

1.1. ACTION AGENDA

This POCD represents not only a product of much time and effort, but also the beginning of a process which involves changing existing conditions, regulations, and procedures in the City. Some of these changes will require further, more detailed studies and plans. Sustained public involvement is necessary to bring the items in this plan to fruition.

In order to implement the various recommendations contained in this Plan of Conservation and Development, the POCD Steering Committee shall develop an Action Agenda as a policy implementation tool. The Action Agenda shall identify goals, action items, and other policies. Each action item shall be a specific task with an identifiable responsible party (the “lead agency”) and proposed timeframe.

The lead agency is the agency that, by the nature of its mission and authority, is the logical party to spearhead the implementation of a particular proposal. Many proposals will of course involve multiple agencies. The nature of activity required of a lead agency will vary depending on the type of recommendation. Some activities involve budget commitments and capital expenses and some require advocacy and promotion, while others call for administrative action.

Priorities shall be classified as ongoing, short term (1-3 years), mid-term (4-6 years) and long-term (7-10 years). Many of the short-term items may already be scheduled into the City’s Capital Improvement Program or may be activities and policies that are in place and need to be continued. Some short-term recommendations may have evolved as part of the planning process and need to be inserted into the Capital Improvement Program.

Mid-term and Long-term priorities are activities which are considered important, but placed “down the road” in recognition of the fact that limited resources are available both in terms of time and money to implement the Plan. Mid-term and long-term capital projects may also require some intermediate planning and design activity before project implementation can take place.

The implementation schedule shall be presented in the form of a “To Do” list. This form will make it easy for the Planning Commission to review and report on implementation progress as a component of their annual report. The Director of Development and Enforcement shall prepare annually by September 30th a report that will be submitted to the Mayor, City Manager, City Council, and the Planning Commission summarizing the implementation status of the Action Agenda of the adopted Plan of Conservation and Development. The report shall discuss the status of each of the Action Items and recommend actions that need to be taken to assure implementation of the Plan of Conservation and Development.

10.0: FUTURE LAND USE AND ACTION AGENDA

IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES

BOE - Board of Education	LB - Library Board
Council - City Council	LIN – Linear Trails Advocacy Group
CC - Conservation Commission	LT -Land Trust
CD - Community Development Division	MH - Meriden Historical Society
CM - City Manager	MHD - Health Department
CTDEEP - CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection	MFD - Meriden Fire Department
CTDOT - CT Department of Transportation	MPD - Meriden Police Department
DE - Development & Enforcement Department	PR - Parks & Recreation Division
DPW - Department of Public Works (Engineering)	PRC- Parks Committee
DRB - Design Review Board	PC- Planning Commission
ED - Economic Development Division	PD - Planning Division
EDHZ- Economic Development and Housing Committee	PS- Public Safety Commission
Elderly - Agent for the Elderly	PU - Public Utilities
FC - Flood Control Commission	SCRCOG - South Central Regional Council of Governments
HA - Housing Authority	TC - Transit Committee
IWC - Inland Wetlands Commission	ZC - Zoning Commission

Housing

Goals

- H 1 - Maintain and complement the character of existing residential neighborhoods.
- H 2 - Ensure that there is a variety of housing types to reflect the needs and desires of all Meriden residents.
- H 3 - Housing unit density should be focused in areas such as the Downtown and along primary transportation routes.
- H 4 - Promote infill development as a primary strategy for meeting the City’s housing needs given the limited amount of readily buildable residential land, the sensitive environmental nature of many remaining open land parcels, and the availability of small previously developed vacant lots within the core neighborhoods of the City.
- H 5 - Encourage increased reinvestment in residential properties, particularly in Meriden’s core neighborhoods, through residential building, renovations and timely maintenance.

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Economic Development

Goals:

- Econ 1 - Identify and market vacant or underutilized industrial and commercial properties.
- Econ 2 - Encourage commercial infill development in established commercial corridors to create critical densities of economic development in these areas.
- Econ 3 - Streamline the development process to make Meriden an attractive place for future economic development.
- Econ 4 - Attract skilled workers to Meriden and produce future workers, via the Meriden school system, with the skill sets needed to flourish in the 21st century global economy.
- Econ 5 - Promote the “creative economy” in Meriden, which is centered around arts, culture, education, the non-profit sector and entrepreneurship.
- Econ 6 - Continue to support reinvestment in the Downtown, which build upon the recent public improvements such as the Train Station and Meriden Green.
- Econ 7 - Create sustainable, high-quality commercial and industrial spaces that will maximize tax revenue while being sensitive to surrounding neighborhoods and environmental assets.
- Econ 8 - Strengthen efforts in the areas of business recruitment, business retention, and expansion of existing businesses in Meriden.
- Econ 9 - Enhance the physical attractiveness of commercial and industrial areas.

Transportation and Circulation

Goals:

- Tran 1 - Continue to maintain and reinvest in City-maintained roadways.
- Tran 2 - Improve the City’s bus system to improve multi-modal transportation and mobility in Meriden.
- Tran 3 - Address the current need of critical roadway corridors and plan for future impacts from development to make sure roadways do not become overburdened.
- Tran 4 - Identify ways to improve key intersections and facilitate traffic flow to help simplify the process of moving around the City.
- Tran 5 - Promote trail networks for pedestrians and bicyclists as an alternative means of transportation and recreation for residents.

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Parks, Recreation, and Open Space

Goals:

- Park 1 - Focus on maintenance, enhancement, and improving accessibility to existing parks, recreational facilities and open space resources in order to maximize their value and utility.
- Park 2 - Provide a system of linking public and private open space throughout Meriden and the region. Open space should provide passive and active recreation opportunities and preserve environmentally sensitive areas.
- Park 3 - Improve communication and outreach process for parks and recreation activities to promote use of Meriden's extensive open space/recreation system.

Environment and Sustainability

Goals:

- Envi 1 - Protect Meriden's landscape and unique topography while still permitting future development. Identify priority areas for conservation and preservation actions, as well as areas that should be designated as prime development areas. Priority areas for conservation should be those undeveloped areas that have a high ecological value, will guard against flooding, soil erosion, and stream sedimentation, and/or can connect to a comprehensive parks and open space network.
- Envi 2 - Reduce the risk of stormwater inundation, particularly for those properties in the 100-year floodplain.
- Envi 3 - Promote energy-efficient and sustainable patterns of development.

Community Facilities

Goals:

- Comm 1 - Continue to meet the health and social service needs of Meriden residents in a coordinated and efficient manner.
- Comm 2 - Provide the highest level of educational services to the children of Meriden.
- Comm 3 - Provide enhanced waste disposal, sewage treatment, and other public works infrastructure to ensure that the City of Meriden can meet both its current and future waste disposal needs.
- Comm 4 - Maintain and enhance the contributions of historic resources to Meriden's community character.

OTHER POLICIES

Housing

Other Policies:

- Support measures that will improve quality of life and reinforce residential neighborhoods by mitigating blighting influences.
- Encourage a diversity of housing options in unit type and price point.

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- Guide development pressure away from sensitive natural areas and into parts of City that have existing infrastructure capable of supporting development.
- Develop the Downtown area as the location for high-density housing and other transit-oriented development (TOD).
- Evaluate opportunities to develop for market rate mixed-use or multi-family development.

Economic Development

Other Policies:

- Continue to investigate properties that may become available for development and explore any brown-fields-related issues. If existing, the City should continue to use grant funding, such as EPA Assessment Grants, to assist owners and developers in using public programs for remediation.
- Corridors of particular focus should be East Main Street, West Main Street, Broad Street (North and South), and Berlin Turnpike.
- Build upon existing clusters of uses in specific areas (retail, office, hi-tech) when marketing the corridors and recruiting new businesses.
- Coordinate design and access management for infill development along commercial corridors. Ensure that quality development occurs in these areas.
- As a planning and zoning policy objective, prevent the fragmentation of existing commercial corridors by non-commercial uses to preserve as much land as possible for economic development.
- Utilize Meriden's relatively affordable housing stock, access to regional transportation networks, proximity to prestigious colleges and universities and central geographic location as salient points for marketing Meriden as an attractive place for hi-tech businesses.
- Continue to investigate properties that may become available for development and explore any brown-fields-related issues.
- Continue to work with individual property owners to identify and overcome land use or other issues which may impede the development of vacant parcels. Assist owners and developers in accessing grants and public programs for remediation.
- Assist developers in conducting site assemblage of smaller vacant and underutilized parcels to create larger, more marketable development sites in areas such as along East Main Street, South Broad Street and the Berlin Turnpike.
- Continue the revitalization of Meriden's downtown by encouraging new businesses and residents to locate in the recently redeveloped mixed use area around the Meriden Transit Station and Meriden Green in order to strengthen the built environment as well as draw in residents, shoppers, visitors and commuters.
- Improve the perception of downtown and create a distinct identity for the City in order to attract new businesses, residents and visitors. Encourage the conversion of vacant upper floor commercial space to market rate residential uses, which can bring pedestrian activity, vitality, and buying power to the Downtown.
- Encourage pop-up arts and culture uses in the Downtown that will develop more visual interest for shoppers, pedestrians and visitors to the area.

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- Insist upon high-quality, innovative physical design in the economic development components of each of these sites that maximizes tax revenue, limits traffic impacts, protects and retains important natural features and blends harmoniously with the surrounding neighborhood.
- Improve marketing and outreach for existing skills and job training programs.
- Continue to provide the resources to the Making Meriden Business Center and others to maintain a vibrant economic development marketing and promotion effort via the Economic Development Office.

Transportation and Circulation

Other Policies:

- Maintain adequate funding and staffing levels at the Public Works Department to ensure that resources are in place for periodic and systematic assessments of Meriden's roadway network.
- Continue exploring opportunities to increase funding for road preservation, and explore ways to improve funding for paving and road improvements.
- Continue to work with SCRCOG and CONNDOT on improvements to implement recommendations of the ongoing Route 5 study, possibly including strategies to reduce the number of motor vehicle accidents, identifying appropriate development to minimize curb cuts and ingress/egress points, and revise pavement markings to improve traffic flow and driver comprehension.
- Interstate 91, Interstate 691, Route 15 and Route 66 will continue to serve the important role of connecting Meriden with the region, the State and the national transportation network. While the City has little direct control over the development and utilization of these roadways, it should continue to be active in working with State and federal departments and officials to ensure that Meriden is adequately and properly served by these roadways.
- As part of the City's work to promote downtown Meriden as a place to live, work and do business, pursue strategies to better and more directly connect I-691 with the Downtown area.
- Continue to work with SCRCOG and CONNDOT to coordinate incident management and traffic advisory services, proposed construction projects and enhancements, and basic maintenance activities.
- The City should investigate opportunities for improving east-west and north-south roadway connectivity wherever feasible.
- Wherever possible, existing parks and open space should be linked together to form interconnected greenways. Greenways should also link neighborhoods, public facilities and employment areas to existing open space areas as a focus for recreational activity;
- Encourage new development to include trails where they can logically connected to the City's existing or planned trail and sidewalk network;
- Work with adjacent Municipalities, the County, State, and other agencies to improve regional connectivity and connect to other linear trails in surrounding cities, such as Cheshire and Middletown.

Parks, Recreation, and Open Space

Other Policies:

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- Continue the efficient utilization of existing parks and recreation facilities, including extended hours and creative scheduling;
- Strengthen the existing cooperative relationship between the Parks Department and the Board of Education to maximize the use of all school associated recreational resources to the benefit of Meriden's residents;
- Encourage new development to include trails where they can logically connected to the City's existing or planned trail and sidewalk network;

Environment and Sustainability

Other Policies:

- Continue to review and further City policies to promote the good stewardship of natural resources.
- Support actions that protect floodplains and limit the development of flood prone areas.
- Enforce proper soil conservation practices to guard against soil erosion and stream sedimentation resulting from future land development activities.

Community Facilities

Other Policies:

- Focus additional resources on enhancing the Senior Affairs department's ability to provide home-delivered meals, transportation and in-home assessments for elderly residents.
- Expand efforts to reduce school truancy among Meriden youth.
- Continue to update the public library facilities to meet the future planned use of the facility.
- Continually evaluate the need for additional school system programs such as new curriculum programs so that emerging education needs can be addressed quickly and effectively.
- Provided more opportunities for students to gain experiences outside the school system. This may include opportunities to involve students in civic planning (i.e. through the student council) and to provide internship programs with local businesses or the City.
- New development should be consistent with and sensitive to the historic nature of the community, particularly in the Downtown and other neighborhood centers. Emphasis on quality physical design and site planning that is in keeping with the nature of the surrounding environment should be a high priority.

City of Meriden 2019 POCD Action Agenda

(Adopted April 9, 2020)

Goal	Action	Partner Agencies	Method	Priority
» Economic Development - Retention and Attraction				
ECON3, ECON8	Review zoning regulations and application process to determine how they can be streamlined. Build upon success of pre-application meetings by considering split or combined preliminary and detailed plan of development approvals.	PD,PC, Council, ED	City Staff	1
ECON8, PARK3	Develop a marketing campaign that shows Meriden as an attractive and inviting physical environment for businesses and their employees. Marketing should include Meriden's open space system and recreation programs as a major quality of life amenity.	ED, PD, BOE, PR,PC, Council, ED, COMM	City Staff	1
ECON1, ECON9, H1, H4	Review existing applicable regulations, such as signage and landscaping requirements, to gauge their impact on the physical design and appearance of Meriden's economic generation areas.	PD,PC, Council, EDHZ, ZC,ED	Economic Dev. FG Regulatory FG	1
ECON1, ECON9, H1, H4	Study potential changes to zoning to encourage economic development through infill and amendments to regulations and approval procedures.	PD,PC, Council, EDHZ, ZC,ED	Economic Dev. FG Regulatory FG	1
ECON2	Conduct a detailed zoning study to see where it may be appropriate to expand commercial zoning along commercial corridors. Zoning regulations should ensure that these areas can be developed to their highest and best use in a way that improves the streetscape, allows for better access and egress and promotes good site design.	PD, PC, ZC, DPW, ED	Economic Dev. FG	1
ECON3, ECON8	Consider combining agencies or commissions where appropriate to enable applicants to work with one commission during the approvals process reducing the time and burden of development approval, including zoning amendments and site plan approvals.	Council, CM	City Leadership Regulatory FG	1 - 2

Goal	Action	Partner Agencies	Method	Priority
» Quality of Life - Property Maintenance, Blight, and Resident Support				
ECON6, ECON8, ECON9, H1, H5, COMM4	Create programs and explore existing programs such as CDBG funding that encourage owners to reinvest in their properties. Programs may provide financial incentives, reduced loan rates for home improvements, façade grants, tax abatement, and technical assistance and guidance for other funding sources.	PD, PC, Council, CD, ED, MHD	Economic Dev. FG	1
COMM4, H5	Identify potential locations and consider creating a State-recognized historic district to ensure that historic sites in Meriden are eligible for State and Federal grant opportunities, such as Historic Restoration Fund Grants, Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credits and Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives. Expand upon the 2014 Historic Resource inventory to maintain, enhance and promote the historic assets of the community	PD, EH, MH	Economic Dev. FG Community FG	1
TRAN5, PARK2	Work with adjacent Municipalities, the County, State, and other agencies to improve regional connectivity to other linear trails in surrounding cities.	DPW, PD, Council, SCRCOG, LTAG	City Staff	1
TRAN2, TRAN5, PARK1, PARK2	Continue to pursue the development of a cross-City linear trail and implement recommendations of the 2012 Linear Trails Master Plan.	PD, DPW, LIN, LTAG	City Staff	1
TRAN2	Create a local task force on public transportation and work with CT Transit and bus service providers to improve ridership, scheduling and frequency of buses. Discussion should include a reassessment of ways to improve bus routes based on where ridership generators are in Meriden.	PD, DPW, ED, CTDOT, PS, TC, HEALTH	Transportation FG City Staff	1
N2, COMM1	Consider potential ADA improvements for the bus system and coordinate efforts of local nonprofit organizations currently providing transportation options for local seniors, such as the Meriden Senior Center.	PD, DPW, ED, CTDOT, PS, TC	Transportation FG Community FG	2
H1, COMM4	Review regulations for residential zones to ensure that any new development is consistent and sensitive to the historic nature of the community, particularly in neighborhood centers.	PD, PC, ZC, MH	City Staff	3

Goal	Action	Partner Agencies	Method	Priority
H2	Review zoning to identify opportunities to support the use of accessory units to help families that may be cost burdened in single family houses.	PD, PC, Council, Council, ED	City Staff	1
H1, ECON9, PARK1	Build upon success of existing Citywide clean up events. Organize more clean-up events collaborating with the Neighborhood Associations and Board of Education to engage the public.	PD, DPW, CC, BOE, PR	BOE Staff NRAB	1
COMM2	Comprehensively evaluate the physical and programmatic needs of each of Meriden's school facilities, identify pertinent issues to be addressed, and develop a plan for addressing identified needs through renovations and programmatic changes over the long-term.	BOE	BOE Staff	Continual
» Traffic Safety				
TRAN1, TRAN4	Investigate possible opportunities to address traffic safety concerns and study pedestrian improvements Hanover Avenue, Coe Avenue and the Camp Street corridor. Implement recommendations of available studies such as the Road Safety Audit (RSA).	DPW, ED	Transportation FG City Staff	1 - 2
TRAN4	Continue to investigate the potential for realigning and reconfiguring the East Main Street/Broad Street intersection to improve traffic flow and reduce confusion.	DPW, CTDOT, ED, MPD, PS	City Staff	3
TRAN1, TRAN4	Implement a comprehensive strategy to reduce accidents, which should include traffic calming and access management techniques, along with other site-specific measures.	DPW, MPD	City Staff	1
» Infrastructure Maintenance -Roads, Parks, Trails, and Buildings				
COMM3	Continue to pursue the upgrading of the sewage treatment system and implement needed improvements to the inflow and infiltration (I&I) removal project.	PU, DPW	City Staff	1
ENVI2, PARK2, TRANS	Continue to implement projects identified in the Harbor Brook Flood Control and Linear Trail Plan	DPW,IWC, PD, FC	City Staff	1

Goal	Action	Partner Agencies	Method	Priority
PARK1, H1	Evaluate opportunities to develop additional recreation amenities such as a skate park and restore existing resources such as Hanover Pond and Mirror Lake.	PD, CC, PR, PRC, Council	Parks FG P&R Subcomm	1
ECON2, ECON6, ECON9, TRAN1, TRAN3, TRAN5	Create a road and sidewalk master plan to guide redevelopment and investment in City streets, including an inventory utilizing GIS. Identify locations where sidewalks and linkages to downtown are needed.	PD, DPW, BOE, Council	Transportation FG P&R Subcomm	1
ENVI1, ENVI2	Study the drainage patterns of the minor brooks and streams within the City of Meriden to identify any potential future flooding problems before they occur.	IWC, DPW, FC, ED	City Staff	2
ECON6. TRAN2, TRAN5	Continue to implement the recommendations of the First Mile Last Mile Study that was completed in 2016, including policy initiatives such as transportation demand management (TDM), adopting a citywide Complete Streets policy, promoting universally accessible design, encouraging coordination between transit agency policies and local jurisdiction policies, and strategically managing parking in pedestrian and TOD areas.	PD, DPW, ED, TC	City Staff	2
ENVI3	Complete a comprehensive assessment of City Facilities and implement a strategy for repairs and upgrades.	PU, DPW	City Staff	1
PARK3	Improve signage for parks to help create awareness of these resources for residents as well as visitors. Signage should be provided that marks parks, trail heads, and boat launch areas (i.e. at the Quinnipiac River)	PR, DPW, LIN	Parks FG	1
TRAN5, PARK1, PARK2	Develop an Open Space and Recreation Plan to evaluate the condition of parks and to prioritize improvements in existing parks. Study opportunities to improve accessibility to all open space resources, including those that are city owned but are not easily accessible by the public.	PD, CC, LT, PR, PRC, MHD, BOE	Parks FG	3
» Conservation and Preservation				

Goal	Action	Partner Agencies	Method	Priority
ENVI3	Incorporate into site plan review, green standards that encourage sustainable development policies, and minimize waste and energy use. Provisions should encourage green roofs, energy efficiency, solar panels and other renewable energy, green building, and ride-sharing.	PD, PC, EDHZ, DPW, CM, BOE	City Staff	1
ENVI3	Energy Efficiency: Make energy efficiency a high priority for municipally owned infrastructure	DPW, PU, BOE, CM	City Staff	1
ENVI1, ENVI2	Review the existing zoning of environmentally-sensitive lands (steep slopes, wetlands, etc.) to ensure that the zone designations for such parcels do not promote unnecessarily intensive development.	PD, ED, CC, EDHZ	Conservation FG Regulatory FG	1
ENVI1, ENVI2, ECON7	Create a list of open space criteria with weighted factors to serve as a base for decision-making in terms of future open space acquisitions.	PD, CC, EDHZ	Conservation FG	2
ENVI1,H4	Revise zoning standards to protect environmentally sensitive areas (steep slopes, wetlands, etc.) and promote environmental quality through site design, landscaping, irrigation, and maintenance.	PD, PC, EDHZ, CC, FC	Conservation FG City Staff	2
ENVI1, ECON9, H1, H4	Strengthen land use regulations pertaining to tree preservation for actions such as subdivision, site plan approval, and other municipal permits.	DPW, PC, EDHZ	City Staff Regulatory FG	3
ENVI3	Electric Vehicles: Support infrastructure for electric vehicles city-wide	CC, PD, CM, BOE, DPW	City Staff	3
H4, ECON7, ENVI1, ENVI2	Identify priority areas and individual parcels for conservation and preservation actions, as well as areas that should be designated as prime development areas. Conservation areas should be identified along with a strategy for the conservation and preservation of undeveloped land as it becomes available. Open space acquisitions should be ones that enable the City to connect the existing parks and open space assets into a cohesive system should be given high priority.	CC, PD, EDHZ, BOE	Conservation FG Economic Dev. FG	1 - 3

Goal	Action	Partner Agencies	Method	Priority
H1, COMM1, PARK2, TRANS	Link together existing parks and open space to form interconnected greenways. Greenways should also link neighborhoods, public facilities and employment areas to existing open space areas as a focus for recreational activity.	DPW,PD, Council, PR, LIN, PRC	Parks FG	3
» Engagement				
ECON4	Develop a task force focused on encouraging linkages between educational institutions to City affairs and local businesses to tie students' educational experience to real-world employment and economic situations.	BOE, PD, ED, DPW,MPD, CM	Economic Dev. FG Community FG	1
ECON5, ECON6, PARK3, COMM1	Expand programming in the TOD, specifically at the Meriden Green. Effectively promote events to bring more activity to the downtown area and Support the creation of an arts corridor.	PR, ED, MPD	Economic Dev. FG Community FG	1
PARK3, COMM1, ECON5	Develop centralized information repository for parks, recreation, and other cultural events in the City. The City can help to coordinate a central information repository, potentially on the City's website, which people can use to access a calendar of events, field reservations, information on field closures, sign-up dates, sports and programs offered, etc.	CM, PR, ED, BOE	Parks FG City Staff	1
ECON4, COMM2	Promote the continued development and expansion of community assets such as Middlesex Community College programming at Platt High School.	BOE, ED, CD	Economic Dev. FG Community FG	2