

An aerial photograph of the town of Vernon, New Hampshire, showing a mix of residential and commercial buildings, a church steeple, and surrounding hills under a clear sky.

# Vernon

## Plan of Conservation and Development

Appendix A: Data Analysis

November 16, 2020



MILONE & MACBROOM

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

- Demographics
- Infrastructure
- Housing
- Environment
- Economic Development
- Community Facilities
- Transportation
- Historic Resources
- Land Use & Zoning



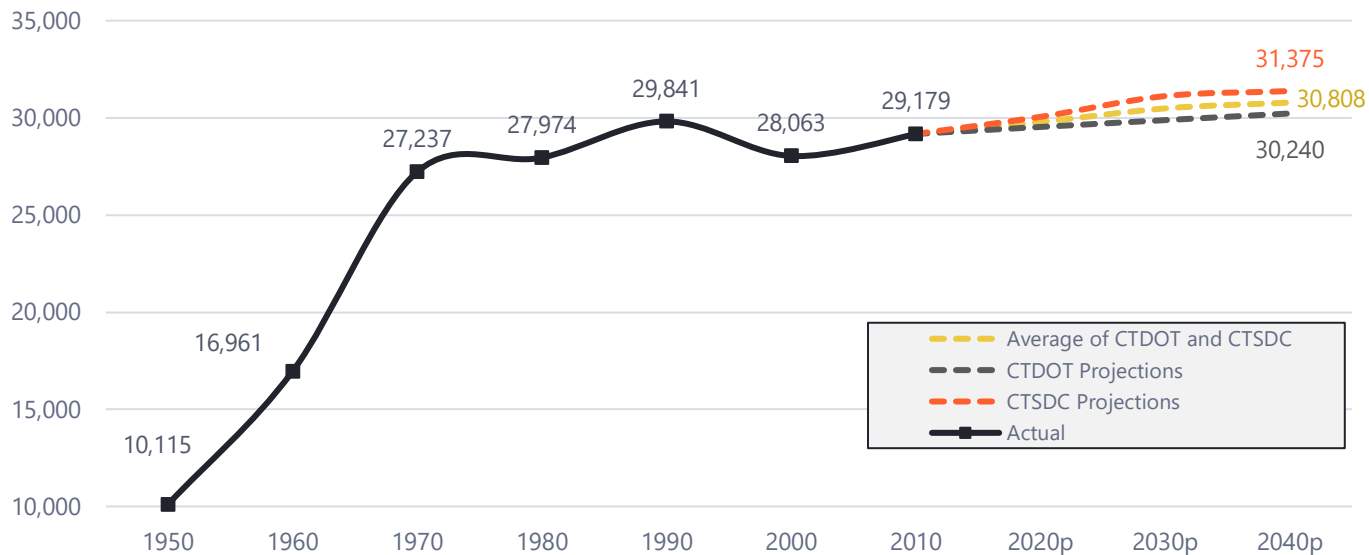
# DEMOGRAPHICS

A photograph of a large, multi-story red brick building with a prominent central tower. The building features arched windows and decorative architectural elements. The word "DEMOGRAPHICS" is overlaid in large, white, sans-serif capital letters across the center of the image. In the foreground, a white van is parked on the left, and several cars are parked along the street on the right. The scene is set on a city street with trees and a clear sky in the background.

# THE TOWN'S POPULATION HAS STABILIZED

- Vernon experienced its fastest population growth in the 1950s and 1960s.
- There was a 6% population decline between 1990 and 2000. The population has not yet returned to its high.
- Between 2010 and 2019, Vernon's population increased by 180 residents (0.6%) to 29,359.
- **Stabilization likely due to residential buildout.**
- CTDOT and CTSDC Population projections show slow population growth through 2040.

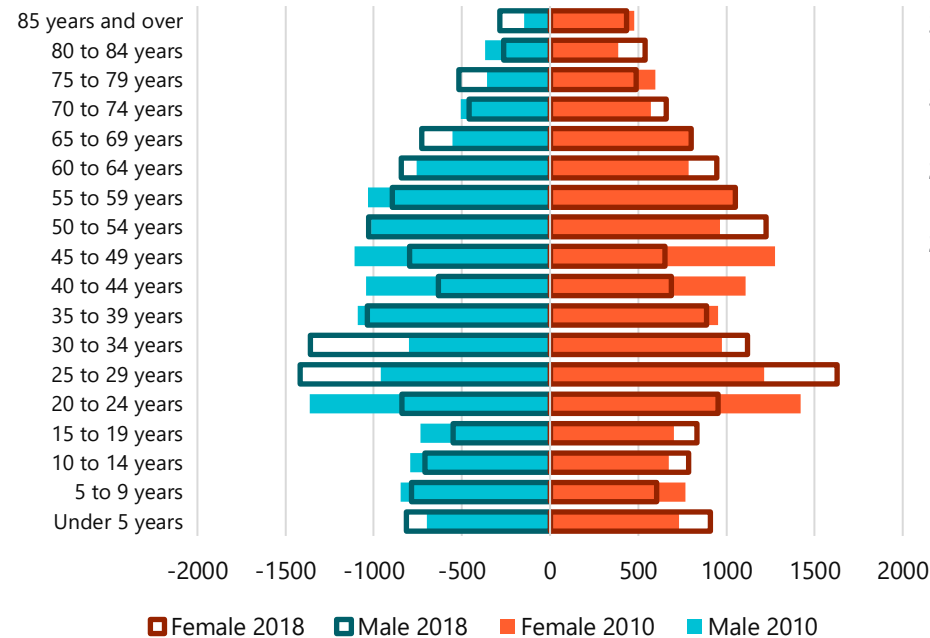
Historical and Projected Population in Vernon: 1950 to 2040



Sources: U.S. Census Bureau Decennial Census, 1950-2010. Projected Population by CTDOT and CTSDC.

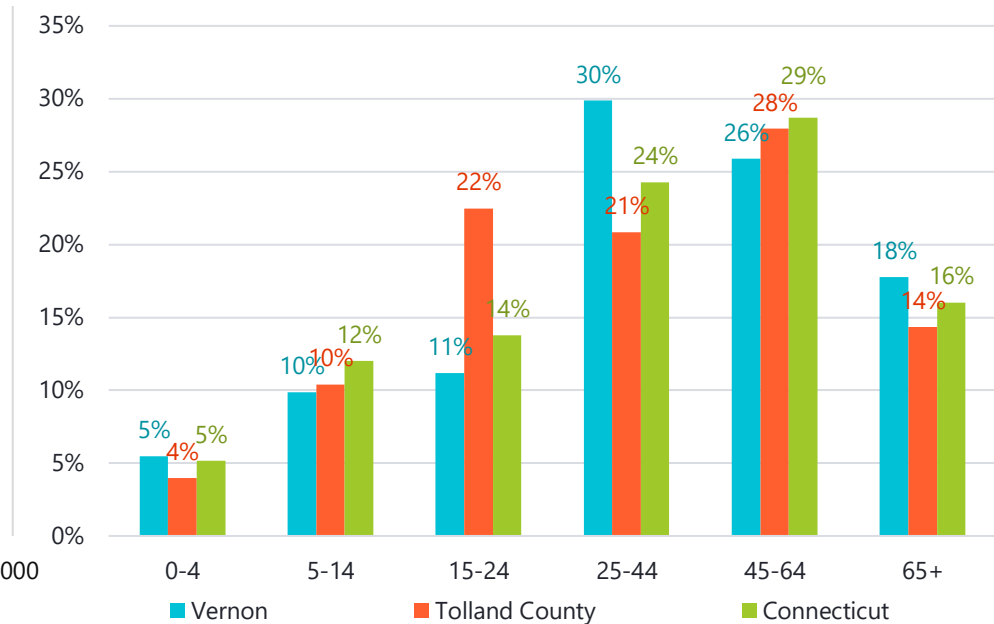
# LARGE WORKING-AGE POPULATION

Population by Age and Sex



Source: U.S. Census 2010, American Community Survey 2018

Population Comparison by Age Grouping, 2016



Source: CERC (ACS 2016)

- **Young adult (20-24) population grew between 2010 and 2018.**
  - Influx may be tied to construction of new multifamily housing.
- Vernon also has a larger share of adults age 25 to 44 compared to the county and state.
- As of 2017, Vernon's median age was 39 years old, up from 37.7 in 2000.
- **Vernon has a larger portion of the population over 65 compared to the county and state.**

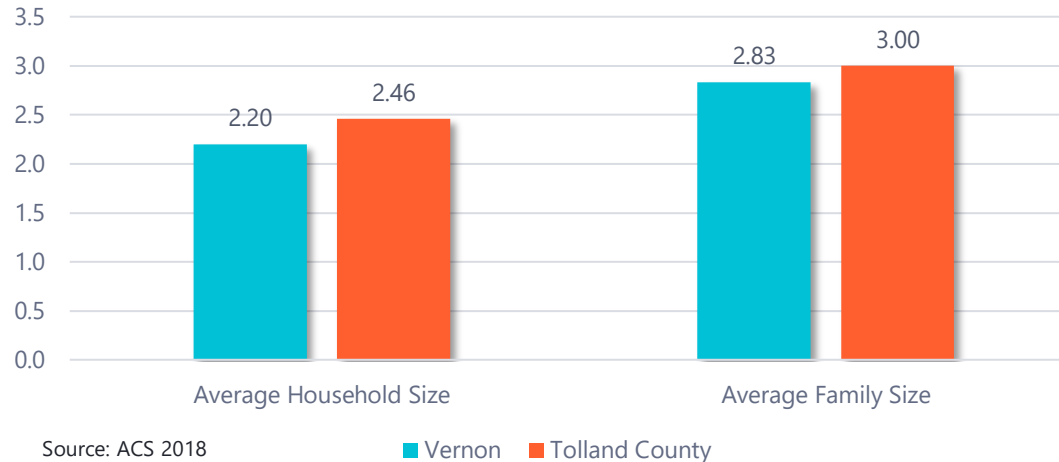
# RACE & ETHNICITY

- **The population of Vernon is diversifying.**
  - The Asian population grew by 867 people (78.3%) between 2010 and 2018. The Hispanic or Latino population grew by 635 people (32%).
  - Growth in the "Some Other Race" (81.8%), Two or More Races (66.2%), Black or African American (15.4%).
  - Non-white population has a younger median age than the town wide median
  - 10% of population is foreign-born.

Mutually Exclusive Racial or Ethnic Group	2010		2018		Change from 2010 to 2018	
	Count	% of Total	Count	% of Total	Net	Percent
<b>Not Hispanic or Latino</b>	<b>27,223</b>	<b>93.2%</b>	<b>26,540</b>	<b>91.0%</b>	<b>-683</b>	<b>-2.5%</b>
White	24,002	82.2%	21,922	75.2%	-2,080	-8.7%
Black or African American	1,530	5.2%	1,765	6.1%	235	15.4%
American Indian and Alaska Native	76	0.3%	41	0.1%	-35	-46.1%
Asian	1,107	3.8%	1,974	6.8%	867	78.3%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	10	0.0%	0	0.0%	-10	-100.0%
Some other race alone	66	0.2%	120	0.4%	54	81.8%
Two or more races	432	1.5%	718	2.5%	286	66.2%
<b>Hispanic or Latino (all races)</b>	<b>1,982</b>	<b>6.8%</b>	<b>2,617</b>	<b>9.0%</b>	<b>635</b>	<b>32.0%</b>
<b>Total:</b>	<b>29,205</b>		<b>29,157</b>		<b>-48</b>	<b>-0.2%</b>

# SHRINKING HOUSEHOLD SIZE LEADS TO EVOLVING HOUSING NEEDS

Household and Family Size: 2018

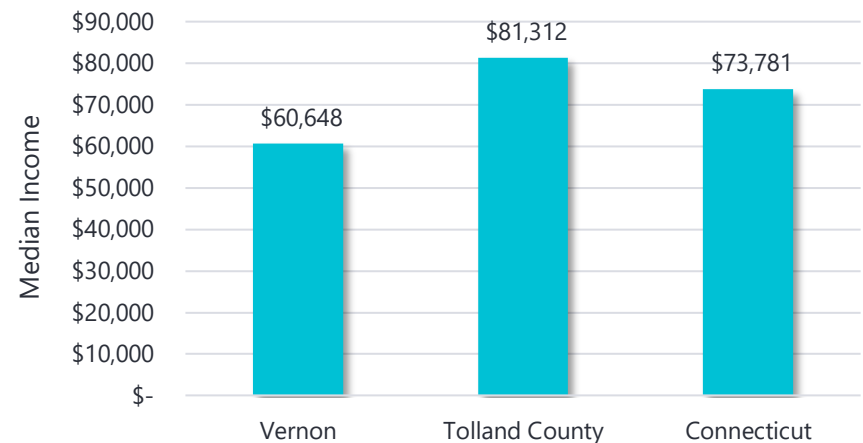


- Number of households is growing faster than the population as a whole. Even with a stable population, there is additional demand for housing units.
- **Average household size in Vernon is decreasing.** As of 2018 average household size is 2.20 – down from 2.21 in 2010 and 2.26 in 2000.
- Decline in the number of households with children under age 18 over the last 15 years – corresponds with dropping school enrollments.
- **Vernon has smaller household and family sizes compared to Tolland County.**
  - Tied to young working age population.
- **Trend of smaller households is leading to greater demand for smaller housing units.**

# EDUCATION & INCOME

- **About 35% of adults age 25 years old and over have a Bachelor's degree or higher** – lower than state and county.
- Median Household income in Vernon is about 25% lower than Tolland County and 18% lower than the State of Connecticut.
  - Retired population, those with low educational attainment, and those early in their careers may impact median income.

**Median Household Income Comparison, 2017**



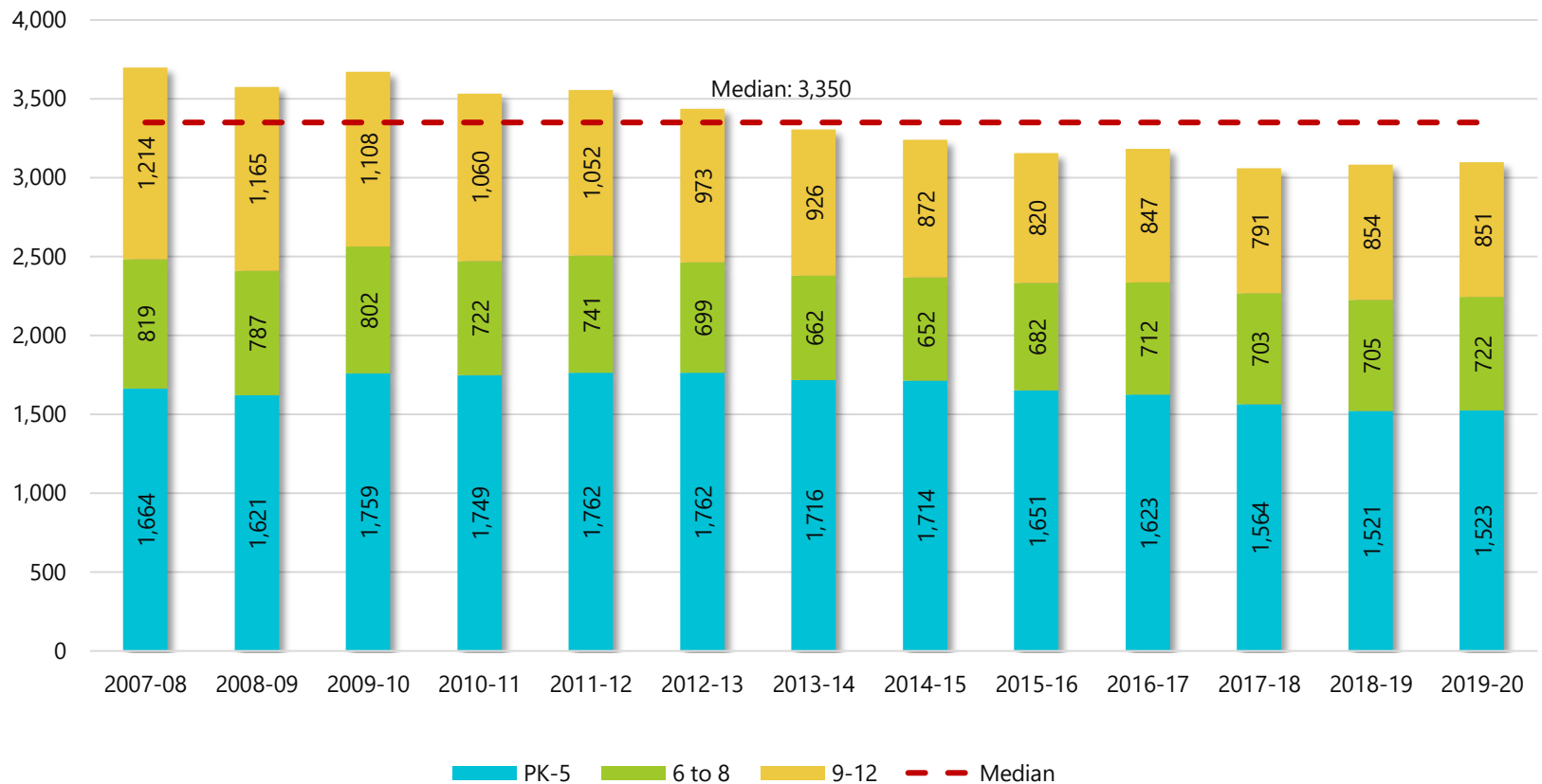
Source: 5YR American Community Survey 2017



# PUBLIC SCHOOL ENROLLMENTS HAVE STABILIZED

- Between the 2007-08 and 2019-20 school years Vernon Public School's total PK-12 enrollment declined by 15.3%.
- Enrollment has stabilized over the last three years.**

Vernon Historical School Enrollment, 2007-08 to 2019-20



Source: Connecticut State Department of Education; EdSight Enrollment database

# DEMOGRAPHIC TAKEAWAYS

- Town population is stable. Largely built out community.
- Smaller household size and current multi-family demand may put upward pressure on the future demand for housing.
- Large and growing young adult population attracted by multifamily housing may demand starter homes in the future.
  - The construction of new units responding to market demand.
- Large and growing senior population may lead to additional demand for smaller housing units as well as services that can help them age in place.
- Population is diversifying with growth in Asian and Hispanic populations.

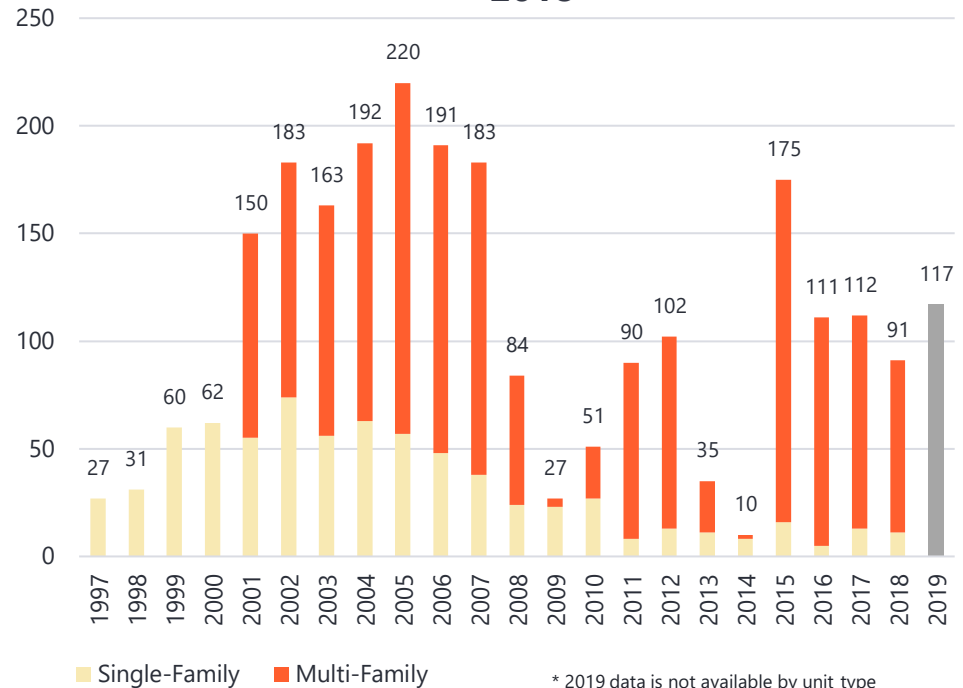


# HOUSING

# NEW HOME CONSTRUCTION HAS SLOWED

- Housing growth rate in Vernon since 2010 exceeds both County and State.
  - Driven by new multi-family housing
- From 1998 to 2006, Vernon averaged 139 new housing units per year.
- Between 2015 and 19, the Town has averaged 121 new housing units per year. Mostly multi-family.
  - Recent projects include Loom City Lofts, Grand Lofts, Old Talcott Mill, and Trail Run
- Single-family housing permits have yet to recover from levels seen in the mid-2000s.
  - Lack of vacant land to support additional single-family housing

**Vernon Annual Housing Permits: 1998 to 2018**



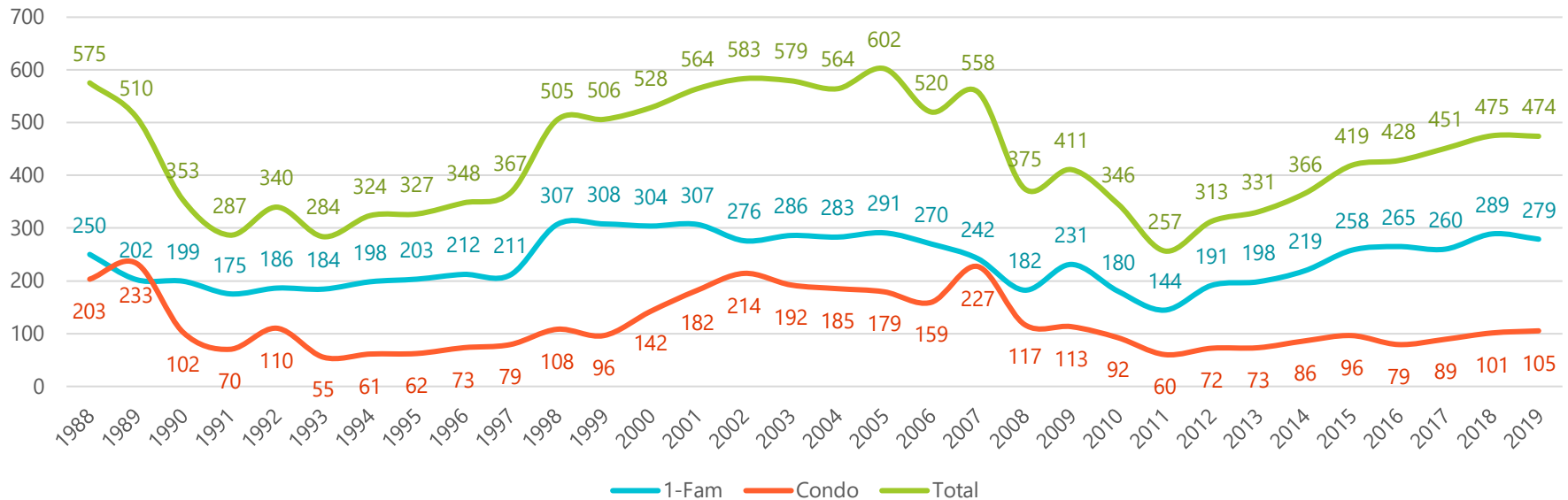
Geography	Housing Unit Change		
	2010	2017	Change
Vernon	13,896	14,480	4.2%
Tolland County	57,963	59,809	3.2%
Connecticut	1,487,891	1,514,065	1.8%

Source: Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development



# THE HOUSING MARKET IS IMPROVING

Town of Vernon Home Sale Trends: 1988 to 2019



Source: The Warren Group

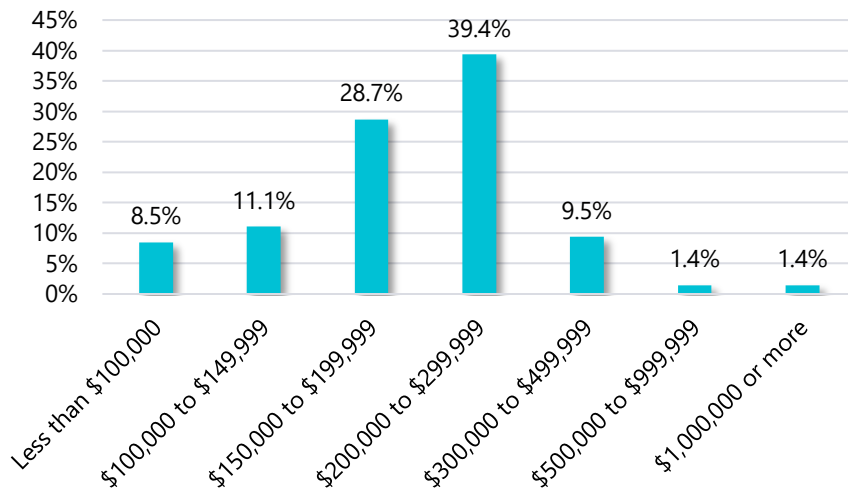
- Significant drop in sales activity starting in 2008 – tied to Great Recession and slower pace of home construction.
- Strong recovery in single-family sales over the last five years.
  - Median sale price has increased in recent years, but still 15% less than pre-recession peak.
- Existing housing stock being sold indicating turnover to new families.
- Condo sales still yet to recover.



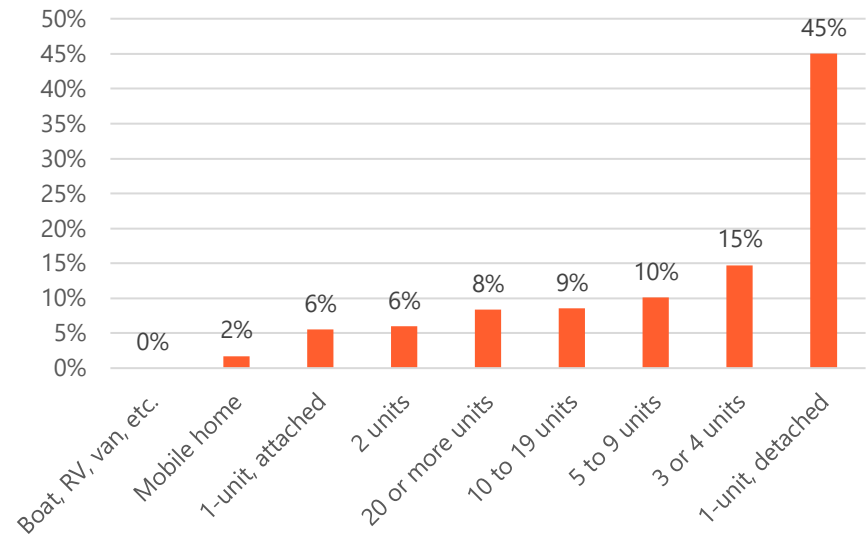
# THE TOWN HAS DIVERSE HOUSING OPTIONS

- Diverse housing stock – About 50% single-family units, 20% 2-4 family units, and 27% in buildings with five or more units
- Diversity of price points in Town's housing stocks provides opportunities for different life stages and incomes.
  - About 16% home values are less than \$200k.
  - Just under 40% are between \$200k and \$300k.
  - Just under 10% are between \$300k and \$500k.

**Distribution of Owner-Occupied Home Values: 2018**



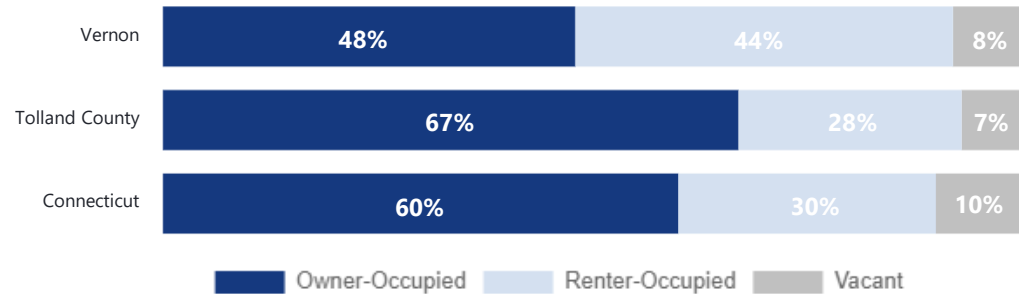
**Housing by Units in Structure, 2018**



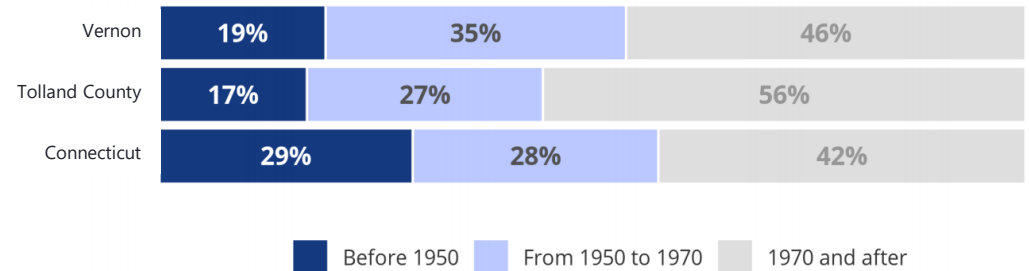
# THE TOWN HAS DIVERSE HOUSING OPTIONS

- About 44% of housing units in town are occupied by renters – much higher than Tolland County, where about a quarter of units are renter occupied.
- A majority of the town's housing stock was built between 1950 and 1990.
- Older housing stock more likely to be vacant.
  - Older housing concentrated in Rockville.

**Occupancy Status**



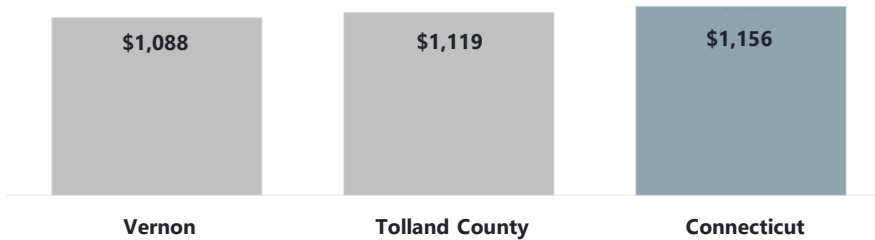
**Age of Units**



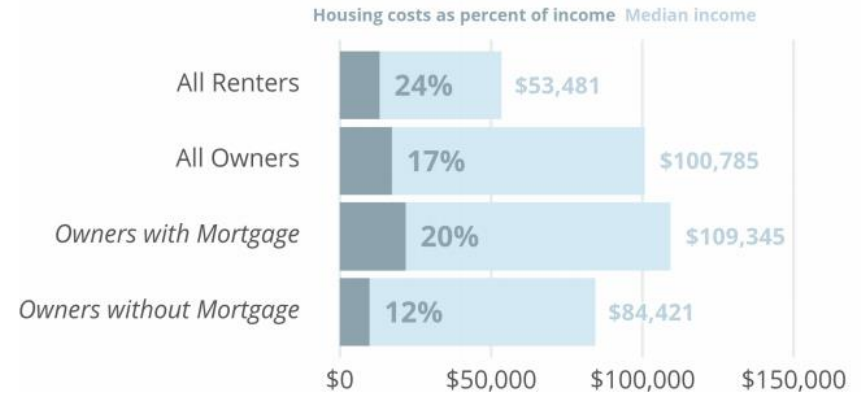
Source: Partnership for Strong Communities Housing Profile for Vernon 2020

# RENTAL OPTIONS

## Median Rent



## Housing costs as percent of income



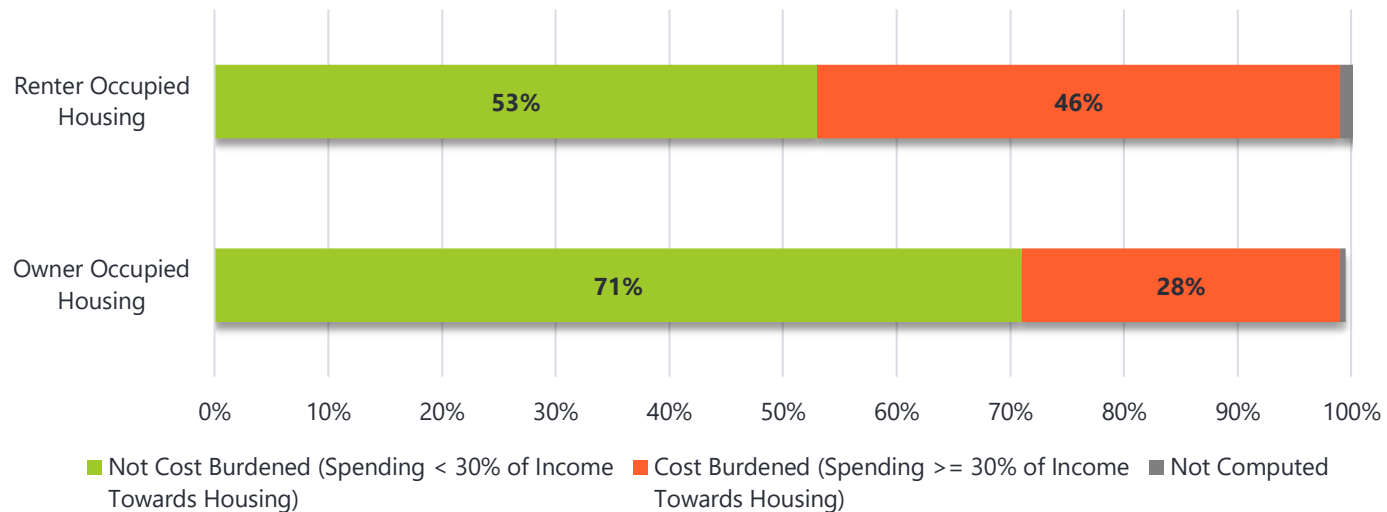
Source: Partnership for Strong Communities Housing Profile for Vernon 2020

- **Affordable community relative to state and county** - Vernon has a large portion of units with rents under \$1,000/month
- Median rent in Vernon is \$1,088. Lower than the county and state.
- Renters on average pay 24% of their income towards housing.
- Mix of large and small rental units. About 55% of units have 2 bedrooms or less.

# MANY HOUSEHOLDS ARE COST BURDENED

- The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) recommends that no more than 30% of household income be spent on housing. This includes mortgage or rent, property taxes, HOA fees, insurance, and utilities.
- Households that spend more than 30% of their income on housing may have difficulty affording other necessities such as food, clothing, transportation, and medical care.
- Renters are more likely to be cost burdened than homeowners.

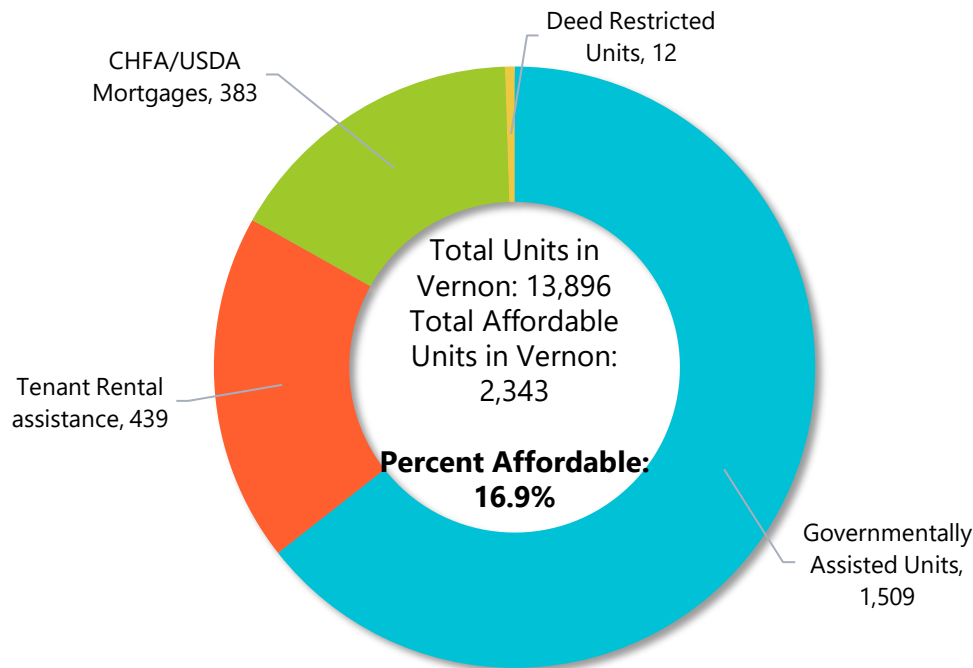
## Affordability of Housing by Tenure



Source: Partnership for Strong Communities Housing Profile for Vernon 2020

# AVAILABILITY OF PROTECTED AFFORDABLE HOUSING UNITS

## Assisted Units in Vernon's Appeals List, 2019



Source: Connecticut Department of Housing – Affordable Housing Appeals List: 2019  
CHFA – Connecticut Housing Finance Authority  
USDA United States Department of Agriculture

- State defines affordable housing as units that are deed restricted, governmentally assisted, receive tenant rental assistance, or have CHFA/USDA mortgages.
- Towns with less than 10% of housing units as affordable are subject to the provisions of CGS Section 8-30g.
- The number of affordable housing units in Vernon in 2019 was 2,343 units, or 16.9% of total housing units.
- There has been a gain of 286 affordable units since 2009. There was a loss of 170 governmentally assisted units, but a gain of 439 tenant rental assistance units.
- There is a large number of “naturally occurring” affordable units that are not deed restricted.



# VERNON HOUSING AUTHORITY

- Vernon Housing Authority owns and operates 323 units throughout Vernon for elderly and disabled residents and families.
- All units are leased.
- Over 510 applicants on the public housing wait list and 4,400 applicants on the Housing Choice Voucher Program waitlist.
- Demand for housing is great and continues to grow. **Reflects both a local need as well as a need in the larger region**



# HOUSING TAKEAWAYS

- Largely built out community.
- Diverse housing stock – range of styles, sizes, price points, and density.
  - Provides opportunity for those looking to “upscale” and “downsize.”
- Strong multi-family market. Significant new construction over the last five years.
  - Mix of new construction and mill redevelopment.
  - POCD should identify areas where new multi-family development is desirable by type, number of units, density, scale, etc.
- Weak market for new single-family construction. However, resale market is strong.
  - Lack of vacant land to support new single-family construction.
- Significant affordable housing stock, concentrated in Rockville
  - However, still significant need for additional units, especially for families.

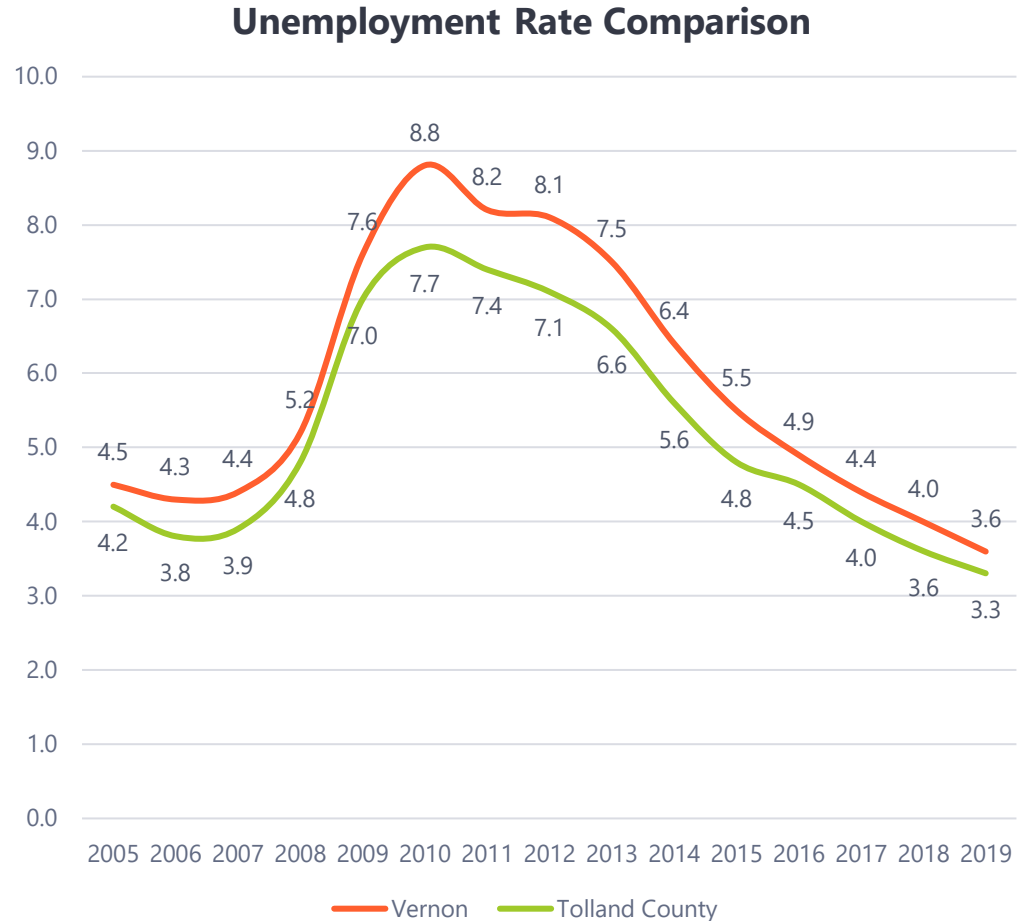
# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

LOOM  
CITY  
LOFTS

Loom City  
LOFTS

# UNEMPLOYMENT

- Unemployment rate has declined significantly from 2010 peak.
  - Due to the COVID pandemic as of July 2020, Vernon unemployment rose to 9.9%.
- Historically, Vernon's unemployment rate is slightly higher than Tolland County – within 1 percentage point.

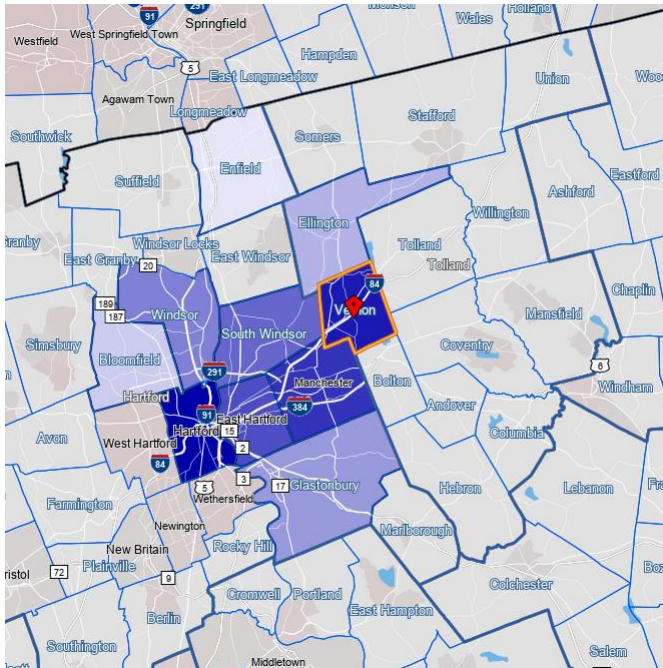


Source: Connecticut Department of Labor. Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS): 2005 to 2019

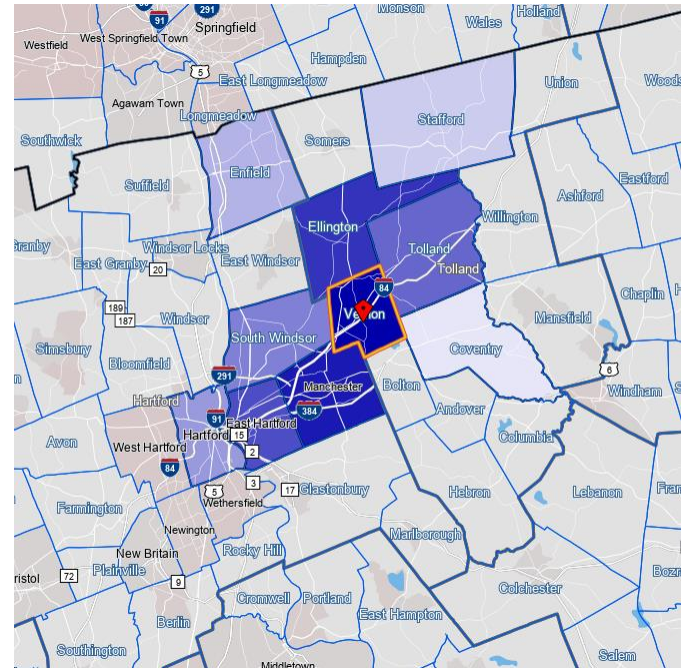


# COMMUTER TRENDS

Where Vernon residents are employed		
Place	Job Count	Job Share
Hartford	1,703	13.3%
Vernon	1,228	9.6%
Manchester	1,191	9.3%
East Hartford	805	6.3%
South Windsor	641	5.0%
Windsor	629	4.9%
Glastonbury	349	2.7%
Ellington	322	2.5%
Bloomfield	314	2.5%
Enfield	305	2.4%
All Other Locations	5,284	41.4%
<b>All County Subdivisions</b>	<b>12,771</b>	<b>100.0%</b>



Where Vernon workers live		
Place	Job Count	Job Share
Vernon	1,228	18.1%
Manchester	611	9.0%
Ellington	416	6.1%
East Hartford	327	4.8%
Tolland	324	4.8%
South Windsor	247	3.6%
Hartford	204	3.0%
Enfield	192	2.8%
Stafford	148	2.2%
Coventry	146	2.1%
All Other Locations	2,952	43.4%
<b>All County Subdivisions</b>	<b>6,795</b>	<b>100.0%</b>





# EMPLOYMENT BASE

Industry	2019 Employment	2008 Employment	Employment Change	Percent Change
Admin. & Support & Waste Mgmt. & Remed. Services	245	151	94	63%
Real Estate and Rental & Leasing	184	134	50	37%
Federal Government	71	60	11	18%
State Government	203	175	28	16%
Other Services (except Public Administration)	498	446	52	12%
Accommodation & Food Services	1,265	1,159	106	9%
Wholesale Trade	130	127	3	2%
Health Care & Social Assistance	2,035	2,073	(38)	-2%
Local Government	1,032	1,110	(78)	-7%
Retail Trade	1,376	1,621	(246)	-15%
Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation	164	200	(36)	-18%
Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services	214	348	(133)	-38%
Finance & Insurance	158	258	(101)	-39%
Construction	243	525	(282)	-54%
Manufacturing	115	377	(263)	-70%
Information	11	207	(196)	-94%
<b>Total - All Industries</b>	<b>8,053</b>	<b>9,180</b>	<b>(1,127)</b>	<b>-12%</b>

Source: CT Department of Labor Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages  
Sum totals may not equal totals due to data redactions for small sectors.

- Overall Vernon lost 1,127 jobs (12% contraction) between 2008 and 2019.
- The largest losses were in Construction and Manufacturing.
  - Limited industrial land to support growth in these sectors.
- Large healthcare workforce tied to Rockville General Hospital.

# PRINCIPAL EMPLOYERS AND TAXPAYERS

- Town of Vernon (including public schools) and Rockville General Hospital are the Town's largest employers.
  - Both centered in Downtown Rockville.
  - Provide "boots on the ground" that can support Downtown revitalization efforts.
- Other principal employers include retailers, health care facilities, and state government.
- Several multi-family residential developments among the Town's largest taxpayers.

Principal Employers	Rank	Number Employed
Town of Vernon	1	816
Rockville General Hospital	2	537
Visiting Nurse and Health Services	3	431
Stop & Shop	4	283
Vernon Manor	5	179
Rein's Delicatessen	6	155
Fox Hill Nursing and Rehabilitation	7	148
State of Connecticut	8	145
T.J. Maxx & Home Goods	9	125
Suburban Subaru	10	112

*Vernon Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) –Year Ending June 30, 2019*

Principal Taxpayers	Rank
Chapman and Mansions LLC	1
Evandro Santini & Woodbrook LLC	2
Connecticut Water Company	3
Tri City Improvements, LLC	4
Prospect Rockville Hospital/ ECHN	5
Connecticut Light & Power/ Yankee Gas Co.	6
CE Vernon II, LLC	7
Boston Rockville/ Boston Vernon	8
Briar Knoll Apartments	9
New West Apartments	10

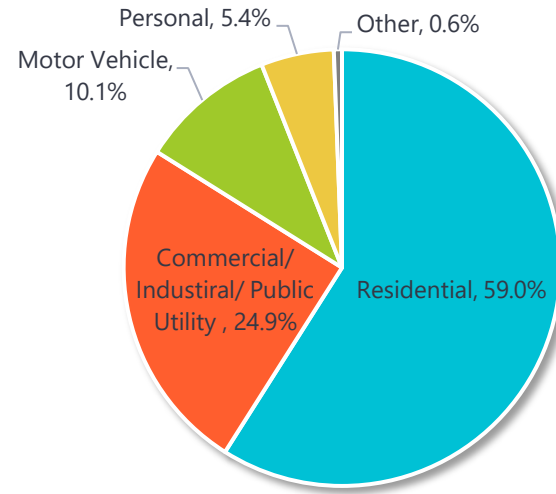
*Vernon Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) –Year Ending June 30, 2019*

# TAX BASE

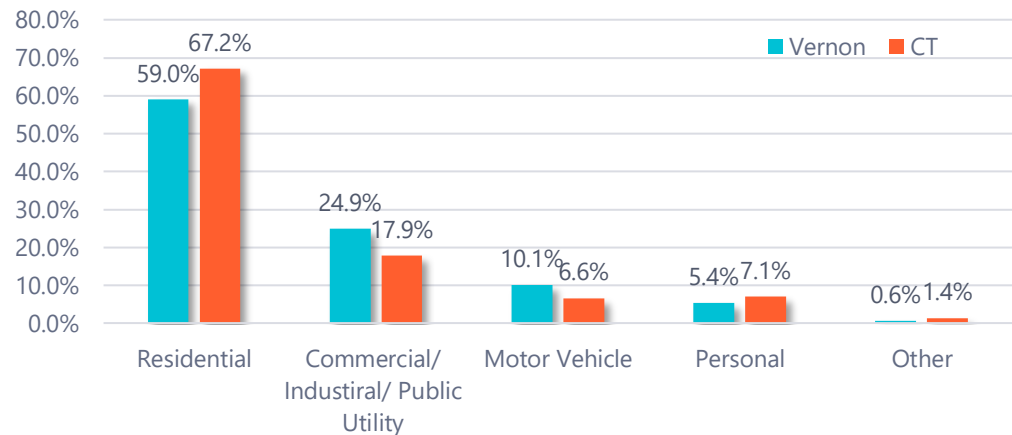
- Town's Grand List is less reliant on residential properties (59.0% of tax base) compared to state average (67.2%).
- Between Grand List Year (GLY) 2011 and 2017, commercial, industrial, and utilities grew by 4.7% of the tax base.
- 10.2% of Grand List is tax exempt.

Source: Connecticut Office of Policy and Management  
Municipal Fiscal Indicators Fiscal Years Ended 2014 to 2018  
Published January 2020

**Vernon Grand List Composition (GLY 2017)**

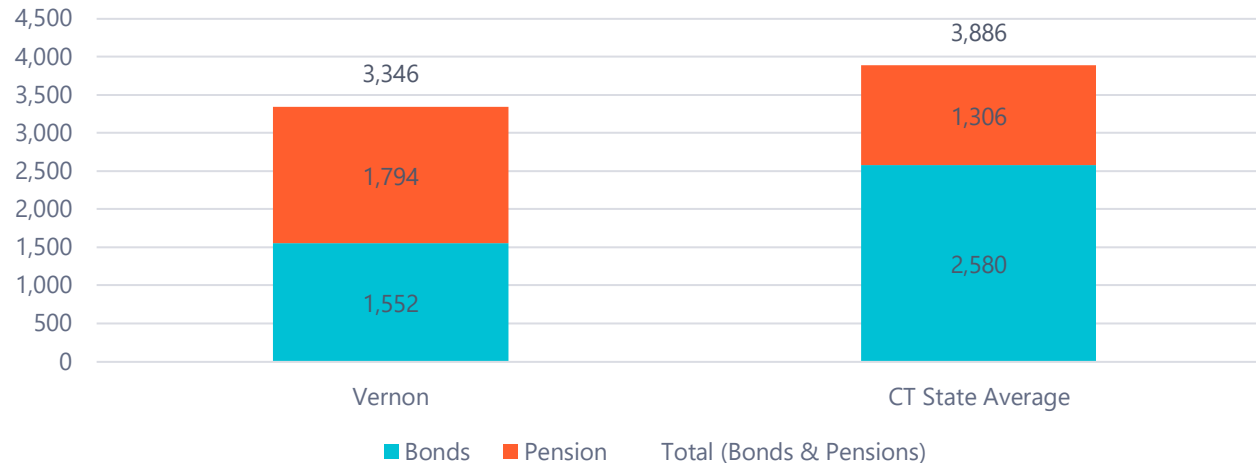


**Comparison of Grand List Components as Percentages of the Total Grand List, 2017**



# MUNICIPAL FISCAL INDICATORS

## Vernon Debt per Capita by Bonds & Pensions, FYE 2018

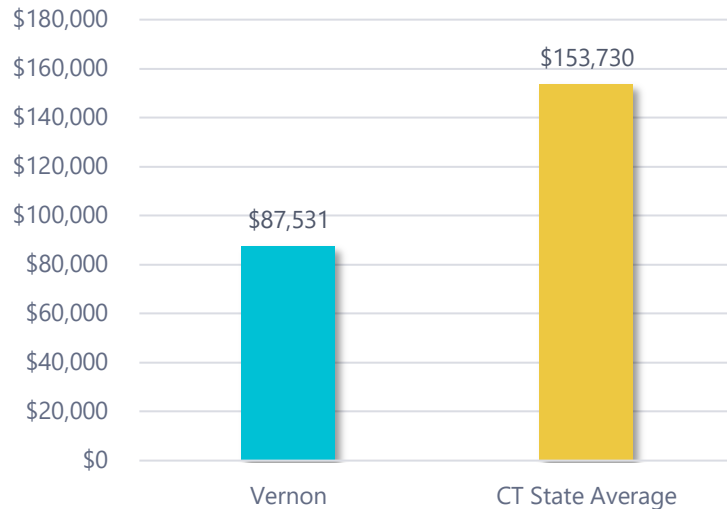


Source: Connecticut Office of Policy and Management Municipal Fiscal Indicators Fiscal Years Ended 2014 to 2018  
Published January 2020

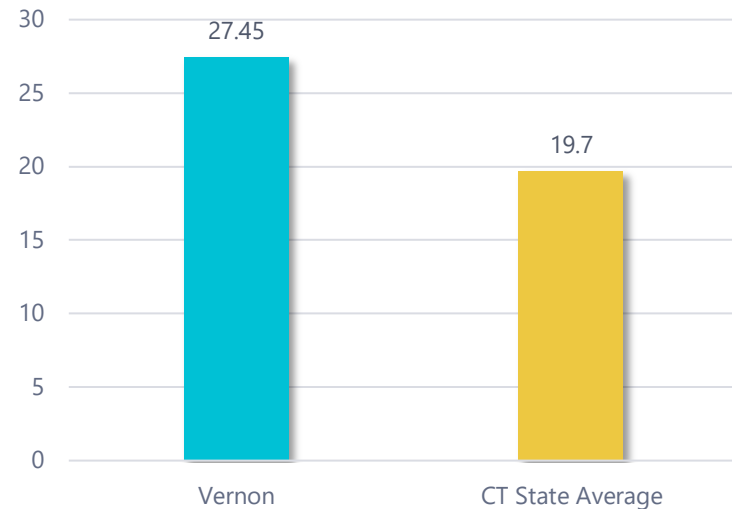
- Vernon's debt per capita of \$3,346 is about 14% less than the state average.
- As of December 2019, Vernon maintains an Aa2 bond rating from Moody's.

# MUNICIPAL FISCAL INDICATORS

**Equalized Net Grand List per Capita Comparison, FYE 2018**



**Equalized Mill Rate Comparison, FYE 2018**



*Source: Connecticut Office of Policy and Management Municipal Fiscal Indicators Fiscal Years Ended 2014 to 2018 Published January 2020*

- Vernon ranked 153<sup>rd</sup> out of 169 municipalities in Equalized Net Grand List Per Capita – about 43% lower than state average.
  - Reflects more affordable property values.
- Equalized mill rate is about 39% higher than state average.



# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

The Economic Development Three Year Plan provides an outline of goals for future development. It was last updated in 2015.

## Promote Community Spirit Throughout Town

- Develop a brand/positive and recognizable image to help convey Vernon's unique identity
- Marketing campaign

## Enhance Gateways

- Improve public realm at major entry points (signage, landscaping, maintenance)

## Encourage Appropriate Business Development at Exits 66 and 67

- Encourage business development
- Update zoning
- Utility and infrastructure improvements

## Ensure that Utilities Meet Current and Future Needs

- Ensure Vernon offers up-to-date communication and utility options

## Encourage the Revitalization of Rockville

- Continue to support and collaborate with RDA
- Increase patronage of Rockville businesses
- Encourage redevelopment of West Main Street Retail Block
- Continue efforts to redevelop/ re-tenant the Citizens Block
- Work to ensure that existing buildings can continue to support business uses
- Explore State programs that can aid in the revitalization of Rockville

# REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) was completed in 2019. The CEDS focuses on regional collaboration to reach the following goals:

## Talent

Educate, train, and retain talent with a focus on underserved and underrepresented populations to better meet the needs of the region's employers and to create jobs paying a family living wage.

## Invest

Enhance the quality of place amenities throughout our region to retain and attract talent

## Brand

Strengthen collaboration to support and promote the region's industry strengths.

### Regional Target Sectors include:

- Business Services
- Insurance and Financial
- Aerospace
- Medical Devices
- Metal Working & Metal Products
- Printing Services
- Production Technology, Machinery, & Equipment

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TAKEAWAYS

- Employment profile consistent with a suburban community.
  - Strong commuter ties to Hartford and regional economy
- Largest employment sectors in health care, retail, and food services sectors.
  - Local sectors, driven by local population.
- Strong commercial tax base driven by retail.
- Limited availability of industrial land limits opportunities for economic growth in certain sectors.
- Opportunity to better capitalize on land surrounding Exit 66 and Exit 67.
- Downtown Rockville Revitalization remains a community priority.
  - Leverage employment base – government and hospital.
  - Need to better connect and integrate into larger community.
  - Continue to leverage unique historic character through adaptive reuse and appropriate infill development.

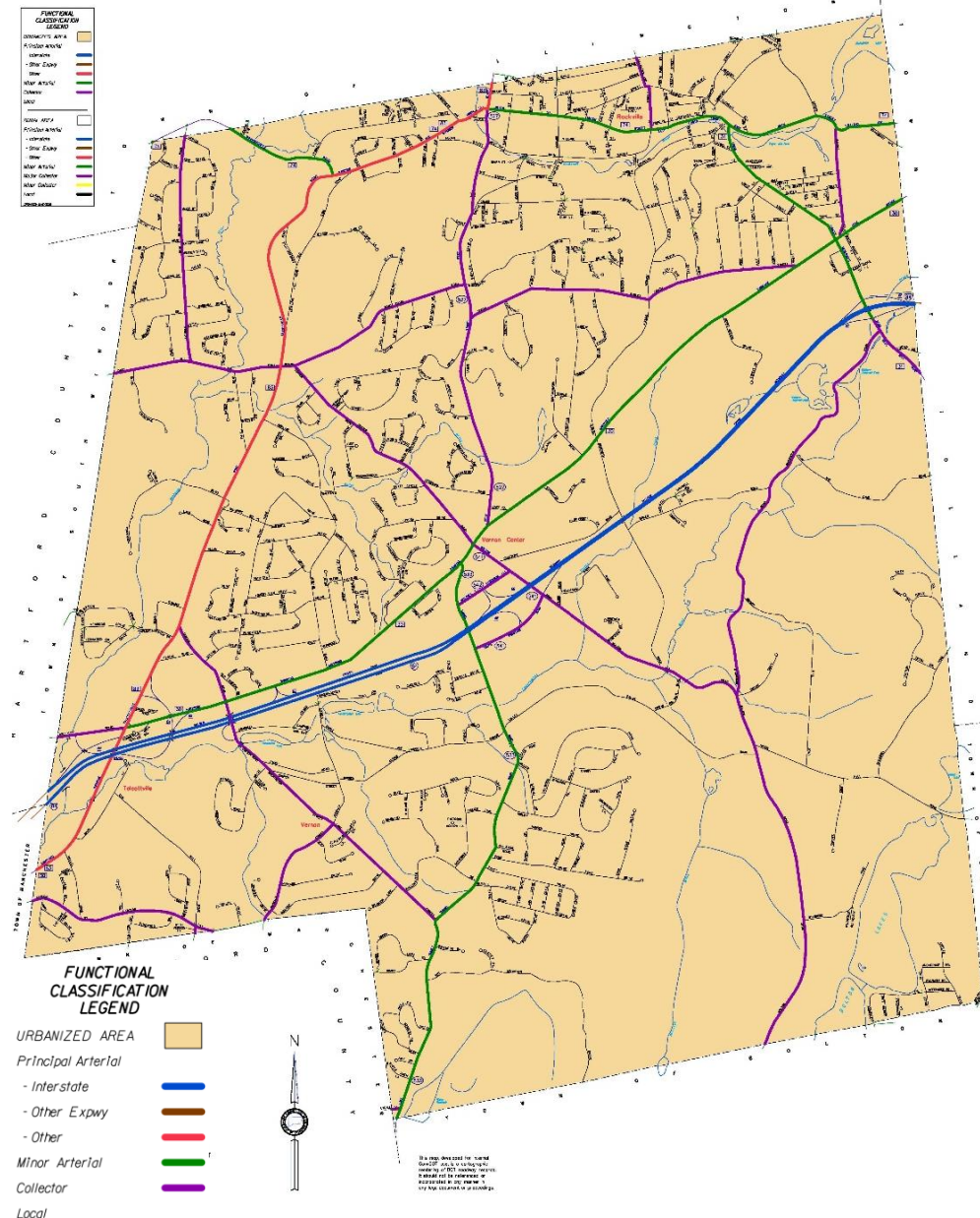
# TRANSPORTATION





# FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION

- Functional Classification is a roadway hierarchy that is used to determine eligibility for state and federal transportation funds.
- Roads classified as collectors and arterials are eligible for state and federal funding programs, including:
  - Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG)
  - Local Transportation Capital Improvement Program (LOTICIP)



# TRAFFIC VOLUMES

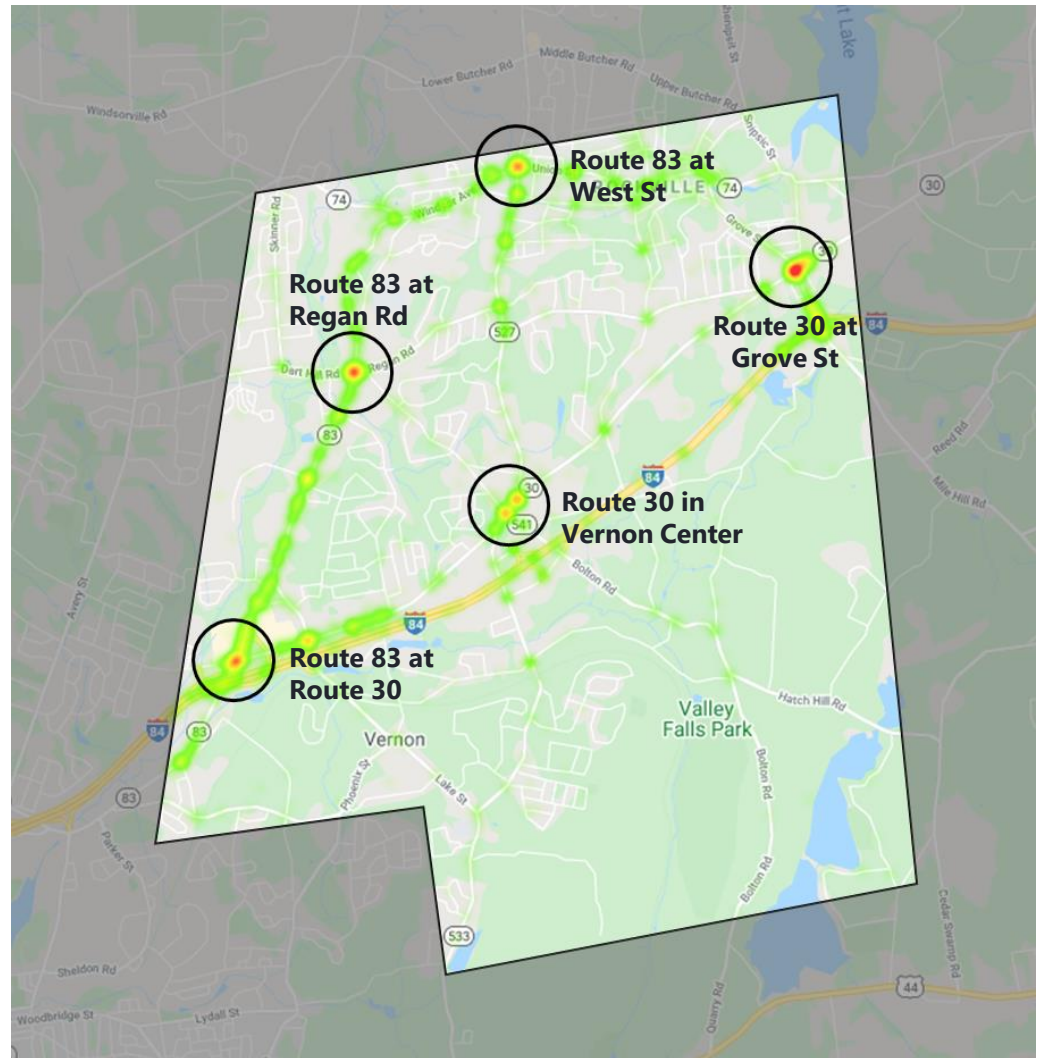
- Outside of I-84, the highest traffic volumes are in the Route 83 corridor, ranging from 15,000 to 27,600 vehicles per day (vpd).
- Other heavily used corridors include Route 31 near Exit 67 (23,300 vpd) and Hartford Turnpike in Vernon Center (20,600 vpd)
- Much lower traffic volumes in Downtown Rockville compared to other commercial corridors, ranging from 8,300 to 9,300 vehicles per day.
  - Makes it difficult for Rockville to compete with Route 83 corridor for retail and service businesses.
- Generally, traffic volumes have declined through out Vernon, except for Route 83.



*Traffic volumes in the Route 83 corridor (top) are nearly three times higher than the traffic volumes in Downtown Rockville (bottom)*

# TRAFFIC SAFETY

- CTDOT is responsible for improvements on state roadways.
- Crash hot spots are concentrated in the Route 83 and Route 30 corridors at signalized intersections.
- Over the last five years there have been ten traffic fatalities in Vernon, including two pedestrian fatalities on Route 83.



**Crashes in Vernon 2015 to 2020**

*Connecticut Crash Data Repository*



# BIKE, PEDESTRIAN & TRANSIT

## Bike Connectivity

- Centered on 9.2-mile multi-use trail system.
- Difficult on-road bike conditions due to lack of infrastructure.

## Sidewalks

- Centered on Rockville
- Disconnected sidewalks, especially in commercial districts (Route 83, Route 30).

## Transit Service

- CT Transit Route 84 provides local service to Rockville and Route 83 corridor
- Two express routes (917 and 913) serve park & ride lots at Exit 65, 66, and 67.



Disconnected Sidewalk on Dobson Rd.  
Google Maps

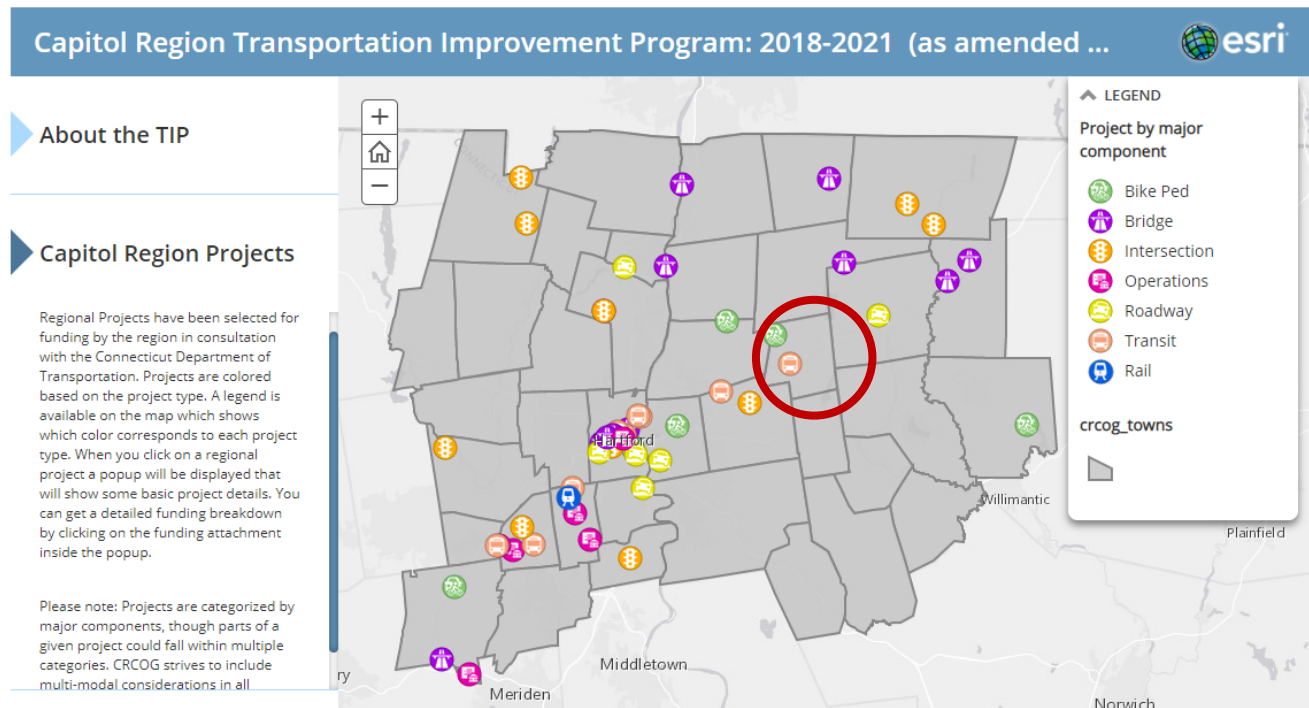


Park and Ride Lot on Hartford Turnpike.  
Google Maps

# TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

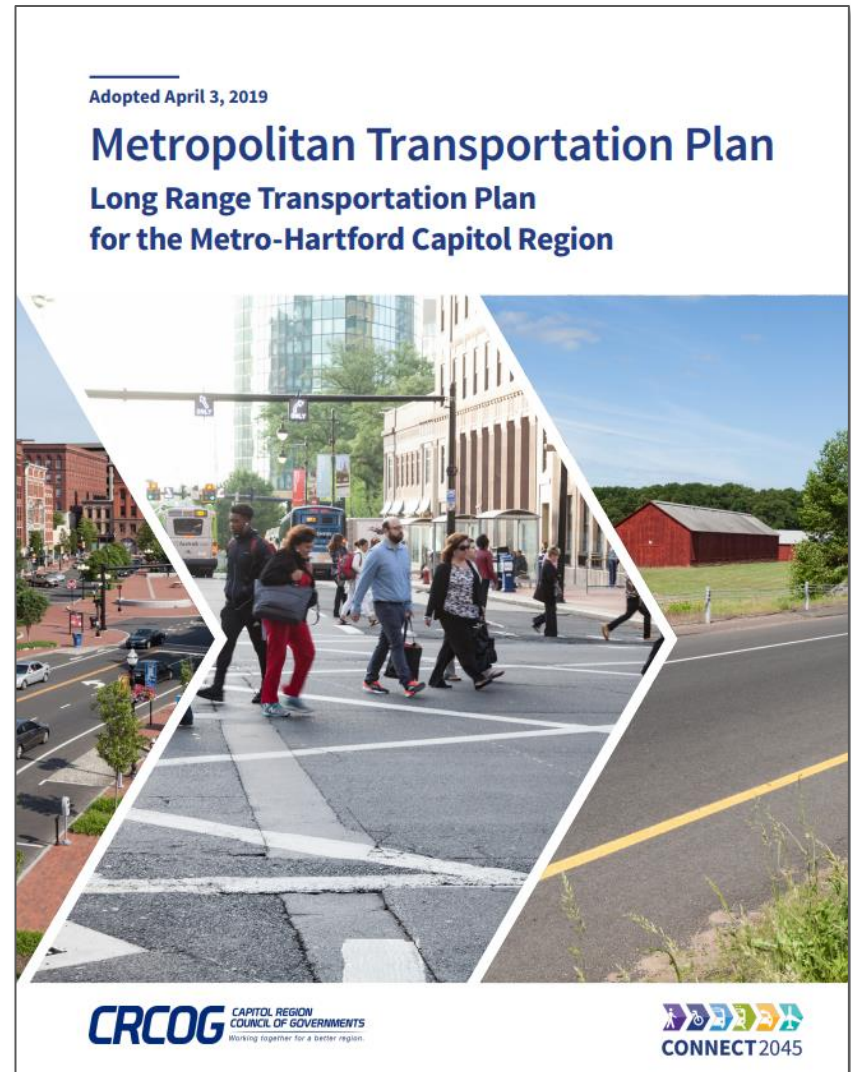
- Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) lists regional transportation projects that are likely to receive state or federal funding over the next five years. Four Vernon projects listed in current TIP.
  - Improvements to Vernon commuter lot
  - Safe Routes to School Project for Pedestrian Improvements at Skinner Road
  - Bridge replacement projects over the Hockanum and Tankerhoosen Rivers

## Map of TIP Projects



# LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

- 2019 Plan identifies how the Capitol Region will manage transportation system region's goals, by 2045.
- Regional goals and projects that may impact Vernon include:
  - CTfastrak expansion to the east
  - Enhanced transit corridors
  - Bus stop consolidation and improvement



# LOTICIP

- Local Transportation Capital Improvement Program (LOTICIP) is a state funding program overseen by CTRCOG.
- Project in design for replacement of Dart Hill Road Bridge.
- Future project for Rockville Center Complete Streets & Multi-Use Trail.
- Future project for standalone sidewalk on Hartford Turnpike, Dobson Road, and Lake Street.



Dart Hill Road Bridge  
Google Maps



# CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS FOR TRANSPORTATION

- 88% of the roads have been resurfaced under a six-year road bond. The remaining 12% to be done over the next seven years.
- Major transportation projects listed in CIP<sup>1</sup> include:
  - Dart Hill Road Bridge reconstruction
  - Talcotville Main Street Bridge reconstruction
  - Reconstruction of South Street
  - Pleasantview Drive Bridge



# TRANSPORTATION TAKEAWAYS

- Highest traffic volumes on the Route 83 and Route 30 corridor – makes these areas most conducive to retail development.
  - Crash “hot spots” at several intersection in these corridors.
- Capital Improvements focused on asset protection such as road resurfacing and bridge repairs and replacements.
- Bus transit service serves both commuters to Hartford (express service), as well as local businesses and residents in Rockville and the Route 83 corridor.
- Excellent multi-use trail system. However, lacks connections to commercial corridors and Downtown Rockville.
- Disconnected sidewalk network, especially within commercial corridors such as Route 83, Route 30, and Route 31.





# LAND USE & ZONING

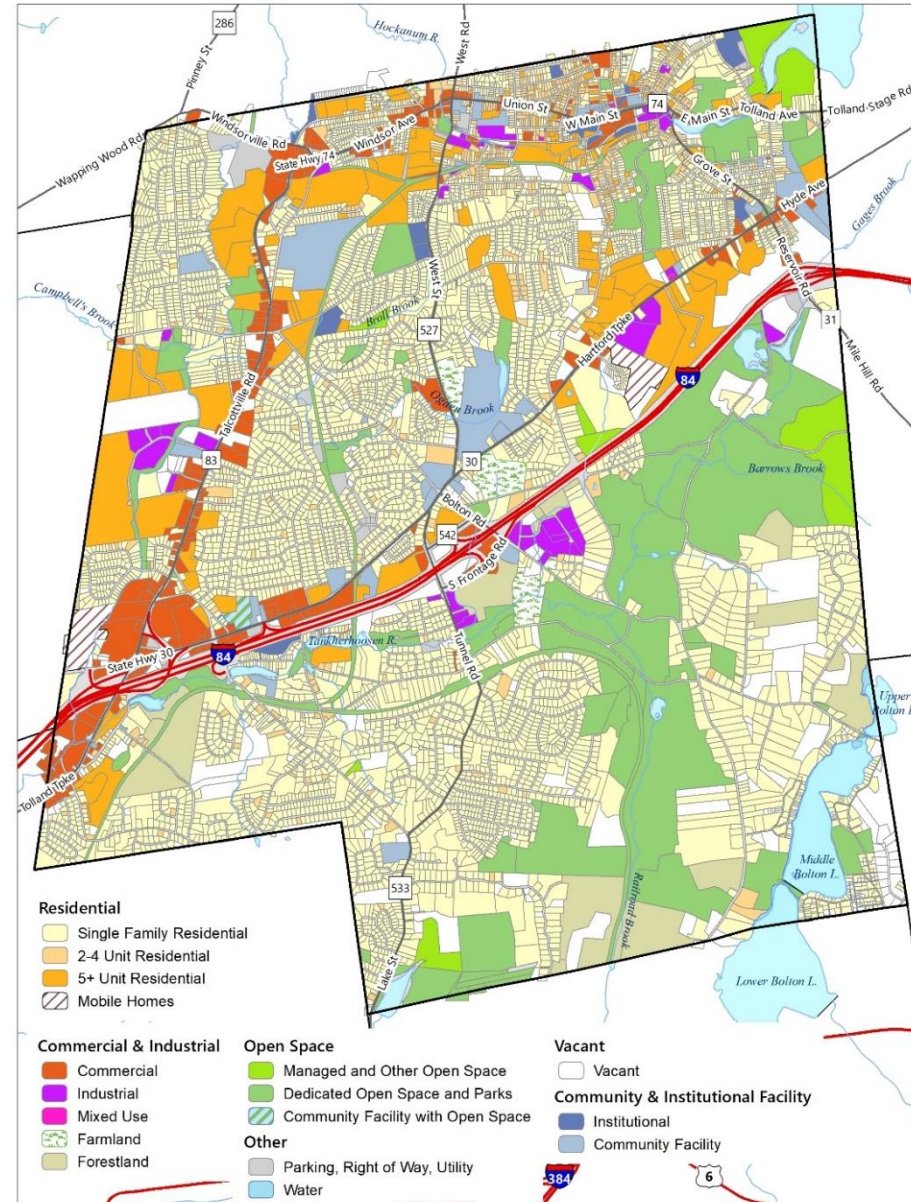


# EXISTING LAND USE

Land Use	Parcels	Land Area Acres	
		Acres	% of Total
Residential	6,948	5,621.9	54.4%
2-4 Unit Residential	708	314.3	3.0%
5+ Unit Residential	167	874.1	8.5%
Mobile Homes	2	67.0	0.6%
Single Family Residential	6,071	4,366.3	42.3%
Commercial & Industrial	329	622.5	6.0%
Commercial	282	471.6	4.6%
Mixed Use	8	2.4	0.0%
Industrial	39	148.5	1.4%
Institutional & Community	78	366	3.5%
Institutional	14	64.7	0.6%
Community Facility	63	291.0	2.8%
Community Facility with Open Space	1	10.6	0.1%
Roads & Utilities	65	94.8	0.9%
Parking	4	10.7	0.1%
Parking, Right of Way, Utility	1	1.9	0.0%
Right of Way	25	11.2	0.1%
Utility	35	71.1	0.7%
Open Space & Agriculture	130	2,641.4	25.6%
Dedicated Open Space and Parks	96	1,818.9	17.6%
Farmland	5	78.0	0.8%
Forestland	18	385.5	3.7%
Managed and Other Open Space	8	200.3	1.9%
Water	3	158.7	1.5%
Vacant	449	984.1	9.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,001</b>	<b>10,330.9</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Acreage only includes parcel area. Excludes most transportation R.O.W

- Residential uses make up over 50% of the Town's total acreage.
- Commercial/Industrial uses only comprise 6% of the Town's total acreage.
- Limited vacant land.



Land Use



MILONE & MACBROOM

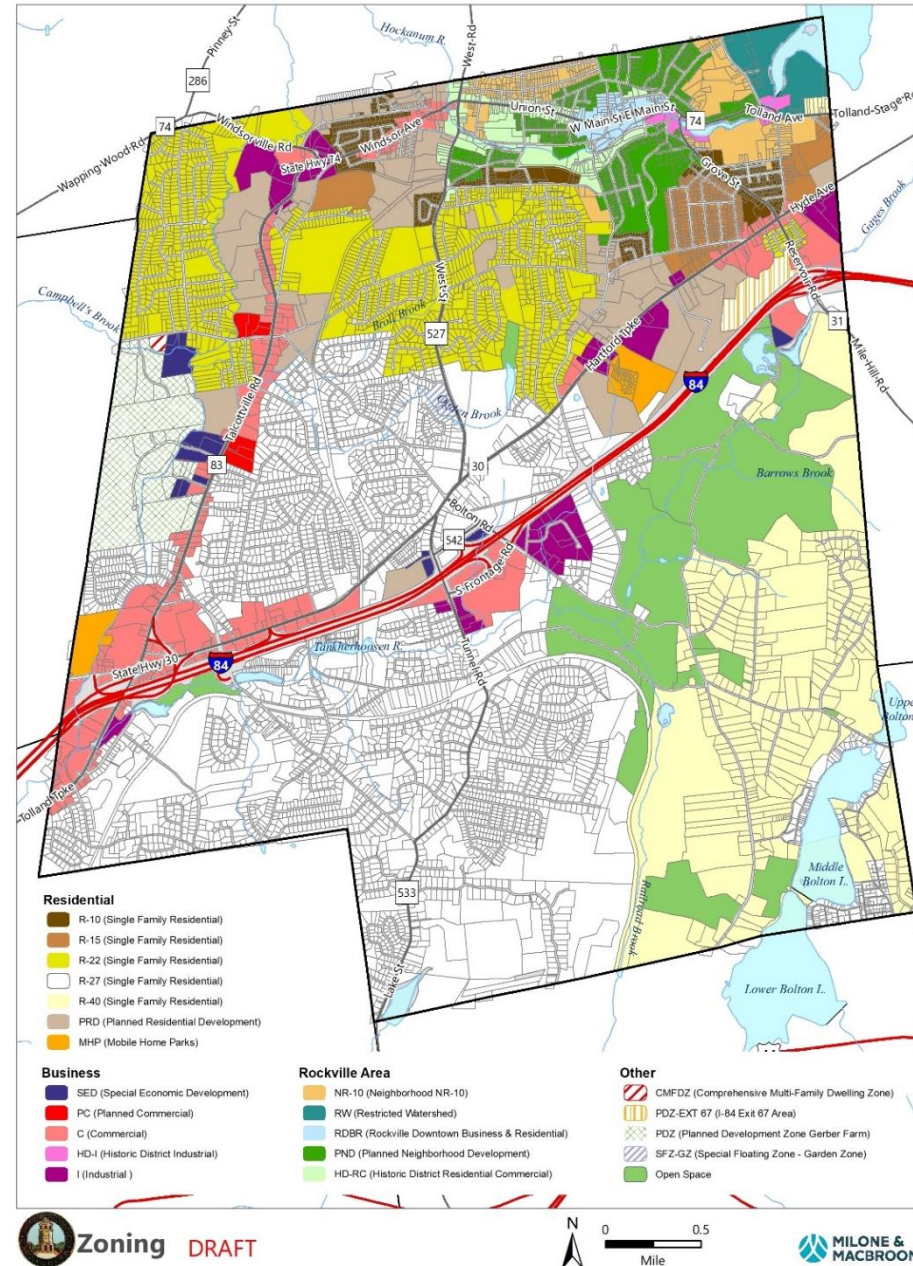
DRAFT



MILONE & MACBROOM

# ZONING

- The majority of the town is zoned for lower density residential uses with densities ranging from half acre (R-22) to one acre (R-40)
- The majority of commercial zones are located along Route 83 and Route 30.
- Zoning in Rockville focused on preserving traditional development patterns and historic character
- Since the 2012 Plan, zoning additions include:
  - LID requirements
  - Rockville Village Overlay
  - Adaptive reuse regulations



# LAND USE AND ZONING TAKEAWAYS

- Largely built out community - future development will mostly be through infill, reuse, or redevelopment.
- Lack of vacant land to support industrial uses under current zoning.
  - Many light industrial uses locate within commercial zones.
- Lack of vacant land zoned for multi-family residential.
  - Zone changes would be required for future projects.
- Exit 67 Area – identified as an area with both conservation and development value. Current overlay zone for Exit 67 Area strives to balance these objectives.
- Zoning regime in Rockville strives to retain traditional development patterns and protect historic character.



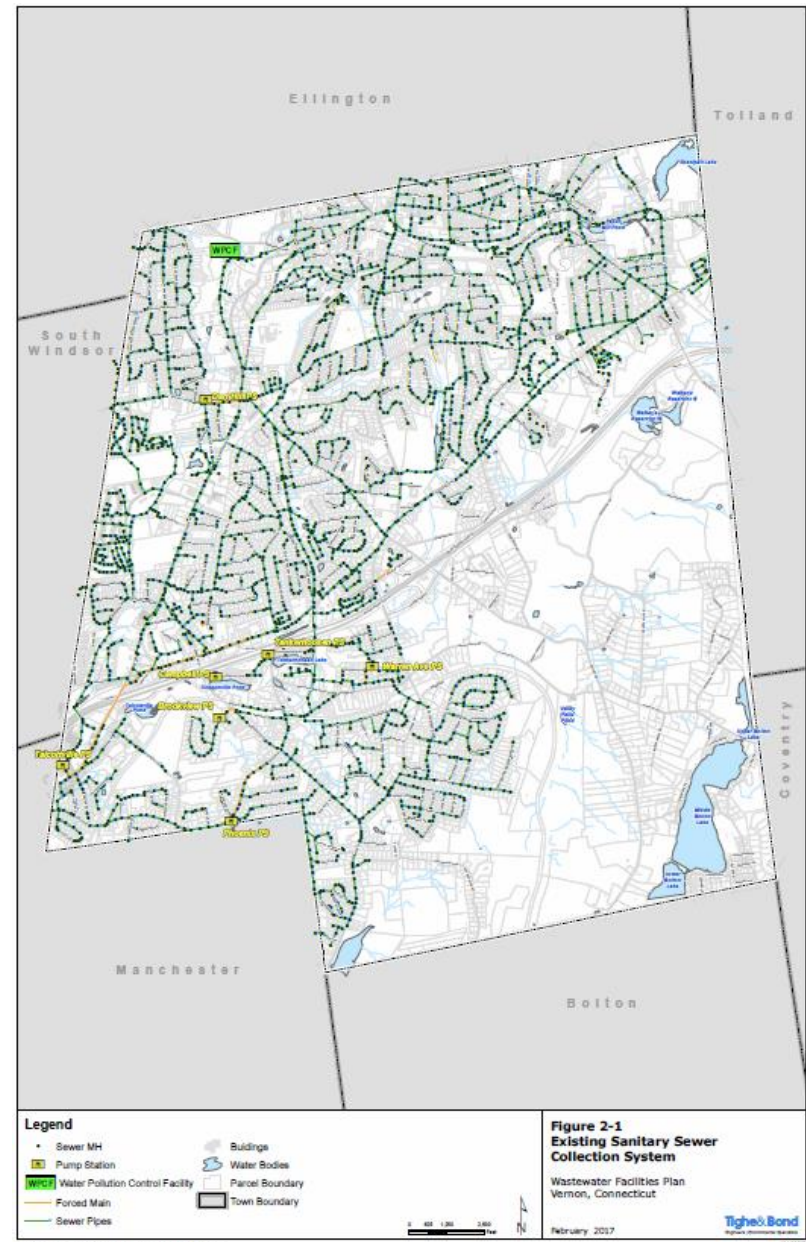
An aerial photograph of a wastewater treatment plant. The facility includes several large circular clarifiers with central mechanical arms, rectangular aeration tanks, and various industrial buildings. The word "INFRASTRUCTURE" is overlaid in large white capital letters across the center of the image.

# INFRASTRUCTURE



# EXISTING SEWER SERVICE

- Served by Vernon Water Pollution Control Facility (WPCF)
  - Sewer service area is concentrated in northern and eastern areas of town.
  - Also serves portions of Ellington, Tolland, South Windsor, and Manchester.
- Extensions since 2017 have occurred within the existing service area:
  - Scranton Line
  - Jen Drive
- Small sewer service area around Bolton Lakes.

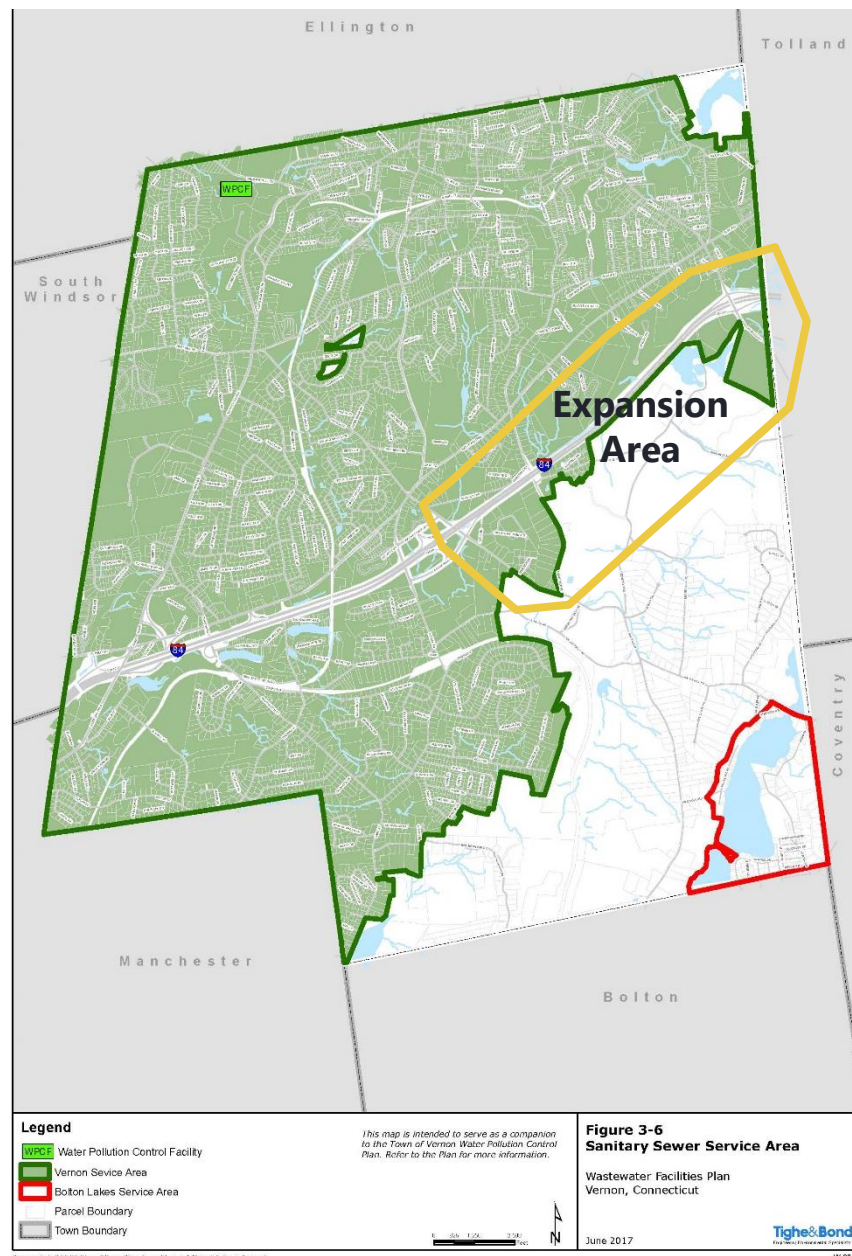


# SEWER PLAN

- Sewer Plan map notes potential sewer expansions along the I-84 corridor near Exit 66 and Exit 67.
- **WPFC System has ample capacity to support future development as well as an expanded sewer service area.**

**Comparison of Existing WPCF Influent Flows to Design (in millions of gallons per day)**

	WPCF Design Flow	Existing	% of Design Flow
Average Annual Day	7.1	2.95	42%
Maximum Month	8.3	4.91	59%
Peak Hour	22.0	12.00	54%



# VERNON WATER POLLUTION CONTROL FACILITY UPGRADE

Currently being upgraded with estimated completion in 2023.

Upgrades include:

1. Screening and grit removal equipment to protect downstream equipment
2. Aeration system to biologically reduce harmful pollutants
3. Retrofit Filter Building with new cloth media filters needed to reduce phosphorus
4. Switch from bleach disinfection to UV disinfection to provide safer, cost-effective treatment
5. Convert abandoned tanks into needed covered storage tanks
6. Install equipment to reduce hauling and disposal costs
7. Replace 1970s electrical equipment to improve system safety and reliability



## Benefits of the Facility Improvements include:

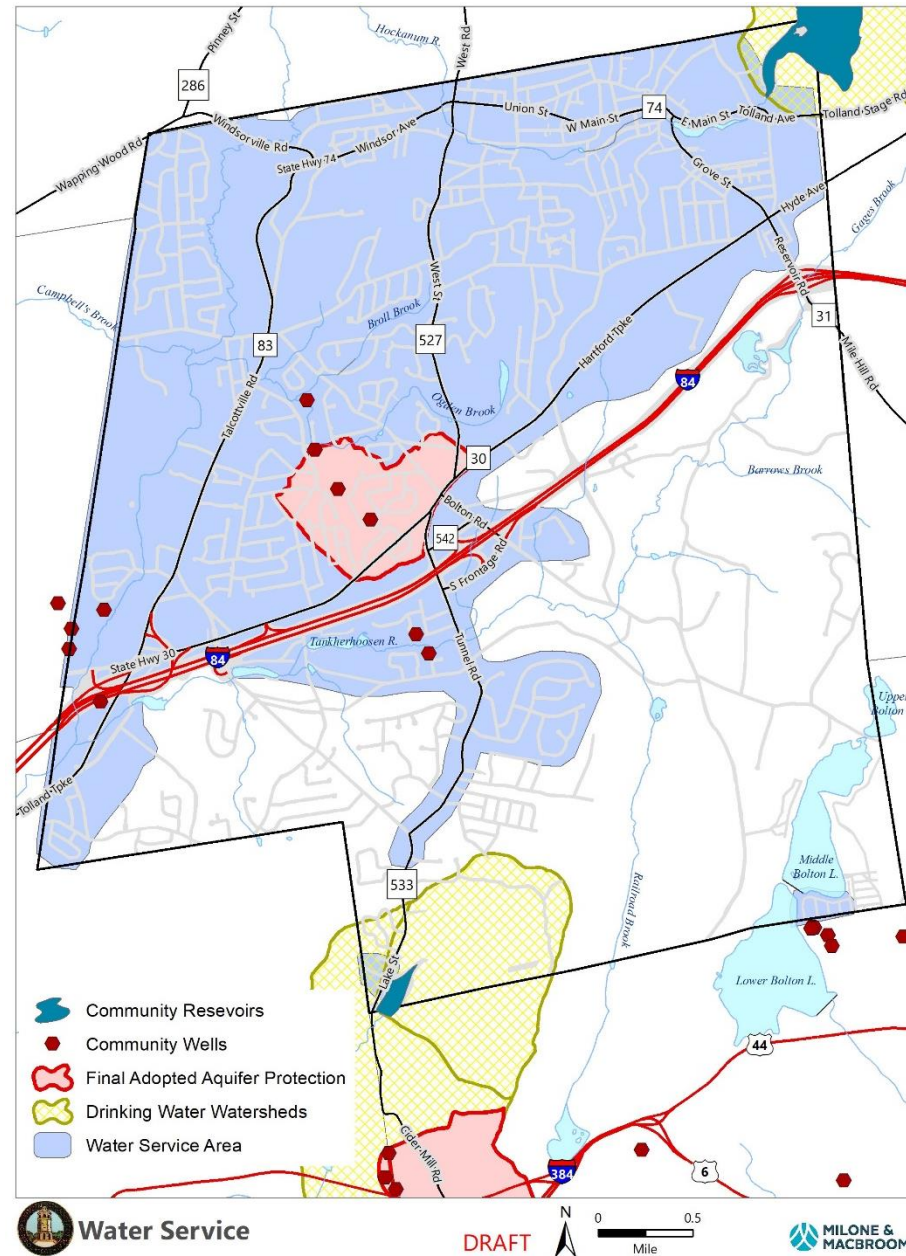
- Meets or exceeds all environmental standards
- Protects the quality of the Hockanum River and Long Island Sound
- Assures reliable, cost-effective service
- Reduces nitrogen and phosphorous, major pollutants affecting fish habitats

*2018 Vernon WPCF Flyer*



# WATER SERVICE

- Water service area covers most neighborhoods north of I-84.
  - Most of Town is serviced by the Connecticut Water Company.
- Two public drinking water supplies in Town (Shenipsit Lake and Risley Reservoir) as well as community wells along the Hockanum River, Ogden Brook, and Tankerhoosen River.
- The Manchester Water Department and Vernon Village Inc. serve small areas in the southwest of town.
- Notable commercial and industrial areas that lack water service include:
  - Industrial Park Road
  - Exit 67 area
  - Exit 66 area



# INFRASTRUCTURE TAKEAWAYS

- Lack of water and sewer service makes development challenging near Exit 66 and Exit 67, and on Industrial Park Road.
- Upgrades to the Water Pollution Control Facility will meet environmental standards and lessen environmental impacts.
- Ample sewer capacity to support future development within the sewer service area, including identified expansion areas.

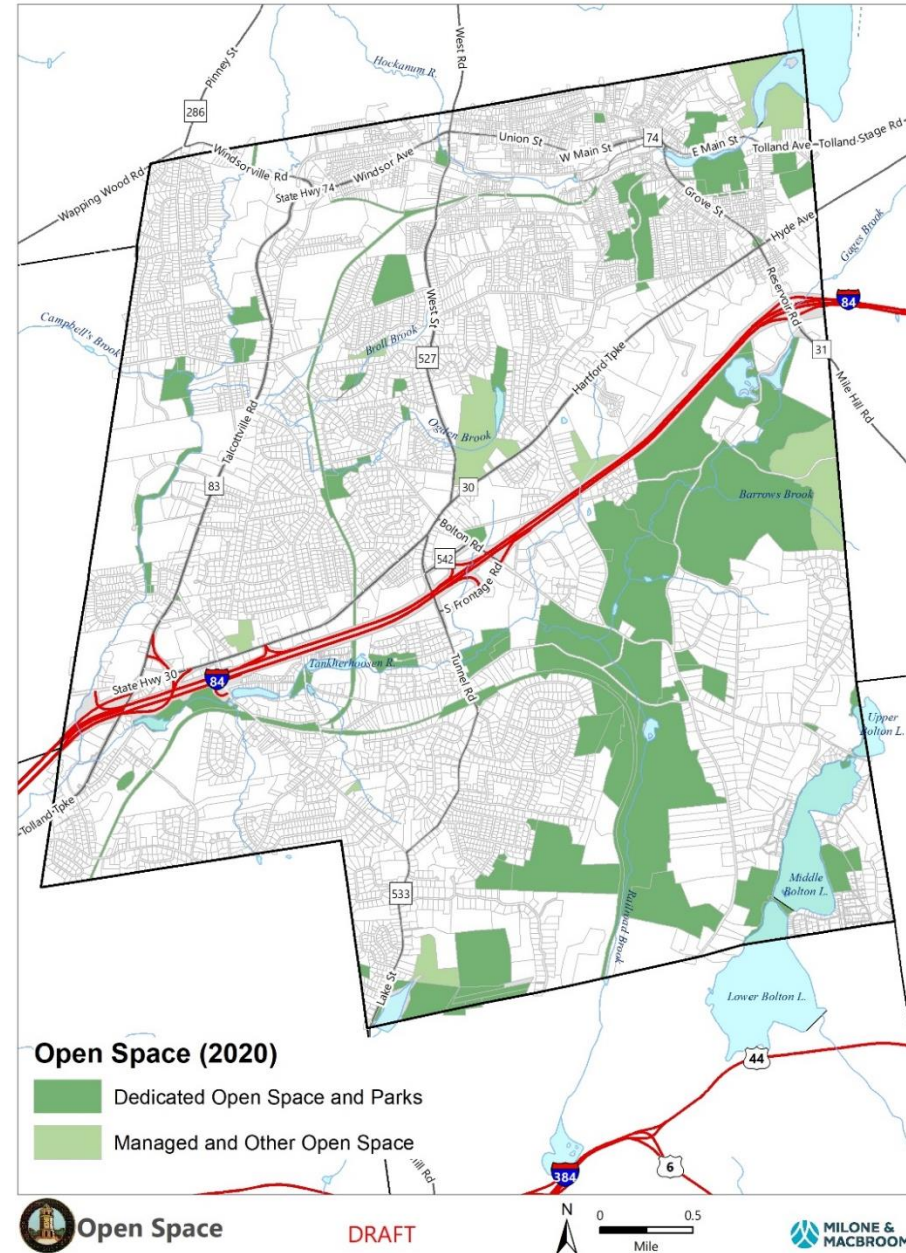


# ENVIRONMENT

A scenic view of a lake with a rocky shoreline. In the foreground, a wooden bridge with a lattice railing spans the water. The shoreline is composed of large, flat rocks and patches of green grass. In the background, a dense forest of tall trees covers a hillside. The sky is overcast and grey. The word "ENVIRONMENT" is overlaid in large, white, bold, sans-serif capital letters across the center of the image.

# OPEN SPACE

- About 26%\* of Town is "Open Space," although not all Open Space is permanently protected.
- 21% is considered protected. Ownership of these properties is distributed as follows:
  - State of Connecticut - 51%
  - Town of Vernon - 31%
  - Land Trusts - 8%
  - Connecticut Water Company - 6%
  - Privately Owned - 3%
  - Non-Profit Organizations - 1%
- Some of the "Desired Open Space" identified in the 2012 plan has now become dedicated open space.
  - Around Barrow Brook, creating contiguous habitat





# OPEN SPACE TASK FORCE

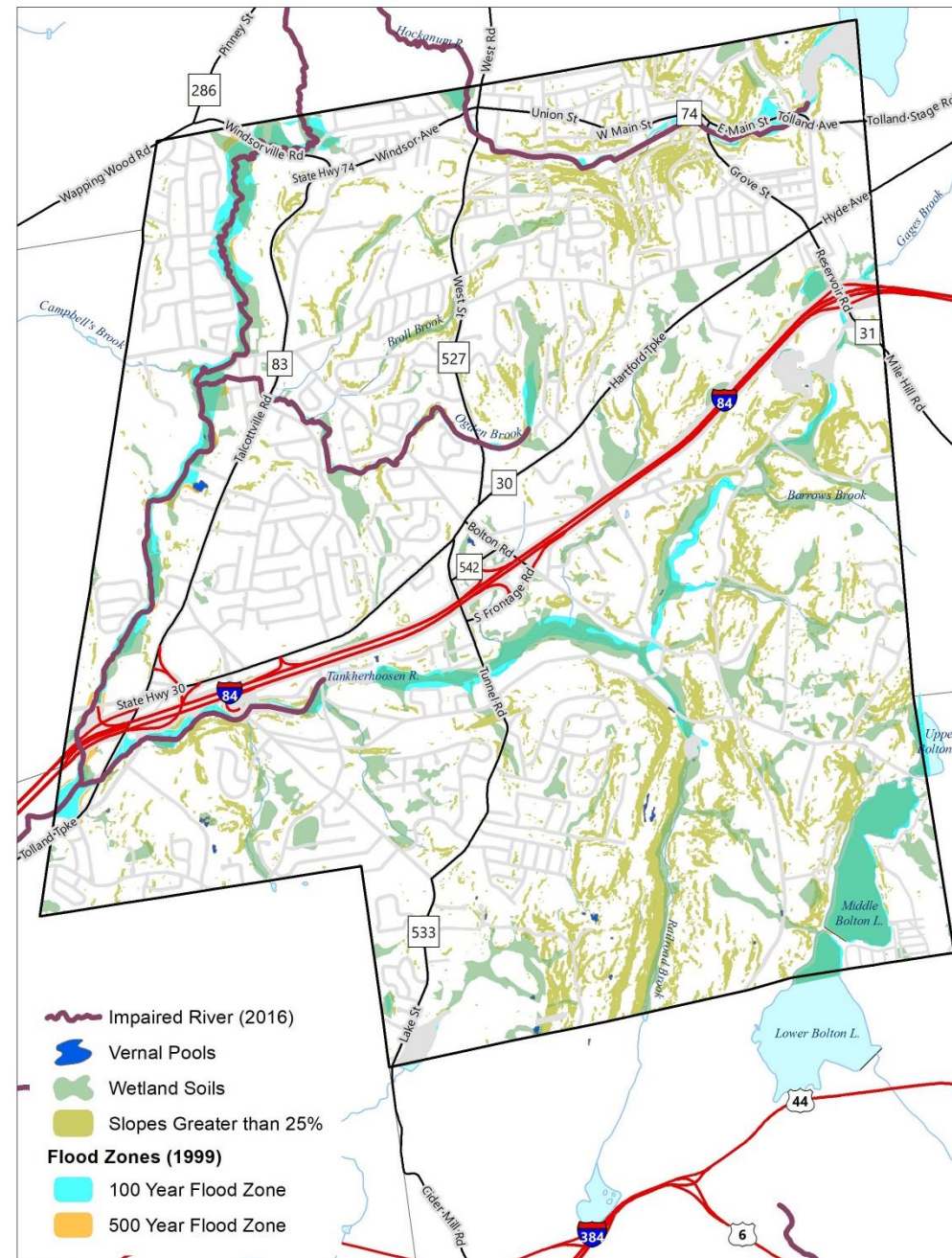
## Goals from the Open Space Task Force:

- Water quality protection in Vernon, especially threatened areas:
  - Tankerhoosen River especially headwaters near Exit 67
  - Bolton Lakes
- Increased use of other natural resource areas or preserves: Valley Falls Park, Belding and Tankerhoosen Wildlife Mgt Areas; overuse impacts wildlife habitat.
- Management Plan for Valley Falls Park area.



# NATURAL RESOURCES

- Natural environment characterized by steep terrain and river valleys.
- Natural resource constraints are concentrated in the south-eastern quadrant of Vernon.
- Vernon lies primarily within the Hockanum River Watershed
- Watershed Management Plans have been developed for the Hockanum River (2010) and Tankerhoosen River (2009).
  - Focused on restoring and improving water quality and reducing non-point source pollution



Natural Resources



MILONE & MACBROOM

DRAFT



0 0.5  
Mile

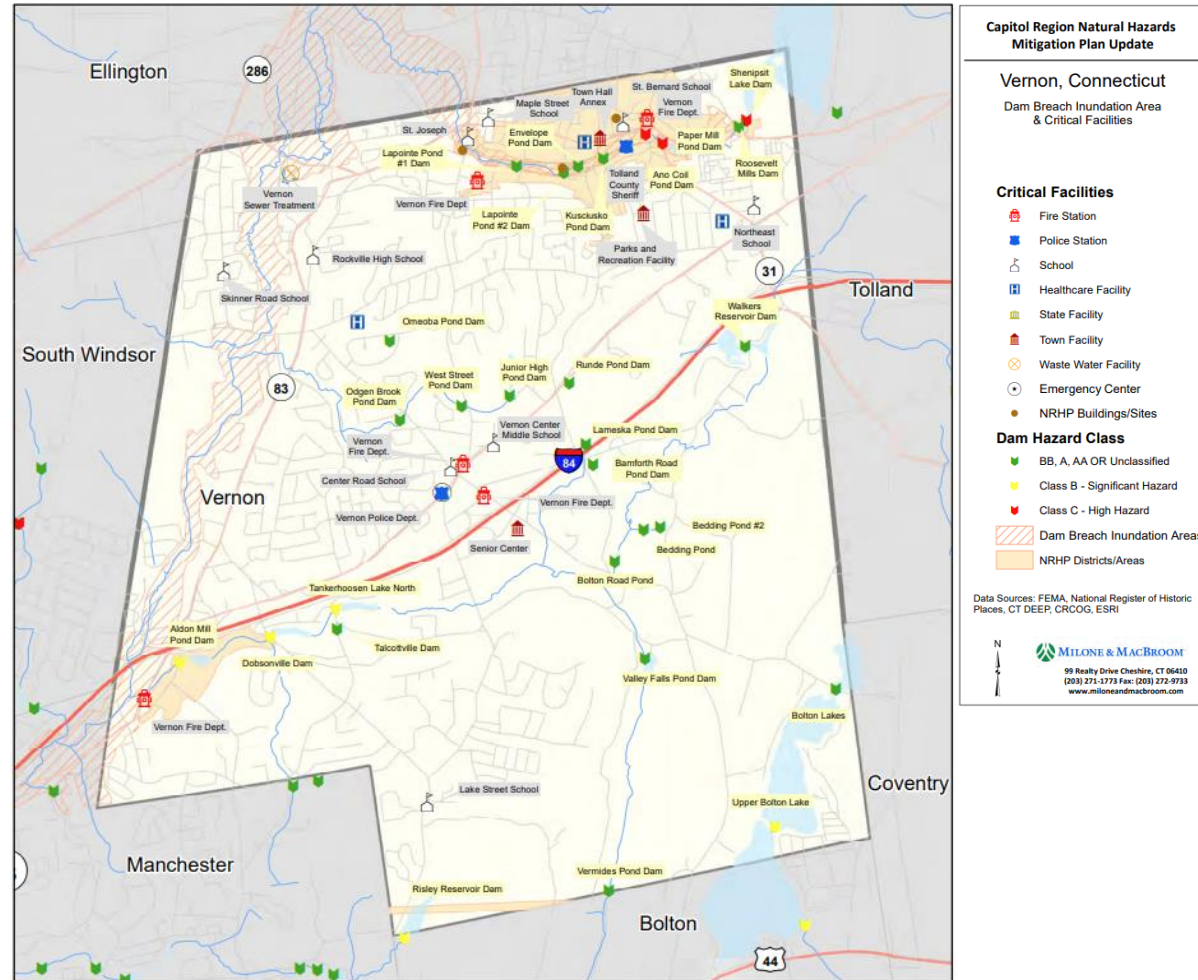
MILONE & MACBROOM



# HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN

## Primary Hazards of Concern

- Flooding, hurricane winds, and winter storms.
- Hockanum and Tankerhoosen Rivers are the primary sources of flooding.
- Concerned about widespread crumbling foundation issues, and the potential for amplification of natural hazard effects.





# HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN

## Recommended Mitigation Actions – CRCOG HMP 2019

1. Enter the Sustainable CT program... and review actions that can be undertaken to pursue Certification. Make progress with the actions related to hazard mitigation. *(Note that the Town has completed this task and achieved Silver certification).*
2. Develop a scope of work and a RFP to study improvements to the Manchester Flats area, around Route 83 and Welles and Main Streets, to alleviate flooding issues.
3. Develop a scope of work and an RFP to study improvements to Frederick Rd to alleviate flooding issues.
4. Complete upgrades to the generators at the Town Hall Annex and Parks & Recreation Facility.
5. Conduct outreach to local small businesses with the aim of preventing the accidental release and pollution from chemicals stored and used at their facilities during or following natural hazard events.
6. Coordinate with NEMO and CRCOG to share resources and gain technical support for hazard mitigation actions involving stormwater management and public outreach, which have parallel benefits related to MS4 stormwater permit compliance.

# HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN

## Recommended Mitigation Actions – CRCOG HMP 2019 (Continued)

7. Participate in EMI courses or the seminars and the CT Association of Flood Managers annual conference.
8. Review water level monitoring systems that can provide real-time data and alerts to inform critical decision making to identify those appropriate for the Town. Explore grant funding options.
9. Contact the owners of Repetitive Loss Properties (RLPs) and nearby properties at risk to inquire about mitigation undertaken and suggest options for mitigating flooding in those areas. This should be accomplished with a letter directly mailed to each property owner.
10. Evaluate the costs and benefits of joining the FEMA Community Rating System.
11. Coordinate with CT SHPO to conduct historic resource surveys, focusing on areas within natural hazard risk zones (such as flood or wildfire hazard zones and areas near steep slopes), to support identification of vulnerable historic properties and preparation of resiliency plans across the state. This action leverages existing resources and best practices for protection of historic and cultural resources through an ongoing statewide initiative by CT SHPO.
12. Work with CT DEEP to complete a formal validation of the RLP list and update the mitigation status of each listed property.
13. Pursue grants to purchase portable generators and modify buildings for hook-up.

# SUSTAINABILITY

## Sustainable CT Program

- Vernon registered with the Sustainable Connecticut Program in November 2018 and achieved Silver certification in October 2019.
- Town has achieved points in nine out of ten action categories.



1. Thriving Local Economies

2. Well-Stewarded Land and Natural Resources

3. Vibrant and Creative Cultural Ecosystems

4. Dynamic and Resilient Planning

5. Clean and Diverse Transportation Systems and Choices

6. Efficient Physical Infrastructure and Operations

7. Strategic and Inclusive Public Services

8. Healthy, Efficient and Diverse Housing

9. Inclusive and Equitable Community Impacts

10. Innovation Action

# ENVIRONMENT TAKEAWAYS

- Extensive open space network concentrated along waterbodies.
  - Opportunities to better serve and connect Rockville with the Town's open space network.
- Continued focus on water quality protection and pollution reduction, particularly the Tankerhoosen River and Hockanum River corridors.
  - Watershed Management Plans have been developed for both watersheds.
- 2019 Hazard Mitigation Plan has identified hazard risks and actions the Town can take to make itself more resilient.
- Vernon joined Sustainable Connecticut in 2018 and has made significant progress, achieving Silver Certification in 2019.

The image shows the front facade of a grand, classical-style building, identified by the inscription as The George Maxwell Memorial Library. The building features a prominent portico with six tall, fluted columns supporting a triangular pediment. In the center of the pediment is a circular clock face. Below the pediment, the words "THE GEORGE MAXWELL MEMORIAL LIBRARY" are carved into the stone. The entrance is a set of double glass doors, flanked by large, multi-paned arched windows. A wide set of stone steps leads up to the entrance, with a metal handrail on the right side. To the left of the steps, there is a decorative bronze sculpture of a globe on a pedestal. The sky is clear and blue, and some greenery is visible on the right side of the building.

# COMMUNITY FACILITIES



# COMMUNITY FACILITIES

- Rockville and Vernon Center serve as the institutional hubs of the community

<b><u>Town Services</u></b>	Building/Engineering/Planning	55 West Main Street	General Government Offices
	Library	52 Union Street	Public Library
	Town Hall	14 Park Place	General Government Offices
	Town Hall Annex	8 Park Place	General Government Offices
	Salvation Army Building	166 Union Street	DPW Annex
	Senior Center	135 Bolton Road	Senior Activity Center
	Youth Services Department	9 Elm Street	Youth Service Department
<b><u>BOE</u></b>	BOE Administration	30 Park Street	BOE Admin. Offices
	BOE Annex	38 Park Street	BOE Admin. Offices
	Rockville High School	70 Loveland Hill Road	High School
	Vernon Center Middle School	777 Hartford Tpke	Middle School
	Center Road School	20 Center Road	Elementary School
	Lake Street School	201 Lake Street	Elementary School
	Maple Street School	20 Maple Street	Elementary School
	Northeast School	69 East Street	Elementary School
	Skinner Road School	90 Skinner Road	Elementary School
<b><u>Public Safety</u></b>	FD Station 141	724 Hartford Tpke	Vernon Center Firehouse
	FD Station 241	59 Birch Road	Dobsonville Firehouse
	FD Station 341	100 Hartford Tpke	Talcottville Firehouse
	FD Station 441	15 Nye Street	Nye Street Firehouse
	FD Station 541	5 Prospect Street	Rockvill Firehouse
	FD Station 641 - EMS	280 West Street	EMS HQ
	Police Department	725 Hartford Tpke	Police HQ & Arts Center East

Source: Town of Vernon

# RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

<u>Parks</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Acreage</u>
Boulder Ridge	Athletic Field	29.93
Center 375	Multi-purpose rec facility	10.10
Central Park	Memorial park	0.60
Dart Hill Park South	Multi-purpose rec facility	15.77
Fox Hill Memorial Tower	Historic Tower, Scenic overlook	2.00
Grove Street Linear Park	Passive park	3.15
Henry Park	Multi-function park	40.00
Legion Athletic Complex	Multi-purpose rec facility	27.37
Newhoca	Multi-purpose rec facility	57.60
Phoenix Mill Dam	Passive park	5.40
Platt Butterfly Park	Passive park	2.07
Saxony Dog Park	Dog park	3.82
Talcott Park	Playground area	1.78
Valley Falls Barn	Historic facility	1.00
Valley Falls Park	Multi-purpose rec facility	192.00
Walker's Reservoir	Passive park	12.60
West Main Street Park	Playground area	0.33
Windermere Park	Hiking Trail	
<b>Total</b>		<b>405.52</b>

- Especially recently, Vernon's open spaces and recreational facilities have been heavily used. Regular maintenance and expansion of facilities are needed to maintain quality.
- Most recreational facilities are located north of I-84 where the population is concentrated.

# FACILITY AND CAPITAL NEEDS

The following list represents needs identified during the planning process and does not take into consideration the costs or fiscal resources to undertake these projects, nor does it distinguish between necessary projects, versus those that are simply desirable.

- Town Office Space – several town departments to relocate to the Citizens Block space once the project is completed.
- Water Pollution Control Facility – Environmental compliance upgrades (in progress).
- DPW – additional repair bays, wash bay, roof/garage door repairs, solar canopies, fire sprinkler systems in all garages.
- Transfer Station – facility and site is adequate today but is becoming tighter as it accepts additional materials.
- Police Department – Radio System upgrades (in progress).
- Fire Department – Periodic apparatus and gear replacement.

# CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Major facility and construction projects in the Capital Improvement plan include:

- WPCF upgrades (in progress)
- Fox Hill Tower repairs
- Replacement of Town Fueling Station



*Source: FY2018-19 Six-Year Capital Improvement Plan*



A photograph of a historic stone tower with a conical roof, situated on a grassy hill. An American flag flies on a pole to the left of the tower. The scene is set against a clear blue sky with green trees in the background. The text "HISTORIC RESOURCES" is overlaid in large white letters.

# HISTORIC RESOURCES



# HISTORIC RESOURCES

The Town of Vernon has nine designated local historic properties or districts overseen by the Local Historic Properties Commission. In addition, there are several national historic districts and sites within Town, including:

## National Historic Districts

- Talcottville Historic District
- Rockville Historic District

## National Register of Historic Places

- Florence Mill
- Minterburn Mill
- Old Rockville High School and East School
- Sharpe's Trout Hatchery Site
- Valley Falls Cotton Mill Site
- Saxony Mill (Demolished)



The Talcott Brothers School



Valley Falls Cotton Mill Site

*Photos Magicpiano - Own work, CC BY-SA 4.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/>*

# HISTORIC RESOURCES

Town has seen several successful historic preservation and adaptive reuse projects over the last five years:

- Old Talcott Mill
- Roosevelt Mills (Loom City Lofts)
- Ongoing efforts to redevelop the Amerbelle Mill site



*Old Talcott Mill Apartments*



*Loom City Lofts (photo courtesy of Loom City Loft Apartments)*