Over the centuries several communities developed in Greenwich that persist to this day as centers in many cases with their own business district, post office, school, houses of worship, train station, firehouse, library, and community center or park.

ACTION STRATEGIES

The Action Strategies for Downtown, Commercial Development and Villages are:

- Preserve and Maintain the Viability of Downtown,
- Protect and Preserve the Larger Villages and Neighborhoods,
  - Cos Cob
  - Old Greenwich
  - Byram
  - Glenville
- Preserve the Smaller Villages.
  - Banksville
  - Chickahominy
  - North Mianus
  - Pemberwick
  - Riverside
  - Round Hill
Preserve and Maintain the Viability of Downtown

Downtown means different things to different people, because it is a place to live, shop, dine, recreate, or do business. As the central area of the community this popular destination has increased value for businesses that locate here. The Town Hall Campus Area contains valuable open space and recreational facilities.

In addition to retail establishments, community facilities, such as the Senior Center, Greenwich Arts Council, the Bruce Museum and the movie theater contribute to making this a special place.

Greenwich’s past vision for Downtown, as described in earlier Plans of Development, was to provide localized goods and services and prevent this area from becoming a regional center.

Downtown is now a regional employment and shopping center. This occurred because:
- The market-related forces of demand for retail space exceeded the space available,
- The attractive design and aesthetic value of a walkable and historic downtown, and
- The status of a Greenwich address.

However, there is a need to find ways to protect neighborhood-oriented small businesses on Greenwich Avenue and to encourage more housing in order to create a vibrant residential Downtown.

Since 1998 about 800,000 square feet of additional floor area has been added to Downtown, a 36 percent increase. Additional build-out potential exists in Downtown of about 1,000,000 square feet. P&Z should continue to analyze where future construction is likely to occur and what Downtown may look like at full build-out.

All of this development potential leads to increased traffic congestion and parking issues within Downtown, adjoining residential areas and along the Post Road.

There are divergent opinions about what Downtown should become. Downtown would benefit from a comprehensive “visual planning process” where alternative scenarios are prepared and evaluated. Such a process could involve businesses, building owners, and residents of Greenwich through a visual preference survey or other technique where people provide feedback on what type of downtown Greenwich should have.

At the present time projects in Downtown tend to be evaluated on a site-by-site basis. Such a process is heavily dependent on the regulations we have rather than the type of development we want. By preparing and evaluating alternative scenarios Greenwich can identify preferred policies and discourage incompatible activities.

This Plan recommends that the First Selectman chair a Downtown Study Committee to develop a consensus on the future of Downtown and develop a Downtown Master Plan by 2011. This committee should include representatives from P&Z, RTM, BET, DPW, and Town residents from various parts of the community - especially those neighborhoods in District 1 which are directly affected - as well as business interests, and building owners. It is critical that the Committee membership reflect a wide-range of opinions.

This Committee should hold public meetings to also obtain comments from the general public as they develop the Master Plan. There are differences of opinion in defining the limits of what areas should be included in Downtown. It is recommended that this be a major topic for the Downtown Study.

The Planning and Zoning Commission retains the authority to review any recommendations of this Committee and will render a final decision on what appropriate changes are needed in the Building Zone Regulations to implement the final vision in the Downtown Master Plan.

There are three elements of Downtown still being reviewed by the various Town agencies:
- the Havemeyer Building,
- the Senior Center, and
- the Old Town Hall building.

Post Road at the top of Greenwich Avenue
There is general agreement that the Board of Education needs new offices. Studies are underway concerning the reuse of the Havemeyer Building and location of the Senior Center. An important concern is whether to relocate these facilities in Downtown.

In addition it is recommended that Greenwich consider:

- adopting design guidelines to maintain and enhance the design, relationship and compatibility of structures, plantings, signs and other objects in public view.
- working with Downtown property owners and businesses to create a Special Services District (similar to the one in Stamford, Connecticut) or utilizing the National Trust for Historic Preservation’s Main Street program. Greenwich could charge Downtown landlords and business owners an additional tax for streetscape improvements, street cleaning, snow plowing, sidewalk cleaning and special events.

It is important that the boundaries of the core of Downtown be established to concentrate new opportunities within a specific area and to prevent commercial sprawl and encroachments into the adjoining residential neighborhoods which must be maintained.

Greenwich Avenue, along with portions of the Post Road, Elm, Lewis, Amogerone and Griggs streets, Railroad Avenue and Field Point Road are all included in the National Register of Historic District. This also includes the Municipal Design District of several Town buildings.

The designs for new buildings and exterior modifications to existing structures are usually reviewed for compatibility and consistency with their historic and architectural heritage by the Architectural Review Committee and the Historic District Commission.

It is important that:
- the distinctive character, landscape and historic value of the area and buildings be protected,
- the conversion, conservation and preservation of existing buildings and sites be encouraged, and
- any new development occurs in a way that protects and enhances the character of buildings and the streetscape.

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<th>ACTIONS</th>
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<tr>
<td>4.1 Continue to promote business, social, civic and cultural activities to maintain residential and economic vitality in Downtown.</td>
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<td>4.2 Examine the build-out potential to determine where additional development may occur and how to influence this growth.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.3 A Downtown Study Committee should be chaired by the First Selectman with representatives from the appropriate Town departments, P&amp;Z, RTM, residents and business owners to develop a master plan for Downtown by 2011, based on future build-out potential. It should address parking, traffic congestion, pedestrian safety, housing, cultural activities, the highest and best use of Town properties and the possible creation of a Special Services District. This Committee will report to P&amp;Z, the RTM and BET and hearings will be held to take input from the public.</td>
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Protect and Preserve the Larger Villages and Neighborhoods

Greenwich has four large villages that provide a community level of commercial services and sense of neighborhood within that area.

These villages, Cos Cob, Old Greenwich, Byram and Glenville offer unique opportunities and challenges.

The transformation of Downtown into a high-end shopping destination has created opportunities for these other villages to provide goods and services for their specific neighborhoods.

Byram

Cos Cob

Glenville

Old Greenwich
Cos Cob

In the 18th and 19th centuries, Cos Cob was one of the Town’s most important harbors for exporting locally-grown produce to New York. At the turn of the 20th century, Cos Cob also became home to the first art colony in Connecticut and a cradle of American Impressionism, centered in Bush-Holley House, which is now the headquarters of the Historical Society.

Today Cos Cob has a strong vehicular connection to Downtown, because of Route 1 and Interstate 95. The center, known as the Hub, is divided by Route 1. The Cos Cob School, Library and stores are all within walking distance for many residents. The train station is removed from the commercial center.

To solve this problem Greenwich should consider creating a strong pedestrian and bicycle link to the train station, Cos Cob School, the Cos Cob Power Plant Park and the village core. The train station could also serve as an area for small unit multi-family housing, which might help to satisfy housing needs.

This village appears to have some additional small-business capacity if it were developed in a more pedestrian-friendly mixed-use development style. While a number of buildings fit into this category, there are areas of strip development where parking spaces dominate the landscape.

A village plan for Cos Cob should be developed to explore what opportunities exist to enhance this village, including whether land-use tools, such as the Village District, as authorized by State statutes, is appropriate. This Plan should explore flooding conditions and potential solutions in areas along Strickland Brook and Mill Pond.

Cos Cob might also serve as a community business center, in addition to being a neighborhood business center. The village plan should focus on promoting diversity of retail opportunities while protecting and preserving the residential neighborhoods. Adding housing in the Hub area along the Post Road would reinforce the local businesses and reduce traffic congestion in the area.

As part of the village plan, an evaluation should be made of the allowed uses permitted in the Local Business Retail (LBR) zone along the Post Road to see if residents’ needs are being adequately served.

**ACTIONS**

4.4 Create a village plan based on future build-out analysis and explore using the Village District as a tool to manage land-use and building design.

4.5 Review potential for additional mixed-use development (commercial and residential) along the Post Road.

4.6 Evaluate existing traffic flows and road designs and explore re-designs for US Route 1 with the Connecticut Department of Transportation.

4.7 Create a stronger pedestrian and bicycle link from the train station to the Hub and other activity centers, such as the Cos Cob Power Plant Park.

4.8 Encourage more passive and active recreational uses in open space areas within walking distances of homes, school and businesses.

4.9 Review the existing floodways and flooding conditions along Strickland Brook to see what improvements can be done on a cost benefit basis.
Old Greenwich

Old Greenwich is the original village of Greenwich. It dates back to 1640. It was developed as a summer cottages community where visitors came to enjoy the fresh air and waterfront. This village has an elementary school, civic center, Greenwich Point Park (now on the National Register of Historic Places), the Perrot Library, a fire station, several places of worship (one of which – First Congregational Church – is the oldest church in Greenwich), Binney Park and the neighborhood business center.

Old Greenwich is a pedestrian-friendly mixed-use village center, with a strong rail connection, high aesthetic value and a variety of business activities. The village is challenged by a limited connection to Route 1, Interstate 95 and the remainder of Greenwich.

There is concern about the continued vitality of this village center. New commercial development in neighboring Stamford has the potential to adversely impact some of the local businesses.

Old Greenwich has a number of interesting transit-oriented development opportunities, including the parking lots adjacent to the rail station. Housing (similar to the Old Greenwich Gables development) could be built while retaining valuable parking spaces. The village also appears to have capacity for additional mixed-use development along Sound Beach Avenue.

New development or redevelopment of Old Greenwich should pay particular attention to not overburdening the existing infrastructure, such as the stormwater and sewer systems, traffic and parking areas. There are a number of low-lying areas that require additional study to address existing flooding issues.

A village plan for Old Greenwich should be developed to explore what opportunities exist to enhance this village, including whether land-use tools, such as the Village District, are appropriate.

As discussed in the Community Facilities chapter, Eastern Greenwich Civic Center is an important Town asset and needs to either be reconstructed or redeveloped. This facility is in need of updating and this Plan recommends that the Department of Parks and Recreation work with private groups to develop plans and funding sources for this facility.

There are areas of localized and coastal flooding which are presently being studied by the Department of Public Works to address stormwater drainage problems.

**ACTIONS**

4.10 Create a village plan.
4.11 Improve pedestrian and bicycle connections within the village and address traffic and parking issues in and around the train station, business area, schools, parks and library.
4.12 Find ways to protect neighborhood-oriented small businesses.
4.13 Evaluate properties abutting the Railroad for development for mixed-uses with housing similar to the Old Greenwich Gables development.
4.14 Rebuild or redevelop the Eastern Greenwich Civic Center.
4.15 The Flood and Erosion Control Board should address flooding issues in Old Greenwich.
4.16 When redevelopment of residences occurs in the flood and coastal zones they should be required to meet all Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) flood standards without obtaining a variance.
Byram

Byram is a unique village center. Its history “reflects the traditional American industrial revolution development pattern and should be preserved,” according to Andres Duany, a leading urbanist and planner of the 21st century, who visited Byram and commented on its future as a neighborhood center.

Byram is becoming gentrified but still retains the traditional architectural styles, is primarily a single-family and two-family neighborhood and still hosts generations of the same families. Byram Park and Byram Beach provide recreational areas particularly for residents of this village. The only public pool for all of Greenwich is located in Byram Park. The pool needs to be reconstructed and upgraded to meet today’s needs.

Greenwich has focused particular attention on Byram during the last ten years with the development of the Byram Neighborhood Enhancement Plan in 2003 and the 2007 Byram Comprehensive Plan. Implementation of the recommendations in the 2007 Plan should be funded in the Capital Improvement Program.

Byram benefits from having a presence on the Byram River and will likely see some additional development because of redevelopment activities occurring in nearby Port Chester, New York.

A pocket park has been proposed for the Sewer Pump Station site. A public accessway and boardwalk has been designed for the Church Street extension on South Water Street, which will be constructed in 2009. The riverfront provides an excellent opportunity to create public access and a river walk when properties are redeveloped.

The Byram community has expressed interest in having the Planning and Zoning Commission re-examine the uses allowed in the existing Waterfront Business Zone as they apply to the Byram waterfront. There is a need to ensure that regulations accommodate and encourage the desired type of development and public access to the River.

New development or redevelopment of Byram should pay particular attention to infrastructure, flooding, parking and traffic circulation, to ensure that existing residents and neighborhoods are not adversely impacted.

Retaining the architectural history and styles of the single and two-family residences is important for Byram’s and Greenwich’s history.

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<td>4.17 Implement the Byram Comprehensive Plan by providing funding for the recommendations in that Plan.</td>
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Byram Center

Proposed Pocket Park along South Water Street
**Glenville**

Glenville’s economic history was tied to the American Felt Company, which was located in a complex of mills on Pemberwick and Glenville Roads powered by the dams along the Byram River. Some of these historic mill structures have been preserved with new commercial uses through an Historic Overlay Zone granted by Planning and Zoning in the 1980s.

Glenville has a picturesque village center that provides local shopping for the surrounding neighborhoods. The central area of Glenville, with the historic mill buildings and firehouse, is now a National Register Historic District.

Glenville has an elementary school (currently undergoing renovation), the Bendheim Western Greenwich Civic Center (a former school) with recreation fields, and a variety of businesses, including the redeveloped Glenville mill complex housing offices, restaurants and retail uses.

The Byram River flows through the center of the business area. There is deed-restricted open space along both sides of Pemberwick Road riverfront area acquired through conservation zoning for multifamily housing. This preserves scenic vistas, open space and water quality of the Byram River.

The business pattern that has recently developed is more strip; however there are opportunities to reinforce the historic development pattern, including adjusting regulations to limit strip development. Glenville has growth potential for both business and residential development.

The recent remodeling of the Bendheim Western Greenwich Civic Center has resulted in more public use of the building (for community groups, day care programs, etc.) and it has become a focal point of the Glenville community.

While the revitalization has involved existing buildings, there is potential for expanding floor area and redevelopment of the commercial areas of Glenville as well, especially in the shopping center. There are large landholdings off Glenville Road (Rockefeller property) and Riversville Road that offer some major residential potential.

There are areas included in the sewer benefit map that are not now on sewer and these areas may become a part of the Capital Improvement Program’s long-term capital projects for the Town if new Federal or other funding is made available.

In rush hours King Street, Glenville Street, Glenville Road and Riversville Road are used as major arteries to Downtown from New York and the Merritt Parkway. These roads are congested and queues form past intersections at Weaver Street and Angelus Drive. A new traffic signal is proposed to be installed to address traffic issues at Weaver Street. The intersection of Pemberwick Road and Glenville Road should be studied for possible signalization.

The high volume of traffic on these local roads reduces the overall sense of place in this area. Greenwich should consider ways to enhance pedestrian safety while managing traffic congestion.

As with all village areas, conflicts will occur when growth occurs in the business and residential areas. The Planning and Zoning Commission should analyze the build-out potential and the resulting future traffic flows in Glenville as part of the village plan.

### ACTIONS

4.18 Create a village plan.
4.19 Develop stronger pedestrian connection and traffic controls along main transportation routes for access to local businesses, Glenville School and the Bendheim Western Greenwich Civic Center.
4.20 Explore using the Village District tool to promote the preservation of historic structures through the management of land-use and building design.

![Glenville Center](Glenville%20Center)
Protect the Small Villages

Round Hill

Chickahominy

Riverside

Pemberwick

Banksville

North Mianus
Historically, Greenwich grew around several neighborhoods. Some of these neighborhoods have become small villages with a variety of localized services: schools, parks, fire protection and, in some instances, businesses that serve the local neighborhoods.

Some areas, such as Chickahominy, North Mianus, and Banksville, have some of these services. Other areas such as Pemberwick, Round Hill, and Riverside are less clearly defined with smaller business centers.

Threats to community character from the demolition of historic resources and insensitive new construction are the main concerns in these areas. Changes to community facilities can impact these villages as they create a strong sense of place.

Greenwich should evaluate whether existing regulations are effective, or whether new tools, such as the Village District or local historic district, are more appropriate for preserving and protecting the historic character of these areas.

Design elements should be identified and encouraged as part of new development proposals. This Plan recommends the Architectural Review Committee create design guidelines for commercial development in these areas.

Pedestrian and bicyclist safety and access are overriding issues in small and large villages. Greenwich should also evaluate whether sidewalks, bike paths and/or traffic controls are needed in these areas, and then make the necessary improvements.

Greenwich has developed business regulations to protect the small villages from regional stores and the loss of local character. These Local Business Retail (LBR) regulations are designed to keep the business areas small enough to serve only local needs and to limit the types of activities to those traditionally found in neighborhoods, such as retail goods and services and small dining establishments.

These zoning regulations have been an effective management strategy and this Plan recommends that the Planning and Zoning Commission continue this approach and re-evaluate the existing LBR Building Zone Regulations.

### ACTIONS

4.21 Enhance gateways to help define the small villages and strengthen the sense of place.
4.22 Consider creating Village Districts or local historic districts.
4.23 The Architectural Review Committee working with the Historic District Commission should create design guidelines that encourage the unique attributes of each village.
4.24 Encourage small neighborhood-oriented businesses.
4.25 Evaluate whether sidewalks, bike paths and/or traffic controls are needed and make the appropriate improvements.
4.26 Reinforce the neighborhood village concepts by:
   - keeping and encouraging neighborhood cultural and historic structures and properties,
   - retaining neighborhood schools, libraries, playgrounds, fields, waterfront parks,
   - retaining local neighborhood retail and office establishments,
   - retaining fire stations, civic centers and religious institutions - all of which provide a sense of history and cultural place.
Enhance Putnam Avenue

East Putnam and West Putnam, also known as The Post Road and Route 1, is the main east/west vehicular transportation route within Greenwich and provides a mix of residential and commercial areas, interspersed with scenic views of Greenwich’s harbors and institutions.

Because of the variety of businesses in various areas along the Road, Greenwich should evaluate whether the scale of redevelopment of certain areas is appropriate, and how Greenwich can create more pedestrian-friendly mixed-use redevelopment.

Redevelopment may require additional density along this corridor and near Greenwich Avenue. These areas appear to be naturally suited for this type of redevelopment. Commercial development has been designed with many of the business sites having their own on-site parking areas. The individualized approach to parking has created a road with numerous driveways, which often leads to congestion.

Greenwich may be able to encourage the consolidation and reduction of curb cuts along with residential mixed-use development to alleviate some traffic congestion.

Because of the strong vehicular connection that Route 1 provides, along with transit connections, this area may be appropriate for additional housing.

Ultimately, concerns about traffic congestion will need to be considered as part of developing new land-use solutions here. Greenwich should conduct a study of land-use and traffic issues to make sure these issues are appropriately considered during this process.

ACTIONS

4.27 Encourage pedestrian-friendly mixed-use re-development, including mixed types of housing.
4.28 Conduct a study of land-use and traffic issues to see where improvements can be made by reducing the number of curb cuts.

Monitor Changes Along King Street

King Street presents a number of challenges, particularly because the road serves two communities in different states, with different ideas about how development should occur.

King Street in New York State is a State highway. King Street in Connecticut is a Town road. Development along the New York side of King Street includes large corporate centers and access to a regional airport (Westchester County Airport).

In Greenwich development along the corridor is zoned for residential and institutional uses and includes several private schools, two nursing homes, the Griff Harris Town-owned golf course and Fairview Country Club.

Development of Chieftains (the Gimbel property) involved large residences and preservation of 50 percent of the lot areas as open space. It preserved the original estate buildings, reinforcing the residential character.

The mixture of uses on both sides of the street provides for an interesting dynamic. Greenwich may also be able to work with local transit providers and businesses in the area to expand transit options and encourage van-pooling to all of the users in both states and especially to the Westchester Airport.

A plan is under consideration by the Greenwich institutional users to extend the private water line up King Street. They are working with Aquirion Water Company to explore financial feasibility and actual water needs. Greenwich is also developing plans for a new firehouse on upper King Street next to the Griff golf course.

ACTIONS

4.29 Continue to participate in a regional dialogue about the future function and role of King Street to serve all communities.
4.30 Develop a strategy and seek funding to encourage new and expanded transit and van pooling to institutions and businesses in the area and to the Westchester County Airport to minimize traffic and enhance transportation options.
4.31 Funding for the new fire station on King Street should be provided.