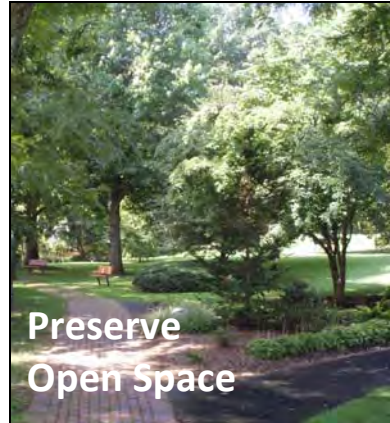
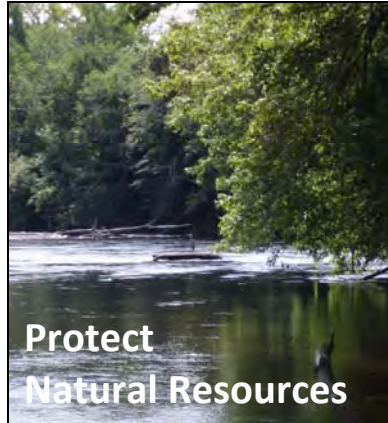


WHAT WE WANT TO PROTECT



PROTECT NATURAL RESOURCES

5

Overview

Natural resources are a barometer of overall environmental health and contribute to the character and appearance of Simsbury. Protecting natural resources is important to residents and is a key part of the POCD. While the telephone survey revealed that about 89 percent of Simsbury residents feel the Town is doing a good job protecting natural resources, these efforts must continue.

Land Resources



Water Resources



Flora



Fauna



What We Want To Protect - Natural Resources



In the telephone survey, participants were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with the following statement:

Simsbury is doing a good job protecting its natural resources such as rivers, streams and wetlands.

Strongly agree	26%
Agree	63%
Not sure	7%
Disagree	4%
Strongly disagree	1%

Land Resources

In terms of landform, Simsbury contains several prominent features:

- The Talcott Mountain ridgeline on the eastern side of Simsbury,
- Onion Mountain / Sugarloaf / Hedgehog / West Mountain on the western side of Simsbury, and
- a broad valley between these two ridgelines containing the Farmington River.

Water Resources

The Farmington River is the main watercourse in Simsbury. It flows north through Simsbury before turning south and east through the Tariffville Gorge on its way to the Connecticut River and Long Island Sound. Simsbury has numerous other surface water resources (brooks, streams, ponds, wetlands, etc.).

Groundwater resources are just as important. Simsbury has large areas of aquifers (geologic formations capable of holding large amounts of water) and these provide drinking water to public water supplies and private wells.

Protecting water quality is one of the key recommendations of the POCD.

Water Resources



Water Resources



What We Want To Protect - Natural Resources

Air Resources

While there may be little that a Town can do directly with regard to air quality (air quality is regulated by State and Federal agencies), it is an important natural resource consideration. To the extent that it can, Simsbury should continue to promote policies and programs to maintain and improve air quality.

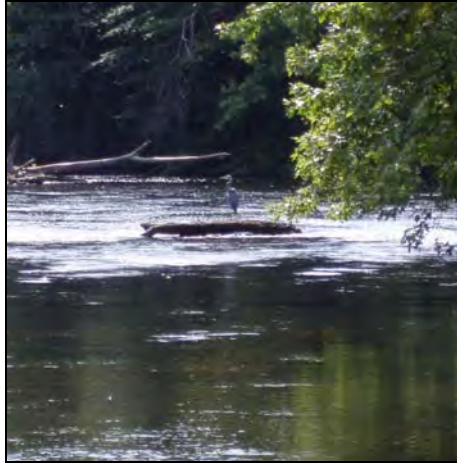
Biological Resources

Simsbury contains a number of diverse habitats that sustain a variety of plants and animals. Some areas in Simsbury are on the State's Natural Diversity Database meaning that such areas sustain rare or endangered species or support the species of special concern.

Spotted Salamander



Bird At Tariffville Gorge



GOAL

Maintain an appropriate balance between the use of land and the conservation of natural resources.

What We Want To Protect - Natural Resources

Groundwater Protection

In the 1980s, Simsbury was ahead of many other communities in Connecticut in terms of being concerned about aquifer protection. Simsbury worked with the United States Geological Survey to drill test borings and study aquifer potential.

Based on that work, Simsbury adopted some groundwater protection regulations which were advanced for their time.

Since then, the regulatory framework in Connecticut has changed and the tools to protect groundwater areas has also changed.

5.1 *Protect surface and groundwater quality.*

A. WATER QUALITY - Simsbury will:	Leader	Partners
1. Continue to protect water quality.	Town	FVHD DEEP
2. Administer and enforce regulations intended to protect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> existing public water supply wells, and aquifers and associated recharge areas. <input type="checkbox"/> a. <i>Review map boundaries and text related to locally defined aquifer areas.</i>	Town ZC	CWC DEEP
3. Consider impacts on water quality and public health as part of land use decisions.	FVHD	Town
4. Coordinate with other organizations to protect water quality and remediate threats to water quality or public health.	Town	FVHD DEEP
<i>Code legend is on inside back cover</i>		

B. LID (Water Quality) - Simsbury will:	Leader	Partners
1. Promote the use of "low impact development" (LID) strategies, where appropriate, to help protect water quality. <input type="checkbox"/> a. <i>Review Town regulations for opportunities to minimize impervious surface as part of new development.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> b. <i>Update engineering standards to incorporate "best management practices" for LID.</i>	Town ZC	
2. Where LID strategies for protecting water quality are not appropriate, utilize other mechanisms (such as particle separator chambers and bio-remediation filters) to minimize degradation of water quality.	PW PW	
<i>Code legend is on inside back cover</i>		

C. SEPTIC MANAGEMENT - Simsbury will:	Leader	Partners
1. Promote proper maintenance of on-site water and sewage disposal systems.	FVHD	CWC
2. Monitor the long-term impacts of septic systems on soil and groundwater.	FVHD	CWC
<i>Code legend is on inside back cover</i>		

Key Water Resource Areas

Granby

East Granby

Simsbury, CT



Bloomfield

Canton

Avon

Legend



Public Well Recharge Areas (CT Level A Aquifer Protection Area)



Public Water Supply Watersheds



Highest Potential Aquifer Yield



Moderate Potential Aquifer Yield



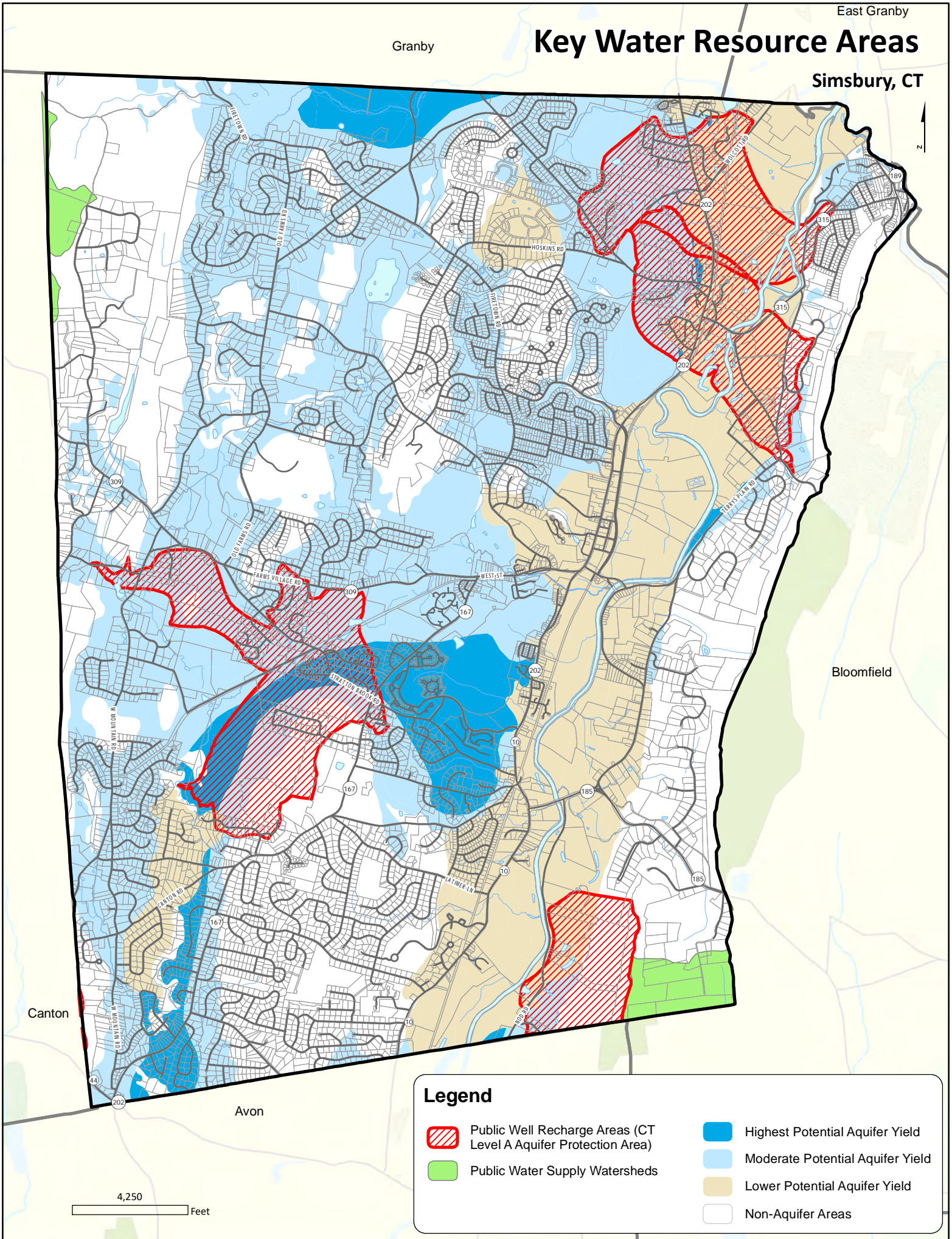
Lower Potential Aquifer Yield



Non-Aquifer Areas

4,250

Feet



5.2 *Protect other significant water-related resources.*

A. WATER RESOURCES - Simsbury will:	Leader	Partners
1. Preserve and protect watercourses, wetlands, and flood-plains and their functions.	CWC	ZC PC
2. Encourage or require appropriate setbacks along stream belts (riparian setbacks) and from wetland areas.	CWC	ZC PC
3. Coordinate with other organizations to protect water resources.	CWC	FVHD DEEP
<i>Code legend is on inside back cover</i>		

B. FLOODPLAINS - Simsbury will:	Leader	Partners
1. Continue to implement the provisions in the Zoning Regulation regulating activities in flood-prone areas.	Town	ZC
2. Participate in the National Flood Insurance Program.	Town	
<input type="checkbox"/> a. <i>Investigate the benefits of participating in FEMA's Community Rating System.</i>	Town	
<i>Code legend is on inside back cover</i>		

C. LID (Water Quantity) - Simsbury will:	Leader	Partners
1. Promote the use of "low impact development" (LID) strategies, where and when appropriate, to help manage runoff quantity and promote stormwater infiltration.	Town	CWC ZC PC
<i>Code legend is on inside back cover</i>		

5.3 *Protect significant land-related natural resources.*

A. LAND RESOURCES - Simsbury will:	Leader	Partners
1. Protect trap rock ridges from development.	Town	
2. Protect steep slopes (grade over 20%) from development.	Town	
3. Coordinate with other organizations to protect land resources.	Town	
<i>Code legend is on inside back cover</i>		

Natural Resources Plan

Granby

Simsbury, CT

East
Granby

Bloomfield

Avon

Canton

Legend

-  Watercourses
-  Wetlands
-  Steep Slopes >15%
-  Natural Diversity
Database (NDDB)
Areas
-  FEMA 100 Year Flood
Zone
-  FEMA 500 Year Flood
Zone

4,250

Feet

5.4 *Protect the overall environment and other significant natural resources.*

• NATURAL DIVERSITY - Simsbury will:	Leader	Partners
1. Seek to preserve environmentally sensitive areas identified: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> by the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) in their Natural Diversity Database, by the Farmington River Watershed Association, by the Simsbury Land Trust, or in any similar comprehensive inventory. 	Town	CWC ZC PC
2. Encourage developments to use habitat-friendly design elements (such nesting structures, “turtle tunnels”, etc.), where appropriate.	Town	CWC ZC PC
<input type="checkbox"/> a. <i>Incorporate standards for the protection of vernal pool ecosystems into land use regulations.</i>	CWC	ZC PC
3. Encourage the use of native plant species.	Town	
4. Prohibit the use of invasive or non-native plant species	Town	
<i>Code legend is on inside back cover</i>		

• AIR QUALITY - Simsbury will:	Leader	Partners
1. Seek ways to implement best management practices to protect air quality.	Town	DEEP
<i>Code legend is on inside back cover</i>		

• DEVELOPMENT PROCESS - Simsbury will:	Leader	Partners
1. Encourage use of a “pre-application” process for proposed development within sensitive environmental areas.	Town	
2. Protect and preserve significant natural resources through acquisition of conservation easements, purchase of land / development rights, or cluster development techniques.	Town	ZC PC
<i>Code legend is on inside back cover</i>		

• COORDINATION - Simsbury will:	Leader	Partners
1. Coordinate with other organizations to protect other natural resources.	Town	
<i>Code legend is on inside back cover</i>		

PRESERVE OPEN SPACE

Overview

Open space helps protect community character, enhance the quality of life for residents, conserve important natural resources, provide wildlife habitat, provide fiscal and economic benefits, shape development patterns, and preserve lands for recreational uses. Preservation of open space is important to Simsbury residents and has been for many years.

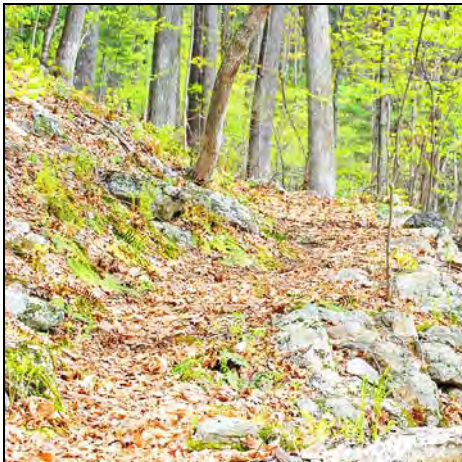
Town Park



State Park



Land Trust



Trails



What We Want To Protect - Open Space



In the telephone survey, participants were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with the following statement:

Simsbury should try to acquire more land for open space and parks.

Strongly agree	17%
Agree	43%
Not sure	8%
Disagree	27%
Strongly disagree	6%

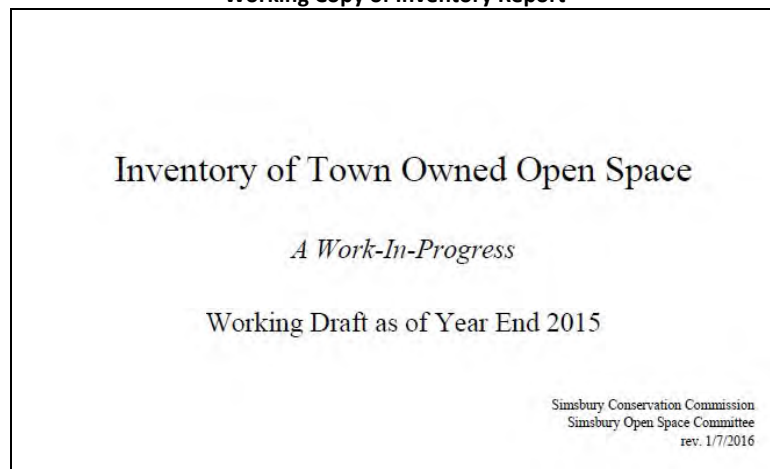
Simsbury has long recognized that acquiring and retaining open space will help maintain and preserve important local resources and community character. Simsbury has been very fortunate over the years to have had assistance in the preservation of open space by organizations such as the Simsbury Land Trust, McLean Game Refuge, the State of Connecticut, the Trust for Public Land, and other such organizations.

As part of the various meetings and workshops conducted as part of the planning process, residents expressed the following thoughts and concerns:

- Open space provides a number of benefits
- Preserving the open space we already have and acquiring more open space should be a high priority for the community
- We also need to maintain the open space we have
- Better walking paths and trails connecting existing and new development to open space areas will enhance values
- Simsbury should discontinue the practice of blindly acquiring open space as part of a residential subdivision if it doesn't add anything to the community.
- We need to prepare a Parks and Open Space Master Plan(s) to plan for the future maintenance needs of our parks and open space in town.
- We need to proceed with active management of selected forest parcels on town owned land.

Simsbury has established an Open Space Committee that has been working on an inventory of all Town-owned open space parcels in order to better understand the resources on each parcel and how the parcels relate to each other. These efforts should continue.

Working Copy of Inventory Report

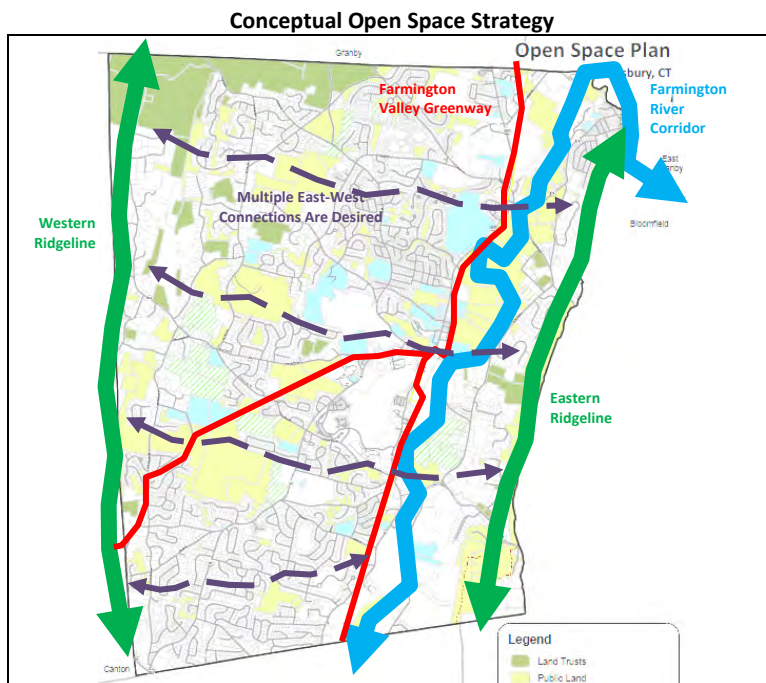


What We Want To Protect - Open Space

Overall, the concept of a “strategic” open space plan is an important future direction for Simsbury. This may involve establishing conservation easements on regulated areas and only acquiring land parcels when it protects an important resource or asset or adds to the overall open space system in Simsbury. Where open space is not preserved, the Town will seek to acquire a fee in lieu of open space in order to be able to acquire the open space it really wants or needs.

Overall, Simsbury’s “strategic open space vision” is to create a meaningful open space system consisting of:

- The eastern ridgeline / hillside (Talcott Mountain)
- The western ridgeline / hillside (Onion Mountain / Sugarloaf / Hedgehog / West Mountain)
- The Farmington River corridor
- As many east-west connections as possible to create wildlife corridors, greenway trails, riparian corridors, etc.



GOAL

Preserve open space to protect important resources, enhance community character, and enhance the quality of life.

6.1 Preserve important areas as open space.

A. PRO-ACTIVE APPROACHES - Simsbury will:	Leader	Partners
1. Actively seek to identify and preserve important open space properties.	OSC	SLT
<input type="checkbox"/> a. <i>Create a master plan that identifies and prioritizes open space for acquisition / preservation.</i>	OSC	SLT
<input type="checkbox"/> b. <i>Work with owners of land to explore means of preservation, including a right of first refusal.</i>	OSC	SLT
2. Utilize all potential funding sources (including a municipal "open space fund") to preserve desirable open space.	Town	
3. Coordinate and collaborate with the Simsbury Land Trust and other entities to preserve open space.	OSC	
<i>Code legend is on inside back cover</i>		

B. RE-ACTIVE APPROACHES - Simsbury will:	Leader	Partners
1. Seek to preserve land or obtain a fee-in-lieu-of-open space payment as part of every development.	PC	ZC
<input type="checkbox"/> a. <i>Modify the land use regulations to require as much as 50 percent open space in association with an open space/cluster subdivision.</i>	PC	
<input type="checkbox"/> b. <i>Modify the Zoning Regulations to require as much as 20 percent more open space (perhaps) in new mixed-use <u>developments</u>.</i>	ZC	
<input type="checkbox"/> c. <i>Review the Subdivision Regulations to ensure the "proportionality" requirement for open space is clearly written.</i>	PC	
2. Where preserving land in that location may not make sense, seek a "fee in lieu of open space" payment.	PC	
<input type="checkbox"/> a. <i>Review the Subdivision Regulations to ensure the "fee-in-lieu-of-open space" requirement for open space is clearly written</i>	PC	
<i>Code legend is on inside back cover</i>		

What We Want To Protect - Open Space

6.2 *Strive to create an open space system with inter-connected trails and other amenities, as appropriate.*

A. GREENWAY/OPEN SPACE SYSTEM - Simsbury will:	Leader	Partners
1. Seek to interconnect open spaces to the greatest extent possible to establish an overall greenway system.	OSC	CPR
2. Encourage the extension of the Farmington Canal Heritage Trail to create a multi-town "greenway" along the Farmington River.	OSC	
<input type="checkbox"/> a. <i>Promote creation of a State Park at Tariffville Gorge.</i>	Town	OSC CPR
<input type="checkbox"/> b. <i>Create a broad, conceptual master plan for Simsbury Meadows (the land between Iron Horse Boulevard and the river) and create access to the riverbank via Helen's Way.</i>	CPR	OSC
3. Seek to establish "greenway" systems along the trap rock ridges on both the east and west side of town.	OSC	
4. Seek to preserve parcels of open space that will provide linkage between the east and west ridgeline systems.	OSC	
<i>Code legend is on inside back cover</i>		

B. BLUEWAY - Simsbury will:	Leader	Partners
1. Promote a multi-town "blueway" along the Farmington River for canoeing, kayaking, tubing, rafting, and fishing.	OSC	
2. Increase public access to the Farmington River for launching and landing small boats, for fishing, and for other active and passive recreation.	OSC	CPR
<input type="checkbox"/> a. <i>Investigate the feasibility of increasing river access at Route #185 and Nod Road (canoe/kayak launch and parking).</i>		CPR
<input type="checkbox"/> b. <i>Provide a location for a canoe/kayak pullout near Simsbury Center, possibly with a publicly accessible picnic area.</i>		CPR
<input type="checkbox"/> c. <i>Improve the boat launch and access road in Tariffville Park.</i>		CPR
3. Support designation of the lower Farmington River as a Wild & Scenic River.	FRWA	OSC CWC
<i>Code legend is on inside back cover</i>		

What We Want To Protect - Open Space

Sidewalks

See Chapter 13 – Address Transportation Needs for discussion of sidewalks and other pedestrian and bicycle strategies.

C. TRAILS - Simsbury will:		Leader	Partners
1.	Seek to create an interconnected network of multi-purpose trails and other public ways for residents and visitors.	BPA	
<input type="checkbox"/>	a. <i>Establish a trail connecting the Farmington Canal Heritage Trail to Simsbury Farms, the Saddle Ridge Trails and the Owens Brook bike path.</i>	BPA	OSC CPR
<input type="checkbox"/>	b. <i>Complete the extension of the Farmington Canal Heritage Trail to Tariffville.</i>	BPA	OSC CPR
<input type="checkbox"/>	c. <i>Seek to more directly connect the Metacomet Trail Tariffville village.</i>	OSC	CPR
2.	Investigate providing sanitary facilities at trails, as needed, to support users for as much of the year as possible.	CPR	OSC
3.	Support efforts to designate the Metacomet Trail as a National Scenic Trail.	BPA	OSC CPR
		Code legend is on inside back cover	

D. WAYFINDING - Simsbury will:		Leader	Partners
1.	Seek to establish a “wayfinding” system for residents and visitors.	BPA	CPR
<input type="checkbox"/>	a. <i>Erect markers at access points for all trails and include “wayfinding” information where needed.</i>	BPA	CPR
<input type="checkbox"/>	b. <i>Publish maps with useful information about trails and access points for residents and visitors.</i>	BPA	CPR
		Code legend is on inside back cover	

McLean Game Refuge



Woods Trail



Open Space Plan

Simsbury, CT

Granby

East Granby

Bloomfield

Avon

Canton

See graphic on page 33 for conceptual open space strategy.

Legend

- Land Trusts
- Public Land
- Managed OS
- Development Rights Acquired
- Public / Semi-Public Facilities
- Metacomet Trail
- Farmington Valley Greenway
- Farmington Valley Greenway Extension
- Farmington River Trail

4,500

Feet

6.3 *Manage, maintain, and enhance open space areas.*

A. OVERALL - Simsbury will:		Leader	Partners
1. Maintain a comprehensive database of information to address the unique needs of each area.		OSC	
<input type="checkbox"/> a. <i>Complete the inventory and evaluation of open space land in order to:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Categorize land owned by the Town, the State, and other entities permitting public access describing all current and expected future uses (such as "permanent open space", "managed open space", facilities, or other system),</i> <i>Identify Town-owned parcels that may not contribute to an overall open space system and might be sold to abutters with a restrictive covenant placed on the land and funds designated solely to an open space acquisition / stewardship fund</i> 		OSC	
<input type="checkbox"/> b. <i>Create "management plans" for Town-owned open space areas in order to give them the attention they may need.</i>		OSC	
<input type="checkbox"/> c. <i>During the acceptance process, obtain "management plans" for open space dedications.</i>		Town	PC ZC
2. Monitor demand for, use of, and maintenance requirements of hiking and biking trails and waterway trails.		BPA	CPR
3. Provide adequate resources to maintain open space resources and monitor and enforce protective easements when used as a conservation tool.		OSC	
4. Where necessary, restrict public access and use of environmentally sensitive areas to educational or scientific purposes in order to minimize adverse impacts.		OSC	
		<i>Code legend is on inside back cover</i>	

MAINTAIN AND ENHANCE COMMUNITY CHARACTER

7

Overview

Community character is consistently cited as one of the attributes which makes Simsbury special to residents. Maintaining and enhancing community character is an over-arching principle of this POCD.

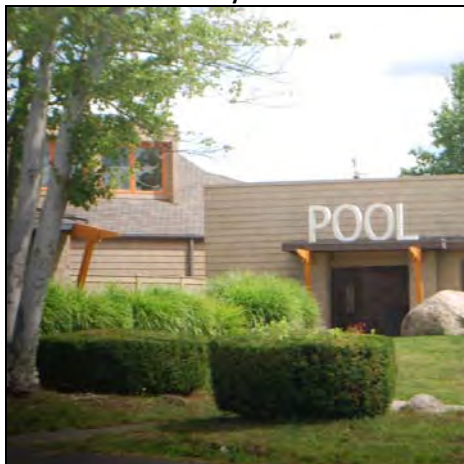
Sense of Place



Sense of Time



Community Amenities



Community Events



What We Want To Protect – Maintain And Enhance Community Character

“Sense of Place”

The concept of “place” is abstract, and defining it is elusive; however, you know it when you see it.

Place is found in the organizational patterns of the physical landscape, natural or built, i.e., ridgelines, signature brownstone buildings, winding secondary roads, etc., or in preserved historical land uses, such as farms, factories, mills, etc.

These patterns extend beyond the visual. It is more than just the way the town “looks”.

“Place” is also manifested in the interaction between human and habitat. The organizational pattern of a farmstead, for example, includes the familiar house, barns and fields. But it also includes the experience of a farm—the sounds (livestock and tractors), the smells (manure and freshly mown hay), and the history associated with the site (perhaps owned by the same family for generations or renowned for its organic produce).

Some of the attributes that contribute to community character in Simsbury include:

- Natural resources such as the topography of Talcott and the West Mountains and the Farmington River
- Open space resources
- Scenic views, scenic roads, and other scenic resources including views of the ridgelines, hillsides, and the river valley
- Farms and farming
- Historic buildings and sites
- Settlement patterns such as villages and other unique places
- Community services and facilities (such as schools and other Town services)
- Community amenities (such as the Farmington Canal Heritage Trail and Simsbury Farms)
- Community events (such as events at the Performing Arts Center)

A listing of some recognized character resources is contained on the following pages.

Yet, in reality, community character is not just any one of these things. It is the totality of all of these things. Simsbury has a “sense of place” because these elements (and many others) are all interwoven into the fabric of the community.

This “sense of place” is part of what draws people to Simsbury. People make a conscious choice to live here or visit here or stay here because of its small town character and sense of community and all of the elements that contribute to character.

Heublein Tower



Fountain in Weatogue



Town Clock



What We Want To Protect – Maintain And Enhance Community Character

Listing of Some Current And Former Character Resources

Buildings

1. Joseph Ensign House (corner of Drake Hill Road)
2. Simsburytown Shops – example of village style/scale center
3. Former Ensign Bickford complex
4. Railroad station buildings
5. Former Tobacco Barns on Route 10
6. Central School
7. Town Offices (Belden School)
8. Hop Brook Mill / Brownstone Building
9. Tobacco Fields / Barns / Dormitory
10. The Tariffville Mill
11. Former Pettibone's Tavern (Abigail's)
12. St. Mary's Church
13. Methodist Church
14. Congregational Church
15. St. Bernard's Church
16. Trinity Episcopal Church
17. "Courtyard Building"

Aesthetic Places

1. Hop Brook waterfall
2. King Philip's Cave
3. Massaco Plantation
4. Militia Training Band Field
5. Sycamores along Route 10
6. Hillsides, ridgelines and escarpments
7. The Farmington River flood plain
8. Stone walls
9. Bartlett Tower
10. Sugarloaf Mountain
11. Patterson Park
12. Simsbury Meadows
13. Case Meadow Ethel Walker Woods
14. Simsbury Center
15. Garrett stairs at McLean Game Refuge
16. Heublein Tower
17. Intersection of Laurel Ln / Great Pond
18. Drake Hill Bridge
19. Farmington Canal Heritage Trail
20. Farmington River Canal
21. Fields across Route 10 from Blue Ridge / Lincoln / Old Meadow Plain
22. Fountain in Weatogue
23. Silo and Sycamore at Folly Farm
24. Pinchot Sycamore tree
25. Old quarry
26. Route 185 Bridge
27. Waterfall at McLean Game Refuge
28. West Simsbury Center
29. Barndoor Hills view
30. Grave site on East Weatogue Street (ox cart death)
31. Tobacco fields / barns: Firetown Road, Hoskins
32. Old barn on Terry's Plain Road, formerly Bartlett Farm
33. Scenic road along East Weatogue Street, Terry's Plain Road, Ferry Lane
34. Views of the Farmington River along Riverside Road, Terry's Plain Road
35. Nod Brook field
36. Public school properties (see details on Community Facilities Plan)
37. Simsbury Farms recreation complex
38. Private school properties (such as Westminster, Ethel Walker, Masters)

Community Events

1. Talcott Mountain Music Festival (Hartford Symphony)
2. Performing Arts Center
3. Septemberfest
4. Simsbury Light Opera
5. Simsbury Summer Theater For Youth
6. Simsbury Fly-In
7. Simsbury Celebrates (First Night)
8. Luminary Night
9. Memorial Day Parade
10. River Run
11. Simsbury Bike Month (May)

(continued on next page)



In the telephone survey, participants were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with the following statements:

Simsbury should try to encourage more public events, such as concerts, festivals and other family-friendly events.

Strongly agree	24%
Agree	55%
Not sure	5%
Disagree	15%
Strongly disagree	1%

Does Simsbury offer enough entertainment options (music, movies, plays, etc.)?

Too many	1%
About right	49%
Too few	48%
Not sure	2%

What We Want To Protect – Maintain And Enhance Community Character

Volunteer Efforts

The importance placed on community character is pervasive in the community and supported by many local organizations.

For example, volunteers associated with the Beautification Committee maintain more than 60 flower gardens and planters on Town land throughout Simsbury including:

- Schultz Park
- Town Hall
- Simsbury Public Library
- Simsbury Farms recreation complex
- Welcome signs and brownstone pillars at gateways
- At various islands, inter-sections and triangles throughout town
- Eno Memorial Hall
- Entrance to the Flower Bridge
- Key corners

Listing of Some Current And Former Character Resources (continued)

Historic Districts

1. East Weatogue Historic District
2. Terry's Plain Historic District
3. Tariffville Historic District
4. Simsbury Center Historic District

Farms

1. Tulmeadow Farm
2. Flamig Farm
3. George Hall Farm
4. Joseph Hall Farm
5. Rosedale Farm
6. Pickin' Patch Farm
7. Town Farm
8. Folly Farm
9. Ryan's Flower Farm
10. Anthony's Farm

Watercourses / Waterbodies

1. Farmington River
2. Meadow Pond
3. Tariffville Gorge
4. Great Pond
5. Streams and brooks
6. Ponds

Parks and Recreation

1. Town Forest
2. Stratton Brook Park
3. Schultz Park
4. Tariffville Park
5. Tariffville Green
6. State Wildlife Management Area
7. McLean Game Refuge
8. Metacomet Trail
9. Curtiss Park
10. Memorial Park
11. Hopmeadow Country Club
12. Tower Ridge Country Club
13. Onion Mountain Park
14. Belden Forest
15. Talcott Mountain State Park
16. Penwood State Park
17. Metacomet Trail overlook
18. The Hedgehog
19. The Sugarloaf

Gateway Signage



Schultz Park



Rotary Park



Character Places

Granby

Simsbury, CT

East Granby

Bloomfield

Avon

Canton

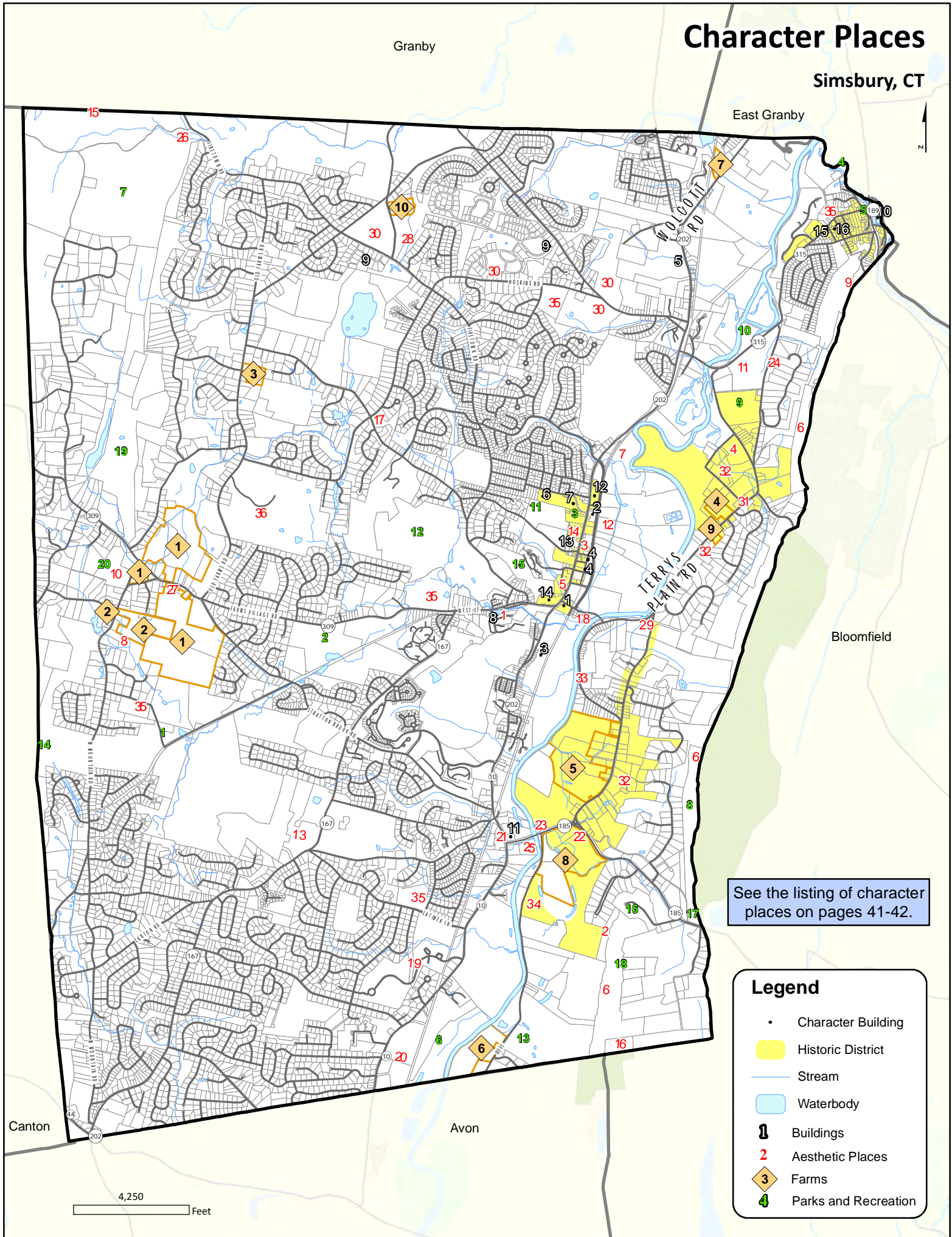
4,250

Feet

See the listing of character places on pages 41-42.

Legend

- Character Building
- Historic District
- Stream
- Waterbody
- 1** Buildings
- 2** Aesthetic Places
- 3** Farms
- 4** Parks and Recreation



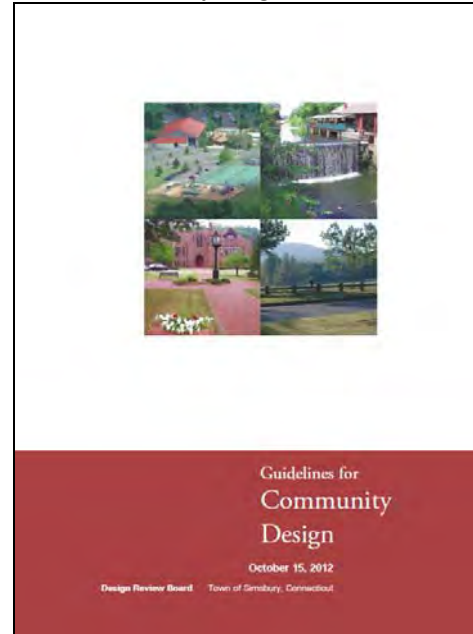
What We Want To Protect – Maintain And Enhance Community Character

Simsbury recognizes that the aesthetic aspects of development affect the overall ambience of our community and the quality of life of residents. If a development does not maintain or enhance community character in some meaningful way, it is actually detracting from community character in Simsbury.

Simsbury has had a Design Review Board for many years and the work of this Board should continue to ensure that new development fits into the community well. The Board has promulgated award-winning design guidelines that serve to guide its efforts and inform applicants of how to prepare applications.

The POCD takes the position that new development in Simsbury should maintain or enhance community character in some meaningful way. Design review is critical to maintain and enhancing community character and these efforts should continue and be strengthened as needed.

Community Design Guidelines



GOAL

Maintain and enhance the overall character of Simsbury by preserving and protecting the characteristics that contribute to its overall ambience and quality of life.

7.1 Identify and protect the resources, “sense of place”, and quality of life that contribute to the overall character of Simsbury.

A. NATURAL / CULTURAL RESOURCES –Simsbury will:	Leader	Partners
1. Preserve significant natural resources that contribute to community character.	Town	CWC
2. Preserve stone walls, burial sites, cellar holes, and other cultural resources that contribute to community character.	Town	
<input type="checkbox"/> a. Consider a Town ordinance to preserve stone walls.	BOS	CWC
3. Use techniques such as open space cluster zoning and view sector regulations to preserve character resources.	ZC	
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B. COMMUNITY DESIGN –Simsbury will:	Leader	Partners
1. Maintain and improve the design review process in Simsbury to ensure new developments reflect, complement and enhance the overall character of Simsbury.	DRB	
<input type="checkbox"/> a. Review and update the “Guidelines for Community Design.”	DRB	
<input type="checkbox"/> b. Tailor the design guidelines, as needed, to village centers and other special places in the community.	DRB	
<input type="checkbox"/> c. Investigate if there are ways to incorporate public comment into the design review process.	DRB	
<input type="checkbox"/> d. Consider ways to incorporate dynamic computer visualization tools (such as Sketchup) into the design review process so that all aspects of a proposed development are visualized and understood in the context of other buildings around them.	DRB	
2. Seek to ensure that new development complements, and is compatible with, the existing fabric of Simsbury and complements nearby historic structures and sites.	DRB	
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What We Want To Protect – Maintain And Enhance Community Character

“Dark Skies”

The term “dark skies” is used to draw attention to light pollution and its impact upon night skies. More information is available from the International Dark Sky Association.

Several decades ago, there was little night lighting being used so its overall impact was not particularly noticeable. Nowadays, excessive night lighting is having an overall impact on communities and the quality of life. It also wastes electricity.

A dark-skies ordinance or regulation typically:

- requires all outdoor light fixtures to shine downward only.
- prohibits light streaming up into the night sky, where it interferes with a clear view.

C. NOISE / LIGHT POLLUTION –Simsbury will:		Leader	Partners
1.	Manage artificial lighting to maintain and enhance community character and help reduce light pollution.	ZC	
<input type="checkbox"/>	a. <i>Incorporate “dark skies” principles into the zoning regulations in order to minimize negative impacts of artificial lighting.</i>	ZC	
2.	Minimize impacts of noise on residential areas from commercial and industrial uses.	BOS	
<input type="checkbox"/>	a. <i>Evaluate the regulatory issues associated with adoption of a noise ordinance.</i>	BOS	
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D. COMMUNITY SPIRIT –Simsbury will:		Leader	Partners
1.	Seek ways to maintain and enhance community pride and spirit.	Town	
2.	Encourage community and civic activities that promote and enhance community spirit.	Town	
3.	Support concerts at the Performing Arts Center, fireworks, local parades, and other community events.	Town	
4.	Maintain a community calendar to inform people of upcoming events.	Town	
5.	Collaborate with Simsbury Community Television and other media formats (print media, social media, email blasts, etc.) to keep residents informed about community affairs.	Town	
6.	Continue programs to recruit volunteers and recognize “hometown heroes” who have made a difference in the community.	Town	
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Simsbury Fly-In



Simsbury Celebrates



7.2 *Protect historic and archeologic resources and celebrate their contribution to community character and sense of place.*

A. OVERALL –Simsbury will:	Leader	Partners
1. Preserve and protect historic and archeologic resources since they contribute to Simsbury's overall character and sense of place.	Town	HDC SHS
2. Maintain a Historic Resources Inventory in cooperation with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO).	Town	HDC SHS
3. Use the Archeological Site Sensitivity Analysis of the Town of Simsbury to identify potential archeological sites.	Town	
4. Seek to create corridors or linkages between historic sites when possible (for example, the Rosedale Farm - East Weatogue Street - Tariffville corridor).	Town	HDC SHS
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B. RECOGNITION –Simsbury will:	Leader	Partners
1. Promote Simsbury's historic sites, structures and districts.	Town	HDC SHS
2. Promote heritage tourism in Simsbury as part of our commitment to being a <i>Preserve America</i> community.	Town	HDC SHS
3. Increase public awareness of local historic resources through print / digital means (Town website, library, schools, etc.) and through other means.	Town	HDC SHS
<input type="checkbox"/> a. <i>Recognize the presence of the remnants of the historic Farmington Canal in Simsbury by installing signage and publicizing it.</i>	Town	HDC SHS
<input type="checkbox"/> b. <i>Consider enhancing the appearance of the Route 185 bridge by adding architectural lighting and other enhancements.</i>	Town	HDC SHS
4. Support the listing of qualified buildings, sites, structures, and districts on the National Register of Historic Places and the State Register of Historic Places.	Town	HDC SHS
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State / National Registers of Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) identifies resources significant in the history of the nation. The State Register of Historic Places (SRHP) identifies resources significant in the history of the state.

These designations are not regulatory in nature and only directly affect activities involving federal and/or state funding. Property owners may be eligible for tax benefits for improvements to these resources.

The designations may be for districts (areas containing multiple properties) or for individual properties.

Local Historic Districts

A local historic district is regulatory in nature and a local Historic District Commission regulates exterior changes in view from a public street. A super-majority of property owners must consent to the establishment of a local historic district.

A local historic property may be similarly protected or may be protected by ownership, easement, or other means consented to by the property owner.

What We Want To Protect – Maintain And Enhance Community Character

Adaptive Re-Use

Since older buildings may outlive their original purposes, adaptive re-use is a process where older buildings are adapted for new uses while retaining their historic features.

For example:

- an old factory may become an apartment building,
- a church may become a restaurant (or a restaurant may become a church),
- an old house may be converted to office use.

C. PROTECTION / REGULATION –Simsbury will:	Leader	Partners
1. Support efforts to protect historic sites and areas.	Town	HDC SHS
2. Consider historic and archeologic resources as part of land use applications.	Town	ZC PC
<input type="checkbox"/> a. Amend the Subdivision Regulations to require consideration of historic and archeologic resources.	PC	
<input type="checkbox"/> b. Amend the Zoning Regulations to require consideration of historic and archeologic resources and preservation of such resources, where possible.	ZC	
<input type="checkbox"/> c. Adopt regulations to protect archeological resources.	Town	
3. Support the establishment of local historic districts (a regulatory approach) where supported by affected owners.	Town	
4. Retain the Town's Delay of Demolition Ordinance.	BOS	
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D. ADAPTATION / RE-USE –Simsbury will:	Leader	Partners
1. Consider allowing adaptive reuse of historic buildings (residential, commercial, governmental and industrial) if that will be instrumental in preserving them.	ZC	
2. Maintain the architectural integrity of historic structures and sites when adapted for re-use for commercial, industrial or residential purposes.	DRB	ZC HDC SHS
3. Encourage preservation of the historic character of structures and sites and the restoration / maintenance of such buildings in an appropriate way.	Town	HDC SHS
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E. PROGRAMS –Simsbury will:	Leader	Partners
1. Pursue and promote financial incentives for preservation (grants, tax incentives, loans, easements, assessment deferrals, etc.)	Town	
2. Use techniques such as open space cluster zoning to preserve historic buildings and sites.	Town	ZC PC
3. Maintain Simsbury's designation as a Certified Local Government in the National Historic Preservation Program in order to be eligible for grants and other assistance.	Town	HDC
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Historic Points and Places

Simsbury, CT

East Granby

Bloomfield

Canton

Avon

Legend

Historic Points

- National Register of Historic Places
- Locally Important

Historic Districts

- National Register Of Historic Places (Non-Regulatory)
- Locally Important (Regulatory)

Site

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| 1. Town Farm Cemetery | 17. White Memorial Fountain | 34. Wire Mill |
| 2. Stone Railroad Arch at Town Farm | 18. Heublein Tower - NRHP | 35. 1734 Toll Bridge |
| 3. Bartlett Tower | 19. Cannon Medical Center - NRHP | 36. Cullman Brothers Inc. Plantation |
| 4. Cullman Brothers Inc. Dormitory | 20. Eno Memorial Hall - NRHP | 37. Bissell's Landing |
| 5. Governor's Bridge Railroad Crossing | 21. Englewood (Simsbury 1820 Home) - NRHP | 38. 1788 Bridge |
| 6. Stone Quarry at Quarry Road | 22. Farmington Canal - NRHP | 39. Probable Location of Potash Works |
| 7. Russell Marker | 23. John Humphrey House - NRHP | 40. Stone Quarry |
| 8. Pent Road Ferry | 24. Pilfershire Cider Mill | 41. Calvin Barber Stone Quarry |
| 9. Horace Belden/ Central Schools - NRHP | 25. First Fairground | 42. Ferry Site 1673 |
| 10. Old Drake Hill Bridge - NRHP | 26. Manto Meadow | 43. Probable Location of Indian Fort |
| 11. Saw and Grist Mills at Hop Brook | 27. Old Fuse Factory | 44. King Phillip's Cave |
| 12. Canal Arches Over Hop Brook | 28. Militia Training Ground | 45. American Sumatra Tobacco Plantation |
| 13. Cooper Smelter and Steel Mill | 29. Militia Training Ground | 46. Stoddard Reservoir 1907 |
| 14. Mindwell Adams Marker | 30. Carpet Company | 47. Simsbury Bank and Trust - NRHP |
| 15. Jared Bradley Marker | 31. Central New England Station - NRHP | 48. Boy Scout Hall - NRHP |
| 16. Civil War Monument | 32. New Haven and Northampton Station - NRHP | 49. Massaco Forest Pavilion - NRHP |
| | 33. Wintonbury Road | 50. Phelps Tavern - NRHP |

5,000

Feet



What We Want To Protect – Maintain And Enhance Community Character

Major Farms

1. Tulmeadow Farm
2. Flamig Farm
3. George Hall Farm
4. Rosedale Farm
5. Pickin' Patch
6. Town Farm
7. Folly Farm

Other properties in Simsbury may also be farmed on a regular basis (including the former Culbro tobacco fields, fields in the Farmington River floodplain, and other areas).

Rosedale Farms



Tulmeadow Farm



Flamig Farm



Town Farm



7.3 Support the preservation of working farms and the availability of farmland soils.

A. WORKING LANDS – Simsbury will:	Leader	Partners
1. Work with local farmers and others to identify specific mechanisms to preserve agricultural lands. <input type="checkbox"/> a. <i>Create an Agricultural Subcommittee to create a plan for farm preservation.</i>	Town	AG
2. Promote the use of agricultural “best management practices.”	Town	AG
3. Lease Town-owned agricultural land to farmers on a multi-year basis to encourage investment in the fertility of the land and promote farming uses on those lands. <input type="checkbox"/> a. <i>Survey existing Town-owned open space to identify suitable parcels for additional agricultural use.</i>	BOS	AG
4. Seek to provide incentives to preserve agricultural lands.	Town	AG
5. Seek to provide incentives for reclaiming farmland that has fallen into disuse.	Town	AG
6. Encourage the retention of quality agricultural land in agricultural use.	Town	AG
7. Should such lands become available, give working farms and agricultural land high priority for “open space” acquisition or development rights acquisition.	Town	AG
8. Use techniques such as open space cluster zoning and view sector regulations to help preserve working farms and help preserve prime or important agricultural soils that could be utilized for commercial farming or community gardens.	ZC	Town AG
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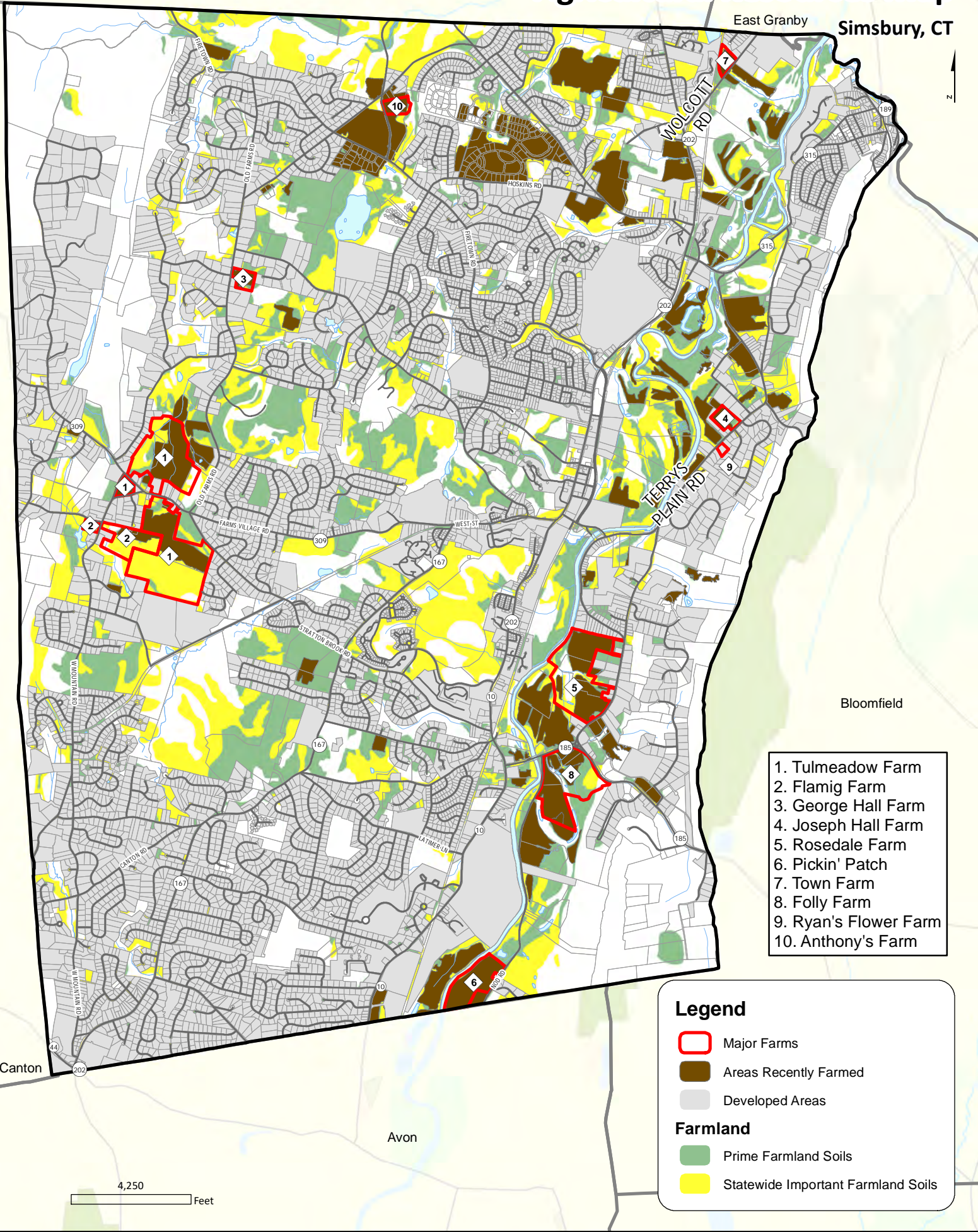
B. PRODUCE MARKETS - Simsbury will:	Leader	Partners
1. Encourage the formation of farming cooperatives to facilitate a mutually beneficial farming environment.	AG	
2. Encourage the purchase of products (such as milk, wine, and produce) from local farms. <input type="checkbox"/> a. <i>Strive to find a permanent location in Simsbury for a farmers market.</i>	AG	
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Agricultural Resources Map

Granby

East Granby

Simsbury, CT



- 1. Tulmeadow Farm
- 2. Flamig Farm
- 3. George Hall Farm
- 4. Joseph Hall Farm
- 5. Rosedale Farm
- 6. Pickin' Patch
- 7. Town Farm
- 8. Folly Farm
- 9. Ryan's Flower Farm
- 10. Anthony's Farm

Legend

- Major Farms
- Areas Recently Farmed
- Developed Areas

Farmland

- Prime Farmland Soils
- Statewide Important Farmland Soils

Scenic Views / Vistas

- the Talcott and West Mountain hillsides and ridgelines;
- the Farmington River valley from the hillsides and ridgelines;
- the farm fields in West Simsbury;
- the Ethel Walker hillside and fields along Bushy Hill Road;
- vistas that embody the rural characteristics of Simsbury, such as those along Nod Road, East Weatogue Street and Terry's Plain Road; the southerly portion of Old Farms Road; the intersection of Laurel Lane and Great Pond Road; vistas of the Farmington River; the Tariffville Gorge; and other vistas.

Scenic Road Ordinance

Simsbury's Scenic Road Ordinance allows the Planning Commission to designate scenic roads in Simsbury, after receiving consent of the owners of a majority of lot frontage along the road.

Such designation helps protect that roadway from inappropriate changes.

The following Town roads have been designated since the establishment of the ordinance:

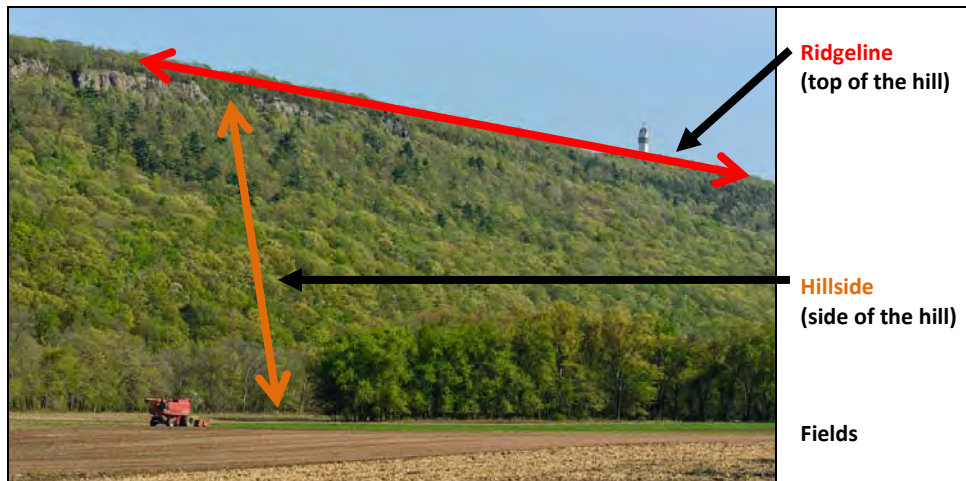
- Goodrich Road
- Ferry Lane
- Terry's Plain Road
- East Weatogue Street
- Barn Door Hills Road

Currently there is no state highway within Simsbury designated as a Scenic Road.

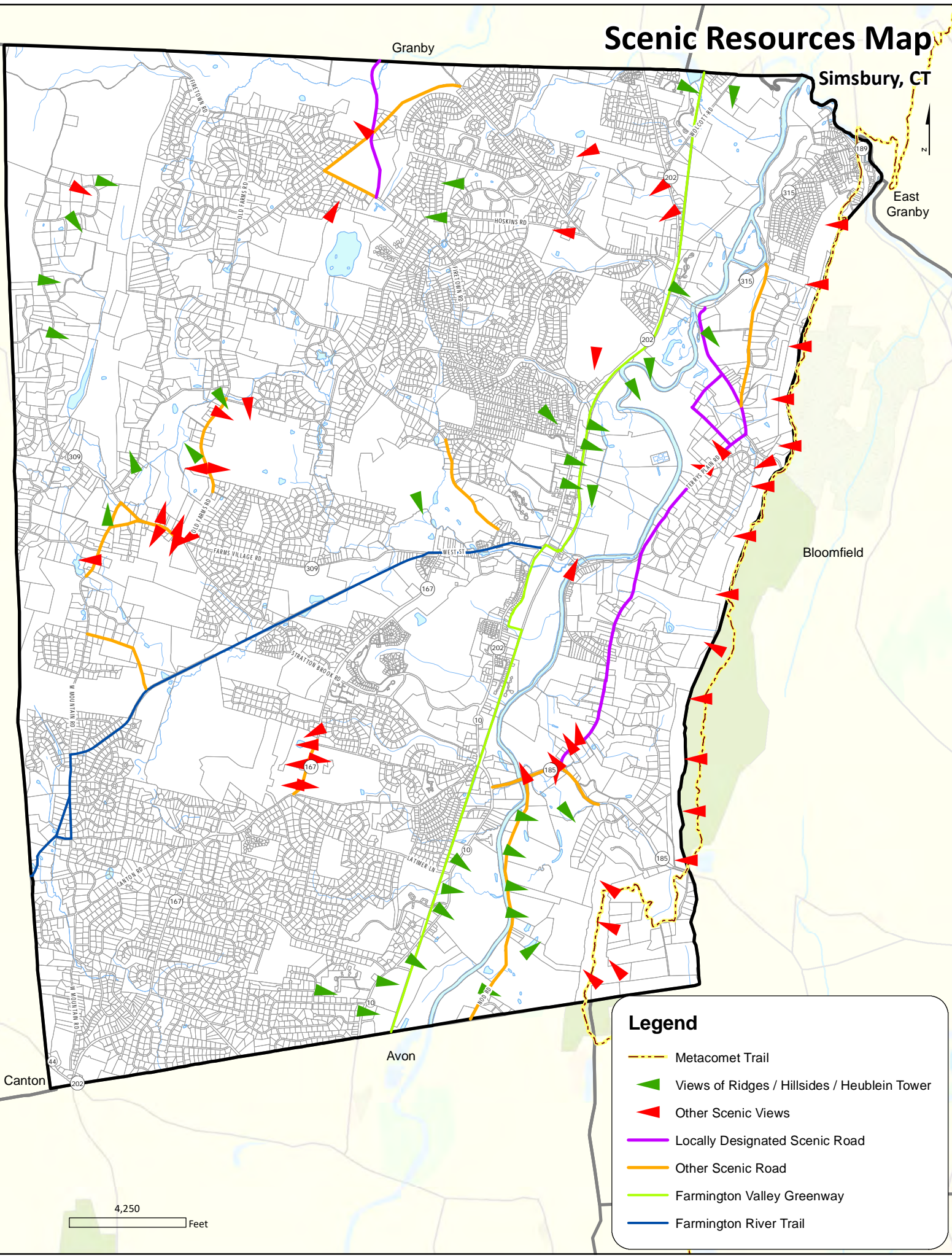
7.4 Preserve and enhance the scenic characteristics of Simsbury.

A. SCENIC FEATURES –Simsbury will:	Leader	Partners
1. Preserve scenic resources that enhance the overall character of Simsbury (partial list in the sidebar on this page and in the beginning of Chapter 7).	Town	SBC
<input type="checkbox"/> a. Amend the Zoning Regulations to strengthen protection of scenic resources.	ZC	
<input type="checkbox"/> b. Amend the Subdivision Regulations to strengthen protection of scenic resources.	PC	
2. Maintain the Scenic Road Ordinance and designate additional scenic roads, where appropriate.	Town	
3. Collaborate with the Simsbury Land Trust and similar organizations promoting preservation of scenic resources.	Town	SLT SBC
4. As opportunities arise, seek to put wire utilities underground in Simsbury Center and other village centers in order to enhance community character.	Town	
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B. RIDGELINES / HILLSIDES –Simsbury will:	Leader	Partners
1. Establish, maintain and enforce regulations to protect hillsides and ridgelines and the scenic views to and from these areas.	Town	ZC PC
Code legend is on inside back cover		



Scenic Resources Map



Granby

Simsbury, CT

East Granby

Bloomfield

Avon

Canton

Legend

- Metacomet Trail
- Views of Ridges / Hillsides / Heublein Tower
- Other Scenic Views
- Locally Designated Scenic Road
- Other Scenic Road
- Farmington Valley Greenway
- Farmington River Trail

4,250

Feet

What We Want To Protect – Maintain And Enhance Community Character

PA-490 Program

The PA-490 program (codified in CGS Section 12-107) is an assessment reduction program that reduces taxes on certain types of land so that it is more likely to remain undeveloped.

The 2016 Grand List reports the following:

- 84 parcels used for farming (totaling 1,419 acres),
- 12 parcels of at least 25 acres kept as forest (totaling 861 acres),
- 12 parcels meeting the open space criteria (totaling 576 acres).

Gateway Approaches

The following locations could be considered as major gateways in Simsbury:

- The north and south entrance points of Route 10/202
- The intersection of Routes 167 and 44
- The intersection of Routes 315 and 189 in Tariffville
- The entrances at Route 185, Nod Road and Route 309
- The Wolcott Road area near East Granby
- The entrance points on the Farmington Canal Heritage Trail and other trails

Gateway Sign



C. UNDEVELOPED LAND –Simsbury will:	Leader	Partners
1. Continue to use the “PA-490” assessment reduction program (CGS 12-107) to help preserve undeveloped land as long as possible.	Town	BOS PC
<input type="checkbox"/> a. <i>Review the criteria for the PA-490 “open space” assessment category to evaluate whether to extend incentives to residentially-zoned parcels less than 25 acres in size.</i>	Town	
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D. TREES / VEGETATION –Simsbury will:	Leader	Partners
1. Recognize the importance of trees and vegetation to Simsbury’s overall character and environmental health.	Town	SBC
<input type="checkbox"/> a. <i>Develop a comprehensive program for streetscape improvements along major streets.</i>	Town	PW
2. Preserve and maintain historic and significant trees such as the sycamores along Route 10 and Route 185.	Town	
<input type="checkbox"/> a. <i>Develop a maintenance / replacement plan for street trees, (especially the iconic sycamore trees along Hopmeadow Street in Simsbury Center).</i>	Town	
3. Emphasize the importance of landscaping (including berms) as part of any commercial development.	ZC	
<input type="checkbox"/> a. <i>Amend the Zoning Regulations to include a section outlining landscaping requirements.</i>	ZC	
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E. GATEWAYS –Simsbury will:	Leader	Partners
1. Seek to preserve and enhance the major “gateway” approaches to and within Simsbury (see sidebar).	Town	
2. Encourage the preservation of existing woodlands along the streetscapes, such as but not limited to Routes 185 and 309, to enhance the character of the gateway.	Town	
3. Through the site plan review process and other means, maximize landscaping and minimize pavement on public and private right-of-ways at the gateway approaches.	Town	ZC PC
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