in Connecticut. These roadways experience the highest crash rate in the City due to factors such as traffic volume and speed and the frequency and complexity of intersections.

New Haven's roads accommodate a wide range of users and traffic is common, especially during rush hours. The City's Complete Streets Policy seeks to ensure that this network safely and conveniently accommodates all users while prioritizing the needs of the most vulnerable users.

New Haven's roadway network is comprised of arterial, collector, and local roads. Arterial roads are major thoroughfares within the City that channel significant volumes of traffic including a relatively high share of commercial traffic. Collector roads gather traffic from local roads and feed it into the arterial network and local roads are typically smaller neighborhood streets.

Traffic in New Haven is largely generated by economic and institutional activity. This mix results in distinct peak travel periods that reflect the work schedules of health care staff, university students, and retail workers, by example. Congestion is most noticeable in the downtown area, where a dense mix of pedestrians, cars, and buses slows the flow of traffic.

New Haven was one of the first cities in Connecticut to adopt a Complete Streets design manual, which lays the groundwork for a Complete Streets policy:



Source: CT DOT

The City of New Haven shall require the accommodation of the safety and convenience of all users of the transportation system using a hierarchy of users which supports and encourages non-motorized transportation and prioritizes the needs of the most vulnerable users: children, the elderly and persons with disabilities. This accommodation will be executed through the application of the complete street designs guidelines described in the Complete Streets Design Manual.

Planned and Ongoing Mobility Projects

There are multiple planned, ongoing, and recently completed mobility projects in New Haven. These range from pedestrian improvements to major roadway reconstruction and new transit services.

Downtown Crossing

The Downtown Crossing project is the largest mobility infrastructure project active in New Haven. Its goal is to improve pedestrian and bicycle safety and mobility, provide new opportunities for economic development, and restore the urban street environment that was destroyed by the Route 34 highway. The project has been constructed over four phases with the final phase currently underway connecting Temple Street to Congress Avenue. The project has successfully spurred development along the corridor and has reestablished connections between the Downtown and the Hill neighborhood.

Union Station Enhancements

New Haven received a \$17 million state grant in 2023 for improvements to New Haven Union Station that will be used for the design of three projects including a new multimodal hub, parking structure, and rental car facility in the West Lot; Transit Oriented Development (TOD) in the existing East Lot; and the realignment of Union Avenue near Union Station to enhance traffic, bicycle, and pedestrian safety.

MOVE New Haven

Connecticut DOT received a \$25 million federal grant in 2023 based on MOVE New Haven, a study commissioned by the City to implement a bus rapid transit route across the city connecting Milford to Hamden. The new BRT system will provide faster service than existing CT Transit routes and provide residents living in lower-income areas with enhanced access to New Haven's job centers. The service will use electric buses.

New Haven Green Mobility Improvements

The City received a \$4.6 million grant in 2023 for downtown mobility improvements in the vicinity of the New Haven Green, including bicycle, pedestrian, and traffic calming improvements on Temple Street, streetscaping along College Street, and the conversion of a section of Chapel Street to two-way traffic.

Safe Streets Improvements

The City received a \$400,000 federal grant in 2023 to build upon the existing safety action plan to pursue quick-build projects outlined in the Safe Routes for All plan including projects on Blatchley Avenue, Bassett Street, Kimberly Avenue, Winthrop/Sherman Avenue, and Wintergreen Avenue.

Whalley Avenue Enhancements

New Haven received a \$1 million grant in 2023 to transform Whalley Avenue between Orchard and Sperry Streets from a car-oriented avenue into a walkable and bikeable street. Improvements build upon the recommendations of the 2010 Whalley Avenue Corridor Study.

Farmington Canal Greenway

The City recently completed construction on the final phase of the Farmington Canal Trail project that included connecting the trail from Temple Street to Orange Street through an existing tunnel.

Shoreline Greenway Trail

The City received \$2.3 million in state funds and \$7 million in federal funds in 2023 to help build a new 4.5-mile section of the Shoreline Greenway Trail from Long Wharf in New Haven to the East Haven town line.

Mill River Trail

The Mill River Trail, now in Phase 2 implementation, will connect East Rock Park to the New Haven Harbor. The completed Phase 1 of the trail is located between Grand Avenue and John Murphy Drive. Future sections will extend both north and south of this area.

Grand Avenue

This project, which is funded and in the design stage, will transform the Grand Avenue corridor in Fair Haven by introducing traffic calming, streetscape enhancements, intersection improvements and resiliency measures at Quinnipiac River Park.

Millions of dollars are being invested in New Haven's mobility infrastructure, much of which comes from state and federal grant sources. Maintaining an emphasis on bicycle and pedestrian safety and mobility and the improvement and expansion of transit service, as these projects do, will be critical to their success in meeting the most pressing mobility needs of the City's residents.



Health Department staff regularly conduct outreach to the community

New Haven provides services intended to promote and protect the health, safety, and welfare of its residents with substantial resources devoted to meeting the needs of the City's children and its most vulnerable residents. Programs such as the Office of Climate & Sustainability and Food System Policy Division are primarily grant funded and their continued operation is not certain.

The City of New Haven provides a broad range of services designed to ensure well-being and quality of life for its residents. The services are provided through several administrative arms of the City including the Chief Administrative Officer, the Community Services Administration, The Economic Development Administration, the Board of Education, and the Corporation Counsel's office. In addition to the internal administrations, the City has multiple affiliate authorities that oversee resources across New Haven. New Haven also works with outside partners in the coordination and delivery of services including non-profit organizations and regional and state agencies.

Chief Administrator's Office

The Chief Administrator's Office implements the Mayor's policies and coordinates City services and interdepartmental activities across a broad range of essential government services. It oversees the Engineering, Emergency Management, Fire, Human Resources, Parks, Police, Public Safety Communication, and Public Works departments and offices.

Community Services Administration

The Community Services Administration's mission is to address the health & social well-being of all New Haven residents. The Administration includes the Health Department, the Youth and Recreation Department, the Department of Community Resilience, the Department of Elderly Services and the New Haven Public Libraries. It also houses the Food System Policy Division, Financial Empowerment Center, and the Dixwell Q-House.

Economic Development Administration

The Economic Development Administration contains multiple departments and offices engaged a wide array of services related to supporting and managing growth and development in the New Haven. This includes the City Plan Department and the Departments of Transportation, Traffic & Parking and Arts, Culture & Tourism. The Administration also oversees the Livable City Initiative, the Housing Administration and Development department, and the Office of Building Inspection and Enforcement.

Corporation Counsel

The Corporation Counsel's office is home to the City's Department of Disability Services, Fair Rent Commission, and Commission on Equal Opportunities (the oldest civil rights organization in the nation).

Board of Education

The Board of Education oversees New Haven's Public Schools, which includes 44 schools.

The programs, services, initiatives, and offices through which the City provides them continue to evolve to meet the needs of the community and match the resources available to the City. Programs such as the Office of Climate and Sustainability, Food System Policy Division, and those administered by the Department of Arts, Culture & Tourism and Health Department are grant funded. Recognizing that public-service delivery extends beyond the municipal government, many city departments work closely with state and federal funding partners, private for- and non-profit agencies to support community needs and development goals.

2.7

Environmental Conditions

New Haven is a coastal city with three rivers, beautiful parks, and the striking natural landmarks of East Rock and West Rock. New Haven is also deeply impacted by environmental injustice, bearing the burdens of waste and pollution for the entire region, which has disparate impacts on neighborhoods within the city. The city also experiences the impacts of climate change including extreme heat and increased inland and coastal flooding related to sea level rise and increased intensity and frequency of extreme weather events.

Impervious Surface

Like most urban areas, much of New Haven is covered by pavement and buildings (impervious surface).

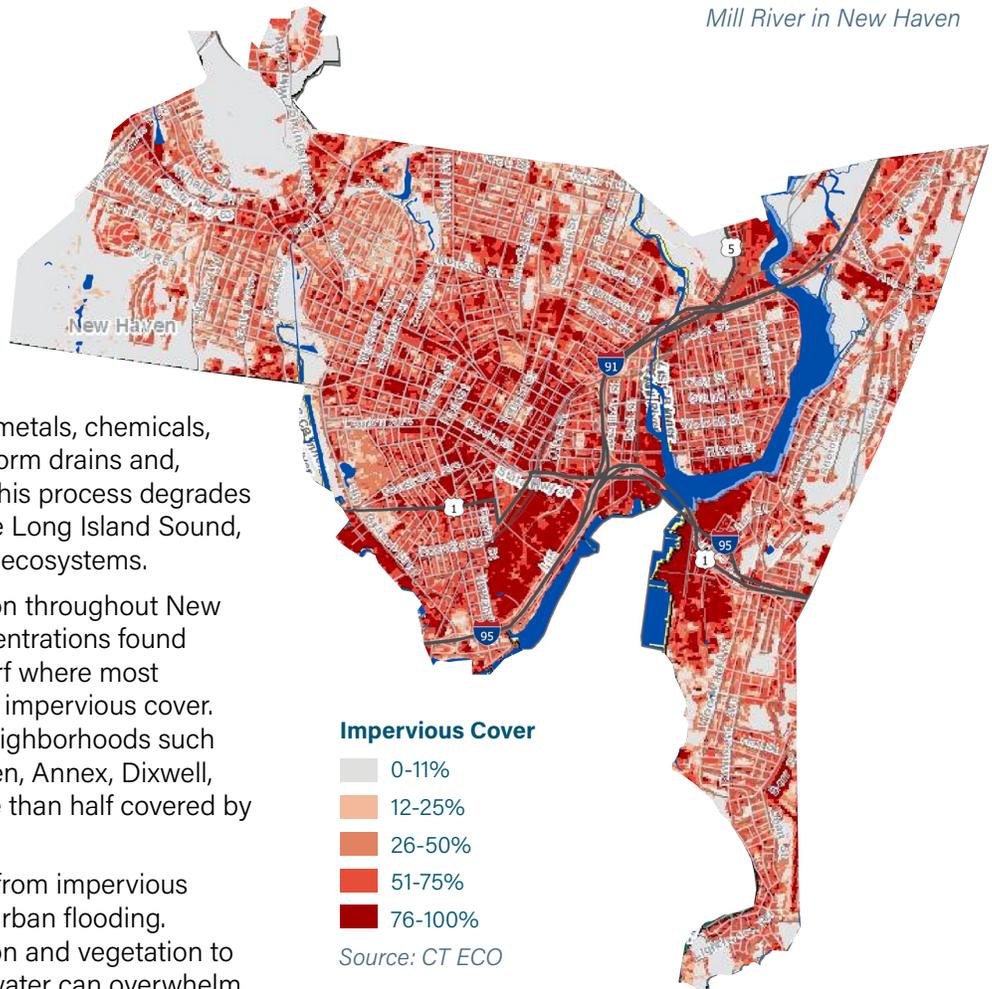
Impervious surfaces present significant environmental challenges. These surfaces prevent rainwater from naturally infiltrating into the ground, leading to increased stormwater runoff. As water flows over impervious surfaces, it accumulates pollutants such as oil, heavy metals, chemicals, and debris before entering storm drains and, ultimately, local waterways. This process degrades water quality in rivers and the Long Island Sound, negatively impacting aquatic ecosystems.

Impervious surface is common throughout New Haven with the highest concentrations found in Downtown and Long Wharf where most areas have more than 75% of impervious cover. Significant shares of other neighborhoods such as Wooster Square, Fair Haven, Annex, Dixwell, Dwight, and the Hill are more than half covered by impervious surface.

Excessive stormwater runoff from impervious surfaces also contributes to urban flooding. Without natural soil absorption and vegetation to slow and filter rainfall, stormwater can overwhelm drainage systems, erode streambanks, and cause property damage. Under these conditions, the areas of the city with a combined sewer system can become overburdened by heavy runoff, leading to raw sewage discharges into the Harbor and other water bodies during storm events.



Mill River in New Haven



New Haven's impervious cover, which is typical of an urban environment, is one of its greatest environmental challenges.

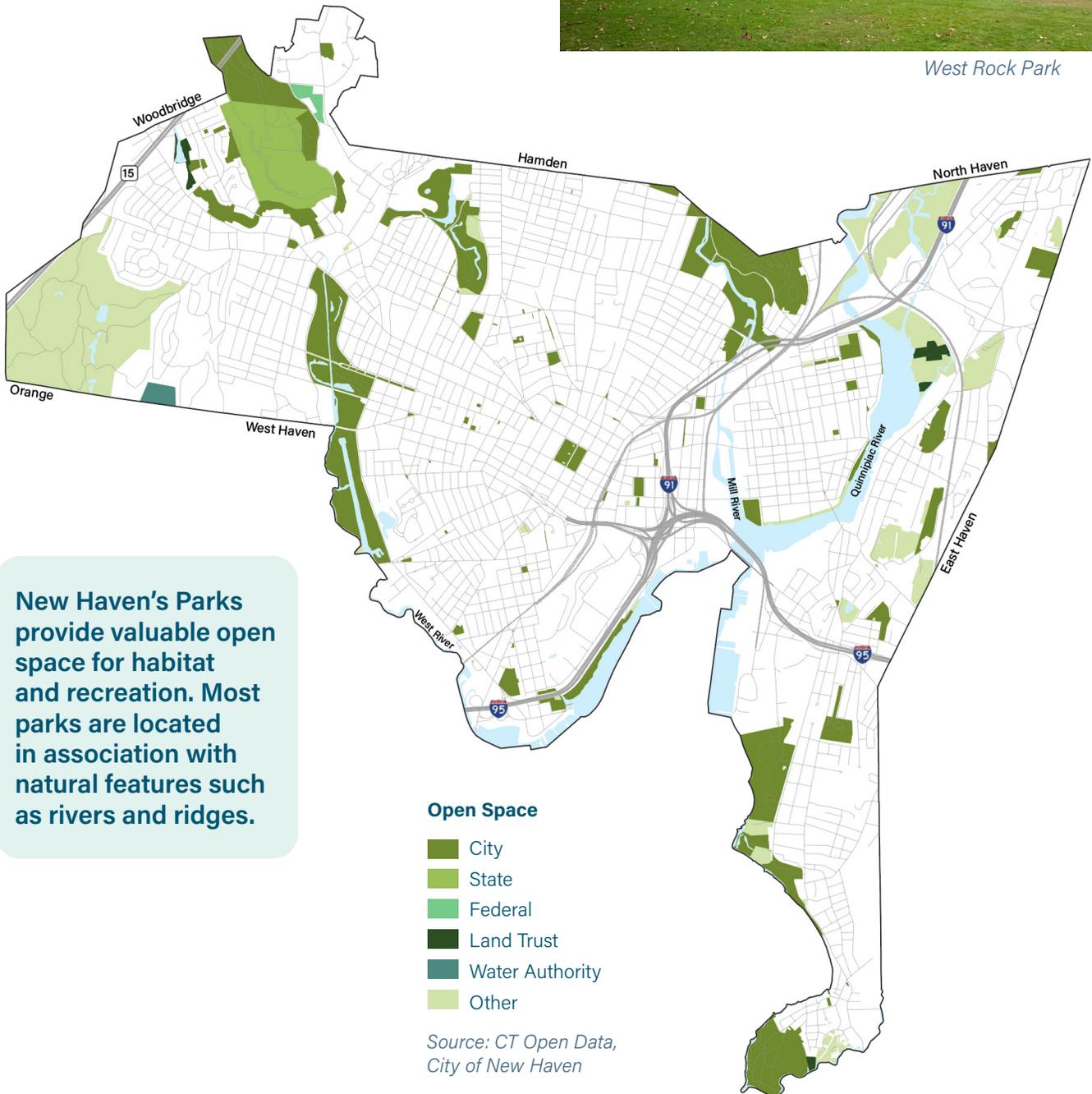
Open Space

New Haven's open spaces include state and City parks, water authority properties, and privately held conservation lands. These areas provide space for tree cover, habitats for wildlife, rainwater infiltration, and recreation space for the City's residents.

The City's parks range from small pocket parks and playgrounds to large parks such as the 425-acre East Rock Park. In total, the City has over 2,300 acres of parks covering 15% of its land area and it also owns open space in neighboring towns.



West Rock Park



New Haven's Parks provide valuable open space for habitat and recreation. Most parks are located in association with natural features such as rivers and ridges.

Habitat

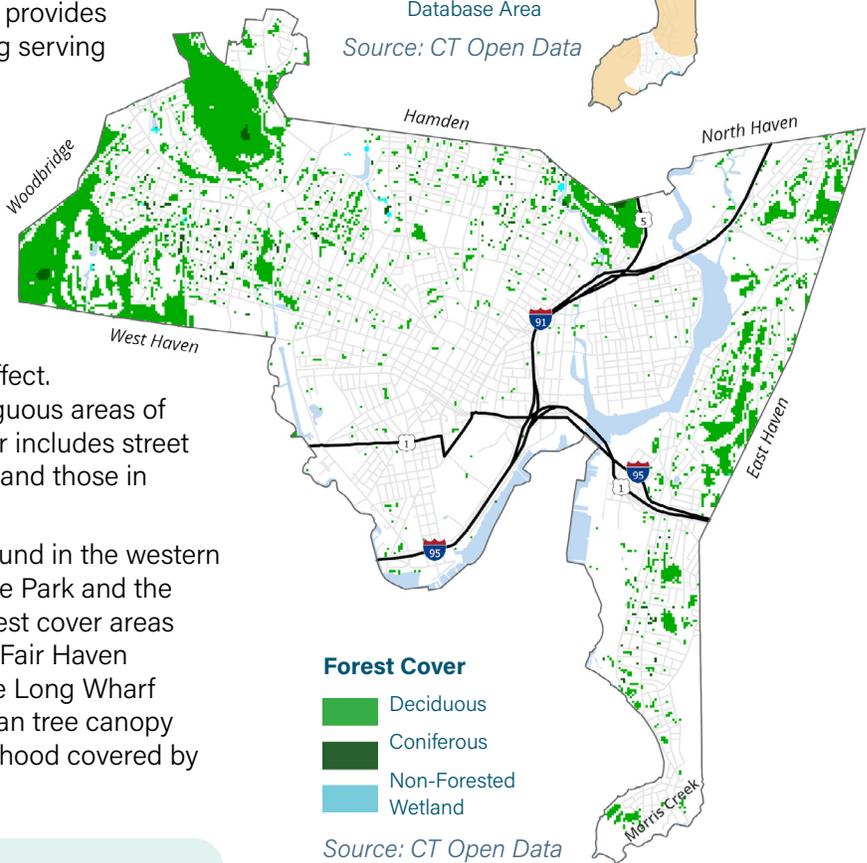
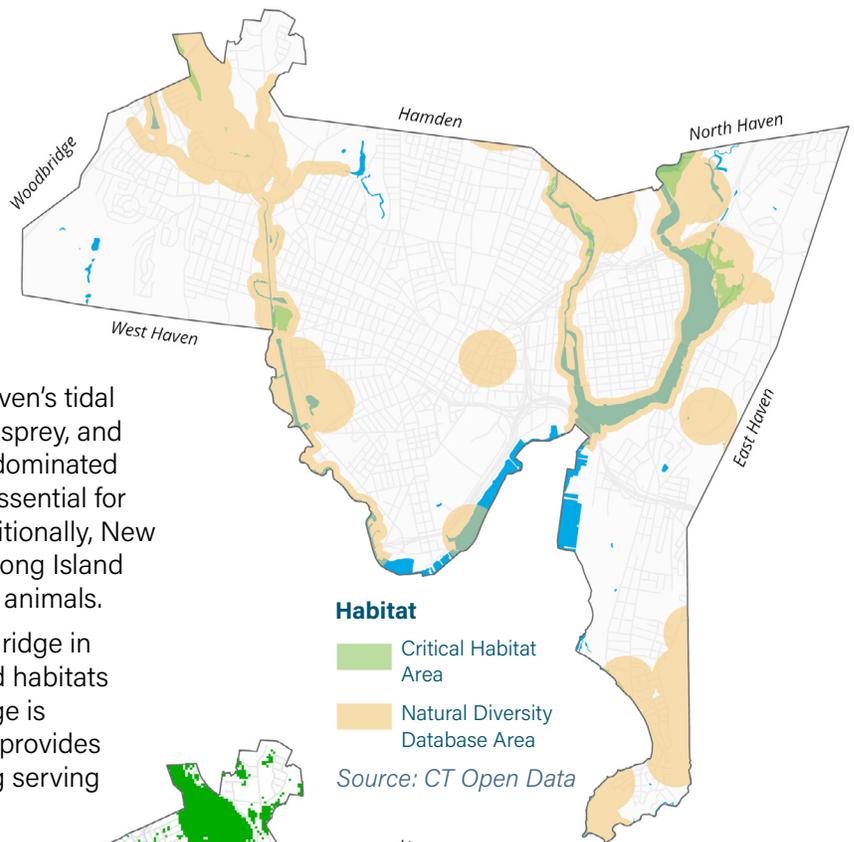
New Haven's habitats are primarily associated with its rivers including the Quinnipiac River, Mill River, and West River including tidal and inland wetland areas. These areas are mapped and documented in Connecticut's Natural Diversity Database and show approximate locations of endangered, threatened, and special concern species and important natural communities. New Haven's tidal areas provide habitat for ducks, geese, osprey, and various shorebirds. These wetlands are dominated by a variety of plant species which are essential for maintaining the ecological balance. Additionally, New Haven Harbor and nearby areas of the Long Island Sound are home to a diversity of marine animals.

West Rock Ridge, a prominent trap rock ridge in New Haven and Hamden, offers forested habitats that support a variety of wildlife. The ridge is part of the larger Metacomet Ridge and provides important ecological functions, including serving as a corridor for migratory species. The area is characterized by rugged woodlands and supports diverse plant communities.

Forest and Tree Cover

New Haven's forests and urban tree cover play an important role in mitigating the impact of impervious cover and reducing urban heat island effect. While its forests are comprised of contiguous areas of trees and undergrowth, urban tree cover includes street trees, trees found on private properties, and those in parks, cemeteries, and other areas.

The greatest areas of forest cover are found in the western part of the City in West Rock Ridge State Park and the Westville neighborhood with limited forest cover areas in the East Rock, Quinnipiac Meadows, Fair Haven Heights, and Annex neighborhoods. The Long Wharf neighborhood has by far the lowest urban tree canopy in the City with only 6% of the neighborhood covered by trees.



Forests and street trees cool the City down, clean the air, and provide habitat for wildlife.

Water Resources

New Haven's water resources consist primarily of the Quinnipiac, Little, Mill, and West Rivers, and the Long Island Sound. The City is also home to the Hemingway Creek and Morris Creek. New Haven does not have any large lakes or reservoirs but is home to several ponds and lagoons including the Beaver Pond, Beaver Creek Lagoon, Lily Pond, Ray Bishop Pond, Edge Park Pond, and West River Memorial Park Pond.

Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (CTDEEP) 2020 water quality assessments indicate that most of the City's surface waters are not supportive of recreation or aquatic life.

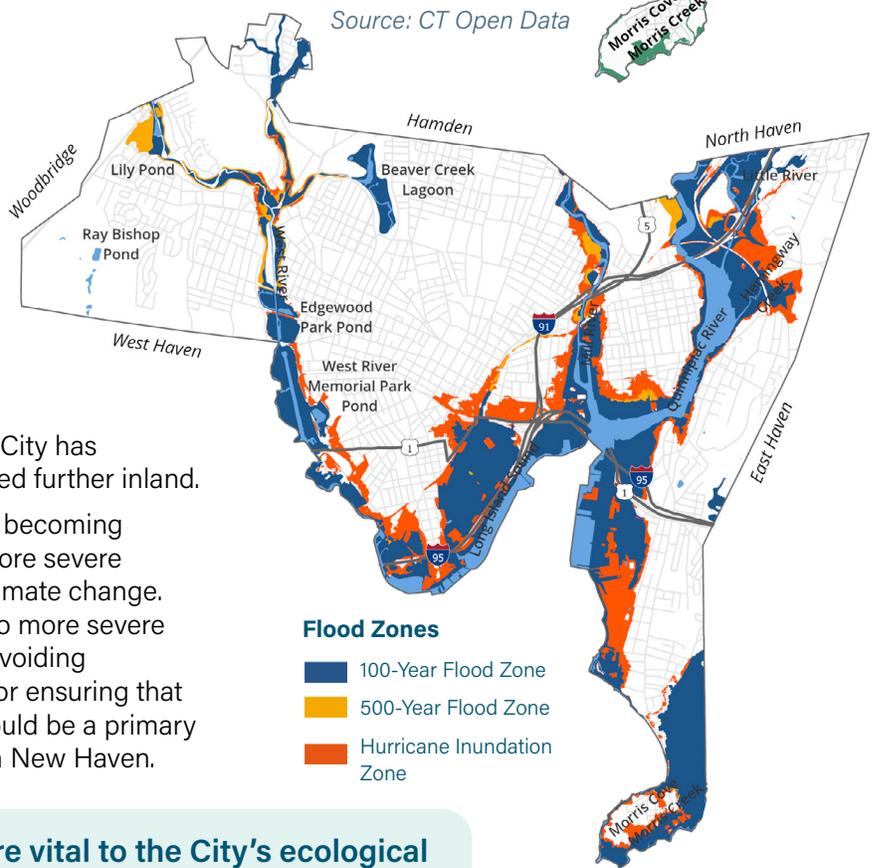
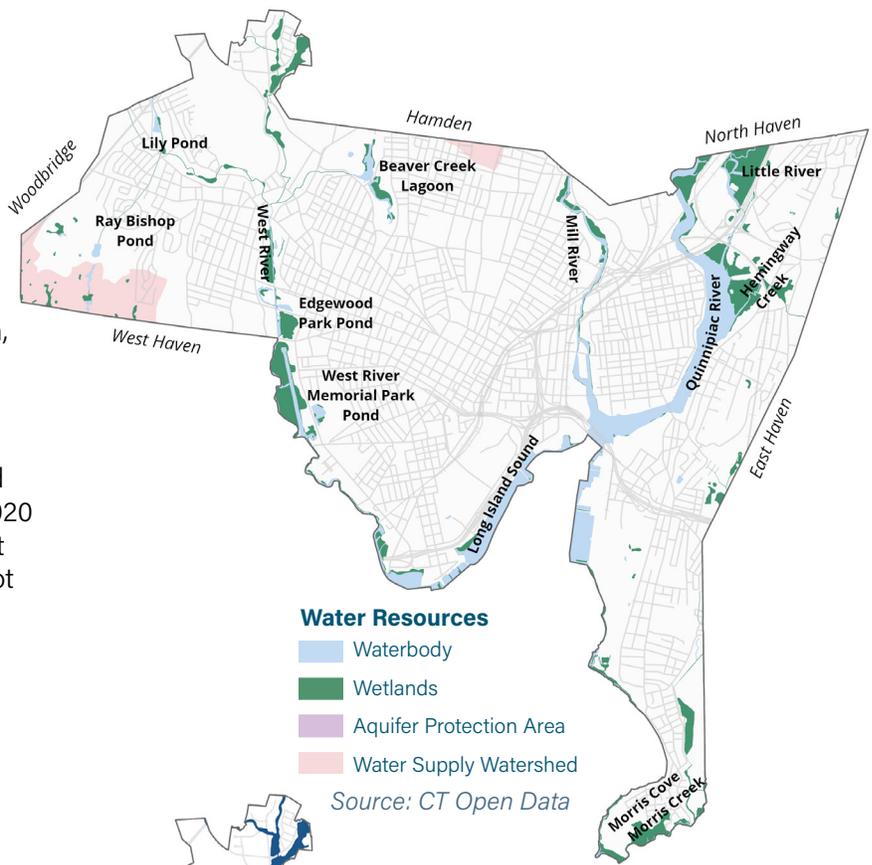
Flood Zones

New Haven's inland flood zones are primarily located in the historic flood plains for the Quinnipiac, Mill, and West Rivers and along the Morris Creek, Lily Pond and Beaver Creek Lagoon. Its coastal flood zones are primarily located around the Harbor and extend far into the Long Wharf, Annex, the Hill, and East Shore neighborhoods.

These flood zones include areas with a 1% chance of annual flooding (100-year flood zone) and those areas with a 0.2% chance of annual flooding (500-year flood zone). Additionally, the City has hurricane surge inundation zones located further inland.

Flooding and the severity of flooding is becoming more common in New Haven due to more severe and frequent storms associated with climate change. Additionally, sea level rise contributes to more severe coastal flooding during storm events. Avoiding development within these flood zones or ensuring that development is resilient to flooding should be a primary consideration for future development in New Haven.

New Haven's surface waters are vital to the City's ecological systems and to the absorption and drainage of stormwater runoff. Increased flood frequency and severity associated with climate change should be a primary consideration for future development in proximity of these resources.



Flood Vulnerability

The flood climate change vulnerability index (shown on the map at right) assesses flood vulnerability rather than risk (which is shown by flood zone maps). Areas with higher vulnerability have a higher sensitivity to flooding, more exposure to flooding, and less adaptive capacity. High vulnerability to flooding is related to population density and demographic characteristics such as low-income levels and a built environment that is easily damaged.

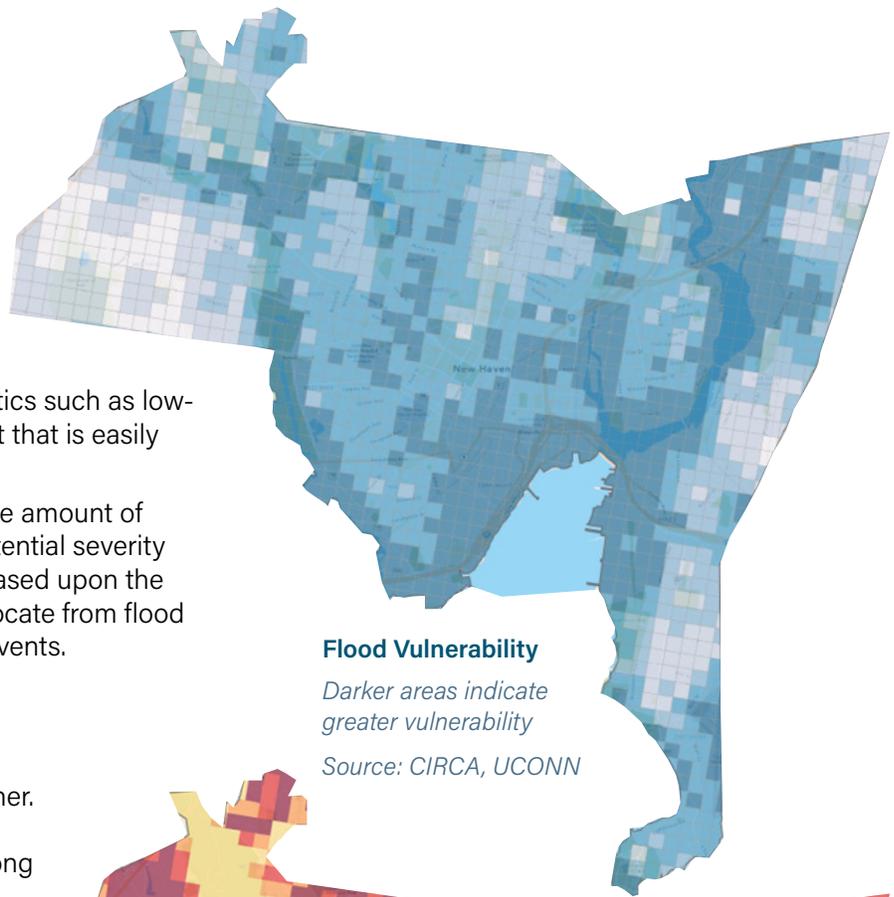
High exposure to flooding is due to the amount of area that is in flood zones and the potential severity of flooding in those areas. It is also based upon the community's adaptive capacity to relocate from flood zones or improve resiliency to flood events.

New Haven has the fourth highest average flood vulnerability in Connecticut, with only Bridgeport, Hartford, and New London being higher. The most vulnerable areas of New Haven include New Haven Harbor, Long Wharf, and areas along the Mill River, Quinnipiac River, and West River.

Heat Vulnerability

The heat climate change vulnerability index is similar to the flood index in that areas that are more vulnerable are those that have a higher sensitivity to heat, more exposure, and less adaptive capacity. High sensitivity to heat occurs as a result of health factors and living conditions. High exposure to heat is related to the population that is exposed in those areas and the urban heat island effect within those areas. Adaptive capacity is related to an individual or the community's ability to adapt through measures such as increasing urban tree cover, adapting buildings, and providing air conditioning and cooling centers.

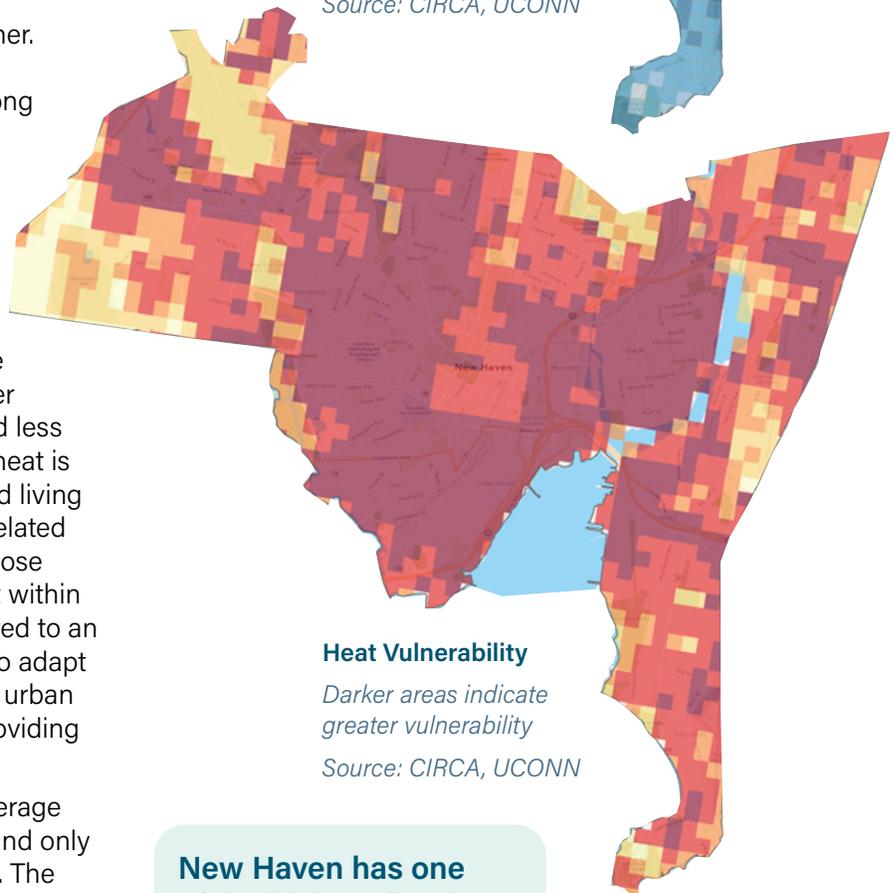
New Haven has the fourth highest average heat vulnerability in Connecticut, behind only Bridgeport, New Britain, and Hartford. The most vulnerable neighborhoods of New Haven include Long Wharf, Hill, Fair Haven, Dixwell, Edgewood, and Newhallville.



Flood Vulnerability

Darker areas indicate greater vulnerability

Source: CIRCA, UCONN



Heat Vulnerability

Darker areas indicate greater vulnerability

Source: CIRCA, UCONN

New Haven has one of the highest flood and heat vulnerability ratings of any community in the state.



One of many of the City's festivals



Source: Downtown New Haven

New Haven actively supports and promotes arts and culture through a variety of programs, but the City's Department of Arts, Culture, and Tourism is under-resourced when compared to some peer cities.

New Haven has a dynamic and diverse arts and cultural scene that is integral to the city's identity and economic vitality. The city is home to a variety of cultural resources that reflect its multicultural population and vibrant community. Contributing to New Haven's culture are artists, entrepreneurs, events and entertainment, restaurants and food vendors, shopping, museums and galleries, theaters and music, schools and universities, libraries, sports and recreation, and historic sites and districts.

From celebrated museums and galleries to public art projects, festivals, and a vibrant food scene, New Haven's arts and culture landscape continues to evolve. With the support of both public and private organizations, the city remains a beacon of creativity and cultural excellence, fostering both community engagement and economic growth.

Arts and Culture Programming and Promotion

The Department of Arts, Culture, and Tourism, including its non-profit arm, New Haven Festivals Inc., and the Cultural Affairs Commission play pivotal roles in promoting the city's cultural offerings. The Youth and Recreation Department ensures youth access to creative expression, and the New Haven Poet Laureate, advocates for poetry, culture, and the arts. The Department also supports projects through the Neighborhood Cultural Vitality Grant Program, which helps support projects that celebrate, recognize, and bring together the city's diverse neighborhood cultures. New Haven's commitment to fostering an inclusive arts community is further exemplified by the Cultural Equity Plan, released in 2022, which provides a framework to ensure that all residents have access to artistic and cultural opportunities that connect people, celebrate history, and inspire creative expression.

While the Department plays a strong role in supporting arts and culture, it does so with a limited budget relative to larger cities. An even greater contrast can be drawn between New Haven and New York City, which spends twenty times per capita on arts and culture programming and promotion than New Haven.

In addition to the Department of Arts, Culture, and Tourism, the New Haven Arts Council, a private organization, plays a crucial role in empowering artists and supporting nonprofit arts organizations, creating opportunities for collaboration and innovation within the city.

Public Art

New Haven has over 500 public art installations with monuments, murals, mayoral portraits, and art parks. The Percent for Art in Public Spaces Program, established by municipal ordinance in 1981, allocates one percent of the city's construction costs for new or renovated municipal buildings to commissioned artwork. This program has commissioned more than 31 works of art, including murals, sculptures, stained glass, and other pieces by local and regional artists, creating an engaging and creative environment within public spaces such as schools, libraries, fire stations, and parks.

Museums

New Haven is also home to several cultural institutions that attract visitors from near and far.

New Haven Museum

The Museum showcases the City's past, with permanent exhibitions like the New Haven Gallery and the Amistad Gallery, as well as temporary exhibitions.

Yale University Art Gallery

The Gallery, which holds the largest university art collection in the world, has a collection of works by renowned artists such as Pablo Picasso, Mark Rothko, and Roy Lichtenstein.

Yale Center for British Art

The Center hosts the largest collection of British art outside of the United Kingdom.

The Peabody Museum of Natural History

The Museum offers a gallery with over 14 million specimens, including fossils, reptiles, and historical scientific instruments, while providing educational resources to the community.

Other cultural institutions include the Blessed Michael McGivney Pilgrimage Center, the Arts Council Gallery, Lost In New Haven, the Ely Center of Contemporary Art, Morris Steinert Collection of Musical Instruments at Yale, and NXTHVN.

Theater

New Haven has a vibrant theater scene that reflects its rich cultural heritage and commitment to the performing arts. The City is home to several notable venues and organizations that contribute to this theatrical landscape.

Shubert Theatre

Established in 1914, the Shubert Theatre has played a pivotal role in New Haven's theater history. It continues to present a diverse array of performances, including Broadway productions, concerts, and dance, maintaining its status as a cornerstone of the City's cultural scene.

Long Wharf Theatre

Founded in 1965, Long Wharf Theatre is renowned for producing both classic and contemporary plays. The theater has earned a reputation for artistic excellence, receiving multiple awards, including a Pulitzer Prize. Its commitment to new works and innovative interpretations has solidified its place in the regional theater community.

Yale Repertory Theatre

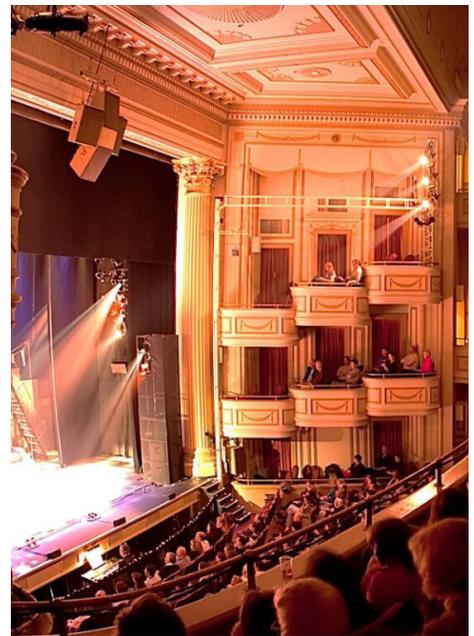
Affiliated with the University, the Theatre serves as a training ground for emerging talent while staging professional productions. Since its inception in 1966, it has premiered numerous significant works and has been instrumental in shaping American theater.

Community and University Theater

New Haven's theater scene is further enriched by community and university groups. By example, the Purple Crayon of Yale, an improvisational theater group founded in 1985, specializes in long-form improv and is the oldest collegiate long-form group in the country, the Bregamos Community Theater, and the Broken Umbrella Theatre.



Yale Art Gallery



*The Shubert Theater
Image Source: John Canning*

New Haven is the home to legendary cultural institutions including museums and theaters. These venues and the communities surrounding them contribute greatly to New Haven's identity and sense of place.



New Haven's Puerto Rican Day Festival
Image Source: I Love New Haven

Music, Festivals, and Events

New Haven's music scene is equally vibrant, with the New Haven Symphony Orchestra performing regularly at Woolsey Hall, and venues like Westville Music Bowl and College Street Music Hall (formerly the Palace Theatre) hosting live performances in a range of genres. Venues such as Toad's Place have contributed to New Haven's cultural fabric by hosting a variety of performances featuring legendary artists. There is also a vibrant "underground" music and spoken word poetry scene in the city.

Additionally, the City hosts a wide variety of annual festivals and events, which attract thousands of visitors each year. The International Festival of Arts & Ideas, one of New Haven's most prominent cultural events, brings together international and local artists, offering a platform for performances, lectures, and other activities. Other notable festivals include the New Haven Jazz Festival, Apizza Feast, Puerto Rican Festival, Sweet and Sounds Festival, Black Wall Street Fest and Kulturally LIT Fest, showcasing the City's music, food, and diverse cultural heritage.

Food Culture

New Haven's culinary scene contributes to its cultural vibrancy, particularly its famous Apizza, a Neapolitan-style pizza. New Haven's diverse restaurant scene reflects the City's multicultural population, offering a wide range of cuisines that reflect the City's international influences and rich ethnic diversity. New Haven is renowned for its culinary variety, offering an array of dining experiences that cater to a multitude of tastes.

The City's restaurant scene is a tapestry of global cuisines including Malaysian, Ethiopian, Spanish, Belgian, French, Greek, Latin American, Mexican, Italian, Thai, Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese, Korean, Indian, Jamaican, Cuban, Peruvian, Syrian/Lebanese, and Turkish eateries. This extensive selection has positioned New Haven as a destination for food enthusiasts.

A cornerstone of the City's food identity is its distinctive style of pizza, known locally as "apizza." Originating from the City's Italian American community, apizza is characterized by a thin crust and is traditionally baked in coal- or wood-fired brick ovens. Notable establishments like Frank Pepe Pizzeria Napoletana, established in 1925, and Sally's Apizza, which opened in 1938, have been instrumental in popularizing this style.

New Haven's food history includes claims to the invention of the hamburger at Louis' Lunch, a small eatery operating since 1895. The restaurant continues to serve hamburgers prepared using original cast iron stoves. The City has also been a pioneer in sustainable dining practices. Miya's Sushi, founded in 1982, is recognized as the first sustainable sushi restaurant globally.

Complementing its brick-and-mortar establishments, New Haven is home to a popular food truck culture. Areas like Long Wharf Drive have become hubs for food trucks offering diverse cuisines. Additionally, farmers' markets managed by organizations such as CitySeed operate in various neighborhoods, including Wooster Square and Downtown, supplying fresh, locally sourced produce and artisanal goods.



New Haven style pizza
Image Source: CT Insider

New Haven's food and festival culture is unsurpassed in Connecticut. Together, they showcase and celebrate the City's diverse cultures and communities.

Historic Resources and Architecture

New Haven has a rich array of historic resources, reflecting its deep-rooted heritage and architectural significance. The City has numerous local historic districts, national register districts, and individually listed properties that collectively narrate its historical and cultural evolution. The City's historic architecture includes landmarks like the buildings of Yale University as well as local historic districts such as City Point, Quinnipiac River, and Wooster Square, five state register historic districts, 19 national register historic districts, and 73 national register properties.

Local Historic Districts

New Haven's local historic districts preserve the architectural and historical integrity of its neighborhoods. These districts reflect the City's development over time, showcasing a variety of architectural styles and eras. They include the City Point, Quinnipiac River, and Wooster Square Districts.

- *The City Point District* is an exceptionally cohesive, well-preserved urban residential neighborhood in New Haven. The District is historically significant for its maritime associations, specifically the oystering industry which flourished there between 1840 and 1925.
- *The Quinnipiac River District* is a rare surviving and intact example of a 19th-century maritime community. It gained prominence in the mid-1800s as a major oyster port, with ancillary industries of ship building and shipping.
- *The Wooster Square District* is an architecturally distinguished neighborhood located east of downtown New Haven. During the mid-19th century, it was a fashionable residential area which ship captains and wholesale grocers found convenient to their places of business.

National Register Historic Districts

The City is home to several historic districts listed on the National Register of Historic Places, each contributing uniquely to New Haven's historical tapestry.

- *Hillhouse Avenue Historic District:* Renowned for its 19th-century mansions, Hillhouse Avenue has been described by authors Charles Dickens and Mark Twain as "the most beautiful street in America." The district includes notable architectural works, such as the Skinner House.
- *Wooster Square Historic District:* This area reflects New Haven's rich Italian American heritage, characterized by its historic homes and the prominent St. Michael's Church.
- *Quinnipiac River Historic District:* Situated along the Quinnipiac River, this district showcases maritime history with well-preserved 18th and 19th-century architecture.
- *Prospect Hill Historic District:* Known for its affluent residences and proximity to Yale University, this district features diverse architectural styles, including Colonial Revival and Tudor.
- *Westville Village Historic District:* Reflecting a 19th-century mill village, Westville retains its historic charm with commercial and residential buildings from that era.
- *Whitney Avenue Historic District:* This district highlights early trolley-focused development with its array of residential architectures lining Whitney Avenue.



Alexander Foote House, City Point
Image Source: NHPT



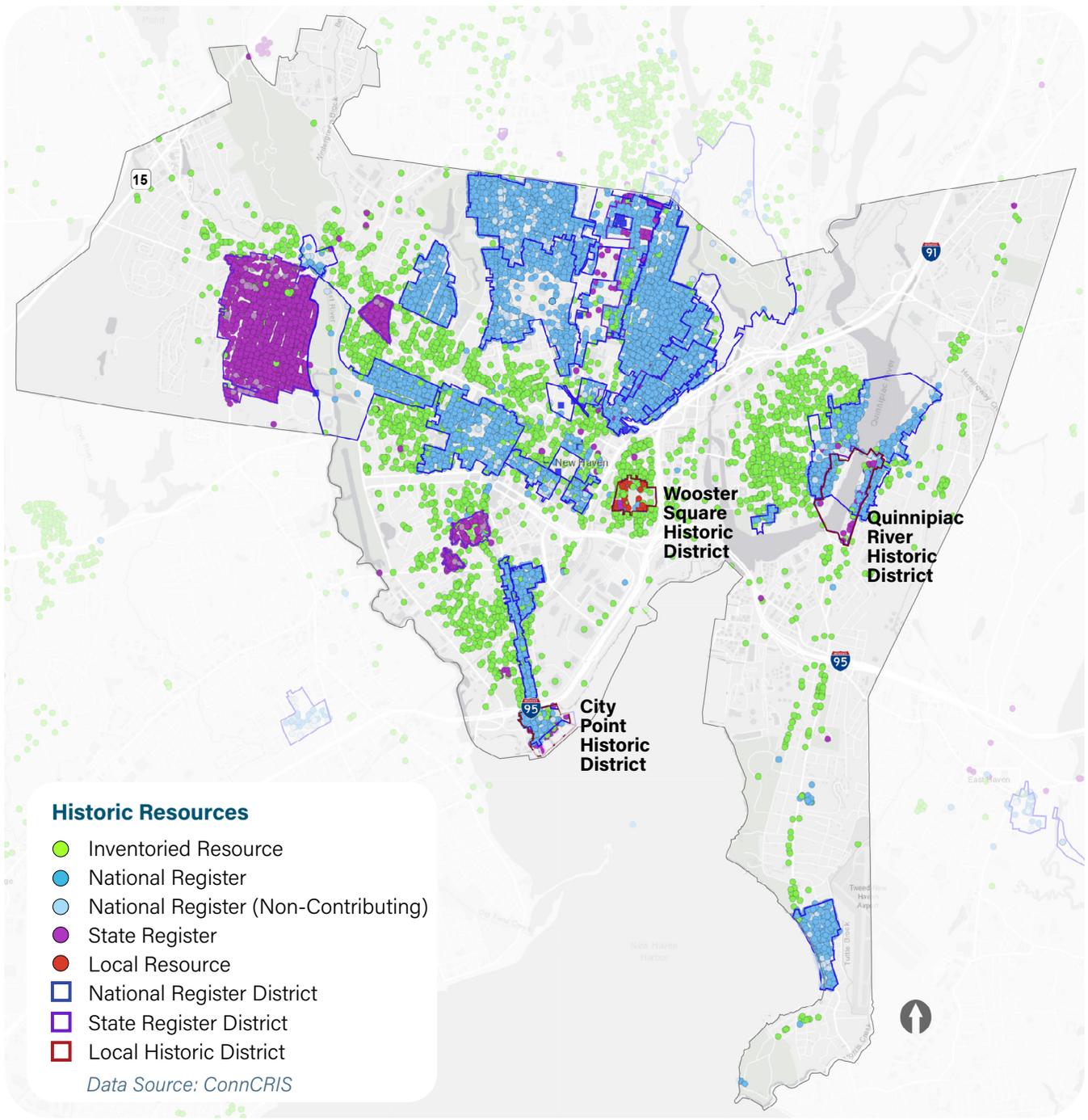
Jessie Mallory House, Quinnipiac River
Image Source: NHPT



Jewett House, Wooster Square
Image Source: NHPT



Pelatiah Perit House, Hillhouse
Image Source: NHPT



Historic Resources

- Inventoried Resource
- National Register
- National Register (Non-Contributing)
- State Register
- Local Resource
- National Register District
- State Register District
- Local Historic District

Data Source: ConnCRIS

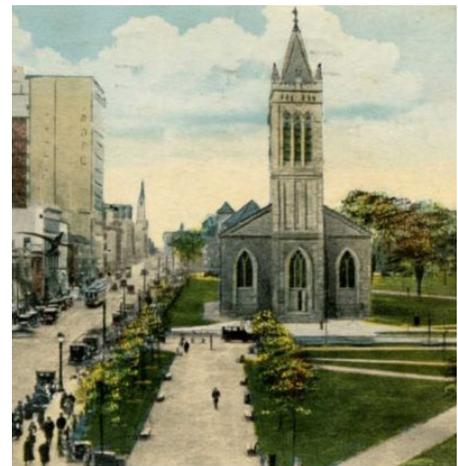
National Register Properties and Places of Historical Significance

In addition to its historic districts, New Haven houses numerous individually listed properties of historical importance including:

- New Haven Green: A central three-block park that has served as the City's focal point since its founding in 1638. The Green is surrounded by historic churches and has been the site of many significant events.
- Grove Street Cemetery: Established in 1796, it is one of the oldest planned cemeteries in the United States, featuring notable burials and exemplary funerary art.
- Yale University Campus: The campus encompasses several historic buildings, including Connecticut Hall (built in 1750), the oldest surviving university building.

New Haven is also a member community of the Connecticut Freedom Trail. The Trail commemorates the fight for emancipation from slavery, honoring the courageous African American individuals who paved the way for future generations. The Trail includes a diverse range of locations, including the Underground Railroad's safe houses, sites associated with the Amistad case of 1839, and the Civil Rights Movement's sites, gravesites, monuments, homes, the New Haven Armory and other structures. The Trail program documents and designates sites that embody the struggle toward freedom and human dignity, celebrate the accomplishments of the state's African American community, and promote heritage tourism.

The Freedom Trail provides an example of the complexity and richness of New Haven's history and the many races, cultures, and peoples that have contributed to New Haven's growth, development, and identity.

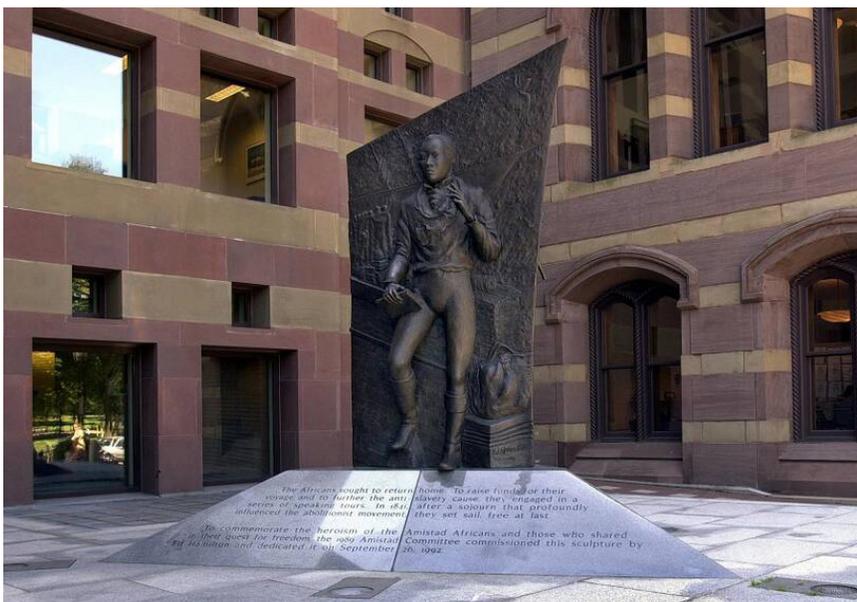


The New Haven Green
Image Source: *The New Haven Museum*



Yale University
Image Source: *DBVH Architects*

New Haven's historic resources are exceptional and tell a rich, although incomplete history of New Haven's development over time.



The Amistad Memorial, Image Source: Visit New Haven

3. The Community's Perspective



Source: New Haven Arts

3.1

Vision 2034 Engagement

Overview

Engaging with the New Haven community was an important part of creating Vision 2034. Every part of the process was informed by the people who live here. By making sure their voices and needs were reflected in the plan, Vision 2034 was shaped by the community. Through discussions, workshops, and interviews, residents shared ideas and concerns about topics like housing, transportation, sustainability, jobs, public spaces and issues related to equity and inclusion.

Engagement Initiatives

Digital and online tools were used to increase accessibility to all residents:

- A website to provide residents with easy access to information and updates about the plan.
- An online map that allowed residents to comment on issues or opportunities at specific locations.
- English and Spanish language promotional videos introducing and explaining Vision 2034.
- A Community Navigator program that hired ten New Haven residents as community organizers for the plan.
- A Youth Leadership Team of New Haven Public School high school students who conducted youth-to-youth outreach.
- Groups called "Co-Creation Teams" that met periodically and focused on specific topics for the plan.

A broad range of voices were engaged in the process by meeting residents where they live and work, in neighborhoods and existing gathering spots and events:

- Attendance of and tabling at 18 community events to meet residents in informal settings.
- Seven public workshops in locations across the City to foster in-depth discussions.
- Eighteen stakeholder interviews with topical experts.
- An online survey to share the draft recommendations of the Plan and offer the community an opportunity to provide feedback.

Inclusive, Accessible Engagement

The project team designed the engagement strategy to be inclusive and accessible, with a focus on meeting people in their neighborhoods, and addressing the barriers that exclude people with disabilities, young people, seniors, immigrants, residents with limited English proficiency, very-low-income people, and others, from participating in planning and other government processes. Some of the values that guided community engagement include:

1. *Pay organizers for their work. Community Navigators and the Youth Leadership Team were paid positions.*
2. *Go to where people are, reach every neighborhood. Pop-ups, workshops, Community Navigator events, and Youth Leadership Team outreach happened all over the City.*
3. *Provide food, activities for kids, and language interpretation at in-person events.*
4. *Use physically accessible venues and provide options to engage online/virtually.*
5. *Proactively engage historically excluded communities. Staff and Community Navigators worked with service providers to conduct discussion sessions with refugee women and youth, people in recovery, high school students, seniors, people experiencing homelessness, and other communities.*

Steering Committee

A Steering Committee was formed to guide the planning process. It met three times a year and supported every aspect of the plan creation. The Committee included approximately twenty-one members including City staff, organizations, and residents:

City Departments

City Agencies

Nonprofit Partners

Community Members

Community Navigators

Youth Leaders

Board of Alders

South Central Regional
Council of Governments

"Teaching and advising the youth on ways to be civically engaged is important. It's a lot easier than we think, we often assume only older people can be involved civically."

- Youth voice

Co-Creation Teams

Six Co-Creation Teams were established to provide guidance on topics related to the plan's themes and to support the development of the plan's recommendations. Teams included residents, city staff, and other stakeholders and were open to anyone to join. These teams were organized around the topics of the plan and are as follows:

- *Great Places to Live: Explored life in New Haven's neighborhoods and developed ideas for how the City can expand housing choice and affordability, improve neighborhood conditions, and ensure that New Haven remains an affordable, accessible, and attractive place to live for a diverse community.*
- *Economic Opportunity for All: Explored and developed ideas for supporting economic development, labor force and employment, workforce and youth development, entrepreneurship, innovation, re-entry services, and commercial activity in the City.*
- *Move Together: Explored mobility in New Haven including ideas for how the City can improve mobility to ensure that New Haven remains a place where movement fosters exchange.*
- *Climate and Ecological Connections: Explored New Haven's natural environment and physical landscape and environmental resources within the context of climate change and developed ideas for how land use and development can best be regulated.*
- *Civic Services and Experiences: Explored the experience that residents and other stakeholders have when interacting with City government, schools, or other institutions and developed recommendations for supporting positive civic experiences.*
- *Arts and Cultural Identity: Explored New Haven's arts and culture, building on the City's Cultural Equity Plan and developed ideas for how the City can become a more equitable place for residents of all cultural backgrounds and identities.*

Each team met three times over the course of the Plan's development. The first meetings introduced the Plan, relevant studies, and ongoing initiatives. The second meeting reviewed engagement outcomes from workshops and community events and introduced draft goals. The final meetings reviewed Plan chapters and content. Discussions provided valuable insights to shape a comprehensive, actionable Plan that meets community needs.

3.2 Promotion and Communication

On January 11, 2024, the Vision 2034 planning process kicked off with a Project Launch. Over 100 members of the New Haven community came out to show their interest and support. The Project Team introduced the Plan, discussed key goals, and shared next steps. Everyone who attended got a great overview of the planning process and how to get involved. The project website was also created in early 2024 followed by a promotional video.



Project Launch



Project Launch



Spanish language version of the promotional video

Tabling at Community Events

3.3

Key Themes Identified

Provide better transportation options, including more bike lanes, cleaner and more frequent bus service, and improved connectivity throughout the City. Make streets safer with measures such as improved traffic flow, enhanced signals, and better pedestrian safety.

Improve the safety of neighborhoods. Provide more community-based programming and clear communication about City initiatives. Ensure that residents in all neighborhoods are included in decision-making and have equitable access to resources.

Prioritize the development of more affordable housing and provide better tenant protection. Address zoning issues to support housing development, encourage mixed-use development and support the development of more essential services such as grocery stores.

Provide equitable access to quality education and afterschool programs is a priority for families. Invest in public schools to ensure all students, regardless of background, have the same opportunities. Provide more career training programs for youth.

Maintain and improve green spaces and parks with a focus on making these areas more accessible and attractive. Address environmental concerns, like flooding risks and support community-driven environmental programs and green space cleanups.

Provide more recreational and cultural activities, including festivals, public art, and entertainment options. Enhance public spaces and making downtown a more attractive destination for residents.

Expand access to health and mental health services, affordable daycare, affordable housing, and support for the homeless. Ensure that the basic needs of all residents are met especially the most vulnerable.

Provide more transparency and clear pathways for engaging in decision-making. Improve City communications to the community.

The Project Team engaged with approximately 2,000 residents through "pop-up" tabling with maps and materials at community events. These events were intended to make residents better aware of the Vision 2034 planning process, encourage participation and interaction with the project website and online mapping tool, invite residents to attend public workshops, and were a way to collect direct feedback.



Engaging with participants

Events featuring a Vision 2034 pop-up:

- New Haven Day
- Back to School Day at Bowen Field
- Wooster Square Cherry Blossom Festival
- Rock to Rock
- Fair Haven Day Parade
- Westville Art Walk
- Fair Haven Family Stroll
- Freddy Fixer Parade
- Quinnipiac RiverFest
- Caribbean Festival
- Arts and Ideas Hill Neighborhood Festival
- Arts and Ideas West River/West Rock Neighborhood Festival
- Arts and Ideas Newhallville Neighborhood Festival
- Puerto Rican Festival
- Black Wall Street
- Family Fun Days at Edgewood Park, Roberto Clemente, and Clinton Avenue School
- New Haven Pride
- Q House Farmers Market

3.4 Community Navigator Program

The Community Navigator Program was created early in the planning process to encourage community involvement and ensure that a variety of voices were heard. Trusted members of the community were hired based on their interests, community connections, and language abilities, forming an inclusive and representative team. These Navigators worked closely with the Project Team, receiving training and support. They were given a toolkit with information about the Comprehensive Plan, enabling them to advocate for the Plan and gather important feedback.

Using their connections, Community Navigators reached out to residents in their neighborhoods and social circles. They helped encourage participation by attending Pop-Up events, leading an Arts and Culture workshop, organizing neighborhood walk-and-talks, and sharing information on how to get involved such as through the online survey. Their efforts were vital in increasing public participation and ensuring that diverse voices shaped the planning process.



Community Navigators out and about

Youth Leadership Team 3.5

In addition to the Community Navigator Team, Vision 2034 had a team of paid high school students as leaders in the planning process. The Vision 2034 Youth Leadership Team was funded through the Department of Youth and Recreation's Youth at Work Program and through a partnership with the Common Ground High School Green Jobs Corp, funded by an Environmental Protection Agency Environmental Justice Collaborative Problem-Solving Grant. Between 2023 and 2025, eight students from three different high schools participated on the team. In February 2025, the Federal Government suddenly terminated the EPA grant, forcing the Green Jobs Corp to immediately pause the work of seventy student workers at host sites across the City, including the Vision 2034 Youth Leadership Team.

Over eighteen months, the Youth Leadership Team designed and led engagement that reached over five hundred young people in the City, including two City planning "Game Nights" at the downtown Public Library. The top priority for young people in the City was access to efficient, safe, clean, and affordable transportation. Housing, public safety, a clean environment, homelessness services and prevention, and youth services closely followed as major areas of concern. Hear about these priorities directly from young residents through the "youth voices" quotes incorporated throughout the plan.



Youth Leadership Team in action. Flyer above developed by the Youth Leadership Team to advertise Art and Game Night

3.6 Public Workshops

Seven public workshops were conducted at schools and libraries across the City, as well as one Zoom workshop. Workshops were held at different days and times of the week, including evenings and weekends. Food from local businesses, activities for kids, and Spanish and American Sign Language interpreters were available at each of the workshops. Topics and activities varied across the workshops. Workshops were conducted on the following dates:

- *Workshop #1 - Visioning, May 5th, 2024, High School in the Community*
- *Workshop #2 - Asset Mapping, May 15th, 2024, Lincoln-Bassett Community School*
- *Workshop #3 - Co-Creation Themes, June 4th, 2024, Edgewood Magnet School*
- *Workshop #4 - Civic Experiences, July 30th, 2024, Virtual Meeting*
- *Workshop #5 - Cultural Equity, September 28th, 2024, Wilson Library*
- *Workshop #6 - Housing, October 29th, 2024 - Main Branch of the New Haven Public Library*
- *Workshop #7 - Presentation of the draft plan*

Key highlights and themes discussed during each workshop are summarized on this and the following pages.

Workshop #1 - Visioning

Attendees participated in break-out sessions discussing their concerns and ideas for the City. Key concerns identified include litter and blight, road conditions, crime and gun violence, underfunded schools, high taxes, absentee landlords, housing neglect, rising housing costs, and gentrification. To address these concerns and strengthen the community, residents suggest:

- *Increasing school funding to support students and educators.*
- *Expanding job training and workforce development programs.*
- *Enhancing bus transit options for better mobility.*
- *Strengthening public safety efforts to reduce crime.*
- *Enforcing litter and dumping laws to improve cleanliness.*
- *Expanding affordable housing options to prevent displacement.*
- *Enhancing access to and revitalization of Long Wharf.*

A Vision for the Future

Residents envision a New Haven that prioritizes high-quality affordable housing, government transparency, and safer neighborhoods. They want to see thriving local businesses supported beyond the startup phase. Expanding parks, greenspaces, and tree coverage, and improving air quality, would contribute to a healthier, more sustainable City.

Preserving New Haven's Identity

While looking toward the future, residents also value preserving the City's distinct neighborhoods, historic districts, and landmarks. Protecting cultural assets such as libraries, "third spaces", art spaces, and the vibrant food scene remains a priority. Additionally, neighborhood festivals, community events, and New Haven's diversity are seen as essential elements that define the City's identity and should be safeguarded.



Vision 2034 Public Workshop

Workshop #2 - Asset Mapping

The asset mapping workshop focused on identifying New Haven's resources and discussing how to best leverage those resources to support the community's vision for its future. Residents identified assets such as:

- New Haven is a hub for education, home to universities, colleges, and top-rated schools. Its libraries offer more than just books, serving as valuable community spaces.
- The City is highly walkable and bike-friendly, with excellent highway, rail, and air connections. Its historic architecture, especially Yale's buildings, is nationally recognized.
- Natural resources like parks, forests, beaches, and Long Island Sound add to its appeal, with New Haven Harbor standing out for its economic and scenic value.
- The City also boasts a strong restaurant scene, though some areas have fewer dining options than Downtown.
- New Haven offers a variety of social assets that foster community connection.
- Its many parks and playgrounds serve as gathering spaces where neighbors meet and interact. The City also has numerous "third spaces"—like cafes, libraries, and community centers—that encourage social engagement.
- New Haven's diverse neighborhoods have a strong sense of community, where residents know their neighbors and take pride in local history.
- The International Festival of Arts and Ideas is a citywide event that brings people together beyond just Downtown. Additionally, community gardens provide meaningful spaces for social interaction and connection.
- An economy that thrives on its colleges and universities, strong transportation network, and growing healthcare industry. Restaurants and farmers markets drive local business, while neighborhood support helps small businesses succeed. The City also benefits from a skilled, entrepreneurial workforce that fuels economic growth.



Asset Mapping

- Valuable public services that support the community. Its libraries and widespread educational opportunities are key assets.
- Multi-modal transportation with bike lanes and sidewalks.
- Essential services like emergency housing, shelters, and warming centers help those in need, while food pantries and soup kitchens provide critical support to residents.
- Dedicated community leaders and active Community Management Teams.
- A strong culture of volunteerism, with residents committed to supporting one another and a student population that brings a sense of idealism and a desire to make a positive impact on the community.

An asset is anything that helps make a community stronger and better. It's not just money or buildings—it can also be people, places, groups, skills, or relationships that support the community's well-being and future.

Workshop #3 - Co-Creation Themes

This workshop was organized around the Co-Creation Team themes and included break-out session by team topic. Priorities were identified for each theme as follows:

- **Great Places to Live:** *New Haven needs to increase homeownership opportunities and the types of housing available. Housing maintenance, affordability, and concerns about flooding and sea level rise are key issues that should be addressed*
- **Economic Opportunity For All:** *There is a desire to expand job opportunities for young adults, improve workforce pipelines, and support small businesses. The City's walkability and access by public transit should be leveraged to attract workers and encourage job growth.*
- **Move Together:** *Improving connectivity for biking, walking, and transit is crucial. There's also a need for ADA compliance citywide, and continued planning for car use. Public transportation intersects with housing, economic development, and climate change.*
- **Climate and Ecological Connections:** *Addressing climate change, including sea level rise and flooding, is a priority. Efforts to increase urban forestry, support electric vehicles, and improve food waste management are essential for sustainability. There is a need for better integration of climate concerns with other City planning efforts.*
- **Civic Services and Experiences:** *Improving public safety, infrastructure, and communication between City institutions and residents are critical. The City also needs more resources for mental health and social services, and to improve parks and public amenities.*
- **Arts and Culture:** *Promoting arts in schools, preserving historic architecture, and supporting local artists are key priorities. Events and public art initiatives can also be drivers for economic growth and social connection.*

Workshop #4 - Civic Experiences

This virtual workshop was a joint effort of City Plan and IfeMichelle Gardin, founder of Elm City Lit Fest with an emphasis on civic experiences in New Haven. Key issues discussed include housing affordability, climate resilience, and investment in youth. Residents emphasized the need for greater transparency and involvement in City projects, suggesting better outreach and collaboration with trusted community leaders. Civic engagement through neighborhood volunteerism was discussed as an important tool. Ideas on the topic of resilience ranged from addressing food insecurity, supporting urban agriculture, fostering small neighborhood businesses, and promoting regional collaboration.



Virtual Workshop

“Make it easier for residents to connect with City officials. Improve responsiveness from City officials.”

- Survey participant

Workshop #5 - Arts and Culture

The Community Navigator Team led a fun, interactive workshop using cultural equity to explore planning and policy recommendations for New Haven's next decade. Discussions covered green spaces, housing, transportation, and accessibility, emphasizing greenery, walkability, and shared civic spaces.

Key themes included affordable, diverse housing, stronger civic engagement, and better communication with City leadership. Economic discussions centered on supporting small businesses, workforce hubs, and a "Food Hall" marketplace. Environmental priorities included expanding green spaces, community gardens, and sustainability efforts. Participants also highlighted arts and cultural identity, proposing neighborhood creative spaces, wayfinding projects, and repurposing historic sites like the Armory for artistic and civic uses. Overall, the session emphasized strategic planning, collaboration, and accountability in shaping New Haven's future.



Arts and Culture Workshop



Tabletop exercise at the Arts and Culture Workshop

Workshop #6 - Housing

Housing was the number one issue identified by residents throughout the planning process. The sixth workshop was dedicated to discussing housing needs in the City and was attended by over sixty residents including many community organizers and housing advocates who have been working tirelessly on the issue for many years. Participants stressed the need for diverse, affordable options, highlighting two- to three-family owner-occupied units, affordable and no-income housing, single-room occupancy units, and accessory dwellings. There was strong support for mixed-use and transit-oriented development, as well as alternative housing like tiny homes. Expanding on-campus student housing was also seen as crucial to easing rental market pressure.

Neighborhoods identified by participants as having the greatest need—West Rock, the Hill, Newhallville, and Fair Haven—face high costs, aging stock, and overcrowded units. However, maintaining and improving housing was identified as a priority citywide and affordable housing supply was highlighted as a regional issue.

Priorities included affordability, landlord accountability, and property upkeep. Suggested policies included income-based rental caps, affordable housing incentives, and stricter housing code enforcement. Strategies like infill development, repurposing vacant properties, and easing accessory dwelling unit and tiny home regulations were seen as ways to expand housing without overdeveloping open spaces. A comprehensive, inclusive housing policy was deemed essential for long-term affordability and stability.



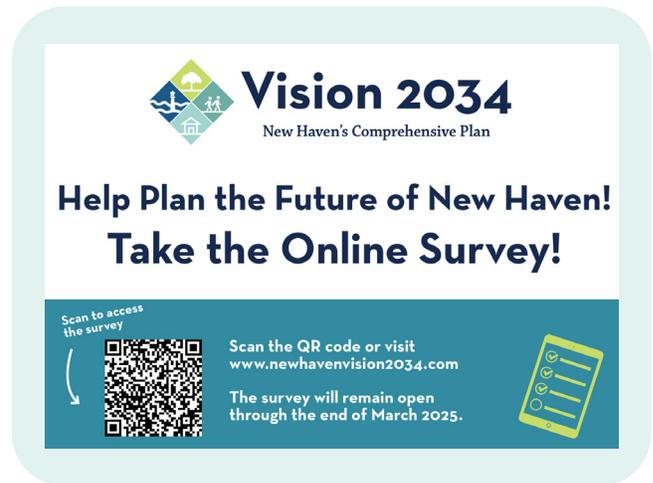
Housing Workshop

3.7 Survey

In February 2025, an online survey was launched to gather feedback on the draft goals for each section of the Plan. This allowed participants to review and rate the proposed goals, which were developed based on earlier input from the planning process. The survey was widely promoted through the project and City websites, social media, email announcements, and flyers. It was available in English, Spanish, Pashto, and Dari and hard copies were provided at community centers and libraries across New Haven. The survey remained open for five weeks to encourage broad participation.

Top priorities for each topic area from the Survey

- 1st** Transform empty and run-down properties into housing and other community resources.
- 1st** Connect residents to good jobs and economic opportunities in the city.
- 1st** Make it easier and safer for people to walk, bike, and use public transportation.
- 1st** Ensure that parks and open spaces are safe and accessible to all.
- 1st** Expand access to education and training opportunities in arts and culture, with a focus on youth.
- 1st** Improve the safety, sustainability, and quality of school buildings.



Examples of Ideas provided through the survey

Find a way to make third spaces and access to the arts free, especially for youth.

Help residents to become homeowners. Have programs that assist and make purchasing a home more affordable.

Support development of urban farming and community gardens downtown.

Prioritize affordable locations for small business and develop easier streams for approval.

Provide more support to Public Libraries and programming.

Build more bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure into the road networks.

4. Great Places to Live



Source: City of New Haven

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Great Places to Live

The Vision

Foster safe, diverse, and vibrant communities in New Haven by ensuring access to affordable, dignified housing for all residents; enhancing community spaces to create beautiful and inviting environments; promoting sustainability through pedestrian-friendly design with strong interconnections between neighborhoods and shared resources.

Goals

- 1 Increase the number of deeply affordable housing units.
- 2 Increase housing supply.
- 3 Expand temporary and supportive housing and programs that eliminate and prevent homelessness.
- 4 Transform empty and run-down properties into affordable housing and other community resources.
- 5 Support place-based programs, policies, and improvements that align with the unique assets and goals of each neighborhood and residents' quality of life.
- 6 Prevent displacement by ensuring residents can continue to live in their neighborhood of choice as housing costs rise.
- 7 Improve access to housing resources and support for tenants and current and prospective home-owners.
- 8 Improve the quality of existing housing.

1

Increase the number of deeply affordable housing units.

Increasing the supply of affordable housing units is crucial to fostering economic stability, social equity, and community resilience in New Haven. Ensuring that low and moderate income residents—including essential workers, families, and seniors—have access to affordable housing strengthens communities and reduces displacement, homelessness, and overcrowding, which can strain social services and public resources. Expanding the supply of affordable housing is essential to ensuring that housing remains accessible to those who need it most.

Strategies

1.1 Build upon launch of the New Haven Land Bank by exploring the creation of resources such as a Community Land Trust or supporting external partners to do so.

A Community Land Trust (CLT) can play a vital role in supporting the development of affordable housing by acquiring and stewarding land for long-term community benefit. CLTs hold land in trust and lease it to homeowners, nonprofit developers, or cooperatives, ensuring that housing remains affordable in perpetuity. By separating land ownership from housing ownership, CLTs help keep housing costs stable and prevent speculative price increases that can lead to displacement. They may also provide support to residents through financial education, homebuyer assistance, and property management services, fostering community stability and long-term affordability.

1.2 Prioritize the development of housing units affordable to households at or below 30% of Area Median Income (AMI) in development of mixed-income housing.

In New Haven, households earning at or below 30% of the Area Median Income (AMI) fall within an annual income range of \$24,400 to \$46,050, depending on household size. The City has a small supply of housing, especially units with two or more bedrooms, that is affordable to these households. Affordable housing is generally defined as housing for which monthly costs do not exceed 30% of a household's income. Based on this standard, the City needs more housing units with total monthly costs—including rent, mortgage, taxes, insurance, and utilities—ranging from \$610 to \$1,151, depending on household size, to ensure affordability for lower-income residents. Mixed-income housing is important because it reduces the geographic segregation of affordable housing.

33.2% of New Haven's housing is identified as affordable by the Connecticut Office of Policy and Management but only 3,420 units (5.9%) are deed-restricted as affordable.

Case Study

Dudley Neighbors Inc., Boston, MA

The Dudley Neighbors Inc. (DNI) is a community land trust established in the late 1980s to combat disinvestment, vacancy, and gentrification in the Roxbury and Dorchester neighborhoods of Boston. DNI has successfully developed affordable housing, urban farms, and community spaces while ensuring long-term community control of land. By preventing speculative land sales, DNI has helped revitalize the area while preserving affordability and preventing displacement.

DNI has facilitated the improvement of development of housing at nine sites with a total of 227 units, with 97 of those units being ownership units and 77 being co-op units.



Source: Dudley Neighbors Inc.

This icon indicates that this strategy is related to the New Haven Zoning Ordinance. Click to skip to the next related strategy.

Spotlight

Elm City Communities

Elm City Communities (ECC) is New Haven's public housing authority. It currently provides 950 households/2,244 individuals (1.7% of the City's households) with mixed-income public housing. Of those households, 801 have extremely low or no income. Additionally, ECC administers the City's housing choice voucher program, overseeing the distribution of vouchers for 5,322 households in 2023.

ECC now provides housing or facilitates vouchers for 30% more families than they did in 2001. It has rehabilitated and redeveloped almost 2,000 units of high-quality, affordable housing and processed a 59% higher voucher volume compared to 2021.

Its Glendower Group is a nonprofit arm that leads development of new housing projects and is actively engaged in major developments including the Union Square project near Union Station.



Source: Elm City Communities



1.3 Expand funding streams available to the City and partners for affordable housing including the Affordable Housing Fund.

New Haven's Affordable Housing Fund receives funds from developers that don't provide the amount of affordable housing required by the City's inclusionary zoning ordinance. The fund is used to support affordable housing initiatives across the City. The City should explore other new and innovative funding streams and expand the sources of funding for the Affordable Housing fund, to provide more resources for housing needs. This could include exploring tax policy strategies.

1.4 Support expansion and redevelopment of public housing projects.

Elm City Communities has been active in redeveloping and expanding its public housing portfolio. As New Haven's public housing authority, it is well positioned to support the development of additional affordable housing in the city, particularly housing that is affordable to households with extremely low incomes. Major projects in the development pipeline include the Union Square/ Church Street South redevelopment in front of Union Station, the St. Luke's development on Whalley Avenue, and the development on George between State and Orange.

1.5 Continue to integrate mixed income housing into City Development Agreements.

Residential development occurring under a Development Agreement with the City is required to provide mixed-income housing. The City should continue these requirements and explore expansion into other development, such as integrating housing into public facility projects. The housing component would have to be owned and managed by an outside entity.

1.6 Extend or replace existing subsidies and affordability restrictions.

Housing subsidies such as housing vouchers and affordability restrictions attached to housing regularly expire. As this occurs, the City loses units that are affordable. The City should actively connect individuals with resources for the continuation or extension of subsidies and should track all income restricted housing to proactively work with property owners to extend affordability restrictions.

1.7 Advocate for the development of more affordable housing across the region.

The need for affordable housing is not limited to New Haven and the City cannot be the only provider of affordable housing in the region. Through coordination with the South Central Regional Council of Governments which coordinates fifteen municipalities, the City should continue to serve as a leader in regional housing conversations and efforts to advance affordable housing production across the region.

2

Increase housing supply.

Increasing housing supply enhances equity by expanding access to affordable and diverse housing options, reducing displacement, and ensuring that people of all income levels can live near jobs, schools, and essential services. A greater housing supply helps prevent housing shortages that drive up costs, making homeownership and renting more attainable for historically marginalized communities.

At the same time, expanding housing contributes to resilience by fostering more stable, mixed income neighborhoods, reducing homelessness, and ensuring that local workers have a place to live in the City. Well-planned housing growth can also incorporate climate-resilient design, energy efficiency, and proximity to transit, strengthening the City’s ability to adapt to economic, social, and environmental challenges.

Strategies

2.1 Identify opportunities for and take measures to support infill residential development, expansions, and redevelopment.

The City possesses the most current and comprehensive data about property in New Haven through its Tax Assessors office and database. This data could be used to identify vacant, undeveloped, and underutilized properties that may be appropriate for housing development. Additionally, the city should continue to repurpose small, city-owned “sliver” lots across the city as well as larger sites, to support infill development, redevelopment, or expansion of residential properties through the Land Disposition process.

Through the use of a land bank as recommended by Strategy 4.1 of this chapter, the land bank can be used to acquire, hold, and strategically repurpose vacant or abandoned properties to facilitate their reuse for housing and streamline development processes.

This icon indicates that this strategy is directly related to another strategy. Click to jump to the related strategy.

2.2 Amend ordinances and policies to better support housing development.

The New Haven Zoning Ordinance shapes and controls development across the city and has not been amended since 1962, when car-centric, low-density development was the focus. A comprehensive zoning overhaul is needed, with an emphasis on lowering barriers to housing creation, for diverse housing types. The City should review and amend the New Haven Zoning Ordinance and other relevant policies to better support the development of workforce, mixed-income, multi-family, and high-density housing types. More specifically, the City should review and amend as needed its parking, lot size, density, setback, building coverage, building height, and floor-area-ratio standards to better support housing development. Many of these changes are recommended in the 2023 Elm City Communities Breaking Ground report and other advisory documents. Some policy changes may apply city-wide, while others will need to be developed through small area planning for specific neighborhoods. Rezoning efforts should be designed to avoid catalyzing gentrification in neighborhoods with high displacement risk.

2.3 Increase the number of small housing units in the City such as accessory dwelling units, single-room occupancy units, and small stand-alone dwelling units.

The New Haven Zoning Ordinance restricts development of small dwelling units. These include dwelling units that serve individual residents such as accessory dwelling units (ADUs), single-room occupancy units, and small stand-alone dwelling units (such as tiny houses). By example, the ADU regulations adopted in 2021 currently require that the owner of a property with an ADU live on the property. In December 2023 the City Plan Department proposed Phase II of the ADU Ordinance that would allow ADU’s outside of the existing building envelope, remove the owner occupancy restriction, and reduce the minimum lot size required. The City should continue to work with elected officials to adopt legislation that further reduces barriers to ADU creation. Amendments to the New Haven Zoning Ordinance as described under Strategy 2.2 above should be considered to support these housing types.

2.4 Support small-scale development.

Current market conditions are most favorable to large-scale development projects, which are most often led by developers with considerable financial resources and borrowing capacity. Small scale development with ten or fewer dwelling units is financially challenging and fewer developers are willing to take on this scale of development. Most of the City's housing built prior to 1945 was built by homebuilders and small developers that created only a few homes per year. Today, many properties in New Haven are suited to small infill and redevelopment projects. The City partners with a number of local non-profits in developing these lots but could expand to new small, locally-owned private and nonprofit partners, as well as expanding funding streams beyond federal funding for the City's Gap Financing Program to support this small-scale development. The City should also consider preapproved development plans where standardized plans go through a streamlined permitting process.

2.5 Continue to convert underutilized office buildings to residential use, with a focus on key areas downtown.

Due to changing technology and business culture, more people work from home and as a result businesses are leasing less space than five or ten years ago. The City has seen many conversion projects over the last ten years, including 900 Chapel Street (the former mall), along Trumbull Street, and in smaller buildings across the city. Repurposing excess office space to residential uses should be supported to provide more housing and ensure areas with underutilized office space remain active and vibrant. The City should identify zoning and other policy changes needed to streamline the process for the conversion of office buildings to residential use.

2.6 Support collaboration and partnerships between organizations that provide housing and neighborhood resources.

Continued partnerships and collaboration with community development organizations is an essential part of housing growth. Local non-profit developers including Beulah Land Development, Habitat for Humanity, NeighborWorks New Horizons dba Mutual Housing, ConnCorp Development, and Neighborhood Housing Services (NHS) play an important role in making housing available to the City's residents. Coordination and collaboration between City departments and outside organizations should be prioritized to better support the mission of all organizations in providing access to housing.

2.7 Increase affordable, accessible housing options for people with disabilities.

New Haven has a small number of homes that are accessible to people with disabilities and only a small share of those homes are affordable. According to the American Community Survey, 6% of residents in the City have a disability or physical limitation that makes it difficult for them to walk and this number does not reflect other types of disabilities that affect housing needs. The building code only requires a small number of units to be made accessible and only in larger developments. The City should encourage, incentivize, or require the development of more affordable units that are accessible, following universal design guidelines. The City should also explore creating a funding stream to retrofit units for accessibility. People with disabilities should be engaged in the development of policy changes related to accessible housing.

More than 90% of housing permits issued in New Haven over the past decade have been for units in buildings with five or more units.

3

Expand temporary and supportive housing and programs that eliminate and prevent homelessness.

Like many cities, New Haven has experienced a significant increase in homelessness in recent years. As of late 2024, the Greater New Haven Coordinated Access Network reported 633 verified unhoused individuals, more than doubling from 257 the previous year. This surge reflects broader statewide trends; Connecticut's homeless population rose by 13% between 2023 and 2024, marking the third consecutive year of increases.

Several factors contribute to this crisis, including escalating housing costs, limited affordable housing availability, and economic challenges intensified by inflation. The region's housing market has seen rising prices and a constrained supply of quality units, making it increasingly difficult for residents to secure affordable housing. Additionally, the number of people experiencing homelessness aged 55 and older across the state has risen, often due to fixed incomes unable to keep pace with rent increases.

Expanding temporary and supportive housing programs is critical to addressing the needs of people that are unhoused in New Haven. While this is a challenging issue, the City in coordination with private organizations, and other municipalities in the region, is best positioned to lead efforts to address it.

Strategies

3.1 Engage with housing and service providers to identify gaps and produce quality permanent supportive housing.

New Haven's Office of Housing and Homelessness Services conducts street outreach, emergency shelter services, and homelessness prevention assistance. The City's shelters are operated by multiple private organizations. Coordination between the Office of Housing and Homelessness Services, shelter providers, and other organizations providing services to the unhoused is crucial to ensuring that adequate services are provided to that community.

3.2 Partner with the Public Housing Authority to explore expansion of the housing choice voucher program to fully meet need.

Elm City Communities, the City's housing authority, is the largest provider of housing for those with extremely low or no income and it administers the City's housing choice voucher program, which provides housing subsidies to individuals and families. These housing vouchers do not always sufficiently meet housing cost needs, exposing those that cannot cover their housing costs to the risk of homelessness. Supplementing the federal voucher with a local match could prevent individuals and families from losing their housing.

Case Study

The Way Home, Houston, Texas

The Way Home is the collective effort to prevent and end homelessness in the Houston region through permanent housing and supportive services. It is made up of more than 100 partners including homeless service agencies, local governments, public housing authorities, the local Veterans Affairs office, and other nonprofits and community stakeholders and spans multiple counties. The partners of The Way Home work together to make homelessness rare, brief, and non-recurring in the region.

Since its launch in 2012, The Way Home has housed over 28,000 individuals, leading to a 63% reduction in homelessness in the Houston area. It uses a Housing First model, prioritizing getting people into permanent housing without preconditions (such as sobriety or employment) and a Coordinated Access System to match individuals with the appropriate housing and services based on need. Funding is provided through local governments, HUD, and private donors.



Source: The Way Home

Spotlight

Continuum of Care at the Former Days Inn Hotel

In 2023, the City of New Haven purchased the Days Inn Hotel on Foxon Boulevard for \$6.9 million to provide emergency housing. The renovated facility, which opened in December 2023, offers 24-hour shelter and can accommodate 110 individuals in non-congregate housing with private rooms, allowing couples and families and their pets to stay together.

To manage operations, the City contracted Continuum of Care, a nonprofit organization specializing in housing and support services. On-site staff conduct intake interviews with each resident, connect them to medical, behavioral health and employment services and provide case management. The shelter is staffed daily by case managers and residential aids, a full-time therapist, a housing coordinator, and general support staff, ensuring comprehensive care and assistance for residents.



Source: New Haven Arts

3.3 Work with community-based organizations to expand tenant advocacy support.

In order to prevent homelessness it is important to ensure that tenants aren't forced to leave their housing because of lack of adequate maintenance or services or due to landlord-tenant disputes. Community based organizations can actively support these efforts by providing advocacy on behalf of tenants.

3.4 Expand coordination among City departments and community-based organizations to improve eviction prevention strategies.

Preventing evictions is an important strategy in reducing homelessness. While there are laws, policies, and programs in place to protect tenants and reduce the risk of eviction, more work should be done to reduce evictions across the City. In support of this the City should more actively promote awareness of state and local eviction prevention funds and better connect tenants with those resources. It should also monitor state legislation and advocate for legislation that would be beneficial to the City.

3.5 Support and encourage regional coordination of services for the unhoused.

Homelessness and the risk of homelessness is an issue across the region that requires a regional approach to address. While most of the resources for the unhoused are in New Haven, municipalities across the region should support and coordinate with the providers of services. The City should continue to advocate for a regional approach to this issue.

Greater New Haven's homeless population more than doubled between 2023 and 2024 and statewide rates have risen three years in a row.

“The city should provide more shelter services and stop encampment sweeps”

- Youth voice

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4

Transform empty and run-down properties into affordable housing and other community resources.

Converting vacant and run-down (blighted) properties into productive housing assets revitalizes neighborhoods, stabilizes property values, and expands housing opportunities throughout New Haven. By strengthening partnerships with housing developers and community organizations, implementing proactive enforcement measures, and creating efficient mechanisms for the redevelopment of neglected properties, the City can effectively reduce blight and encourage investment. This targeted approach improves neighborhood quality of life, addresses housing shortages, and supports equitable community growth.

Strategies

4.1 Develop expedited processes to transfer neglected properties to responsible owners/developers through the Land Bank.

The City can use the land bank to expedite the transfer of neglected and vacant properties to developers by streamlining the acquisition, management, and disposition process. To accelerate the process, the City can pre-identify priority properties, fast-track legal and zoning approvals, and bundle properties for sale in targeted redevelopment areas. By offering discounted pricing, reduced red tape, and pre-approved redevelopment guidelines, New Haven can attract responsible developers committed to repurposing vacant or neglected properties. See also Strategy 2.1 of this chapter.

4.2 Implement aggressive enforcement measures for chronically vacant properties.

By strengthening enforcement mechanisms, establishing expedited processes for transferring neglected properties to responsible owners or developers, and clearly defining the conditions that warrant direct municipal intervention, the City can reduce blight, encourage redevelopment, and protect neighborhood integrity. Enhanced responsiveness not only mitigates potential safety and health hazards but also facilitates the timely conversion of vacant properties into productive housing assets, improving overall community quality and stability.

4.3 Strengthen partnerships with housing developers and community organizations for property rehabilitation.

Building effective partnerships with local housing organizations, developers, and community stakeholders will position the City to strategically identify, rehabilitate, and reuse vacant or abandoned properties for residential purposes. These collaborative efforts facilitate targeted investment, reduce blight, and expand housing availability, particularly for income-restricted or affordable housing developments. By proactively addressing vacancy issues through coordinated partnerships and rehabilitation initiatives, the City can enhance neighborhood capacity, improve community quality of life, and foster sustainable residential growth.

Case Study

Vacants to Value, Baltimore, MD

Baltimore has implemented aggressive measures to combat urban blight through its Vacants to Value initiative, launched in 2010. This program incentivizes the purchase and rehabilitation of abandoned properties by offering financial assistance and streamlined processes to buyers committed to restoring these homes. The initiative has led to the rehabilitation or demolition of thousands of vacant properties, transforming blighted areas into revitalized neighborhoods.



Source: David Kidd

5

Support place-based programs, policies, and improvements that align with the unique assets and goals of each neighborhood and residents' quality of life.

New Haven's neighborhoods are central to the City being a great place to live. However, the impacts of redlining, urban renewal, and decades of disinvestment remain very evident in many areas, particularly neighborhoods with higher concentrations of lower income as well as Black and Brown residents. Equitable investment in the City's neighborhoods is essential for ensuring that New Haven's growth enhances quality of life, preserves community assets, and aligns with neighborhood needs. The City can support strong neighborhoods by ensuring that programs, policies, and improvements encourage context-sensitive development, enhance walkability, and improve infrastructure. Conducting targeted neighborhood planning and prioritizing inclusive community engagement will further ensure that new development is equitable, sustainable, and reflective of the City's diverse communities. *See also Goal 4 of Economic Opportunity for All.*

Strategies

5.1 Develop a community engagement toolkit that engages residents in decision making with emphasis on communities that have often been historically excluded.

Establishing a community engagement toolkit equips City departments, decision-makers, and local partners with practical resources and methods to broaden public participation, ensuring the inclusion of historically marginalized and underrepresented residents. The toolkit should include inclusive engagement practices, tailored communication strategies, and opportunities for continuous and transparent feedback to allow the process to adapt and respond to community input and needs. By institutionalizing inclusive engagement practices, the City can foster greater trust, accountability, and responsiveness in its decision-making processes, ultimately resulting in policies and projects that better reflect community needs and priorities.

5.2 Conduct neighborhood level planning studies in close collaboration with residents and in unstudied parts of the City.

While this Plan provides recommendations that are relevant to all of New Haven's neighborhoods, it does not provide many neighborhood-specific recommendations and does not address issues that are unique to neighborhoods outside of Downtown. Conducting neighborhood-level planning and developing adequately resourced neighborhood plans would allow for greater engagement of specific neighborhoods in developing a vision for their neighborhood and developing a plan that addresses local needs. Existing plans such as the Hill to Downtown Community Plan, Long Wharf Responsible Growth Plan, Wooster Square Planning Study, Mill River District Planning Study, and the Resilient Fair Haven Plan provide examples of how neighborhood planning can support the improvement of conditions specific to neighborhoods in the City. In support of the work, the City should develop neighborhood planning templates that provide guidance on how to conduct a plan, the information that should be included in the plan, and resources for that information. *See also Strategy 4.2 of Economic Opportunity for All.*

5.3 Continue to support neighborhood revitalization around schools and public housing.

New Haven Public Schools has over forty schools, many of those located in neighborhoods across the City. Each school is a vibrant area of activity that often functions as a community center. Focusing neighborhood revitalization around the City's schools would provide benefit to the entire community by making those areas safer, more comfortable, and more attractive. Similarly, public housing is often a neighborhood within a neighborhood and improvements to neighborhoods in proximity of public housing, such as those provided through the HUD Choice Neighborhoods program, can be beneficial to the neighborhood as a whole. Elm City Communities is taking this approach with the Union Square project which, in addition to redeveloping the former Church Street South site, will invest in the Hill South area with a focus on Trowbridge Square.

5.4 Support mixed-use development and ensure that such development is sensitive to the neighborhood.

New Haven needs more housing and its neighborhoods need services such as local markets, laundromats, and personal service establishments that provide convenience and reduce the need to travel far for those services. Housing and services can be delivered in the form of mixed-use development, but that development needs to be appropriate to its location. Clearly defining and distinguishing neighborhood-focused mixed-use within the New Haven Zoning Ordinance or through a design guide is important to ensuring that development is compatible with the surrounding neighborhood.

5.5 Strengthen anti-bligh and zoning enforcement.

Livable City Initiative, the Office of Building Inspection and Enforcement, the Health Department and City Plan enforce the city's anti-bligh regulations, the building code, New Haven Zoning Ordinance and other city ordinances. These regulations were designed to prevent conditions that impact quality of life for neighbors and neighborhoods. The City should streamline enforcement, regulatory texts, and processes to eliminate ambiguities, build cross-departmental collaboration to improve response times when violations occur, improve documentation of compliance checks, and create efficient processes for issuing fines where appropriate. This will allow the city to address and prevent zoning violations such as light trespass, noise, non-compliant signage, illegal dumping, unpermitted construction and other activities that create unsafe or challenging conditions in neighborhoods.

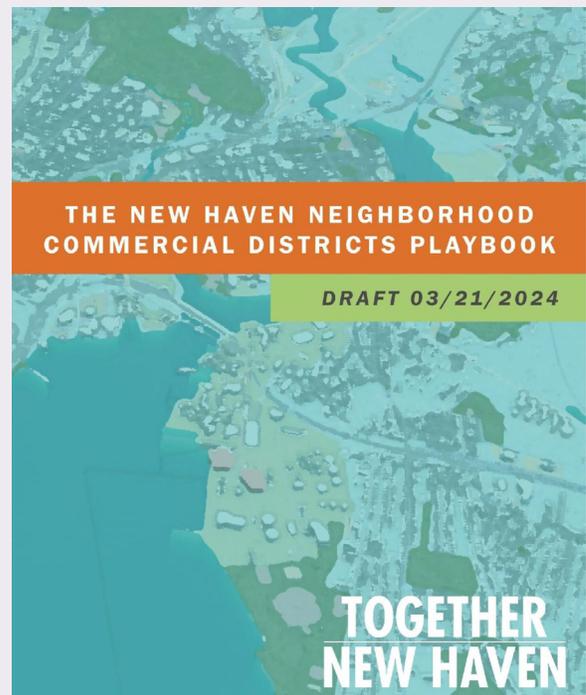
Spotlight

The Neighborhood Commercial District (NCD) Initiative

Launched in 2024, New Haven's Neighborhood Commercial District (NCD) Initiative is a citywide framework to revitalize 17 neighborhood-scale commercial corridors, such as Kimberly Square, Congress Avenue, and Dixwell Plaza, that serve as vital centers of commerce, community, and daily life. These districts, often in predominantly residential areas, provide essential goods, services, and jobs—especially for the 36% of residents without personal vehicles.

The Initiative offers tailored support for each district, recognizing their differences in infrastructure, tenants, and community capacity. It fosters collaboration between residents, businesses, community groups, and City departments to enhance economic vitality and quality of place.

A key tool is the NCD Playbook, a guide for assessing district needs, organizing stakeholders, and implementing improvements based on local culture and assets. Early signs of progress include a drop in citywide storefront vacancies—from 168 in 2023 to 156 in 2024—but persistent disparities, such as Dixwell's 35% vacancy rate, highlight the continued need for targeted, place-based investment.



6

Prevent displacement by ensuring residents can continue to live in their neighborhood of choice as housing costs rise.

As cities such as New Haven experience economic growth and housing development, the rising cost of living can lead to home displacement, particularly among low-income and historically marginalized communities. While investment in housing, infrastructure, and services is beneficial to the community as a whole, these changes often come with unintended consequences, including the loss of affordable housing and the displacement of long-term residents. Gentrification is a primary concern among many New Haven residents. Addressing this challenge is a priority for ensuring that New Haven's residents, many of whom grew up in the City, are not displaced from their homes.

Strategies

6.1 Pursue necessary zoning amendments to promote aging in place.

Retired seniors with low or fixed incomes would benefit from greater flexibility in the use of their homes through the renting of rooms or through the development of an accessory dwelling unit to subsidize their housing costs and help them to stay in their home.

6.2 Expand and promote property tax relief for residents that are struggling to stay in their homes or neighborhoods.

The State of Connecticut provides a Homeowners' Elderly/Disabled Tax Relief Program for elderly or disabled homeowners whose annual incomes do not exceed certain limits. Many eligible residents are not aware of and do not participate in the program. Expansion of this program through a local match or based upon other qualifying criteria could help homeowners to remain in their homes. The City should also continue to actively promote the program as it does through its Department of Elderly Services.

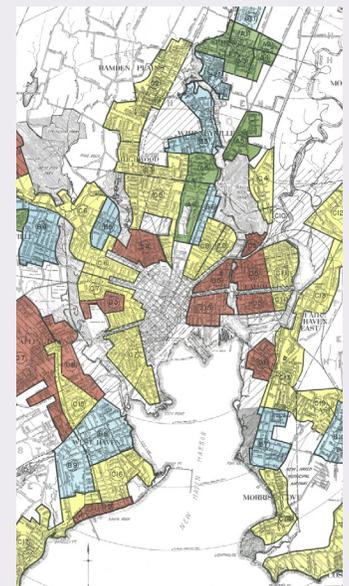
6.3 Develop a method for determining how land use policies impact displacement and implement policies or amend ordinances and regulations to prevent or reduce displacement.

The City needs to fully understand the potential impacts of policy decisions, adopted ordinances, and amended zoning have on the ability of residents to continue to afford to live in their homes or neighborhoods. By being able to evaluate proposed changes, the City can make informed decisions that will prevent or reduce displacement. By example, conducting a displacement impact study including developing a displacement risk map and model before major zoning reform would help to ensure that such reform is in the best interest of the entire community. Examples can be found in cities such as Boston, MA and Louisville, KY which have implemented anti-displacement plans and strategies.

Acknowledging the Harms

New Haven's housing landscape has been shaped by national policy and local decisions that expanded opportunity for some while excluding others. The New Deal made homeownership a national standard, but redlining denied investment to urban neighborhoods, locking in cycles of disinvestment that persist today. Urban renewal in the 1960s and '70s introduced highways and zoning laws that displaced dense communities and redirected growth toward single-family homes. In New Haven, projects like the Oak Street Connector and I-91 reshaped the City in the 1960s and '70s, displacing poorer communities further from the downtown.

Experiments like Oriental Gardens, a project in the late 1960's which envisioned high density stacked modular homes, aimed to modernize public housing but were ultimately abandoned. Meanwhile, decades of deferred maintenance left much of the City's urban housing stock in decline, while resources flowed to suburban development. Today, demand for city living is rising. Rents are climbing, vacancies are down, and long-time residents are being priced out of neighborhoods once neglected. With major developments planned for areas like Dixwell and the Hill, the question remains: How do we ensure that all of New Haven's residents have "Great Places to Live"?



Redlining Map of New Haven

6.4 Support the conversion of rental units to co-op or condominium ownership arrangements.

New Haven's homeownership rate is 28.4%, which is significantly lower than Bridgeport's and Stamford's. Because homeowners are less vulnerable to displacement than renters, increasing home ownership or co-operative ownership can play an important role in reducing potential displacement. The City should evaluate challenges and best practices for cooperative housing models and for conversion of rental housing to condominium housing through a rent to own mode.

6.5 Allow single-room occupancy housing in areas where there is access to transit and support services.

Single-room occupancy (SRO) living arrangements whether as a rented room in a house or in a boarding house environment are one of the most affordable models of housing. Location of this type of housing in proximity of transit and other services provides higher benefit to residents. The City should improve and strengthen its licensing program for SROs.

6.6 Monitor the impact of and restrict as needed short-term rentals and student housing projects.

Short-term rentals and student housing projects can compete with or displace housing units otherwise available to the City's residents. The City should closely monitor short-term rentals and the development of student housing to ensure that they do not lead to displacement, and implement new regulations as needed to mitigate impacts.

6.7 Continue to partner with anchor institutions (such as Yale and Southern Connecticut State University) to address student housing needs and ensure that the City's residents are not displaced due to student housing needs.

The total enrollment of universities in New Haven is over 24,000 students, which is about 18% of the City's population. Local universities do not provide enough housing units to fully meeting student housing demand and so students compete with other New Haven residents for housing. Better coordination through partnerships between the City and local universities is needed to ensure that student housing demand does not result in displacement of the City's residents.

6.8 Explore tools such as a Right of First Refusal policy to preserve affordability.

A Right of First Refusal policy gives a City, tenant, or a designated entity (such as a housing authority or nonprofit) the first opportunity to purchase a property before it is sold to another party. This policy is often used to preserve affordable housing, prevent displacement, and maintain community control over land and development. New Haven could partner with existing local organizations or the newly created Land Bank to strategically acquire properties to ensure that the residents of those properties are not displaced.



Source: Yale University

Spotlight

Yale Homebuyer Program

Yale established the Yale Homebuyer Program in 1994. It offers any regular Yale employee - from faculty to maintenance to clerical to management - \$25,000 (\$5,000 at closing and \$2,000 annually for ten years) to purchase a home in an eligible New Haven neighborhood. The Program assisted more than 1,300 employees in the purchase of a home in the City, 80% in recent years are first-time homebuyers. To date, Yale has contributed over \$35 million to the program.

7

Improve access to housing resources and support for tenants and current and prospective home-owners.

Improving access to housing resources and information ensures that all residents, particularly those facing housing insecurity, can effectively utilize available services and support. Enhancing communication through accessible and inclusive formats, such as video tutorials, streamlined online resources, and regular newsletters, increases transparency, simplifies complex processes, and empowers residents to navigate housing systems confidently. By prioritizing clear, coordinated information-sharing strategies, New Haven can better support community members, reduce barriers to accessing assistance, and foster a more informed and resilient community.

Strategies

7.1 Continue to support collaboration and partnerships between agencies and organizations that provide housing and neighborhood resources.

There are multiple departments, agencies, and organizations across New Haven that provide housing supportive services, but those services would benefit from stronger and more frequent coordination and collaboration. The City should take a leadership role in regularly convening representatives from all groups and acting as a hub for connecting people in need with available resources whether City or private.

7.2 Use the City's website as a centralized housing resource hub.

Building on the success of the Below Market Rate interactive housing unit registry, the City should host a page or "hub" on its website that is easily accessible from the home page and other relevant department pages that provides information on affordable housing programs, rental assistance, emergency shelter options, and homeownership support. This would help reduce confusion and make it easier for individuals and families to access the help they need without navigating multiple agencies independently. While much of this information is currently available, it is scattered across multiple departmental pages. This hub should provide direct links to important forms such as the Fair Rent Commission complaint form and outside sites that provide relevant housing supportive information.

7.3 Expand participation in City-sponsored homeownership and home rehabilitation programs.

Through its Housing Administration and Development department, the City of New Haven provides homebuyer assistance and homeowner assistance to provide homeowners with helpful information for maintaining their homes and connect them with financial support that may be needed for housing repairs. The City should increase awareness of these programs through an advanced marketing campaign and pursue funding to expand them.

Case Study

Providence Housing Authority Orientation Videos

The City of Providence, RI has implemented an innovative approach to improve communication and understanding for Public Housing residents by creating bilingual orientation videos in both English and Spanish. The videos guide residents through the entire public housing process, from moving in to terminating the lease. The goal of this initiative is to provide residents with clear, step-by-step instructions on critical topics such as security deposits, pre-inspections, post-inspections, damages beyond normal wear and tear, and lease terms.

The program addresses key challenges faced by residents, especially those with limited English proficiency or unfamiliarity with housing procedures. By offering information on who is allowed to live in the unit, how to add new people to the lease, reporting changes in income, and the code of conduct, the videos ensure that residents understand their responsibilities.



Source: Providence Housing Authority

Spotlight

City of New Haven Housing Supportive Programs

The City of New Haven has multiple departments, divisions, offices, and commissions that provide housing resources and support. These include the Housing Administration and Development Department (HAD), Livable City Initiative (LCI), Housing and Homelessness Services, and the Fair Rent Commission.

HADD oversees the planning, construction, and management of residential areas and urban infrastructure to meet the needs of a growing population. It is engaged in affordable housing development, community infrastructure and facilities investments, processing of fair housing complaints, assistance programs to homeowners, and maintenance of an affordable rental unit inventory and map.

LCI serves as the City's primary housing enforcement agency. It works to ensure safe, healthy housing through the enforcement of municipal housing standards and regulations. Its mission is focused on three core areas: housing code enforcement, anti-bligh initiatives, and residential landlord licensing.

Housing and Homelessness Services support services for the City's homeless individuals and families. It coordinates with the City's emergency shelter providers and administers grant funds for street outreach, emergency shelter services, homelessness prevention and rapid re-housing assistance.

The **Fair Rent Commission** was established to control and eliminate excessive rental charges on housing within the City. Its primary function is to determine whether or not the rent for the housing accommodation is so excessive as to be harsh and unconscionable.

7.4 Develop video tutorials that provide instruction on housing programs, applications, and procedures.

Video tutorials are a powerful tool in helping people understand complex information and procedures. Videos can provide clear, step-by-step instructions, reducing confusion and mistakes that could lead to application delays or rejections. They are particularly beneficial for individuals with language barriers, literacy challenges, or disabilities, as visual and audio explanations can make complex forms easier to understand. By offering tutorials online, cities can enhance convenience and accessibility, allowing residents to complete forms at their own pace without the need for in-person assistance. This can reduce the burden on City staff, minimizing the number of calls, emails, or office visits related to application errors. Additionally, video tutorials help promote transparency and trust, ensuring that residents understand the process and their eligibility for various programs.

7.5 Expand the reach of the housing newsletter to widely share housing-related information.

In 2024, the Housing Administration and Development Division began distributing a regular housing newsletter. This is a vital tool to inform and engage residents on housing-related matters and available resources, fostering transparency and community involvement. The existing newsletter should be expanded to reach more residents, made available in multiple languages, and should consolidate housing resources across City departments.

7.6 Encourage or prioritize projects that combine affordable housing with long-term care services, such as a Program for All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) or state-assisted living programs to enable older residents to age in place while receiving coordinated care and services.

Elderly residents, particularly those with disabilities or chronic health issues are among the City's most vulnerable residents and require housing and personal care support that extends beyond the needs of most other residents in the City. Co-locating support services such as PACE or state-assisted living programs with affordable housing projects would improve access to those resources for elderly residents.

7.7 Work with local housing and service providers to expand the reach of homeowner emergency assistance.

Strengthening collaboration with local housing and service providers will allow New Haven to proactively address housing instability and support vulnerable populations, such as seniors, veterans, and residents with disabilities. Targeted interventions including emergency homeowner assistance funds, additional property tax relief programs, and supportive service partnerships provide critical support during financial hardships and reduce the risk of displacement. Through coordinated policy measures and dedicated financial resources, the City can ensure ongoing housing affordability, security, and stability for the most vulnerable residents.

8

Improve the quality of existing housing.

Maintaining and enhancing the quality of New Haven's existing housing stock is essential to providing safe, healthy, and affordable homes. Initiatives that prioritize accessibility, energy efficiency, and home rehabilitation support, allow the City to address the diverse housing needs of residents, particularly those living in older or income-restricted housing. Proactive strategies such as updating universal design standards, expanding energy efficiency programs, and raising awareness of available home maintenance or rehabilitation resources will directly contribute to improved housing conditions and preservation of units. Housing code enforcement and holding landlords accountable to maintaining their properties are major focuses for the City and should continue to be over the next ten years. Improving housing quality is especially critical for aging housing stock and housing in flood-prone areas.

Strategies

8.1 Expand the scope of existing energy efficiency programs and increase participation in those programs.

Expanding existing energy efficiency programs such as the Home Energy Solutions Program administered through EnergizeCT and securing funding for new initiatives will help improve the quality, sustainability, and affordability of New Haven's housing stock. By promoting energy-saving upgrades, retrofits, weatherization, and renewable energy installations, these efforts reduce utility costs, enhance resident comfort, and advance the City's environmental goals. Actively pursuing funding opportunities through state, federal, and private sources will enable broader implementation, ensuring that residents, particularly those in older or income-restricted housing benefit from healthier, more resilient homes.

Case Study

The Philadelphia Restore, Repair, Renew Program

The Restore, Repair, Renew Program is operated by the Philadelphia Housing Development Corporation and provides low-interest loans to help eligible homeowners make critical home repairs, ensuring safety, habitability, and energy efficiency. The program is designed to assist homeowners who might otherwise struggle to afford necessary repairs that could lead to unsafe living conditions or potential displacement. The program provides loans of up to \$50,000 at a fixed low-interest rate for eligible repairs and upgrades and has income-based eligibility with flexible repayment terms.



Source: City of Philadelphia

8.2 Work toward 100% participation in the Residential Rental License Program.

The Residential Rental License Program is intended to identify and address deficiencies in rental units, to maintain the character and stability of residential areas, provide information about housing code standards related to health and safety, prevent overcrowding, and protect property values. Property owners subject to the program are required to register, pay a fee, and are subject to periodic inspections. The effectiveness of this program depends on the registration of all property owners subject to its requirements. In support of this, the City should create a streamlined verification system to maintain an accurate rental property database.

8.3 Develop proactive outreach strategies to share information about housing regulations and requirements and engage non-compliant property owners.

Improved communications and outreach is needed to educate and inform property owners about the City's housing code, zoning ordinances, blight, and residential licensing regulations and requirements. A proactive approach will reduce the need for enforcement but when enforcement is required, the City should develop outreach strategies for engaging property owners to move towards compliance.

8.4 Improve and expand the use of technology and data in enforcing housing code, blight, building code, zoning violations, and Residential Rental License regulations.

New Haven's Livable City Initiative is responsible for enforcement of the City's housing code and public space requirements, educating and increasing awareness on solutions for neighborhood concerns, and administration of a Residential Rental License Program. Additionally, the Office of Building Inspection and Enforcement ensures compliance with building code and zoning regulations. The improved use of technology could streamline tracking and enforcement and could allow for better collaboration across offices and departments.

8.5 Improve the transparency of City enforcement of housing code, blight, building code, zoning, and residential rental licensing programs.

Residents that file complaints regarding a property or issue in their neighborhood or about a property in which they live have limited access to information about how that complaint is being processed and the status of any enforcement actions. This may result in frustration and lack of trust in the system, even when the City is actively working towards resolving the issue. Improving transparency through more effective information sharing and tracking is important to building trust with the community.



*Workshop in support of the license program.
Source: New Haven Independent*

Spotlight

New Haven's Residential Rental License Program

The program was first created in 2006. The program requires any non-owner occupied rental property or owner occupied properties with three or more rental units to be registered with the City and subject to inspection for the issuance of a license to rent. Properties that do not register or are not in compliance due to a failed inspection are subject to fines. The greatest challenge in administering and enforcing the program has been getting property owners to register or apply for the required exemption. The debut of a new online registration system is intended to ease registrations.

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5. Economic Opportunity for All



Source: New Haven Night Market

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Economic Opportunity for All

The Vision

Build a thriving, inclusive economy in New Haven that empowers all residents to achieve social mobility, regardless of educational background, by investing in public schools, lifelong learning, robust training programs, and rewarding career pathways, particularly for young people. Promote economic growth in all neighborhoods while preserving environmental and cultural resources, ensuring a resilient and sustainable future for generations to come.

Goals

- 1 Connect New Haven's workers to good jobs and economic opportunities in the City.
- 2 Strengthen New Haven's position as a regional employment center by building on economic strengths across multiple sectors.
- 3 Promote inclusive commercial development & economic activity in strategic locations that align with neighborhood goals.
- 4 Make neighborhood commercial centers stronger and more vibrant.
- 5 Implement and encourage policies that require employers to hire local workers and those that face systemic injustice in the job market.
- 6 Expand entrepreneurship and small-business opportunities.
- 7 Expand and improve transportation and public utility infrastructure.
- 8 Encourage sustainable economic development and support the development of a green economy.

1

Connect New Haven's workers to good jobs and economic opportunities in the City.

Ensuring that New Haven's workforce has access to local employment opportunities strengthens the City's economy, supports residents' financial stability, and fosters inclusive economic growth. By enhancing collaboration among workforce development organizations, expanding job training and placement programs, and aligning skills development with employer needs, the City can bridge gaps between workers and available jobs. A coordinated approach to workforce development will create stronger pathways to employment, helping residents build sustainable careers while supporting local businesses with a well-prepared labor force.

59% of New Haven's workers travel outside of the City for work.

Strategies

- 1.1 Support and expand workforce development and job placement programs and continue to coordinate with those programs to develop new training pathways.

Aligning job training and placement programs with the evolving needs of the City's economy ensures that residents have the skills necessary for local employment. By strengthening coordination among workforce training providers, educational institutions, and employers, the City can identify emerging job opportunities and develop new career pathways that meet industry demands. For example, the City should support Workforce Alliance's roundtable meetings, which help to coordinate organizations that provide job training and placement services.

Acknowledging the Harms

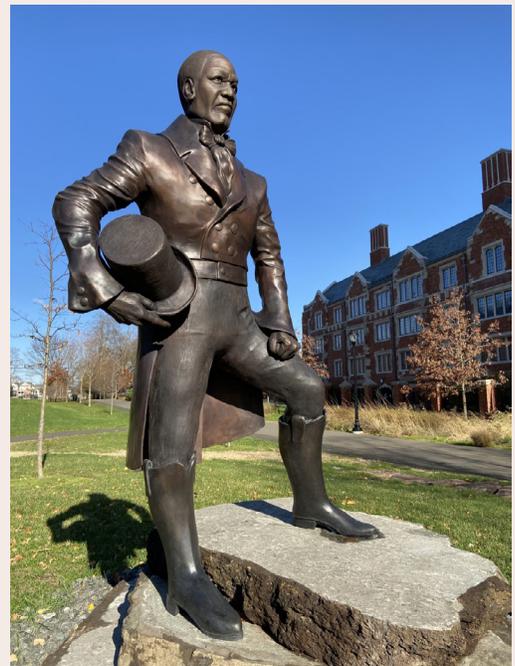
In the early 1800s, William Lanson, a Black engineer and entrepreneur, helped build New Haven's wharf, canal, and economy. He owned land, ran businesses, and tried to establish a college for Black students. His growing success was seen as a threat. The school was blocked, his neighborhood was displaced, and Lanson died poor, his legacy mostly forgotten.

That story set the tone for generations of economic exclusion. Through redlining, urban renewal, and unequal lending, Black and Brown residents were denied the same access to wealth, land, and opportunity as their white neighbors. These decisions didn't just shape housing, they shaped education and economic mobility.

In many of New Haven's public high schools, fewer than one in four graduates are considered "college ready", compared to over 80% in nearby suburban districts. And while graduation rates have improved over time, students from low-income families, English learners, and those with disabilities still graduate at significantly lower rates—and are less likely to enroll in college or complete a degree.¹

Education remains a gatekeeper for economic opportunity—but it reflects deeper systemic inequalities. Addressing the City's achievement gap is not just about schools—it's about repairing the policies and conditions that limit access to jobs, wealth, and stability.

¹ Source: *BEST OF 2023: How CT's college-readiness system leaves students of color behind*



Source: City of Elms

1.2 Continue to partner with local educational institutions and organizations to promote career pathways, paid internships, and direct job placement for local students.

Strengthening partnerships between local educational institutions and employers helps create clear career pathways and direct job placement opportunities for New Haven's youth. By aligning education with workforce needs, the City can improve graduate retention, support students pursuing associate and technical degrees, and expand access to in-demand job sectors such as manufacturing and the trades. Investing in internships, job-matching initiatives, and employer partnerships ensures that young residents are equipped with the skills, experience, and connections needed for long-term career success.

1.3 Continue to grow the Bioscience and Tech Career Ladder Programs as part of the City's partnership with CT State Community College Gateway (GCC) and Southern Connecticut State University (SCSU).

Both GCC and SCSU offer a range of educational programs in technical fields such as bioscience, computer science, mechanical engineering, and materials science. GCC's programs provide associate's level degrees while SCSU provides bachelor's and master's degrees. It's important that the programs offered through those universities prepare students for the job opportunities available within New Haven in the fields of bioscience, computer science, mechanical engineering, materials science, and similar technical fields.

1.4 Promote vocational training opportunities for local youth in New Haven's most competitive and emerging industry sectors.

Expanding skills-based job training programs ensures that New Haven's workforce remains competitive and prepared for emerging industry needs. By collaborating with local educational institutions and organizations like New Haven Works, the City can develop training initiatives that align with technological advancements, AI-driven industries, bioscience, and other high-growth sectors. In 2022, guided by input from the Civic Space New Haven engagement process, the City allocated American Rescue Plan funds to launch a comprehensive Vo-Tech Initiative with the goal of creating vocational and technical school together with a training and entrepreneurial pipeline that guides New Haven residents through the process of attaining living wage careers in growing industries. This work is ongoing and should continue to be a priority for the City.

"I would like to have the opportunity for job training programs that have an ESL (English as second language) component."

- Youth voice

2

Strengthen New Haven's position as a regional employment center by building on economic strengths across multiple sectors.

A dynamic and inclusive business environment is essential to sustaining economic growth and creating opportunities for all. By leveraging New Haven's strengths in education, healthcare, medical research, bioscience, quantum computing, arts and culture, climate science and food, the City can drive innovation while building an inclusive economy. Expanding retail strategies, strengthening small business support, and fostering multilingual and community-based engagement will create a resilient commercial landscape that supports local entrepreneurs, attracts investment, and enhances neighborhood economic activity.

Strategies

2.1 Continue engagement in regional economic collaboration and coordination.

As a member of the South Central Regional Council of Governments (SCRCOG) New Haven collaborates with representatives of the other 14 municipalities that belong to the region. Continued engagement and coordination through SCRCOG and other regional forums is important for the strengthening of the region's economy. The City should also remain actively engaged as a member of the South Central CT Regional Economic Development Corporation, also known as REX Development, which serves as the region's federally designated Economic Development District and maintains the region's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS).

2.2 Continue to work closely with anchor institutions to understand their short- and long-term plans to ensure those plans are consistent with this Plan and other planning efforts.

The strategic plans of major institutions such as Yale, Yale New Haven Health, Southern Connecticut State University, University of New Haven, and CT State Community College Gateway should align with the City's plans, goals and policies.

2.3 Collaborate with Yale University to support and expand emerging science and technology initiatives including Quantum-CT, Wu-TSAI, Yale Ventures, Climate Haven and C-BIT.

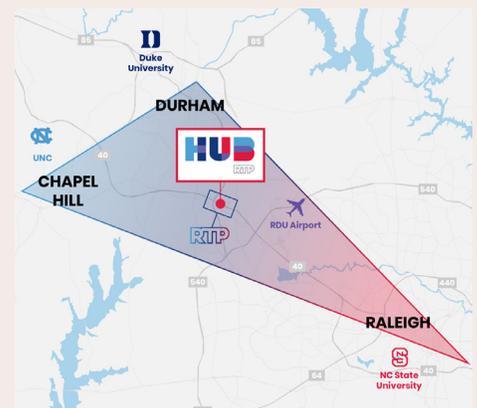
These initiatives position New Haven as a national leader in cutting-edge fields like quantum computing, neuroscience, climate technology, and biomedical innovation. By leveraging Yale's research expertise, resources, and entrepreneurial ecosystem, the City can attract startups, create high-paying jobs, and foster a thriving innovation district. Collaboration enhances workforce training opportunities, strengthens the local economy, and ensures that scientific advancements translate into real-world applications that benefit both New Haven residents and the broader region.

Case Study

Research Triangle of North Carolina

The Research Triangle area of North Carolina, encompassing Raleigh, Durham, and Chapel Hill, has implemented a range of economic development tools to foster growth in bioscience, research, and high-technology industries. A cornerstone of this effort is Research Triangle Park (RTP), established in 1959 as one of the largest and most prominent research parks in the world. The Research Triangle benefits from the presence of three top-tier universities, Duke University, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and North Carolina State University, which supply a steady stream of talent, cutting-edge research, and commercialization opportunities.

Another key initiative is the North Carolina Biotechnology Center (NCBiotech), founded in 1984 as a state-funded nonprofit organization dedicated to transforming North Carolina into a global life sciences leader. NCBiotech supports advancement of biotechnology research, commercialization, education, and business development. NCBiotech also provides the Landing Pad, a program and facility that provides office space and resources for companies looking to establish in the Triangle.



Source: Medium

Spotlight

Science Park New Haven

The Science Park Development Corporation is a not-for-profit corporation established by Yale, the City of New Haven, Olin Corporation and the State of Connecticut to develop the former Winchester Firearms factory campus. Its mission is to complete the development/redevelopment of Science Park and its surroundings for the purpose of increasing employment in the Dixwell and Newhallville neighborhoods, increasing the City's tax base, attracting research and technological enterprises to the City, and to increase the variety of housing in the Science Park area.

The S*Park Innovation Hub at Science Park offers small office, labs and co-working space (office or labs) to startups, tech companies, and biotech companies for short-term or long-term leases. Additionally, Science Park is home to the Literacy Coalition of Greater New Haven, the Connecticut Center for Arts and Technology, and Winchester Lofts, an apartment community comprised of 158 loft-style apartments in several renovated historic buildings.



One of many buildings at Science Park
Source: New Haven Independent

This icon indicates that this strategy is directly related to another strategy. Click to jump to the related strategy.

2.4 Track and support the development of bioscience space including key sites such as Innovation Cluster, Downtown, Science Park and the medical district.

It's important that the City understands how space is being used in buildings, complexes, and developments in growth areas such as Science Park and the medical district to ensure that City policies and zoning ordinances are supportive of land uses and development that are responsive to market conditions and the demand for space driven by the science and medical industries.

2.5 Support the growth of an innovation cluster for quantum technologies and bioscience in proximity to Downtown.

Downtown New Haven is expanding with Downtown Crossing now providing a true connection between the Hill neighborhood, the Medical District, Union Station, and Downtown as well as unlocking new sites for development. These areas should be targeted for the development of new innovation districts and complexes for industries such as quantum computing and bioscience.

2.6 Support neighborhood economic development initiatives that connect to the emerging innovation economy.

In addition to Downtown, New Haven's neighborhood commercial and industrial centers provide opportunities for growth of small businesses that support the supply chain or provide services to emerging industries. Support for initiatives such as The Neighborhood Commercial District (NCD) Initiative, which was launched in 2024, will be important for revitalizing and investing in the City's neighborhood commercial corridors and connecting neighborhoods to the emerging innovation economy. The City should focus on attracting and directing emerging and innovative businesses to those commercial areas.

2.7 Enrich and contribute to innovation by supporting food-based business, craft products and cultural equity.

Food entrepreneurs and artisans drive local economic growth, create jobs and attract tourism while fostering a unique sense of place. Investing in these sectors continues to build New Haven's brand as the Cultural Capital of the state and region.
See also Goal 7 of Arts and Cultural Identity.

2.8 Continue developing business-focused City marketing and branding across digital media.

A strong digital presence helps position New Haven as an attractive destination for entrepreneurs, investors, and skilled workers by showcasing its economic strengths, innovation hubs, and quality of life. Effective branding can also drive tourism, highlight key industries, and create a unified identity that differentiates the City from competitors. By leveraging social media, websites, and digital campaigns, the City can engage a global audience, foster business growth, and build a dynamic, forward-looking reputation.

3

Promote inclusive commercial development & economic activity in strategic locations that align with neighborhood goals.

New Haven should build upon the success of its existing commercial areas such as Downtown and direct economic activity towards emerging areas such as Long Wharf, the Port, Mill River, Science Park, Innovation Clusters/Hill to Downtown, and Union Station/Union Square. The City should also continue its investment in former brownfield sites as areas of potential redevelopment.

Strategies

3.1 Continue to invest in and support development and redevelopment in the Downtown.

Development and redevelopment in New Haven's Downtown should focus on density, inclusivity, and protecting neighborhoods adjacent to Downtown from gentrification. The City should continue to identify opportunities for mixed-use, mixed-income infill development on surface parking lots. Continued investment in the Downtown will drive economic growth, job creation, and long-term resilience. Strengthening these districts attracts businesses, enhances walkability, and increases tax revenue, supporting public services and infrastructure improvements. Targeted redevelopment can foster a vibrant, mixed-use environment, encouraging innovation, sustainability, and equitable economic opportunities.

3.2 Continue to invest in and support development and redevelopment in Long Wharf and the Mill River District.

Building on the Long Wharf Responsible Growth Plan and Mill River Imagine Next initiative, continued investment in these areas will drive economic growth, job creation, and long-term resilience. Strengthening these areas attracts businesses, enhances walkability, and increases tax revenue, supporting public services and infrastructure improvements. Targeted redevelopment can foster a vibrant, mixed-use environment, encouraging innovation, sustainability, and equitable economic opportunities. Investing in Long Wharf and Mill River also unlocks waterfront potential and can improve climate resilience.

This icon indicates that this strategy is related to the New Haven Zoning Ordinance. Click to skip to the next related strategy.



3.3 Update the zoning ordinance to ensure that locations are available for emerging industries and business types that mitigate adverse impacts and support neighborhood development.

Much of the City's zoning ordinance, which controls land use and new development, was adopted decades ago and needs to be updated to ensure that it allows for the type of development associated with emerging industries discussed in this plan. The City should review and amend as needed its use regulations, parking, lot size, density, setback, building coverage, building height, and floor-area-ratio standards to better support economic development.

3.4 Continue to facilitate the cleanup and reuse of former industrial and brownfields sites.

New Haven has multiple acres of former industrial sites with many of these sites having a history of contamination (brownfields). The City has made considerable progress in leading and supporting the clean-up of industrial and brownfields sites. It needs to maintain its focus on this issue and support the reuse of those former industrial and brownfield sites consistent with the recommendations of this plan.

3.5 Continue to promote development opportunities in the City's Enterprise and Opportunity Zones.

New Haven has nine Enterprise Zones and seven Opportunity Zones. The Enterprise Zone program is a State program that provides tax abatement opportunities to companies involved in manufacturing, research, distribution, and warehousing. The Opportunity Zone program is a federal program designed to spur economic development and investment in distressed communities by offering tax incentives to investors. These designated zones attract private capital by allowing investors to defer, reduce, or even eliminate capital gains taxes on long-term investments in businesses, real estate, and infrastructure. They can catalyze revitalization, stimulate job creation, and support local entrepreneurship, particularly in historically disinvested areas.

3.6 Leverage New Haven's Port and Port District Area for efficient land use and limited encroachment.

The Port of New Haven is one of the largest ports in New England and a vital economic and transportation hub for Connecticut. It serves as a key center for shipping, logistics, and energy distribution, handling petroleum, chemicals, and bulk goods that support regional industries. The New Haven Port District plays a crucial role in job creation, economic activity, and supply chain resilience, making it essential for both local businesses and broader regional commerce. To better leverage this resource, the City should focus on water dependent uses, concentrating port dependent uses to free up developable land elsewhere, and providing more employment opportunities for New Haven residents. Investments in the port's infrastructure, sustainability, and climate resilience should also be made to enhance its competitiveness, ensuring it remains a strong driver of economic growth and innovation for the City. The Port Authority is initiating a strategy planning process in 2025, and the City should continue to be engaged in this process to ensure alignment with Vision 2034.

3.7 Work with property owners that have large land holdings to ensure that the City's economic development strategies and policies are consistent with the planned use of their properties.

Collaboration between the City and large landowners is crucial to ensuring that economic development strategies align with long-term land use planning, fostering sustainable growth, investment, and community benefits. Engaging property owners helps the City coordinate infrastructure improvements, attract targeted industries, and promote mixed-use, transit-oriented, or industrial development that supports job creation and grows the tax base. Coordination can help to reduce land-use conflicts, streamline development approvals, and ensure that private investments are beneficial to the community.

3.8 Work with local partners and industry leaders to encourage and assist businesses and industries to locate in New Haven.

Working with local partners and industry leaders will help New Haven attract and retain businesses, fostering job creation, innovation, and economic growth. By leveraging these partnerships, the City can provide targeted incentives, workforce development programs, and infrastructure support that make it more attractive to new and expanding industries. This collaboration also ensures that economic development efforts align with market trends and community needs, creating a business-friendly environment that promotes long-term investment.

3.9 Create a culture of trust and transparency by engaging residents of these areas in economic development plans and processes.

Residents should be engaged in decision making that impacts them. Developers and city staff should support this by engaging residents early and often, providing information including data visualization and mapping tools to monitor trends and patterns across neighborhoods and raising awareness of how development is occurring. Residents should also have access to information about the importance of development and have the opportunity to provide input on or work with developers to integrate neighborhood goals and needed amenities into development activities.

Spotlight

Transforming Underutilized Land

New Haven has made significant progress in the last decade investing in and transforming underutilized land in the city. This has ranged from environmental remediation projects (see map on next page), the transformation of Route 34 into multi-modal urban boulevards and developable land, creation and implementation of the Hill to Downtown and Long Wharf Responsible Growth Plans, and major redevelopments at Science Park and the former coliseum site. Vision 2034 builds on this work with a continued focus on redevelopment of areas of the city that are currently vacant, underutilized, or in need of significant remediation. These efforts seek to address needs such as climate resilience, environmental remediation, housing development, and improving infrastructure to meet the needs of all residents while supporting economic development. The City has successfully leveraged millions of dollars of state and federal assistance in supporting these projects. The following are some of the major projects underway that will transform underutilized land in the City.

Mill River Imagine Next / Reconnecting Communities

A \$5M Urban Act grant will support pre-development activities and redevelopment of the Mill River District, including brownfield remediation, addressing English Station, construction of the Mill River Trail, and redevelopment initiatives. A \$2M USDOT Reconnecting Communities grant will help reconnect neighborhoods split by I-91 and reclaim underutilized land.

ConnCAT Place on Dixwell

Building on the success of the Q House in the last decade, local economic justice leader, ConnCORP, will revitalize Dixwell Plaza into a state-of-the-art mixed-use retail, residential, and cultural hub in Dixwell's Historically Black Community Center. It will include a diverse cross-section of uses to deliver a vibrant, high-quality, and sustainable mixed-use environment.

Quantum Life Science Innovation Cluster

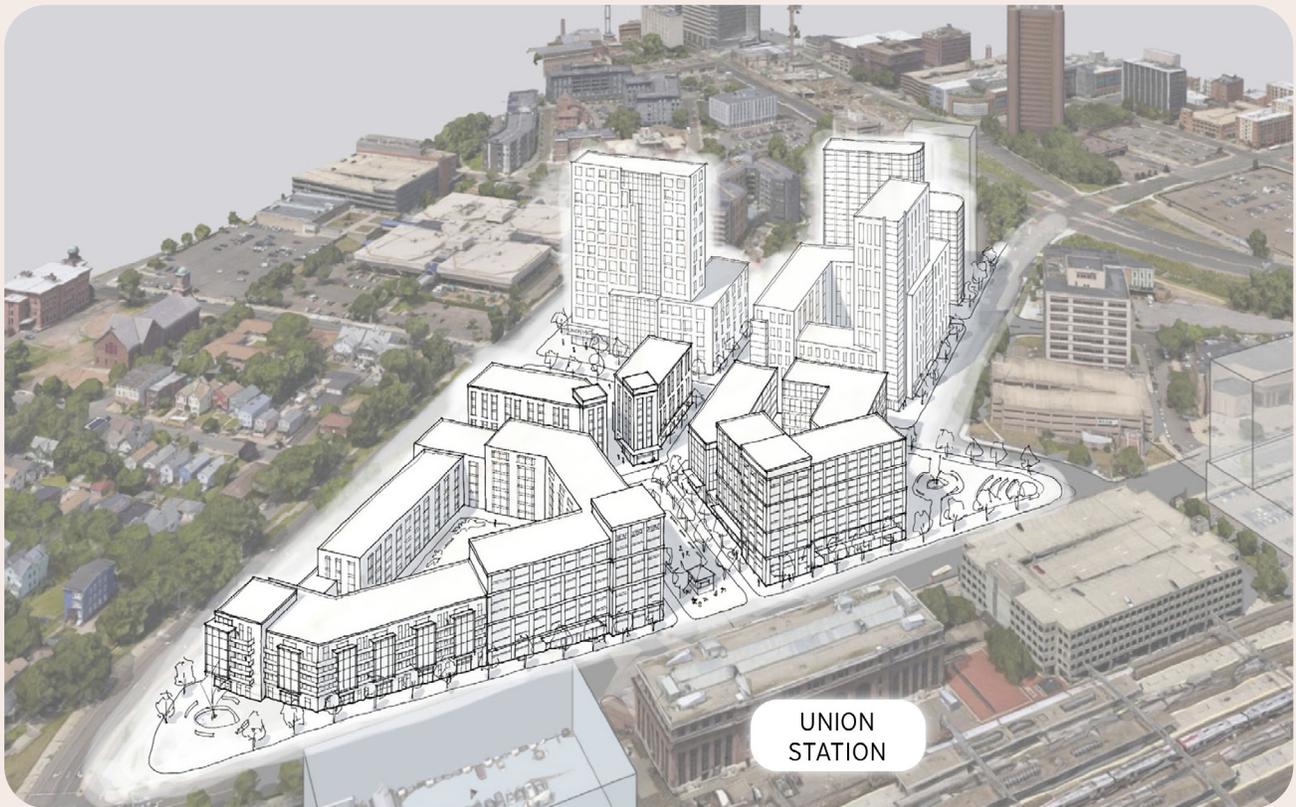
The Quantum & Bioscience Cluster is emerging in New Haven as a globally competitive innovation district. This will involve completing the New Haven Downtown Crossing project which reclaims land lost to urban renewal, with a focus on connecting residents to opportunities in emerging job sectors.

Union Square / Union Station

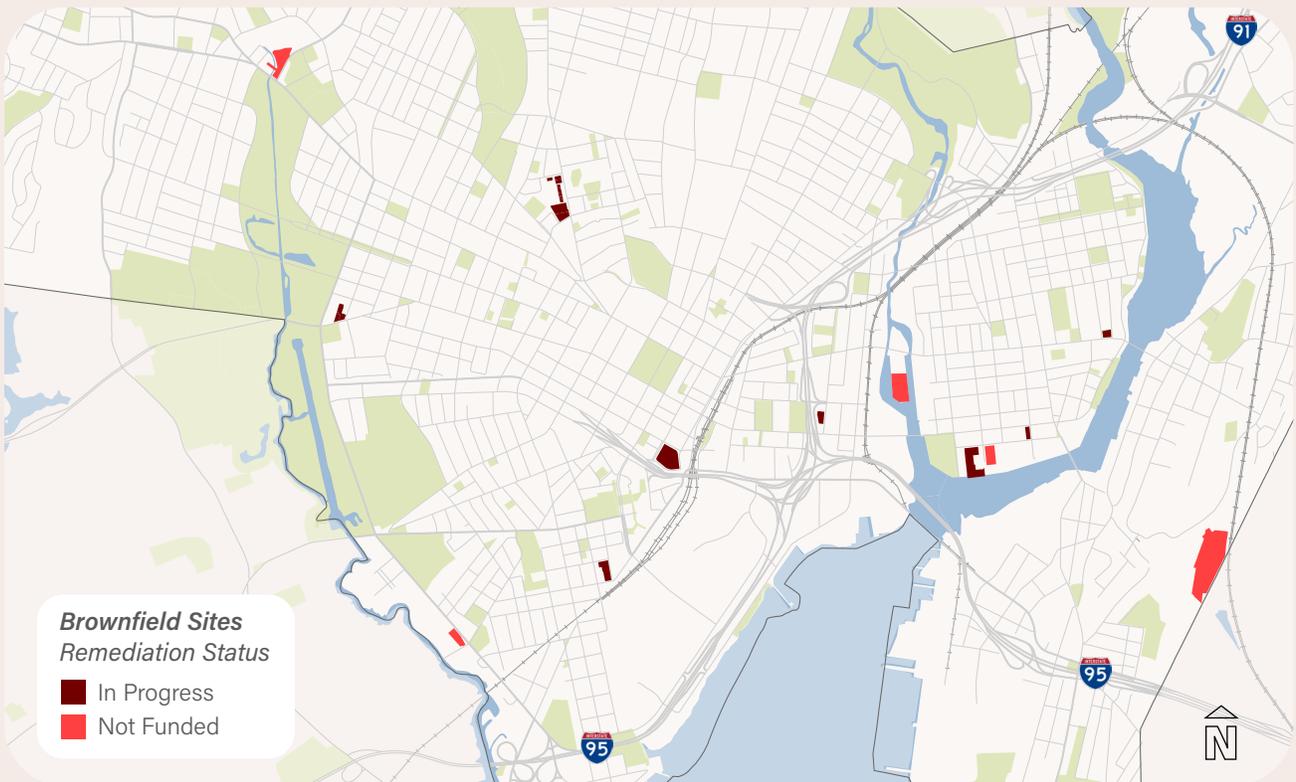
Continuing implementation of the Hill to Downtown plan, New Haven will transform the Union Square site in front of Union Station into thriving, sustainable, mixed-income communities, and reinvigorate Union Station with interior renovations that create new retail and dining options, high-density, transit-oriented development to the east, and a multi-modal hub to the west. Together, these projects will create a vibrant new district and a welcoming gateway into the City, connecting downtown to Union Station.

Long Wharf Waterfront & Flood Protection

Building on the Long Wharf Responsible Growth Plan, the City will implement flood protection and resiliency measures to protect the Long Wharf Neighborhood and revitalize Long Wharf Park and Food Truck Paradise while enabling thoughtful, mixed-use development northwest of I-95



The Union Square Choice Neighborhood Transformation Plan is a bold, collaborative vision to revitalize Union Square into a thriving, inclusive community where residents can achieve their full potential. Source: Union Square Choice



**Brownfield Sites
Remediation Status**

- In Progress
- Not Funded

4

Make neighborhood commercial centers stronger and more vibrant.

Strengthening New Haven's neighborhood commercial centers is key to fostering equitable economic growth, supporting small businesses, and ensuring long-term economic stability. By investing in commercial and mixed-use development, expanding inclusive economic opportunities, and aligning anchor institution planning with citywide goals, the City can continue to create active business districts that serve local neighborhoods. Conducting business surveys, supporting urban agriculture, and promoting retail diversity will further enhance neighborhood resilience, making commercial hubs more adaptable to economic shifts while providing essential goods, services, and employment opportunities close to where people live. This goal is closely linked to Goal 5 of Great Places to Live.

Strategies

4.1 Continue to implement public infrastructure improvements in neighborhood commercial districts and corridors.

Streetscape improvements, traffic calming, green infrastructure, and bicycle & pedestrian improvements, such as the Whalley Avenue and Grand Avenue projects, create safer, more attractive, and accessible commercial areas, increasing foot traffic and encouraging residents and visitors to shop, dine, and invest locally. Enhanced infrastructure also supports small business development, improves public health, and promotes sustainability, making the City more resilient and competitive. Additionally, well-designed public spaces foster a sense of community, attract private investment, and contribute to long-term economic stability. See also Strategy 3.4 of *Move Together*.

4.2 Continue to develop and update neighborhood level plans to identify opportunities to support neighborhood commercial activity.

As recommended in Strategy 5.2 of Great Places to Live, the City should conduct neighborhood-level planning, such as the Hill to Downtown Plan to support and strengthen local commercial activity by aligning development strategies with community needs and provide a clear vision and framework for improving commercial districts, guiding investments in infrastructure, zoning, and business support programs.

4.3 Support the creation of Business Improvement Districts in neighborhood commercial districts.

Business improvement districts (BIDs), such as the Town Green Special Services District are areas that receive enhanced services and improvements beyond what the City provides. These may include cleaning, public safety, marketing, streetscape enhancements, and business support programs. BIDs help boost economic activity, attract investment, and improve the overall appeal of commercial districts by creating a more vibrant, well-maintained, and business-friendly environment.

Case Study

Southwest Partnership Baltimore, MD

The Southwest Partnership is a coalition of seven Baltimore neighborhoods and institutions working to improve neighborhood empowerment and neighborhood commercial activity. Formed in 2012, the Partnership was organized by community leaders, neighborhood residents, businesses and local institutions with the key priorities of supporting housing development, education and workforce development, safe & walkable streets, commercial development along neighborhood corridors and preservation and promotion of local amenities and assets. Some of the work this Partnership has completed in recent years, ranges from retail and commercial use studies, development of a toolkit for building revitalization, and housing market studies. The Partnership also provides and pursues grant funding such as its workforce grants, which support neighborhood residents looking for employment, maintaining and employment and identifying opportunities to grow in their careers.



Partnership Marketing Coordinator and Resident. Source: Southwest Partnership

Spotlight

BioCity

New Haven's Economic Development Administration partnered with New Haven Public Schools, Southern Connecticut State University, and the developer of 101 College Street, Winstanley, to launch BioCity, an innovative dual-enrollment program designed to immerse high school students in the biosciences. Located at the BioLabs incubator at 101 College Street, the program offers up to 15 high school juniors and seniors the opportunity to take college-level science and STEM courses taught by Southern Connecticut State University faculty.

BioLabs, an incubator that supports early-stage biotech entrepreneurs, provides a professional, industry-standard environment where students can gain hands-on experience. By working in this real-world setting and using high-quality lab equipment, students are not only exposed to advanced scientific concepts but are also better prepared for continued academic pursuits and careers in the bioscience field.

The first group of students began in September 2024, with funding secured to support the program for up to three academic years.



BioCity classroom

Source: New Haven Public Schools

4.4 Review and update the City's zoning ordinance and policies to better support neighborhood commercial development.

As recommended in Strategy 3.3 of this chapter, the City should review and update City's zoning ordinance to better support neighborhood commercial development.

4.5 Identify opportunities to assemble City-owned and tax delinquent parcels for neighborhood commercial or mixed-use development.

New Haven has a portfolio of City-owned lots and tax-delinquent parcels that should be repurposed for neighborhood commercial or mixed-use development. A neighborhood level plan (see Great Places to Live Strategy 5.2) would assist in identifying more of those properties and recommending an appropriate reuse.

4.6 Encourage activation of public spaces by businesses and community groups.

The activation of public spaces through coordinated events, performances, or outdoor vendors can enliven a neighborhood commercial area, attract visitors, and benefit local businesses through more foot traffic. This type of public space activation can be coordinated through a business improvement district if established.

4.7 Increase integration of third spaces downtown and in neighborhood commercial centers.

Third spaces, such as cafes, libraries, art studios, parks, and community centers, play a vital role in fostering social connections, civic engagement, and overall well-being in a community. They serve as informal gathering places where people can interact outside of home, work, or school, helping to build a sense of belonging and social cohesion. *See also Strategy 3.2 of Arts and Cultural Identity.*

4.8 Further enhance the City-wide retail strategy supporting small businesses and entrepreneurs to encourage take-up in first floor retail space and increase neighborhood commercial activity.

The City should continue to enhance the City-wide retail strategy that emphasizes activating first floor retail spaces in its neighborhood commercial districts and strengthens existing zoning to discourage conversion of these spaces into non-retail uses. First floor retail space is valuable to any commercial center and the occupation of those spaces by active uses is important to the vibrancy of neighborhood commercial districts. Connecting small business owners and entrepreneurs to vacant or underutilized space provides a benefit to those individuals and to the commercial district as a whole.

5

Implement and encourage policies that require employers to hire local workers and those that face systemic injustice in the job market.

These policies help address wealth inequality in the City, reducing unemployment and supporting local businesses. By prioritizing historically marginalized groups – such as people of color, individuals with disabilities, or those with criminal records – New Haven can address systemic barriers to employment, promoting social mobility and reducing economic disparities. Additionally, a stronger local workforce enhances community stability, reduces reliance on social services, and contributes to a more inclusive and diverse economy, ultimately benefiting both businesses and residents.

Strategies

5.1 Explore opportunities to expand local hiring preferences beyond direct City projects.

Section 12 ¼ of New Haven's Municipal Code establishes a Small Contractor Development Program that requires a specified share of City contracts to go to qualified small business enterprises. The City should explore expansion of this requirement, for example, to private projects that receive tax relief or subsidies from the City. Section 12 ½ is the City's Equal Opportunity ordinance, which requires that equal employment opportunities be provided by all contractors.

5.2 Partner with major employers to implement preferred hiring programs for New Haven residents.

Preferred hiring programs, such as Yale University's New Haven Hiring Initiative, provide local residents with the first opportunity at jobs in the City. These programs and requirements ensure that economic development directly supports residents, fostering job creation, economic equity, and community wealth-building. By prioritizing local workers, employers help reduce local unemployment, strengthen the local tax base, and keep wages circulating within the community, boosting small businesses and housing markets. Additionally, local hiring promotes workforce development, encourages businesses to invest in training programs, and strengthens ties between employers and the community.

Black and Latino workers in New Haven earn 37% less on average than White workers in New Haven.

Source: *DataHaven, 2023*

Spotlight

Workforce Alliance, South Central Connecticut

Workforce Alliance's mission is to provide a comprehensive, community-wide response to the challenges of building a highly skilled workforce. Through a variety of employment and training initiatives, they prepare individuals for jobs and assist employers with training and employee transition. The Alliance works to improve the delivery of workforce services in close collaboration with business, education and training providers, local elected officials and community partners. The Alliance provides regional services to the South Central area of Connecticut and operates American Job Centers in New Haven, Meriden, Hamden, and Middletown, offering free services to job seekers, including career counseling, job placement, and short-term training programs in sectors like manufacturing, healthcare, and hospitality. Annually, Workforce Alliance assists over 12,000 individuals and collaborates with regional employers to address hiring needs, supported by a \$16 million budget sourced from federal, state, and philanthropic funds.



Source: *Workforce Alliance*

Spotlight

Center for Inclusive Growth

The Center, established in 2024, is a partnership between the City of New Haven and Yale University that will develop and implement strategies to ensure that economic growth in the City benefits all residents. The Center's mission is to act as a leader in the development and implementation of innovative strategies that target the root causes of inequalities on issues such as urban development, local sourcing and hiring, startup support, small business development, affordable housing and green energy. Establishment of the Center marks another step in a citywide effort to engage with residents across the City's neighborhoods to identify tools, opportunities and strategies to support local businesses, career pathways and broader economic growth for all residents.



Source: City of New Haven

5.3 Support reentry programs and job placement of formerly incarcerated individuals.

Every year, upwards of 1,000 individuals return to or arrive in New Haven after being released from prison. Programs such as the Project MORE Reentry Welcome Center and the EMERGE Connecticut Social Enterprise provide support services for housing, benefits, food assistance, transportation, medical care, assistance for substance use disorder, mental health care, and job placement. Additionally, the Connecticut NCAACP Million Jobs Campaign works with employers who are committed to offering job placement opportunities that are aligned with support systems to assist with workforce training and long-term employee retention for the formerly incarcerated. The Campaign is partnered with Yale-New Haven Health to employ formerly incarcerated individuals in entry-level positions with pathways to training and upward mobility. The continued support for and coordination of programs such as these is essential to ensure their continued operation as many are grant funded and have limited resources.

5.4 Support multilingual education and workforce training and job placement programs.

Programs such as the New Haven Adult & Continuing Education Center provide adult and continuing education learning including English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), citizenship, and workforce training programs. There is an ongoing need to provide education and workforce training in languages other than English to increase placements of non-English speakers into jobs. Organizations such as MATCH in New Haven provide bilingual training and employment opportunities in manufacturing.

As of 2023, 15,278 New Haven residents, 13% of the population ages 5 and older, had limited English proficiency.

Source: ACS 2023 5-year estimates

6

Expand entrepreneurship and small-business opportunities.

Supporting small businesses and entrepreneurs is key to economic growth and opportunity in New Haven. By working with schools, employers, and community groups, the City can expand services that help new businesses start and grow. Helping home-based businesses move into commercial spaces and increasing support for startups will give residents the tools they need to succeed and strengthen the local economy.

Strategies

6.1 Prioritize strategies for business retention and expansion.

A comprehensive business retention and expansion strategy helps to support existing businesses, foster job growth, and enhance community resilience. By proactively engaging with businesses, identifying challenges, and providing targeted resources, such as workforce development, infrastructure improvements, and financial incentives, New Haven can create a more stable and competitive business environment.

6.2 Work with local centers, institutions, and community-based organizations to expand start-up and entrepreneurial development services.

The City's Small Business Resource Center and the Community Foundation's New Haven Equitable Entrepreneurial Ecosystem (NHE3) provide entrepreneurs with technical assistance, training, access to capital, networking and mentorship. Work with these and other organizations should continue to build partnerships and expand programs that provide improved access to these services. Additionally, the City should develop a "wealth creation through innovation and entrepreneurship" program through the Center for Inclusive Growth to foster economic growth by supporting startups, small businesses, and innovative enterprises.

6.3 Evaluate the potential for start-up grants for micro businesses to help with fit out costs, signage, marketing, or sale systems.

The City should evaluate the potential to expand its small business grant programs including the Leaseholder Improvement Program and NHE3 to include a grant program providing startup funding for a wide variety of micro businesses. This would supplement existing programs such as the Connecticut's Office of Innovation's Innovation Spotlight program, which provides small grants to technology startups. Providing grants to a wider range of businesses, whether food service, retail, or another craft or service provider would help to build a diverse economic ecosystem in the City.

Spotlight

New Haven Equitable Entrepreneurial Ecosystem

The New Haven Equitable Entrepreneurial Ecosystem (NHE3) of The Community Foundation aims to build an equitable entrepreneurial ecosystem designed for historically marginalized entrepreneurs, such as those who identify as Black, Latinx, and women, to create jobs and economic stability, create community wealth and power, build generational wealth, and support structural change and remove barriers of structural racism. It works with local entrepreneurial support organizations and small business owners to support a full continuum of grants, business advisory, and technical services in Greater New Haven.



Source: NHE3

6.4 Streamline regulatory processes to better support business licensing, permitting, and establishment.

A more efficient licensing and permitting system increases transparency, improves customer service, and encourages entrepreneurship by removing unnecessary barriers. The Food System Policy Division has established a strong model for this work, launching the Grow New Haven portal in 2024 in collaboration with Food & Society at the Aspen Institute. Grow New Haven is a free portal with local resources to help food and agriculture entrepreneurs establish and grow their businesses. The digital one-stop-shop provides current and aspiring small business owners with guidance on business planning, obtaining permits and licenses, securing funding, and sustainable growth.

6.5 Continue to support events that showcase small business owners, makers and artists.

Events such as the New Haven Night Market, hosted by the Town Green District as well as the Black Wall Street Festival and CITA Park, a pop up beer garden that highlights Black and Brown brewers, food purveyors and makers, celebrate the community's entrepreneurs, art, music, food, drink, and culture. The continued support of events such as these and the support for conducting similar events across the City provides local business owners, makers, and artists an opportunity to share their craft with the community.

6.6 Support growth of prototyping and maker environments particularly in material science and green technology sectors.

Programs and spaces such as MakeHaven, ClimateHaven, and the Ives Squared Center and its Tinker Lab at the New Haven Free Public Library provide space and support services for a wide variety of projects, including prototyping, fabrication, mechanics, electronics, crafts, art, and woodworking. The City should support the growth of the spaces and establishment of new spaces to focus on the materials science and green technology sectors.

6.7 Reduce language barriers related to business assistance and applications.

New Haven should seek to reduce language barriers by hiring more multi-lingual business assistance staff and providing applications and business assistance materials in multiple languages. The Food System Policy Division's meetings and materials are available in the City's top eight most spoken languages.

6.8 Expand outreach for existing business networking events to connect business leaders and owners of various sizes in the City.

Organizations such as the Greater New Haven Chamber of Commerce and the Black Business Alliance provide local networking events for professionals and businesses. The City should encourage participation in these events and work with those organizations and others to host more events focused on bringing business leaders together.

6.9 Expand economic and business data collection and reporting to better track small businesses.

The City should strengthen business data collection to support economic growth and informed decision-making. This includes tracking home-based businesses to facilitate their transition to brick-and-mortar locations and developing a comprehensive business contact list to enhance retention and expansion efforts. Partnering with the Chamber of Commerce to implement an annual business survey will help identify employer needs and challenges, guiding policy and support initiatives. Additionally, continuing and promoting the New Haven Economic Indicators report will provide valuable insights into economic trends, fostering data-driven development strategies. The report features local, up-to-date information including data from the biannual vacant storefront survey.

7

Expand and improve transportation and public utility infrastructure.

Reliable and modern utility infrastructure is essential for supporting economic growth and equitable access to resources. Expanding broadband access ensures that all residents, particularly those who cannot afford service or have poor access, can fully participate in the digital economy. Furthermore, targeted improvements to public utilities in areas of planned growth, such as Downtown, Long Wharf, and Mill River will help accommodate new development, attract investment, and enhance the City's overall resilience.

Strategies

7.1 Continually assess improvements needed to public utility infrastructure including sewer separation, electrical capacity, and water provision, prioritizing areas of planned growth.

Utility services and infrastructure such as public water, wastewater, electric, natural gas, and communications are essential to development, but those services vary in their capacity across the City. Prioritizing the improvement and expansion of utility infrastructure and service capacity in areas of growth such as Downtown, Downtown Crossing, and Long Wharf is critical to supporting growth. The City should coordinate with utility providers to ensure that improvements and expansions are planned and conducted in alignment with the growth needs of the City. Additionally, the City should work with providers to ensure that infrastructure is secure and resilient to extreme weather events and physical and cyber threats. Efforts such as the combined sewer separation in alignment with the Greater New Haven Water Pollution Control Authority strategic plan should be continued.

7.2 Expand fiber optic infrastructure throughout the City and improve access to broadband service for residents that can't afford service.

Expanding fiber optic infrastructure and improving broadband access are essential for New Haven's economic growth, digital equity, and overall competitiveness. High-speed internet enhances business productivity, attracts new industries, and supports innovation in sectors like technology, healthcare, and education. Reliable broadband access is also critical for residents, enabling remote work, online learning, and telehealth services, while bridging the digital divide in underserved communities. With the growth in the number of larger multi-unit buildings both from private developers and the City's partners at Elm City Communities (Housing Authority of New Haven), a more comprehensive citywide broadband strategy may be required. Additionally, advanced fiber networks improve municipal operations, enhance public safety, and support smart City initiatives. Investing in broadband infrastructure ensures long-term economic resilience and a more connected, inclusive community.

Case Study

Gig City — Chattanooga, TN

Chattanooga has strategically invested in utility infrastructure to bolster economic development and accommodate population growth. In 2010, the City's municipally-owned electric power board (EPB) launched the western hemisphere's first community-wide gigabit-speed fiber optic network, offering internet speeds of up to one gigabit per second. This initiative not only positioned Chattanooga as a leader in high-speed internet accessibility but also earned it the nickname "Gig City." The implementation of this advanced fiber optic network had a profound impact on the local economy. It attracted numerous tech startups and established companies seeking reliable, high-speed internet services, thereby fostering job creation and economic diversification.

Its high-speed internet also helps to improve transportation, energy usage, power reliability and telemedicine. By example, The Center for Urban Informatics and Progress at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga is using EPB's high-speed internet connections to gather and analyze transportation patterns and behaviors from traffic cameras. The goal of this research is to directly or indirectly improve citizens' lives and create an urban environment that is livable, accessible and healthy for all.



Source: [theGigTank.com](https://www.thegigtank.com)

Spotlight

Mill River: Imagine Next

In 2024, the City gained approval for a \$5 million Urban Act grant to support pre-development activities, infrastructure and redevelopment of the Mill River District. This work is focused on turning vacant or underused brownfields into amenities which introduce coastal access, recreation and mixed-income housing to the district. The completion of the English Station cleanup and redevelopment, construction of the Mill River Trail (through to Quinnipiac River Park), together with relocation of salt piles north of John Martinez School, are priority undertakings. In 2024, the City Plan Department led a broad initiative known as the I-91 Reconnection Initiative, which will be closely aligned with this work over the next several years.



Source: Mill River Development Plan

7.3 Support the responsible growth of Tweed New Haven Regional Airport while addressing impacts on the community.

The planned and ongoing development of Tweed will enhance regional connectivity, boost economic growth, and improve travel convenience. Upgrades such as a longer runway, expanded terminal facilities in East Haven, and increased flight options will attract more airlines and destinations, making New Haven more accessible. This growth also has the benefit of creating jobs, supporting local businesses and tourism. Addressing the impacts of a busier Airport on neighborhoods and surrounding communities should remain a top priority for the City.

7.4 Coordinate with the Port Authority of New Haven and port businesses to optimize operations, reduce environmental impacts, and unlock the Mill River area for mixed-use economic development and housing.

New Haven's Port operations are evolving with recent electrification improvements to Port equipment and infrastructure as well as an upcoming channel-deepening project. The receiving and distribution of fuel oil is a current focus of the Port's operations. As energy use changes through the replacement of fuel oil with electricity as a heating source, the Port's operations should also transition to better position the Port and the Port District to support New Haven's future economy. This will require continued coordination between the City and the Port Authority.

7.5 Consider zoning changes to support appropriate land use and development around future Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) stops.

New Haven will soon receive BRT service connecting the City to both Hamden and West Haven. That service will have a specific number of stops in the City. Each stop provides an opportunity for transit-oriented development including small commercial areas, mixed-use, and high-density residential development surrounding those stops. The City should review and revise its zoning as needed to support development that is complementary to the BRT service.

“Expand mixed-use zoned areas to allow for more small businesses to open shops in more neighborhoods.”

- Survey participant

8

Encourage sustainable economic development and support the development of a green economy.

Green economies support job growth in sector including renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, and green infrastructure that prioritize environmental sustainability, and social equity in addition to economic growth. This enhances economic resilience by diversifying the economy and provides environmental sustainability with lower carbon emissions, better air and water quality outcomes, and greater conservation of natural resources than traditional economies. Additionally, a green economy supports community health by reducing pollution and encouraging active transportation options. It also promotes social equity by fostering workforce development and ensuring that historically disadvantaged communities benefit from green investments.

“[Undertake] efforts to retain & provide incubators for business students/entrepreneurs from local colleges”

- Survey participant

Strategies

- 8.1 Update the City's zoning ordinance to require the inclusion of—or provide incentives for—green building features and technologies.

New Haven's zoning ordinance can require and provide incentives for the inclusion of green building features and technologies such as the use of solar energy, passive cooling and heating, on-site capture of stormwater, waste minimization, and use of sustainable materials. Zoning amendments should build on existing green ordinances and the sustainability strategies used for density bonuses in the Whalley Avenue Commercial Gateway District and BD-3 zones.

- 8.2 Encourage the establishment of green building innovation hubs, incubators, and workforce development programs.

The establishment of green building innovation hubs, incubators, and workforce development programs can drive economic growth, environmental sustainability, and social equity. These initiatives attract startups, investors, and industry leaders, fostering innovation in energy-efficient construction, renewable energy integration, and sustainable design. By providing these programs and resources, New Haven can position itself as a leader in the green technology sector, creating high-quality jobs and boosting economic competitiveness.

Case Study

Denver Office of Climate Action

Denver's Office of Climate Action is focused on eliminating pollution and waste while investing in clean energy and resiliency. A Climate Protection Fund is central to this effort. The fund, which comes from a local sales and use tax, raises \$40M annually to mitigate the causes of climate change and to center that work on equity by reserving half of the fund for communities most harmed by climate change impacts. It focuses on job creation through local workforce training and the development of new careers in clean energy technology and natural resource management, especially for under-resourced individuals. The fund encourages increased investments in renewable energy technologies, such as solar power and battery storage, while also funding neighborhood-based environmental and climate justice programs.



Source: CPR News

8.3 Support the use of low-embodied carbon construction and other innovative and sustainable building technologies and the development of those industries in New Haven.

Mass timber construction and other sustainable building technologies reduces carbon emissions compared to concrete and steel. There are currently two residential mass timber projects nearing completion in New Haven, one of which is a public-private partnership between the City and an affordable housing development corporation. These projects should be viewed as an exemplar for future mass timber projects. Innovations such as energy-efficient and automated building systems reduce long-term operating costs, making developments more affordable and resilient. The industries developing these technologies also attract investment, foster workforce development, and can position New Haven to be a leader in the green economy, promoting sustainable growth and a higher quality of life for residents. The City should identify existing incentive programs to promote the use of these technologies (such as C-PACE and Smart-E) and expand existing green building collaborations with partners like the Center for Inclusive Growth to develop new incentive programs.

8.4 Continue to upgrade infrastructure and services with an emphasis on sustainability and resiliency.

The City should continue to improve the sustainability and resiliency of its infrastructure and the services it provides through measures such as electrification of the City's fleet of vehicles, development of electric vehicle charging infrastructure, expansion of solar energy production, and improvements to operations to reduce energy use and waste. The transition to more sustainable practices will create opportunities for local businesses and industries to provide support in that transition, which will further their growth. *See also Goal 1 of Climate and Ecological Connections.*

8.5 Develop platforms for clean and affordable renewable energy to support economic growth in densifying areas of the City such as networked geothermal.

The City should continue to explore opportunities for the large-scale implementation of renewable energy systems such as networked geothermal. In 2024 federal funding for a networked geothermal energy system was awarded for Union Station as well as affordable housing projects in the surrounding area. Yale University is implementing another major geothermal project as part of the redevelopment of the Science Hill campus. These are examples of the type of efforts that can be advanced elsewhere in New Haven, especially if linked to development and redevelopment efforts described elsewhere in this plan. *See also Strategy 1.3 of Climate and Ecological Connections.*

Spotlight

Long Wharf Responsible Growth Plan

The Long Wharf Responsible Growth Plan is the City's own model for sustainable economic development. All City departments are collaborating for implementation. The plan aims to transform Long Wharf into walkable, mixed-use districts centered around existing uses with improved ties to transit and adjacent neighborhoods. The plan is arranged into five "districts" connected by a new green infrastructure linear park and complete street concepts. The plan addresses resilience to climate-change induced events and sea level rise, and is somewhat dependent on the flood protection system design that is underway. New, supportive zoning amendments passed in 2023.



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6. Move Together



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Move Together

The Vision

New Haven will have an equitable transportation system that is safe, accessible, and resilient — providing sustainable, affordable, and dependable ways to get around that are efficient and human-centric.

Goals

- 1 Eliminate deaths and injuries caused by motor vehicles.
- 2 Make the transportation system fully accessible to people with disabilities.
- 3 Make it easier and safer for people to walk, bike, and use mobility devices and public transportation.
- 4 Improve bus service and stops.
- 5 Improve traffic flow and reduce congestion.
- 6 Better manage parking and ensure that parking supply aligns with future needs.
- 7 Make transportation infrastructure and services more resilient and sustainable.

1

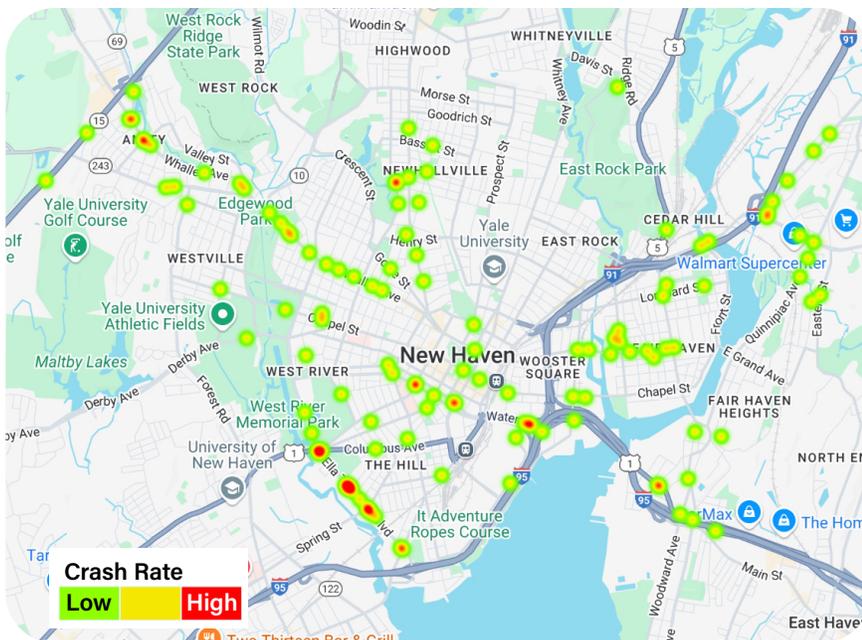
Eliminate deaths and injuries caused by motor vehicles.

New Haven has averaged 12 traffic fatalities per year over the last ten years. Approximately 44% of those killed were pedestrians or bicyclists. The elimination of fatal crashes should be the City's highest transportation priority. Focusing on reducing traffic injuries and deaths is essential for creating a safe, livable, and equitable City. Traffic crashes are a leading cause of preventable death and serious injury, particularly affecting vulnerable road users like pedestrians, cyclists, children, and older adults. The City is working to educate users to address risky behavior through a revamped Street Smarts campaign; implementing proven safety countermeasures during project implementation; addressing risky driving behavior with automated enforcement; and working with the State Vision Zero council on other policy and practice related initiatives to advance Vision Zero goals. (Vision Zero is a safety initiative aimed at eliminating all traffic fatalities and severe injuries)

Strategies

1.1 Target safety improvements in high-crash rate locations, particularly those with high injury and fatality rates.

New Haven's fatal crashes are concentrated on high volume roadways such as Ella Grasso Boulevard, Whalley Avenue, South and North Frontage Roads, etc. These corridors and other high crash locations including intersections and mid-block segments need to be prioritized for safety improvements as improvements to those areas would be most effective at reducing the City's crashes and crash fatalities.



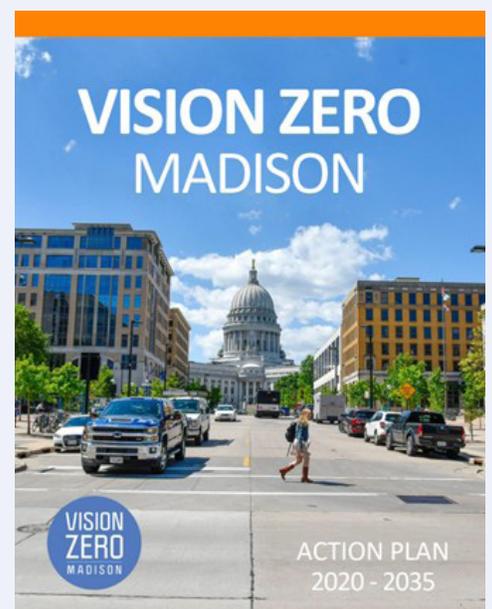
Location of fatal crashes in New Haven between 2015 and 2024
Source: Connecticut Crash Data Repository

Case Study

Vision Zero Action Plan Madison, WI

Madison's Vision Zero Action Plan aims to eliminate traffic-related fatalities and serious injuries by 2030. The City has made significant strides toward this goal through key improvements including the installation of sidewalks, shared-use paths, bike lanes, and protected bike lanes. The City also implemented speed limit reductions across multiple roadways, successfully reducing traffic speeds. These efforts have been key to reducing crash frequency and severity, contributing to a safer City for all road users.

Madison's plan is guided by principles including safety, equity, and accountability. The safety of all roadway users is the core of the plan and it also emphasizes the need for equitable improvements across the City, responding to the needs of racially and economically segregated communities. Additionally, the plan is data-focused to ensure the most effective deployment of resources with accountability for achieving the plan's objectives being a high priority.



Source: City of Madison

Spotlight

Safe Routes for All Active Transportation Plan, New Haven

The goal of Safe Routes for All is to make active transportation (walking, biking, taking the bus) easier for residents to safely and easily reach their destinations. This project, initiated in 2019, began with a series of six demonstration projects in the neighborhoods of Fair Haven, West Rock, Dixwell, Dwight, Newhallville, and the Hill. The goal for each project was to increase safety by slowing traffic, reducing the distance that pedestrians had to cross, and by expanding and improving the areas of the roadway for active transportation users. These projects reflect best practices to make streets safer and serve as a model as the City of New Haven develops an Active Transportation Plan.

The Active Transportation Plan prioritizes New Haven's low-income communities and communities of color in making streets safer for active transportation – walking, biking, and taking the bus. The goal of the plan is to create safer routes to everyday destinations, giving New Haven residents the freedom to choose how to travel and feel safe doing so.



Source: StreetPlans

1.2 Continue implementation of Safe Routes for All and Safe Routes to School projects.

Safe Routes for All is an active transportation, mobility, and safety master plan developed by the City of New Haven's Transportation, Traffic & Parking Department and adopted by the New Haven Board of Alders in 2021. The initiative identified issues and opportunities for infrastructure improvements to increase pedestrian safety throughout the City. Six demonstration projects were conducted throughout various neighborhoods in New Haven in 2019 aimed at testing and displaying the effectiveness of the measures taken to generate support for the implementation of similar permanent measures across the City. Similarly, the Safe Routes to School program is intended to improve pedestrian safety throughout the City to support increasing the number of students walking to school. This is done by concentrating infrastructure improvements within a one-quarter-mile radius of each of the City's public schools. The recommendations from these projects and the measures proven effective by these projects should be fully implemented.

1.3 Continue to implement Complete Streets Plans to address neighborhood safety concerns.

Traffic calming improvements such as speed humps, traffic circles, and road diets are effective measures for slowing vehicle speeds, reducing crash rates, and improving pedestrian and bicyclist safety. The City is actively implementing traffic calming projects such as the \$2.6 million project on Quinnipiac Avenue in Fair Haven Heights which will include measures such as raised crosswalk, raised intersections, speed humps, and reduced crosswalk distances. Projects such as this should be evaluated for implementation at other high crash and high fatality locations across the City. In support of this, the City should improve the process of requesting and implementing Complete Streets requests through the creation of a Complete Streets Review Committee.

1.4 Continue to build dedicated bicycle facilities to reduce bicyclist exposure to traffic hazards.

New Haven's Safe Routes for All Citywide Active Transportation Plan recommends the development of an extensive separated bicycle infrastructure network across the City. Recent improvements such as the separated bike lanes on Yale and Edgewood Avenue provide an example of how bicyclists can be provided a dedicated facility that reduces their exposure to traffic. This has the benefit of encouraging bicycling and reducing car trips while improving the comfort and safety of bicyclists. The City should continue to develop these facilities as recommended by the plan.

2

2.1 Make the transportation system fully accessible to people with disabilities.

The American with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires that transportation infrastructure be made accessible to people with disabilities. Because much of the City's transportation infrastructure was constructed prior to the adoption of the Act, much of it is not accessible. This is not unique to New Haven, but making the City's transportation infrastructure fully accessible is required and needs to be a priority for the City. See also Goal 3 of Civic Services and Experiences.

2.1 Ensure that all public transportation services, stations, and stops are fully accessible to people with disabilities.

While CTtransit buses and commuter rail trains providing service in New Haven are accessible, the facilities that would enable a person to arrive at a bus stop or transit station are not fully accessible across the City. Sidewalks, curb ramps, and bus stop waiting area improvements that allow for safe boarding and exiting of buses are the greatest accessibility need in the City's transit system. The City will work with the State and CTtransit to plan and build necessary improvements so that people with disabilities can safely access the transit system. Bus stop ADA compliance/accessibility as well as shelter and amenity upgrades are being evaluated through the CTDOT Bus Stop Enhancement Program.

This icon indicates that this strategy is directly related to another strategy. Click to jump to the related strategy.

2.2 Identify priority areas for improving sidewalk coverage, connectivity and conditions and make the needed upgrades to ensure accessibility.

The quality of the sidewalk pavement, width of sidewalks, and continuity of sidewalks varies across New Haven. In winter, gravel and ice from plowing can accumulate in pedestrian right-of-ways and block pedestrian ramp access in crosswalks. Some streets have a sidewalk on only one side of the street and other streets have no sidewalk at all. The incompleteness and inconsistency of this network and how it's maintained impacts all residents, especially people with disabilities. Improving the City's sidewalk network by repairing sidewalks in poor conditions, building sidewalks where none exist, adequately maintaining the network, and keeping it free of hazards, is critical to encouraging walking trips, improving safety, and accommodating those for whom walking or using mobility devices is the primary means of transportation.

2.3 Develop a standalone accessibility design guide and integrate into other design guides.

Design guidance for accessible design is scattered across multiple resources and publications, which can be challenging for a designer or planner to access and understand when designing a project or ensuring compliance. By developing an accessibility design guide that organizes that information in one location, and incorporating or providing references to that guide from other City guides, the City can support the design and development of accessible facilities in public spaces and private developments.

Case Study

City of Seattle, WA

Seattle has committed to making public transit more inclusive through its partnerships with regional transit providers. Key improvements include the widespread deployment of low-floor buses with ramps, priority seating, and automated stop announcements to assist riders with visual or hearing impairments. Additionally, the Link Light Rail system features elevators, tactile paving, and accessible fare payment options. Seattle also expanded its paratransit services with the Access Transportation program, providing door-to-door service for riders unable to use fixed-route transit. The City's commitment to accessibility extends to pedestrian infrastructure, with increased investments in curb ramps, audible pedestrian signals, and sidewalk improvements.



Source: City of Seattle

2.4 Improve roadway crossing facilities across the City to ensure accessibility for people with disabilities.

Safe and convenient roadway crossing facilities are integral to the pedestrian transportation network. Curb ramps, marked crosswalks, pedestrian traffic signals, crossing signage, refuge islands, raised crosswalks, and bumpouts play a valuable role in helping pedestrians, including those with mobility aids, to safely cross the street. Along with improvement of its sidewalk network, the City needs to improve roadway crossings, tactical wayfinding, and accessible design prioritizing the needs of people with disabilities. The City should inventory the conditions of these facilities at all locations and establish a prioritized list for making needed upgrades.

2.5 Conduct accessibility improvements in conjunction with infrastructure projects happening in the vicinity.

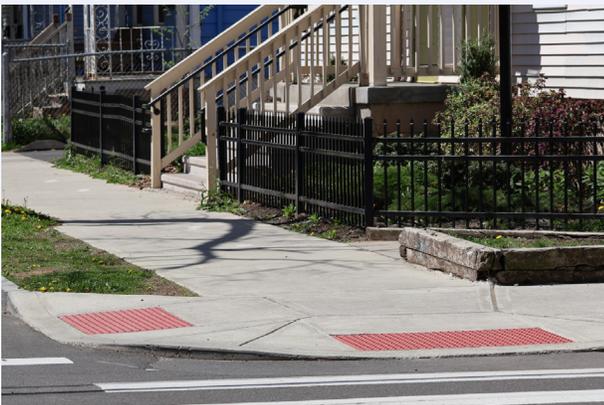
As required by ADA, infrastructure projects must include accessibility improvements. This includes roadway resurfacing projects, which are considered an alteration of the roadway and require not just that curb ramps be restored to original conditions, but that crosswalks are provided or upgraded to meet current standards. Other improvements such as providing or upgrading pedestrian crossing signals would be required when traffic signals are improved as part of a project. The City should seek to go beyond the minimum that is required by ADA by expanding improvements to the surrounding neighborhood when conducting local improvements.

2.6 Evaluate existing accessible parking spaces on the street and in City owned or operated facilities and make necessary upgrades to ensure they meet state and federal accessibility guidelines.

An accessible parking space needs to allow sufficient space for a person to move around the vehicle and unload a mobility aid such as a wheelchair. Accessible spaces also need to be provided in sufficient number and located to allow convenient access to destinations. In support of these needs, the City, including the New Haven Parking Authority, should evaluate its on- and off-street reserved accessible parking inventory to ensure that enough spaces exist and that they are properly located, designed, and constructed to meet the needs of users. Based upon the findings, the City should make appropriate improvements and consider developing an accessibility design guide to be integrated into other design guides.

Nearly 8,000 New Haven residents either can't walk or have difficulty walking.

Source: American Community Survey, 2023



Source: Kese Thomas

Spotlight

New Haven Department of Disability Services

The Department is charged with ensuring that residents and visitors with disabilities have equal access to the City's programs, services and activities. It strives to foster a welcoming and accessible community for individuals with disabilities through policy development, education and the formation of strategic partnerships with public, private and non-profit entities. The Department receives complaints and requests from the communities for assistance including the improvement of the City's transportation infrastructure.

3

Make it easier and safer for people to walk, bike, and use mobility devices and public transportation.

Making New Haven easier to walk, bike, or use public transportation enhances equity by ensuring that people of all income levels, abilities, and backgrounds have access to affordable and reliable mobility options. It reduces dependence on personal vehicles, which can be a financial burden, and improves access to jobs, healthcare, education, and other essential services. Reducing car dependence will also make New Haven more sustainable by reducing climate pollution.

Strategies

- 3.1 Prioritize pedestrian, bicycle, and transit enhancements, in historically low-income communities, communities of color, and areas where a high share of households don't have access to a car.**

Neighborhoods such as Dixwell, Dwight, Fair Haven, Newhallville, The Hill, West River, and West Rock have lower car ownership and lower incomes than other neighborhoods in the City. The residents of these neighborhoods are more reliant on walking, bicycling, and transit as a means of everyday transportation. The improvement of bicycle, pedestrian, and transit facilities in these neighborhoods will have positive impacts on the ability of residents to get to work, school, and meet everyday needs.

- 3.2 Adopt a Complete Streets policy for transportation infrastructure projects that prioritizes multimodal improvements.**

In 2010 New Haven adopted a Complete Streets Design Manual to guide the implementation of Complete Streets measures but it has not adopted a Complete Street policy. A Complete Streets policy is a commitment to an approach requiring the City to consider and integrate bicycle, pedestrian, and transit improvements in all roadway and transportation infrastructure projects. A Complete Streets policy typically includes requirement for community engagement and board or commission review of projects before final design decisions are made and construction is started. While the City has prioritized Complete Streets improvements in its projects, adopting a policy ensures that a Complete Streets approach will be carried forward on all projects in the future.

Acknowledging the Harms

The 1960s construction of Route 34, a former highway in New Haven's Downtown area, displaced neighborhoods and prioritized cars over community. Early 20th-century decisions to favor highways over public transit created lasting barriers, limiting economic mobility and disconnecting residents from the City's neighborhoods and scenic landscape. The area around Union Station, a key regional transit hub, continues to reflect this car-centric legacy. Instead of a welcoming arrival, many experience an unsafe, impersonal introduction to the City. Today Route 34 has been transformed into a pedestrian-friendly urban boulevard, a step toward reversing this history. It's not just about creating safer, clearer paths into downtown; it's about reuniting fragmented areas of the City, fostering a sense of connection.

However, challenges persist. High-crash corridors like Dixwell & Bassett, Foxon Boulevard, and Whalley & Ella Grasso Boulevard remain concerns, especially in historically underserved neighborhoods, where pedestrian and bicyclist safety must be prioritized. For those without reliable access to transportation, everyday essentials like school, work, and essential services are much harder to reach, limiting opportunities for economic mobility. The City's bus system, while functional, still struggles with inefficiencies, lengthening commutes and making essential services less accessible. New Haven's bike network needs further development to better connect residents to jobs, transit, and key destinations. Accessibility remains a critical issue as well; designing sidewalks, crossings, and curb ramps for all abilities is key to ensuring equitable mobility. Each improvement in these areas moves New Haven closer to a transportation system that serves everyone, where safety, opportunity, and connection are within reach for all.



Route 34 shortly after construction

3.3 Improve and expand the City's sidewalk network and pedestrian crossing facilities.

As discussed in Goal 2 (*Make the transportation system fully accessible to people with disabilities*), the quality of the sidewalk network and roadway crossing facilities varies across New Haven. The incompleteness and inconsistency of this network impacts all residents. By improving these facilities, the City can encourage walking trips, improve safety, and better accommodate those for whom walking is their primary means of transportation.

3.6 Support and implement micromobility options such as shared bicycles, e-bikes, and e-scooters.

Ride New Haven, an electric bike (e-bike) share program, was launched by the City in 2024. It provides electric bikes across the City that can be rented for individual trips or for several hours. The City's shared electric scooter program launched in partnership with Veo Micromobility in 2025. New Haven should support the continued operation of these programs and the development of additional mobility options. It should expand the number of areas users are allowed to begin and end their trips to make it easier and more convenient for new and existing users. By providing convenient, low-cost, and flexible alternatives to cars, micromobility enhances mobility for residents and visitors, particularly for short trips that may not be well served by public transit such as "first and last mile" connections. This can help reduce traffic congestion, ease the strain on parking infrastructure, and create a more efficient transportation network. The City should continue to explore options for providing electric bikes and scooters that are accessible for people with disabilities as a part of these programs. *See also Strategy 4.5 of this chapter.*

3.4 Continue to invest in streetscape projects in New Haven's commercial areas, including downtown.

The City should continue to invest in rebuilding its commercial corridors by improving them for all users and providing streetscape enhancements. These investments can complement and support the City's Neighborhood Commercial Development Initiative (as described on page 71). Streetscape projects improve traffic flow, transit accommodations, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities. These projects may involve rebuilding sidewalks, upgrading lighting and traffic signals, moving or replacing curbs, repaving the roadway, providing bicycle facilities, improving bus stops, and providing other amenities such as street trees, benches, and other street furnishings. Streetscape projects are costly but provide a range of benefits including improved safety and mobility for all users. These projects provide the greatest economic impact when located in commercial districts because of the benefit they provide to local businesses by encouraging walking and providing a more attractive environment for visiting, shopping, and dining. *See also Strategy 4.1 of Economic Opportunity for All.*

3.5 Continue the development of separated bike lanes, prioritizing continuous east-west and north-south routes.

The City has made considerable progress in providing bicycle lanes over the past two decades. As approximately 15% of New Haven roads have dedicated bicycle infrastructure, there remains a need to provide dedicated bicycle lanes, whether on-road or separated, across the City to better connect neighborhoods. Routes that provide east-west and north-south connectivity across the City should be prioritized as these routes have the potential to connect multiple neighborhoods including Downtown. In tandem with expanding the bike lane network, the City should also increase access to secure, weather-protected bicycle parking.

3.7 Continue development of regional greenways and improve and expand the trails system in parks and open spaces.

New Haven's section of the Farmington Canal Heritage Trail demonstrates the benefits of – and need for – these types of spaces for bicyclists and pedestrians get to school, work, and access amenities, and to exercise. The City is continuing to support the development of greenways and trails in its parks and open spaces including the completion of the Farmington Canal Heritage Trail by connecting it to Long Wharf. New Haven should also continue its support for the development of the Shoreline Greenway, which it received a \$9.3 million grant for. The greenway would connect to the Farmington Canal Heritage Trail and travel east along Connecticut's shore. The City should also create a five-year trail and greenway plan specifically to plan for and build dedicated pedestrian and bicycle trails that link to the on-street bike network.

4

Improve bus service and stops.

New Haven has an extensive bus network primarily operated by CTtransit but also supplemented by the Yale Shuttle Service. Service is best in the Downtown area where there are multiple bus routes and stops and a higher frequency of service. In neighborhoods further from Downtown, routes are farther apart, buses don't come as often, and bus stops lack amenities like shelters, benches, and space for getting on and off buses. The improvement of bus services and stops is important to providing an equitable transportation system that provides good services to the residents most in need of those services. Increased transit ridership will also improve traffic and reduce greenhouse gas emissions and other forms of air pollution.

Strategies

4.1 Coordinate with CTtransit to improve and expand bus service with emphasis on under-served areas and communities.

The City should coordinate with CTtransit to improve and expand bus service in neighborhoods where service is limited (such as Westville, East Shore, and East Rock) and where car ownership is low (such as Annex, Fair Haven, and Newhallville). This may require more frequent service, the establishment of new routes, and the expansion of hours of operation. The City should partner with CTtransit to engage teenaged bus riders and other underrepresented groups in decision-making for transit improvements.

4.2 Facilitate the planned implementation of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) service in New Haven.

New Haven will soon have a BRT line as envisioned by the MOVE New Haven initiative. The project has not yet begun construction and coordination between the City and State will be required for its successful implementation. Engagement will be required with communities along its routes to ensure that construction impacts are kept to a minimum and the design and implementation of the service best meets community needs.

4.3 Support the long-term expansion of on-demand microtransit and paratransit services.

The City should support and partner with microtransit (microtransit is technology-enabled, shared transportation service that provides on-demand public transit using vehicles like vans or shuttles) and paratransit (transit service for the disabled) operators to improve first mile connectivity, reduce transfer times, create better trip connections, and provide more travel choices. Paratransit service is provided by the Greater New Haven Transit District. A regional taxi service (Encompass/M7) is also available to New Haven residents. Additionally, the City received a \$3 million grant from the State to pilot on-demand ride service with Via, a microtransit provider. Via NHV now provides wheelchair accessible ride service from fixed locations in New Haven at a low fixed cost. The continuation and expansion of these services is important to meeting the transportation needs of New Haven's residents, particularly those with disabilities and residents that need transportation to or from a location not served by CTtransit.

Case Study

Better Bus Network Redesign, Washington, D.C.

In 2022, Washington D.C. Metro launched the Better Bus Network Redesign (BBNR), the first comprehensive overhaul of Metrobus service in 50 years. This initiative aims to improve bus frequency, reliability, and access for low-income communities and people of color. The redesigned network, set for implementation in June 2025, includes direct routes, faster travel times, and better connections to key destinations. The plan also introduces bus lanes and transit signal priority to reduce delays and improve speed. Public feedback played a key role, ensuring routes align with changing travel patterns and increased service during evenings and weekends.



Pop-up engagement for the BBRN Plan
Source: Washington Metro

4.4 Improve bus stop facilities to ensure a secure and comfortable waiting, boarding, and exiting area at all stops.

Many bus stops in the City are served only by a sidewalk or roadway shoulder and provide little room for waiting. Paved and accessible waiting areas that accommodate wheelchair and other transit users should be provided at all stops. All stops should be inventoried to find which ones do not have waiting areas. Shelters that provide weather protection and shade and benches should be provided at highly used stops. See also Strategy 9.2 of *Climate and Ecological Connections*.

4.5 Improve bicycle and pedestrian facilities connecting to the planned Bus Rapid Transit stops and highly used local stops and ensure that rideshare micromobility services are located at those stops.

The effectiveness of the planned Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) service can be improved by ensuring that transit riders have convenient and accessible connections to bus stops in the form of sidewalks, bike lanes, and safe roadway crossings. Additionally, the BRT stops and stations should be coupled with micromobility services such as Ride New Haven electric bikes and Via NHV rideshare. See also Strategy 3.6 of this chapter.

4.6 Partner with Yale to integrate CTtransit and Yale shuttle service and expand shuttle service access to the public.

The Yale shuttle service provides service to students, faculty, and staff. It provides multiple routes that are concentrated in Downtown, East Rock, and Prospect Hill. The City should facilitate coordination between Yale and CTtransit to better improve linkages between the networks and expanding the Yale service to the general public.

6.9% of New Haven's residents commute to work using transit. This rate is lower than in Bridgeport, Hartford, and Stamford.

Source: American Community Survey, 2023

“The city should provide free bus passes for youth under 18.”

- Youth voice

“New Haven is the perfect sized city to have a vibrant walking and biking and public bus systems. Make it easier to connect from one to the other.”

- Survey participant



Source: CTDOT

Spotlight

MOVE New Haven Bus Rapid Transit

Envisioned by the MOVE New Haven initiative, this project, which is funded through a \$25 million federal grant, will connect the New Haven Green to Hamden and West Haven. It will include 18 new stops and 4 mini-stations, the procurement of 15 new electric buses, dedicated bus-only lanes, and traffic signal priority for buses to enhance travel efficiency. These improvements are designed to increase ridership, reduce travel times, and provide a more reliable and sustainable public transportation option for residents and visitors.

5

Improve traffic flow and reduce traffic congestion.

Smoother traffic flow reduces fuel waste and vehicle emissions, leading to better air quality and lower greenhouse gas emissions. Less congestion means a more reliable transportation system that can better withstand disruptions such as extreme weather events, infrastructure failures, or emergencies. Additionally, reducing congestion supports active and public transportation by making streets safer and more accessible for pedestrians, cyclists, and transit users. This not only enhances livability but also fosters economic growth by improving access to jobs, businesses, and essential services.

Strategies

5.1 Improve signal timing and coordination along major corridors to encourage the smooth flow of traffic at a safe rate of speed.

Well-timed and coordinated traffic signals are crucial to the smooth flow of traffic. When signals are well-timed, and traffic flow is consistent, driver frustration is reduced, leading to safer and more comfortable streets for all. This has the added benefit of making streets safer and more comfortable for all users. Investments such as traffic signal upgrades, traffic control systems and software, and traffic monitoring technology are needed for the City to better manage the flow of traffic. Because many of the busy roadways in the City are state roadways, the City should encourage and support the Connecticut Department of Transportation in making traffic flow improvements to those corridors.

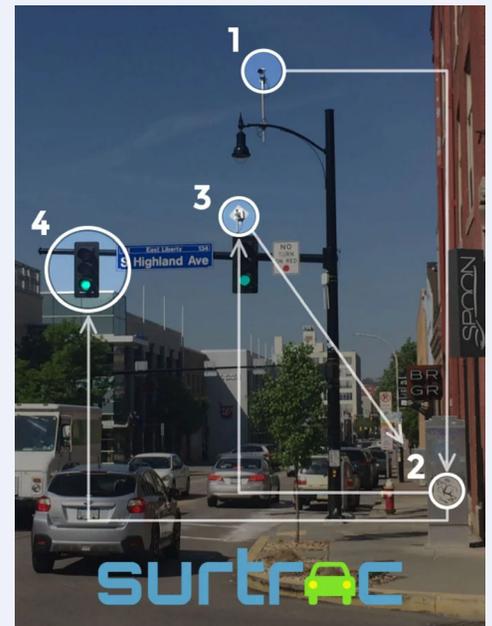
5.2 Collect and analyze traffic flow data and areas of congestion to advance safety for all road users.

Implementing technologies to track and measure traffic can help the City to optimize traffic flow, reduce congestion, and enhance overall transportation safety. The City should then adjust traffic signal timing and make other changes to ensure that traffic flows are aligned with safety standards for multi-use roadways.

Case Study

Scalable Urban Traffic Control System, Pittsburgh, PA

Pittsburgh has effectively implemented smart traffic control technology to enhance traffic flow and reduce congestion. The City deployed the Scalable Urban Traffic Control (SURTRAC) system, an adaptive traffic control solution developed by Carnegie Mellon University's Robotics Institute. SURTRAC dynamically adjusts traffic signals in real-time based on current traffic conditions, optimizing the movement of vehicles through urban intersections. This decentralized system allows each intersection to independently compute optimal signal timings while coordinating with neighboring intersections to improve overall traffic efficiency. Initial deployments in Pittsburgh's East Liberty neighborhood resulted in significant improvements, including a reduction in travel times by over 25% and a decrease in wait times by approximately 40%.

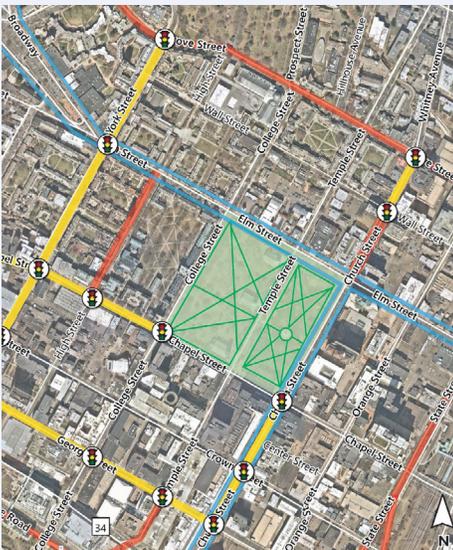


Components of the SURTRAC system
Source: Carnegie Mellon University

Spotlight

New Haven 1-Way to 2-Way Conversion Study

The goal of this project was to identify streets in New Haven's Downtown that would be most productively converted from 1-way to 2-way operation. The conversion of those streets is intended to improve safety and efficiency for all transportation modes, primarily pedestrians, bicyclists and transit-users. The recommended conversions align with Vision Zero safety principles and the City's Safe Routes For All Active Transportation Plan. The study recommended four roadways for conversion: Chapel Street, Church Street, George Street, and York Street. Of these roadways, only York Street has been converted between South Frontage Road and Martin Luther King Boulevard. The conversions are expected to provide a range of benefits including reducing traffic, slowing vehicle speeds, simplifying transit routes, and supporting businesses by improving access and visibility.



Source: SLR

5.3 Continue implementation of the 2023 plan for one-way-to-two-way street conversions.

The City should continue to convert streets from one-way to two-way traffic, building upon the recommendations of the 2023 1-Way to 2-Way Conversion Study and recent successes with conversions on York Street. The Study also recommends the conversion of portions of George Street, Church Street, and Chapel Street. Two-way streets improve navigation by providing more direct routes, reducing unnecessary detours, and making it easier for drivers to reach businesses and services. They tend to slow down vehicle speeds compared to wide one-way roads, reducing the severity of crashes and making streets safer for all users. Two-way streets also enhance flexibility in the transportation network, allowing for better traffic distribution and alternative routing in case of road closures or emergencies.

5.4 Replace signalized intersections and all-way stops with traffic circles or roundabouts to increase traffic flow and improve safety, where appropriate.

The City should evaluate the feasibility of replacing traffic signals and stop sign-controlled intersections at high crash locations with roundabouts or traffic circles as it did at the intersection of Chapel Street and Yale Avenue. Unlike a signalized intersection, roundabouts reduce vehicle conflict points, leading to less severe crashes, especially for pedestrians and cyclists. Lower speeds within roundabouts enhance safety while still allowing for smooth traffic flow. From a resiliency perspective, roundabouts continue functioning during power outages, avoiding disruptions caused by traffic signal failures. They also improve traffic efficiency by reducing idling, stops, and delays, which helps decrease congestion. Sustainability is another key benefit, as roundabouts reduce fuel consumption and vehicle emissions by minimizing stop-and-go traffic.

New Haven experiences more travel hours lost to congestion per year (27 per automobile commuter) than Hartford or Bridgeport, but fewer than Stamford and Providence.

Source: American Community Survey, 2023

6

Better manage parking and ensure that parking supply aligns with future needs.

Actively managing the City owned on- and off-street parking supply ensures the optimal use of available spaces, leading to increased turnover and accessibility to businesses and services. Expanding paid parking systems encourages the turnover of vehicles in high-demand areas, making parking more available. Integrating smart parking technologies offers real-time data on parking availability, enabling drivers to locate spots efficiently and decreasing the time spent searching for parking. This reduction in search time not only alleviates traffic congestion but also contributes to lower vehicle emissions, supporting environmental sustainability. A well-managed parking system can generate significant revenue for the City, which can be reinvested to improve parking facilities and management.

Strategies

6.1 Develop a parking master plan and evaluate use of City-owned on- and off-street parking facilities on a regular basis.

A parking master plan would guide the development, management, and optimization of parking resources across the City. By assessing current parking conditions and anticipating future needs, the plan would ensure that parking facilities support the City's broader goals related to transportation, land use, and economic development. Ongoing tracking of parking utilization and evaluation of parking facilities and policies is key to effectively managing parking. As part of this process, the City should explore the establishment of parking districts, similar to the Downtown district, in other areas of the City. These districts would enable the City to charge for on-street parking in designated areas and would support the operation of public off-street parking facilities.

6.2 Increase shared use of existing parking infrastructure, including public and private facilities.

New Haven has over 8,000 parking spaces in its public garages and parking lots in Downtown and surrounding neighborhoods, but the supply of private parking exceeds this amount. Through coordination with the New Haven Parking Authority and private property owners, the City could expand the supply of parking that is available to the public, reducing the need to build new parking facilities and allowing for the redevelopment of existing parking facilities that may no longer be needed through increased shared parking use. When developing new parking garages, consider designs that are adaptive, so that space can be converted for different uses, if necessary, in the future.

Case Study

SFpark, San Francisco, CA

In 2011, the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency launched SFpark, a comprehensive initiative to manage both on- and off-street parking. This program introduced smart parking meters that adjust prices based on location, time of day, and demand, aiming to maintain approximately 15% vacancy rates on each block. By 2014, studies indicated that SFpark met its occupancy goals, reducing the time drivers spent searching for parking by 50%, thereby alleviating congestion and enhancing urban mobility. In 2022 the City began replacing 18,000 parking meters to fully enable variable pricing and accept contactless payments.



Source: San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency

6.3 Explore the feasibility of implementing variable pricing for on-street parking in the Downtown area to better manage demand.

In 2018, Park New Haven introduced a pilot program for variable parking pricing in the Downtown area. Variable pricing parking adjusts parking rates based on real-time demand, offering several benefits. By increasing prices during peak periods and lowering them during off-peak times, New Haven can optimize parking space utilization, ensuring availability and reducing the time drivers spend searching for spots. Implementing variable pricing for on-street parking requires the installation of smart parking meters and occupancy sensors to enable the tracking of usage and payment systems to allow for variable pricing. The City should follow up on the pilot program by implementing permanent measures.

6.4 Remove parking minimums and consider implementing parking maximums in the New Haven Zoning Ordinance.

The Inclusionary Zoning ordinance eliminates parking minimums for residential projects that meet the requirements of the ordinance. The Whalley Avenue Commercial Gateway District and the Long Wharf mixed-use zone have established parking maximums. Implementing parking maximums (limits on the number of parking spaces allowed for new developments) can reduce the prevalence of expansive parking lots, thereby minimizing impervious surfaces that contribute to increased stormwater runoff and urban heat islands. Eliminating parking minimums allows developers to right-size parking based on location, tenant demand, and other factors.

These approaches encourage more sustainable land use, promoting higher-density, mixed-use developments that support walking, cycling, and public transit. Economically, limiting parking supply can lead to more efficient land use and reduce development costs associated with building large parking facilities. This efficiency can result in more affordable housing options and provide additional space for community amenities rather than extensive parking areas. Reducing zoning parking requirements requires careful study of potential impacts to the neighborhood.

6.5 Evaluate City ordinances and revise or provide parking requirements as needed for all vehicle types including bicycles, electric vehicle charging, and shared or rentable vehicles.

New Haven's Zoning Ordinance provides bicycle and electric vehicle charging space requirements, but those requirements should be reviewed and updated as needed to meeting future needs. More specifically, the City should continue work on a local policy for EV charging infrastructure that exceeds what's required by State law. Additionally, the City should consider providing parking requirements for other vehicle types such as bikeshare electric bikes and scooters and short-term rental vehicles such as Zip Car.

6.6 Evaluate accessible parking needs in coordination with businesses, residents, disability advocates and other important stakeholders.

Accessible parking spaces are required in accordance with State law and building codes but these requirements do not ensure that accessible parking is available where needed or in the quantity needed. The City should identify accessible parking needs and identify measures that can be taken to meet those needs, including providing an accessible parking requirement within the zoning ordinance that exceeds what is required by State law and building code. If parking minimums are reduced or eliminated through zoning, such as the Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance, considerations or modifications should be made to ensure that accessible parking is not impacted. *See also Goal 3 of Civic Services and Experiences.*

7

Make transportation infrastructure and services more resilient and sustainable.

Enhancing a New Haven's transportation infrastructure and services to be more resilient and sustainable requires changes and improvements to policies, practices, technology, and infrastructure. Improving transportation infrastructure to withstand climate-related challenges is essential. This involves reinforcing structures to endure extreme weather events and incorporating green infrastructure to manage stormwater effectively. Encouraging modes of transportation that minimize environmental impact is crucial. Investing in public transit systems and concentrating development around transit is a more sustainable approach to development. Transitioning to electric vehicles for public and private transport reduces greenhouse gas emissions and air pollutants. This shift supports sustainable mobility and contributes to improved air quality.

Strategies

7.1 Align transportation activities and plans with the transportation goals of the City's Climate and Sustainability Framework.

The Framework identifies multiple goals for transportation with emphasis on expanding the City's transportation network, increasing the use of mass transit, supporting transit-oriented development, transitioning to hybrid and electric vehicles, and improving outreach and education. The City should implement the recommendations of the Framework which are aligned with the transportation recommendations of this plan.

7.2 Develop a comprehensive City-wide transportation asset management plan.

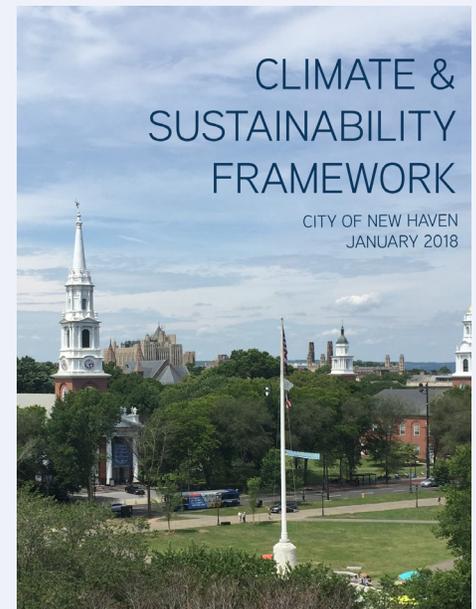
The City should develop a comprehensive City-wide transportation asset management plan for its roads, bridges, sidewalks, and transit systems—by using data to prioritize investments, extend asset life, reduce long-term costs, and improve safety and reliability for all users. This will support more efficient budgeting and ensure that critical transportation systems meet current and future community needs

Spotlight

New Haven Climate & Sustainability Framework

New Haven developed its Climate & Sustainability Framework in 2018. The Framework provides recommendations intended to advance both climate and sustainability objectives and to do New Haven's part in limiting temperature rise to two degrees Celsius. The Framework provides recommendations for six areas including electric power, buildings, transportation, materials management, land use and green infrastructure, and food.

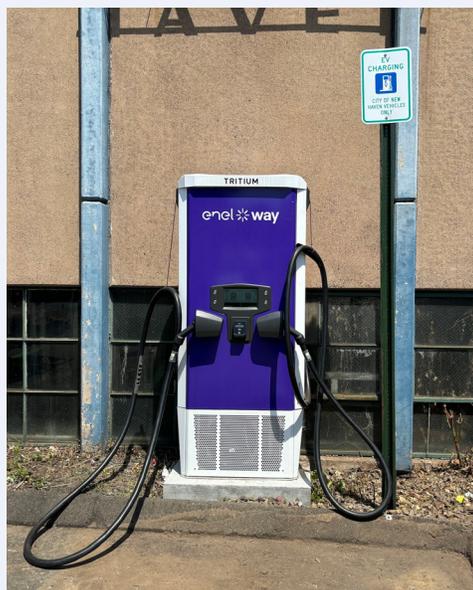
In addition to its goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions, the framework seeks to: create safe and convenient transportation routes accessible for biking, walking, and public transportation; save residents, businesses, and the City money on utility bills by switching to renewable energy; promote local farms and healthy nutrition options; build resilience to future climate impacts; reduce waste and toxic pollution; enable development of green jobs and a local clean energy economy; and improve public health and wellbeing.



Spotlight

New Haven Fleet Electrification

In 2021, the City adopted its Community Electrification Resolution, committing the City to electrifying its municipal fleet by 2030. As of 2024 New Haven had 45 electric vehicles, comprising nearly 8% of its municipal fleet. This includes the purchase of 45 electric Chevy Bolts. In addition to reducing dependence on fossil fuels and reducing CO2 emissions, the move towards electric vehicles is expected to reduce fleet maintenance cost and improve local air quality. Additionally, in 2023, the City was awarded \$25 million for the MOVE New Haven project which will include the purchase of 15 new electric buses for a planned bus rapid transit system. In support of its fleet electrification the City is installing charging stations and improving electrical infrastructure to accommodate vehicle charging.



City of New Haven EV Charging Station
Source: New Haven Independent

This icon indicates that this strategy is related to the New Haven Zoning Ordinance. Click to skip to the next related strategy.



7.3

Evaluate and revise the New Haven Zoning Ordinance to better support development along existing commercial corridors and along existing and planned transit routes.

The City should review and revise, if where needed, its zoning ordinance to support higher density development along its existing commercial corridors and transit routes where adequate transportation infrastructure and transit services are available. By promoting compact, mixed-use development near transit, the City can reduce reliance on private vehicles, leading to decreased greenhouse gas emissions and improved air quality. Development near transit and in mixed-use areas also reduces the amount of parking required, reducing urban heat island effect and stormwater runoff otherwise generated by large parking lots.



7.4

Continue progress towards electrifying City and transit fleets.

New Haven needs to increase its progress towards electrifying its fleet of vehicles including public safety, public works, and vehicles for other departments and divisions. The City should consider exploring purchasing options through the Electric Vehicle Purchasing Collaborative, which provides reduced costs and assistance with transitioning fleets. The City should also coordinate with CTtransit to further support the transition to an electric fleet and work with Yale to support the transition of their shuttle fleet to electric vehicles. The New Haven Division facility of CTtransit was one of the State's first facilities to undergo upgrades for electrification and now provides support for vehicle charging. This will help to support the electric bus fleet that is planned for the MOVE New Haven bus rapid transit project, but the rest of New Haven's bus transit system should also be converted to electric. *See also Strategy 1.2 of Climate and Ecological Connections.*

7.5

Continue improvements to infrastructure such as local bridges to make that infrastructure more resilient and more bicycle and pedestrian friendly.

The City's infrastructure requires ongoing maintenance and periodic reconstruction to ensure that it is effective, safe, and resilient. Infrastructure such as bridges are an important and sometimes unnoticed component of the City's transportation network. The continued maintenance and improvement of the City's bridges is critical to ensuring that those structures are resilient to increasingly severe storm and flooding events. Additionally, major repairs or reconstruction of infrastructure provides an opportunity to improve or reconfigure that infrastructure to accommodate a wider range of users including bicyclists and pedestrians.

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7. Climate & Ecological Connections



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Climate & Ecological Connections

The Vision

New Haven recognizes the complex interconnections between climate change, urban ecosystems, public health, pollution, open space, and access to the water. New Haven will become an environmentally just community where all residents can thrive, by working with natural systems to nurture human and environmental health and mitigate and adapt to climate change.

Goals

- 1 Reduce pollution and greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation sector and residential, commercial, industrial and City development.
- 2 Reduce the generation of waste and increase the diversion of recyclables and organics.
- 3 Improve the condition of parks and open space and ensure that they are safe and accessible to all.
- 4 Expand tree cover and provide better care for street trees.
- 5 Expand farming and gardening opportunities for all.
- 6 Closely guide land use in the coastal management district, including waterfront development.
- 7 Adapt to sea level rise and reduce flood risks.
- 8 Ensure that streams, rivers, and coastal waters are safe and accessible to all.
- 9 Improve facilities and infrastructure in response to extreme heat.
- 10 Support agencies, communities, and neighborhoods working together to become more resilient to climate change impacts.

1

Reduce pollution and greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation sector and residential, commercial, industrial and City development.

New Haven is addressing the climate crisis by aiming to end community-wide greenhouse gas emissions by 2030. To achieve this, the city adopted a Climate Emergency Resolution in 2019 and a Community Electrification Resolution in 2021, committing to electrifying city buildings and vehicles by 2030. Additionally, the city approved the Safe Routes for All Active Transportation Plan in 2022 to improve bicycle, pedestrian, and transit infrastructure. These efforts build on earlier initiatives like the 2018 Climate and Sustainability Framework and the MOVE New Haven transportation study. Reducing emissions will improve public health, air and water quality, mitigate climate change, and provide economic savings to businesses and residents. The focus of this goal is on larger-scale solutions and holding institutions accountable for emission reductions.

Strategies

1.1 Implement recommendations of New Haven's Climate and Sustainability Framework relating to building and energy use.

The Sustainability Framework established a goal of 55% reduction of 2001 emissions by 2030. It provides specific guidance for the improvement and electrification of buildings and building systems to assist in meeting this target. Additionally, the Community Electrification Resolution adopted in 2021 commits the City to electrifying City buildings by 2030.



1.2 Support the transition to electric vehicles (EVs) and the development of EV charging stations across the City.

Transitioning to electric vehicle use is key to reducing vehicle emissions that contribute to greenhouse gases and cause harmful air pollution. The City should continue the transition of its fleet of vehicles and enable a wide-scale transition to EVs by supporting and requiring the development of charging stations. While many charging stations are already available in parking garages and parking lots, incorporating more charging stations into public parking facilities and development and redevelopment projects will help remove barriers to use of electric vehicles. *See also Strategy 7.4 of Move Together.*

1.3 Develop neighborhood-scale platforms for clean and affordable renewable energy to support densifying areas of the City.

A neighborhood-scale platform for clean and affordable renewable energy is a localized system that generates, stores, and distributes power using sources like solar, wind, and geothermal. These platforms incorporate technologies such as microgrids, battery storage, and smart energy management to enhance efficiency, resilience, and affordability. By enabling energy sharing, stabilizing costs, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions, they support decarbonization while increasing community resilience. The planned Union Station Area Thermal Energy Network geothermal project is an example of this type of system. The City should continue to work towards its successful implementation and use it as a model for similar opportunities across New Haven.

1.4 Expand the deployment of solar energy systems across the City.

The City should take a leadership position by continuing its progress towards installing solar energy systems at municipal buildings, schools, and parking lots. This should include new facilities and existing buildings. Numerous programs are in place statewide for solar installations on private properties, ranging in scale from entities that work directly with single-family property owners to entities like the Connecticut Green Bank that can assist larger-scale deployments. While the City cannot require solar deployment in private developments, promoting existing programs can help reduce confusion about choices and options that are difficult for property owners to navigate.

This icon indicates that this strategy is directly related to another strategy. Click to jump to the related strategy.

Spotlight

Union Station Area Thermal Energy Network

The Union Station Area Thermal Energy Network (USATEN) is a planned geothermal system that will provide sustainable heating and cooling to New Haven's Union Station and the adjacent Union Square development, a proposed mixed-income housing project. The system will utilize approximately 285 geothermal boreholes, reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 76% and cutting heating costs for residents by 50%. It would reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 63,000 metric tons through 2050

Supported by a \$9.47 million EPA Climate Pollution Reduction Grant, the project aims to eliminate on-site fossil fuel use while creating job and apprenticeship opportunities, particularly for underserved communities. USATEN represents a major step toward urban decarbonization and serves as a model for integrating clean energy into City infrastructure.



Rendering of planned development in Union Station area.
Source: Union Station Partnership

1.5 Expand the electrification of heating and cooling systems in buildings across the City.

The City's Community Electrification Resolution, adopted in 2021, commits it to electrifying City buildings by 2030. Heating and cooling systems powered by electricity (whether from the grid or from local renewable sources) are important tools for reducing emissions from sources like traditional oil-fired or gas-fired heating systems. To achieve its own progress with climate action and set an example for others, the City should transition heating and cooling systems used in municipal buildings and schools. This should include installations at new facilities and existing buildings. The City should also work with New Haven Public Schools as well as authorities and agencies such as the Port Authority, Elm City Communities, and the Airport Authority to advance electrification through collaboration on grants (or serving as the grantee), local regulatory approvals, and sharing planning capacity. *See also Strategy 10.5 of Civic Services and Experiences.*

1.6 Connect building owners with programs and financing to support energy efficiency upgrades.

The City should connect building owners with programs and financing such as Home Energy Solutions, Home Energy Solutions-Income Eligible, Energize CT rebates, C-PACE (Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy) program, which offers 100% financing for energy upgrades. The City should track and promote these incentive programs to achieve greater energy efficiencies in buildings.

1.7 Strengthen City procurement standards and specifications to include sustainable materials and systems.

The City's Engineering Standards currently include low-carbon concrete mixes. Expand the standards across departments for purchasing/contracting to include sustainable materials and systems.

1.8 Reduce light and noise pollution in the City.

The City should prioritize the reduction of light and noise pollution to improve the quality of life of residents and better protect wildlife such as birds. This can be accomplished through strengthening and more strictly enforcing the City's exterior lighting ordinance and by more strictly enforcing existing noise ordinances. Additionally, integrating green infrastructure, like street trees can naturally dampen sound and limit light spread. Public education campaigns and stakeholder engagement are also critical to raise awareness and foster community support for reducing these forms of pollution.

2

Reduce the generation of waste and increase the diversion of recyclables and organics.

Connecticut's waste is being shipped hundreds of miles out of state for placement in landfills. The volume of waste produced and the energy spent to transport that waste is unsustainable. Reducing waste generation and increasing the diversion of recyclables and organics lowers is critical to reducing the amount of waste that is shipped out of state and reducing the associated greenhouse gas emissions with its transportation. By reducing waste and increasing recycling and options for organics disposal, New Haven can do its part to lessen its contribution to this problem. A shift in the City's approach to waste also creates opportunities to repurpose materials into new products, use organics to support local composting and gardening, and create jobs in recycling and composting industries while promoting a cleaner, healthier, and more sustainable environment.

Strategies

2.1 Expand the operations of the New Haven Solid Waste and Recycling Authority (NHSWRA).

Making the NHSWRA convenient for residents, commercial entities, and haulers to use is integral to reducing unauthorized dumping. Programs must include wide promotion as well as convenient hours and locations. Current drop-off hours are limited 9 am to noon for City residents, which limits access to the facility. In support of this and other measures recommended by this plan, NHSWRA should increase the level and consistency of staffing.

2.2 Increase recycling and reuse of products and materials.

While the City enjoys an extensive recycling program that includes paper, glass, metal, and plastic items, sustained education and messaging is needed for program success. Single stream recycling is challenging and costly due to the sorting requirements, and inappropriate disposal of non-recyclable items in the single stream can offset benefits. Curbside recycling is only available to residences with six or fewer units. An expansion in the number of allowable buildings and properties for curbside collection could help improve recycling rates. Neighborhood drop-off points could provide an option for people who are not well-served by existing services. Coordination with property owners and landlords is needed to improve recycling rates and practices at multi-unit properties.

Programs such as Hometown Recycling Days, which provides convenient opportunities to drop off waste and recyclables should be provided more consistently. Given the annual turnover in occupancy of units associated with New Haven's universities, the proper disposal of bulky waste items left behind is a regular challenge. Coordination with property owners and landlords is critical to identify and remove the barriers to proper waste disposal and recycling. Additionally, the City should work to divert bulky waste items from disposal pathways to reuse and recycling (freecycle) programs. A multi-tiered approach involving City departments, the LCI, Public Works, the New Haven Solid Waste & Recycling Authority, and the Office of Climate and Sustainability Recycling Educator is needed to reduce waste and increase recycling success rates.

Case Study

Boulder Universal Zero Waste Ordinance, Boulder, CO

Boulder adopted its Universal Zero Waste Ordinance in 2015 with the aim of diverting 85% of waste from landfills. At the time of adoption, the City diverted about 40% of its waste. The ordinance requires that all properties, businesses, and events provide recycling and composting services alongside regular waste collection. As of 2023, the City achieved a 56% waste diversion rate, corresponding to the recovery of approximately 91,000 tons of material, with 38% of waste being recycled, 17% being composted, and 1% being reused.



Source: City of Boulder

2.3 Expand the use of food recovery and composting.

Food recovery programs, which redirect left over food retailers and service providers, should be better used to divert food from the waste stream and instead provide it to people in need. When food cannot be recovered or is not suitable for recovery, composting should be used. Composting and composting education programs are important tools for reducing waste, as they empower people to take their own steps to reduce waste production while enjoying the benefits of composting. The City should remain engaged with community-led composting and education that promotes composting to ensure that the messaging is consistent with sustainability efforts and fits into Citywide programs like food scrap diversion. The City should continue its progress towards developing a food scrap diversion sorting facility at the New Haven transfer station, which would enable curbside collection of food waste separate from other garbage. Yard waste is already collected and composted, but more capacity could allow enhanced collection. Overall, a comprehensive strategy should be developed for all types of excess food and organic waste, from food and yard waste to organic wastes originating from commercial facilities.

2.4 Ban specific packaging for takeout food.

Takeout food packaging is a challenge in New Haven because of the density of food service establishments, the types of packaging used, and the inability to recycle packaging due to its composition or condition after use, and packaging often ends up as litter. In addition to the Styrofoam packaging ban already in place, the City should explore banning other types of problematic food packaging such as black plastic containers that are not readily visible to automated recycling scanners, plastic bags, and other plastic-based single-use containers and utensils.

2.5 Support state policies and regulatory changes aimed at reducing waste.

The City should advocate for stronger State policies and regulations for the reduction of waste statewide and in local communities. With a greater commitment towards this issue across the state, cities and towns will be able to work more collaboratively to address the issue of waste. The City should work through its legislature to encourage the States to enact regulations requiring the commercial producers of waste to assume a greater responsibility for waste that they generate.



Source: Haven's Harvest

Spotlight

Haven's Harvest, New Haven

Haven's Harvest is a food recovery program serving the Greater New Haven area. Their core belief is that good food should not be wasted. They partner with grocers, bakeries, farmer's markets, food distributors, universities, caterers, event sites to redistribute excess food. Their volunteers transfer food directly from donors to community partner sites such as food pantries and soup kitchens with most food staying within a 15-minute ride. In 2023 alone, they recovered over 1.5 million pounds of food, preventing 800,000 pounds of CO2 emissions.

3

Improve the condition of parks and open space and ensure that they are safe and accessible to all.

Fifteen percent of New Haven is covered by parks. They range in size from small playgrounds to large parks and open space areas like East Rock Park. In addition to providing opportunities for recreation, the City's parks improve air and water quality, reduce urban heat, support biodiversity, and can include productive landscapes where food and flowers are cultivated. Access to these green spaces enhances mental and physical health, encourages recreation and social interaction, and strengthens community cohesion. New Haven's parks also help manage stormwater and mitigate climate impacts, making the City more resilient. The City's parks and open space contribute to a more livable, equitable, and sustainable City and their maintenance and improvement is important to their sustainability and the community's enjoyment of those spaces.

Strategies

3.1 Make investments in the parks system using an equity investment strategy.

An equitable improvement and investment strategy for City parks would direct funding and resources toward neighborhoods with limited access to parks and green spaces. This approach would result in improving connectivity to existing parks, improving conditions in parks, and potentially identifying new park space. In 2025, New Haven joined the 2025 cohort of the 10-Minute Walk program, a Trust for Public Land national program that engages city leaders to close the park equity divide so that every resident has access to a quality park or green space within a 10-minute walk of home.

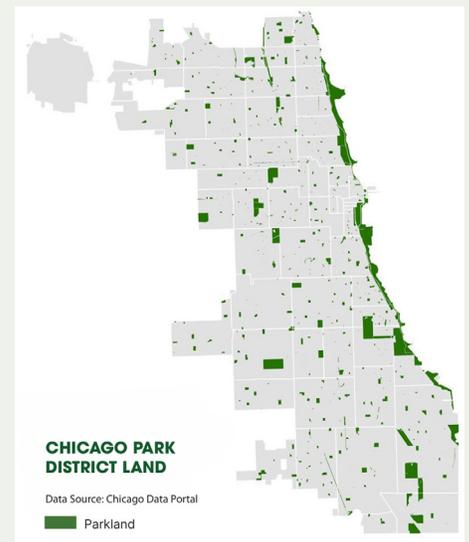
3.2 Continue to enhance asset management strategies to guide maintenance, repair and replacement of all park features.

To ensure that parks are safe and accessible to all in an equitable manner, resources need to be directed to where they are most needed by the community. Asset management is instrumental to this approach. In the context of parks and recreation, assets include park properties, playgrounds, athletic courts, signage, pavilions, maintenance equipment, and vehicles. Asset management is a method of understanding assets in a format that allows improved monitoring and maintenance. Asset management can include a system of inspections, tracking, preventative maintenance, repairs, and replacements. It can help balance competing interests to ensure the equitable distribution of resources.

Case Study

Chicago Park District, Chicago, IL

The Chicago Park District (CPD) uses an Enterprise Asset Management (EAM) system to oversee its network of over 600 parks and associated facilities. This system enables comprehensive tracking of park assets, including equipment, infrastructure, and natural resources, allowing for proactive maintenance. The EAM system ensures that labor, materials, and funding are efficiently distributed across park sites. It also provides analytical tools to assess asset performance, plan capital improvements, and prioritize projects based on condition assessments and usage patterns. Additionally, the system supports regulatory compliance by scheduling inspections and documenting maintenance activities, helping the CPD meet safety and environmental regulations. By adopting an EAM system, the Chicago Park District enhances the longevity and quality of its assets, ensuring that Chicago's parks remain vibrant, sustainable, and accessible for residents and visitors alike.



Source: Chicago Park District

Spotlight

Long Wharf Park Improvements

Long Wharf Park, located along the New Haven Harbor is a passive open space park featuring a 1.6-mile out-and-back pathway with views of the harbor. Adjacent to the park is the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Park and the Long Wharf Nature Preserve, which provides habitat for local wildlife. The park is known for its array of food trucks, offering diverse culinary options that attract both locals and visitors. Efforts are ongoing to enhance the area's accessibility and resilience, including plans to improve connections between Long Wharf and surrounding neighborhoods as envisioned by the Long Wharf Responsible Growth Plan.

In 2023 New Haven received a \$12.1 million grant from the Connecticut Community Investment Fund to help transform Long Wharf Park consistent with the vision established by the Long Wharf Responsible Growth Plan. Improvements will include a visitor's center, a restored park and wildlife refuge, new furnishings, lighting, playgrounds, bike paths, outdoor fitness, walkways, and a food truck pavilion. The project will also include resiliency measures.



Source: City of New Haven

3.3 Fully activate the City's four nature centers and provide consistent programming opportunities for all City residents.

New Haven's nature centers provide a wide range of facilities and services. For example, the Barnard Nature Center is the newest building in the New Haven Parks System, featuring a classroom, green roof, and park ranger office. The nature centers should be fully utilized with consistent programming with the goal of providing programming that is available to all residents.

3.4 Continue to implement Natural Areas Management to actively manage park land for nature-based solutions to climate change.

Climate change is expected to alter natural landscapes through shifting vegetation species, changing precipitation and hydrology, occurrence of more flashy droughts, and sea level rise leading to frequent contact with water in areas that were not previously flooded. Adapting facilities like pavilions and trails will be straightforward, but adapting natural areas requires a comprehensive approach. Implementing natural areas management across City parks will help set priorities and time frames for incorporating solutions that protect and help natural resources adapt while providing quality park experiences for people and habitats relying on parks. Natural areas management can be expanded to other public land beyond the park system.

17% of New Haven (over 2,100 acres) is occupied by parks.

"Parks should include activities and features for teens."

- Youth voice

4

Expand tree cover and provide better care for street trees.

Trees improve air quality, reduce urban heat island effects, and enhance stormwater management. They absorb carbon dioxide, filter pollutants, and provide shade that lowers temperatures, reducing energy costs for cooling. Trees also help prevent flooding by absorbing rainwater and reducing runoff. Additionally, they improve mental and physical well-being, increase property values, and create more attractive, livable urban spaces. They also supporting biodiversity providing habitat for birds and other wildlife.

Strategies

4.1 Complete an Urban and Community Forest Master Plan.

In 2023, New Haven was awarded a \$360,000 grant from the United States Forest Service to support urban forestry including the development of an urban forestry plan, although funding is currently frozen by the federal government. Development of a plan is needed to guide the City in maintaining and expanding its urban forest. A masterplan would support the inclusion and integration of urban forestry into all aspects of City planning, codes, ordinances, and policies. The City should continue to pursue alternative funding sources and partnerships to complete and implement the plan.

4.2 Plant new shade trees in existing developed spaces and along roadways to enhance livability and provide shade.

The City should coordinate with and support the efforts of the Urban Resources Initiative (URI) to plant trees where they would provide the most benefit to residents including developed areas and along roadways. In 2023 URI was awarded a \$3 million federal grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Urban and Community Forestry Grant Program to plant an additional 2,500 trees across New Haven over the next five years. While this funding is currently being withheld, the City should continue to partner with URI to expand tree planting and target the 2,500-tree goal. Key neighborhoods for expanding tree canopy include Long Wharf, Fair Haven, the Hill, Downtown, the Annex, Dwight, and West River. Within these neighborhoods, the City should focus on strategic areas—for example, the Resilient Fair Haven concept plan identified the Mill River corridor and northeast Fair Haven as key areas to expand urban tree canopy to help reduce heat exposure and provide co-benefits related to trees.

Spotlight

Resilient Fair Haven

The Resilient Fair Haven project focused on developing adaptation strategies to mitigate current and future climate induced impacts to community assets and transportation corridors in Fair Haven, as well as developing strategies to help mitigate the impacts of extreme heat for community residents. resilience strategies and actions. A key component of the plan is the development of living shorelines including the planting of trees and plants to improve resilience to coastal storm events and the improvement of the neighborhoods urban forest.



Source: Resilient Fair Haven

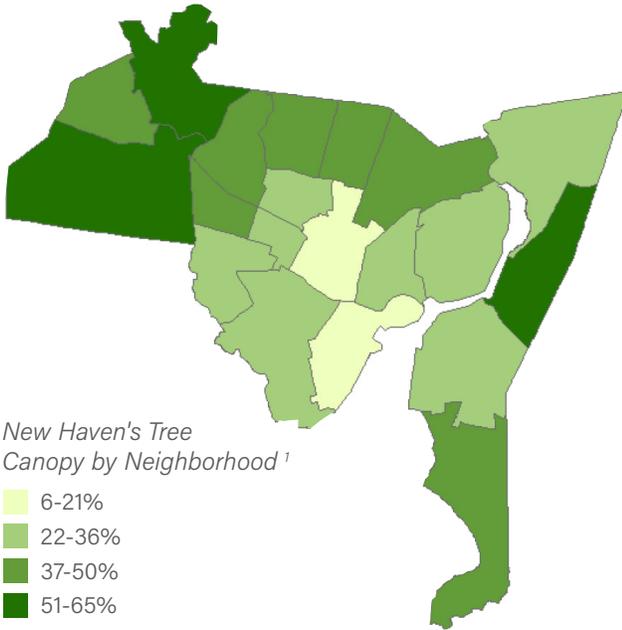
This icon indicates that this strategy is related to the New Haven Zoning Ordinance. Click to skip to the next related strategy.

4.3 Maintain existing trees and replace trees with more appropriate species where needed.

The City's Parks Department, which oversees maintenance of trees, should continue its work to maintain trees to maximize their life and to minimize their impacts to surrounding infrastructure. While trees provide important benefits, they require maintenance and eventually will need to be replaced. Selection of new trees should consider changing climate conditions, the potential impact of the tree on surrounding infrastructure, and the appropriate species for unique site conditions. For example, in Fair Haven, Criscuolo Park and Quinnipiac River Park are coastal parks that could benefit from additional trees, carefully selected to ensure salt-tolerance.

4.4 Strengthen tree requirements for new developments and strengthen requirements to maintain existing trees.

The City has several regulatory tools available for requiring trees in new developments and for maintaining existing trees. For example, the New Haven Zoning Ordinance provides clear standards for trees in public plazas. The zoning should be amended to also require or incentivize the planting of trees in association with any development project or the establishment of impervious surface such as the construction of a parking lot. The City should also ensure that planting trees and other vegetation is incentivized in the Reflective Heat Impact ordinance (NHZO Section 60.2) which is designed to mitigate contribution to Urban Heat Island Effect by new developments.



More than 4,400 acres of New Haven is covered by tree canopy representing 38% of all land in the City.

Source: University of Vermont, 2009



Source: Urban Resources Initiative

Spotlight

Urban Resources Initiative, New Haven

URI is a non-profit organization and program of the Yale School of the Environment. Its mission is to empower and support communities in the restoration, stewardship and enjoyment of the urban forest and nature in New Haven. URI works with local New Haven community groups and residents to replant, restore, and reclaim the urban environment. They focus on social and physical renewal of New Haven's community and environment.

¹ 2009 Urban Tree Canopy Report

5

Expand farming and gardening opportunities for all.

Urban agriculture and farming (including growing vegetables, fruit trees, flowers, and keeping chickens and bees) enhances food security, improves public health, and promotes environmental sustainability. It increases access to fresh, locally grown produce, reducing reliance on long-distance food supply chains and lowering carbon emissions. Urban farms also help reduce urban heat island effects, improve air quality, and manage stormwater through green infrastructure. Additionally, they help to build stronger communities, provide educational opportunities, and create economic benefits by supporting local jobs and small businesses.

Strategies

5.1 Implement the recommendations of the Urban Agriculture Master Plan.

The Urban Agriculture Master Plan was developed in 2023 by New Haven's Food System Policy Division (FSPD) and a sixty-person Community Advisory Board to support the growth of agriculture practices in New Haven to create a community-rooted, actionable vision for the growth of food and farming in New Haven. Implementation of the Plan will require the coordination of multiple departments, divisions, and offices across the City, through leadership by the FSPD.

“Increase green space and gardening resources in neighborhoods!”

- Survey participant

5.2 Recognize and support the importance of aquaculture.

The City should recognize and support the educational, commercial, and environmental aquaculture initiatives in New Haven. The Sound School plays a central role by engaging students in hands-on marine science and aquaculture projects, including fish cultivation and oyster reef restoration in New Haven Harbor. These efforts are bolstered by partnerships with institutions like Southern Connecticut State University and Connecticut Sea Grant, which have secured significant funding to develop aquaculture career pathways.

5.3 Change policies and processes to support the growth of urban agriculture in New Haven.

The City should review its ordinances and policies, including its zoning ordinance, and update those as needed to support both indoor and outdoor forms of urban agricultural uses.

- 5.4** Support residents in the exploration of options for new and/or expanded community gardens, particularly in neighborhoods that are currently lacking such resources.

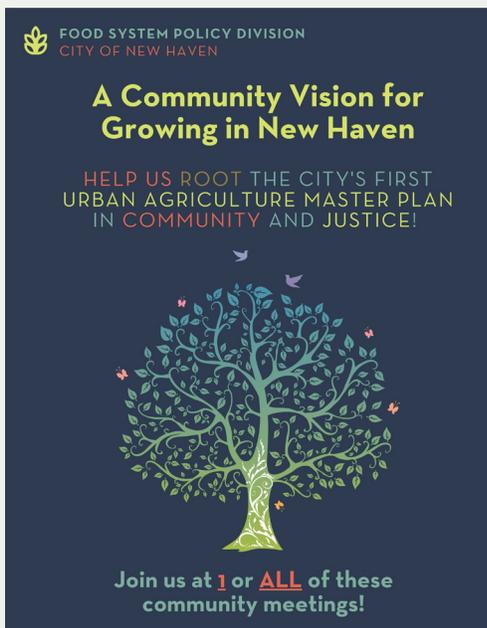
One of the recommendations of the Urban Agriculture Master Plan is the expansion of options for community gardens, including new locations and larger operations where possible, to serve additional residents. The City should consider the conversion of its City-owned "sliver" lots to urban gardens where appropriate and develop a program to support local residents to improve those spaces for gardening, and facilitate the transfer of this land into ownership, trust, or other forms of long-term protection for agricultural use. These programs should be independent from and not reliant on any one or collection of organizations.

- 5.5** Increase access to information, resources, and opportunities related to food and agriculture.

Sustained communications and education are necessary components of ensuring that people can learn about the benefits of urban agriculture and are empowered to do their own gardening or participate in opportunities locally. The City's Food System Policy Division should act as a clearinghouse for urban agriculture information, educational materials, and resources and conduct direct outreach to the community to promote the benefits of and opportunities for urban farming.



A herb garden in the City. Source: New Haven Independent



Spotlight

Urban Agriculture Master Plan

New Haven's recently completed Urban Agriculture Master Plan is a community-driven initiative aimed at fostering a sustainable, equitable, and inclusive food system. Developed by the City's Food System Policy Division in collaboration with a Community Advisory Board, the plan addresses systemic barriers such as outdated zoning laws, limited access to land and funding, and regulatory complexities that hinder urban farming in the City, especially in communities of color.

Key objectives of the plan include: simplifying City processes to make urban agriculture more accessible to residents; updating New Haven Zoning Ordinance to support urban farming initiatives; enhancing access to knowledge and financial support for urban agriculture projects; and strengthening ties with marginalized communities to ensure equitable participation and benefits.

6

Closely guide land use in the coastal management district, including waterfront development.

New Haven needs to continue to closely regulate development along its coastal waterfront. This should come through a combination of planning for waterfront development, as exemplified by the Long Wharf Responsible Growth Plan, encouraging appropriately located and resilient development, and improving coastal resiliency to protect existing and future land uses. Waterfront development should integrate a mix of land uses to create vibrant, pedestrian-friendly places that are sustainable and resilient. Additionally, coastal management strategies, such as implementing nature-based solutions like artificial reefs, living shorelines, and wetland restoration, can mitigate flooding risks and bolster ecological health. By adopting a comprehensive approach to waterfront development and coastal area management, New Haven can create sustainable, resilient, and thriving waterfronts that serve both the community and the environment.

Strategies

6.1 Work directly with property owners and provide resources to support the continuation and expansion of water dependent uses.

Protection of water-dependent uses (aquaculture, commercial fishing, marinas, ship repair, passenger ferry service, shipping terminals) is consistent with the goals of the State's coastal management statutes and important for preserving the City's maritime industries. Pressures associated with consolidation within the fishing, marine transport, and small-scale aquaculture industries will pose challenges to these water dependent uses. Simultaneously, rising coastal land values, climate change impacts, regulatory complexity, and competition from global markets contribute to escalating costs and operational uncertainty. The City should expand its efforts to link existing water dependent uses with technical and financial resources to ensure continued viability and in some cases, expansion.

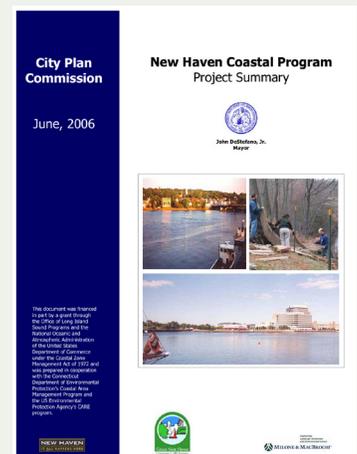
6.2 Update the City's Coastal Program.

New Haven's Coastal Program was adopted in 2006. The program provides a guide for the City's review of zoning applications, coastal land use decisions, and public investment priorities. The Program also provides recommendations for zoning amendments, revised administrative processes, coastal zone development standards, coastal improvements, and shoreline stabilization and sea level rise mitigation. The City should update the Program to be consistent with the recommendations of Vision 2034 and better responded to issues related to sea level rise and climate change.

Spotlight

New Haven Coastal Program

The Connecticut Coastal Area Management Act (CCAMA) requires that projects located within the coastal zone be reviewed for consistency with the requirements of the Act. New Haven's City Plan Commission is responsible for the coastal program and administers most of the required coastal site plan reviews. In June 2006, the City Plan Commission adopted its current Coastal Program. As required by the CCAMA, the program provides a guide for the City's review of zoning applications, coastal land use decisions, and public investment priorities. The Program also provides recommendations for zoning amendments, revised administrative processes, coastal zone development standards, coastal improvements, and shoreline stabilization and sea level rise mitigation.



6.3 Implement resiliency requirements that address flood design criteria and other elements of climate adaptation.

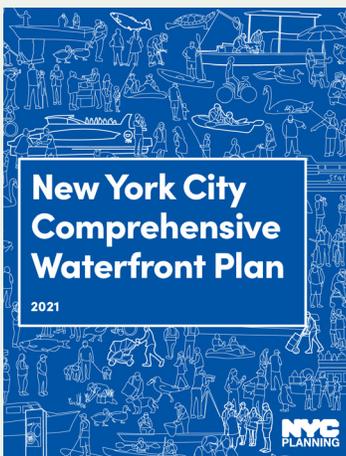
The City has advanced various elements of climate resilience design criteria through its Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance and other sets of regulations. As of 2025, the Ordinance is consistent with and exceed some requirements of the State Model Flood Regulations and the State Building Code. Additional changes could be incorporated into the Ordinance to increase resiliency. An alternative approach would be to incorporate flood resiliency elements into overlay zones or existing zoning regulations, allowing them to apply to specific areas. The City has already accomplished a similar effort in its adoption of the Coastal Mixed Use zone for Long Wharf in 2023 and the corresponding text amendments for the new zoning district. The Long Wharf zoning changes are an example of how flood resiliency can be incorporated into other districts.

6.4 Pilot adaptable building designs that adhere to current flood zone requirements, but can be adapted to more intense uses when flood protection systems are in place and accredited.

The presence and configuration of FEMA Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHAs) and the Limit of moderate wave action (LiMWA) have a direct influence on building designs in areas like Long Wharf and River Street. The City is required to apply the State Building Code and Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance to its approvals. However, the potential Long Wharf flood protection system, when constructed, will shrink the SFHA and move the LiMWA waterward of the flood protection system, allowing more intense uses in the areas protected. Fully replacing buildings constructed to today's standard would be wasteful and disruptive. When possible, the City should encourage designs that can be adapted in the future. An example would be permitting an elevated structure at the present time and allowing the floodable levels to be converted to usable space in the future.

16% (3,217) of properties in New Haven are at risk of flooding. This share is projected to increase to 17.6% over the next 30 years.

Source: First Street



Case Study

New York City Comprehensive Waterfront Plan

New York City's Comprehensive Waterfront Plan, most recently adopted in 2021, is a strategic framework released every ten years to enhance the City's 520-mile shoreline, aiming to create a waterfront that is healthy, equitable, and resilient. The plan outlines a vision for waterfront development, environmental restoration, and public access. It establishes eight overarching goals ranging from expanding public access to increasing climate resilience. The plan is guided by values such as equity, health, and resilience. By addressing diverse waterfront uses, including public spaces, working waterfronts, and natural habitats, the plan seeks to balance development with environmental preservation and climate adaptation, ensuring that the waterfront serves as a valuable resource for all New Yorkers.

7

Adapt to sea level rise and reduce flood risks.

According to the Fifth National Climate Assessment the intermediate projection for sea level rise of US coastal waters is nearly 11 inches by 2050. By 2100 that amount is projected to be a minimum of 18 inches, but could be much higher. Additionally, the frequency of coastal flooding events is expected to increase to at least three major events per year by 2100 versus the prior trend of one per every ten to twenty years. The Connecticut Institute for Resilience and Climate Adaptation recommends that communities along the Long Island Sound plan for 20 inches of sea level rise by 2050 as the degree of sea level rise is projected to be more severe in the Northeast. Given these potential realities, New Haven should remain focused on resiliency projects and other measures that will protect the City from sea level rise and storm-related flooding.

Strategies

7.1 Complete the Long Wharf Park and East Shore Living Shorelines.

The Long Wharf Park and East Shore living shoreline projects were conceptualized in the early 2010s as methods of slowing decades of erosion, protecting critical park spaces, and restoring habitat values to coastal ecosystems. These projects can also reduce wave energy and provide resilience benefits and should be completed. Both of these projects are funded and beginning implementation.

7.2 Conduct an evaluation of wetland and forest resources in West River and Edgewood Park to determine actions needed to adapt them to long-term changes.

Due to their configuration and topography, the West River corridor (downstream of Whalley Avenue) and Edgewood Park are vulnerable to the effects of sea level rise and more frequent tidal flooding is likely to occur. The City should evaluate wetland and forest resources of Edgewood Park and set priority actions for adapting these resources to be more resilient to sea level rise and flooding.

7.3 Participate in the Army Corps flood protection system study and design for the Sargent Drive/Long Wharf area.

The Army Corps of Engineers initiated a study and design process for constructing a flood protection system that would reduce coastal flooding and improve the resilience of the area northwest of Interstate 95 in the Sargent Drive area. The project will protect important infrastructure like I-95 and the Union Train Station. The Army Corps has been working on this project in collaboration with local and state agencies, and has secured funding for its implementation. The City's cooperation is necessary to follow through with the completion of the study and design.

Case Study

The Living Breakwaters Project Staten Island, NY

The Living Breakwaters project, initiated in response to Superstorm Sandy, is a \$111 million coastal resilience effort off Staten Island's South Shore, combining physical protection with ecological restoration. It features 2,400 linear feet of near-shore breakwaters—partially submerged structures built of stone and ecologically enhanced concrete units designed to reduce wave energy, mitigate erosion, and serve as habitats for marine life, including oysters, crabs, and fish. The breakwaters are designed to reduce the impact of climate-intensified weather events on the low-lying coastal community of Tottenville, which experienced some of the most damaging waves in the region and tragic loss of life during Superstorm Sandy.

Beyond environmental benefits, the project offers educational opportunities through partnerships with organizations like the Billion Oyster Project, aiming to restore oyster populations and engage the community in marine stewardship. Construction began in 2021 and was completed in 2024. In 2023, the project received the Obel Award, recognizing its innovative approach to combining environmental protection with community engagement.



*A living breakwater off of Staten Island.
Source: SCAPE*

Spotlight

Green Infrastructure

In an effort to address issues of localized flooding, downstream pollution, and long-term climate change resilience, the City has installed nearly 300 bioswales mostly in the Downtown area through a partnership with Yale's Urban Resources Initiative, the Yale School of Forestry & Environmental Studies, and EMERGE Connecticut. This "green" infrastructure uses natural features such as plants and soil to reduce flooding and pollution. The existing bioswales are expected to absorb and filter more than 5.6 million gallons of stormwater runoff annually, which is equivalent to 8.5 Olympic-sized swimming pools.

The partnership's work has been made possible by funding support from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. The bioswale project partnership, as well as earlier collaborations with Common Ground High School and the Greater New Haven Water Pollution Control Authority, was awarded Harvard's prestigious Roy Family Award for Environmental Partnership in the fall of 2018.



Source: Urban Resources Initiative

7.4 Complete the stormwater tunnel under the railroad and Long Wharf area and associated pump station to reduce flooding in the Downtown area.

Flooding related to stormwater generation and runoff is a challenge in Downtown, the Hill, Long Wharf, and around Union Station, leading to road closures and lack of critical egress during many events; and sometimes leading to damage to infrastructure and properties. While green infrastructure and traditional drainage improvements have helped, a stormwater conveyance system is needed to fully address flooding. The City should continue pursuing funds to complete the design and construction of the microtunnel and pumping system.

7.5 Expand the number of green infrastructure installations across the City.

Flooding and water quality impairments related to stormwater generation and runoff have long been a challenge in different parts of New Haven. The City embarked on an aggressive green infrastructure installation program in the early 2010s, resulting in more than 285 streetside bioswales that reduce stormwater generation, collect stormwater, and help infiltrate stormwater while providing green spaces. As locations for green infrastructure become more challenging to identify and funding sources shift, community partners will become more critical for deploying green infrastructure. The City should continue its work with existing partners. Securing funding for ongoing maintenance of existing installations is also critical.

7.6 Support implementation of the CTDEEP Climate Resilience Fund (DCRF) grant recommendations to address combined flood and sanitary sewer challenges near the West River.

The DCRF program was launched by CTDEEP in 2022-2023 and the Greater New Haven Water Pollution Control Authority (WPCA) was the sole recipient of a DCRF grant in the City. The study, completed in 2025, aims to address infrastructure improvements to minimize stormwater discharges to the sanitary sewer system and reduce existing and future street flooding. The City will be a key participant in the implementation of the study's recommendations. Additionally, the WPCA's identified the reduction of combined sewer overflows as an objective of its 2022-2027 Strategic Plan.

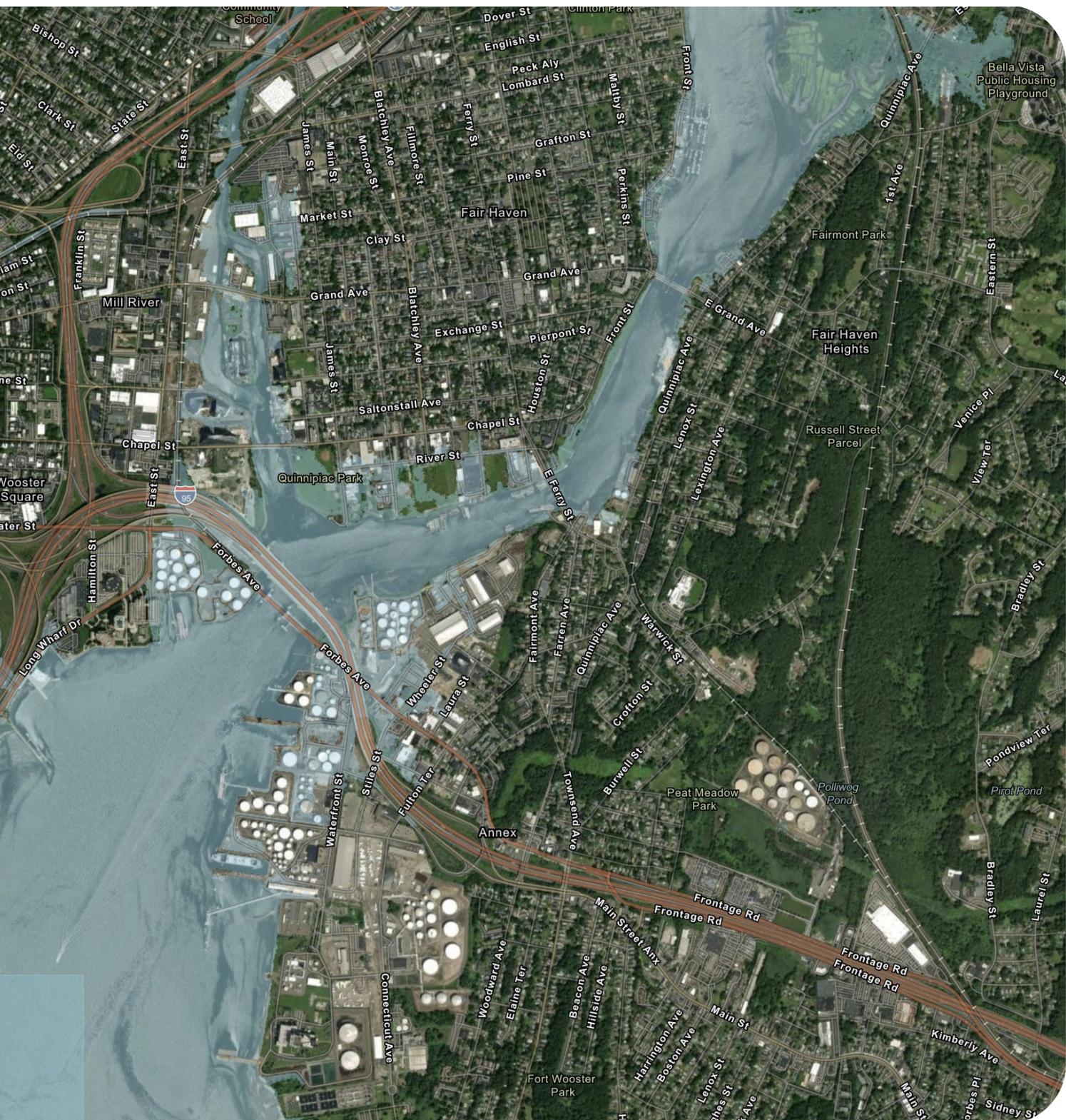
7.7 Continue to develop solutions for persistent flooding in areas yet to be addressed.

The City, together with outside agencies and organizations, have conducted flood resilience studies in areas such as Downtown/Hill, Long Wharf, and Fair Haven. Other parts of the City have not yet benefited from focused studies and resiliency designs. The City should pursue funding and/or partner agencies to conduct additional flood resilience work.



The Flood Impacts of a Storm Compounded by Sea Level Rise: 10-Year Storm in 2050

The map above shows the extents of a ten-year flood if sea level increases to an average of 20 inches. This mapping and the associated sea level rise projections are produced by the Connecticut Institute for Resilience and Climate Adaption. The Institute recommends that Connecticut's coastal communities plan for 20 inches of sea level rise by 2050. This will worsen storm events which are becoming more frequent under changing climate conditions. The ten-year flood projected on this map may therefore occur more frequently.



Source: Connecticut Institute for Resilience and Climate Adaption Sea Level Rise and Storm Surge Viewer

8

Ensure that streams, rivers, and coastal waters are safe and accessible to all.

New Haven's waterfront and rivers have played a central role in the city's history. But as in many cities along the Northeast Corridor, for the past half century, the city's vital connection to water has been largely cut off by highway infrastructure and industrial-scale land uses. Now spurred by climate threats of storm surge and flooding, creative thinking and planning for disaster resilience and adaptive and sustainable development are opening exciting new opportunities and visions for connecting residents to the Long Island Sound, Quinnipiac River, Mill River, and West River. Access to waterways enhances public recreation, providing opportunities for activities such as kayaking, fishing, and walking along a waterfront, which improves physical and mental health. These natural spaces also serve as educational resources, fostering environmental awareness and stewardship. Maintaining access to and protecting waterways can be done in coordination with resiliency, stormwater management, and restoration efforts. Equitable access to clean, safe water bodies ensures that all residents benefit from these shared environmental and recreational resources.

Acknowledging the Harms

New Haven's natural landscape has long shaped its character, but the City's relationship with the environment has been marked by community disconnection and underinvestment. Though situated on the coast, New Haven's waterfront remains largely inaccessible—cut off by highways and rail lines, burdened by industrial zoning, and threatened by environmental hazards like flooding and pollution. In places where public access exists, such as East Shore Park, residents still face shoreline destabilization, rising sea levels, and legacies of contamination. What could be vibrant ecological and cultural spaces have often been sidelined in favor of development that prioritizes industry over public life.

In the 1970s, ambitious plans for park revitalization and Olympic-caliber rowing facilities fell through, leaving behind underutilized spaces. The tide gates at Edgewood Park turned natural marshlands into freshwater systems, and the Friends of Edgewood emerged in 1982 to reimagine what stewardship could look like. Though schools like Barnard, Common Ground, and Sound School provide environmental education, the broader population continues to face barriers to meaningful ecological connection. Tree loss, particularly near heat islands like the Mill River and highway corridors, intensifies rising temperatures, and the City still relies heavily on natural gas, falling short of its zero-emissions goals.

New Haven released its first climate action plan in 2004, marking a turning point in public awareness—but for many years, climate concerns were seen as niche issues. Today, that can no longer be the case. The ecological future of New Haven is everyone's concern. The opportunity now is not just to protect the environment, but to build stronger, healthier, and more connected communities through it.

Strategies

8.1 Advance elements of the Resilient Fair Haven plan for the English Mall, Clinton Park, and Dover Beach areas.

The Resilient Fair Haven plan recommends resiliency improvements for the English Mall, Clinton Park, and Dover Beach area that include enhanced connectivity and direct public access to the Quinnipiac River. The City should take the lead in advancing these recommendations by pursuing grant funding and identifying potential funding sources.

8.2 Designate new public access at the end of dead-end roads.

The 2006 Municipal Coastal Program for New Haven recommended creating new public access to the shoreline at the ends of roads that end at coastal water. Some progress has been made, including enhanced public access in the River Street area. However, not all of the dead-end roads identified in the Program have been provided with public access points. The City should revisit the potential to create new public access points.

8.3 Develop new fishing locations and enhance existing locations for recreational fishing.

Fishing at coastal access points already occurs in New Haven. However, not all locations are ideal for safe public access, and many locations lack the means to educate people about fish consumption advisories. New fishing locations should be established where appropriate and provided with basic amenities. Wayfinding, multilingual signage, warnings/advisories, and appropriate configuration of water access should be incorporated into locations being used for fishing. Litter deterrence methods should be included where possible, such as signage that draws a connection between litter and water quality.

8.4 Develop new and improve existing boat and kayak launch locations.

Public access to coastal waters is a key aspect of the State's coastal management policies and an important part of the City's maritime history. New boat and kayak launch sites should be established especially at new locations of public access such as dead-end roads or in connection with redevelopment projects that provide enhanced public access. Boat and kayak launch sites must be made safe, and opportunities should be identified to educate people on coastal ecosystems while promoting sustainable use of water resources. This work is ongoing--the City received permits for repair of the Clifton Street boat launch in 2025.

8.5 Provide safe, accessible options for swimming.

Swimming is open to the public at Lighthouse Point Park and at a limited number of swimming pools at public schools. As risks associated with extreme heat increase over the coming decades, new locations for safe water recreation will be a useful tool for managing heat exposure. Creating new locations for water access (swimming, wading) must be closely aligned with understanding where water quality is appropriate and where physical conditions (shoreline configuration, debris, other land uses) are consistent with safe water access.



Locations recommended by the 2006 Municipal Coastal Program for improved public access.

Spotlight

Canal Dock Boat House



Source: City of New Haven

The Canal Dock Boat House was completed in 2018, after decades of planning and design led by the City Plan Department. As a community resource, the boat house fulfills important obligations regarding public access and community use. The facility provides a venue for water-dependent recreation and education, public access to the water for boating and viewing, and indoor and outdoor spaces for community activities focused on the harbor. In addition, the Boathouse hosts rowing, sailing, and other boating programs and waterfront educational opportunities through its non-profit partner, New Haven Community Boating. Due to its waterfront location in an area of flood risk, adherence to the State Building Code and the City's Flood Ordinance were important for making the facilities resilient. The Boathouse is also currently home to the University of New Haven's Robert M. Lee and Linda M. Wilkins Marine Science Center, supports non-profit organizations including Discovering Amistad and offers event space for rent.

9

Improve facilities and infrastructure in response to extreme heat.

According to the Fifth National Climate Assessment, average temperatures are projected to rise by at least 1.9 degrees Fahrenheit and as much as 8.5 degrees Fahrenheit in the US by 2095. Elevated temperatures will intensify New Haven's urban heat island effect due to heat-absorbing infrastructure like concrete and asphalt and will most heavily impact neighborhoods with fewer trees and more pavement, which are home to many of the City's low-income and Black and Brown residents, disproportionately impacting those communities. This is likely to cause increased energy consumption for cooling, strain on power grids, and heightened greenhouse gas emissions. Prolonged exposure to extreme heat increases heat-related illnesses and respiratory issues, particularly among vulnerable populations including the elderly, children, people experiencing homelessness, and those with preexisting conditions. Furthermore, rising temperatures can deteriorate air quality by increasing ozone formation, leading to smog and associated health problems.

Strategies

9.1 Expand the number of facilities that can provide 24-hour operations for cooling during extreme heat events and provide targeted outreach to vulnerable populations.

As risks associated with extreme heat increase over the coming decades, the availability of accessible cooling centers will be one of the most important tools for the City to provide relief from heat. Studies have shown that warm nighttime temperatures during heat waves reduces a person's ability to manage heat exposure. Cooling centers will need to be open more often, with extended hours and enhanced services. New Haven's most vulnerable populations include seniors and the unhoused who may not have convenient access to or awareness of cooling center availability. Outreach to those communities, and others, will be important to the productive use of those centers in protecting the City's most vulnerable residents.

9.2 Partner with CTtransit to install shade structures at bus stops and hubs.

Reducing the heat exposure of people waiting for transit should be a top priority. Bus stops are often located in areas lacking shade from street trees. Their proximity to roadway and parking lot pavement also exposes users to heat from those sources. The provision of shade using shelters provides a direct benefit by cooling those waiting but also keeps benches cool so they may be used. Shelters have the added benefit of providing protection from more severe rainfall events associated with climate change. See also Strategy 4.4 of *Move Together*.

Case Study

Baltimore Resiliency Hub Program, Baltimore, MD

Baltimore's Community Resiliency Hub Program is a community-centered initiative that increases community capacity to prepare for, withstand, and respond to natural hazard impacts and emergencies. The goal of the program is to connect community organizations with support and resources to improve emergency response and recovery services to under-resourced neighborhoods and their most vulnerable residents. The Program is a partnership between service-based community organizations in Baltimore's most climate-vulnerable neighborhoods and the Office of Sustainability, Office of Emergency Management, and Department of Health. A priority goal of the Program is to outfit Hubs with solar power and battery back-up capabilities. This helps increase access to renewable energy and back-up power in low to moderate income communities, reduces the utility cost burden for community organizations, and provides community training and workforce development opportunities.



Opening of a Baltimore Resiliency Hub
Source: Maryland Energy Administration

Case Study

The Capital Region Urban Heat Island Mitigation Project Sacramento Region, CA

The Capital Region Urban Heat Island Mitigation Project, conducted from May 2018 to February 2020, was a collaborative initiative led by the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District and the Local Government Commission. Funded by a California Adaptation Planning Grant, the project aimed to address the urban heat island effect in the region by developing advanced models to assess its impacts and evaluate mitigation strategies. Key components included community engagement to gather input on heat-related transportation concerns, particularly focusing on vulnerable communities across six counties. The project recommended measures such as increasing tree canopy coverage, implementing cool roofs and pavements, promoting vehicle electrification, and installing solar panels to reduce heat pollution. These findings serve as a blueprint for local governments to incorporate heat mitigation into transportation plans and urban design guidelines, enhancing resilience against extreme heat events.



Downtown Sacramento, Source: Redfin

9.3 Support the development of resilience hubs across the City.

Resilience hubs are service-based organizations that are trusted by the community and located in under-resourced neighborhoods. Most resilience hubs consist of buildings that are open on a regular basis and continuously staffed by the organization charged with operating the hub. The City should collaborate with its Community Management Teams, partner organizations, and residents to identify where resilience hubs should be located and how they should be staffed and operated. Existing locations that people trust and have been used for gathering should be prioritized (this could be a library, community center, nonprofit office, etc.). Priority neighborhoods for locating resilience hubs should include Fair Haven and other neighborhoods with similar vulnerabilities. The City should also collaborate with the Connecticut Institute for Resilience & Climate Adaptation and Connecticut's Department of Energy & Environment on the statewide planning for the development of resilience hubs.

9.4 Provide opportunities for outdoor recreation-based cooling.

In addition to cooling centers and resilience hubs, the City should continue to support recreation based outdoor cooling. This could take the form of new open water swimming locations, swimming pools, and splash pads. Shade trees and shade structures should also be provided as needed along greenways such as the Farmington Canal Greenway to provide residents who may be seeking relief from heat with a comfortable place to walk or rest.

9.5 Incentivize cool roofs and green roofs.

New Haven can encourage the adoption of cool and green roofs through the New Haven Zoning Ordinance and other municipal ordinances. The Zoning Ordinance can incentivize new developments or major renovations to incorporate green or cool roofs through offering density bonuses to increase development density. Expedited permitting processes can further incentivize sustainable roofing by reducing approval times for projects that include these features. Financial incentives, such as tax credits and rebates can be provided to property owners who install cool or green roofs, promoting voluntary adoption.

9.6 Expand tree cover.

Expand tree cover in the City as recommended by Goal 4 in this chapter of the plan. Trees will help to reduce urban heat island effect and provide shade to buildings and those outside.

9.7 Revise the Reflective Heat Impact Ordinance.

Section 60.2 of the New Haven Zoning Ordinance, adopted in 2011, addresses reflective heat impact from hardscape or paved surfaces. Development permit applications for developments that meet certain thresholds are required to show compliance. The City Plan Department and Engineering Department have been working on updates to this ordinance that will better incentivize replacing hardscape with vegetation and tree planting as well as other strategies that could expand the impact of the regulation, such as an in-lieu fee directed to parks and trees.

10

Support agencies, communities, and neighborhoods working together to become more resilient to climate change impacts.

In 2020, the City assembled a Climate Emergency Task Force with necessary powers and resources to plan and coordinate all of the New Haven's climate responses, including emergency climate mitigation, resilience and adaptation programs. While the City of New Haven and its Task Force is best positioned to take a leadership role in addressing these issue of climate change, it needs partners across and beyond the community in this effort. The Task Force should bring the issues of sustainability and resiliency front and center, working directly with the community and across departments, divisions, and offices to address these issues.

Strategies

- 10.1 Maintain direct City liaison participation in the Connecticut Equity and Environmental Justice Advisory Council (CEEJAC) and ensure that this liaison coordinates with other CEEJAC members from the New Haven community.**

The New Haven Director of Health is a standing member of CEEJAC, an advisory council to the Commissioner of Connecticut's Department of Energy & Environmental Protection. In this role, the Director advocates for the City and helps advance environmental justice statewide. Members of the New Haven community are also involved with CEEJAC through their own organizations. Coordination and cooperation will help advance environmental justice in New Haven.

- 10.2 Improve resilience and sustainability coordination and collaboration across City departments, particularly between the City and New Haven Public Schools.**

Sustainability and climate-related initiatives will be most successful when the youth are empowered to act and bring important messages home to their families. Direct, ongoing coordination between the Office of Climate and Sustainability and New Haven Public Schools will ensure that New Haven's young people and their families can connect with nature and build understanding of environmental issues, as well as activating spaces at schools, parks, and other greenspaces to foster this connection and learning.

- 10.3 Engage Community Management Teams (CMTs) and other community groups in supporting climate resilience.**

The City should continue deepening collaboration with community-based organizations in the City (as exemplified by the Climate Collaborative described below and the work of the Co-Creation Team that developed this chapter). This could include designating a liaison to attend Community Management Team (CMT) meetings to provide updates, information, and opportunities to engage with City-led resiliency initiatives, working with youth-led/centered organizations, and collaborating with environmental groups, both formal and grassroots. These collaborations should ensure that residents of all neighborhoods have access to education, information, and opportunities to get involved, with a focus on the neighborhoods with highest climate vulnerability.

- 10.4 Continue the work of the Elm City Climate Collaborative.**

In 2024, the City of New Haven and twenty partner organizations (Elm City Climate Collaborative) were granted \$20 million in federal funding for a series of environmental initiatives designed to mitigate climate change, build resiliency, and reduce pollution in New Haven. The funds were awarded through the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Community Change Grants Program established to reduce pollution, increase community climate resilience, and build community capacity. The program would support the development of green and energy efficient homes, climate resilient corridors, food rescue and community composting, green transportation, climate education, and green jobs and workforce development. While the release of the funding is currently uncertain, this partnership should continue regardless of federal funding outcomes.

8. Arts & Cultural Identity



Source: New Haven Night Market

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Arts & Cultural Identity

The Vision

Arts and culture will strengthen our identity as a welcoming, dynamic city, building economic vitality and community connection. By honoring our past and looking toward the future, we will foster inclusive and meaningful opportunities for creative expression that enhance every neighborhood and bring people together.

Goals

- 1 Increase support for and promotion of arts and culture in New Haven.
- 2 Expand access to education, training, and employment opportunities in arts and culture.
- 3 Support the development of accessible and affordable space for arts and culture across the City.
- 4 Celebrate and expand public art in the City.
- 5 Embrace storytelling to build community and share culture.
- 6 Protect and promote New Haven's historic resources.
- 7 Embrace and invest in New Haven's identity as a food capital.

1

Increase support for and promotion of arts and culture in New Haven.

Increasing the support for and promotion of arts and culture can provide economic benefits, attract tourism, and strengthen community identity. With more resources, the City can better support creativity, innovation, and social cohesion by providing platforms for diverse voices and cultural expression. Strong arts and culture initiatives improve quality of life, contribute to mental well-being, and create opportunities for education and workforce development.

Strategies

1.1 Advance implementation of the action items of the Cultural Equity Plan, with regular reporting to the community on progress.

New Haven's Cultural Equity Plan provides specific guidance as to how the City can improve equity and support for arts and culture. The City should make the necessary investments to fully implement the recommendations of that plan and take additional measures needed to support arts and culture across the City. Achieving this requires providing departments such as the Arts, Culture & Tourism Department with the resources they need to support the recommendations of this plan and the Cultural Equity Plan.

1.2 Through the Department of Arts, Culture & Tourism, continue to play an active role in facilitating connections between organizations, groups, and individuals across the arts and culture community and other sectors.

The City should play a more substantial role in coordinating organizations, groups, and individuals including assisting in the coordination and facilitation of arts and culture roundtables with outside organizations and making direct connections, including across sectors. Additionally, the Cultural Equity Plan recommends the hiring of staff to build capacity within the department and support neighborhood-based organizers.

Case Study

Providence, RI Department of Arts, Culture and Tourism

The Providence Department of Art, Culture and Tourism (ACT) plays a central role in integrating arts and culture into community life, positioning Providence as a leading cultural destination. ACT works under five broad priorities: Access, Cultural Equity, Change and Transformation, Responsiveness, and Impact in delivery of its services.

The Department administers grants to support local artists and organizations, oversees public art installations, and manages the Main Gallery at City Hall to showcase local talent. Additionally, ACT produces public events and festivals that celebrate the City's diverse cultural heritage and develops initiatives that connect arts with health and well-being. As of fiscal year 2024, ACT had a budget of \$1.7 million per year. Their initiatives have had a significant economic impact, with the City's nonprofit arts and culture sector generating approximately \$205.8 million annually, supporting over 5,100 jobs, and contributing nearly \$21 million in local and state revenue.



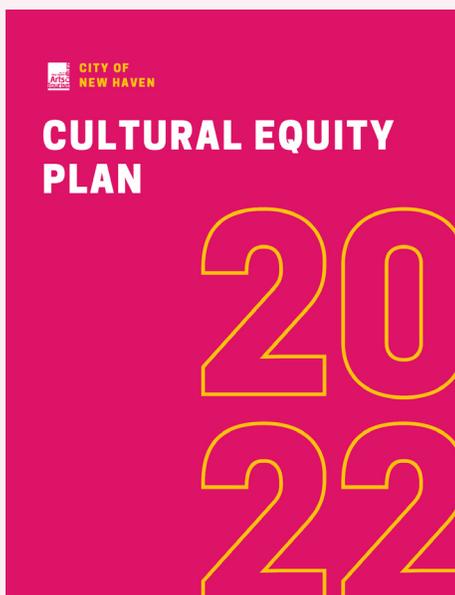
Gallery Night in Providence
Source: Small Frye Photography

Spotlight

City of New Haven Cultural Equity Plan

The Cultural Equity Plan offers a collection of ideas, stories, and questions about culture in New Haven, serving as a tool to identify opportunities for equitable change and clarify everyone's role in shaping a more inclusive future. It provides activities and action items to help individuals integrate equity into their daily lives and broader systems.

Emphasizing a collaborative approach, the plan seeks to amplify the voices of artists and creatives from historically underrepresented communities, including those who identify as Black, Brown, Latinx, Asian, Indigenous, Disabled, Neurodivergent, Queer, Immigrant, Young, Elderly, Poor, and English Language Learners, addressing longstanding gaps in arts and culture policy and institutions. The Plan recommends twelve actions that the City and community can take to improve equity and to better support arts and culture in an equitable manner.



1.3 Improve and streamline marketing of arts and cultural events and opportunities.

The City should improve its marketing of arts and cultural events by substantially improving its Arts, Culture & Tourism webpage to be more accessible and transparent and to host a calendar of citywide events. Additionally, the City should expand its use of social media in the promotion of arts and cultural events and opportunities.

1.4 Simplify the process for individuals and organizations to receive approval to conduct events in the City.

New Haven should better support the hosting of events across the City by simplifying its approval process and making that process more accessible. This involves simplifying forms and procedures, reducing insurance requirements and permit fees as feasible, and collaborating with the cultural organizations to develop a how-to-guide for permitting. The City should also provide direct links to a permitting guide and permit applications on its Arts, Culture & Tourism webpage and partnering with Special Service Districts and other neighborhood organizations to assist individuals and small organizations with permitting.

1.5 Provide direct and regular financial support to local artists, cultural groups, and community events, and make it easier for them to qualify for that support.

The Department of Arts, Culture & Tourism supports New Haven's arts and cultural organizations through the Neighborhood Cultural Vitality Grant Program. The program is intended to support projects that celebrate, recognize, and bring together the City's diverse neighborhood cultures. The City should ensure the continued funding and operation of this program and build upon the success of this program to provide direct financial support for a wider array of artists and community and cultural events.

New Haven's arts sector generated **\$143.4 million in economic activity** during 2022 - \$118.3 million in spending by arts and culture organizations and an additional \$25.2 million in event-related expenditures.

That economic activity supported **2,402 jobs**, provided **\$112.8 million in personal income** to residents, and generated **\$34.2 million in tax revenue**.

Source: Americans for the Arts, Arts & Economic Prosperity 6, The Economic & Social Impact Study of Nonprofit Arts & Culture Organizations & Their Audiences in City of New Haven

2

Expand access to education, training, and employment opportunities in arts and culture.

Expanding access to education, training, and employment in the arts would add voices to New Haven's arts and culture community. It would promote social inclusion by ensuring that diverse communities have access to creative opportunities and encourage community engagement through collaborative programs. Historically, access to arts education has been inequitable, with marginalized communities often facing barriers such as lack of resources, funding, or institutional support. By expanding access, New Haven can break down these barriers, offering all individuals the chance to develop their talents, express themselves, and contribute to cultural life.

Strategies

2.1 Improve access to arts education and programming for residents of all ages, especially youth and seniors.

New Haven should invest in its arts community by ensuring that youth are exposed to arts education and that residents of all ages have an opportunity to explore art. In support of this, the City should coordinate with New Haven Public Schools to bolster arts programming. Through its Department of Youth and Recreation the City should increase its arts education offerings including after-school arts programming. Additionally, through its Department of Elderly Services and senior centers, the City should expand arts education opportunities to seniors.

2.2 Support and expand existing arts volunteer, mentorship, internship, and apprenticeship programs.

Volunteer, mentorship, internship, and apprenticeship programs provide educational opportunities and pathways to careers in the arts. The City can play an active role in facilitating resident participation in these types of programs in a several ways. By example, it should track and maintain a list of opportunities and openings and making that information available on its Arts, Culture & Tourism webpage. The City should also provide support to and facilitate participation in existing programs such as Youth at Work and Arts Council and Community Foundation of Greater New Haven programs. New Haven should also work with New Haven Public Schools to link high school students with volunteer, mentorship, internship, and apprenticeship programs before and after graduation.

Case Study

Artists for Humanity, Boston, MA

Artists For Humanity (AFH) offers mentorship and apprenticeship programs for young people interested in arts careers. Participants work alongside professional artists in fields such as visual arts, graphic design, and photography, while developing their portfolios and gaining job-readiness skills. Their programs are designed to transcend economic, racial and social divisions to transform communities through creative expression.



Source: Artists for Humanity

2.3 Build and support partnerships with local institutions and performance venues as a means of connecting New Haven's residents with the City's cultural resources.

New Haven is home to outstanding arts and performance institutions and venues, but many of the City's residents lack connection to or experience with those institutions and venues. Building upon successful partnerships like the Shubert Theater/Co-op High School program or Long Wharf Theater's partnership with Southern Connecticut State University, the City should support and facilitate partnerships to provide New Haven residents greater access to these resources. The City should also work through the New Haven Free Public Library to expand free or reduced cost admissions to institutions and venues, building upon its free admissions program with the Long Wharf and Yale Repertory Theaters.

2.4 Connect residents to training in arts administration and operations careers and career advancement opportunities in the arts.

Careers in the arts most obviously include artists, but also those that facilitate the arts such as administrators, facilitators, and producers. The City should provide support to the development of these skill sets and professionals by working with local institutions to support educational opportunities and training in these fields. By example, the City should work with New Haven Public Schools to arts administration programs at local universities including Southern Connecticut State University's program in Arts Administration and Cultural Advocacy. New Haven should also connect residents, artists, and art administrators with training, skill building, and career advancement opportunities through local providers.

New Haven is home to incredible arts and culture resources and events, and the City should work to connect its residents with those resources as participants and creators.



Source: ACES

Spotlight

ACES Educational Center for the Arts, New Haven

The Educational Center for the Arts (ECA) has been located in the heart of New Haven's Audubon Arts District since 1973. It is a public, half-time, magnet high school serving the 25 school districts in south central Connecticut and beyond. ECA provides intensive study of music, dance, theatre, writing and the visual arts. Its programming is centered around three elements of global citizenship: multicultural literacy, global citizenship, and social justice. A set number of seats are available to New Haven residents each year.

3

Support the development of accessible and affordable space for arts and culture across the City.

While New Haven has remarkable galleries, studios, and performance spaces, most of those are located Downtown or are associated with institutions such as Yale University and Southern Connecticut State University. Few spaces exist in New Haven's neighborhoods or are available to small organizations or the public. Providing space that is available to a wider audience is important to improving access to opportunities in the arts and to improving equity in arts and culture. Additionally, many spaces are not accessible to artists and patrons with disabilities and should be retrofitted to provide universal accessibility.

Strategies

- 3.1 Establish and support partnerships with local institutions and organizations to make arts and performance space available to the City's residents.**

The City should explore partnerships with New Haven Public Schools, local universities, and other institutions to make underutilized spaces available to artists. This should include studio, rehearsal, and performance space for the visual and performing arts. *See also Strategy 10.3 of Civic Services and Experiences.*

- 3.2 Repurpose vacant and underutilized spaces for community use.**

There is vacant and underutilized space located across the City that could be used or converted for use for local artists. This includes vacant and underutilized office and industrial space, institutional space, and retail space. The City, through its Economic Development Administration, should work with property owners to make such space available to artists and arts and culture organizations through short-term rentals, leases, or purchase agreements. New Haven should also continue its support for redevelopment of the Armory and for the inclusion of arts and culture space when redeveloped. *See also Strategy 4.7 of Economic Opportunity for All.*

- 3.3 Connect small organizations and community groups to larger organizations that can provide logistical support with securing arts and performance space.**

Small organizations may lack the financial resources or other requirements for securing arts and performance space. The City should work to partner these groups with larger organizations that can provide guidance and assistance such as co-signing a lease, fiscal sponsorship, or insurance sharing.

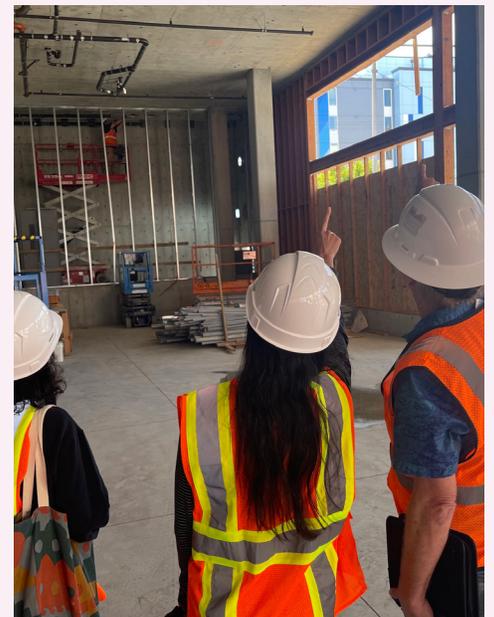
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Case Study

Cultural Space Agency, Seattle, WA

The Cultural Space Agency is a real estate development company chartered by the City of Seattle as a Public Development Authority. Its primary mission is to secure community-held spaces where arts and culture can thrive, with a focus on building capacity, promoting access to wealth-building knowledge, and employing reparative investment strategies. The agency prioritizes partnerships with Black and Indigenous communities, as well as other diverse cultural groups, to foster inclusivity and equity in the development of cultural spaces.

The Cultural Space Agency operates various programs and projects aimed at preserving, creating, and activating cultural spaces within Seattle. One such initiative is BASE (Build Art Space Equitably), a program designed to build capacity among leaders from diverse backgrounds in the realms of cultural development and commercial real estate.



A future dedicated pop-up venue for cultural space projects in Seattle. Source: Cultural Space Agency

Spotlight

West River Arts, New Haven

The West River Arts Building, located on Whalley Avenue in Westville, consists of 13 studio spaces forming a community of engaging artists of different styles, backgrounds, and practices including sculptors, mechanical engineers, product designers, handmade jewelers, painters, photographers and more.

Each member can personalize their space to fit their creative process and production. The collective hosts a monthly open studio, the Second Saturday, where the public is welcome on a self-guided tour of the studios and to visit with our resident artist in a casual setting, conducive for candid and meaningful conversations.



A studio at West River Arts
Source: Lotta Studio

3.4 Provide density bonuses or other incentives to developers that provide dedicated arts spaces within their developments.

New Haven should encourage the development of new arts and performance spaces by providing density bonuses through the New Haven Zoning Ordinance or other incentives, such as tax incentives, to developers that provide such space. These could be spaces intended for community use, or open to small organizations and individual artists and performers.

3.5 Explore opportunities to develop a community cultural center.

The City should explore the potential of establishing a cultural community center that provides a place for individuals and groups from New Haven's many cultures to gather and share experiences. A cultural center would be especially beneficial in welcoming new immigrants and refugees by providing them with a safe and welcoming place to connect to the larger New Haven community. The Center could include studio and gallery space for immigrant and refugee artists.

3.6 Provide small and low-cost spaces for the sale of locally produced craft products.

The City should work with Tweed New Haven Airport, Park New Haven, and other entities to dedicate small low-cost spaces for the sale of locally produced craft products in transportation hubs. This could include small kiosks, vendor carts, or vending machines. New Haven should also expand opportunities for vendors at City-sponsored events and other temporary vending opportunities in public spaces.

3.7 Ensure that arts and performance spaces are accessible to people with disabilities.

As the City works to expand space for the arts, it should ensure newly established spaces are fully accessible to those with disabilities and that resources are available to make those spaces accessible. The City should also work with the owners of existing spaces that may not be fully accessible to improve the accessibility of those spaces. In support of this, New Haven should consider developing a fund to assist in the retrofit of spaces to make them accessible.

4

Celebrate and expand public art in the City.

Public art enriches the urban environment by transforming ordinary spaces into vibrant, engaging areas that reflect the community's cultural identity. It beautifies neighborhoods and stimulates the local economy by attracting tourists and fostering community pride. Public art also provides a platform for public dialogue and social expression, encouraging residents to connect with and contribute to the evolving narrative of the City.

Strategies

4.1 Provide space for the display and promotion of local art and for small performances in public spaces.

Building upon the recent success of Studio Haven, which features local artwork in City Hall, the City should make more public space available to local artists for the display and promotion of their work and for small performances. This could include providing or expanding space dedicated to such uses at the New Haven Green, Union and State Street Stations, Tweed New Haven Airport, and other places such as the Q House.

Case Study

Jersey City Youth Mural Arts Program, Jersey City, NJ

Jersey City's Youth Mural Arts Program is an extension of the City's broader mural initiative that empowers young artists—typically aged 15 to 25—to design and execute large-scale public murals that beautify urban spaces and build community pride. The program offers intensive, hands-on training under the mentorship of professional muralists, teaching participants everything from conceptual design and scale enlargement to advanced spray-painting techniques. This initiative has become a celebrated community cornerstone, turning Jersey City into an expansive outdoor gallery that reflects the diverse voices and narratives of its residents.

4.2 Continue to support installation of public murals and sculptures, and explore opportunities for a large-scale, landmark public art installation.

The City should continue to support the installation of public murals and sculptures such as those found on the Downtown New Haven Public Art Walk. The City should also consider commissioning and installing a large sculpture or landmark that celebrates an aspect of the City's culture or history. This could be used as a community building event by involving residents in developing the vision for an installation, identifying a location, selecting a theme, inviting design submissions, and selecting and commissioning an artist.



*The Philadelphia LOVE sculpture.
Source: C. Smyth, Visit Philadelphia*



Source: Jersey City Youth Art Mural Program

4.3 Work to expand the impact of New Haven's Percent for Art in Public Spaces Program.

The City's Percent for Art in Public Spaces Program requires that one-percent of the City's construction costs for new or renovated municipal buildings be allocated towards the purchase of commissioned artwork. The City should explore ways to expand this program to other types of development in the City such as private and institutional development that benefits from City subsidy or tax relief. The City should also encourage voluntary participation in this program by providing zoning incentives such as density incentives for the provision of public art. As part of its expansion of the program, the City should ensure that public art be created by New Haven artists.

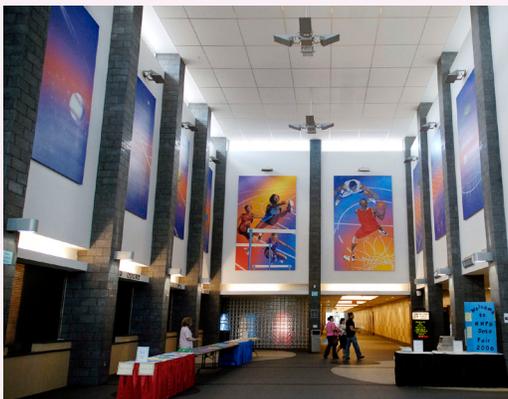
4.4 Engage youth in the creation of public art and as a means of generating discussion about social issues.

Engaging New Haven's youth in the creation of public art empowers them to express their perspectives on social issues, fostering creativity and critical thinking while giving them a platform to influence community dialogue. Their involvement not only helps them build essential skills and confidence, but it also invites diverse audiences to consider and discuss complex social challenges. By incorporating their unique voices into the City's landscape, public art projects can spark broader conversations, promote empathy, and drive collective action toward addressing the issues that impact their lives and communities.

4.5 Work with local artists to expand the Downtown public art interactive map to include art in other areas of the City.

As part of a larger effort to map and share information about cultural resources across the New Haven, the City should work with local artists to expand the Downtown public art map to map art in other areas of the City.

New Haven is home to the Sculpture Mile, located on Chapel Street, between College and Orange Streets. It features multiple works of art by local and internationally renowned artists.



*Hoops and Hurdles by Tony Falcone
Hillhouse High School*

Spotlight

Percent for Art in Public Spaces Program, New Haven

The Percent for Art in Public Spaces Program was established in 1981. It requires that one percent of the City's construction costs for new or renovated municipal buildings be allocated towards the purchase of commissioned artwork. The program's goal is to visually enhance municipal facilities with quality works of art by professional artists. The program adds visibility to the artistic and cultural heritage of New Haven and its people. It also provides monetary support, recognition, and pays tribute to Connecticut's living artists by honoring and preserving their work on display. Since its establishment, the program has commissioned over thirty works of art.

5

Embrace storytelling to build community and share culture.

Embracing storytelling will enable New Haven's community to weave together the diverse experiences, histories, and values of residents into a shared cultural narrative. By encouraging individuals and communities to share their personal and collective stories, through public art, community events, digital media, and local festivals, New Haven can help preserve its cultural heritage and foster empathy and connection in its residents. This will strengthen the community by creating spaces and opportunities where dialogue, celebration, and reflection can intersect allowing residents to feel seen and heard.

Strategies

5.1 Launch a City-led storytelling initiative.

The City should launch a storytelling initiative that engages the entire community in a dialogue about New Haven and their lives in New Haven. The City should build upon existing storytelling programs and partner with the organizations that run those programs such as the Collective for Refugee & Immigrant Women's Wellbeing, The Word, Kulturally LIT, Unidad Latina en Acción, Black Wall Street, Ubuntu Storytellers, Semilla Collective, Broken Umbrella Theater, the Arts Council of Greater New Haven, the City Historian, the New Haven Free Public Library, and New Haven Museum in development of the initiative.

5.2 Create digital and public platforms for storytelling.

New Haven should develop digital forums for written, audio, or video submissions that encourage participation from underrepresented groups and promote these stories through social media campaigns and public exhibitions. Websites, social media, podcasts, video, and other platforms and forms of media should be used to promote the initiative and share stories. Given the ever-changing digital landscape, the program should remain flexible, inviting storytellers to experiment with different forms and platforms for storytelling.

"We want culture themed events that teach people from different cultures about each other"

- Youth voice

Case Study

Chicago Stories Project, Chicago, IL

The Chicago Stories Project is a community-driven storytelling initiative that captures and shares the diverse narratives of Chicago residents. By collecting personal accounts through interviews, live events, and digital submissions, the project documents the everyday experiences, challenges, and triumphs of individuals from various neighborhoods. These stories not only highlight Chicago's rich cultural heritage but also serve as a bridge between communities, fostering dialogue and understanding. Through public exhibitions, online archives, and interactive workshops, the Chicago Stories Project makes these narratives accessible to a wider audience, ensuring that the voices of the City are preserved and celebrated for future generations. The project has partnered with a wide range of organizations in its work to provide storytelling and creative writing instruction.



Source: Chicago Stories Project

Spotlight

Storytellers New Haven

Storytellers New Haven was a community-driven initiative dedicated to connecting individuals through the art of storytelling. Founded by Kevin Walton and Dr. Karen DuBois-Walton, the series hosted monthly gatherings where residents shared personal narratives, fostering empathy, understanding, and a deeper appreciation for the diverse experiences within the community.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Storytellers New Haven adapted by transitioning to virtual events, ensuring the continuation of community engagement and support during challenging times. This adaptability highlighted the initiative's dedication to maintaining connections and providing a platform for voices to be heard, even amidst adversity. Through its consistent efforts, Storytellers New Haven became a vital part of the City's cultural fabric, celebrating the power of personal narratives to unite and inspire the community.

Storytellers New Haven partnered with local organizations and theaters such as the Bregamos Community Theater and the New Haven Play Project to host storytelling events.



5.3 Host community storytelling events and workshops.

The City should work across its departments to organize workshops and listening sessions at libraries, community centers, senior centers, senior housing, and schools. New Haven should also partner with local theaters and businesses to host live storytelling events. Storytelling instruction and storytelling sessions and events could be included in school curriculum and in youth and recreation programming.

5.4 Enhance public spaces with storytelling elements.

The City should provide storytelling installations, storyboards, historical plaques, and storytelling maps in its public spaces including municipal buildings, schools, parks, plazas, train stations, and at Tweed New Haven Airport. These elements could be comprised of both permanent and temporary installations so that storytelling remains engaging and dynamic.

5.5 Document and tell New Haven's story from diverse and multicultural perspectives.

Working with the New Haven Free Public Library, New Haven Museum, the Institute Library, the New Haven Preservation Trust, local universities, and other organizations and volunteers, the City should conduct a comprehensive cultural resources inventory. The inventory should document significant places, events, and milestones across the City for all of its people, communities, and cultures. As aspects of the inventory are completed, the City should use the storytelling platforms and spaces described in Strategies 5.2 and 5.4 to make that information available to the community in an engaging way. The City should also work towards developing a comprehensive digital map of significant cultural places across New Haven, partnering with the Metropolitan Business Academy (Metro) and other organizations to ensure that the history of marginalized groups is reflected, building on Metro's Black and Indigenous History mapping project.

6

Protect and promote New Haven's historic resources.

New Haven has thousands of historic most of which are listed on the New Haven Historic resources Inventory, with many also listed on the National Register of Historic Places, or located in a National or State Register district, or within a Local Historic District. Whether they are landmarks, spaces, homes, or buildings, these places each tell a story about the City's history and development. The protection and promotion of these resources is important to telling the City's story and preserving its identity.

Strategies

6.1 Enhance public awareness and accessibility to information about historic resources.

Better connecting residents and visitors with New Haven's historic resources can build a greater appreciation for those resources and more support for their preservation. Promotion of these resources could be done through storytelling and the recommended storytelling initiative described under Goal 5 on the preceding pages. The City should work in coordination with the New Haven Preservation Trust in developing and improving access to stories about its historic resources.

6.2 Prioritize the protection of all historic resources including those located outside of Local Historic Districts.

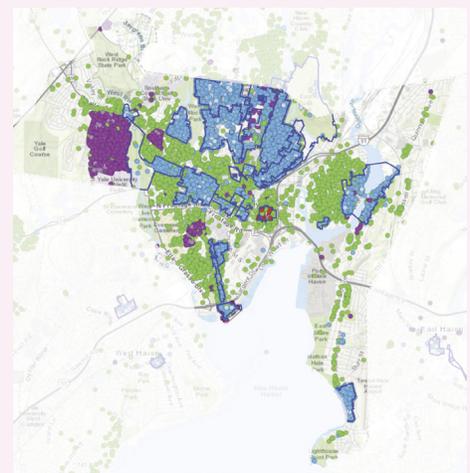
The strongest protection of historic resources comes through New Haven's local historic districts. Properties located within these three districts must have any work that would impact their outside appearance approved by the City's Historic District Commission. Additionally, changes to structures within a Local Historic District must receive a Certificate of Appropriateness from the City's Historic District Commission. Outside the Local Historic Districts, the City has limited authority over changes to or demolition of historic resources.

Spotlight

ConnCRIS

Connecticut's Cultural Resources Information System (ConnCRIS), is an interactive, web-based mapping platform developed by the Connecticut State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) to provide public access to the state's cultural and historic resource data. Launched in April 2023, ConnCRIS maps over 96,000 above-ground historic architectural resources, including properties listed on the State and National Registers of Historic Places, local historic and National Register districts, and surveyed areas. Its inventory is updated on a regular basis.

ConnCRIS mapping of New Haven's cultural and historic resources.



6.3 Revise policies and procedures related to protection of historic resources to improve clarity and reduce inefficiencies.

The City's main regulations related to historic preservation include the regulations for Local Historic Districts, and the Demolition Delay ordinance which requires a 90-day delay and comment period prior to demolition of a historic resource. These regulations have not been updated in many years and can be challenging to follow and to enforce. These regulations and associated procedures should be reviewed and revised to improve clarity and efficiency for both the property owner and city staff and officials, such that compliance improves and enforcement action is avoided.

6.4 Maintain working relationship with the State Historic Preservation Office and maintain Certified Local Government status.

New Haven has Certified Local Government (CLG) status from the National Park Service, which runs the National Register program. The program is coordinated through the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). It is a local, state and federal partnership that promotes historic preservation at the grassroots level. It seeks to develop and maintain local historic preservation programs that will influence zoning and permitting decisions critical to preserving historic properties. It also works to ensure the broadest possible participation of local governments in the national historic preservation program. As a CLG, New Haven is eligible for historic preservation grants. Maintaining its status and working relationship with SHPO is important for the continued preservation of the City's historic resources. The City should pursue grants available through its CGL status to support future cultural and historic resource inventory work and to research potential changes to City policies to better protect cultural resources.

New Haven has three Local Historic Districts, 19 National Register Historic Districts, and 51 properties that are individually listed on the National Register.

Of the individually listed properties, nine are identified as a National Historic Landmark.



Source: NHPT

Spotlight

New Haven Preservation Trust

The New Haven Preservation Trust (NHPT) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the preservation and appreciation of New Haven's historic architecture and cultural heritage. Established in 1961, the Trust advocates for the protection of significant buildings and neighborhoods, offers technical assistance for preservation projects, and provides educational programs to raise public awareness about the City's architectural legacy. NHPT works with property owners, local government, and community organizations to promote sustainable preservation practices and encourage adaptive reuse of historic structures. Through research, advocacy, and grants, the Trust plays a vital role in protecting and promoting New Haven's historic resources.

7

Embrace and invest in New Haven's identity as a food capital.

Embracing New Haven's identity as a food destination and actively promoting its food culture can provide significant economic, social, and cultural benefits. By spotlighting unique food traditions and local dining experiences, New Haven can attract visitors and food enthusiasts, which supports local restaurants and food-related businesses, increases job opportunities, and boosts the local economy. As such, this goal supports the City's cultural identity and the vision for Economic Opportunity for All.

Strategies

7.1 Strengthen marketing and branding of the City's restaurants and food culture.

The City should develop a marketing campaign, featuring branding unique to New Haven that promotes its identity as a food destination, featuring locally-owned businesses. In support of this work, the City should conduct an inventory and maintain a listing of restaurants and food businesses and make that information available to the public. Working through the Department of Arts, Culture & Tourism, the City should use multiple media platforms to promote itself as a food destination including television, radio, print, web-based, and social media platforms as well as neighborhood-based, multilingual marketing strategies.

7.2 Conduct and support more food-centered events, recognition, and storytelling.

New Haven should conduct more events and celebration around its culturally diverse food scene. This could take the form of food events such as Arts and Ideas food programming, and the Grand Avenue Food Tours. Additionally, the City should develop a local awards program for restaurants, chefs, and other food providers that recognizes their contributions to New Haven's food culture. The City should also support storytelling about its food culture, providing a platform for the expression of the cultural significance of food.

7.3 Support a values-based approach to food procurement.

The City should continue New Haven's Food System Policy Division's (FSPD) values-based food procurement approach. This approach prioritizes social, environmental, and ethical considerations alongside cost and quality when purchasing food. Rather than focusing solely on price or efficiency, this practice emphasizes supporting local economies, sustainable agriculture, nutritious food, animal welfare and fair labor practices. The City should expand on FSPD's collaboration with New Haven Public Schools in shifting towards a values-based approach to food sourcing.

Case Study

Cambridge Food Business Incubator Program, Cambridge, MA

The City of Cambridge's Food Business Incubator Program offers essential support to emerging food entrepreneurs, especially those from underrepresented groups and first-time business owners. This initiative provides a range of services designed to help businesses grow and succeed within the local food industry.

One of the program's key components is a workshop series focused on providing training in areas such as menu design, financial management, and market analysis. These workshops are tailored to meet the needs of new or early-stage food business owners, equipping them with the knowledge to navigate the complexities of starting a food business. Additionally, the program provides assistance to cottage food operations, helping home-based businesses in licensing and establishment.

Cambridge is also home to the Inman Incubator, which provides commercial kitchen spaces and services that help entrepreneurs expand their operations and the BIPOC Incubator Initiative, which provides farmers and food entrepreneurs with opportunities to sell their products at the Central Square Farmers Market and receive assistance in areas like permitting and marketing.



prepshift

Cambridge Food Business Basics

Learn the basics of starting your own food business in this free, 6-week course.

Want to open a food business?
Unsure of next steps?

Cambridge, MA residents are eligible to apply.

APPLY BY 2/28: www.bit.ly/cfbb-2025

Source: Cambridge Food Business Incubator Program

Spotlight

New Haven Food System Policy Division

The Food System Policy Division (FSPD) operates through a food justice and sovereignty framework prioritizing health equity, socio-economic justice, and environmental justice. The FSPD works on food policy at all levels including changing practices within organizations and institutions, modifying regulations at a City level, advocating for legislation at a state and federal level, and shaping international agendas.

The FSPD is currently developing an urban agriculture master plan. The plan is intended to ensure that City processes related to food and farming are clear, easy to navigate, and accessible for every resident; that the urban farming community is reflective of the City's diversity; that those who are most impacted by racism and injustice are honored, respected, and empowered; and that every resident experiences the health, environmental, social, and economic benefits of urban agriculture. In addition to this work, the FSPD partnered with the Food & Society program of the Aspen Institute to provide the Grow New Haven platform, a resource for people that grow, cook, make, or sell food.



Food System Policy Division staff participate in beekeeping in New Haven.

7.4 Provide more space for food start-ups and food-related small businesses.

The availability and cost of space can present a barrier to the successful establishment of a food-related business. Space is important for the production of food and for connecting with the community to support sales. In response to this need, the City should support the development of and access to food business incubation space, shared kitchen space, food trucks and food truck vending locations, food halls, and markets including farmers' markets. The City should collaborate with existing organizations such as CitySeed and CT Food Launchpad and existing food space providers to promote and expand their services as well as supporting new entities in the food incubation space. The City should invest in Food Truck Paradise on Long Wharf and ensure that this remains a hub for immigrant and Black, Indigenous, and People of Color-owned businesses, preventing "food truck gentrification".

7.5 Provide more support to food start-ups and for the establishment of small food-related businesses including home-based businesses.

The City should connect its food start-ups and businesses, including home-based businesses (e.g. cottage food businesses, micro enterprise home kitchen operations (MEHKOs)) and micro food businesses with the resources necessary to support their establishment and growth. By building and maintaining a listing of food-related businesses in the City as described in Strategy 7.1 above, the City can conduct direct outreach to those businesses to offer support. New Haven should partner with existing organizations such as reSET, Havenly, CitySeed, and others to connect start-ups and small businesses with the support that those organizations can provide.

7.6 Streamline the permitting process for food-based businesses and improve instructional materials.

New Haven should support the establishment of food-related businesses by streamlining the City permitting process and improving instructional materials about the City and State or Health District permitting and licensing requirements. This would include building upon and expanding the Food System Policy Division's Grow New Haven portal, which provides information and resources that assist in the establishment of a food-related business. The City should also provide instructional materials for business establishment, permitting, and licensing in multiple languages and in written and video form.

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9. Civic Services & Experiences



Source: New Haven Youth and Recreation Department

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Tinker Lab at Ives Squared. Source: New Haven Independent

Civic Services & Experiences

The Vision

New Haven is dedicated to being a resilient, inclusive, and equitable City that delivers high-quality, fiscally responsible, and environmentally sustainable services and facilities to its residents. The City fosters collaboration across departments and with external organizations and embraces a culture of transparency, open communication, and accountability.

Goals

- 1 Equitably develop and distribute City services and resources.
- 2 Enhance collaboration, communication, and transparency within City government and with community organizations.
- 3 Ensure that City services and facilities are accessible to people with disabilities.
- 4 Expand support for people returning to New Haven after being released from prison.
- 5 Improve the health of New Haven's residents.
- 6 Expand services for New Haven's older residents.
- 7 Enhance public safety services to effectively meet community needs.
- 8 Invest in the City's library buildings, services, and programming.
- 9 Expand and improve access to youth and recreation services.
- 10 Improve school buildings and their use to better meet the needs of students and the community.

1

Equitably develop and distribute City services and resources.

In 2020, during the Black Lives Matter mass uprisings following the murder of George Floyd and the COVID-19 pandemic that illuminated shocking health inequities, New Haven declared racism a public health crisis in the City. In 2021, New Haven joined the Government Alliance on Racial Equity, formalizing a commitment to breaking down racial inequities within City Hall and throughout the community. Departments like the Food System Policy Division, Department of Arts, Culture, and Tourism, the Health Department, and the Department of Community Resilience have been leaders in advancing evidence-based, community-rooted programs and policies that advance equity. However, the City lacks overarching plans and policies to align departments in an equity-based approach to their work. Equitably developing and distributing the City's services and resources ensures that all residents have meaningful access to opportunities and support and can influence decision-making. In a federal climate that rejects the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion, New Haven has reaffirmed its commitment to "equitably strengthening and stewarding public goods so that individuals, families and communities can live long, healthy, joyful lives, no matter their race, class, gender, sexuality, ability, migration status, or zip code." By making equity a core policy across all City operations, New Haven can intentionally address systemic barriers and deliver services that reflect the needs of diverse communities across the City.

Strategies

1.1 Ensure that equity continues to be at the forefront of City services and operations.

To ensure that equity continues to be strengthened as a citywide policy, the City should build on past work done and continue to strengthen its equity work to guide all City departments and agencies and inform the development of policies and procedures that advance equity. The City should ensure a shared definition for equity that captures the nuance of New Haven's diverse population, tools for assessing equity impacts of decisions, and guidance on how departments should conduct robust, authentic community engagement. Where necessary, the City should also update its ordinances and other regulations and policies to ensure that they are consistent with its vision on equity.

1.2 Continue to cultivate an inclusive City workforce and governance structure.

New Haven should maintain a focus on efforts to ensure that its staff and board and commission members are representative of the community. By building upon existing municipal hiring codes and revising hiring practices to support greater diversity including individuals with disabilities, the City can create a more inclusive and equitable workforce. This will require evaluating the City's hiring process and reducing barriers for applicants. The City should also lower barriers to participation on boards and commissions to encourage broader participation. Services such as childcare and interpretation could be considered.

1.3 Enhance access to multilingual and culturally responsive services.

New Haven is becoming more diverse racially, ethnically, and culturally with more languages spoken in the City than ever before. Providing equitable services to the community requires expanding the languages that services are provided in and ensuring that services are delivered in a culturally sensitive and competent way. This includes designing services and resources to be culturally responsive and welcoming specifically to immigrants and refugees, while actively increasing outreach to these communities. Additionally, the City should provide targeted support services and collaborate with existing organizations that assist multilingual as well as immigrant and refugee populations, ensuring that all residents can access the resources they need.

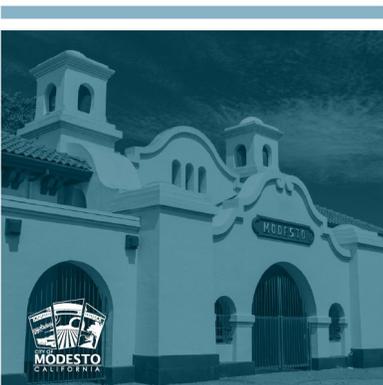
1.4 Improve the ability of small businesses and service providers to work with and for the City.

New Haven should simplify and reduce barriers in the City's procurement process to improve opportunities for small businesses and service providers to work with and for the City.

Case Study

City of Modesto, CA Communications Plan

The City of Modesto developed its Communications Plan in 2020, as a means of supporting implementation of the City's 2020-2025 Strategic Plan and to enhance public engagement and understanding of City services and initiatives. The plan emphasizes strategic communication through storytelling, public engagement, and consistent brand management to build trust and keep residents informed. It has improved community participation in City events, fostered a better understanding of government initiatives, and ensured timely and accurate information during emergencies. The plan has also reinforced the City's commitment to transparency by addressing public concerns effectively, leading to greater satisfaction with City services. Overall, Modesto's approach has strengthened the connection between City government and residents, creating a more engaged and informed community.



CITY OF MODESTO
COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

2

Enhance collaboration, communication, and transparency within City government and with community organizations.

New Haven needs to improve communication and collaboration across its departments, with outside organizations, and with the community. Successful implementation of this plan will require the involvement of all stakeholders.

Strategies

2.1 Enhance public communication and transparency.

By improving its communication with the community, New Haven will improve the transparency of its governance and operations. This should include proactively sharing information with the public through an improved online and social media presence; using plain language in documents and communications, conducting more public forums and surveys; and improving communications in response to resident concerns and providing timely updates on response to those concerns. The City should also provide regular reporting to the public on progress made toward the recommendations of this plan.

2.2 Strengthen external partnerships and interagency communication.

The City should enhance communication with outside agencies, regional partners, and community organizations by establishing regular interagency meetings, designating department liaisons, and creating a centralized digital information hub. Improved coordination with outside organizations will streamline emergency response efforts, improve social services, and support economic and transportation initiatives.

2.3 Improve internal coordination and staff training.

Improving internal coordination and staff training across the City's departments and agencies is essential for increasing efficiency, reducing redundancies, and enhancing service delivery. By evaluating and aligning technology solutions across departments and ensuring comprehensive staff training, the City can streamline workflows, improve data sharing, and foster greater collaboration. Additionally, developing standardized onboarding practices will provide clarity on organizational structures and common technology tools, ensuring that all employees understand departmental roles and functions.

2.4 Use the Vision 2034 Plan as a guide to align departmental efforts.

This plan provides a comprehensive guide to important needs and issues across the City and should be a point of reference for all departments. The use of this plan across departments can support the alignment of their work towards a common vision for the community.

3

This icon indicates that this strategy is directly related to another strategy. Click to jump to the related strategy.

Ensure that City services and facilities are accessible to people with disabilities.

The City should implement a comprehensive set of strategies focused on compliance, accountability, and inclusion to ensure an equitable environment that is welcoming of residents and visitors with disabilities and seniors with access needs. A focus on universal design would benefit all users including seniors and families with children that have mobility impairments. *See also Goal 2 of Move Together.*

Strategies

3.1 Conduct an ADA Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan.

The City should conduct a comprehensive ADA Self-Evaluation and develop a Transition Plan to assess the accessibility of its services, programs, and facilities. This process will identify barriers to accessibility and establish a clear roadmap for compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). By systematically addressing accessibility gaps, the City can ensure that all residents, regardless of ability, have equal opportunities to engage with municipal resources and participate fully in community life.

3.2 Establish ADA liaisons in each City department.

The City should appoint an existing staff member as the ADA liaison for each department to work closely with the Department of Services for Persons with Disabilities. These liaisons will help identify and address barriers, provide guidance on ADA compliance, and serve as points of contact for residents seeking assistance. By embedding accessibility expertise within every department, the City can proactively ensure that policies, programs, and services meet the needs of people with disabilities.

3.3 Ensure City-sponsored events are fully accessible.

All City-sponsored events and activities, including those held on the New Haven Green, should be designed to accommodate individuals with disabilities. This includes ensuring wheelchair accessibility, providing sign language interpretation, offering assistive listening devices, and making information available in alternative formats. By prioritizing accessibility in public events, the City will foster a more inclusive environment where all residents can fully participate in civic and cultural life.

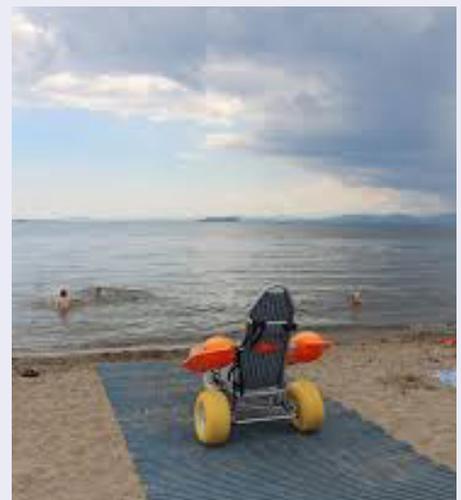
3.4 Improve accessibility in health, education, and public programming.

Health clinics, educational programs, and other City-sponsored services should be made physically and programmatically accessible to individuals with disabilities. This includes ensuring that buildings meet ADA standards, providing accommodations such as accessible communication methods and assistive technology, and training staff on best practices for serving individuals with disabilities.

Case Study

Burlington, VT ADA Transition Plan

Burlington conducted an ADA self-evaluation in 1990 followed by adoption of its ADA Transition Plan in 1992. The plan aims to ensure accessibility for individuals with disabilities across public facilities, programs, and services. It identifies barriers, outlines removal methods, sets a timeline, and assigns responsibility for progress. The plan covers parks, sidewalks, polling places, and public buildings, adhering to both federal and Vermont accessibility standards. Burlington also provides communication aids like sign language interpreters and assistive listening devices, along with grievance procedures. Progress includes installing curb ramps, improving park and playground access, and ensuring accessible polling places. In 2018, Burlington outlined specific strategies for ADA compliance, aiming for full implementation within 15 years. The City also established the Advisory Committee on Accessibility, comprising citizens, including individuals with disabilities, to guide these efforts.



Accessible Lake Champlain beachfront. Source: Burlington Parks, Recreation and Waterfront.

Case Study

The Fortune Society New York City

The Fortune Society, founded in 1967, is one of the nation's leading reentry service organizations, serving nearly 10,000 individuals each year across multiple program sites in New York City. It is also a prominent advocate for criminal justice reform and alternatives to incarceration.

The organization's mission is to support successful reentry from incarceration and promote community-based alternatives to incarceration; ultimately working to strengthen communities. It pursues this mission by believing in the power of individuals to change, delivering services shaped by the needs and experiences of its participants, and advancing policies that support a fair, humane, and rehabilitative justice system.

Its comprehensive services include job training, educational support, substance use treatment, mental health counseling, HIV/AIDS care, family services, and long-term aftercare. Since the early 2000s, the organization has also developed supportive housing, offering permanent, affordable residences for individuals returning from incarceration. Its success is evidenced in the program's recidivism rate of 15% compared to 50% for New York City as a whole.



Source: The Fortune Society

4

Expand support for people returning to New Haven after being released from prison.

New Haven should support the successful reintegration of formerly incarcerated individuals and youth who have had contact with the juvenile justice system by expanding access to stable housing with supportive services, including mental health care and addiction treatment. The City should also increase the availability of transitional housing, enhance access to education and vocational training, and create job opportunities through public-private partnerships and by adopting and promoting fair hiring practices, both within local government and the private sector.

Strategies

4.1 Expand access to housing and support services.

The City should work to connect formerly incarcerated individuals with long-term supportive and transitional housing. This includes integrating services such as mental health care, addiction treatment, case management, and programs that incentivize landlords to rent to returning residents. Stable housing coupled with supportive services will reduce the chances that those individuals return to prison or become homeless, ensuring a smoother reintegration process. Partnerships with organizations to provide these services will be critical given the difficulty in tracking where individuals go after release. Improvements may be needed to the reentry network to improve contact with individuals released from prison.

4.2 Enhance education and vocational training opportunities.

The City should support access to educational and vocational training programs, including GED preparation, community college courses, and skills-based training. These programs will empower returning residents to pursue meaningful employment, build economic independence, and increase their long-term stability.

4.3 Create employment pathways through partnerships and incentives.

New Haven should partner with local businesses, and the Chamber of Commerce to create job opportunities for formerly incarcerated individuals, recognizing employment as essential for successful reentry. The City should also explore providing incentives to businesses that hire returning residents, aiming to reduce stigma and expand second-chance employment opportunities.

4.4 Promote fair hiring practices and workforce inclusion.

New Haven should evaluate and revise its hiring policies to promote fair hiring practices for formerly incarcerated individuals within City government and local businesses. By reducing barriers to employment and fostering an inclusive workforce, the City can lead efforts to support successful reintegration and reduce employment discrimination.

5

Improve the health of New Haven's residents.

The City should improve the health and well-being of all residents by expanding access to comprehensive, affordable healthcare and integrating mental and behavioral health support throughout the community. Through stronger partnerships, particularly with schools, the City can expand access to services while also promoting preventive care and healthy lifestyles. Addressing issues such as housing, food security, and environmental quality will be central to improving the community's health. Health equity should be a foundational priority, guiding policies and investments to ensure that all residents have access to the care and resources they need to thrive.

Strategies

5.1 Expand access to comprehensive healthcare services.

Expanding access to healthcare in New Haven requires improving the availability of services to ensure all residents can receive the care they need. The co-location of health services within schools through collaboration between the Health Department and school-based health centers, making care more accessible to children and families should be considered. Additionally, securing sustainable funding sources will help reduce reliance on grants, ensuring long-term stability and growth of essential health services. The City should work with community healthcare providers and partners at the State to address federal funding gaps and ensure residents do not lose access to critical services. By prioritizing these actions, the City can create a more equitable and resilient healthcare system that meets the needs of its diverse population.

5.2 Strengthen mental and behavioral health support.

New Haven should strengthen its mental and behavioral health resources by sustaining and expanding existing initiatives while improving access to services, particularly for vulnerable populations. The City should collaborate with New Haven Public Schools to enhance mental health services to help students receive timely support and improve crisis management through better training and intervention strategies. Additionally, increasing awareness, capacity, and integration of mental health services into community resources, through the Health Department and Office of Community Mental Health, will ensure that residents have comprehensive support for their behavioral health needs.

5.3 Address social and environmental issues that impact health.

To improve overall well-being, the City should address key issues impacting health, such as housing stability and quality, food security, and economic opportunity. Ensuring access to safe, affordable housing and expanding resources for food assistance programs will help create healthier living conditions. Additionally, promoting environmental health initiatives, such as reducing pollution, indoor lead abatement and improving air and water quality, will lower health risks and enhance public health outcomes. Another approach is to support workforce development in public health to help cultivate a diverse and well-trained healthcare workforce, ensuring long-term improvements in service delivery and community well-being.

Spotlight

Lead Abatement Dashboard

This dashboard, hosted by the New Haven Health Department, provides information about cases of children that have a large amount of lead in their blood that come to the Department. It provides real-time tracking of active and closed cases documented back to 2019 including the status of cases. The Department also offers classes to contractors to become certified for lead abatement projects, helping to safely remove lead from the homes of residents across the City.

Total Cases, 2019-Present



5.4 Promote preventive care and healthy lifestyles.

Preventive care and healthy lifestyles are essential to reducing chronic disease and improving overall health in New Haven. The City should promote wellness through education programs, improved access to nutrition resources, and increased opportunities for physical activity. Encouraging community engagement in health initiatives will ensure that residents are active participants in shaping programs that reflect their needs and priorities. By fostering a culture of prevention and proactive health management, New Haven can reduce healthcare disparities and improve long-term health outcomes for all residents.

5.5 Strengthen health resilience and emergency preparedness.

Building a resilient public health system requires enhancing emergency preparedness and response efforts to protect residents from public health threats, natural disasters, and disease outbreaks. Building on lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic, New Haven should strengthen coordination between public health agencies, first responders, and community organizations to improve crisis response capabilities. Additionally, the City should adopt data-driven decision-making to enable the City to track health trends, allocate resources effectively, and adapt to emerging challenges. These efforts will ensure that New Haven is well-prepared to address both immediate health crises and long-term public health needs.

5.6 Advance health equity and integrate it into policy.

Health equity must be a core principle in all City policies to ensure that every resident has equal access to quality healthcare and wellness opportunities. New Haven will integrate health considerations into planning, zoning, and policy decisions to address systemic disparities and improve community well-being. By prioritizing health equity and fostering a culture of wellbeing, the City will create an inclusive and supportive environment where all residents, regardless of background or socioeconomic status, can achieve optimal health.

New Haven's residents experience higher rates of health and mental health issues such as asthma and depression than residents of the region and the City has a higher rate of residents (11%) that lack health insurance compared to the region.

Source: Data Haven 2023 Equity Profile



Source: New Haven Health Department

Spotlight

New Haven Health Department

The New Haven Health Department (NHHD) is responsible for promoting public health and ensuring the well-being of the City's residents. It offers a wide range of services including clinical care, immunizations, disease prevention, and health education. The department provides vital records, supports school health requirements, and offers community health programs addressing issues such as lead poisoning, tobacco control, and chronic disease management. Additionally, NHHD focuses on emergency preparedness, environmental health through inspections, and enforces regulations to ensure a safe living environment. The department works closely with local organizations to reduce health disparities and promote health equity throughout the City.

6

Expand services for New Haven's older residents.

The City should enhance the quality of life for its older residents by transforming senior centers into vibrant community hubs that are accessible, inclusive, and supportive. These centers should offer extended hours, intergenerational programs, and expanded locations to ensure citywide access and encourage cross-generational connection. Seniors should be provided with greater opportunities for cultural enrichment and lifelong learning through trips and educational programming, while also receiving improved access to health, mental health, and financial support services. Efforts should be made to strengthen multilingual communication to ensure that all seniors, regardless of language or location, can access the resources they need and feel fully integrated into the community.

Strategies

6.1 Enhance senior centers as community hubs.

To better serve New Haven's older residents, the City should transform senior centers into community hubs that are accessible to people of all ages. By extending their hours into the evening and offering after-school programs, senior centers can become inclusive spaces that encourage cross-generational engagement. Additionally, new senior centers should be opened in the Hill and Bella Vista, with dedicated centers for the Dixwell and Newhallville neighborhoods, ensuring that residents in all parts of the City have access to vital services and community-building opportunities.

6.2 Foster intergenerational connections.

The City should create an intergenerational program that pairs seniors with middle or high school students, fostering meaningful relationships and mutual learning. This initiative would bridge generational gaps, allowing seniors to share their life experiences and wisdom while providing younger individuals with the opportunity to connect with older generations in a supportive, educational environment. This strategy aims to strengthen the fabric of the community through enhanced understanding and cooperation across age groups. The City should also offer tailored support services for grandparents raising grandchildren.

"Create housing for seniors to downsize into who want to stay in their neighborhood and city. All the new housing seems to be for young working people."

- Survey participant

Case Study

San Francisco Intergenerational Programs, San Francisco, CA

San Francisco's Human Service Agency has implemented several successful intergenerational programs that foster meaningful connections between seniors and youth. These initiatives include the Intergenerational Youth Leadership & Technology Program by Self-Help for the Elderly, which teaches youth leadership and technology skills while promoting community engagement with seniors. The Intergenerational Program by Bayview Senior Services offers arts-based activities to promote brain health among seniors and strengthen ties with younger generations. Additionally, the Intergenerational Play Collective organizes creative activities for children, parents, and older adults, encouraging community building. These programs collectively aim to reduce social isolation, promote mutual learning, and enhance community cohesion by connecting different generations.



Source: San Francisco Senior Beat, Elisabeth Fall

Spotlight

New Haven Department of Elderly Services

The City's Department of Elderly Services supports seniors in maintaining independence and improving their quality of life. It operates three senior centers—Atwater, Dixwell/Newhallville, and East Shore—offering a range of programs, including nutrition, health screenings, exercise classes, and social activities. The department also provides case management, assistance with legal, medical, housing, and financial needs, and protective services to safeguard elderly residents from abuse and neglect. These services, along with transportation support and community-building programs, aim to foster a vibrant, connected community for older adults in New Haven.

The department conducts four special events each year including a Senior Volunteer of the Year luncheon a trip to the Connecticut Senior Day at Holiday Hill, Connecticut Day at the Big E, and apple picking at Bishop Orchards in Guilford.



Dixwell/Newhallville Senior Center
Source: City of New Haven

6.3 Increase engagement in cultural and educational opportunities.

To enrich the lives of seniors, the City should offer more opportunities for cultural engagement through organized trips to local museums, theaters, and other venues. These activities will provide seniors with enriching experiences that promote social interaction and lifelong learning. Additionally, the City should collaborate with partners to provide educational opportunities, such as workshops, seminars, and skill-building programs, enabling seniors to continue learning and stay intellectually engaged.

6.4 Improve health, social, and financial support systems.

Ensuring that seniors are properly cared for is a key priority. The City should connect seniors to health, fitness, and mental health specialists to ensure comprehensive care. In addition, a pet companion program will be established to help reduce social isolation and provide companionship. Financial aid should also be offered to eligible seniors for home maintenance needs, allowing them to safely remain in their homes and maintain their independence. The City should ensure that information about programs, services, and resources for seniors across city departments are easily accessed through the Department of Elderly Services.

6.5 Improve communication and access to services.

To better serve diverse communities, the City should enhance multilingual communication within the services it provides to its seniors. This effort would ensure that seniors in neighborhoods like Dixwell/Newhallville, Atwood, and East Shore have access to resources and information in languages that meet their needs. Strengthening these communication channels will help ensure that all seniors, regardless of language barriers, can engage fully with the services available to them and feel more connected to the broader community. An important component of this effort would be to overcome technology barriers by providing better access to technology and technology training at senior centers.

Nearly 17,000 (12.4%) New Haven residents are 60 years of age or older.

Source: 2023 ACS, US Census Bureau

7

Enhance public safety services to effectively meet community needs.

The City of New Haven should strengthen public safety by investing in modern infrastructure, technology, and equipment for its Police and Fire Departments to enhance operational efficiency and emergency response. The City should also expand crisis intervention and social work support within policing to improve responses to mental health and community-based needs, promoting a more compassionate and community-centered approach. Efforts should be made to diversify public safety personnel aiming to build a workforce that reflects the City's residents and fostering trust and cultural competency. Additionally, a comprehensive review and modernization of the Police Department's organizational structure and operations will ensure more effective, data-driven, and coordinated service delivery, aligned with the evolving needs of the community.

Violent crime dropped three-fold and property crime dropped by more than half in New Haven in the decade between 2010 and 2020.

Source: FBI Uniform Crime Reports and U.S. Department of Justice

Strategies

7.1 Modernize and improve the efficiency of the Police Department.

New Haven should conduct a department-wide efficiency audit of its Police Department to identify areas where workflows and operational processes can be streamlined to improve response times, eliminate redundancies, and optimize the use of available resources. This assessment can provide data-driven recommendations to enhance coordination across units, refine administrative procedures, and strengthen overall service delivery. By modernizing its organizational structure and prioritizing efficiency, the New Haven Police Department can build a more responsive, adaptable, and technologically advanced force that better serves and protects the community.

New Haven should analyze and refine the Police Department's organizational structure, staffing, and workflows to align with the evolving demands of modern policing. As technology plays an increasingly central role in crime prevention, investigation, and emergency response, the department must be structured to effectively integrate data-driven tools, surveillance systems, and digital crime analysis. A comprehensive evaluation of department staffing will ensure that personnel are positioned to maximize these resources while maintaining strong community engagement and accountability.

Case Study

Wilmington Police Department, Wilmington DE

Wilmington has implemented various initiatives to diversify its police force and improve community relations. These efforts include targeted recruitment, with the most recent police academy class consisting of a diverse group of recruits, and the establishment of a Community Engagement Unit that fosters relationship-building between officers and residents. The City has also launched the Partners in Care Co-Responder Program, pairing officers with mental health professionals to address crises effectively. While progress has been made, including a notable increase in minority representation within the force, challenges remain in achieving a police force that mirrors the City's demographic makeup, with ongoing initiatives aimed at further diversifying the department.



Source: Wilmington Police Department

7.2 Improve Police and Fire Department infrastructure and resources.

Ensuring that New Haven’s Police and Fire Departments have modern facilities, systems, technology, and equipment is essential to maintaining effective public safety services. Investing in infrastructure and technology upgrades will enhance operational efficiency, improve emergency response capabilities, and support the evolving needs of these critical departments. By prioritizing these improvements, the City can strengthen its ability to protect residents and maintain a well-equipped and responsive public safety network.

7.3 Diversify public safety personnel.

As recommended for all other City departments and operations, New Haven should diversify its personnel to better reflect the community that they serve. By continuing efforts to recruit and retain personnel from a wide range of backgrounds, the City can enhance trust, improve cultural competency, and ensure that police officers, firefighters, and emergency responders reflect the diversity of New Haven’s residents. Expanding diversity initiatives will contribute to more equitable and effective public safety services.

7.4 Expand crisis intervention and social work support in policing.

The City’s Police Department should continue its work with Elm City COMPASS (Compassionate Allies Serving Our Streets) to expand resources for addressing mental health crises and other community-based needs. These professionals can help bridge the gap between law enforcement and social services, offering specialized support for individuals in distress.

7.5 Continue to invest in the Office of Violence Prevention.

The City of New Haven established the first municipal Office of Violence Prevention (OVP) in the state, emphasizing social services and prevention to complement traditional law enforcement-based approaches to community violence. In 2023, the OVP published a Gun Violence Prevention Blueprint which outlines strategies for violence prevention in the city. The City should continue to invest in the OVP to ensure the office can fulfill the recommendations of the Blueprint through grant-making, agency coordination, advocacy, technical assistance, reporting and evaluation, and research and policy development.



Source: Continuum CT

Spotlight

Elm City COMPASS

Elm City COMPASS (Compassionate Allies Serving our Streets) is a community-based crisis response initiative launched in New Haven in 2022. The program is designed to support individuals experiencing mental health, substance use, or housing crises. It operates with a dedicated team comprising social workers and peer recovery specialists who collaborate closely with police, fire, and emergency medical services to provide timely and compassionate assistance. Its services were expanded in 2024, extending operating hours by providing nightly shifts.

8

Invest in the City's library buildings, services, and programming.

Residents consistently name the public library system as one of the city's greatest assets. The City should continue to improve its library system to better serve the community. This includes modernizing facilities to ensure they are welcoming, functional, and resilient, while also expanding access to a wide range of programs, resources, and technologies that reflect the needs of a diverse population. The City's libraries should serve as community hubs, offering inclusive spaces for learning, connection, and creativity. Strengthening partnerships with local organizations and improving access through extended hours and additional services will further support community engagement. The New Haven Free Public Library should also ensure that library collections remain relevant, inclusive, and responsive to evolving interests.

"Improving recreation and library services will decrease the need for more police."

- Survey participant

Strategies

8.1 Modernize and enhance library facilities.

The City should modernize library buildings to ensure they are well-functioning, welcoming, and contemporary, including upgrades to interiors and investment in environmentally sustainable infrastructure. Specific improvements should focus on ensuring that libraries serve as effective warming and cooling centers by upgrading heating and air conditioning systems. Additionally, libraries should be updated to support the hosting of in-person, virtual, and hybrid community meetings.

8.2 Expand access to library services and programming.

The City should expand library programming to serve all residents, with a focus on diverse groups and interests. This includes offering improved career readiness programs, parenting and life skills resources, literacy classes for all ages, multicultural and multilingual programs, and more programming for teens and adults. Efforts should also be made to increase access to library materials in underserved areas, such as through the use of the Readmobile in Fair Haven Heights and Quinpiac Meadows.

Case Study

Spokane Public Library, Spokane, WA

Spokane, Washington, recently completed a comprehensive transformation of its public library system, aiming to modernize facilities and enhance community engagement. In 2018, voters approved a \$77 million bond to renovate existing branches, rebuild libraries in two neighborhoods, and construct a new facility called The Hive. Included was renovation of its Central Library, completed in 2022, which included features such as computer, business, and media labs, as well as community meeting and study rooms. The Hive, established in partnership with Spokane Public Schools, serves as a non-traditional library space providing innovative resources for students and the broader community.



The Hive. Source: Spokane Public Library

8.3 Innovative technology and resource expansion.

Through its libraries, the City should expand access to STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math) resources, the Library of Things, technology lending programs, content creation areas, digital recording suites, art studios and new, and innovative spaces such as makerspaces. This will help foster creativity and technological literacy, especially for teens and adults.

8.4 Strengthen partnerships and community collaboration.

The City should strengthen partnerships with local schools, arts and cultural organizations, universities, and civic groups to enhance library services and extend their reach. Collaborations could include shared programming, educational initiatives, and events that further enrich the cultural and intellectual life of the community.

8.5 Increase library accessibility and ensure relevant and inclusive collections.

The City should work to extend library hours and provide after-hours solutions for material access to ensure that library services are available to all residents. New revenue streams such as passport services and café vendors should be explored at all library locations to help fund and expand library services. The City should conduct annual audits of library material collections to ensure they reflect community interests and needs. This includes expanding resources in world languages and introducing more content on important topics such as climate change and environmental sustainability.

“We need more places for teens like the Library Teen Center”

- Youth voice

The New Haven Free Public Library welcomes 600,000 patrons annually to its five libraries. 43,000 people hold a New Haven Free Public Library card.



Source: New Haven Free Public Library

Spotlight

Ives Squared, New Haven Free Public Library

Ives Squared is an innovation center located within the Ives Main Library. It was launched in 2018 and serves as a hub for creativity, entrepreneurship, and community engagement. The center features the Tinker Lab, a makerspace equipped with tools and resources for hands-on projects; the Exchange, a co-working and entrepreneurial space fostering business development; and the Switchboard, a welcoming front desk connecting visitors to various library resources and opportunities. Additionally, Ives Squared offers a café and patio overlooking the New Haven Green, providing a space for relaxation and social gatherings.

9

Expand and improve access to youth and recreation services.

The City of New Haven should work to expand and improve access to youth and recreation services by better coordinating programs across departments and organizations to ensure that youth and their families are provided with the best possible services. This will involve the City increasing outreach, improving programming, and providing targeted services to populations in need. Young people in New Haven want more spaces designed for them like the NHFPL Teen Center and sports facilities, access to jobs and internships, reliable transportation, and to be included proactively in civic engagement.

Strategies

9.1 Improve coordination and integration of services.

The City should work to better coordinate youth and recreation services across departments and organizations, ensuring that resources are efficiently shared and that services are accessible and well-aligned to meet the needs of youth across the City.

9.2 Enhance outreach and communication.

To increase visibility and engagement, the City should expand the social media presence of youth and recreation services, including the development of an app to share information about programs, events, and resources with youth and their families, ensuring greater outreach and engagement.

9.3 Expand and strengthen youth and recreation services.

After-school programs, job training programs like Youth at Work, and opportunities to play sports are in high demand. The City should work to expand the capacity of the Youth and Recreation Department by securing federal and state grant funding to improve program quality, extend the reach of services, and serve a broader range of youth in the community. This strategy will enhance the quality and variety of services offered, particularly in underserved areas.

9.4 Provide targeted services for diverse and at-risk youth.

The City should expand direct services to youth, focusing on job training, financial workshops, and specialized programs for at-risk or high-risk youth, including youth from LGBTQ, re-entry, and immigrant communities. This will help ensure that all youth, regardless of background, have access to the support and resources they need to thrive.

New Haven's Youth and Recreation programs have 35,000 enrollments per year on average, with some of New Haven's youth enrolled in multiple programs per year.

Source: Department of Youth and Recreation Services

Case Study

Kalamazoo, MI Youth Development Network

The Kalamazoo Youth Development Network (KYD Network) is dedicated to ensuring that all youth have agency within a well-coordinated system supporting anti-racist, high-quality, and youth-driven afterschool programs. Established in 2000, KYD Network began as a collaborative effort among the City of Kalamazoo, the Irving S. Gilmore Foundation, and the Hispanic American Council to provide networking opportunities for youth-serving organizations. Over time, it evolved into an intermediary organization focused on building a sustainable out-of-school time system in Kalamazoo County.

KYD Network partners with various organizations to enhance program quality, promote inclusion and equity, and foster social-emotional learning. Their initiatives include implementing the Youth Program Quality Intervention to improve program standards, conducting assessments like the Devereux Student Strengths Assessment to measure social and emotional skills, and facilitating the Kalamazoo County Youth Cabinet, a youth advisory council. These efforts collectively aim to create a thriving community where all youth can develop and succeed.



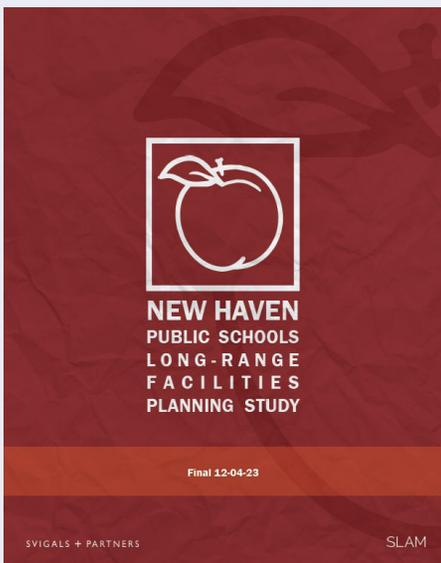
Source: Kalamazoo Youth Development Network

Spotlight

New Haven Public Schools Long-Range Facilities Planning Study

The Study provided a comprehensive assessment of the District's schools and their facilities and explored student enrollment trends including projected enrollment over the next decade. The study and its recommendations are intended to support the efficient use and allocation of resources in response to curriculum and programmatic needs, projected enrollment, school capacity and the overall condition of facilities and infrastructure. It seeks to address challenges that include declining enrollment, capacity limitations, aging infrastructure, and fiscal sustainability.

The study identified 12 operational school buildings as being in "Poor" condition indicating immediate and on-going needs to maintain current usage. It found that several additional facilities are rapidly approaching "Poor" condition and 31 School Facilities have been identified as "Fair" condition. Only two School Facilities have been identified as "Good" condition. Additionally, most of the schools or buildings were found to be consuming more energy than anticipated when designed.



10

Improve quality and use of school buildings to better meet the needs of students and the community.

School buildings comprise the largest share of the City's buildings, both in number of buildings and in terms of space. In addition to serving the needs of students, school buildings play a roll as community centers, and some serve as emergency shelters and polling places. The improvement of these facilities to meet changing educational and community needs is critical to ensuring that they remain positive and productive spaces for students and the community.

Strategies

10.1 Upgrade school buildings and facilities.

Working with New Haven Public Schools, the City should improve schools by upgrading heating, cooling, plumbing, and electrical systems, improving safety features, and ensuring compliance with accessibility standards (ADA). The City should also enhance school exteriors and interiors, and ensure that proper security improvements are provided.

10.2 Provide technology and learning space enhancements.

Modern technology should be more widely implemented in New Haven's schools, such as interactive boards, high-speed internet, and digital content delivery systems. Additionally, classrooms and learning spaces should be improved to be flexible and collaborative, with updated furniture and specialized spaces for science, math, technology, and creative curriculums.

10.3 Improve schools to better support community engagement and provide multi-use spaces.

The City should improve schools to better serve as community hubs, offering multi-use spaces such as auditoriums, meeting rooms, and after-hours venues for public use. *See also Strategy 3.1 of Arts and Cultural Identity.*

10.4 Upgrade and modernize health, wellness, and recreation facilities at schools.

Schools should be provided with modernized health services including updated nurse's offices, mental health spaces, and wellness centers. Additionally, recreational facilities like gyms, athletic fields, and outdoor spaces should be upgraded or provided to better support physical education and extracurricular activities.

10.5 Make sustainability and energy efficiency improvements

Improve the sustainability and energy efficiency of schools as recommended by Strategy 1.5 of Climate and Ecological Connections.

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10. Land Use Vision



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About the Land Use Vision 10.1



The land use vision is a key element of the Vision 2034 Plan, offering a long-term perspective on the most desirable and sustainable use of land throughout New Haven. This vision is shown in a future land use map that serves as a planning tool to guide public policy, land use decisions, and investment priorities over the next decade and beyond.

The land use vision builds upon the Vision 2025 future land use plan. It incorporates new insights, goals, and aspirations identified during the Vision 2034 planning process, and reflects the extensive public engagement that shaped the plan including Co-Creation Team contributions, community workshops, surveys, and stakeholder meetings. The map integrates this public input with the land use recommendations of other plans and policies to promote land use and development that is appropriate to New Haven and to its neighborhoods.

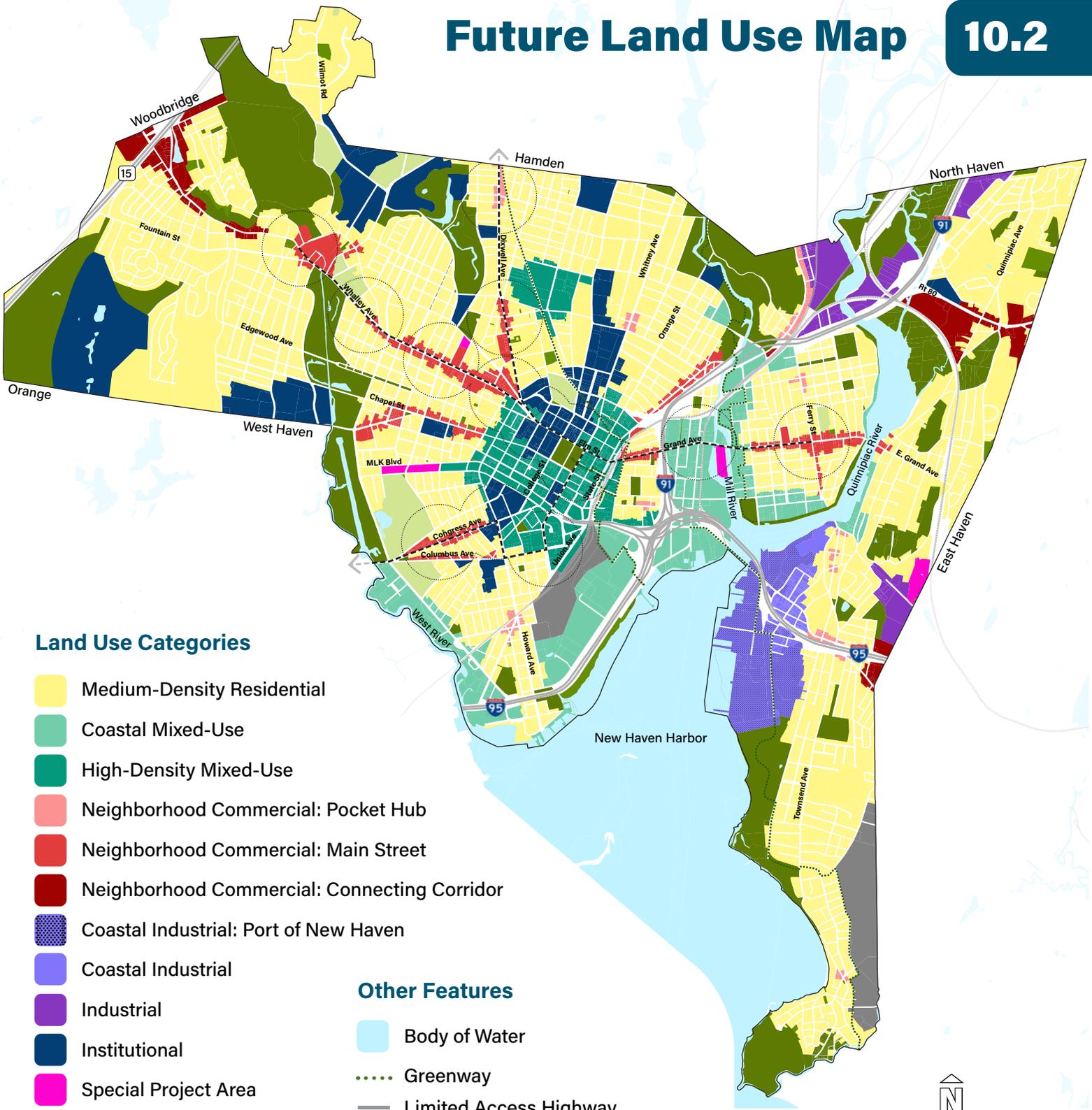
The map identifies a broad range of recommended land use categories including residential, institutional, mixed-use, neighborhood commercial, industrial, open space, transportation uses, and special project areas. It is intended to align with the plan's overarching themes of equity and resilience while supporting land use and development that will support economic vitality, housing opportunity, environmental stewardship, and neighborhood livability. While the future land use map is not a zoning map, it provides a forward-looking land use framework that will inform land-use decisions including a comprehensive update of the New Haven Zoning Ordinance.

The map provides a basis for area and neighborhood plans that have been or will be conducted in the City. Those plans provide more detailed guidance on land use and potential zoning amendments and should be consulted in future land use planning. Area plans conducted by the City and shown on the future land use map include plans for the Hill, Downtown, Wooster Square, Long Wharf, Mill River, and Fair Haven areas. Additionally, the planned Bus Rapid Transit service connecting New Haven to Hamden and West Haven is shown on the map. It has implications for land use in the bus hub and stop areas, where transit-oriented development should be considered.

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Future Land Use Map

10.2



Land Use Categories

- Medium-Density Residential
- Coastal Mixed-Use
- High-Density Mixed-Use
- Neighborhood Commercial: Pocket Hub
- Neighborhood Commercial: Main Street
- Neighborhood Commercial: Connecting Corridor
- Coastal Industrial: Port of New Haven
- Coastal Industrial
- Industrial
- Institutional
- Special Project Area
- Cemetery
- Parks and Open Space
- Transportation

Other Features

- Body of Water
- Greenway
- Limited Access Highway
- Rail
- Planned Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)
- 0.25 mile Radius of BRT Hub



10.3 Future Land Use Categories

Medium-Density Residential

These areas include walkable, neighborhood-scale development with diverse housing types, including townhouses, single family, two-family and three-family homes, and small apartment buildings. These areas support housing choice by providing a diverse range of housing choices serving residents at all incomes, include neighborhood amenities focused on residential areas, and encourage efficient land use near public transit and amenities, contributing to environmental sustainability. Small area and neighborhood planning is key to ensuring these areas evolve and increase in density without displacement and align with the goals of Vision 2034.

High-Density Mixed-Use

These areas, including New Haven's downtown and Science Park, are vibrant, high-density areas that function as the City's central business district, cultural hub, and institutional centers. These areas feature a mix of office, retail, civic, and entertainment uses, along with high-density residential development, including residential and mixed-use buildings. They are well-served by a robust transportation network, including local and regional transit, access to larger public spaces, and pedestrian and bike-friendly streets, making these areas the most accessible and connected parts of the City.

Coastal Mixed-Use

These areas are intended to support a resilient, vibrant waterfront district with a mix of residential, commercial, recreational, and maritime uses. These areas focus on enhancing public access to the shoreline, celebrating the waterfront's character, and supporting economic and cultural vitality. With proximity to New Haven's harbor, development prioritizes public access to the waterfront, maritime uses, and a focus on climate resilience including mitigating the impacts of flood risk, sea level rise, and storm impacts. These areas promote walkability, mixed-income housing, and water-dependent uses, ensuring growth supports a resilient waterfront.

Coastal Industrial

These areas are intended to promote industrial uses that are water-dependent and include the Port District. Operations in these areas should focus on maritime use and transition to the green economy by minimizing environmental impacts.

Industrial

These areas are intended to support manufacturing and industrial production activities in a manner consistent with light industrial zoning. These areas may include formerly industrial vacant land suitable for redevelopment and include accessibility to appropriate rail, freight or barge services.

Neighborhood Commercial Districts

These areas are the heart and focus of the City's neighborhoods where local businesses, programming and events, and casual social interactions combine to drive economic development and spark a vibrant sense of place. These districts are the economic and social anchors of neighborhoods. Commercial uses appropriate to each district will vary depending on the size and location of each district. These areas support a balance of food service including grocery stores and eateries, neighborhood services, medical and wellness services, and third places such as small parks, plazas, cafes and community meeting spaces.

Neighborhood Commercial: Pocket Hub

These are smaller, pedestrian-oriented clusters of commercial and mixed-use development serving the immediate neighborhood and providing transportation services.

Neighborhood Commercial: Main Street

These areas are pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use retail districts that serve the day-to-day shopping needs of the neighborhood.

Neighborhood Commercial: Connecting Corridor

Boulevards connecting to neighboring municipalities that will evolve toward higher-density, mixed-use areas.

Institutional

These areas include public and private institutions like municipal facilities, school campuses, churches, cultural centers, colleges and universities, and hospitals and health care centers. These areas support the City's social, educational, and cultural needs, offering services and community programs. These land uses typically have good public transit access, ensuring that vital institutions are well connected to the City's neighborhoods.

Special Project Area

These four areas are comprised of properties that are poised for redevelopment but for which most appropriate use has not yet been determined. These areas will require significant engagement with the community and may require site investigation, remediation, and additional planning to determine the best use.

Cemeteries

These areas include the City's cemeteries and burying grounds are reserved for those uses.

Parks and Open Space

These areas are prioritized for protection as dedicated open space, deed-restricted conservation areas, and/or active recreational spaces.

Transportation

These areas are occupied by major transportation infrastructure and sites including the New Haven Rail Yard and Tweed-New Haven Airport.

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11. Implementation



Source: New Haven Independent

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Implementing the Vision 2034 Plan

The approach to Vision 2034 implementation is designed to be strategic, flexible, coordinated, and transparent to the public. The strategies listed in Vision 2034 vary in priority level, timeframe, cost, and staff capacity needed to implement. Many different departments and agencies will take the lead on sections of the plan.

To ensure that progress is made on the items identified in this plan, a working group will be established to meet quarterly to track progress on the plan's goals. Additional working groups may be formed to provide feedback and support. The first step in implementation will be developing benchmarks and action steps for high priority strategies. The City Plan department will share plan progress through a public platform and community outreach at least annually.

About the Implementation Guide

The Implementation Guide included in the plan organizes the goals and strategies presented in the previous chapters of this Plan into a series of tables that may be used as a stand-alone reference. Strategies are classified as high, medium, or low priority. This provides guidance for the prioritization of goals based on the results of the Community Survey and input from City leadership. This Guide is non-binding and should be considered a working document as priority levels will shift based on the evolving needs of residents, specific neighborhoods, available funding, and other factors.

The Implementation Guide identifies the proposed City department, division, board, or commission responsible for leading implementation of the strategy. Achieving success in these goals will require additional strategies and actions to be implemented that are not yet developed. As such, this implementation summary is intended to shape and guide progress towards this Plan's goals, but the measures necessary to achieve those goals are not limited to the recommendations provided. The Implementation Guide will be further developed, including identifying partners for each strategy and timeframes (short, mid, long).

Understanding the Implementation Tables

Goal specific to the topic area. There is one overriding goal for each topic area of the plan.

The lead is best positioned to initiate action and manage progress towards the action.

Goal 1: Increase the number of deeply affordable housing units.				
Strategies	Priority Level	Lead	In Progress	
1.1	Build upon launch of the New Haven Land Bank by exploring the creation of resources such as a Community Land Trust or supporting external partners to do so.	Medium	AHC	
1.2	Prioritize the development of housing units affordable to households at or below 30% of Area Median Income (AMI) in development of mixed-income housing.	High	ECC/HAD	✓
1.3	Expand funding streams available to the City and partners for affordable housing including the Affordable Housing Fund.	High	EDA/HAD	✓

Priority level is identified as low, medium, or high

A checkmark indicates that the strategy is currently being implemented

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Abbreviation Key

The offices, departments, divisions, boards, commissions, agencies, and community organizations in the table at right are identified as lead or partner entities that will spearhead the recommendations of this Plan and assist with its implementation. Departments such as the Information Technology Department, Finance Department, and the Office of the Corporation Council are expected to play supporting roles in many of the Plan's strategies and actions, even if not specified within the implementation summary tables.

Entity	Abbreviation
Arts Council of Greater New Haven	ACGNH
Affordable Housing Commission	AHC
Board of Education	BOE
Chief Administrator's Office	CAO
City Plan	CP
Capital Projects Steering Committee	CPSC
Community Service Administration	CSA
Department of Arts, Culture & Tourism	DACT
Department of Community Resilience	DCR
Public Works Department	DPW
Department of Services for Persons with Disabilities	DSPD
Elm City Communities	ECC
Economic Development Administration	EDA
Economic Development Commission	EDC
Engineering Department	ENG
U.S. Government Office or Agency	Federal
Fair Rent Commission	FRC
Food System Policy Division	FSPD
Greater New Haven Transit District	GNHTD
Housing Administration and Development	HAD
Human Resources	HR

Entity	Abbreviation
Livable Communities Initiative	LCI
Mayor's Office	MO
New Haven Fire Department	NHFD
New Haven Free Public Library	NHFPL
New Haven Health Department	NHHD
New Haven Parking Authority	NHPA
New Haven Police Department	NHPD
New Haven Public Schools	NHPS
Neighborhood Housing Services	NHS
Office of Climate and Sustainability	OCS
Office of Emergency Management	OEM
Office of Housing and Homelessness	OHHS
New Haven Port Authority	NHPA
Parks Department	Parks
Purchasing Department	PUR
REX Development	REX
State of Connecticut Office or Agency	State
Department of Transportation, Traffic & Parking	TTP
Tweed-New Haven Airport Authority	TNHAA
Youth and Recreation Department	YARD

11.2

Implementation: Great Places to Live

Goal 1: Increase the number of deeply affordable housing units.				
Strategies		Priority Level	Lead	In Progress
1.1	Build upon launch of the New Haven Land Bank by exploring the creation of resources such as a Community Land Trust or supporting external partners to do so.	Medium	AHC	
1.2	Prioritize the development of housing units affordable to households at or below 30% of Area Median Income (AMI) in development of mixed-income housing.	High	ECC/HAD	✓
1.3	Expand funding streams available to the City and partners for affordable housing including the Affordable Housing Fund.	High	EDA/HAD	✓
1.4	Support expansion and redevelopment of public housing projects.	High	ECC	✓
1.5	Continue to integrate mixed income housing into City Development Agreements.	High	EDA/HAD	✓
1.6	Extend or replace existing subsidies and affordability restrictions.	High	AHC	✓
1.7	Advocate for the development of more affordable housing across the region.	High	AHC	✓

Goal 2: Increase housing supply.				
Strategies		Priority Level	Lead	In Progress
2.1	Identify opportunities for and take measures to support infill residential development, expansions, and redevelopment.	High	EDA/HAD	✓
2.2	Amend ordinances and policies to better support housing development.	Medium	EDA/HAD	✓
2.3	Increase the number of small housing units in the City such as accessory dwelling units, single-room occupancy units, and small standalone dwelling units.	High	EDA/HAD	✓
2.4	Support small-scale development.	Medium	EDA/HAD	
2.5	Continue to convert underutilized office buildings to residential use, with a focus on key areas downtown.	Medium	EDA/HAD	✓
2.6	Support collaboration and partnerships between organizations that provide housing and neighborhood resources.	High	EDA/HAD	✓
2.7	Increase affordable, accessible housing options for people with disabilities.	High	EDA/HAD	

Goal 3: Expand temporary and supportive housing and programs that eliminate and prevent homelessness.

Strategies		Priority Level	Lead	In Progress
3.1	Engage with housing and service providers to identify gaps and produce quality permanent supportive housing.	High	CSA	✓
3.2	Partner with the Public Housing Authority to explore expansion of the housing choice voucher program to fully meet need.	High	CSA/ECC	✓
3.3	Work with community-based organizations to expand tenant advocacy support.	Medium	OHHS/CR/FRC	
3.4	Expand coordination among City departments and community-based organizations to improve eviction prevention strategies.	High	OHHS/CR	✓
3.5	Support and encourage regional coordination of services for the unhoused.	High	OHHS/CR	✓

Goal 4: Transform empty and run-down properties into affordable housing and other community resources.

Strategies		Priority Level	Lead	In Progress
4.1	Develop expedited processes to transfer neglected properties to responsible owners/developers through the Land Bank.	High	EDA	✓
4.2	Implement aggressive enforcement measures for chronically vacant properties.	High	LCI	✓
4.3	Strengthen partnerships with housing developers and community organizations for property rehabilitation.	High	EDA/HAD	

Goal 5: Support place-based programs, policies, and improvements that align with the unique assets and goals of each neighborhood and residents' quality of life.

Strategies		Priority Level	Lead	In Progress
5.1	Develop a community engagement toolkit that engages residents in decision making with emphasis on communities that have often been historically excluded.	Medium	CSA/CP	
5.2	Conduct neighborhood level planning studies in close collaboration with residents and in unstudied parts of the City.	High	EDA	✓
5.3	Continue to support neighborhood revitalization around schools and public housing.	Medium	EDA	✓
5.4	Support mixed-use development and ensure that such development is sensitive to the neighborhood.	Medium	CP	
5.5	Strengthen anti-bligh and zoning enforcement.	High	LCI	

Goal 6: Prevent displacement by ensuring residents can continue to live in their neighborhood of choice as housing costs rise.

Strategies		Priority Level	Lead	In Progress
6.1	Pursue necessary zoning amendments to promote aging in place.	Medium	CP	
6.2	Expand and promote property tax relief for residents that are struggling to stay in their homes or neighborhoods.	High	HAD/CP	
6.3	Develop a method for determining how land use policies impact displacement and implement policies or amend ordinances and regulations to prevent or reduce displacement.	High	CP	
6.4	Support the conversion of rental units to co-op or condominium ownership arrangements.	Low	HAD/CP	
6.5	Allow single-room occupancy housing in areas where there is access to transit and support services.	High	CP	
6.6	Monitor the impact of and restrict as needed short-term rentals and student housing projects.	Low	CP	
6.7	Continue to partner with anchor institutions (such as Yale and Southern Connecticut State University) to address student housing needs and ensure that the City's residents are displaced due to student housing needs.	Medium	CP	
6.8	Explore tools such as a Right of First Refusal policy to preserve affordability.	Medium	EDA/HAD	

Goal 7: Improve access to housing resources and support for tenants and current and prospective home-owners.

Strategies		Priority Level	Lead	In Progress
7.1	Continue to support collaboration and partnerships between agencies and organizations that provide housing and neighborhood resources.	High	EDA/HAD	✓
7.2	Use the City's website as a centralized housing resource hub.	High	EDA/HAD	✓
7.3	Expand participation in City-sponsored homeownership and home rehabilitation programs.	High	EDA/HAD	✓
7.4	Develop video tutorials that provide instruction on housing programs, applications, and procedures.	Medium	EDA/HAD	
7.5	Expand the reach of the housing newsletter to widely share housing-related information.	Medium	EDA/HAD	✓
7.6	Encourage or prioritize projects that combine affordable housing with long-term care services, such as a Program for All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) or state-assisted living programs to enable older residents to age in place while receiving coordinated care and services.	High	EDA/HAD	
7.7	Work with local housing and service providers to expand the reach of homeowner emergency assistance.	High	EDA/HAD	✓

Goal 8: Improve the quality of existing housing.

Strategies		Priority Level	Lead	In Progress
8.1	Expand the scope of existing energy efficiency programs and increase participation in those programs.	Medium	OCS	✓
8.2	Work toward 100% participation in the Residential Rental License Program.	High	LCI	✓
8.3	Develop proactive outreach strategies to share information about housing regulations and requirements and engage non-compliant property owners.	High	LCI	✓
8.4	Improve and expand the use of technology and data in enforcing housing code, blight, building code, zoning violations, and Residential Rental License regulations.	High	LCI	✓
8.5	Improve the transparency of City enforcement of housing code, blight, building code, zoning, and residential rental licensing programs.	High	EDA	✓

11.3

Implementation: Economic Opportunity For All

Goal 1: Connect New Haven’s workers to good jobs and economic opportunities in the City.				
Strategies		Priority Level	Lead	In Progress
1.1	Support and expand workforce development and job placement programs and continue to coordinate with those programs to develop new training pathways.	High	EDA	✓
1.2	Continue to partner with local educational institutions and organizations to promote career pathways, paid internships, and direct job placement for local students.	High	NHPS/ EDA	✓
1.3	Continue to grow the Bioscience and Tech Career Ladder Programs as part of the City’s partnership with CT State Community College Gateway (GCC) and Southern Connecticut State University (SCSU).	High	NHPS/ EDA	✓
1.4	Promote vocational training opportunities for local youth in New Haven’s most competitive and emerging industry sectors.	High	NHPS/ EDA	✓

Goal 2: Strengthen New Haven’s position as a regional employment center by building on economic strengths across multiple sectors.				
Strategies		Priority Level	Lead	In Progress
2.1	Continue engagement in regional economic collaboration and coordination.	Medium	EDC/ REX/EDA	✓
2.2	Continue to work closely with anchor institutions to understand their short- and long-term plans to ensure those plans are consistent with this Plan and other planning efforts.	High	EDC/ REX/EDA	✓
2.3	Collaborate with Yale to support and expand emerging science and technology initiatives including Quantum-CT, Wu-TSAI, Yale Ventures, Climate Haven and C-BIT.	High	EDC/ REX/EDA	✓
2.4	Track and support the development of bioscience space including key sites such as Innovation Cluster, Downtown, Science Park and the medical district.	Medium	EDA	✓
2.5	Support the growth of an innovation cluster for quantum technologies and bioscience in proximity to Downtown.	High	EDA	✓
2.6	Support neighborhood economic development initiatives that connect to the emerging innovation economy.	High	EDA	✓
2.7	Enrich and contribute to innovation by supporting food-based business, craft products and cultural equity.	High	EDA	✓
2.8	Continue developing business-focused City marketing and branding across digital media.	High	EDA	✓

Goal 3: Promote inclusive commercial development & economic activity in strategic locations that align with neighborhood goals.

Strategies		Priority Level	Lead	In Progress
3.1	Continue to invest in and support development and redevelopment in the Downtown.	Medium	EDA	✓
3.2	Continue to invest in and support development and redevelopment in the Long Wharf and the Mill River District.	Medium	EDA	✓
3.3	Update the New Haven Zoning Ordinance to ensure that locations are available for emerging industries and business types that mitigate adverse impacts and support neighborhood development.	Medium	CP	✓
3.4	Continue to facilitate the cleanup and reuse of former industrial and brownfields sites.	Medium	EDA	
3.5	Continue to promote development opportunities in the City's Enterprise and Opportunity Zones.	Low	EDA	✓
3.6	Leverage New Haven's Port and Port District Area for efficient land use and limited encroachment.	Medium	EDA	
3.7	Work with property owners that have large land holdings to ensure that the City's economic development strategies and policies are consistent with the planned use of their properties.	Medium	EDA	
3.8	Work with local partners and industry leaders to encourage and assist businesses and industries to locate in New Haven.	Medium	EDA	✓
3.9	Create a culture of trust and transparency by engaging residents of these areas in economic development plans and processes.	Medium	EDA	✓

Goal 4: Make neighborhood commercial centers stronger and more vibrant.

Strategies		Priority Level	Lead	In Progress
4.1	Continue to implement public infrastructure improvements in neighborhood commercial districts and corridors.	Medium	ENG	✓
4.2	Continue to develop and update neighborhood level plans to identify opportunities to support neighborhood commercial activity.	Medium	CP/EDA	✓
4.3	Support the creation of Business Improvement Districts in neighborhood commercial districts.	Medium	EDA	
4.4	Review and update the New Haven Zoning Ordinance and policies to better support neighborhood commercial development.	Medium	CP	
4.5	Identify opportunities to assemble City-owned and tax delinquent parcels for neighborhood commercial or mixed-use development.	Medium	EDA	✓
4.6	Encourage activation of public spaces by businesses and community groups.	Medium	DACT	
4.7	Increase integration of third spaces downtown and in neighborhood commercial centers.	Medium	EDA	
4.8	Further enhance the City-wide retail strategy supporting small businesses and entrepreneurs to encourage take-up in first floor retail space and increase neighborhood commercial activity.	Medium	EDA	✓

Goal 5: Implement and encourage policies that require employers to hire local workers and those that face systemic injustice in the job market.

Strategies		Priority Level	Lead	In Progress
5.1	Explore opportunities to expand local hiring preferences beyond direct city projects.	Medium	EDA	
5.2	Partner with major employers to implement preferred hiring programs for New Haven residents.	Medium	EDA	✓
5.3	Support reentry programs and job placement of formerly incarcerated individuals.	Medium	DCR	✓
5.4	Support multilingual education and workforce training and job placement programs.	Medium	EDA	

Goal 6: Expand entrepreneurship and small-business opportunities.

Strategies		Priority Level	Lead	In Progress
6.1	Prioritize strategies for business retention and expansion.	Medium	EDA	✓
6.2	Work with local centers, institutions, and community-based organizations to expand start-up and entrepreneurial development services.	Medium	EDA	✓
6.3	Evaluate the potential for start-up grants for micro businesses to help with fit out costs, signage, marketing, or sale systems.	Medium	EDA	
6.4	Streamline regulatory processes to better support business licensing, permitting, and establishment.	Medium	EDA	
6.5	Continue to support events that showcase small business owners, makers and artists.	Medium	EDA/ DACT	✓
6.6	Support growth of prototyping and maker environments particularly in material science and green technology sectors.	Medium	EDA	
6.7	Reduce language barriers related to business assistance and applications.	Medium	EDA	
6.8	Expand outreach for existing business networking events to connect business leaders and owners of various sizes in the City.	High	EDA	✓
6.9	Expand economic and business data collection and reporting to better track small businesses.	Medium	EDA	✓

Goal 7: Expand and improve transportation and public utility infrastructure.

Strategies		Priority Level	Lead	In Progress
7.1	Continually assess improvements needed to public utility infrastructure including sewer separation, electrical capacity, and water provision, prioritizing areas of planned growth.	High	EDA	✓
7.2	Expand fiber optic infrastructure throughout the City and improve access to broadband service for residents that can't afford service.	Medium	State	✓
7.3	Support the responsible growth of Tweed New Haven Regional Airport while addressing impacts on the community.	High	TNHAA/ EDA	✓
7.4	Coordinate with the Port Authority of New Haven and port businesses to optimize operations, reduce environmental impacts, and unlock the Mill River area for mixed-use economic development and housing.	Medium	NHPA/ EDA	✓
7.5	Consider zoning changes to support appropriate land use and development around future Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) stops.	Medium	CP	✓

Goal 8: Encourage sustainable economic development and support the development of a green economy.

Strategies		Priority Level	Lead	In Progress
8.1	Update the New Haven Zoning Ordinance to require the inclusion of—or provide incentives for—green building features and technologies.	Medium	OCS	✓
8.2	Encourage the establishment of green building innovation hubs, incubators, and workforce development programs.	Medium	OCS	✓
8.3	Support the use of low-embodied carbon construction and other innovative and sustainable building technologies and the development of those industries in New Haven.	Medium	OCS	✓
8.4	Continue to upgrade infrastructure and services with an emphasis on sustainability and resiliency.	Medium	OCS	✓
8.5	Develop platforms for clean and affordable renewable energy to support economic growth in densifying areas of the City such as networked geothermal.	Medium	OCS	✓

11.4

Implementation: Move Together

Goal 1: Eliminate deaths and injuries caused by motor vehicles.				
Strategies		Priority Level	Lead	In Progress
1.1	Target safety improvements in high-crash rate locations, particularly those with high injury and fatality rates.	High	ENG/TTP	✓
1.2	Continue implementation of Safe Routes for All and Safe Routes to School projects.	High	ENG/TTP	✓
1.3	Continue to implement Complete Streets Plans to address neighborhood safety concerns.	High	ENG/TTP	✓
1.4	Continue to build dedicated bicycle facilities to reduce bicyclist exposure to traffic hazards.	High	ENG/TTP	✓

Goal 2: Make the transportation system fully accessible to people with disabilities.				
Strategies		Priority Level	Lead	In Progress
2.1	Ensure that all public transportation services, stations, and stops are fully accessible to people with disabilities.	High	ENG/TTP	✓
2.2	Identify priority areas for improving sidewalk coverage, connectivity and conditions and make the needed upgrades to ensure accessibility.	High	ENG	✓
2.3	Develop a standalone accessibility design guide and integrate into other design guides.	Medium	Fed/State	
2.4	Improve roadway crossing facilities across the City to ensure accessibility for people with disabilities.	High	ENG/TTP	✓
2.5	Conduct accessibility improvements in conjunction with infrastructure projects happening in the vicinity.	Medium	ENG/TTP	✓
2.6	Evaluate existing accessible parking spaces on the street and in City owned or operated facilities and make necessary upgrades to ensure they meet state and federal accessibility guidelines.	Medium	TTP	

Goal 3: Make it easier and safer for people to walk, bike, and use mobility devices and public transportation.

Strategies		Priority Level	Lead	In Progress
3.1	Prioritize pedestrian, bicycle, and transit enhancements, in historically low-income communities, communities of color, and areas where a high share of households don't have access to a car.	High	ENG/TTP	✓
3.2	Adopt a Complete Streets policy for transportation infrastructure projects that prioritizes multimodal improvements.	High	ENG/TTP	✓
3.3	Improve and expand the City's sidewalk network and pedestrian crossing facilities.	High	ENG/TTP	✓
3.4	Continue to invest in streetscape projects in New Haven's commercial areas, including downtown.	High	ENG/EDA	✓
3.5	Continue the development of separated bike lanes, prioritizing continuous east-west and north-south routes.	High	ENG/TTP	✓
3.6	Support and implement micromobility options such as shared bicycles, e-bikes, and e-scooters.	High	TTP	✓
3.7	Continue development of regional greenways and improve and expand the trails system in parks and open spaces.	Medium	ENG/Parks	✓

Goal 4: Improve bus service and stops.

Strategies		Priority Level	Lead	In Progress
4.1	Coordinate with CTtransit to improve and expand bus service with emphasis on under-served areas and communities.	High	ENG/TTP/EDA	✓
4.2	Facilitate the planned implementation of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) service in New Haven.	High	ENG/TTP	✓
4.3	Support the long-term expansion of on-demand microtransit and paratransit services.	Medium	GNHTD	
4.4	Improve bus stop facilities to ensure a secure and comfortable waiting, boarding, and exiting area at all stops.	High	TTP	✓
4.5	Improve bicycle and pedestrian facilities connecting to the planned Bus Rapid Transit stops and highly used local stops and ensure that rideshare micromobility services are located at those stops.	High	ENG/TTP	
4.6	Partner with Yale to integrate CTtransit and Yale shuttle service and expand shuttle service access to the public.	Medium	TTP	

Goal 5: Improve traffic flow and reduce traffic congestion.				
Strategies		Priority Level	Lead	In Progress
5.1	Improve signal timing and coordination along major corridors to encourage the smooth flow of traffic at a safe rate of speed.	Medium	TTP	
5.2	Collect and analyze traffic flow data and areas of congestion to advance safety for all road users.	Medium	TTP	
5.3	Continue implementation of 2023 plan for one-way-to-two-way street conversions.	Medium	TTP	✓
5.4	Replace signalized intersections and all-way stops with traffic circles or roundabouts to increase traffic flow and improve safety.	Medium	ENG	✓

Goal 6: Better manage parking and ensure that parking supply aligns with future needs.				
Strategies		Priority Level	Lead	In Progress
6.1	Develop a parking master plan and evaluate use of City-owned on- and off-street parking facilities on a regular basis.	Medium	TTP	
6.2	Increase shared use of existing parking infrastructure, including public and private facilities.	Medium	TTP	
6.3	Explore the feasibility of implementing variable pricing for on-street parking in the Downtown area to better manage demand.	Medium	TTP	
6.4	Remove parking minimums and consider Implementing parking maximums in the New Haven Zoning Ordinance.	Medium	CP	
6.5	Evaluate City ordinances and revise or provide parking requirements as needed for all vehicle types including bicycles, electric vehicle charging, and shared or rentable vehicles.	Medium	TTP/CP	
6.6	Evaluate accessible parking needs in coordination with businesses, residents, disability advocates and other important stakeholders.	Medium	TTP	

Goal 7: Make transportation infrastructure and services more resilient and sustainable.				
Strategies		Priority Level	Lead	In Progress
7.1	Align transportation activities and plans with the transportation goals of the City's Climate and Sustainability Framework.	Medium	OCS	
7.2	Develop a comprehensive City-wide transportation asset management plan.	Medium	TTP	
7.3	Evaluate and revise the New Haven Zoning Ordinance to better support development along existing commercial corridors and along existing and planned transit routes.	Medium	CP	
7.4	Continue progress towards electrifying City and transit fleets.	High	CAO/CS	✓
7.5	Continue improvements to infrastructure such as local bridges to make that infrastructure more resilient and more bicycle and pedestrian friendly.	Medium	ENG	✓

Implementation: Climate and Ecological Connections

11.5

Goal 1: Reduce pollution and greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation sector and residential, commercial, industrial and City development.

Strategies		Priority Level	Lead	In Progress
1.1	Implement recommendations of New Haven’s Climate and Sustainability Framework relating to building and energy use.	High	ENG	✓
1.2	Support the transition to electric vehicle (EV) and the development of EV charging stations across the City.	High	CAO/ ENG/OCS	✓
1.3	Develop neighborhood-scale platforms for clean and affordable renewable energy to support densifying areas of the City.	High	OCS/ENG	✓
1.4	Expand the deployment of solar energy systems across the City.	High	OCS/ENG	✓
1.5	Expand the electrification of heating and cooling systems in buildings across the City.	Medium	ENG	✓
1.6	Connect building owners with programs and financing to support energy efficiency upgrades.	High	OCS	✓
1.7	Strengthen City procurement standards and specifications to include sustainable materials and systems.	High	OCS/EDA	
1.8	Reduce light and noise pollution in the City.	Medium	CAO/CP	

Goal 2: Reduce the generation of waste and increase the diversion of recyclables and organics.

Strategies		Priority Level	Lead	In Progress
2.1	Expand the operations of the New Haven Solid Waste and Recycling Authority (NHSWRA).	Medium	CAO	✓
2.2	Increase recycling and reuse of products and materials.	High	CAO/ DPW/CS	✓
2.3	Expand the use of food recovery and composting.	High	CAO/ DPW	✓
2.4	Ban specific packaging for takeout food.	Medium	OCS/ NHHD	
2.5	Support state policies and regulatory changes aimed at reducing waste.	High	OCS	

Goal 3: Improve the condition of parks and open space and ensure that they are safe and accessible to all.

Strategies		Priority Level	Lead	In Progress
3.1	Make investments in the parks system using an equity investment strategy.	High	Parks	✓
3.2	Continue to enhance asset management strategies to guide maintenance, repair and replacement of all park features.	High	Parks	✓
3.3	Fully activate the City's four nature centers and provide consistent programming opportunities for all City residents.	High	Parks	✓
3.4	Continue to implement Natural Areas Management to actively manage park land for nature-based solutions to climate change.	Medium	Parks	✓

Goal 4: Expand tree cover and provide better care for street trees.

Strategies		Priority Level	Lead	In Progress
4.1	Complete an Urban and Community Forest Master Plan.	High	Parks	✓
4.2	Plant new shade trees in existing developed spaces and along roadways to enhance livability and provide shade.	High	Parks	✓
4.3	Maintain existing trees and replace trees with more appropriate species where needed.	High	Parks	✓
4.4	Strengthen tree requirements for new developments and strengthen requirements to maintain existing trees.	High	Parks/CP	✓

Goal 5: Expand farming and gardening opportunities for all.

Strategies		Priority Level	Lead	In Progress
5.1	Implement the recommendations of the Urban Agricultural Master Plan.	High	FSPD	
5.2	Recognize and support the importance of aquaculture.	Medium	FSPD	✓
5.3	Change policies and processes to support the growth of urban agriculture in New Haven.	High	FSPD	✓
5.4	Support residents in the exploration of options for new and/or expanded community gardens, particularly in neighborhoods that are currently lacking such resources.	High	FSPD	✓
5.5	Increase access to information, resources, and opportunities related to food and agriculture.	High	FSPD	✓

Goal 6: Closely guide land use in the coastal management district, including waterfront development.

Strategies		Priority Level	Lead	In Progress
6.1	Work directly with property owners and provide resources to support the continuation and expansion of water dependent uses.	High	CP	
6.2	Update the City's Coastal Program.	High	CP	
6.3	Implement resiliency requirements that address flood design criteria and other elements of climate adaptation.	High	ENG/CP	✓
6.4	Pilot adaptable building designs that adhere to current flood zone requirements, but can be adapted to more intense uses when flood protection systems are in place and accredited.	Medium	CP/ENG	

Goal 7: Adapt to sea level rise and reduce flood risks.

Strategies		Priority Level	Lead	In Progress
7.1	Complete the Long Wharf Park and East Shore Living Shorelines.	Medium	ENG/Parks	✓
7.2	Conduct an evaluation of wetland and forest resources in West River and Edgewood Park to determine actions needed to adapt them to long-term changes.	Low	Parks/ENG	✓
7.3	Participate in the Army Corps flood protection system study and design for the Sargent Drive/Long Wharf area.	High	ENG	✓
7.4	Complete the stormwater tunnel under the railroad and Long Wharf area and associated pump station to reduce flooding in the Downtown area.	High	ENG	✓
7.5	Expand the number of green infrastructure installations across the City.	Medium	ENG	✓
7.6	Support implementation of the CTDEEP Climate Resilience Fund (DCRF) grant recommendations to address combined flood and sanitary sewer challenges near the West River.	Medium	ENG	✓
7.7	Continue to develop solutions for persistent flooding in areas yet to be addressed.	High	ENG	✓

Goal 8: Ensure that streams, rivers, and coastal waters are safe and accessible to all.

Strategies		Priority Level	Lead	In Progress
8.1	Advance elements of the Resilient Fair Haven plan for the English Mall, Clinton Park, and Dover Beach areas.	Medium	ENG/Parks	
8.2	Designate new public access at the end of dead-end roads.	High	ENG	
8.3	Develop new fishing locations and enhance existing locations for recreational fishing.	Medium	ENG/Parks	
8.4	Develop new and improve existing boat and kayak launch locations.	Medium	ENG/Parks	✓
8.5	Provide safe, accessible options for swimming.	Medium	ENG/Parks	

Goal 9: Improve facilities and infrastructure in response to extreme heat.

Strategies		Priority Level	Lead	In Progress
9.1	Expand the number of facilities that can provide 24-hour operations for cooling during extreme heat events and provide targeted outreach to vulnerable populations.	Medium	CSA/OEM	
9.2	Partner with CTtransit to install shade structures at bus stops and hubs.	Medium	TTP/DPW	
9.3	Support the development of resilience hubs across the City.	Medium	OCS/ENG	
9.4	Provide opportunities for outdoor recreation-based cooling.	High	Parks/DPW	
9.5	Incentivize cool roofs and green roofs.	Medium	CP	
9.6	Expand tree cover.	Medium	Parks	✓
9.7	Revise the Reflective Heat Impact Ordinance.	High	CP	

Goal 10: Support agencies, communities, and neighborhoods working together to become more resilient to climate change impacts.

Strategies		Priority Level	Lead	In Progress
10.1	Maintain direct City liaison participation in the Connecticut Equity and Environmental Justice Advisory Council (CEEJAC) and ensure that this liaison coordinates with CEEJAC members from the New Haven community.	Medium	OCS	
10.2	Improve resilience and sustainability coordination and collaboration across City departments, particularly between the City and New Haven Public Schools.	High	OCS	
10.3	Engage Community Management Teams (CMTs) and other community groups in supporting climate resilience.	Medium	OCS	
10.4	Continue the work of the Elm City Climate Collaboration.	High	OCS	✓

Implementation: Arts and Cultural Identity

11.6

Goal 1: Increase support for and promotion of arts and culture in New Haven.

Strategies		Priority Level	Lead	In Progress
1.1	Advance implementation of the action items of the Cultural Equity Plan, with regular reporting to the community on progress.	High	DACT	✓
1.2	Through the Department of Arts, Culture & Tourism, continue to play an active role in facilitating connections between organizations, groups, and individuals across the arts and culture community and other sectors.	High	DACT	✓
1.3	Improve and streamline marketing of arts and cultural events and opportunities.	Medium	DACT/ACGNH	
1.4	Simplify the process for individuals and organizations to receive approval to conduct events in the City.	High	CAO	
1.5	Provide direct and regular financial support to local artists, cultural groups, and community events, and make it easier to qualify for that support.	High	DACT	✓

Goal 2: Expand access to education, training, and employment opportunities in arts and culture.

Strategies		Priority Level	Lead	In Progress
2.1	Improve access to arts education and programming for residents of all ages, especially youth and seniors.	High	NHPS/CSA	
2.2	Support and expand existing arts volunteer, mentorship, internship, and apprenticeship programs.	Medium	DACT	
2.3	Build and support the establishment of partnerships with local institutions and performance venues as a means of connecting New Haven's residents with the City's cultural resources.	Medium	DACT	✓
2.4	Connect residents to training in arts administration and operations careers and career advancement opportunities in the arts.	Medium	DACT	

Goal 3: Support the development of accessible and affordable space for arts and culture across the City.

Strategies		Priority Level	Lead	In Progress
3.1	Establish and support partnerships with local institutions and organizations to make arts and performance space available to the City's residents.	Medium	DACT	
3.2	Repurpose vacant and underutilized spaces for community use.	Medium	EDA	✓
3.3	Connect small organizations and community groups to larger organizations that can provide logistical support with securing arts and performance space.	Medium	DACT/ACGNH	
3.4	Provide density bonuses or other incentives to developers that provide dedicated arts spaces within their developments.	Medium	CP	
3.5	Explore opportunities to develop a community cultural center.	Medium	EDA/CSA	
3.6	Provide small and low-cost spaces for the sale of locally produced craft products.	Medium	DACT	
3.7	Ensure that arts and performance spaces are accessible to those with disabilities.	High	DACT/ACGNH/DSPD	

Goal 4: Celebrate and expand public art in the City.

Strategies		Priority Level	Lead	In Progress
4.1	Provide space for the display and promotion of local art and for small performances in public spaces.	Medium	DACT	✓
4.2	Continue to support installation of public murals and sculptures, and explore opportunities for a large-scale, landmark public art installation.	Low	DACT	
4.3	Work to expand the impact of New Haven's Percent for Art in Public Spaces Program.	Low	DACT	
4.4	Engage youth in the creation of public art and as a means of generating discussion about social issues.	Medium	DACT	✓
4.5	Work with local artists to expand the Downtown public art interactive map to include art in other areas of the City.	Medium	DACT	

Goal 5: Embrace storytelling to build community and share culture.

Strategies		Priority Level	Lead	In Progress
5.1	Launch a City-led storytelling initiative.	Medium	NHFPL	
5.2	Create digital and public platforms for storytelling.	Low	NHFPL	
5.3	Host community storytelling events and workshops.	Low	NHFPL	✓
5.4	Enhance public spaces with storytelling elements.	Low	DACT	
5.5	Document and tell New Haven's story from diverse and multicultural perspectives.	Low	NHFPL	

Goal 6: Protect and promote New Haven's historic resources.

Strategies		Priority Level	Lead	In Progress
6.1	Enhance public awareness and accessibility to information about historic resources.	High	CP	✓
6.2	Prioritize the protection of all historic resources including those located outside of Local Historic Districts.	Medium	CP	
6.3	Revise policies and procedures related to protection of historic resources to improve clarity and reduce inefficiencies.	High	CP	
6.4	Maintain working relationship with the State Historic Preservation Office and maintain Certified Local Government status.	High	CP	✓

Goal 7: Embrace and invest in New Haven's identity as a food capital.

Strategies		Priority Level	Lead	In Progress
7.1	Strengthen marketing and branding of the City's restaurants and food culture.	High	EDA	✓
7.2	Conduct and support more food-centered events, recognition, and storytelling.	High	EDA	✓
7.3	Support a values-based approach to food procurement.	Medium	FSPD	✓
7.4	Provide more space for food start-ups and food-related small businesses.	High	EDA	✓
7.5	Provide more support to food start-ups and for the establishment of small food-related businesses including home-based businesses.	Medium	FSPD/ EDA	✓
7.6	Streamline the permitting process for food-based businesses and improve instructional materials.	High	NHHD	✓

11.7

Implementation: Civic Services and Experiences

Goal 1: Equitably develop and distribute City services and resources.

Strategies		Priority Level	Lead	In Progress
1.1	Ensure equity continues to be at the forefront of City services and operations.	High	MO	✓
1.2	Continue to cultivate an inclusive City workforce and governance structure.	High	MO	✓
1.3	Enhance access to multilingual and culturally responsive services.	High	HR	✓
1.4	Improve the ability of small businesses and service providers to work with and for the City.	High	PUR	✓

Goal 2: Enhance collaboration, communication, and transparency within City government and with community organizations.

Strategies		Priority Level	Lead	In Progress
2.1	Enhance public communication and transparency.	High	MO	✓
2.2	Strengthen external partnerships and interagency communication.	High	MO	✓
2.3	Improve internal coordination and staff training.	High	CPSC/ MO	✓
2.4	Use the Vision 2034 Plan as a guide to align departmental efforts.	High	CP	

Goal 3: Ensure that City services and facilities are accessible to people with disabilities.

Strategies		Priority Level	Lead	In Progress
3.1	Conduct an ADA Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan.	High	DSPD	
3.2	Establish ADA liaisons in each City department.	High	DSPD	
3.3	Ensure City-sponsored events are fully accessible.	High	DSPD	✓
3.4	Improve accessibility in health, education, and public programming.	High	DSPD	✓

Goal 4: Expand support for people returning to New Haven after being released from prison.

Strategies		Priority Level	Lead	In Progress
4.1	Expand access to housing and support services.	High	DCR	✓
4.2	Enhance education and vocational training opportunities.	High	DCR	✓
4.3	Create employment pathways through partnerships and incentives.	High	DCR	✓
4.4	Promote fair hiring practices and workforce inclusion.	High	DCR	

Goal 5: Improve the health of New Haven's residents.

Strategies		Priority Level	Lead	In Progress
5.1	Expand access to comprehensive healthcare services.	High	NHHD	✓
5.2	Strengthen mental and behavioral health support.	High	CSR	✓
5.3	Address social and environmental issues that impact health.	High	DCR	✓
5.4	Promote preventive care and healthy lifestyles.	High	NHHD	✓
5.5	Strengthen health resilience and emergency preparedness.	Medium	NHHD	✓
5.6	Advance health equity and integrate it into policy.	High	NHHD	✓

Goal 6: Expand services for New Haven's older residents.

Strategies		Priority Level	Lead	In Progress
6.1	Enhance senior centers as community hubs.	High	ES	✓
6.2	Foster intergenerational connections.	Medium	ES	✓
6.3	Increase engagement in cultural and educational opportunities.	Medium	ES	✓
6.4	Improve health, social, and financial support systems.	High	ES	✓
6.5	Improve communication and access to services.	High	ES	✓

Goal 7: Enhance public safety services to effectively meet community needs.

Strategies		Priority Level	Lead	In Progress
7.1	Modernize and improve the efficiency of the Police Department.	High	NHPD	✓
7.2	Improve Police and Fire Department infrastructure and resources.	Medium	ENG/ NHPD/ NHFD	✓
7.3	Diversify public safety personnel.	Medium	HR	✓
7.4	Expand crisis intervention and social work support in policing.	High	DCR	✓
7.5	Continue to invest in the Office of Violence Prevention.	High	DCR	✓

Goal 8: Invest in the City's library buildings, services, and programming.

Strategies		Priority Level	Lead	In Progress
8.1	Modernize and enhance library facilities.	Medium	ENG	✓
8.2	Expand access to library services and programming.	High	NHFPL	✓
8.3	Innovative technology and resource expansion.	High	NHFPL	✓
8.4	Strengthen partnerships and community collaboration.	High	NHFPL	✓
8.5	Increase library accessibility and ensure relevant and inclusive collections.	Medium	NHFPL	✓

Goal 9: Expand and improve access to youth and recreation services.

Strategies		Priority Level	Lead	In Progress
9.1	Improve coordination and integration of services.	High	CSA	✓
9.2	Enhance outreach and communication.	High	YARD	
9.3	Expand and strengthen youth and recreation services.	High	YARD	✓
9.4	Provide targeted services for diverse and at-risk youth.	High	YARD	✓

Goal 10: Improve school buildings and their use to better meet the needs of students and the community.

Strategies		Priority Level	Lead	In Progress
10.1	Upgrade school buildings and facilities.	High	ENG/BOE	✓
10.2	Provide technology and learning space enhancements.	Medium	ENG/BOE	✓
10.3	Improve schools to better support community engagement and provide multi-use spaces.	Medium	ENG/BOE	✓
10.4	Upgrade and modernize health, wellness, and recreation facilities at schools.	High	ENG/BOE	✓
10.5	Make sustainability and energy efficiency improvements.	High	ENG/BOE	✓