

# MANCHESTER NEXT

Implementation Report

April 2026

## Introduction

The [Manchester NEXT Plan of Conservation & Development \(POCD\)](#), adopted on July 12, 2023, charts a strategic, long-range vision for the Town's growth through 2033, guiding public policy around housing, economic development, infrastructure, transportation, parks, and community resources.

*This implementation report builds directly on that vision by translating the Plan's recommendations into tangible action. Unlike a static checklist, this report is intentionally forward-looking and dynamic. Many of the recommended actions require sustained coordination, multi-year investments, interdepartmental collaboration, and community partnership. Some are already underway, while others will unfold over time — but all are critical to realizing the Town's long-term vision.*

*In organizing progress, this report follows the structure of the Manchester NEXT POCD itself — chapter by chapter, subtopic by subtopic — preserving the integrity of the Plan's logic and goals. Each recommendation is paired with the Town's documented actions and accomplishments to date.*

*This living document is intended to not only demonstrate what Manchester has achieved since adopting Manchester NEXT but also helps build momentum and guide future programs, policies, and investments.*



## Economics & Employment

The Economics & Employment chapter of the Manchester NEXT POCD emphasizes the Town’s commitment to fostering a resilient, diverse, and thriving local economy. The Plan recognizes that economic growth must balance support for existing businesses, expansion of the workforce, and attraction of new industries while maintaining Manchester’s character and livability. This chapter’s recommendations provide actionable strategies to strengthen retail and service sectors, retain and expand industrial and healthcare clusters, and revitalize Downtown Manchester. The Town’s ongoing work aligns with multi-year economic development objectives and is supported by strategic partnerships, targeted investments, and a commitment to sustainable growth.

### Retail & Service Economy

POCD Recommendation	Progress Made
<b>Consider updating zoning regulations periodically to reflect the changing needs of the retail and service industry, such as the recent increase in demand for outdoor dining and drive-through services.</b>	<i>As of 2024, a comprehensive update to the zoning regulations is underway, with all zoning-related recommendations in this plan under consideration.</i>
<b>Facilitate the development of mixed-use districts in focus areas such as Spencer Street, Midtown, Buckland Hills, or Depot Square (see Focus Area Concepts chapter).</b>	<i>The Planning &amp; Economic Development Department pursues ongoing opportunities to connect potential developers with focus area concepts.</i>
<b>Continue to seek high-quality development for the former Parkade site, and explore alternative uses not originally contemplated in the Broad Street Redevelopment Plan.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Town leadership has executed a signed contract with Anthony Properties.</i></li> <li>• <i>The Planning &amp; Zoning Commission approved development permits in December 2025.</i></li> </ul>

POCD Recommendation	Progress Made
<p><b>Maintain the promotion of first-floor retail and destination uses on the street level, with office and residential uses on upper floors.</b></p>	<p><i>Future development applications may pursue zoning regulation amendments to accomplish this recommendation. Town continues to monitor opportunities.</i></p>
<p><b>Continue to partner with the Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce (GMCC) to encourage local entrepreneurship and attract new retail businesses to the town. Emphasize Manchester's economic advantages, such as its proximity to Hartford, New York City, and Boston, and its vicinity to major automobile and rail networks.</b></p>	<p><i>Ongoing partnership with GMCC to promote entrepreneurship and market Manchester's location advantages is maintained through engagement with the organization via events and town commission interactions.</i></p>



FIGURE 1. DIAGRAM OF **PROPOSED PARKADE REDEVELOPMENT**, INCLUDING 232 HOUSING UNITS

## Distribution, Healthcare, & Industry

<b><i>POCD Recommendation</i></b>	<b><i>Progress Made</i></b>
<p><b>Contemplate rebranding and updating the Manchester Business Park as a whole.</b></p>	<p>The <a href="#">Economic Development Commission (EDC)</a> is exploring relationship-building with industrial businesses, surveying needs, and identifying growth barriers.</p>
<p><b>Consider applying for funding through the Connecticut Manufacturing Assistance Act to pursue a Small Scale Manufacturing Initiative. This State-sponsored funding would support the development of manufacturing businesses through property acquisition, site construction/demolition/renovation, business support services, and more.</b></p>	<p><i>There is an opportunity to explore state and regional resources after assessing the local manufacturing landscape.</i></p>
<p><b>Pursue a small-scale manufacturing hub at the Manchester Business Park. This would use a vacant building for micro-enterprise related to manufacturing, assembly, technology, etc. Include amenities, open space, and gathering places for pop-up dining and retail in the park at the trailhead. See the Hop River Innovation Park Focus Area Concept for more details.</b></p>	<p><i>Above actions lay foundation for advancement.</i></p>
<p><b>Continue to retain existing industry clusters in distribution, healthcare, manufacturing, logistics, etc.</b></p>	<p>The <a href="#">Economic Development Commission (EDC)</a> is evaluating opportunities to codify tax abatement policies to support business retention, including a review of prior policy work completed in 2019.</p>

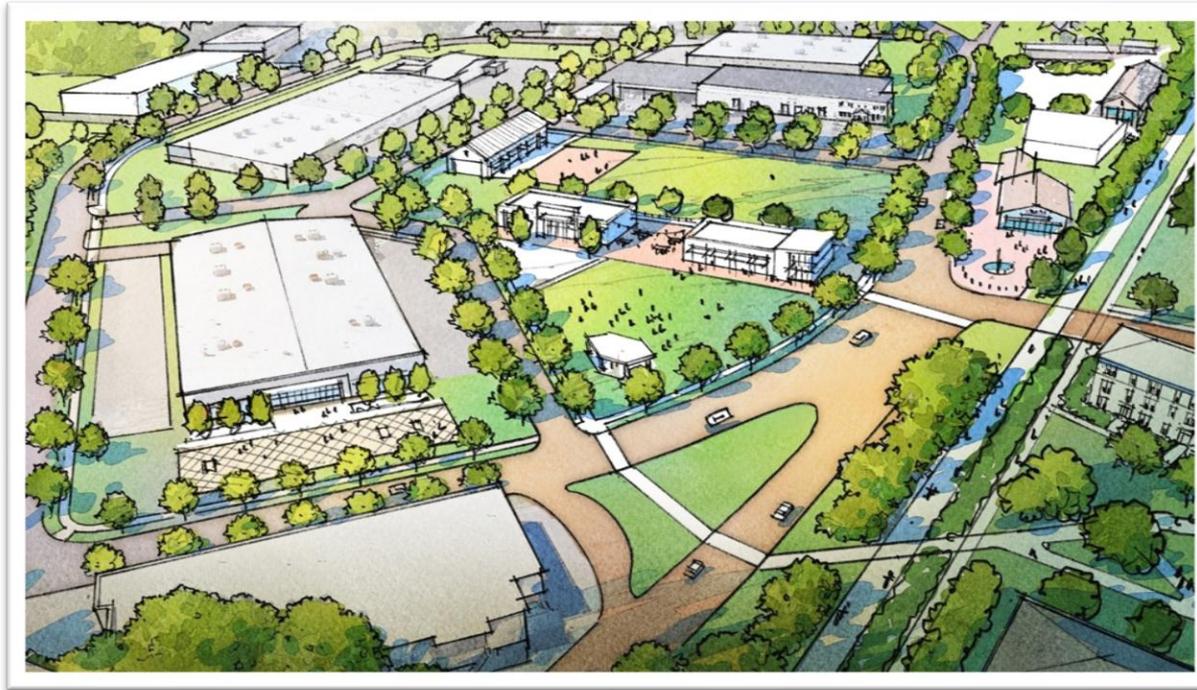


FIGURE 2. CONCEPTUAL ILLUSTRATION OF ‘HOP RIVER INDUSTRIAL PARK’ FOCUS AREA

## Downtown District

<i>POCD Recommendation</i>	<i>Progress Made</i>
<p><b>Continue to support temporary outdoor dining options that expand seating capacity while allowing patrons to comfortably socialize post-Covid.</b></p>	<p>Town maintains <a href="#">seasonal outdoor dining permits</a> via online application process.</p>

<b><i>POCD Recommendation</i></b>	<b><i>Progress Made</i></b>
<p><b>Support existing initiatives and identify new ones that encourage teens, college students, and young adults to spend more time Downtown.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Programs and events promoting safe biking and walking are expanding, including Bike Walk Manchester, Bike Friendly Manchester certifications, the annual Spin Fest, and youth-focused activities at the Mary Cheney Library, all designed to encourage active transportation and recreation among teens and young adults.</i></li> <li>• <i>The Charter Oak West Park Improvement Project will provide new recreational amenities such as a turf soccer field, an all-wheel park, and a pump track, creating additional opportunities for youth and young adults to engage in active, outdoor activities Downtown.</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Incentivize development of the few vacant properties for mixed-use development.</b></p>	<p><i>ARPA-funded Business Investment Fund Grant Program assisted businesses with code improvements to accommodate new building uses (July 2023 – July 2024).</i></p>
<p><b>Invest in connections to adjacent neighborhoods. Downtown should be the center of social interaction for Manchester residents. Trails and connections to Downtown will strengthen these neighborhoods and connect residents to the many independent businesses, job opportunities, and cultural amenities in the district.</b></p>	<p><i>Several ongoing projects are advancing this recommendation by improving connectivity between Downtown and adjacent neighborhoods. These include the comprehensive update to the Zoning Regulations, the <a href="#">Town Hall Parking Lot Project</a> (which links to the Cycle Track leading to Center Springs Park), and implementation of the <a href="#">Sidewalk &amp; Curb Master Plan</a>, which enhances pedestrian connections to Charter Oak Park and Downtown.</i></p>
<p><b>Contemplate prioritizing the addition of new retail and restaurant businesses over service-oriented businesses Downtown to increase foot traffic.</b></p>	<p><i>Future development applications may pursue zoning regulation amendments to accomplish this recommendation. Town continues to monitor opportunities.</i></p>
<p><b>Survey minority populations to determine what would make Downtown feel more welcoming.</b></p>	

<b><i>POCD Recommendation</i></b>	<b><i>Progress Made</i></b>
<b>Create and implement stabilization programs for long-term/minority-owned businesses to minimize displacement if taxes rise.</b>	<i>Concept shared with Economic Development Commission for future consideration.</i>
<b>Consider a night market to celebrate local businesses, highlight creative talent in the region, and bring the community together.</b>	<i>Concept shared with Special Services District for future consideration.</i>
<b>Incorporate an inclusive understanding of community needs and cultural awareness into Downtown policing practices.</b>	
<b>Continue to assist owners with code improvements to older buildings.</b>	<i>ARPA-funded Business Investment Fund Grant Program assisted businesses with code improvements to accommodate new building uses (July 2023 – July 2024).</i>
<b>Strive to make Downtown Manchester welcoming and inclusive for all residents. This could include a range of tools, such as historic interpretation of the history of Manchester from different perspectives, creating amenities and programs that facilitate bringing communities together, and a focus on businesses that are owned by traditionally under-represented populations.</b>	<i>The Leisure, Family, and Recreation Department is collaborating with the Manchester Historical Society and local trail planning groups to develop a historic walking trail that will connect to and pass through the Downtown area, helping to highlight Manchester’s history and expand inclusive cultural experiences.</i>
<b>Continue to encourage and support the development of creative working spaces, shared workspaces, and think tanks. Diversify workplaces by allowing more mixed-use, maker spaces, and live/work buildings.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The Town continues to support the WORK_SPACE building and its programming, which provides collaborative workspace and resources for artists, entrepreneurs, and creative professionals.</i></li> <li>• <i>New development projects may also create opportunities to incorporate live/work spaces. One example is the proposed redevelopment of 942 Main Street, which includes several live/work gallery spaces designed for artists in the Downtown area.</i></li> </ul>

<i>POCD Recommendation</i>	<i>Progress Made</i>
<b>Consider launching a Town branding/marketing initiative to create a cohesive image that markets the Town, and Downtown more specifically, accurately, and creatively.</b>	<i>Townwide branding initiative currently on hold (June 2024).</i>



**FIGURE 3. A MEETING IN PROGRESS IN THE WORK\_SPACE GALLERY**

# Housing

The Housing chapter of Manchester NEXT recognizes that a vibrant, inclusive community requires a housing stock that meets the full spectrum of resident needs — from aging in place and young families to workforce households and those experiencing housing instability. The Plan emphasizes preserving existing housing while expanding attainable options, strengthening neighborhoods, and preparing for shifting demographic and market preferences.

As Manchester grows and evolves, the Town must provide housing opportunities across types, styles, price-points, and life-stages. The chapter’s recommendations are designed to support sustainable, resilient neighborhoods; to expand access and choice; and to embed equity and accessibility into residential development and preservation efforts.

## Housing Stock

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Progress Made</b>
<b>Educate the public on Low Impact Development best practices and erosion control.</b>	<i>The Town maintains a <a href="#">Low Impact Development (LID) education webpage</a> for residents and businesses, linking to the Connecticut Stormwater Quality Manual and the Town’s Sustainable Design &amp; LID Guidelines. These materials promote practical strategies for sustainable site design and encourage LID adoption in new development projects.</i>
<b>Continue to address dilapidated structures and building code violations through code enforcement.</b>	<i>Ongoing code enforcement addresses unsafe or substandard housing to protect residents’ health and safety.</i>

<b><i>Recommendation</i></b>	<b><i>Progress Made</i></b>
<p><b>Continue to aid property owners looking to make repairs or rehabilitate existing housing for low and moderate-income residents and families, especially those that may violate health and safety codes.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>CDBG-funded Housing Rehab programs and Rebuilding Together initiatives provide repair and rehabilitation support.</i></li> <li>• <i>During the 2025 federal government shutdown, the Town also secured \$50,000 in emergency funds, through the generosity of the MISAC board, to continue critical work of the Emergency Replacement Program, aligning with goals from the Affordable Housing Plan.</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Consider increasing public awareness and adopting guidelines or incentives for suburban retrofitting. Through form-based regulations that allow for a mix of uses, diverse housing types, and pedestrian-oriented rights-of-way, suburban retrofitting is encouraged.</b></p>	<p><i>Zoning text amendments and ongoing zoning updates support more diverse housing types, including duplexes and mixed-use development in targeted areas, helping enable incremental suburban retrofitting.</i></p>
<p><b>Create, enforce, and periodically evaluate standards for residential design, building and property maintenance, landscape design, and planting to improve housing conditions. Amend standards as necessary to meet the needs and desires of the Town.</b></p>	
<p><b>Consider forming a community land bank (see Hartford Land Bank Case Study).</b></p>	<p><i>The Capital Region Council of Governments, of which Manchester is a member municipality, is exploring the feasibility of creating a regional land bank to facilitate property acquisition, redevelopment, and long-term housing stability, modeled on <a href="#">Hartford's program</a>.</i></p>

### **What is Low Impact Development?**

Low impact development (LID) is an alternative way of developing land and managing stormwater that is aimed at minimizing the impacts of urbanization on natural habitats and hydrology. The creation of hardened surfaces such as roads, parking lots and rooftops in combination with culverts and other structures that alter the natural movement of water all contribute to degraded rivers and streams.



**FIGURE 4. SAMPLE OF EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS ON THE TOWN'S WEBSITE**

## Sub-Topic: Changing Preferences

<b><i>Recommendation</i></b>	<b><i>Progress Made</i></b>
<b>Identify opportunities to enhance connections within existing neighborhoods, and connections to surrounding neighborhoods, centers, and recreation areas.</b>	<i>Bike Walk Manchester and the Trail Advisory Committee (a subcommittee of the Conservation Commission) are pursuing a 2.5-mile loop connecting the Cheney Rail Trail to ECG and Main Street. This work coordinates with the Greenways Subcommittee of the Planning &amp; Zoning Commission, public improvements tied to</i>

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Progress Made</b>
	<i>the Nathan Hale redevelopment project, the Town’s Complete Streets Policy, and the Sidewalk &amp; Curb Master Plan.</i>
<b>Strengthen neighborhoods and expand housing choices through an increased mix of uses, diversified housing choices, and the concentration of more housing within mixed-use areas such as Downtown.</b>	<i>Multiple development projects in Downtown and elsewhere will add a variety of housing types, including multi-family units, condominiums, and single-family homes.</i>
<b>Provide educational opportunities and outreach to both tenants and landlords to facilitate and encourage building upgrades to improve energy efficiency, switch to renewable energy sources, and support EV charging readiness.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The Manchester Sustainability Commission partnered with Energize Connecticut (Eversource &amp; Connecticut Natural Gas) to deliver: Home Energy Solutions for income-eligible residents, Multifamily and Small Business initiatives</i></li> <li>• <i>Outreach is supported through bilingual flyers, mailers, and Eversource Community Partnership Initiative 2024 materials</i></li> <li>• <i>In 2025, the Board of Directors allocated an additional \$30,000 to continue supporting this initiative</i></li> </ul>
<b>Introduce a street/pedestrian lighting element into the Sidewalk Plan, with implementation guided by neighborhood consensus.</b>	<i>Planned for 2027–2029. Neighborhood-level planning will determine lighting additions to improve pedestrian safety and accessibility.</i>
<b>Offer funding mechanisms and programs to provide pathways to homeownership for residents who prefer to own instead of rent.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Homebuyer assistance is primarily available through state-level programs administered by the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority (CHFA).</i></li> <li>• <i>Residents can access free homebuyer education classes and counseling services through 2-1-1 Connecticut.</i></li> <li>• <i>Town staff, particularly in the Human Services Department, can connect residents to appropriate resources related to housing.</i></li> </ul>

<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Progress Made</i>
<p><b>Monitor the changing preferences of residents in existing neighborhoods using community- and neighborhood-wide surveys. Periodically evaluate satisfaction with safety, civic spaces, sidewalks, paths, trails, landscaping, and street lighting.</b></p>	
<p><b>Ensure an adequate supply of both rental and for-sale housing to keep up with projected demand.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The Town continues to promote the development of accessory dwelling units (ADUs), monitor their implementation, and adjust zoning regulations to expand housing options.</i></li> <li>• <i>Recent regulatory updates reflect ongoing efforts to expand housing flexibility and reuse existing buildings, including provisions that allow conversion of single-family homes to two-family units by Special Exception in the RA zone and conversion of former school buildings to residential use by Special Exception across multiple residential zones.</i></li> </ul>



FIGURE 5. CONCEPTUAL ILLUSTRATION OF NEIGHBORHOOD EDGE DEVELOPMENT

## Sub-Topic: Attainability

<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Progress Made</i>
<b>Implement the strategies described in the Affordable Housing Plan.</b>	<i>As of 2024, a comprehensive update to the zoning regulations is underway, with all zoning-related recommendations in this plan under consideration.</i>
<b>Update zoning regulations to better accommodate attainable housing by reducing lot size requirements, reducing setbacks, and reducing or eliminating parking requirements.</b>	<i>As of 2024, a comprehensive update to the zoning regulations is underway, with all zoning-related recommendations in this plan under consideration.</i>

<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Progress Made</i>
<p><b>Consider lowering parking requirements for proposed attainable housing to make these projects more viable.</b></p>	<p><i>As of 2024, a comprehensive update to the zoning regulations is underway, with all zoning-related recommendations in this plan under consideration.</i></p>
<p><b>Find ways to streamline the development review process by producing a guide to the process for different development types. Shorter and simpler approvals avoid unnecessary increases in development costs. Utilize software to ensure new development aligns with Sectors in the Conservation &amp; Growth Map.</b></p>	<p><i>The Municipal Service Department has partnered with the Building Inspection Division to enhance the online permitting system and clarify review steps, improving efficiency for developers and residents.</i></p>
<p><b>Encourage mixed-use development in areas that traditionally consume large amounts of land, such as big box shopping centers and malls.</b></p>	
<p><b>Identify underutilized funding sources including local, state, and federal opportunities. Explore non-traditional sources such as donations of buildings and land for affordable housing units.</b></p>	
<p><b>Identify resources the Town is willing to provide to incentivize desired types of housing development, such as grants, tax abatements, land, or shared parking.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Initial discussions with the Town Manager’s office and research into incentive structures are underway.</i></li> <li>• <i>State legislation (Public Act 25 / HB 8002) now authorizes municipalities to adopt housing growth policies and apply for grant-in-aid programs to support affordable and mixed-income housing initiatives.</i></li> <li>• <i>The Town continues to explore opportunities to provide local incentives, including potential tax abatements, fee reductions, and use of publicly owned land to encourage housing development.</i></li> </ul>

<b><i>Recommendation</i></b>	<b><i>Progress Made</i></b>
<p><b>Ensure that low-income and attainable housing are interspersed with market-rate housing to create mixed-income communities, including options for disabled persons, elderly residents, and those experiencing homelessness.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The redevelopment of 942 Main Street in downtown Manchester has been approved as a mixed-use project featuring approximately 116 housing units and ground-floor commercial space.</i></li> <li>• <i>The project includes about 20% of units designated as affordable for households at or below 80% of the area median income, promoting a mixed-income community.</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Ensure new low-income and attainable housing is served by public transportation.</b></p>	<p><i>Future planning is expected to align with Connecticut’s housing growth framework (HB 8002 / Public Act 25-1), which will guide municipalities to integrate land use, zoning, and infrastructure planning to support equitable, transit-accessible housing once the state’s implementation timeline is underway.</i></p>
<p><b>Continue to produce affordable housing units and ensure deed restrictions do not expire on larger developments.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Planning staff actively advocate for affordable housing components during pre-application and development discussions, encouraging long-term affordability commitments where feasible.</i></li> <li>• <i>The Town monitors affordability terms and deed restrictions using tools such as the National Housing Preservation Database to track expiration timelines on existing developments.</i></li> <li>• <i>Coordination with partners, including Habitat for Humanity and MISAC, supports preservation and creation of long-term affordable housing opportunities.</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Prioritize policies and programs that encourage higher-density, pedestrian-oriented neighborhoods with a range of housing choices.</b></p>	<p><i>As of 2024, a comprehensive update to the zoning regulations is underway, with all zoning-related recommendations in this plan under consideration.</i></p>
<p><b>Create additional opportunities to produce ‘Missing Middle’ housing types, such as cottage-style development or townhomes.</b></p>	<p><i>As of 2024, a comprehensive update to the zoning regulations is underway, with all zoning-related recommendations in this plan under consideration.</i></p>

## Sub-topic: Homelessness

<b><i>Recommendation</i></b>	<b><i>Progress Made</i></b>
<b>Continue to develop, partner with, expand, and improve upon existing agencies and programs to provide food, healthcare, shelter, temporary housing, or transitional housing for all segments of the homeless population, regardless of sex, gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, age, physical ability, or mental condition.</b>	<i>Town coordinates with local service providers and programs to ensure equitable access to resources.</i>
<b>Consider becoming a “Built for Zero” Community.</b>	<i>Town staff have reviewed the criteria for participating in the “Built for Zero” initiative.</i>
<b>Create a stigma-reducing campaign to provide a consistent definition of “homeless” for use across all departments and public communications. Include public education on causes of homelessness, early warning signs, and available community resources.</b>	<i>Materials and guidance are available through the Connecticut Department of Housing (DOH).</i>
<b>Reduce housing cost burden and expand attainable housing opportunities.</b>	

## Public Services & Infrastructure

*The Public Services & Infrastructure chapter of the Manchester NEXT Plan recognizes that the Town’s quality of life, economic vitality, and community resilience depend on reliable, well-maintained, and forward-looking municipal services. From public safety and emergency services to water, sewer, stormwater, solid waste, and broadband infrastructure, these systems are essential to supporting Manchester’s residents, businesses, and visitors.*

*This chapter’s recommendations emphasize maintaining and modernizing critical infrastructure, integrating sustainability and resilience into municipal decision-making, and expanding equitable access to essential services. Implementation efforts include leveraging public-private partnerships, securing grant funding, and using data-driven approaches to anticipate future service demands. By investing in*

*robust infrastructure and proactive public service management, Manchester aims to ensure a safe, healthy, and resilient community that can adapt to growth, climate change, and evolving community needs.*

<b><i>Recommendation</i></b>	<b><i>Progress Made</i></b>
<p><b>Invest in the Town’s fire protection services to keep pace with future growth in designated areas on the Conservation + Growth Map. The magnitude and timing of investment should be phased to maintain an ISO 3 insurance rating for the Town. Study the need for new and expanded fire station facilities in the Town, and program future capital improvements and personal investments in the Town’s Capital Improvements Plan and Annual Operating Budget to keep pace with the location, magnitude, and timing of growth anticipated through 2040. Continue ongoing discussions to explore merging the two town-serving Fire Districts.</b></p>	<p><i>The Town’s two fire districts merged in July 2023, resulting in 28 new full-time firefighter positions and the conversion of former 8th District stations to 24-hour operations. A \$2 million apparatus replacement reserve was created to support long-term equipment needs, and a state merger grant helped address facility upgrades. Performance measure reports are now used to anticipate future funding and staffing requirements.</i></p>
<p><b>Prioritize recommendations for improved stormwater conditions in riparian zones throughout Manchester, including the reduction of impervious surface in riparian zones to increase stormwater infiltration and decrease stormwater runoff to other areas.</b></p>	<p><i>Recommendations from the <a href="#">Flood Resiliency Plan</a> are also being incorporated into ongoing planning and development strategies.</i></p>
<p><b>Address deferred maintenance concerns in future year budgets. Town officials should set and commit to a minimum guaranteed fund allocation for maintaining critical infrastructure categories in Manchester as a component of the annual budget process. Identify localized flooding issues as a community priority as most conditions will worsen with climate change.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds supported key infrastructure improvements, including \$3 million for water and sewer pipe replacements, library construction, Union Pond Dam repairs, and facility maintenance.</i></li> <li>• <i>Bond referenda in 2023 (\$19 million) and 2025 (\$19.5 million) funded roadways, storm drains, sidewalks, and town buildings.</i></li> <li>• <i>Additionally, a \$1.4 million Climate Resiliency Fund and an increase in wastewater maintenance funding (from \$1.5 million to \$1.75 million annually) address aging infrastructure and flood risks.</i></li> </ul>

<b><i>Recommendation</i></b>	<b><i>Progress Made</i></b>
<p><b>Initiate public outreach and education campaigns about water conservation in homes, businesses, and gardens.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Sustainable Manchester and the Department of Public Works provide resources and programs to promote water conservation.</i></li> <li>• <i>Initiatives include community outreach on conservation practices and rain barrel sales for residents and businesses.</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Promote water conservation and reuse principles in future investments. For new development and redevelopment in Manchester, consider water conservation and reuse practices and technologies that, in part, promote greywater reuse for non-potable users or the installation of water-conserving fixtures and appliances.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Town projects, including school renovations and the new library, incorporate high-efficiency Water Sense-compliant fixtures.</i></li> <li>• <i>The Manchester Water &amp; Sewer Department uses a <a href="#">Drought Contingency Plan</a> that establishes defined response phases (alert, advisory, emergency stages) tied to reservoir supply levels and conservation actions. This plan is publicly described on the Town’s Water Supply Status page and outlines how the department monitors water levels and implements conservation measures as needed.</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Increase the number and location of electric vehicle (EV) charging stations in Manchester to support public and private initiatives to expand EV ownership and uses to meet daily needs. Continue monitoring the supply and demand for public and private EV charging stations and other infrastructure in Manchester. Ensure the Town is adequately covered and equipped to meet future demands. Identify funding sources to be able to install additional infrastructure quickly, as necessary.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The Town Facilities Manager completed a community-wide assessment identifying priority locations for EV charging infrastructure.</i></li> <li>• <i>Multiple public charging stations have been installed, with site documentation and a GIS map layer developed to track locations.</i></li> <li>• <i>Funding sources have also been identified to support future expansion as demand increases.</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Empower the Sustainability Commission to integrate sustainability &amp; resiliency into all Town decision making. For example: Provide funding for technical assistance on Commission efforts; Integrate Low Impact Development (LID) techniques and Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI) into the private development approvals process and municipal capital improvements planning/ design; Develop baseline metrics to</b></p>	<p><i>In 2024, the Sustainability Commission administered an ARPA-funded Sustainability Grant Program (\$500K), supporting community-based resilience and sustainability initiatives.</i></p>

<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Progress Made</i>
<p>track sustainability indicators over time; Expand equity as a component of the Commission’s work. Require representatives of the Sustainability Commission to be included as dedicated members of or liaisons to other Town boards and commissions.</p>	
<p>Maintain Sustainable CT certification, building on the Town’s October 2022 Silver Certification.</p>	<p>Town received Climate Leader designation in 2024 and Gold Certification in 2025.</p>
<p>Town officials should consider, and plan for, increasing demands on stormwater infrastructure resulting from climate change.</p>	<p>The creation of a <a href="#">Flood Resiliency Plan</a>, funded through a DEEP grant, provides guidance for improvements to address current and future stormwater challenges.</p>
<p>Invest in the Town’s police protection services to keep pace with future growth.</p>	<p>Performance Measures report informs funding needs. FY26 added three patrol officers to meet growth in service demand.</p>
<p>Be a successful solid waste entrepreneur. Learn from other solid waste collection agencies in the United States about how they are expanding their business models and consider implementing some of their best practices in Manchester. Continue long-range analysis of landfill maintenance and operation beyond the current 2030 fill horizon.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launched a residential food scrap composting pilot program in 2024, establishing drop-off locations at the Transfer Station, Senior Center, parks, and libraries using app-controlled collection bins to divert organic waste from the municipal solid waste stream.</li> <li>• Secured approximately \$4.75 million through the Connecticut DEEP Materials Management Infrastructure Grant Program, one of the largest awards in the statewide initiative.</li> <li>• Funded projects include expansion of the food waste collection program, acquisition of a leaf grinder and compost screener, development of an aerated static composting facility, and a regional materials management collaboration study.</li> <li>• Public Works is advancing long-range landfill planning, including gas scrubber design to meet State environmental requirements and berm construction to preserve capacity.</li> </ul>

<b><i>Recommendation</i></b>	<b><i>Progress Made</i></b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Town is evaluating landfill expansion options and campus reconfiguration while intentionally slowing waste intake to extend landfill viability beyond 2029.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Produce a Resiliency &amp; Adaptation Plan focused on adapting to and reacting to climate change.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Flood Resilience Planning, funded by CT DEEP, began in 2025 and is expected to be completed by March 2026.</li> <li>The plan will guide strategies to adapt to climate impacts and enhance community resilience.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Evaluate best management practices to reduce stormwater run-off from private developments, including, but not limited to, rain gardens, conservation landscaping, reduced impervious surface areas (especially for parking lots), underground storage areas for large-scale rain events, or onsite swales for short-term stormwater retention.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Flood Resilience Planning, funded by CT DEEP, began in 2025 and is expected to be completed by March 2026.</li> <li>The plan will guide strategies to adapt to climate impacts and enhance community resilience.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Evaluate options for bringing faster high-speed broadband internet throughout the community, especially to low- and moderate-income neighborhoods, whether by partnering with a private provider or through investments in a municipally funded network.</b></p>	
<p><b>The Town should continue its initiative towards meeting MS4 requirements and improving local stormwater management infrastructure throughout the community, which may also increase property values, create scenic views, manage flood events, or attract wildlife as incidental benefits. Prioritize improvements to stormwater conditions in Aquifer Protection Areas and “impaired” water courses.</b></p>	<p><i>MS4 compliance initiatives and stormwater infrastructure improvements are being integrated into ongoing planning and development efforts.</i></p>
<p><b>Consider Town policies and incentives that encourage the redevelopment of underutilized parcels in the Town to increase property tax revenues.</b></p>	

<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Progress Made</i>
<p>Implement one or more ideas for stormwater management as a condition of private development in the Town’s subdivision rules and/or engineering design standards.</p>	
<p>Capitalize on strategic partnerships to implement future infrastructure projects. Convene a professional/community leaders committee to regularly discuss public and private infrastructure projects; Coordinate individual private sector projects to meet shared Town goals; Contribute to upsizing certain infrastructure beyond the needs of an individual project to serve larger community needs; Sync individual project schedules to minimize disruptions in the community; Look for economies-of-scale with multiple projects to build infrastructure more efficiently.</p>	
<p>Consider information from the POCD in updates to the Town’s water and sewer master plans or its capital investment plans and programs to keep pace with the location, magnitude, and timing of growth anticipated through 2040.</p>	
<p>Be creative in implementing strategies that maximize sustainable revenue streams for future year infrastructure investments, and reconsider rules and requirements (like tax assessment agreements) in the Town for commercial, office, industrial, or mixed-use areas related to densities, land use mix, building heights, or parking requirements that depress development potential (and thus tax and fee generation potential).</p>	
<p>Increase revenue potential with the Town’s Conservation + Growth Map presented in the Land Use + Community Character Chapter to help fund future infrastructure investments.</p>	

<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Progress Made</i>
<p><b>Support appropriate applications for “Smart Town” technologies in future capital projects. A broad Smart Towns initiative will link Information systems and provide more opportunities for real-time information-sharing with the community. Develop a townwide strategy that acts as a framework to coordinate investments from various departments or their partners.</b></p>	
<p><b>Modify existing codes and regulations to protect drinking water supply.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The Water &amp; Sewer Department is planning future updates to codes and regulations to enhance drinking water protection, with timelines dependent on departmental priorities.</i></li> <li>• <i>Current efforts focus on regulatory compliance, including service line identification under federal rules and completion of the Risk and Resiliency Water Supply Plan.</i></li> <li>• <i>Annual public outreach through the water quality report provides conservation information, supporting broader water-supply protection goals.</i></li> </ul>

## Community & Cultural Services

*The Community & Cultural Services chapter of the Manchester NEXT Plan recognizes the essential role that arts, culture, education, and social services play in fostering a vibrant, connected, and equitable community. Manchester’s identity is shaped by its diverse residents, its strong network of human service providers, and its rich cultural and artistic assets—from libraries and youth programs to public art, festivals, and cultural institutions.*

*This chapter’s recommendations emphasize supporting lifelong learning, strengthening partnerships among service providers, promoting inclusive arts and cultural programming, and ensuring community assets remain accessible to all residents. The Town continues to invest in enriching quality of life by expanding opportunities for participation, celebrating cultural expression, and reinforcing the connections between people, place, and community identity.*

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Progress Made</b>
<p><b>Explore the pursuit of an Arts and Cultural District designation through the State of Connecticut.</b></p>	<p><i>Manchester received official Cultural District designation from the State of Connecticut in March 2024.</i></p>
<p><b>Encourage art and performances in public places by continuing to collaborate with local artists through facilities like WORK_SPACE. Ensure creatives are fairly compensated and not asked to donate their time or work.</b></p>	<p><i>WORK_SPACE facilities, staff, and programming provide ongoing support for artist partnerships, pop-up activations, and public programming, helping connect local creatives with opportunities for performances and exhibitions in the community.</i></p>
<p><b>Celebrate Manchester’s evolving cultural identity by highlighting the diverse nationalities and cultural traditions represented in the community. See “Festival, Events &amp; Entertainment” section.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The Town supports ongoing cultural programming and partnerships with community organizations that celebrate Manchester’s diversity.</i></li> <li>• <i>Events and initiatives include Juneteenth and Hispanic Heritage celebrations, cultural festivals at Center Memorial Park, community programming at WORK_SPACE, and multicultural events hosted through the Manchester Public Library and local nonprofit partners.</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Implement the Downtown for All Complete Streets Plan to increase pedestrian and visitor activity through safer, more welcoming public spaces.</b></p>	<p><i>This initiative is part of the Downtown Manchester Improvements Project. Planning began in 2021 and the Engineering Division is currently advancing the project design and securing grant funding. The project focuses on improving walkability, accessibility, and overall Downtown vibrancy.</i></p>
<p><b>Consider expanding the existing Downtown District by developing key vacant and underutilized parcels on the west side of Main Street to create a more cohesive and inviting Downtown.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The redevelopment of 942 Main Street in downtown Manchester has been approved as a mixed-use project featuring approximately 116 housing units and ground-floor commercial space.</i></li> <li>• <i>As of March 2026, the project is currently in the planning and pre-development phase, representing a key opportunity to activate an underutilized site and support continued growth and connectivity along the west side of Main Street.</i></li> </ul>

## Sub-Topic: Festivals, Events & Entertainment

<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Progress Made</i>
<p><b>To ensure broad participation in festivals and events, ensure that public transportation is available, or provide transportation such as shuttle buses that run from walkable neighborhood centers or other neighborhood facilities. This can help reduce parking needs and allow events to take place in underutilized parking lots or on closed streets.</b></p>	<p><i>Second Saturday Downtown provides a free public shuttle, when possible, through partnership with the Youth Services Bureau, improving access and reducing parking constraints.</i></p>
<p><b>Continue to keep the Town of Manchester website calendar updated with local festivals, events, and entertainment options.</b></p>	<p><i>Cultural District “Art &amp; Culture” webpage maintained; Communications Specialist coordinates cross-department updates to improve visibility and consistency of community event listings.</i></p>
<p><b>Continue to celebrate diverse cultures. Consider expanding on the annual Juneteenth Freedom Day Commemoration and Hispanic Heritage Celebration and adding celebrations of other cultural events.</b></p>	<p><i>Themed Market Days incorporated into multiple Town events; cultural themes aligned with existing heritage celebrations to expand representation and participation.</i></p>
<p><b>Utilize current civic and cultural assets to create a thriving arts, culture, and entertainment market.</b></p>	<p><i>Manchester continues to leverage its existing civic and cultural assets to strengthen the arts, culture, and entertainment market. The Cultural District and Imagine Manchester Committees regularly advance programming and partnerships, including regional events like Greater Hartford’s Theater Week, exploration of expanded festivals such as Silk City Fest, and ongoing promotion through tools like the cultural asset inventory, online map, and CTVisit updates. These efforts collectively enhance visibility, drive engagement, and reinforce Manchester’s identity as a cultural destination.</i></p>

<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Progress Made</i>
<b>Consider bringing smaller events to individual neighborhoods to increase participation in cultural events.</b>	<i>Opportunities under review as part of Cultural District and community programming efforts; potential alignment with neighborhood-based Market Days and local partnerships.</i>

### Sub-Topic: Historic Resources

<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Progress Made</i>
<b>Make a concerted effort to understand what kinds of historic preservation programs are desired by marginalized communities and pursue SHPO funding to implement projects that honor “hidden histories.”</b>	<i>The World of Manchester Exhibit at Mahoney Recreation Center is an educational art installation highlighting immigration patterns and cultural influences on Manchester today. Project includes digital setup, fabrication, and full installation supported by ARPA funds.</i>
<b>Consider partnering with others to promote private or public acquisition of historic properties to hold, manage, preserve, restore, and improve properties in support of preservation goals.</b>	
<b>Continue to support the efforts of the Manchester Historical Society to bring history-related programming, events, and tours to Manchester.</b>	<i>Town continues coordination with the Historical Society to expand access to programs, tours, and educational resources.</i>
<b>Expand resources available to those seeking to learn about Manchester’s Black and immigrant history and the Indigenous people who were the Town’s original settlers.</b>	

<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Progress Made</i>
<b>Utilize new technology—such as virtual reality, augmented reality, and other digital tools—to improve wayfinding and storytelling within historic areas.</b>	

### Sub-Topic: The Arts

<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Progress Made</i>
<b>Support arts programs in public schools to ensure equitable access for students; address transportation barriers for extracurricular participation.</b>	
<b>Consider designating an Arts &amp; Culture District to demonstrate leadership support for the arts and stimulate economic growth.</b>	<i>Cultural District Designation received from the State of Connecticut in March 2024.</i>
<b>Consider developing a Public Art Master Plan.</b>	
<b>Provide destinations and programming for all ages, incomes, abilities, and cultural backgrounds.</b>	<i>Community arts programming continues to be integrated across facilities, public spaces, and cultural events.</i>
<b>Continue to encourage and support neighborhood-level arts events such as pop-ups, mini galleries, sidewalk shows, and walking art tours.</b>	
<b>Seek national grants to showcase and support local artists, especially those with marginalized identities.</b>	<i>While National Endowment for the Arts funding is limited due to federal actions, WORK_SPACE staff and Cultural District volunteers actively pursue state and local grant opportunities to advance this goal.</i>

### Sub-Topic: Educational Facilities

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Progress Made</b>
<b>Complete the Repurposed Schools project and move forward.</b>	<i>Redevelopment, planning, and implementation for former school properties are actively underway. Projects are advancing through design, partnership development, and phased construction. <a href="#">Additional opportunities</a> for repurposing other former school properties are continuing to be evaluated.</i>
<b>Strengthen and expand existing partnerships between Manchester Community College, Manchester High School, Cheney Tech, and local employers.</b>	
<b>Expand opportunities for the Town of Manchester to partner with Manchester Community College, identifying potential public-private partnerships with clear and tangible goals, including events, studies, grant funding, educational and economic development opportunities, and co-op programs.</b>	
<b>Introduce local youth to government and community planning.</b>	<i>Planning Department staff regularly engage with high school and college aged youth to offer internship and shadowing experiences.</i>

### Sub-Topic: Library

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Progress Made</b>
<b>Partner with the library to identify what municipal services could be more easily provided to the</b>	<i>The new library will feature a designated Municipal Use room on the main floor. Partnerships with numerous agencies and town departments are ongoing, including BOE</i>

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Progress Made</b>
<b>community at the facility in addition to, or instead of, those located at Town Hall.</b>	<i>offices, Recreation, Health, Town Clerk, Senior Center, MCC, UCONN Health, local nonprofits, and cultural organizations. Programs include senior tax services, emergency replacement information, housing rehab, lead abatement info, and economic development resources.</i>
<b>Ensure connectivity to local libraries by multiple modes of transportation.</b>	<i>The Library Building Committee opted not to include an e-bike/scooter charging room, but the new library is well-served by public bus routes and accessible from high-need areas. Opportunities remain to explore a micromobility pilot along Cultural District routes with strategically placed docks.</i>
<b>Expand library programming and services.</b>	<i>While the bookmobile program was discontinued due to cost and limited selection, the library continues to expand physical and mobile programs. Focus remains on children’s programming, school visits, and technology-based resources to reach broader audiences. Planning for future expansion aims to enhance scope, variety, and accessibility of library services.</i>

## Transportation

*Transportation planning in Manchester emphasizes safety, accessibility, and multimodal options to support residents’ mobility needs. The Town is focused on improving pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, enhancing transit access, and promoting connectivity within the community and to regional destinations. Efforts also integrate equity considerations, aiming to provide safe, convenient, and affordable transportation for all users, including pedestrians, cyclists, transit riders, seniors, and people with disabilities. Key initiatives include intersection safety improvements, trail connectivity, first-mile/last-mile solutions, and the development of a comprehensive Active Transportation Master Plan.*

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Progress Made</b>
<b>Improve Intersections</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Priority intersections identified through the Capitol Region Council of Governments' Regional Transportation Safety Plan are being upgraded to enhance safety and mobility. Improvements include pedestrian signal upgrades, leading pedestrian intervals, bus stop enhancements, and conditional turn restrictions.</li> <li>• Recent progress: Vernon St &amp; Buckley School (completed Fall 2023); Tolland Tpke &amp; Adams (under construction, 2024); McKee &amp; Hartford (design phase). Additional intersections are planned for upgrades through 2024.</li> </ul>
<b>Connect Existing Trails</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Efforts to fill gaps and connect trails to streets and roadways continue to expand non-motorized transportation options.</li> <li>• Key projects include the Center Springs Park shared-use path (Fall 2023), Hop River Trail Extension (Spring 2024), and Bigelow Brook Greenway (Summer 2024).</li> <li>• Work is guided by the Complete Streets policy and the Parks &amp; Facilities Master Plan, with \$800,000 awarded through the CTDOT Community Connectivity Grant to support a Downtown Cycle Track.</li> </ul>
<b>Incorporate First Mile/Last Mile Options</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transit access improvements are being implemented through bus stop upgrades, bike education programs, senior shuttles, and Dial-A-Ride services. These programs provide critical connections for medical appointments, shopping, and personal errands, with over 3,000 rides annually provided by the Senior Center van/bus.</li> <li>• Partnerships with CTrides support active transportation outreach.</li> </ul>
<b>Create an Active Transportation Master Plan</b>	
<b>Promote Widespread Transit Options</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Efforts to encourage transit usage focus on fast, convenient, and affordable service along major corridors. Initiatives include supporting transit easements and infrastructure in new or redeveloped projects and evaluating technologies such as signal prioritization, queue jumps, and bus-only lanes.</li> <li>• Opportunities for Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) zones near CTfastrak stations are also being considered.</li> </ul>

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Progress Made</b>
<b>Ensure a Well-Maintained System</b>	<i>Public Works follows an established protocol to maintain bus shelters, select public walkways and facilities. Residents can submit issues through the <a href="#">Mark It</a> system, helping to ensure the system remains safe, accessible, and functional throughout the community.</i>

## Parks, Recreation, and Open Space

*Manchester’s parks, recreation facilities, and open spaces are vital to the health, well-being, and quality of life of its residents. They provide opportunities for physical activity, social interaction, cultural events, and connection to nature. The Town is committed to maintaining and enhancing these spaces to be safe, accessible, and welcoming for people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds. Current planning efforts focus on improving existing parks, developing underutilized or vacant areas, expanding recreational programming, enhancing trail and greenway connectivity, and ensuring equitable access throughout the community. Future initiatives aim to align with the Town’s Parks & Facilities Master Plan while incorporating community input, sustainability practices, and innovative approaches to recreation and open space management.*

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Progress Made</b>
<b>Expand tree planting and consider becoming a Tree City USA.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>The Tree Subcommittee under the Conservation Commission is advancing the Town’s Tree City USA designation.</i></li> <li><i>Public Works dedicated approximately 1,600 hours annually (\$50k–\$75k) to tree maintenance. Between 2021 and 2024, 227 trees were planted, with priority given to disadvantaged neighborhoods, and 200 trees were distributed through Arbor Day and Eversource giveaways.</i></li> </ul>
<b>Continue to implement recommendations from the Parks and Facilities Master Plan.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Trails throughout the Town have been inventoried and classified to support ongoing management.</i></li> </ul>

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Progress Made</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Lighting improvements are underway at Center Springs Park and may also be implemented at Center Memorial Park.</i></li> <li>• <i>The UConn Climate Corps is assisting town staff in creating a natural resource inventory framework to support the Conservation Commission's efforts to advocate for natural resource conservation and open space management.</i></li> </ul>
<b>Explore opportunities to coordinate with and empower volunteers to help with park maintenance through mobile crowd-sourcing apps or websites.</b>	<i>Staff-led park cleanups continue, with ongoing engagement of community volunteers.</i>
<b>Consider providing Wi-Fi in the Town's parks, aligning with Parks and Facilities Master Plan goals.</b>	<i>Public Wi-Fi has been installed at The OAK, with expansion planned following lighting and power upgrades. A grant is currently in the acceptance phase for Charter Oak Park and Northwest Park.</i>
<b>Improve Park safety by providing additional lighting and emergency call buttons.</b>	<i>Infrastructure improvements, including lighting upgrades, are currently underway in Center Springs Park to enhance safety for all visitors.</i>
<b>Emphasize sports tourism as one means to increase spending and sales tax receipts.</b>	<i>The Buckland Hills focus area demonstrates potential for facility-based tourism and associated economic benefits.</i>
<b>Evaluate each park and the pedestrian and bicycle routes to it from surrounding neighborhoods to ensure maximum accessibility and ADA compliance.</b>	<i>Planned evaluations will focus on improving access and ensuring compliance with ADA standards.</i>
<b>Look into the positive economic impacts of the parks system and promote its value to the community.</b>	
<b>Regularly engage the community in discussions about parks and recreation facilities to ensure park programming meets residents' needs.</b>	<i>The Town continues inclusive engagement efforts to ensure recreation programming meets the needs of all residents.</i>

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Progress Made</b>
<b>Continue to expand existing Senior and Youth Services in the community to keep up with demand.</b>	Programming resources are allocated to support evolving community needs, in alignment with findings from the 2022 community survey.

## Sub-Topic: Trails & Connectivity

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Progress Made</b>
<b>Explore adding Manchester's trails to the CT Trail Finder website to help market the Town and attract visitors.</b>	Public Works and Planning Departments collaborated with CT Trail Finder staff to update Hockanum River Linear Park Trail information; all public trails now included (Nov. 2025).
<b>Prioritize land acquisition needs for trail network extensions.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Efforts are coordinated through the Land Acquisition &amp; Historic Property Investment Committee and the Trail Advisory Committee, a subcommittee of the Conservation Commission.</li> <li>• In 2023, a DEEP grant was awarded for the Hop River–Cheney Rail Trail connection.</li> <li>• In 2024, ARPA funds were allocated to support land acquisition.</li> </ul>
<b>Improve wayfinding/signage for parking lots at trailheads so users know where to enter the trails.</b>	New signage and kiosks planned for Case Mountain, Hop River Trail, and Laurel Marsh Parking Lot Project.
<b>Invest in lighting and other safety features for heavily used paths to ensure that trails provide for a safe experience.</b>	Lighting upgrades are currently underway in Center Springs Park to enhance safety for all visitors.
<b>Coordinate and regularly meet with additional entities involved with trails in Manchester to update park and trail maps.</b>	The <a href="#">Trail Advisory Committee</a> , a subcommittee of the Conservation Commission was formed in 2025 to guide coordination.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Progress Made</b>
<p><b>Continue to implement the Trails &amp; Connectivity Plan adopted in August 2021.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New trail connections are being pursued to prioritize links between neighborhoods, parks, and schools.</li> <li>• The DEEP-funded Hop River–Cheney Rail Trail connection is currently underway, enhancing regional trail connectivity.</li> </ul>

## Land Use & Community Character

*Manchester’s land use and community character policies are designed to maintain the Town’s unique identity while accommodating growth and change. The Town emphasizes human-scale design, high-quality architecture, mixed-use development, and sustainable practices. Current efforts focus on updating zoning regulations, promoting design standards, supporting traditional and urban farming, and enhancing streetscapes to create a cohesive, attractive, and livable community. Long-term initiatives aim to implement design guidelines, streetscape improvements, and programs that encourage sustainable development and inclusive community engagement.*



Recommendation	Progress Made
<p><b>Review the current Zoning Regulations to ensure that zoning permits the desired scale and character of development. Look for barriers to their use by developers while maintaining a high standard for human-scale design.</b></p>	<p><i>As of 2024, a comprehensive update to the zoning regulations is underway, with all zoning-related recommendations in this plan under consideration.</i></p>
<p><b>Consider a comprehensive update of the current Zoning Regulations by simplifying, consolidating, and modernizing. Strongly encourage design and form considerations.</b></p>	<p><i>As of 2024, a comprehensive update to the zoning regulations is underway, with all zoning-related recommendations in this plan under consideration.</i></p>
<p><b>Consider reducing or removing parking requirements in some or all existing zoning districts.</b></p>	<p><i>Parking standards are being reviewed as part of the 2024 zoning update, with the goal of supporting development flexibility while maintaining functional and safe site design.</i></p>
<p><b>Consider expanding form-based zoning and Design Overlay Zones to promote high-quality design and development. Amendments or revisions to the existing Zoning Regulations should allow mixed-use development.</b></p>	
<p><b>Lead by example by adhering to design standards for public buildings. By doing so, the Town can encourage the private sector to employ the guidelines when designing new buildings or renovating existing buildings.</b></p>	<p><i>Town projects, including the Library with Net Zero and geothermal systems, demonstrate leadership in sustainable, high-quality design and serve as a model for the private sector.</i></p>
<p><b>Explore ways to further support traditional and urban farming, while maintaining good neighbor relations.</b></p>	<p><i>The Community Garden Program in the Eastside Neighborhood has been active since 2014, with recent expansions and bed reconstructions completed between 2022 and 2025. Programs continue to provide inclusive engagement opportunities for residents.</i></p>
<p><b>Develop design standards for architecture, focusing on materials, scale, orientation, and fenestration, particularly on facades visible</b></p>	

Recommendation	Progress Made
<b>from public spaces and streets. These standards can be incorporated into the Zoning Regulations or can be separate Design Guidelines.</b>	
<b>Establish and implement street design standards that incorporate recommended elements not already covered in the Town’s Public Improvement Standards.</b>	
<b>Pursue grants that will assist in the purchasing and installation of streetscape plantings and furnishings.</b>	

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## FOR MORE INFORMATION

To view the full Manchester NEXT Plan of Conservation and Development, supplemental resources, and related studies, please visit the Town’s Long-Term Planning page: [Manchester Comprehensive and Long-Term Planning](#)