

CONDITIONS & TRENDS

Overview

This Booklet reviews existing conditions in Vernon along with past trends and projected changes that might occur in the future. Understanding how trends related to demographics, housing, the economy, fiscal conditions, and land use have affected the growth and development of Vernon is an important first step in the planning process.

Some trends may be favorable and the Town may wish to encourage the continuation of those trends. Other trends may cause concern or reflect a condition that warrants attention.

Data Sources

The data in this Booklet is the best available at this time. Because the next U.S. Census will occur in 2010, some data in this Plan is almost 10 years old. However, that data helps to characterize trends that have been occurring in Vernon and are therefore included.

The Census Bureau recently launched the American Community Survey (ACS), which collects sample census information for some communities. Updated census data for Vernon is available as part of the ACS. That data was collected over multiple years (2006 to 2008) and is incorporated into many of the analyses in this Chapter. However, direct comparisons between ACS Data and decennial census data should be made cautiously.

It will be important to update these figures when data from the 2010 Census is released.

"If we could first know
where we are, and
whither we are tending,
we could better judge
what to do, and how to do
it."

- Abraham Lincoln

Historical Highlights

This section summarizes the factors that lead to Vernon's development patterns – which we still see today. Tension between an urbanized Rockville and a rural "Vernon" emerged 150 years ago.

Vernon Becomes a Town

Vernon was first inhabited by Native Americans and, today, the names of rivers and lakes in Vernon remind residents of these early inhabitants. Three territories converged at Lake Shenipsit – Nipmucks, Mohegans, and Podunks. These tribes eventually moved westward as new settlers arrived from East Windsor.

The area that is Vernon today became a part of Bolton and was referred to as North Bolton. By 1808, the farmers of North Bolton found it too difficult to travel to Bolton for town functions. They petitioned the Connecticut General Assembly and in 1808, Vernon became a town. Vernon Center was the new town's center, with the church, meeting house, school, grange and houses. Vernon was predominantly an agricultural town at this time. The Hartford Turnpike, built in 1801, ran through Vernon Center, connecting Vernon Center to Hartford and the court in Tolland. In 1810, 827 people lived in Vernon. Connections improved in 1847, when a railway ran through Vernon connecting Vernon to Hartford and Providence. Vernon Center remained the Town's civic center.

Early Development Patterns

Vernon's rivers – the Tankerhoosen and Hockanum – were responsible for the development of industry and created development patterns that we still see today. The rivers provided water power for mills, mainly during the 1800s and early 1900s. Without these water sources, Vernon would be a much different town today. The development of Talcottville and Rockville exemplified the concept of "mill towns."



Photo from Thomas J. Dodd Research Center, UCONN.

The Talcott Brothers (owner of the Talcottville Mill) owned the land in what today is Talcottville. As many mill owners did at the time, the Talcott Brothers built a village for its workers. The village included houses (many still there today), a store, an assembly hall, library and a church. Because the area was under single ownership, development resulted in a cohesive village.

The mill owners in Rockville also developed housing, stores, and other amenities, but each mill owner developed its own mini-village. Businesses were mainly those that existed to support the mills. It was not until much later, when roads were built to connect these villages, that Rockville became a "place" and eventually a city.

Rockville Thrives

As Rockville thrived, history repeated itself. Similar to the desire of North Bolton residents to avoid traveling to Bolton, Rockville residents found it inconvenient to travel to Vernon Center. So they built their own church and a school in 1836. This resulted in less interaction between the rural residents of Vernon and those who lived in Rockville. By 1856, Town Meeting began alternating between Vernon Center and Rockville.

From 1860 to 1880, Rockville was booming, with the continued construction of single family houses and businesses. By this time, businesses that were not dependent on the mills opened up, including lawyers and physicians. Roads were improved and parks with fountains were created. The pressing demand for more housing resulted in houses being built up the steep hills around Rockville. Boarding houses and some larger single-family houses were converted into multi-family structures to meet demands and new two- to four-family houses were built. Land used as a cow pasture was turned into Talcott Park in the 1860/70s and Central Park was created in 1877. Transportation improved too; by 1863, a railroad spur to Rockville was built. In 1898, trolley service began.

Meanwhile, residents in “rural” Vernon were concerned that their taxes were supporting public improvements in Rockville and they did not feel they were benefitting from such investments. By 1889, the Town successfully petitioned the State legislature to incorporate Rockville as a city. Rockville was still a part of Vernon, but now had the ability to govern and tax itself separately from the Town as a whole.

The mills thrived until the early to mid 1900s. During this period, public improvements continued. Memorial Hall opened in 1880; the Library was built in 1904; and Rockville City Hospital opened in 1921. These developments further reinforced Rockville’s civic, business, and cultural role.

But industry changed and many mills began closing. Some changed in ownership and shifted to new products. Many mills burned down. A number remain today; some have been renovated and reused while some sit vacant.

Early Water Supply Protection

As early as 1847, the newly formed Aqueduct Company had the foresight to buy land around the Town’s water supply – Lake Shenipsit. However, the lake was a popular summertime resort. By the early 1900s, the Aqueduct Company realized that resort activities threatened the water supply. The resort owners shut down and sold their land to the Aqueduct Company, further protecting what today serves as a regional water supply.



Photo from Connecticut Historical Society.

Suburbanization and Redevelopment

Like most communities, Vernon sought to capitalize on two trends occurring in the 1950s and 1960s – land use patterns that supported automobile use and urban redevelopment. The trolley was replaced with bus service in 1926. By 1930, Vernon Depot closed and shortly after that (1939), construction of the Wilbur Cross Highway (the future I-84) began. Rail service was terminated in Rockville by 1964. These trends greatly influenced the development patterns in place today and spurred the Town to adopt its first zoning ordinance in 1951.

Vernon's suburbanization was marked by the opening of the Tri-City Plaza. This highway oriented retail plaza was a shopping destination. Suburbanization occurred when most of Vernon's mills had shut down and is credited with alleviating some of the economic impact.

Redevelopment of Rockville resulted in tearing down buildings and introducing some suburban style retail. At that time the river was viewed as a constraint that limited Rockville's redevelopment potential, and therefore it was covered. It was also at this time (1961) that the first zoning ordinance was adopted for Rockville. Shortly afterward, Rockville's and Vernon's government and police were consolidated. Consolidation of the fire department followed.

Today Vernon's villages are integral parts of the community. This historic importance of Rockville and Talcottville has been marked by their listing as historic districts on the National Register of Historic Places.



Regional Context

Vernon is a member of the 29-community Capital Region Council of Governments (CRCOG). The region includes a mix of urban, suburban and rural communities. Vernon is one of nine communities categorized as “Fully Suburban”, meaning that there are 1,251 to 3,000 persons per square mile.

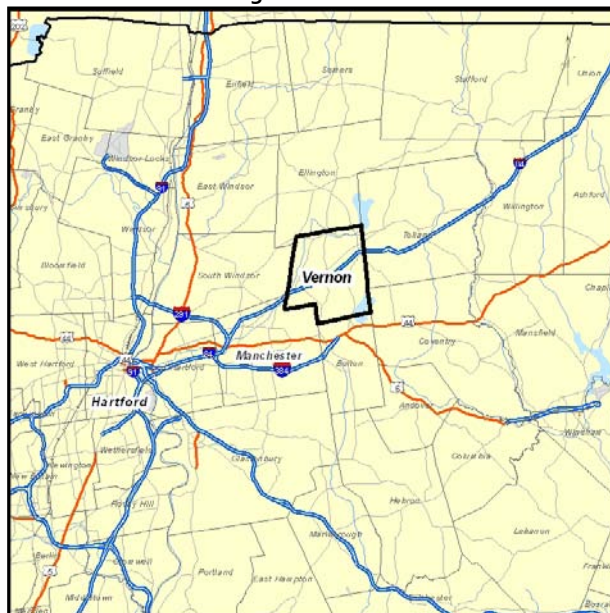
CRCOG has adopted a number of regional plans that have implications for Vernon. These include:

- Regional Plan of Conservation and Development (2009)
- Capital Region Transportation Plan (2007)
- Transportation Improvement Program (FFY 2010-2013)
- Regional Pedestrian Plan and Bicycle Plan (2008)

A number of regional assets are found in Vernon. These include transportation infrastructure (I-84, major State routes), recreational opportunities (trails, parks, open space, lakes), cultural assets (museums), and State and regional facilities (Connecticut National Guard, Rockville Hospital, etc.). And Shenipsit Lake provides water to the region. Vernon’s retail businesses provide goods and services to neighboring communities in addition to its own residents.

Conversely, Vernon’s residents and businesses depend upon the greater region for a number of things, including jobs. Also, conditions and trends in the greater region can impact Vernon. Examples include better access to Hartford which spurred residential growth in Vernon and retail development in neighboring communities that competed with retail businesses in Vernon, but also opened up new opportunities.

Regional Context



Vernon's Population

Year	Population	Change
1810	827	
1820	966	14%
1830	1,164	20%
1840	1,430	23%
1850	2,900	103%
1860	3,838	32%
1870	5,446	42%
1880	6,915	27%
1890	8,808	27%
1900	8,483	-4%
1910	9,087	7%
1920	8,898	-2%
1930	8,703	-2%
1940	8,978	3%
1950	10,115	13%
1960	16,961	68%
1970	27,237	61%
1980	27,974	3%
1990	29,841	7%
2000	28,063	-6%
	28,978	3%
	to	to
2008	31,360	12%

Sources: 1810 to 1990 from US Census; 2008 from ACS, CERC, and North Central District Health Department.

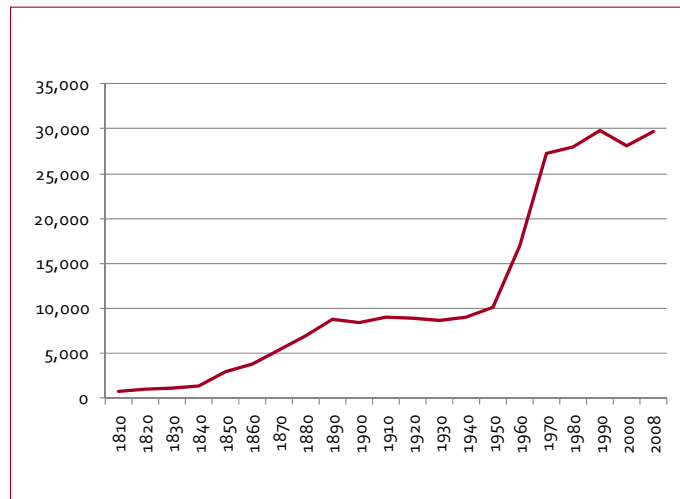
Vernon's People

Changes in Population

Vernon experienced dramatic population growth during two periods – in the mid 1800s due to the booming mill industry and one hundred years later when access to Hartford improved.

The Town experienced a decline in population from 1990 to 2000. Estimates for 2008 indicate that the decline has reversed. The 2008 estimates vary widely, but place Vernon's current population between around 29,000 to 31,400 people.

Vernon's Population, 1810 to 2008



The Connecticut State Data Center (CSDC) and Connecticut Department of Transportation (ConnDOT) prepare population projections for cities and towns in the State. As shown in the following table, Vernon has likely already surpassed the 2010 population projections and possibly even the 2030 projections. Therefore the table includes low and high population estimates if there is a continuation of the growth pattern seen thus far this decade (growth of 4% to 15% if trends to 2008 are extrapolated to 2010). The low estimate appears reasonable, while the high estimate is likely too high.

Population Projections, Vernon

	Population				Change		
	2000	2010	2020	2030	2000 to 2010	2010 to 2020	2020 to 2030
CSDC	28,063	28,548	29,371	29,770	485	823	399
ConnDOT	28,063	28,480	28,960	29,430	417	480	470
Current Trends (Low)	28,063	29,207	30,375	31,590	1,144	1,168	1,215
Current Trends (High)	28,063	32,184	37,012	42,564	4,121	4,828	5,552

Dynamics of Population Change

Population increases when births out-number deaths and / or more people move to Vernon than leave. The reverse is true for a population decline. The following table estimates the causes behind Vernon's population changes from the 1950s to 2000. The table indicates that Vernon's population growth from 1950 to 1970 was driven by people moving to town. This trend reversed over the next three decades as people left Vernon. Natural increase was overshadowed by the number leaving Vernon until the 1990s.

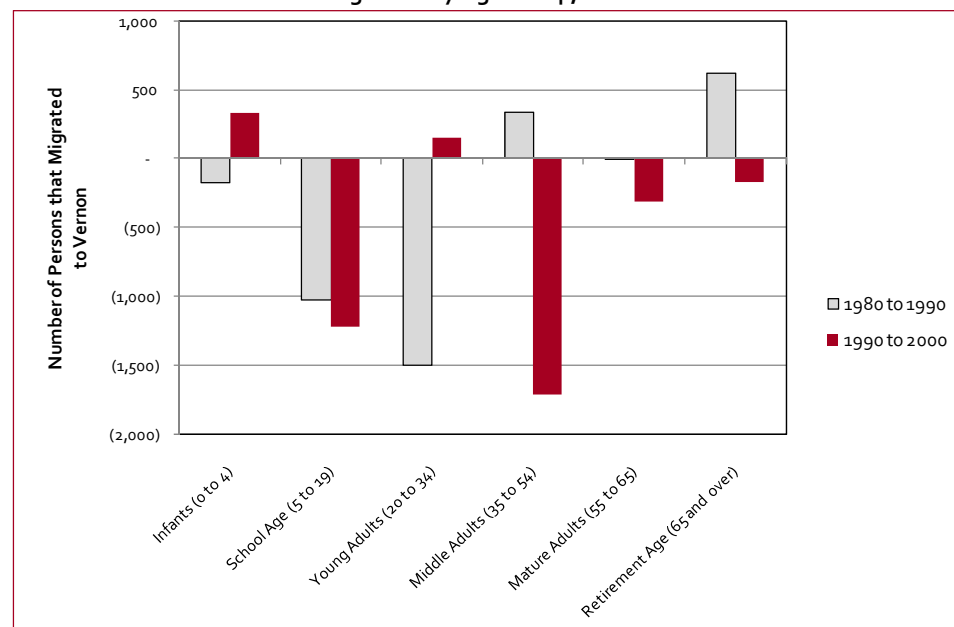
Components of Population Change, Vernon

	1950 to 1960	1960 to 1970	1970 to 1980	1980 to 1990	1990 to 2000
Births	3,705	5,971	4,898	4,521	4,008
Deaths	1,394	1,703	1,821	2,216	2,493
Natural Increase	2,311	4,268	3,077	2,305	1,515
Net Migration	4,535	6,008	-2,340	-438	-3,293
Total Change	6,846	10,276	737	1,867	-1,778

Sources: Census and CT Vital Statistics.

Additional analysis of migration by age group does not reveal clear patterns, except for the continued loss of school age children from 1980 to 2000. Vernon saw a burst of retirement age people move in during the 1980s, but it appears that more left than moved to Vernon during the next decade.

Migration by Age Group, Vernon



Age Composition

Each age group has different needs, particularly in terms of housing and town services and facilities. The following chart depicts the actual and project proportion of Vernon's population in each age group in twenty-year intervals (1980, 2000 and 2020).

The projections indicate that if current demographic trends continue, the proportion of the over 55 population will continue to grow while all other age groups will decrease.

Changes in Vernon's Age Composition

Description	Age Range	Needs / Wants	1980 Share	2000 Share	Projected 2020 Share	Future Trend
Infants	0 to 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child care Pre-school programs 	7%	6%	6%	↓
School Age	5 to 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School facilities Recreation programs and facilities 	25%	18%	15%	↓
Young Adults	20 to 34	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rental housing, starter homes Social destinations 	28%	22%	16%	↓
Middle Adults	35 to 54	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Starter homes, trade-up homes Family programs, school programs 	23%	31%	17%	↓
Mature Adults	55 to 64	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Smaller homes, second homes Leisure programs and facilities 	9%	10%	15%	↑
Retirement Age	65 +	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lower upkeep, higher service housing Elderly programs, tax relief 	9%	13%	32%	↑

Sources: Census and CT State Data Center.



Socioeconomic Characteristics and Diversity

While Vernon's median household income is among the lowest when compared to nearby communities and the State, the Town fares better in terms of educational attainment. The percentage of residents with a Bachelors degree or higher is similar to the percentage for the State. In 2000 Vernon's population was more diverse than most other nearby communities. Vernon's socioeconomic conditions can have land use implications in that certain land uses decisions can trigger enhanced public review to ensure that low-income, racial and ethnic minority groups are not unfairly burdened by environmental impacts (see sidebar).

Income Comparisons

Median Household Income (2008)	
Tolland	\$98,505
South Windsor	\$93,454
Bolton	\$83,278
Coventry	\$80,175
Ellington	\$76,884
CT	\$67,236
East Windsor	\$63,226
Manchester	\$61,633
Vernon	\$58,435
East Hartford	\$50,614

Source: CERC.

Educational Attainment

% Age 25 or Over with Bachelors Degree or Higher, 2008	
Tolland	47%
Bolton	42%
South Windsor	41%
Ellington	38%
Coventry	34%
CT	34%
Vernon	32%
Manchester	31%
East Windsor	22%
East Hartford	16%

Source: CERC.

Environmental Justice

According to the CT Department of Environmental Protection: "Environmental Justice means that all people should be treated fairly under environmental laws regardless of race, ethnicity, culture or economic status."

Vernon is designated as an Environment Justice community. Public act 08-94, which became effective in 2009, requires that certain permitting processes require enhance notification.

Types of projects subject to this requirement include:

- Certain electric generating facilities
- Incinerators
- Landfills
- Transfer stations
- Certain size sewage treatment plants
- Major sources of air pollution
- And others

Racial / Ethnic Composition in 2000

% Minority *	
East Hartford	40%
Capital Region	28%
Manchester	20%
Vernon	12%
East Windsor	10%
South Windsor	10%
Ellington	5%
Bolton	4%
Tolland	4%

*Those who claimed a nonwhite race as one or more of their race categories plus white persons claiming Hispanic ethnicity.

Source: CRCOG, 2009.

Vernon's Housing Stock

Year	# of Units	Change
1960	5,408	--
1970	8,608	59%
1980	10,611	23%
1990	12,748	20%
2000	12,867	1%
2008	14,226	11%

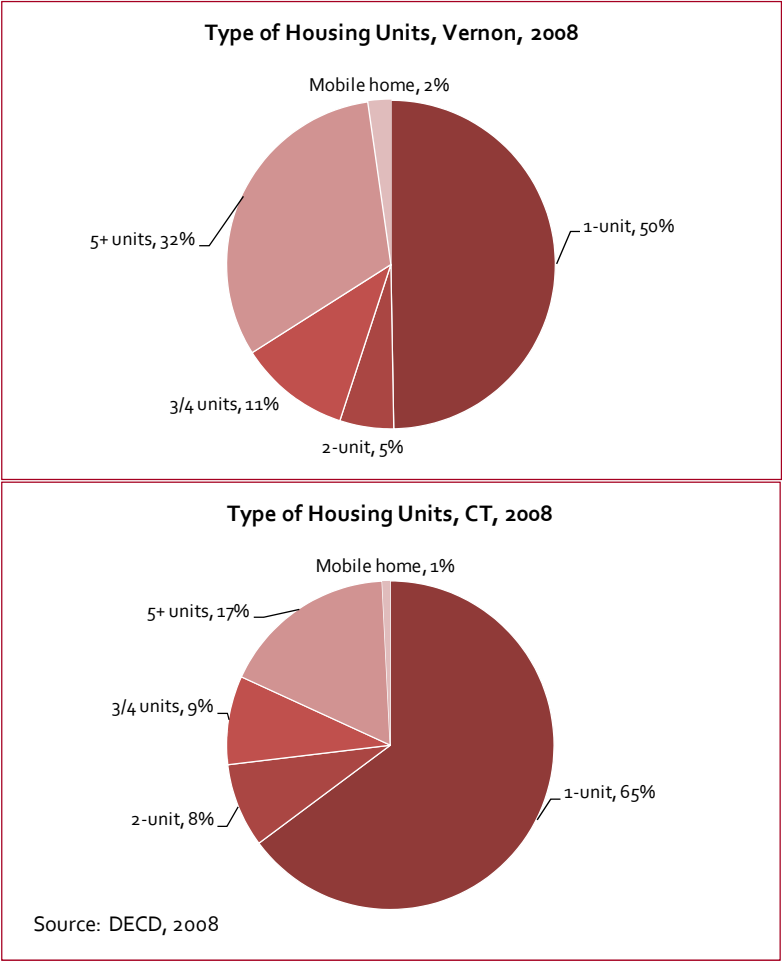
Sources: US Census and previous Town Plans; 2008 from DECD.

Vernon's Housing Stock

Housing Units

In 2008, there were just over 14,200 housing units in Vernon. This represented an increase of almost 1,400 units over the past eight years. This growth in housing units greatly outpaced the growth seen from 1990 to 2000 (during which Vernon lost population) and likely explains the reversal in Vernon's population loss.

Vernon's housing stock is diverse – much more so than the State as a whole. As shown in the chart below, Vernon's housing stock composition differs from that of the State in that a much smaller portion of Vernon's housing is single-family. Data also indicates that most of the new housing construction between 2000 to 2008 was larger multi-family housing developments: of the units built from 2000 to 2008, roughly 950 were units in structures with 5 or more units, 340 were single family houses, and the remaining 150 new units were in buildings with 3 to 4 units per structure.



According to the 2006/08 ACS, 57% of Vernon's housing units are owner-occupied and 43% are renter-occupied.

Having a variety of housing types and ample rental units helps to meet the needs of many segments of the region's population.

In terms of the value of Vernon's housing stock, the map on the following page illustrates the building values of single family houses in Vernon. The map seems to reveal that there are opportunities for a range of income levels in all parts of Vernon, though higher value housing does tend to be more prevalent south of I-84.

At the same time, having a high proportion of rentals and multi-family might draw residents who only stay in Vernon for a few years – i.e., they "trade-up" elsewhere. In addition, while Vernon's housing stock has provided opportunities to its seniors to remain in Town and likely draws area seniors to locate in Vernon, a population that lacks age-diversity could have

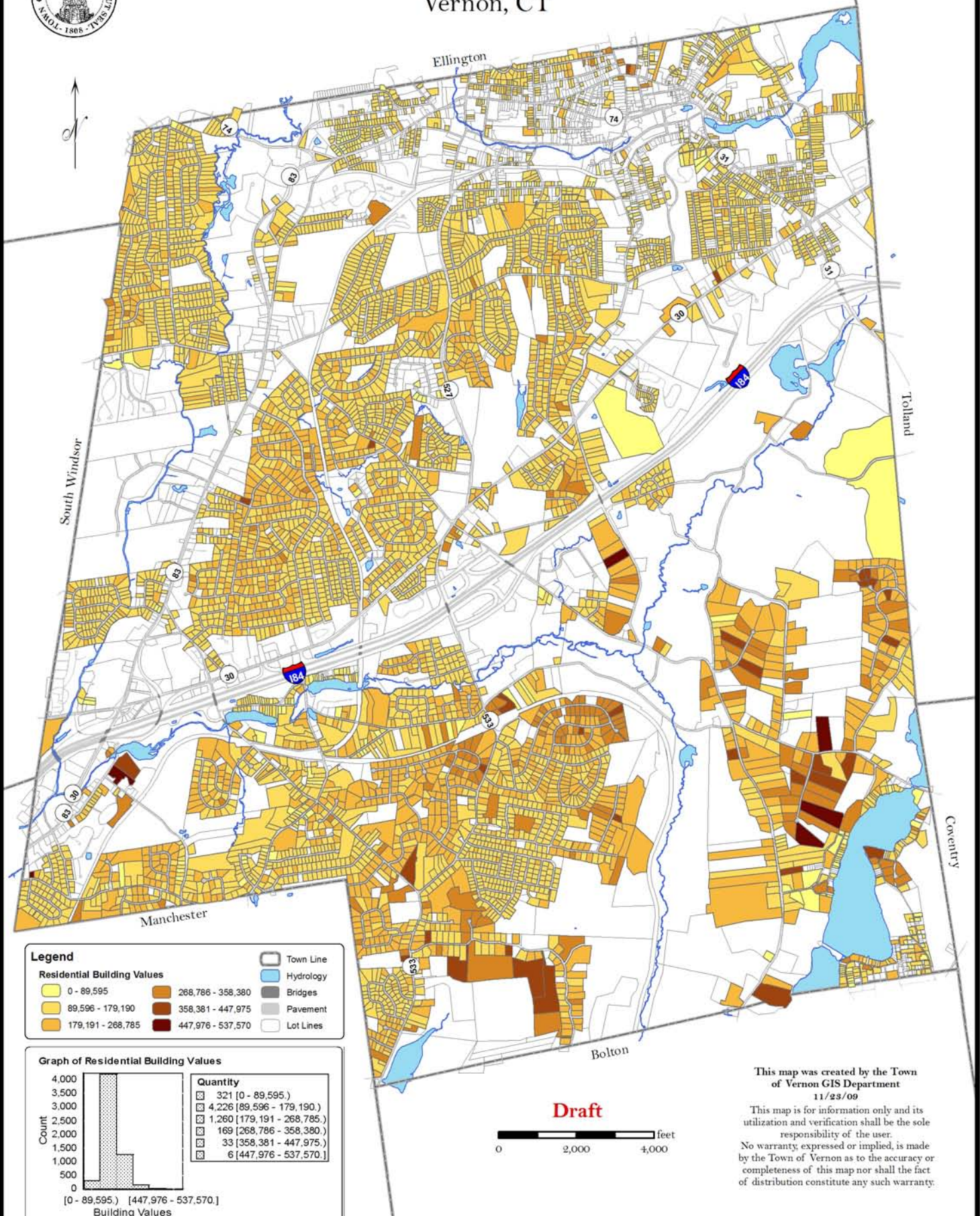
implications in the future.

Temporary housing for homeless also is found in Vernon. There are two homeless shelters, each with beds for 15 people.



Residential Building Values

Vernon, CT



Median Sales Price for Single Family Homes, 2008

South Windsor	\$289,900
Ellington	\$288,400
CT	\$268,000
Bolton	\$261,434
Tolland	\$258,950
Coventry	\$231,000
Vernon	\$206,000
Manchester	\$190,000
East Windsor	\$188,000
East Hartford	\$171,900

Source: The Warren Group

Median Sales Price for Condominiums, 2008

East Windsor	\$200,000
CT	\$196,500
South Windsor	\$186,700
Coventry	\$163,000
Vernon	\$152,000
Tolland	\$149,900
Manchester	\$148,000
Ellington	\$141,000
East Hartford	\$115,500

Source: The Warren Group

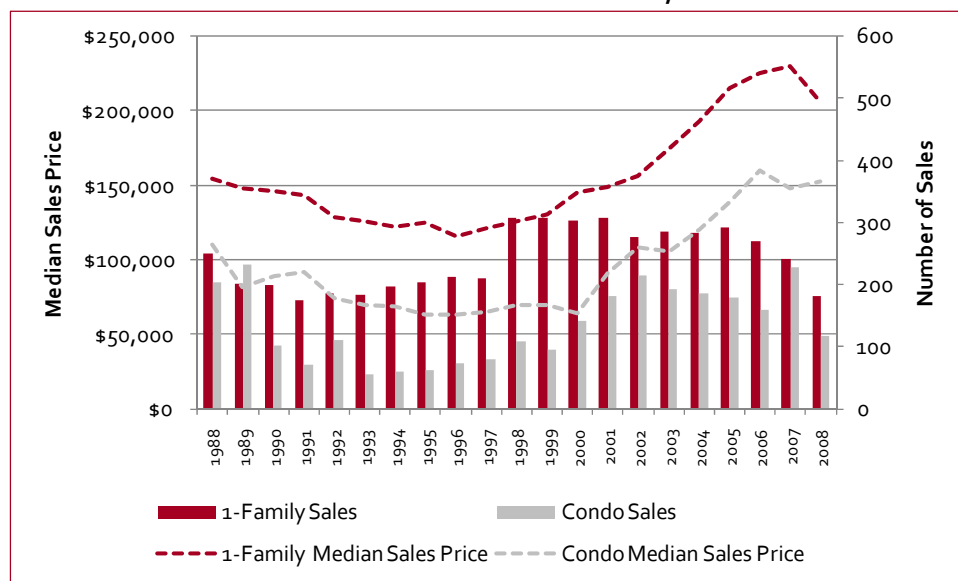
Workforce Housing Analysis Assumptions

- The region's area median income (AMI) in 2008 was \$81,100. Workforce housing is for households earning 80% to 120% of AMI (\$67,475 to \$101,213).
- Analysis assumed no more than 30% of income used for housing costs including insurance, taxes.
- Used average 2008 mortgage rate of 6.03% and based on effective mil rate of 17.05.

Housing Prices and Affordability

Sales prices for single family houses and condominiums in Vernon generally increased from the mid 1990s until recently. The median sales price for a single-family home peaked in 2007 at \$230,000 and the median sales price for a condominium peaked in 2008 at \$152,000. Because the current national economic downturn has dramatically impacted housing sales and prices, it is difficult to estimate whether Vernon's sales prices might continue to decrease over the next few years or rebound.

Trends in Sales Prices and Number of Sales, Vernon



Source: The Warren Group.

A 2008 study by HomeConnecticut analyzed housing affordability for all Connecticut municipalities. Based on a 2008 median sales prices in Vernon of \$206,000 and a median household income of \$58,435, the study determined that Vernon was not "affordable."

While the study does indicate that recent sales might not be affordable to Vernon residents, Vernon remains one of the more affordable communities in the region. Vernon's sales prices in 2008 were lower than the median sales price for the State. Single-family home sales prices were substantially lower than some other nearby communities (see sidebar).

Further analysis indicates that Vernon provides affordable workforce housing for the region. Workforce housing is generally for those that earn 80% to 120% of the area median income (AMI). Using 2008 figures, those earning 80% of the AMI could afford a sales price of up to \$228,000 and those earning 120% of the AMI could afford just over \$378,000 (see sidebar). In other words, Vernon's median sales price of \$206,000 was affordable to the region's workforce.

Affordable Units in Vernon

The State, pursuant to CGS 8-30g, considers a unit to be affordable if the dwelling unit is assisted, CHFA-financed or deed restricted (see sidebar). Just over 15% of Vernon's housing stock is affordable (see sidebar). Out of the 1,626 affordable units in 2008, two-thirds are family units and one-third are elderly units. Roughly 34% of all affordable units are managed by the Vernon Housing Authority.

Vernon's percentage has been declining (in 2002, it was 20.07%). The decline has occurred for a number of reasons, including:

- Loss of deed-restricted units. Since 2004, Vernon has lost all 25 of its deed-restricted units. These were units that were affordable for a set period of time and once that time expired, the owners had fulfilled their obligation and could rent or sell the units at market rates.
- Certain developments were accidentally double-counted by the State. Corrections made it appear that the Town lost those units.
- Vouchers and subsidized mortgages are counted as affordable units. These are "portable" in that if the person moves out of Vernon (or loses the voucher), the voucher or mortgage goes with he/she and Vernon therefore loses the affordable "unit".

Vernon's affordable housing percentage will drop further when the 2010 Census is conducted in part because the current percentage is based on the number of housing units counted in the 2000 Census. Vernon has seen additional housing units built since 2000. Using the 2008 housing estimate of 14,226 units, Vernon's percentage would drop to 13.97%. Any time new market rate units are built, Vernon's percentage will continue to decrease unless additional affordable units are also created / built. If Vernon loses another 560 affordable units then the Town would drop below the 10% requirement. While this seems like a large number, Vernon has "lost" almost 600 affordable units since 2002.

Vernon is one of only 31 municipalities in the State to surpass the 10% threshold – it will be important to stay above the 10% threshold in order to continue to provide housing for a range of income levels and to avoid becoming subject to the affordable appeals process.



Affordable Housing Definition

An affordable unit under CGS 8-30g must be:

- assisted (funded under a state or federal program);
- CHFA-financed (financed under a program for income-qualifying persons or families); or,
- deed restricted to be affordable to low- or moderate-income persons or families for at least 40 years.

When 10% of a community's housing stock is affordable, it is exempt from an affordable housing appeals procedure that shifts the burden of proof to the community to show that threats to public health or safety outweigh the need for affordable housing.

Affordable Housing, 2008

East Windsor	16.25%
East Hartford	15.63%
Vernon	15.44%
Manchester	15.13%
South Windsor	7.07%
Ellington	6.39%
Coventry	5.68%
Tolland	3.54%
Bolton	0.71%

Source: DECD 2008.

Labor Force to Jobs Ratio, Vernon, 2008

Labor Force	17,540
Jobs	9,180
Jobs/Labor Force	0.5

Source: CT Department of Labor.

Vernon's Economy

Vernon's economy provides employment, offers goods and services to local and regional businesses and residents, and adds to the local tax base.

This section examines Vernon's:

- **Labor Force** – The labor force is comprised of Vernon residents who work or are seeking employment. They may work in Vernon or elsewhere.
- **Jobs** ("Employment") – These are jobs that are located in Vernon. The jobs may be filled by Vernon's labor force or by people who live elsewhere.

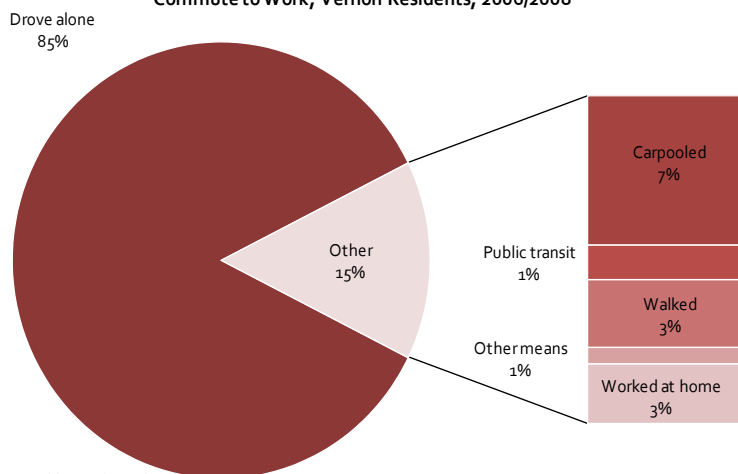
Vernon's labor force depends upon jobs located outside of Vernon. For every one Vernon resident in the labor force, there were 0.5 jobs in 2008 (see sidebar).

Labor Force

In 2008, 17,540 Vernon residents were part of the labor force. In October 2009, Vernon's unemployment rate (7.6%) was slightly lower than that of the larger Hartford labor market area (8.4%).

According to 2000 Census data, the top three work destination for Vernon's labor force was: Vernon, Manchester and Hartford. Most commute to work by driving alone, while 15% either carpool, walk, take public transit or work at home.

Commute to Work, Vernon Residents, 2006/2008



Source: ACS, 2006/2008.

Locations Where Vernon Residents Worked, 2000

Top 10 in 2000	2000	% of Labor Force
Vernon	3,272	22%
Manchester	2,080	14%
Hartford	2,047	13%
East Hartford	934	6%
South Windsor	591	4%
Mansfield	481	3%
Windsor	479	3%
Bloomfield	400	3%
Glastonbury	375	2%
West Hartford	343	2%

Source: US Census, 2000.

The top three job sectors for Vernon residents are Educational/health/social services, Manufacturing and Retail trade. Combined, these account for half of the Town's labor force. The breakdown of sectors that residents work in closely mirrors that State.

Top Industry Sectors for Vernon's Residents, 2006/2008

Industry	% of Labor Force in Vernon	% of Labor Force in CT
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	0.0%	0.4%
Construction	4.0%	6.7%
Manufacturing	12.8%	12.2%
Wholesale trade	3.0%	2.9%
Retail trade	11.3%	11.4%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	4.5%	3.8%
Information	2.3%	2.7%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	10.7%	9.7%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	9.6%	10.6%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	24.4%	23.7%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation, and food services	9.5%	7.8%
Other services, except public administration	4.2%	4.4%
Public administration	3.8%	3.7%

Source: ACS, 2006/2008.



Jobs in Vernon

Year	# of Jobs	Change
1980	7,650	--
1985	9,170	20%
1990	10,130	10%
1995	9,830	-3%
2000	9,530	-3%
2005	9,213	-3%
2008	9,180	-0.4%

Source: CT Department of Labor.

Jobs

Vernon saw tremendous job growth in the 1980's, but that trend has since reversed itself resulting in modest decreases since 1990. In 2008, there were approximately 9,180 jobs located in Vernon (see sidebar).

In 2000, Vernon residents filled the highest percentage of jobs in Town (one-third). Vernon's job attracted residents from neighboring communities along with East Hartford and communities to the east.

Locations Where People Who Work in Vernon Lived, 2000

Top 10 in 2000	2000	% of Those Working in Vernon
Vernon	3,272	34%
Manchester	900	9%
Ellington	731	8%
Tolland	702	7%
South Windsor	490	5%
Stafford	367	4%
East Hartford	276	3%
Coventry	247	3%
Mansfield	238	3%
Enfield	218	2%

Source: US Census, 2000.

The following table provides data on the types of jobs in Vernon. The table shows that highest percentage of jobs are in health care and social assistance, followed by retail, accommodation and food service, and local government. These top sectors do not, however, offer the top wages in Vernon.

Jobs in Vernon, 2008

	# of Em- ployers	Annual Average Jobs	% of Jobs	Annual Aver- age Wage
TOTAL	671	9,180		\$36,319
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunt- ing	*	*	*	*
Construction	52	525	6%	\$59,530
Manufacturing	22	377	4%	\$53,546
Wholesale Trade	39	127	1%	\$50,045
Retail Trade	120	1,621	18%	\$27,476
Transportation and Warehousing	*	*	*	*
Information	8	207	2%	\$37,549
Finance and Insurance	35	258	3%	\$46,833
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	31	134	1%	\$39,631
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	53	348	4%	\$61,415
Management of Companies and Enter- prises	*	*	*	*
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	32	151	2%	\$20,398
Educational Services	*	*	*	*
Health Care and Social Assistance	88	2,073	23%	\$40,200
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	10	200	2%	\$11,404
Accommodation and Food Services	60	1,159	13%	\$14,412
Other Services (except Public Adminis- tration)	86	446	5%	\$27,291
Unclassifiable/unknown industry	*	*	*	*
Federal Government	3	60	1%	\$50,888
State Government	6	175	2%	\$62,812
Local/Municipal Government	16	1,110	12%	\$42,166

* Data not shown for confidentiality.

Source: CT DOL.

The Connecticut Economic Resources Center, Inc., (CERC) prepared the *Economic Conditions and Trends Report* for the Town in 2008. The report identifies which industry sectors might be economic engines in Hartford and Tolland Counties.

Current Strengths

- Non-Internet Broadcasting
- Social Assistance
- Museum and Historical Sites
- Management of Companies and Enterprises
- Waste Management, Remediation Services

High Priority Retention Targets

- Warehousing and Storage
- Nursing and Residential Care Facilities

Emerging Strengths

- Construction of Buildings
- Food Manufacturing
- Plastics and Rubber Products Manufacturing
- Wholesale Electronic Markets, Agents, Brokers
- Clothing and Accessories Stores
- Truck Transportation
- Motion Picture and Sound Recording
- Securities, Commodity Contracts, Other Investments
- Rental and Leasing Services
- Educational Services
- Performing Arts, Spectator Sports
- Amusement, Gambling, Recreation
- Accommodation
- Food Services, Drinking Places

Fiscal Conditions

Revenues

The Town's total revenues in 2008 was \$126.9 million, including revenue from governmental activities and business-type activities. This represents an increase of \$33 million from 2007. Most of this increase was due to capital grants and contributions (e.g., grants for school construction and parks, state contributions to the teachers retirement system, etc). Meanwhile, property tax income increased slightly less than \$2 million. In 2007, Vernon had just over \$2,500 in revenue per person. This was the lowest when compared to nearby communities and the State overall.

According to town financial reports, the real estate component of the grand list grew (in real growth) 1.3% in 2007 and that growth equally reflects residential and commercial construction. The sidebar shows that 62% of the Grand List in 2008 was derived from residential real estate while commercial and industrial real estate accounted for 22%. These percentages are similar to in 2000. Vernon is much less dependent upon residential uses for the tax base compared to the State and many nearby communities (see sidebar). Vernon's top ten taxpayers are listed in the following table.

Top 10 Taxpayers in Vernon, 2008

Taxpayer	Taxable Assessed Value	% of Grand List
Chapman and Mansions, LLC	\$33,808,410	2.27%
Tri City Improvements	\$30,289,320	2.03%
Evandro Santini & Woodbridge LLC	\$20,289,000	1.36%
Connecticut Water Company	\$19,795,605	1.33%
Connecticut Light & Power/Yankee Gas Co.	\$16,049,288	1.08%
CE Vernon II LLC	\$15,797,900	1.06%
Chapman Acres	\$9,016,330	0.60%
Kerensky, Schneider (Risley Trust)	\$7,117,080	0.48%
Talcotville Development	\$6,083,090	0.41%
One Fifty Five West Main St.	\$4,012,150	0.27%

Source: Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, Town of Vernon, CT Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2008.

Expenditures

Expenses in 2008 totaled \$106 million (roughly \$100 million for governmental activities and \$5.6 million for business-type activities). This represented an increase of \$17 million from 2007. The increase was driven by \$14 million for the Teachers Retirement System. Of the total governmental activities, education accounted for 67% of the expenses. When compared to other nearby communities Vernon had the lowest per capita expenses (see sidebar) and, out of Connecticut's 169 communities, 115 have a higher debt per capita than Vernon.

Per Capita Revenue, 2007

South Windsor	\$ 3,341
East Hartford	\$3,279
Bolton	\$3,268
CT	\$3,261
Tolland	\$3,253
Ellington	\$2,977
East Windsor	\$2,868
Coventry	\$2,740
Manchester	\$2,710
Vernon	\$2,552

Source: Office of Policy Management, 2008.

Grand List, 2000 and 2008 (prior to exemptions)

	2000	2008
Residential	60%	62%
Comm/Ind.	24%	22%
Vacant	0.4%	1%
Personal	6%	5%
Prop.		
Motor Vehicles	11%	11%

Residential Grand List Percentages (2006)

Coventry	82.9
Tolland	81.4
Bolton	80.6
Ellington	76.5
CT	71.5
South Windsor	64.8
Vernon	59.8
East Hartford	56.1
Manchester	56.1
East Windsor	52.3

Source: Office of Policy Management, 2008.

Per Capita Expenditures, 2007

South Windsor	\$3,326
East Hartford	\$3,197
CT	\$3,244
Tolland	\$3,214
Bolton	\$3,183
Ellington	\$2,919
East Windsor	\$2,740
Coventry	\$2,718
Manchester	\$2,675
Vernon	\$2,548

Source: Office of Policy Management, 2008.

Definitions

Developed Land - land that has buildings, structures, or improvements used for a particular economic or social purpose (such as residential, commercial, or institutional).

Committed Land - land that is used for a particular economic or social purpose (including open space).

Vacant Land - land that is not developed or committed.

Dedicated Open Space - land or development rights owned by the Federal government, the State, the Town, land trusts, or conservation organizations intended to remain for open space purposes.

Managed Open Space - land that provides open space benefits but is not protected from future development.

FOR DISCUSSION WITH PZC – DEP land is currently included as “managed / other” since it is unclear of the land is permanently protected. In most cases DEP land is placed into the “dedicated” category since it is reasonable to believe that it will remain as open space. What is your preference?

Existing Land Use

Most land in Vernon (92%) has been developed or committed to a use (see sidebar for definitions). That leaves just under 1,000 acres (or 8%) vacant. Of developed or committed land, half of that (5,288 acres) is for residential use. Open space is the second largest category, with just over 2,600 acres that is either permanently protected or used for open space purposes.

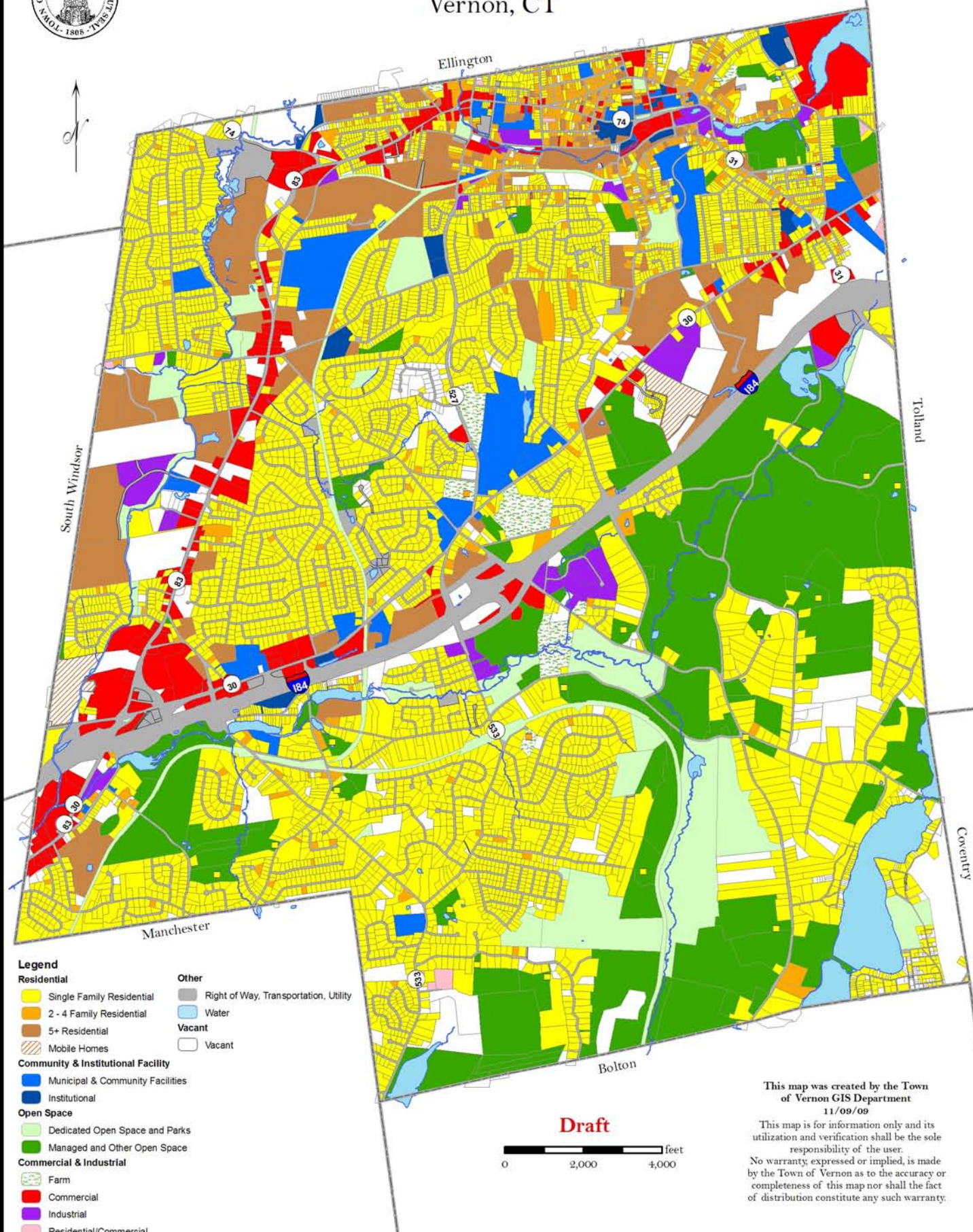
Land Use	Acres	% of Developed or Committed Land	% of Total Land Area
Residential	5,288	50%	46%
Single Family	4,150		
2-4 Family	277		
5+ Family	794		
Mobile Home	65		
Commercial or Industrial	676	6%	6%
Commercial	505		
Industrial	156		
Residential / Commercial	15		
Farm	94	1%	1%
Community Facilities or Institutional	395	4%	3%
Community Facilities	329		
Institutional	65		
Open Space	2,619	25%	23%
Dedicated Open Space and Parks	688		
Managed / Other Open Space	1,929		
Other	1,494	14%	13%
Right-of-Way, Transportation, Utility	1,238		
Water	256		
Total Developed & Committed Land	10,567	100%	92%
Vacant Land	951	--	8%
TOTAL	11,518		

Numbers may not add due to rounding.



Existing Land Use Map

Vernon, CT



Existing Zoning

Most of the Town's land area is zoned for residential use (over 72%), while over 8% is zoned for business use (these figures exclude the zones in Rockville which also allow for business and residential uses). According to an analysis by CRCOG, of the 29 communities the region, Vernon has the 4th highest percentage of land zoned for commercial uses, but the 6th lowest in the percentage of land zoned for industry (see 2009 Regional Plan, CRCOG).

Existing Zoning in Vernon

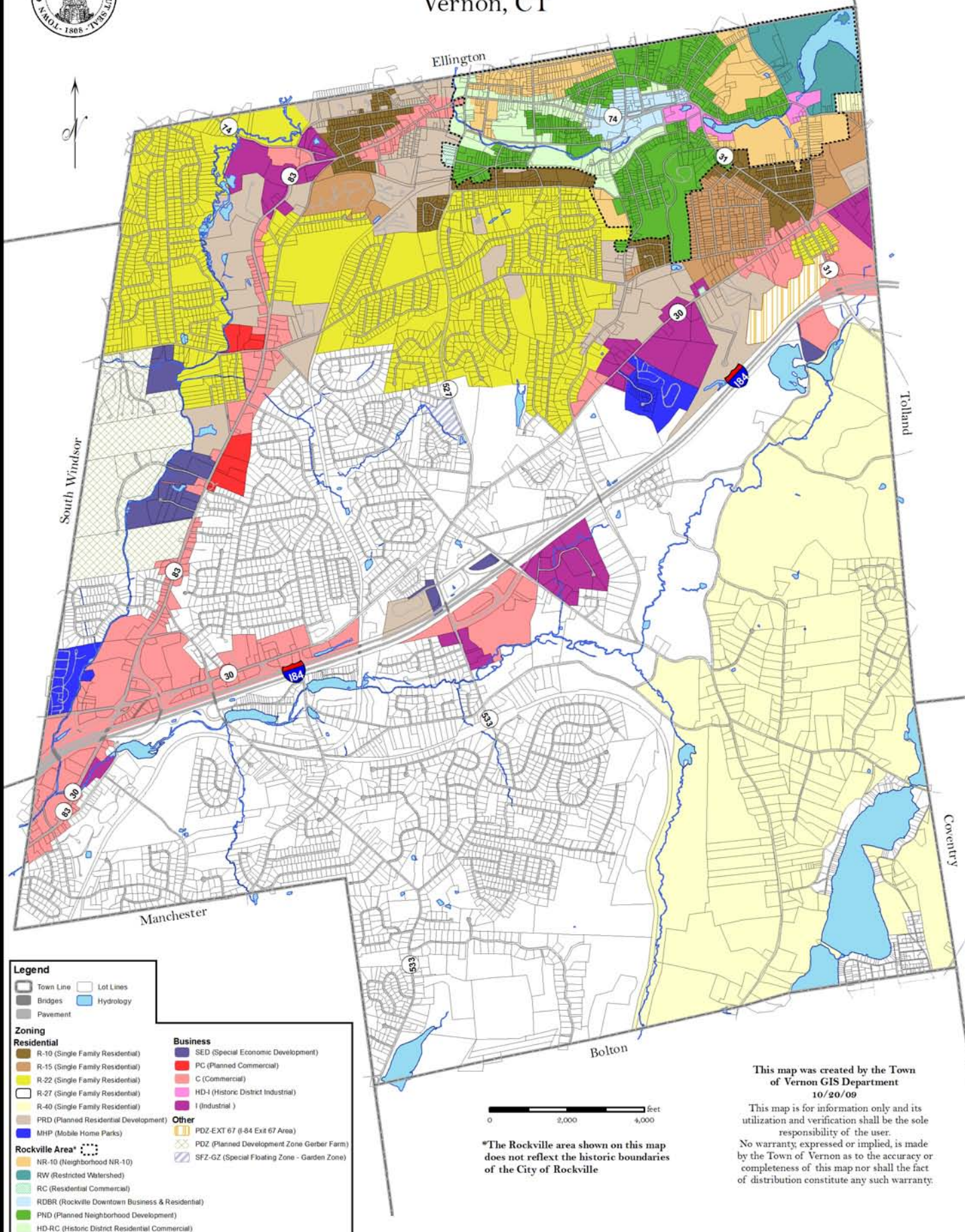
Zone	Acres	% of Land Area
Residential	8,330	72%
R-10 (Single Family)	144	
R-15 (Single Family)	178	
R-22 (Single Family)	1,137	
R-27 (Single Family)	4,332	
R-40 (Single Family)	1,947	
MHP (Mobile Home Parks)	82	
PRD (Planned Residential Development)	510	
Business	910	8%
C (Commercial)	519	
PC (Planned Commercial)	38	
I (Industrial)	244	
HD-I (Historic District Industrial)	24	
SED (Special Economic Development)	85	
Rockville Historic District	712	6%
NR-10 (Neighborhood)	192	
PND (Planned Neighborhood Development)	273	
RDBR (Business & Residential)	45	
HD-RC (Historic District Residential Commercial)	109	
RC (Residential Commercial)	5	
RW (Restricted Watershed)	88	
Other	326	3%
PDZ-EXT 67 (Exit 67 area)	42	
PDZ (Gerber Farm)	272	
SFZ-GZ (Garden Zone)	12	
No Zone (ROW, water, other)	1,240	11%
TOTAL	11,518	

Numbers may not add due to rounding.



Zoning Map

Vernon, CT



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