

SUSTAINABILITY / RESILIENCE BRIEFING BOOKLET

Overview

This “briefing booklet” has been prepared as part of the process of preparing an update to the Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) for Ridgefield.

This booklet is intended to familiarize the members of the Planning and Zoning Commission and others with existing and potential future strategies related to:

- sustainability (the philosophy of encouraging activities that allow present generations to meet their needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs), and
- resiliency (the community’s ability to withstand, respond to, and readily recover from sudden change or adversity).

These topics are linked since, as some have observed, mankind’s inability to act sustainably has contributed to mankind’s need to adapt to climate change and other impactful events and trends.

*“The best time
to plant a tree
was twenty
years ago.*

*The second best
time is now.”*

Anonymous

Sustainability



Resiliency



Become More Sustainable

POSSIBLE GOAL STATEMENT	<i>Strive to become a more sustainable community.</i>
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The 2010 POCD mentioned sustainability in the following ways:

1. the overall Plan Philosophy (page 2-1 and page 4-2) included “overall development patterns and transportation choices promote environmental sustainability”,
2. The summary of POCD recommendations on page 2-4 included “improve the sustainability of Town practices and facilities” with regard to community facilities and services,
3. A sidebar on page 6-1 indicating that “strategies related to environmental sustainability are found throughout this Plan” and that “strategies related to energy consumption and alternative energy sources are found in later chapters.”
4. The section on Residential Development (text and sidebar on page 10-7 and strategy on page 10-8) recognized that residences are often the largest energy consumers in a community and encouraged energy efficient housing and retrofits in Ridgefield.
5. The section on Business Development promoted (text on page 11-7 and strategy on page 11-8) regarding “green buildings”, “sustainable building practices”, and encouraging buildings to be energy efficient.
6. The section on community facilities (page 12-12) recommends “environmentally sustainable public facilities” and becoming more “green,” particularly in terms of reducing energy consumption, exploring alternative energy options, and reducing waste.
7. Pages 12-14 and 16-12 recommended the following with regard to community facilities:
 - a. Continue to work towards the goal of obtaining at least 20% of energy from renewable energy sources.
 - b. Continue and expand efforts to reduce the energy consumption of municipal facilities.
 - c. Incorporate green building measures when facilities are built, renovated or expanded.
 - d. Continue recycling and electronic waste disposal programs and improve and expand as warranted.

More and more communities are addressing “sustainability” in their POCDs and Ridgefield should consider doing the same. There might be several alternative strategies for how to accomplish this.

Option 1 – Continue With 2010 POCD Text

The recommendations from the 2010 POCD could be consolidated into a new “Sustainability” chapter. This would continue current strategies for another ten years (least aggressive) but put them all in one place.

Option 2 – Supplement 2010 POCD Text With More Sustainability Concepts

Recommendations from the 2010 POCD could be consolidated into a new “Sustainability” chapter and supplemented with some specific sustainability strategies:

Energy Consumption – Strategies related to energy could include:

- Reducing energy use / becoming more energy efficient
- Considering life-cycle costing in energy-related decisions
- Encouraging increased use of renewable energy (solar, wind, etc.)
- Promoting “greener” buildings / vehicles
- Providing for alternative approaches (fuel cell, micro-grids, etc.)
- Providing for electric car charging stations

Water Consumption – Strategies related to water could include:

- Reducing water use
- Reducing water waste / recycling water
- Using low-impact development (LID) strategies to address stormwater quality and quantity

Waste Generation – Strategies related to waste could include:

- Reducing waste (including food waste)
- Reducing use of plastic bags, straws, etc.
- Increasing recycling / composting

Greenhouse Gas Emissions – Strategies related to greenhouse gas emissions could include:

- Reducing reliance on fossil fuels
- Reducing CO₂ emissions such as Connecticut’s targets of reducing the state’s CO₂ emissions:
 - to 55% of 2001 levels by 2030. and
 - to 20% of 2001 levels by 2050
- Seeking to reduce the atmospheric concentration of CO₂

SustainableCT

Through the efforts of the Ridgefield Action Committee for the Environment (RACE) and others, Ridgefield has obtained Bronze certification from Sustainable CT in 2018 and is working on ways to get Silver certification.

Sustainable CT Certificate



Option 3 – Incorporate POCD Elements From The SustainableCT Program

SustainableCT is an organization formed over the last few years to help Connecticut municipalities address sustainability issues. Sustainable CT has created a framework with points for communities to obtain “certification” and Ridgefield has already obtained Bronze certification.

The SustainableCT framework for a POCD (edited, reorganized, and summarized below) could be incorporated into the POCD chapters.

1. REDUCE DEPENDENCE ON FOSSIL FUELS, UNDERGROUND METALS, AND MINERALS

Conservation Related	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Encourage local food production and agriculture that reduce the need for long-range shipping. 2. Use local materials and native plants to reduce transport distances and reduce maintenance.
Development Related	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Compact mixed-use development to reduce vehicle miles traveled. 4. Transit-oriented development. 5. Develop near existing transport systems; minimizing need for new road and highway construction. 6. A mix of integrated uses within walking or bicycling distance. 7. Human-scaled development that is pedestrian-friendly. 8. Home-based occupations and work that reduce the need to commute. 9. Provide housing near places of employment.
Infrastructure Related	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10. Design local streets that encourage pedestrian and bicycle use. 11. Provide recreational facilities within walking and bicycling distance. 12. Develop community gardens that reduce the need for long-range transport of food and associated consumption of fossil fuels.
Other	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 13. Increase ... use of alternatives to the drive-alone automobile ... 14. Develop and use vehicles powered by renewable fuel sources. 15. Reduce employee and product transport vehicle trips. 16. Reduce the use of ... potentially toxic metals ... 17. Maintain properties with minimal fossil-fuel-powered equipment. 18. Select building materials with low "embodied energy" ... 19. Encourage residents to use other than fossil-powered transport. 20. Minimize energy use. 21. Reduce dependence on fossil fuels. 22. Encourage or require solar-oriented housing & buildings. 23. Encourage or require regenerative heating and cooling alternatives. 24. Encourage the ... local siting of renewable energy generation. 25. Discourage the use of products that utilize packaging derived from non-renewable, non-degradable resources. 26. Promote recycling, especially ... from non-renewable, non-degradable resources.

2. REDUCE ACTIVITIES THAT NEGATIVELY IMPACT NATURE

<p>Conservation Related</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Minimize disruption of natural systems. 2. Prevent wetlands destruction; restore degraded wetlands. 3. Guide development away from floodplains and preserve or restore areas along rivers for natural flood control. 4. Preserve and enhance water quality. 5. Recharge groundwater basins. 6. Use stormwater techniques that enhance and restore natural habitats and reuse / restore the quality of on-site runoff. 7. Reduce or eliminate impervious paving materials. 8. Prevent activities that emit waste or pollutants into the environment. 9. Respect regional ecosystems, biotic corridors and natural functions. 10. Use agricultural approaches that build up topsoil and minimize water use. 11. Fund open space acquisition. 12. Preserve wildlife habitats and biological diversity in area ecosystems and preserve wilderness areas. 13. Restore damaged natural systems through regenerative design approaches. 14. Create systems of green spaces and biotic corridors within and among communities. 15. Use regionally native plants for landscaping. 16. Development patterns that respect natural systems such as watersheds and wildlife corridors.
<p>Development Related</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 17. Establish development and population growth policies linked to the carrying capacity of natural systems and community facilities. 18. Guide development to existing developed areas and minimize development in outlying, undeveloped areas. 19. Create financial and regulatory incentives to infill development; and eliminate of disincentives. 20. Develop compact and clustered residential areas with reduced minimum lot sizes. 21. Reuse existing buildings and sites for development. 22. Remediate and redevelop brownfield sites. 23. Maintain a well-defined "edge" around each community that is permanently protected from development.
<p>Infrastructure Related</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 24. Reduce water use to minimize developing new water sources. 25. Re-use processed water. 26. Create urban gardens and community gardens. 27. Establish on-site composting of organic waste. 28. Develop responsible alternatives to solid waste landfills. 29. Promote innovative treatment for sewage and effluent. 30. Recognize the lifecycle costs of waste generation and disposal. 31. Promote composting and gray-water reuse systems,
<p>Other</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 32. Use recycled building materials to minimize the use of virgin materials. 33. Use life cycle analysis for construction materials and techniques. 34. Recycle building construction waste materials. 35. Use recycled or by-products of other businesses. 36. Educational efforts to reduce levels of consumption and waste generation at the household and community levels.

3. MEET HUMAN NEEDS FAIRLY AND EFFICIENTLY

Conservation Related	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Address geographic areas or demographic groups disproportionately impacted by environmental burdens and pollution. 2. Encourage local agriculture, providing a nearby source of fresh, healthy food for people.
Development Related	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Plan and promote growth management policies that recognize the values of a diverse local population and economy. 4. Promote neighborhoods and housing developments that are socially cohesive. 5. Provide for housing that residents at many income levels can afford. 6. Provide for diverse housing occupancy (age, social, and cultural groups.) 7. Provide for housing located near employment centers. 8. Fulfill local employment and consumer needs without degrading the environment. 9. Create vibrant community-based economies with employment opportunities that allow people economic self-determination and environmental health. 10.
Infrastructure Related	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. Provide access to affordable, efficient transportation for low-income households, elders, and others that cannot or do not own cars. 12. Clean, conserve, and reuse wastewater in ways that reduce the need for large, expensive collection systems and regional processing facilities.
Other	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 13. Promote financial and social equity in the workplace. 14. Understanding current demographics and projected demographics for the community. 15. Integrally involving local residents in setting the vision for and developing plans for the community and region. 16. Establish avenues for meaningful participation in decision-making for all residents and in particular for historically disadvantaged people. 17. Provide for equitable educational opportunities for all members of society. 18. Promote retraining of those workers displaced in the short-term by a shift of industries and businesses to a more sustainable economy. 19.

4. REDUCE DEPENDENCE ON CHEMICALS AND UNNATURAL SUBSTANCES

Conservation Related	1. Minimize the use of pesticides and promote native/naturalized landscapes.
Development Related	2. (none listed at this time)
Infrastructure Related	3. Use alternatives to chemical pesticides and herbicides in park and facility maintenance (for example, integrated pest management, planting natives that require fewer inputs).
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Encourage use of chemical-free and toxin-free building materials. 5. Encourage use of eco-friendly, non-toxic cleaners. 6. Encourage reduction of waste. 7. Promote recycling by residents and of building waste materials. 8. Actively seek ways to minimize the use of toxic manufactured substances. 9. Meet or exceed clean air standards. 10. Minimize use of chemicals and employ proper disposal and recycling mechanisms. 11. Use agricultural methods that ... minimize use of pesticides, herbicides, and manufactured fertilizers. 12. Use byproducts of other processes or whose wastes can be used as the raw materials for other industrial processes. 13. Treatment facilities that remove or destroy pathogens without creating chemically contaminated by-products. 14. Design approaches and regulatory systems that focus on pollution prevention, re-use and recycling. 15. Educate citizens and public servants about both short- and long-term risks associated with the use and disposal of hazardous materials.

5. PROMOTE ACTIVITIES THAT HAVE MULTIPLE BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

Conservation Related	1. Preserve and plant trees and other vegetation that absorb carbon dioxide and air pollutants.
Development Related	2. (none listed at this time)
Infrastructure Related	3. (none listed at this time)
Other	4. (none listed at this time)

Option 4 – Incorporate The Basics Of The Entire SustainableCT Program

CONCEPT I.	Thriving Local Economies
A.	Support Redevelopment of Brownfield Sites
B.	Implement Sustainable Purchasing
C.	Inventory and Promote Local Retail Options
D.	Provide Resources and Supports to Local Businesses
E.	Promote Sustainable Workforce Development
F.	Participate in and Promote C-Pace Program

CONCEPT II.	Well-Stewarded Land and Natural Resources
A.	Create a Watershed Management Plan
B.	Engage in Watershed Protection and Restoration
C.	Develop an Open Space Plan
D.	Create a Natural Resource and Wildlife Inventory
E.	Manage for Drought and Municipal Water Use
F.	Provide Education on Water Conservation
G.	Implement Low Impact Development (LID)
H.	Manage Woodlands and Forests
I.	Facilitate Invasive Species Education and Management
J.	Implement Green Grounds and Maintenance Program

CONCEPT III.	Vibrant and Creative Cultural Ecosystems
A.	Map Tourism and Cultural Assets
B.	Support Arts and Creative Culture
C.	Develop a Creative Placemaking Plan
D.	Provide an Arts and Culture Program for Youth

CONCEPT IV.	Dynamic and Resilient Planning
A.	Integrate Sustainability into Plan of Conservation and Development and Zoning
B.	Adapt Permitting Process to Promote Sustainable Development
C.	Develop Agricultural-Friendly Practices
D.	Assess Climate Vulnerability
E.	Inventory and Assess Historic Resources
F.	Streamline Solar Permitting for Small Solar Installations

CONCEPT V. Clean and Diverse Transportation Systems and Choices	
A.	Implement Complete Streets
B.	Promote Effective Parking Management
C.	Encourage Smart Commuting
D.	Support Zero Emission Vehicle Deployment
E.	Promote Public Transit and Other Mobility Strategies

CONCEPT VI. Efficient Physical Infrastructure and Operations	
A.	Benchmark and Track Energy Use
B.	Reduce Energy Use Across All Municipal Buildings
C.	6.3 Achieve High Energy Performance for Individual Buildings
D.	Increase Use of Renewable Energy in Municipal Buildings
E.	Develop a Municipal Energy Plan
F.	Manage Municipal Fleets
G.	Install Efficient Street Lights
H.	Implement a Community Energy Campaign

CONCEPT VII. Strategic and Inclusive Public Services	
A.	Hold a Sustainability Event
B.	Provide Effective Community Communications
C.	Train Municipal Commissions
D.	Encourage Healthy and Sustainable Food Networks
E.	Report Materials Management Data and Reduce Waste
F.	Implement Save Money and Reduce Trash (SMART) Program
G.	Recycle Additional Materials and Compost Organics
H.	Develop a Food Waste Reduction Campaign
I.	Conduct Health Impact Assessments
J.	Encourage Smoke-Free and Tobacco-Free Public Spaces

CONCEPT VIII. Healthy, Efficient and Diverse Housing	
A.	Design and Implement a Housing Needs Assessment
B.	Grow Sustainable and Affordable Housing Options
C.	Benchmark Energy and Water Use for Multifamily Housing

CONCEPT IX. Inclusive and Equitable Community Impacts	
A.	Optimize for Equity

CONCEPT X. Implement [Another] Sustainability Action	
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Option 5 – Incorporate The Details Of The Entire SustainableCT Program

1. Thriving Local Economies

1.1. Support Redevelopment of Brownfield Sites

- Create a municipal or regional brownfields inventory.
- Engage the community to prioritize brownfield sites for redevelopment.
- Hold a process of public engagement to identify potential reuse options.

1.2. Implement Sustainable Purchasing

- Adopt a sustainable purchasing policy and distribute it to all municipal departments.
- Develop and maintain an up-to-date vendor list.

1.3. Inventory and Promote Local Retail Options

- Select a target sector and develop an inventory of local retail options for that sector.
- Develop, implement and maintain an ongoing "buy local" campaign.

1.4. Provide Resources and Supports to Local Businesses

- Create and maintain a business-to-business registry
- Host ... business roundtables to support dialogue on ... the needs and opportunities to build and expand business development in the community.
- Create or support ... Main Street Programs, ... Central Business Development Districts, or other comparable entities.
- Invite businesses to participate ... events to build community recognition, provide access to potential customers, and connect the businesses to civic and community organizations.

1.5. Promote Sustainable Workforce Development

- Conduct a sustainable jobs and workforce capacity assessment
- Establish or support a sustainable job training partnership.
- Create networking opportunities for local job seekers to meet individuals working in or operating sustainable businesses.

1.6. Participate in and Promote C-Pace Program

- Pass a municipal resolution to opt-in to C-PACE ...
- Encourage local building owners to access C-PACE financing ...
- Earn credit for C-PACE projects ... undertaking clean energy improvements.

2. Well-Stewarded Land and Natural Resources

2.1. Create a Watershed Management Plan

- Conduct a Natural Resources Inventory for a watershed
- Review existing ... regulations for alignment with watershed protection goals.
- Develop a list of priority actions and projects for reaching watershed protection goals.

2.2. Engage in Watershed Protection and Restoration

- Complete an Action Plan Project.
- Adopt Source Water/Riparian Corridor Protection.

2.3. Develop an Open Space Plan

- Complete an open space inventory ...
- Prioritize resources for protection.
- Develop an open space preservation plan.

2.4. Create a Natural Resource and Wildlife Inventory

- Develop a natural resources and wildlife (NRW) inventory.
- Integrate your NRW inventory into planning documents and/or decision-making processes.

2.5. Manage for Drought and Municipal Water Use

- Establish a ... policy to utilize *WaterSense* labeled [fixtures] in all new municipal construction and ... [for] scheduled or unscheduled replacement.
- Develop a ... communications plan to inform residents about ... drought restrictions.
- Pass a drought restriction ordinance that integrates ... with the state drought plan

2.6. Provide Education on Water Conservation

- Sponsor or host a water conservation education workshop that targets local businesses and residents in your community.
- Identify and disseminate water conservation educational materials to businesses and residents through multiple communications channels.

2.7. Implement Low Impact Development (LID)

- Education - Encourage LID practices on private property. Develop and distribute educational materials ... Host an educational event on stormwater issues and LID.
- Planning, Regulation and Policy - Include a section on ... stormwater management and support of LID solutions in your POCD. Encourage and promote LID in your regulations (such as, zoning, subdivision and road ordinances)
- Implementation - Develop and implement a LID demonstration project with signage in a high-visibility location. Develop a long-term maintenance plan for LID installations on municipal property.

2.8. Manage Woodlands and Forests

- Establish a Forestry Advisory Committee.
- The Forestry Advisory Committee must complete at least one activity, i.e. assessing tree cover, establishing a tree planting program, etc.

2.9. Facilitate Invasive Species Education and Management

- Municipal Management of Invasive Species - Examine regulations to ensure that your municipality is not unintentionally supporting the use of non-native species; eliminate all invasive species from lists of acceptable plants. Embed invasive species management practices into your grounds maintenance practices. Practices should be environmentally sound as opposed to widespread application of herbicides and pesticides
- Educate municipal grounds keeping staff on invasive species management practices utilized by your municipality.
- Municipal Removal of Invasive Species
- Engage in invasive species management practices on municipal properties
- Residential Education
- On your municipal website post invasive species education resources. Provide links to sources (may be external) outlining invasive species identification and removal techniques.
- Host or sponsor an educational workshop for residents about invasive species and removal processes.

2.10. Implement Green Grounds and Maintenance Program

- Complete the ... inventory for properties maintained by your municipality.
- Ground Treatment BMP:- Utilize an Integrated Pest Management Standard OR Utilize an Organic Lawn Care Standard.
- Irrigation BMP - Assess annual irrigation patterns and reduce where possible.
- Runoff BMP - Pervious pavement OR disconnect impervious surface.
- Land Use Practices BMP - Native planting and pruning policy OR education program.

3. Vibrant and Creative Cultural Ecosystems

3.1. Map Tourism and Cultural Assets

- Create a Tourism and Cultural Asset Map. Create a useable and public online resource. Create a maintenance plan for updating the ... web resource [and] ... the map.
- Update and maintain the municipal profile on the CTVisit website. Upload seasonal images. Maintain the content, images, and functioning links periodically.

3.2. Support Arts and Creative Culture

- Include arts and culture in publicly available municipal marketing (printed or web-based).
- Establish and designate/appoint an Arts and Culture Liaison or ... a Cultural Office or Arts and Culture Department/Council. Establish an Arts District.
- Commit dedicated funding to the arts. Establish an annual recognition program for local artists. Streamline permitting system for events, performances, etc. in public spaces.

3.3. Develop a Creative Placemaking Plan

- Engage diverse culture bearers, artists of all kinds and members from the arts and culture field in the creation of your Creative Placemaking Plan.
- Develop a Creative Placemaking Plan. Your plan may be for a neighborhood or selected area of your community, or for your entire municipality.
- Integrate the Placemaking Plan into the Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD).

3.4. Provide an Arts and Culture Program for Youth

- Inventory what is currently offered in the school system and after school, what types of arts and culture programming community members want to create in the future, and what has been done historically (go as far back as is appropriate for your community).
- Convene a diverse selection of community representatives for a round table discussion about connecting to the town's youth.
- Using the inventory, create an education program that includes the recommended steps developed in the stakeholder meeting, plus event examples and/or documentation of completion. Identify which entity will implement each recommended step.
- Describe the budget and funding source to implement the program.
- Implement elements of the program as identified in the recommended actions.

4. Dynamic and Resilient Planning

4.1. Integrate Sustainability into Plan of Conservation and Development and Zoning

- [Include] the Hazard Mitigation Plan and ...other sustainability concepts. [in the POCD]
- [Incorporate sustainability concepts in the] zoning regulations
- Create an implementation guidance document ... that integrates sustainability concepts.

4.2. Adapt Permitting Process to Promote Sustainable Development

- Develop sustainability checklists for zoning and building applicants ...
- [Provide a] Site Plan approval process for projects that meet sustainable design standards.
- Establish or amend municipal policy for pre-application review.
- Review town processes for permitting and create a Development Review Manual.

4.3. Develop Agricultural-Friendly Practices

- Pass a right-to-farm ordinance.
- Adopt regulations to promote open space, subdivisions/clustering of housing.
- Create right-to-farm regulations allowing roadside farm stands and farm signage.
- Establish an open space/farmland acquisition fund.

4.4. Assess Climate Vulnerability

- Conduct a Climate Vulnerability Assessment. Identify unique aspects or areas as outlined in the POCD that may be vulnerable to climate change. Create a list of primary vulnerabilities
- Identify how the secondary impacts of climate change will likely affect the community.
- Demonstrate that special consideration has been given to low-income residents and their particular vulnerability to extreme weather events.

4.5. Inventory and Assess Historic Resources

- Identify priority historic assets within your community, and actions required to sustain their long-term viability.
- Assess viability of assets.
- [Educate] owners of historic homes on how to manage their historic building(s) sustainably.
- Achieve "Certified Local Government" status.

4.6. Streamline Solar Permitting for Small Solar Installations

- Make the solar permitting process simple and transparent.
- Review zoning requirements and identify restrictions that prohibit solar development.
- Create an online checklist detailing the steps of your community's solar permitting process.
- Review the permitting process for efficiency improvements.
- Integrate solar PV and/or shared solar (pilot project(s) and/or virtual net metering) into your local energy, climate, and conservation plans.
- Train staff on best practices in planning and zoning for solar PV.

5. Clean and Diverse Transportation Systems and Choices

5.1. Implement Complete Streets

- Build a Complete Streets Team that reflects the demographics of your town.
- Have municipal elected officials and/or staff members participate in a Complete Streets training.
- By municipal resolution or ordinance, adopt a Complete Streets Policy that states an intent to plan, design, build and maintain all roads to meet the needs of all users.
- Inventory and review planning and design documents and conduct an audit of existing plans, policies and other guidance documents to ensure consistency with Complete Streets Team meeting and workshop discussion outcomes.
- Implement, repair and maintain specific projects that expand safe, connected active transportation networks across all neighborhoods.

5.2. Promote Effective Parking Management

- Conduct a parking needs assessment.
- Implement non-regulatory parking management strategies.
- Implement regulatory parking management strategies.

5.3. Encourage Smart Commuting

- Achieve silver or gold status as a Partner in the CTrides program or provide at least six incentives or amenities from the checklist provided in the action.

5.4. Support Zero Emission Vehicle Deployment

- Clarify the status of zero emission vehicle (ZEV) infrastructure within municipal regulations and host an educational workshop.
- Replace at least 5% of non-emergency passenger vehicles with ZEVs.
- Conduct an assessment of where ZEV charging infrastructure is needed in the community.
- Host at least one electric vehicle charging station for public use on municipal property.

5.5. Promote Public Transit and Other Mobility Strategies

- Educate residents about alternative routes and transportation methods.
- With community engagement and education, conduct a community mobility needs assessment.
- In collaboration with other municipal, regional or state entities, coordinate local, state and interstate transit schedules to ensure proper connections.
- Support shared mobility services. NOTE: services such as dial-a-ride and senior vans do NOT count as a "shared mobility service"
- Ensure that municipal transit vehicles meet the needs of all users, including but not limited to bicyclists and pedestrians of all abilities.

6. Efficient Physical Infrastructure and Operations

6.1. Benchmark and Track Energy Use

- Track energy use in municipal and board of education buildings:
- Track energy use of wastewater treatment plants:

6.2. Reduce Energy Use Across All Municipal Buildings

- Choose an energy efficiency target.
- Achieve weighted energy use intensity reductions of at least 10% of overall municipal buildings as compared to the baseline year.

6.3 Achieve High Energy Performance for Individual Buildings

- Achieve an energy efficiency target in buildings
- Achieve an energy efficiency target in wastewater treatment plants:

6.3. Increase Use of Renewable Energy in Municipal Buildings

- Purchase or install Class I clean energy sources to power municipal buildings

6.4. Develop a Municipal Energy Plan

- Adopt an energy use reduction pledge
- Formally adopt a Municipal Energy Plan
- Formally adopt a Residential / Business Energy Plan
 - Identify how your municipality will track residential / business sector energy use
 - Adopt a target for energy use reduction in the residential / business sectors

6.5. Manage Municipal Fleets

- Inventory the existing fleet
- Complete and adopt a Municipal Fleet Improvement Strategy

6.6. Install Efficient Street Lights

- If a utility company owns the street lights, initiate the conversion process with the utility.
- [Create] a streetlight plan, inventory and needs assessment.

6.7. Implement a Community Energy Campaign

- Identify a target audience on which to focus your energy campaign. .
- Select or design a campaign to educate your audience about available programs that encourage implementation of energy efficiency measures designed for that audience.
- Carry out the campaign

7. Strategic and Inclusive Public Services

7.1. Hold a Sustainability Event

- Provide municipal support for a new sustainability event
- Track the publicity and number of event attendees

7.2. Provide Effective Community Communications

- [Develop] a communications strategy to target audiences across community
- Implement communications strategy

7.3. Train Municipal Commissions

- Send ... Commissions to [a] training session that is relevant to their commission.

7.4. Encourage Healthy and Sustainable Food Networks

- [Compile and distribute] ... a Community Food Indicators Report.
- [Create a] plan to ensure community members can access sustainable, healthy food

7.5. Report Materials Management Data and Reduce Waste

- [Collect and report] data on municipal solid waste and recycling
- Reduce residential solid waste generation per capita by at least 10%

7.6. Implement Save Money and Reduce Trash (SMART) Program

- Conduct ... a process of community ... education regarding SMART program adoption.
- [Adopt] a SMART program.

7.7. Recycle Additional Materials and Compost Organics

- [Educate] residents about targeted recycling initiatives ...

7.8. Develop a Food Waste Reduction Campaign

- [Implement] or maintain an ongoing food waste reduction campaign ...

7.9. Conduct Health Impact Assessments

- [Participate] in training on performing health impact assessments.
- Conduct a health impact assessment in the community.

7.10. Encourage Smoke-Free and Tobacco-Free Public Spaces

- [Implement] or maintain a smoking and tobacco use reduction campaign
- Implement or maintain a strategic campaign to prevent excessive idling of motor vehicles.

8. Healthy, Efficient and Diverse Housing

8.1. Design and Implement a Housing Needs Assessment

- Create, expand and maintain the community's housing data profile.
- With community engagement and education, conduct a municipal and regional housing needs assessment.
- Distribute the Housing Needs Assessment to all municipal departments and relevant regional organizations.

8.2. Grow Sustainable and Affordable Housing Options

- Identify the current percentage of affordable housing in the community.
- Increase the municipality's affordable housing, as compared to a baseline year within the past 5 years.

8.3. Benchmark Energy and Water Use for Multifamily Housing

- Develop and implement an educational campaign for owners of multifamily properties.
- Track multifamily buildings that have had their energy and water use benchmarked.

9. Inclusive and Equitable Community Impacts

9.1. Optimize for Equity

- Complete the Sustainable CT Equity Toolkit in its entirety for any Sustainable CT action of your choice.

10. Implement [Additional] Sustainability Action

- Implement a sustainability action not listed on the Sustainable CT actions list.

Possible Strategies For 2019 POCD

Decide on an overall approach to sustainability based on the options on the preceding pages.

Do these policies and action steps make sense for Ridgefield?

Are there any policies or action steps you feel should be added?

A. Increase Overall Sustainability

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| 1. Continue to consider overall issues of sustainability in municipal decision making. |
| 2. Encourage residents and businesses to include sustainability considerations in their decision making. |
| 3. Continue to participate in programs and activities of SustainableCT (an independent organization which helps Connecticut municipalities make progress towards implementing sustainability initiatives). |
| 4. Continue to seek ways to accomplish reductions of CO ₂ emissions and reduction of the atmospheric concentration of greenhouse gasses. |
| 5. Continue to educate the community about sustainability concepts. |
| 6. Continue efforts to create transit-oriented and pedestrian friendly areas to reduce motor vehicle emissions and energy utilization. |

B. Become More Energy-Sustainable

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|---|
| 1. Encourage and support efforts to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. reduce energy use and become more energy efficient,b. include life-cycle costing in municipal decision-making,c. reduce reliance on fossil fuels, andd. address other energy sustainability issues. |
| 2. Encourage residents and businesses to conserve energy, become more energy efficient, and reduce reliance on fossil fuels. |
| 3. Review the Zoning Regulations and other municipal programs to address energy sustainability issues including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. promoting “greener” buildings / vehicles,b. providing for alternative approaches (fuel cell, micro-grids, etc.), andc. providing for electric car charging stations |
| 4. Continue the transition to LED streetlights with an eye towards balancing energy efficiency with human and environmental impacts, quality of life, and public safety. |

Be Resilient

POSSIBLE GOAL STATEMENT	<i>Strive to become a more resilient community.</i>
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For the POCD, resiliency relates to being able to absorb and/or recover from impactful events in an efficient and timely way.

In years past, the concept of resiliency would have included emergency response, storm preparation, and similar activities. Now, resiliency has grown to include the concept of “hazard mitigation” (identification, avoidance, mitigation, response) related to known hazards such as intense storms, flooding, and similar events.

In the future, the concept of resiliency will also need to include adaptation to climate change. There is increasing evidence that climate change (such as warming temperatures and) is occurring and affecting Ridgefield and other communities. This includes an increase in the occurrence of more frequent and intense storms which overwhelm the infrastructure (such as storm drainage systems) installed in many parts of the community.

Intense Rainfall Events



Severe Winter Storms



Washout From Undersize Culvert



Wind / Tornado Damage



The elements of being a resilient community can include:

Avoidance-Related	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identification / avoidance / risk reduction
Mitigation-Related	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Evaluating probability / risk scenarios• Evaluating approaches (protection / adaptation)• Balancing of cost / benefit• Hardening infrastructure (e.g. burying utilities)• Requiring resilient buildings in coastal areas• Promoting grid independence / interconnected community
Response-Related	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pre-event education / training• Pre-event response plans

A Hazard Mitigation Plan prepared for Ridgefield in 2015 identifies the major hazards (flooding, hurricanes and tropical storms, summer storms and tornadoes, winter storms, earthquakes, dam failure, wildfires) and strategies to reduce or eliminate risk to human life and property.

Recent weather events have proven this to be a worthwhile exercise and exercises like this should continue so that Ridgefield can be a resilient community when events like these occur in the future.

Emergency Response



Emergency Preparedness



Possible Strategies For 2019 POCD

A. Become More Resilient

1. Continue efforts to identify, avoid, reduce, mitigate, and recover from impactful events.
2. Implement the Hazard Mitigation Plan, as amended.
3. Maintain and update the Hazard Mitigation Plan in order to address risks and obtain funding.
4. Maintain and improve approaches for preparing for and responding to impactful events including:
 - a. emergency shelter capacity / supplies
 - b. redundant energy supply
 - c. "off-grid" generation (including generators and fuel cells)
 - d. mobile cellular antennae / charging stations

Do these policies and action steps make sense for Ridgefield?

Are there any policies or action steps you feel should be added?

Emergency Shelters



Phone Charging Stations



