

February 6, 2014

WORKING DRAFT

# Stamford's Coastal Vision

## For Conservation, Economic Development, and Beneficial Land-Use in the Coastal Management Area

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***Vision Statement:** Use and development of land in the Stamford Coastal Management Area will be guided by the City's planning and regulatory programs to maintain an appropriate and sustainable balance between the beneficial use and conservation of coastal resources. That balance will be consistent with public rights and interests, the rights of private property owners, and the City's goals for public health and safety and resilience to coastal hazards.*

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### Introduction

Stamford is a coastal community—one of the oldest and most historic communities on Long Island Sound. From the first settlement in 1641 to the present day, Stamford's character and quality of life have been intrinsically tied to the water and shoreline resources of Long Island Sound and the Rippowam (Mill) River<sup>1</sup> flowing to the Sound through the center of the City. In 2014, the coastal area is generally recognized as the City's most important natural resource, providing a variety of environmental, economic, and cultural benefits to Stamford residents and the general public.

Stamford is part of the coastal area of the State of Connecticut as defined in the Connecticut Coastal Management Act (CCMA; Sections 22a-90 through 22a-112 of the Connecticut General Statutes). Use and development of land within the City's designated coastal area are subject to the special coastal management provisions of the Stamford Master Plan and Zoning Regulations as well as the requirements of the CCMA.

Administered by the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP), the CCMA establishes the state's goals and policies for both conservation and beneficial use of coastal resources. Soon after the CCMA was enacted in 1980, Stamford began its own program to set and advance City goals and policies, consistent with the state's, to address Stamford's coastal management issues, including, but not limited to, issues concerning waterfront development, public access to tidal and navigable waters, water quality, flood and erosion hazards, and conservation of natural coastal resources. This City program is called the Stamford Municipal Coastal Program (MCP) established with adoption of the Master Plan Coastal Addendum in 1984.

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<sup>1</sup> The Rippowam River is often called the Mill River, especially the reach of the river downstream of Broad Street on which a number of mills historically operated, dating back to the 1600s.

Stamford's initial coastal management program was especially timely. In the early 1980s, the City's waterfront had become subject to intense pressures for redevelopment. Residential and commercial projects threatened to replace, and in a number of instances did replace, traditional water-dependent uses such as boat service facilities. Redevelopment also raised concerns about the effect of new, large-scale waterfront development projects on the City's planning goals to establish and maintain a unified Downtown central business district.

As a result of the City's coastal management program, new policies were added to the Master Plan to protect water-dependent uses and achieve other coastal management goals. The Zoning Regulations were then amended to include new land-use regulations to implement the policies. These planning and zoning initiatives by the Planning and Zoning boards, respectively, recognized the economic development opportunities associated with use of Stamford's coastal area as well as the need to ensure that coastal resources and beneficial water-dependent uses are adequately protected.

Today, the attention given by City officials and planners to Stamford's coastal area continues to reflect the City's foresighted efforts to shape its future as well as the ongoing pressure and interest for redevelopment of properties on and near the waterfront. The 2002 Master Plan emphasized the value of the City's coastal neighborhoods and resources and established new land use categories, added to the official Master Plan Map, to provide for waterfront development while protecting existing water-dependent uses and providing appropriate public access to coastal resources. Additional amendments to the Zoning Regulations were adopted in 2004 to achieve consistency with the Master Plan. Also in 2004, the City established its Harbor Management Commission for the purpose of planning for the most desirable use of Stamford Harbor and the City's other coastal and navigable waters and to prepare the City's Harbor Management Plan which was adopted by the Stamford Board of Representatives in 2009.

The Master Plan recognizes that effective implementation of the City's coastal management program is an ongoing process that must continue to develop in response to changing conditions and circumstances. Achieving opportunities for economic growth and public use and enjoyment of coastal resources, while at the same time protecting environmental quality and preserving the traditional quality of life in shorefront neighborhoods, requires public support as well as active involvement, long-term commitment, and thoughtful planning on the part of a number of City agencies.

In 2014, the Master Plan sets a new vision for conservation, economic development, and beneficial land-use in the Stamford Coastal Management Area. The new vision—which consists of basic goals, implementation strategies, and neighborhood policies—is consistent with the legislative goals and policies established by the CCMA. The vision reaffirms and adjusts where necessary the City's already-established goals developed over more than 30 years of active planning to balance the beneficial use and conservation of Stamford's coastal resources.

## Stamford's Coastal Management Area

Defined for the purpose of the Master Plan, the Stamford Coastal Management Area (SCMA) includes the Coastal Boundary Area within which the requirements of the Connecticut Coastal Management Act and the City's coastal land-use planning and regulatory authorities are applied. The SCMA also includes the Stamford Harbor Management Area which is the area of jurisdiction of the Stamford Harbor Management Commission and Stamford Harbor Management Plan. (See Map 1.) While the Master Plan focuses on coastal land use, the Harbor Management Plan establishes City goals and policies for the most desirable use of the City's navigable waterways. The two plans are the City's principal guides for land and water use in the coastal area and are implemented as complementary and consistent documents.

Connecticut's coastal boundary is set by the CCMA. In addition to defining coastal resources and establishing legislative goals and policies for beneficial use and conservation of those resources; the CCMA sets the boundary to mark the area within which the provisions of the Act apply.

State-wide, the coastal management boundary is a continuous line delineated by a 1,000-foot curvilinear setback from the mean high water (MHW) line, a 1,000-foot setback from the inland boundary of state-regulated tidal wetlands, or the inland boundary of the "100-year" floodplain, whichever is farthest inland. In Stamford, this boundary encompasses an area, mostly south of the Connecticut Turnpike (I-95), but also including the Rippowam River to the upstream extent of tidal influence. The Coastal Boundary also includes part of the Downtown central business district north of the Turnpike and adjoining the Rippowam River, as well as some residential lots along the Noroton River north of I-95.

As authorized by the CCMA, the City of Stamford by adoption of a municipal regulation modified the state-designated coastal boundary to a more identifiable rectilinear line following either the nearest street, lot line, or zoning district boundary, but always inland of the state line. In the Master Plan, the land area so bounded, landward of the MHW line, is called the Coastal Boundary Area. (See Map 2 and the "City of Stamford Coastal Boundary Map" available on the City website and in the City's Land Use Bureau.)

Part of the SCMA, the Stamford Harbor Management Area was established by City ordinance<sup>2</sup> with authority provided by the Connecticut Harbor Management Act (Sections 22a-113k through 22a-113t of the Connecticut General Statutes). Provisions of the CCMA also apply within the Harbor Management Area which encompasses all of the navigable waters and intertidal areas of the City waterward of the MHW line. The Harbor Management Area is bounded on the south, in Long Island Sound, by straight lines running to and from defined points within the projecting boundary lines of the neighboring towns of Greenwich to the west and Darien to the east. It includes several distinct and well known coves and harbors, including Stamford Harbor with its east and west branches and the smaller harbors of Dolphin Cove, Westcott Cove, and Cove Island Harbor. Also included in the Harbor Management Area is the lower, tidally influenced reaches of the Rippowam River as well as the City's jurisdiction on Holly Pond and the Noroton River upstream to Route 1.

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<sup>2</sup> See Chapter 6, Article XII, Sec. 6-59 of the Stamford Code of Ordinances.

The SCMA's irregular shoreline covers about 14 miles and supports a diversity of land uses, including residential, commercial, industrial, recreational, and open space uses. Coastal area neighborhoods defined for planning purposes include, from west to east, most of the Waterside neighborhood west of Stamford Harbor, a portion of the West Side neighborhood adjoining the west bank of the Rippowam River, north of I-95; part of Downtown Stamford on the east side of the river; the entire South End neighborhood which defines the most intensively developed part of the SCMA; all of the residential Shippan peninsula; and a significant part of the Cove-East Side neighborhood.

Conditions in the SCMA are appropriately described with respect to coastal resources, water and waterfront uses and activities, and ongoing planning and development initiatives.

## **Coastal Resources**

A variety of coastal land and water resources, defined in the Connecticut Coastal Management Act, are found in the Stamford Coastal Management Area, including but not limited to, tidal waters and embayments, intertidal flats, tidal wetlands, beaches, floodplains, and living marine resources such as finfish and shellfish. Upland resources adjacent to the shoreline include developed shorelands and urban waterfront areas.

The coastal resources are important determinants of Stamford's quality of life; they provide important natural values and ecological functions related, for example to fish and wildlife habitat, water quality, and scenic quality; and they are valuable for many different uses including boating and other recreational activities, water-dependent commerce and industry, and water-enhanced residential and commercial development. The location and extent of coastal resources were identified by the City in the course of developing Stamford's Municipal Coastal Program; resource maps are available for review in the City's Land Use Bureau.

Parts of the Stamford shoreline, and particularly the South End, have historically been subject to severe tidal flooding (most notably during hurricanes in the 1930's, '40's, and '50's). Shoreline flooding and erosion are also caused by more frequent spring and winter storms, and significant portions of the coastal area fall within coastal flood hazard areas as identified on Flood Insurance Rate Maps prepared by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. The Stamford hurricane protection barrier, authorized by Congress and completed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in 1969 to protect the South End and areas along the Wescott Cove shoreline, is a prominent shoreline feature.

The quality of the tidal and navigable waters in the SCMA has a profound impact on the overall quality of life as well as shoreline land use and just about every water use. Accomplishments with regard to understanding and improving water quality conditions in the SCMA and Long Island Sound have included improvement of municipal wastewater collection and treatment systems, establishment of water quality monitoring programs, increased public awareness of the causes and impacts of runoff pollution, and initiatives to plan for water quality improvements on a watershed-wide basis.

## Water and Waterfront Uses and Activities

Stamford's shoreline is used for industrial, commercial, residential, and recreational purposes. The pattern of development is quite varied, ranging from completely residential neighborhoods to older industrial and commercial areas, major mixed use redevelopment areas, active boating facilities, and substantial City parks and beach recreation areas. Waterfront land uses include those genuinely dependent on their waterfront locations and those enhanced by their proximity to the shore. Water-dependent uses include industrial facilities (port facilities) and facilities supporting recreational boating and other water-based recreational activities.

Virtually all of the City's waterfront commercial and industrial development is found along the waterfront of the South End and the east and west branches of Stamford Harbor. (See Map 3.) This central, most intensively developed part of the SCMA also supports residential and recreational uses and municipal facilities, including the City's wastewater treatment plant and transfer station. Office buildings have been constructed on waterfront sites, and in 2014 the South End waterfront is the location of one of the largest, ongoing waterfront development projects in the country—the mixed use Harbor Point project consisting of apartments, office space, restaurants, retail businesses, a marina, and public amenities. Outside of this inner harbor area, residential neighborhoods along with the City's two largest waterfront parks—Cummings and Cove Island parks—dominate the shoreline.

Although local shipbuilding and maritime trading industries disappeared long ago, the City's current port activities are the most active in western Long Island Sound. In terms of the amount of materials shipped to and from its waterfront terminals, the City of Stamford has historically been the fourth largest commercial harbor in Connecticut, behind the three deep-water ports of Bridgeport, New Haven, and New London. The port facilities depend on Stamford Harbor's congressionally designated federal navigation channels, maintained by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, to deliver construction materials and ship out scrap metal utilizing tugs, scows, and barges.

Stamford is also a significant center of recreational boating in western Long Island Sound with a number of facilities serving the boating public located on the waterfront and in the Harbor Management Area. Traditionally, these facilities have included docks, boat slips, moorings, and launching ramps as well as boat sales, repair, service, and storage facilities. Boating facilities include those owned and operated by the City of Stamford for public use, including the marinas at Czescik, Cummings, and Cove Island parks.

For almost a century, a commercial boatyard was operated on a prominent waterfront site—often called the boatyard peninsula—in the South End on the west branch of Stamford Harbor. Beginning in 1912, the site was occupied for over 50 years by the Luders Marine Construction Company, a Stamford shipbuilding industry of national renown. When Stamford's coastal management program was being developed in the early 1980s, the boatyard then occupying the site was identified by City planners as one of the largest boatyard/marina facilities serving pleasure craft in the northeast United States. Retention of uncompromised boatyard services and facilities on this property has been a goal of the Master Plan since the beginning of the City's coastal management program. Elsewhere on the waterfront, marina facilities have been developed as ancillary components of waterfront residential and commercial developments that otherwise are not water-dependent. Private clubs also provide recreational boating services, facilities, and activities for members and guests.

In addition to recreational boating-related activities, other recreational uses are based on access to the City's tidal and navigable waters. These include swimming, land-based fishing, and more passive recreational activities such as walking along the shoreline, picnicking, and enjoying views of the water from a variety of points of public access. Visual and/or physical access to the SCMA is available from a number of locations, including the City's substantial waterfront parks—Cummings, Cove Island, Kosciuszko, and Southfield parks; from other City properties, including public streets and right-of-ways, that lead to or follow the shoreline; and through public access walkways and other amenities provided as elements of waterfront development projects.

## **Planning and Development Initiatives**

In 2014, Stamford's waterfront remains subject to forces for change in the form of various planning and development initiatives likely to have a major effect on waterfront character as well as uses of Stamford's tidal and navigable waterways. Major redevelopment projects are underway and are being planned for properties on and near the waterfront of the South End and the east and west branches of Stamford Harbor. Redevelopment in these locations will have a significant effect on the use and character of the waterfront for years to come.

In addition, there are some considerable and ongoing City-sponsored planning and development efforts affecting coastal resources, including initiatives to restore and enhance the environmental quality of the Rippowam River and provide public access to the river through completion of the Mill River Park and Greenway Project; enhance opportunities for public access to coastal resources, including boating access, through other City parks and locations; and continue to consider the feasibility of establishing passenger ferry service that would connect Stamford with New York City and other places via Long Island Sound. The common themes in all of the ongoing City projects are not new; they can be seen throughout the City's history; and they involve connecting the City with Long Island Sound while protecting the City's most valuable natural assets for the benefit of future generations.

## **Municipal Coastal Program**

Stamford's Municipal Coastal Program includes the City's goals, policies, and requirements set forth in the Master Plan and Zoning Regulations specifically to achieve consistency with, and otherwise implement, the coastal management goals, policies, and requirements established in the Connecticut Coastal Management Act. The CCMA provides for the voluntary development, by each coastal municipality in the state, of such a program to implement the policies and provisions of the CCMA through local land-use plans and regulations. Developed in the early 1980s after passage of the CCMA, Stamford's MCP was established to set and advance the City's own coastal management goals and policies, consistent with the state's, in response to Stamford's local needs and interests. Stamford's MCP is approved by the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, the state agency responsible for administration of the CCMA.

The City's basic goals with regard to coastal area land use and development were first set forth in the 1984 Master Plan Coastal Addendum and remain valid today. Included were well-founded policies to protect and promote water-dependent uses, including water-dependent industry, promote coastal recreation and boating, maintain and enhance public access to coastal resources, protect the quality

of life in shorefront residential neighborhoods, protect and restore natural coastal resources, and redevelop prominent waterfront sites in a manner that provides economic benefits while maintaining viable water-dependent uses and consistency with the CCMA.

The City's official Master Plan Map establishes land use categories to help accomplish these policies, including: the Mixed-Use—Shorefront category to provide for appropriate mixed use of the waterfront in a manner that protects existing water-dependent uses and encourages the preservation and enhancement of public access to coastal resources; and the Industrial—Water-Dependent category, also to promote and preserve water-dependent uses that require direct access to, or location in, marine or tidal waters. These categories have been applied to the waterfront surrounding the South End and adjoining the east and west branches of Stamford Harbor—the central, most intensively developed part of the Stamford Coastal Management Area.

As an integral part of the MCP, the Stamford Zoning Regulations have established specific zoning districts to implement the Master Plan's coastal management policies and general land use plan, including the plan as it applies to the South End waterfront and east and west branches. These districts include: the Designed Waterfront Development District intended to provide for and encourage the most appropriate use and development of waterfront property, giving highest priority and preference to water-dependent uses on sites that are physically suited for such uses; the Coastal Water-Dependent District intended to set aside and protect areas that have been or may be developed predominantly for water-dependent industrial and commercial uses which are dependent upon waterborne transportation or otherwise require waterfront access; and the South End Redevelopment District, South, a flexible design district, subject to special standards and review procedures, intended to provide for and encourage the planning and coordinated development of large-scale mixed-use developments that include the revitalization of industrial brown fields sites and the appropriate redevelopment of significant waterfront properties, while giving highest priority and preference to water-dependent uses and meaningful public access on waterfront sites, consistent with the policies of the CCMA.

As part of implementing its MCP, the City conducts a “coastal site plan review” of all major projects and activities proposed within the Coastal Boundary Area. This review, required by the CCMA, is conducted in the course of the normal responsibilities of the Zoning Board, Planning Board, and Zoning Board of Appeals. Applications for building permits, subdivisions, rezoning, special permits, zoning variances, and municipal improvements within the Coastal Boundary Area are among the activities subject to coastal site plan review. In addition to determining the consistency of a proposal with respect to the City's planning and zoning requirements, the reviewing boards must make sure the proposal will not have a significant adverse impact on coastal resources. The boards also must determine if the proposal is consistent with the City's other coastal management policies, including policies for encouraging water-dependent use of the waterfront, providing appropriate access to tidal waters, and avoiding increased risk of coastal flooding, and with the legislative policies of the CCMA.

Stamford's coastal site plan review requirements are set forth in Section 7T:“Coastal Area Management Regulations” of the Zoning Regulations.

The institutional framework for implementing Stamford's MCP involves a number of agencies at the local, state, and federal levels of government, as well as a number of local, state, and federal laws, regulations, and ordinances in addition to the Stamford Zoning Regulations. The Mayor, Board of Representatives, Planning Board, Zoning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, Harbor Management Commission, Environmental Protection Board, Water Pollution Control Authority, and Shellfish Commission, for example, have important City authorities and responsibilities. On the state and federal levels, the Connecticut DEEP, Department of Transportation, Department of Economic and Community Development, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and Federal Emergency Management Agency are agencies with significant coastal management-related authorities.

In addition, the general public and waterfront property owners have significant water-related rights and interests, and there are several regional and private organizations, including neighborhood groups and associations, with coastal management interests. It is also recognized that actions originating in the neighboring communities of Greenwich and Darien and in other municipalities with jurisdictions in the coastal watersheds draining into the SCMA can affect Stamford's coastal resources.

State laws affecting use and conservation of coastal land and water resources in the SCMA include, but are not limited to, the Connecticut Coastal Management Act, Connecticut Harbor Management Act, Tidal Wetlands Act (Sections 22a-28 through 22a-35 of the Connecticut General Statutes), and the Structures and Dredging Act (Sections 25-102a through 25-102s CGA). In addition, several federal laws, such as Section 404 of the Clean Water Act and Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 administered by the USACE, affect land use and environmental conservation in the SCMA.

In Stamford's Coastal Vision, coordination and cooperation among all City agencies with coastal management authorities will be ongoing and effective for the purpose of achieving the most beneficial use and conservation of the City's waterfront and coastal resources. So too will be the coordination and cooperation among City, state, and federal agencies for that same purpose, with widespread public support, interest, and participation.



## Coastal Management Goals

Twelve coastal management goals and their accompanying implementation strategies establish a guiding framework for decisions and initiatives by the Planning Board and other City agencies with authorities and responsibilities affecting the Stamford Coastal Management Area. At the same time, the decisions and initiatives of the municipal agencies will serve to advance the vision.

Goals and strategies of the Coastal Vision are not tied to specific neighborhoods or locations within the SCMA but are intended to apply in general throughout the area. Coastal neighborhood policies for facilities and locations identified as opportunity areas for advancing the vision follow the goals.

### Goals of the Coastal Vision

1. Recognition of Coastal Resources and Values
2. Active and Coordinated Management of Coastal Resources
3. Viable Water-Dependent Uses and Facilities
4. Conservation and Enhancement of Coastal Resources
5. Protection and Enhancement of Water Quality
6. Sustainable Economic Growth and Development
7. Public Access to Coastal Waterways
8. Public Health, Safety, and Security
9. Coastal Resiliency
10. Preservation and Enrichment of Community Character
11. Public Interest, Support, and Participation
12. Effective Response to Changing Conditions

### **Goal 1: Recognition of Coastal Resources and Values**

Recognize, as a significant basis for the City's coastal land-use decisions and initiatives, that coastal resources<sup>3</sup> have vital environmental, economic, and cultural values that contribute considerably to the quality of life, and that use and conservation of these resources should be managed in the public interest through the City's planning and regulatory programs.

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<sup>3</sup> Coastal resources are defined in Sec. 22a-93 of the Connecticut General Statutes and include coastal bluffs and escarpments, rocky shorefronts, beaches and dunes, intertidal flats, tidal wetlands, freshwater wetlands and watercourses, estuarine embayments, coastal hazard areas, developed shorefront, islands, nearshore waters, offshore waters, shorelands, and shellfish concentration areas.

## **Goal 2: Active and Coordinated Management of Coastal Resources**

Through the City's planning and regulatory programs, guide the use and development of land in the Stamford Coastal Management Area in the most effective manner needed to advance the coastal goals, policies, and requirements set forth in the Master Plan, Zoning Regulations, and Connecticut Coastal Management Act. Continue to strengthen the City's role and authority for managing the use and conservation of coastal resources in the SCMA. Implement the City's land-use planning and regulatory programs in the SCMA in coordination with implementation of the Stamford Harbor Management Plan which establishes provisions for the most desirable use of the Stamford Harbor Management Area, including provisions affecting use and development of waterfront land.

### **Implementation Strategies:**

- 2.1 Municipal Coastal Program: Effectively implement the Stamford Municipal Coastal Program through the coordinated efforts of all City agencies with applicable roles and responsibilities, including but not limited to, the Board of Representatives, Office of the Mayor, Planning Board, Zoning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, Harbor Management Commission, Environmental Protection Board, Water Pollution Control Authority, and Shellfish Commission, all acting in accordance with authority provided by the CCMA and Stamford Code of Ordinances.
- 2.2 Regulatory Initiatives: As necessary, adopt and/or amend City ordinances, regulations, and orders, including, but not limited to, the Zoning Regulations, to achieve effective implementation of the MCP and otherwise regulate the use and development of land in the SCMA in the public interest. Maintain compliance with all City, state, and federal laws; ordinances, regulations, and orders affecting beneficial use and conservation of coastal resources.
- 2.3 Coastal Site Plan Review: Through the municipal process of Coastal Site Plan Review, review public and private plans and applications affecting property within the Coastal Boundary Area to assure their consistency with the coastal management goals and policies set forth in the Master Plan and CCMA.<sup>4</sup>
- 2.4 Coordination Among City Agencies, Plans, and Programs: Promote consistency and coordination among all duly established City plans and programs affecting the SCMA, including but not limited to, the Master Plan, Harbor Management Plan, and any urban redevelopment plans. Maintain effective coordination among the actions of all City agencies with applicable authorities when reviewing proposals affecting land-use and coastal resources in the SCMA.
- 2.5 Harbor Management Coordination: Recognize that use and development of land on and near the waterfront may have a significant influence on the use and condition of the Stamford Harbor Management Area which defines the jurisdiction of the Harbor Management Commission and Stamford Harbor Management Plan, and that planning and regulation of water-

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<sup>4</sup> Plans and applications for activities or projects subject to the requirements for coastal site plan review are defined in Sec. 22a-105(b) of the Connecticut General Statutes and the City's Coastal Area Management Regulations established in the Zoning Regulations.

front land use should be undertaken in coordination with implementation of the Harbor Management Plan. Provide copies of proposals affecting the real property on, in, or contiguous to the Harbor Management Area to the Harbor Management Commission for review, comments, and recommendations in accordance with the requirements of Sec. 22a-113p of the Connecticut General Statutes and Chapter 6, Article XII, Sec. 6-62 of the Stamford Code of Ordinances.<sup>5</sup>

- 2.6 Coordination with Other Municipalities: Achieve and maintain coordination with other municipalities for the purpose of effectively addressing issues of common interest affecting the SCMA and Long Island Sound (LIS), including the towns of Greenwich and Darien with jurisdictions adjoining the SCMA and other towns with jurisdiction in the coastal watersheds draining into the SCMA.
- 2.7 Coordination with State and Federal Authorities: Achieve and maintain coordination among City, state, and federal programs and responsibilities affecting the SCMA, including, but not limited to, the coastal area planning, regulatory, and funding programs of the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP), Connecticut Department of Transportation (ConnDOT), Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD), Bureau of Aquaculture of the Connecticut Department of Agriculture, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).
- 2.8 Participation of Private Groups and Nongovernmental Organizations: Encourage participation by private groups and nongovernmental organizations for implementation of the MCP, including, but not limited to, involvement of associations representing neighborhoods and property owners and participation during public meetings and forums.

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<sup>5</sup> In accordance with the Connecticut General Statutes and Chapter 6, Article XII, Sec. 6-62 of the Stamford Code of Ordinances, the Stamford Harbor Management Commission shall review and make recommendations, consistent with the Harbor Management Plan, on issues coming within the Commission's jurisdiction that arise from any proposal affecting the real property on, in, or contiguous to the Stamford shoreline that is received by the Zoning Board, Planning Board, Environmental Protection Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, and any other municipal agency with zoning, planning, or other land use authority. Requirements for notification of the Harbor Management Commission and consideration of the Commission's recommendations are specified in Sec. 22a-113 p of the General Statutes and Sec. 6-62 of the Stamford Code of Ordinances.

### **Goal 3: Viable Water-Dependent Uses and Facilities**

Establish and maintain a diversity of viable water-dependent land-uses<sup>6</sup> that: a) individually and collectively provide significant economic benefits and enhance the quality of life in the City; and b) are consistent with the capacity of coastal resources to support those uses without the occurrence of significant adverse impacts on environmental quality or public health, safety, or security. Maintain and enhance Stamford's status as a center of recreational boating activity on Long Island Sound and a regional destination for visiting boaters.

#### **Implementation Strategies:**

- 3.1 Water-Dependent Priorities: On waterfront properties physically suited for water-dependent uses, give highest priority and preference to water-dependent uses for which there is a reasonable demand. Encourage and support the expansion of public and commercial water-dependent uses where consistent with applicable provisions of the Master Plan and Harbor Management Plan. Avoid waterfront development that would: a) replace viable water-dependent land uses with uses that provide only pedestrian public access to marine and tidal waters; and/or b) adversely impact future water-dependent development opportunities.
- 3.2 Recreational Boating: Encourage and support continued operation and, where feasible, enhancement of public and private recreational boating uses and facilities, including facilities for the maintenance, repair, storage, hauling, and berthing of vessels. Avoid development that would result in significant reduction of available recreational boating services, including, but not limited to, vessel maintenance, repair, storage, hauling, and berthing facilities of local and/or regional significance. (See Goal 7.)
- 3.3 Waterfront Park and Recreation Areas: Maintain and enhance, for public use and enjoyment, waterfront parks, beach areas, and other facilities that provide opportunities for public access to the City's coastal waterways and LIS, including but not limited to, City-owned properties and privately owned areas that provide public access to and along the coastal waterways. (See Goal 7.)
- 3.4 Waterborne Commerce: Encourage and support, in suitable locations, the maintenance and enhancement of commercial/industrial port facilities providing significant economic, transportation, and environmental benefits of local, regional, and state-wide significance, including facilities involved with the bulk transport of goods and passengers and utilizing federal navigation channels in Stamford Harbor.

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<sup>6</sup> Defined in Sec. 22a-93(16) of the Connecticut General Statutes, "Water-dependent uses" means those uses and facilities which require direct access to, or location in, marine or tidal waters and which therefore cannot be located inland, including but not limited to: marinas, recreational and commercial fishing and boating facilities, finfish and shellfish processing plants, waterfront dock and port facilities, shipyards and boat building facilities, water-based recreational uses, navigation aids, basins and channels, industrial uses dependent upon water-borne transportation or requiring large volumes of cooling or process water which cannot reasonably be located or operated at an inland site and uses which provide general public access to marine or tidal waters."

- 3.5 Passenger Vessel Terminals: Encourage and support the establishment and operation of passenger vessel terminals on suitable waterfront sites, where such terminals would provide significant opportunities for public access to LIS, attract visitors to the City and region, provide efficient waterborne transportation linkages between the City and other centers of population, and be consistent with all other coastal management policies. Ensure that proposals for boat terminals are designed and reviewed to avoid any significant adverse impacts on coastal resources and upland areas.

#### **Goal 4: Conservation and Enhancement of Coastal Resources**

Conserve and enhance natural coastal resources in the Stamford Coastal Management Area, including beaches, rocky shorefronts, estuarine embayments, shellfish concentration areas, tidal wetlands, intertidal flats, coastal hazard areas, and other resources defined in Sec. 22a-93 of the Connecticut General Statutes. Conserve and enhance the ecological functions and values of coastal resources, including, but not limited to, functions and values related to fish and wildlife habitat, nutrient productivity, water quality (see Goal 5), and flood mitigation (see Goal 9). Preserve and, to the extent feasible, enhance scenic quality associated with the SCMA and preserve traditional public views of coastal resources and waterways.

#### **Implementation Strategies:**

- 4.1 Consideration of Ecological Principles: Manage use and conservation of coastal resources with consideration of ecological principles. Recognize the ecological inter-relationships among resource areas and that the tidal waters and intertidal resources in the SCMA are part of the Long Island Sound estuarine and watershed system; consider that actions within one part of that system can have significant impacts on other parts of the system, or on the system as a whole.
- 4.2 Consideration of Environmental Impacts: Evaluate the potential impacts of proposed waterfront use and development on coastal resources; avoid or otherwise mitigate any significant adverse impacts. When making decisions affecting land use and development in the SCMA, consider the cumulative impacts on coastal resources and environmental quality that may result from the incremental impacts of a single action added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions. Recognize that cumulative impacts on environmental quality, including water quality (see Goal 5) and scenic quality, can result from individually minor but collectively significant actions taking place over a period of time.
- 4.3 Consideration of Environmental Capacity: Consider the capacity of coastal resources to support use and development without the occurrence of significant adverse impacts on natural functions and values. Avoid new or expanded uses, development, or other activities that would exceed the capacity of coastal resources to support those activities in a safe, environmentally sound, and economically sound manner.
- 4.4 Environmental Restoration: Encourage and support restoration of coastal resources and ecological functions historically lost or degraded in the SCMA, including but not limited to beaches, tidal wetlands, sand dunes, and shellfish resources. Ensure that any project for restoring coastal resources is pursued in accordance with a detailed plan that is: a) based on

best available scientific information; b) formulated with input from potentially affected parties; and c) duly approved by appropriate City, state, and federal authorities following a careful review of environmental and economic costs and benefits.

- 4.5 Maintenance of Shore Protection Structures: Encourage and support the repair or replacement of deteriorated shore protection structures, including seawalls, bulkheads, and other structures, where such deterioration is causing significant adverse impacts on the environmental quality, including water quality, of coastal resources.

## **Goal 5: Protection and Enhancement of Water Quality**

Protect and improve surface and ground-water quality in the Stamford Coastal Management Area; achieve and maintain the highest reasonably attainable water quality through substantial reduction and avoidance of all sources of pollution, including nonpoint source (NPS) pollution<sup>7</sup> and point source pollution.<sup>8</sup>

### **Implementation Strategies:**

- 5.1 Municipal Infrastructure: Effectively maintain, improve, and repair as necessary municipal stormwater infrastructure in the SCMA and the watersheds draining through the SCMA, including, but not limited to, collection and discharge pipes, catch basins, and culverts, in accordance with best available technology, state and federal stormwater management requirements, and City stormwater management plans pursuant to the State of Connecticut's required stormwater management program.
- 5.2 "Green Infrastructure" and Best Management Practices: Encourage and support the application of cost-effective and sustainable "green infrastructure"<sup>9</sup> measures and suitable best

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<sup>7</sup> Nonpoint source pollution, also called runoff pollution, occurs when water runs off roads, parking lots, driveways, lawns, and other surfaces. Many pollutants (including not only bacteria from animal feces but also oil, sand, pesticides, trash, debris, and excessive nutrients) can be picked up as the water runs over the ground, into storm drains, sometimes through the soil, and eventually to the City's coastal waterways and SCMA. The risk of NPS pollution being carried by stormwater runoff from impervious surfaces such as roads, sidewalks, and parking areas is significantly greater than the risk associated with runoff from natural surfaces.

<sup>8</sup> Point source pollution is any discernible confined or discreet conveyance, including but not limited to any pipe, ditch, channel, tunnel, conduit, well, or floating craft, from which pollutants are discharged.

<sup>9</sup> "Green infrastructure" uses soil and vegetation instead of, or in addition to, pipes, pumps, and other "hard infrastructure" to filter pollutants and allow stormwater to infiltrate, evapotranspire (return of water to the atmosphere through evaporation or plants) or be re-used on the site where it is generated. Green infrastructure techniques include: rain gardens and bio-retention areas to provide on-site retention and treatment of stormwater runoff; vegetated swales with engineered soils to treat and attenuate stormwater runoff; constructed wetlands to remove pollutants through settling and biological uptake; reforested urban areas to provide permeable areas where stormwater can infiltrate along public right-of-ways; porous pavement areas allowing stormwater infiltration; and vegetated buffer zones to filter runoff that would otherwise directly enter coastal waterways.

management practices (BMPs) to manage, reduce where feasible, or otherwise control stormwater runoff and thereby reduce the potential for NPS pollution to enter coastal waterways and the SCMA. Consider establishment and maintenance of: buffer zones of natural vegetation to filter polluted runoff; appropriate buffer/setback distances around tidal wetlands; and other BMPs identified in the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection's Stormwater Manual. Encourage and support feasible measures to reduce NPS pollution through:

- reduction of stormwater runoff from roads, parking areas, lawns, and other surfaces;
- reduction of the amount of sand, debris, and other pollutants discharging into coastal waterways from roads and waterfront properties;
- application of lawn maintenance and landscaping practices that minimize use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides; and
- reduction or elimination of all other human activities that unnecessarily introduce sediment, debris, or pollutants into coastal waterways.

5.3 Reduction and Avoidance of Point Sources of Pollution: Reduce and avoid point sources of pollution through enhanced municipal wastewater collection and treatment in accordance with best available technology and the highest standards of sanitary sewerage operation and maintenance. Operate, maintain, and improve, as necessary, municipal wastewater collection, conveyance, and treatment facilities, including facilities serving residential, commercial, and industrial areas of the SCMA, in accordance with best available technology and design standards. Promptly correct any acute and cumulative adverse impacts on coastal water quality caused by point source pollution, including, but not limited to, any failures of wastewater collection and conveyance facilities.

5.4 Stormwater Treatment Systems and Technology: Require all new development generating significant stormwater discharges directly or indirectly into the SCMA and coastal waterways to employ appropriate stormwater treatment systems and technology, including swirl-type grit chambers where necessary, to reduce the potential for NPS pollution to enter the waterways and SCMA. Ensure that all such systems and technology are maintained and operated in accordance with regularly scheduled maintenance procedures and that all accumulated residue is disposed of properly.

5.5 Public Outreach and Education: Encourage and support efforts to increase public awareness concerning the sources and impacts of nonpoint source pollution, and of opportunities for personal initiatives that avoid or reduce NPS pollution, including opportunities for applying "green infrastructure" technologies and practices and Low Impact Development<sup>10</sup> strategies to manage stormwater, reduce runoff, and prevent pollution in the SCMA.

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<sup>10</sup> LID is an approach to land development that manages stormwater through landscape techniques that reduce impervious surfaces, preserve green space, and generally increase the infiltration of stormwater into the ground.

- 5.6 Water Quality Monitoring: Encourage and support an ongoing program of water quality monitoring in the City's coastal waterways and upstream in the Rippowam (Mill) and Noroton rivers by qualified governmental and/or nongovernmental agencies; identify existing and potential sources of pollution and establish and maintain a data base of information to support water quality improvement efforts, including planning for appropriate technologies, facilities, and BMPs to manage stormwater.
- 5.7 Watershed-Based Planning: Encourage and support measures to improve water quality that are planned and implemented, to the extent practical, on a watershed-wide basis in coordination with other municipalities with jurisdictions in the coastal watersheds that drain into Long Island Sound through the SCMA, and in accordance with duly approved watershed-based plans to reduce NPS pollution.
- 5.8 Management of Highway Pollutants: Encourage and support all feasible efforts by the City and State of Connecticut to reduce the amount of pollutants discharged into coastal waterways from roads, highways, and bridges.

## **Goal 6: Sustainable Economic Growth and Development**

Recognize and pursue opportunities for economic growth and community development in the Stamford Coastal Management Area in harmony with conservation and enhancement of the natural environment and in a manner that does not dilute the vitality of Downtown development districts. Achieve sustainable and substantial economic benefits through coastal area development in appropriate locations that is: a) enhanced by and linked to the City's coastal waterways and waterfront; b) resilient to coastal hazards (see Goal 9); and c) consistent with coastal and harbor management goals for encouraging water-dependent uses and conserving and enhancing coastal resources and environmental quality (see Goals 3 and 4).

### **Implementation Strategies:**

- 6.1 Waterfront Use and Development: Guide use and development of waterfront land through the City's land-use planning and regulatory programs in the most effective manner, consistent with City goals for economic growth and development and support of water-dependent land uses; the capacity of coastal resources to support waterfront land uses in an environmentally sound manner; and in coordination with plans and regulations to maintain safe and beneficial use of the Stamford Harbor Management Area. (See Goal 2.)
- 6.2 Site Planning and Design Standards: Ensure that waterfront development to advance City goals for sustainable economic growth takes place in accordance with comprehensive plans that follow the highest site planning and architectural design standards, including standards to protect and enhance the scenic quality associated with coastal resources and the SCMA.
- 6.3 Water-Based Tourism: Encourage and support water-based tourism activities and the associated economic, recreational, and other benefits of those activities in the City.



## **Goal 7: Public Access to Coastal Waterways**

Uphold public rights and interests for access to coastal resources and provide long-term opportunities for safe and enjoyable public access to the City's coastal waterways and Long Island Sound for active and passive recreational uses. Promote a safe, attractive, and interconnected system of public waterfront areas and facilities linked with commercial areas of the City and enjoyed by persons of all ages, interests, and abilities. Establish and maintain waterfront areas and trails providing opportunities for walking, jogging, bicycling, picnicking, land-based fishing, boating, nature observation, scientific and educational activities, quiet enjoyment of scenic views, and other beneficial activities. Establish and maintain appropriate sections of the waterfront as focal points of community activities throughout the year.

### **Implementation Strategies:**

- 7.1 Public Boating Facilities: Encourage development and maintenance of public boating facilities for the use of City residents and the general public, including boat berthing, docking, and launching facilities, consistent with demonstrated need and the capacity of the Stamford Coastal Management Area and shoreline to support those facilities in a safe and environmentally sound manner. (See Goal 4.)
- 7.2 Public Safety: Plan and manage public water access areas and facilities to avoid conflicts with commercial and industrial water-dependent uses, including port facilities and boat repair and service facilities, and to achieve compliance with requirements for securing and protecting port facilities in accordance with Homeland Security requirements. (See Goal 8.)
- 7.3 City Parks and Right-of-Ways: In all instances, retain, maintain and, where feasible, improve existing public access areas, including City-owned waterfront parks, water access right-of-ways, and all other City-owned properties that provide opportunities for beneficial public access to marine and tidal waters and coastal resources. Provide new water access areas, as needed, in appropriate locations to increase opportunities for public use and enjoyment of the SCMA. Pursue acquisition of waterfront land and easements through purchase, donation, or other appropriate means when such opportunity may arise and where such acquisition will provide opportunities for public access to coastal resources and enhance the overall value and usefulness of the City's system of parks and open space.
- 7.4 Public Access through Private Waterfront Development Projects: Where feasible, require the provision of well-designed, safe, and coordinated facilities and opportunities for public access to and along the City's coastal waterways through all waterfront development projects subject to the City's Coastal Site Plan Review authority, except: a) one- and two-family dwellings; and b) development for principal uses that are otherwise water-dependent as defined in the Connecticut Coastal Management Act and incompatible, for reasons of safety and security, with public access amenities. From time to time, inspect public access facilities required as conditions of zoning approvals to ensure compliance with the terms and conditions of those approvals. When considering public access opportunities, address any issues pertaining to security, maintenance, public safety, and the rights of shorefront property owners.

- 7.5 Waterfront Events: Encourage and support special waterfront events, programs, and activities on suitable waterfront sites to provide recreational, educational, and cultural opportunities for the general public, attract visitors to the City, and maintain Stamford as a popular destination for visitors throughout the year.

## **Goal 8: Public Health, Safety, and Security**

Manage use and development in the Stamford Coastal Management Area to assure orderly and efficient land-use and provide for continued public health, safety, and security. Maintain public safety and security through the most coordinated efforts involving all agencies and officials, including the Police and Fire departments. Maintain the most effective emergency preparedness, response, and recovery capabilities needed to reduce, avoid, or otherwise mitigate adverse impacts of natural and technological<sup>11</sup> hazards. (See Goal 9.)

### **Implementation Strategies:**

- 8.1 Emergency Response Facilities: Provide facilities needed to support effective response to emergencies in the SCMA, including water access facilities to accommodate vessels responding to emergencies in the City's coastal waterways, and equipment necessary for control of any fuel and material spill emergencies that may affect coastal resources.
- 8.2 Fire Prevention and Preparedness: Ensure that all waterfront facilities include appropriate provisions for fire prevention and preparedness as required by the Fire Marshall, including adequate access for emergency vehicles and adequate on-site water supply for fire-fighting purposes.
- 8.3 Environmental Design: Ensure that new development is designed and built in accordance with "Crime Prevention through Environmental Design" principles to enhance public safety, maintain public confidence, and discourage crime.
- 8.4 Homeland Security: Maintain effective coordination among City, state, and federal agencies to secure and protect port facilities and otherwise implement federal requirements for Homeland Security.
- 8.5 Public Safety at Shoreline Areas: Manage all areas and facilities providing opportunities for public access to the waterfront and coastal waterways to ensure safe and beneficial use and enjoyment of those areas and facilities. When considering any future expansion, enhancement, or new development of public access facilities, address any issues that may affect public safety.

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<sup>11</sup> Technological hazards, including hazardous materials incidents, originate from technological or industrial conditions, including accidents, dangerous procedures, infrastructure failures, or specific human activities that may cause loss of life, injury, illness or other health impacts, property damage, loss of services, social and economic disruption, or environmental damage.

- 8.6 Environmental Remediation: Identify and evaluate any significant environmental contamination affecting beneficial use and development of coastal area properties. Encourage and support planning and implementation of effective strategies for environmental clean-up and re-use of affected properties in accordance with applicable remediation standards to protect public health and safety and duly approved Remedial Action Plans.
- 8.7 Emergency Operations Plan: Effectively implement the City's emergency operations plan to address the broad range of emergency situations and responses possible in the SCMA, including responses to natural and technological hazards.
- 8.8 Conflict Avoidance: Avoid or reduce potential conflicts between waterfront facilities, including conflicts between public and private facilities and conflicts involving water-dependent uses. Recognize that public water access areas and facilities are not consistent with safety and security requirements in waterfront industrial areas supporting Stamford port facilities.

## **Goal 9: Coastal Resiliency**

Reduce vulnerability of coastal area development to natural hazards, including but not limited to, flooding, erosion, and wind hazards caused by hurricanes, coastal storms, rising sea level, and other weather and climate-related events and phenomena. Accelerate recovery and reduce the amount of resources, including public expenditures, needed to completely restore municipal services, public infrastructure, and community functions damaged by natural hazard events and phenomena. Continue to improve hazards management capabilities and resiliency of coastal development; adapt to changing conditions and circumstances affecting natural hazards risk and vulnerability (see Goal 12).

### **Implementation Strategies:**

- 9.1 Pre-Hazard Mitigation: Reduce adverse impacts of coastal hazards on residents, public facilities, businesses, private property, and coastal resources through pre-hazard mitigation measures, including, but not limited to: continued analysis of hazard risks; identification of vulnerable and at-risk areas and facilities, including critical infrastructure; development of effective land-use policies, standards, and regulations implemented through the Municipal Coastal Program; public construction and investment decisions; and programs to increase public awareness and education concerning coastal hazards.
- 9.2 Preparedness and Response: Prepare, test, and update plans and programs for emergency operations and response, including procedures for issuing forecasts and warnings to the public and otherwise providing public information. Provide facilities, equipment, and training needed for effective emergency response; maintain coordination among all agencies with emergency responsibilities.
- 9.3 Recovery and Reconstruction: Facilitate post-event recovery and reconstruction in a manner to reduce future vulnerability to coastal hazards. Conduct post-event assessments, including assessments of damage and emergency response actions; adjust emergency preparedness plans accordingly; facilitate available financial and technical assistance to aid recovery and reconstruction.

- 9.4 **Floodplain Management**: Maintain an effective City program of corrective and preventive measures for reducing flood damage, consistent with the goals and requirements of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). Ensure that all construction in designated flood and erosion hazard zones, including Special Flood Hazard Areas<sup>12</sup> and Coastal High Hazard Areas<sup>13</sup>, conforms to applicable floodplain regulations and construction standards. Maintain the City's good standing in the NFIP; avoid variances to the City's Flood Prone Area Regulations that would result in any diminution of that good standing.
- 9.5 **Structural Measures**: Provide structures and other measures to modify flooding and erosion, including flood walls and shore protection structures such as seawalls, bulkheads, and riprap to stabilize the shoreline, in those instances where: a) no other reasonable alternative exists to protect infrastructural facilities, water-dependent uses, or existing inhabited structures from flooding and erosion; and b) the structures employed will not result in significant adverse impacts on coastal resources, ecological functions, and properties adjacent to or nearby the structures. Encourage and support timely repair and maintenance of existing flood protection structures.
- 9.6 **Nonstructural measures**: Encourage nonstructural measures to avoid unwise use of flood and erosion hazard areas and modify susceptibility to coastal hazards without "fortifying" the shoreline with traditional structural measures such as seawalls, bulkheads, and riprap. Recognize the natural protective features of coastal resources, including beaches, dunes, and wetlands, and utilize those features, to the extent practical and feasible, to provide effective shore protection; encourage restoration of degraded coastal resources in accordance with detailed plans (see Goal 4) to provide enhanced shore protection.
- 9.7 **Climate Change**: Consider long-term climate change impacts, including impacts that may be caused by rising sea level, in planning, design, and cost determinations for infrastructure such as, but not limited to, municipal and private roads, water and sewer systems, and electric utilities.

## **Goal 10: Preservation and Enrichment of Community Character**

Preserve and promote the City's existing character and coastal heritage associated with Long Island Sound and the tidal watercourses draining through the Stamford Coastal Management Area, including the Rippowam (Mill) River; protect and enhance the quality of life in residential neighborhoods in the SCMA; and promote the preservation of resources with cultural significance on, in, or contiguous to the SHMA, including historic, scientific, and archaeological significance.

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<sup>12</sup> Special Flood Hazard Areas, defined in the City's Flood Prone Area Regulations established in the Zoning Regulations, means all land in the City of Stamford subject to a one percent or greater chance of flooding in any one year.

<sup>13</sup> Coastal High Hazard Areas, defined in the City's Flood Prone Area Regulations established in the Zoning Regulations, means the area subject to high velocity waters caused by, but not limited to, hurricane wave wash, and designated on a Flood Insurance Rate Map as Zone VE.

### **Implementation Strategies:**

- 10.1 Development Review: Review development proposals in the SCMA to ensure their consistency with neighborhood character and the capacity of coastal resources to accommodate proposed development in a safe and environmentally sound manner. Carefully plan, review, and regulate development to avoid adverse impacts on the traditional character and quality of life in coastal area neighborhoods, including, but not limited to, adverse impacts on public views of the water. (See Goal 2.)
- 10.2 Cultural Resources: Identify and assess cultural resources in the SCMA, including sites and structures representative of the coastal area settlement and history of Stamford. Identify and preserve resources with cultural significance, including historic, scientific, and archaeological significance, in accordance with historic preservation goals and requirements.

### **Goal 11: Public Interest, Support, and Participation**

Develop and maintain substantial public awareness of the significant environmental, economic, and cultural benefits provided by coastal resources in the Stamford Coastal Management Area, including, but not limited to, benefits related to water quality, natural habitat, flood protection, scenic quality, and water-dependent development opportunities. Maintain public support for implementing the Municipal Coastal Program and for otherwise achieving the City's goals for beneficial use and conservation of coastal resources.

### **Implementation Strategies:**

- 11.1 Public Participation: Encourage significant public participation for development of City plans, programs, regulations, and decisions affecting the SCMA; provide continuing opportunities for expression of public interests related to use and conservation of coastal resources and implementation of the MCP, including opportunities for public comments during regular and special meetings of municipal agencies with implementation responsibilities.
- 11.2 Special Programs and Events: Encourage and support special programs and events in suitable locations to increase awareness of coastal resources, consistent with the capacity of the SCMA to support that use in a safe and environmentally sound manner.
- 11.3 Educational Use: Encourage and support use of coastal resources for educational purposes in suitable locations, consistent with the capacity of those resources to support that use in a safe and environmentally sound manner.

### **Goal 12: Effective Response to Changing Conditions**

Adapt to changing conditions and circumstances influencing implementation of the Municipal Coastal Program; maintain and enhance capabilities to effectively guide the use and conservation of coastal resources in response to changes in natural features and conditions, coastal area development, the institutional framework for coastal management, and other relevant considerations.

### **Implementation Strategies:**

- 12.1 Ongoing Review: Monitor conditions in the Stamford Coastal Management Area on an ongoing basis and evaluate the effectiveness of the Municipal Coastal Program for advancing City and state goals for use and conservation of coastal resources; evaluate MCP goals, strategies, regulations, procedures, and other provisions, Provide opportunity for public comments regarding the status of coastal resources and the MCP.
- 12.2 Amendment of the Municipal Coastal Program: Consider amendments to the MCP as may be necessary to adapt and respond to changing conditions and circumstances (see Goal 9), including amendments to MCP goals, strategies, regulations, procedures, and other provisions; adopt any necessary amendments following input from interested citizens, agencies, and organizations.
- 12.3 Scientific Investigations and Research: Encourage and support educational and scientific use of coastal resources, including, but not limited to, marine-related field studies by primary and secondary schools, universities, conservation and natural history groups, and others; encourage and support scientific investigations and research with practical applications for coastal management purposes and effective implementation of the MCP.

## **Coastal Neighborhood Policies**

The neighborhood policies of the Coastal Vision update the plans and strategies for coastal area neighborhoods included in the *Stamford Master Plan 2002* and are consistent with the waterfront guidelines and recommendations established in the *City of Stamford Harbor Management Plan*. Within the coastal neighborhoods, facilities and locations are identified as opportunity areas for advancing Stamford's Coastal Vision.

### **South End, Waterside, and West Side**

Within the Coastal Boundary Area, the South End, Waterside, and West Side neighborhoods are generally bounded on the west by the Stamford/Greenwich municipal boundary, on the east by the Shippan neighborhood, on the north by the Connecticut Turnpike, and on the south by Stamford Harbor and Long Island Sound. Also included is the tidally influenced reach of the Rippowam River upstream of the turnpike.

Prominent features include the navigable waterways on either side of the South End—one of Stamford's oldest residential communities and historically the City's most concentrated area for manufacturing. The navigable waterways—the east and west branches of Stamford Harbor—support the highest concentration of water-dependent businesses in the Stamford Coastal Management Area, including all of the City's port facilities and many of Stamford's recreational boating facilities. This central, intensively developed part of the SCMA also supports residential and recreational uses and municipal facilities, including the City's wastewater treatment plant and transfer station on the east branch. In 2014, the South End waterfront is the location of one of the largest, ongoing waterfront development projects in the United States—the mixed use Harbor Point project consisting of apartments, office space, restaurants, retail businesses, a marina, and public amenities.

Other prominent features include the Stamford hurricane protection barrier; the South End waterfront site known as the boatyard peninsula which historically supported boatyard and marina facilities of local and regional significance; the excavated Dolphin Cove lagoon tidal basin created in conjunction with development of the Dolphin Cove residential area; public waterfront areas including Kosciuszko, Southfield, and Czescik parks and the wetland restoration and public access area adjoining Czescik Park; and the site of the Mill River Park and Greenway Project on the Rippowam River adjoining Downtown Stamford.

The following facilities and locations within the South End, Waterside, and West Side coastal neighborhoods are considered opportunity areas for advancing Stamford's Coastal Vision.

**Water-Dependent Uses:** Continued beneficial operation and enhancement of water-dependent uses, including recreational boating facilities and Stamford port facilities utilizing Stamford Harbor and the harbor's east and west branches for waterborne shipment of materials and commodities, is encouraged and supported, consistent with all other applicable provisions of the Master Plan, Stamford Harbor Management Plan, Stamford Zoning Regulations, and the Connecticut Coastal Management Act. Future development projects that may affect established water-dependent uses should not result in significant reduction of available recreational boating services, including, but not limited to, boat maintenance, repair, storage, and berthing facilities of local and/or regional significance. The Stamford Harbor Federal Navigation Project consisting of congressionally authorized federal channels, federal anchorages, and federal breakwaters should be maintained to serve recreational and commercial vessels, provide safe navigation, and ensure the continued viability of water-dependent facilities and the economic advantages of waterborne transportation.

**Boatyard Peninsula:** The unique physical suitability of this site to accommodate water-dependent uses needed to support the recreational boating industry, including, but not limited to, boat maintenance, repair, berthing, hauling, and storage services for which there is a reasonable demand, is recognized. Commensurate with the site's suitability and prominence and status as one of Stamford's major waterfront assets, highest priority and preference should be given to continuation of the traditional water-dependent use of the site. The authority and provisions of the Master Plan, Harbor Management Plan, Zoning Regulations, and Connecticut Coastal Management Act should be applied to ensure that any redevelopment plans do not compromise the capacity, capability, and integrity of this site to provide recreational boating services of local and regional significance. Any future development of this site should provide for continuation of traditionally provided boat maintenance, repair, berthing, hauling, and storage services, without significant reduction of the traditional level of service and capacity provided on the site.

**Public Boating Facilities:** The provision and maintenance of safe and enjoyable waterfront facilities to attract and serve visiting and resident recreational boaters, including waterfront commercial facilities, dock space, and boat slips on suitable waterfront properties, is encouraged and supported. Opportunities for establishing a public landing to serve visiting and resident boaters on an appropriate waterfront site in Stamford Harbor should be evaluated and to the extent feasible pursued.

**Pedestrian Access Areas:** Well-designed and beneficial facilities for pedestrian access to and along the shorelines of the west and east branches of Stamford Harbor should be provided to link existing and any future public water-access facilities with other public waterfront areas, Downtown Stamford, and commercial and residential areas of the South End. Pedestrian access to and along the waterfront should be planned and implemented to avoid any conflicts between recreational use of the waterfront and industrial water-dependent uses, including Stamford port facilities.

**Kosciuszko Park:** Kosciuszko Park should be utilized to its full potential as a waterfront park providing opportunities for: a) active and passive recreational use, including visual and physical access to Stamford Harbor and Long Island Sound by South End residents, businesses, employees, and others; and b) special events that increase public use and enjoyment of the waterfront. The level of City resources allocated for park maintenance should be commensurate with the park's status as a focal point and central facility for pedestrian and visual access to the harbor and Long Island Sound. Enhancement of the water-related orientation of the park is encouraged and supported, in accordance with a comprehensive, duly prepared and adopted City plan for park operation and management prepared with input from neighborhood stakeholders. Development, enhancement, and maintenance of well-designed and attractive pedestrian facilities to link the park with other public waterfront areas, Downtown Stamford, and commercial areas and residential areas of the South End is encouraged and supported. Opportunities for increased access to the harbor and Long Island Sound from the park, including access for boating, fishing, and other beneficial purposes, should be evaluated and, to the extent feasible, pursued. Access to the park by South End residents should be encouraged and facilitated.

Restoration of intertidal habitat and coastal resources historically lost or degraded nearby the park is encouraged and supported in accordance a detailed plan based on best available scientific information, formulated with input from potentially affected parties, and duly approved by appropriate City, state, and federal authorities following a careful review of environmental and economic costs and benefits.

**Southfield Park:** Southfield Park should be utilized to its full potential as a waterfront park providing opportunities for active and passive recreational use, including visual and physical access to Stamford Harbor and Long Island Sound by residents of the Waterside neighborhood and others. Enhancement of the water-related orientation of the park and linkage between the park and other public waterfront areas is encouraged and supported. Opportunities for improving access to the harbor and Long Island Sound from the park should be evaluated and, to the extent feasible, pursued.

**Mill River Park and Greenway:** Completion of the Mill River Park and Greenway Project on the Rippowam (Mill) River is encouraged and supported to enhance the City's Downtown riverfront and connect multiple and diverse communities to the river and Long Island Sound for educational, cultural, and recreational purposes. Completion of the park and greenway should be in accordance with a comprehensive, duly prepared and adopted City plan for park operation and management prepared with input from neighborhood stakeholders. Development, enhancement, and maintenance of well-designed and attractive pedestrian facilities, including a public walkway/bikeway, is encouraged and supported to provide safe and enjoyable connections to West Side, Downtown, and other neighborhoods, other open spaces and recreational trails of the City, and the west branch of Stamford Har-



bor. Restoration of the river's natural riparian habitat and ecosystem should proceed in accordance with a duly approved detailed plan based on best available scientific information and designed to avoid downstream impacts in the west branch of Stamford Harbor.

**Rippowam River and Watershed:** Initiatives to improve water quality in the Rippowam River that are planned and implemented, to the extent practical, on a watershed-wide basis involving collaborative efforts with the towns of New Canaan and Ridgefield in Connecticut and Pound Ridge in New York State are encouraged and supported, including implementation of a duly approved watershed-based plan to reduce nonpoint sources of pollution affecting the river, Stamford Harbor, and Long Island Sound. An effective, ongoing program of water quality monitoring in the watershed is encouraged and supported to identify any existing and potential sources of pollution and to establish and maintain a data base of information to support water quality improvement efforts. Restoration of Rippowam River riparian habitat and aquatic resources historically lost or degraded is encouraged and supported, including restoration through implementation of the Mill River Park and Greenway Project.

All feasible efforts by the State of Connecticut, Metro North Railroad Company, and the City to reduce the amount of pollutants discharged into the river from the Pulaski Street, railroad, I-95, and other bridges crossing the Rippowam River are encouraged and supported. Any work to maintain or repair bridges crossing the river should be carefully planned, conducted, and monitored to reduce or avoid any potentially adverse impacts on water quality resulting from bridge work.

**Stamford Hurricane Barrier:** Continued effective operation, maintenance, and inspection by the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers of the Stamford hurricane barrier in accordance with duly established and published procedures is encouraged and supported. Coordination between the USACE and the City as necessary for effective operation, maintenance, and inspection of the hurricane barrier is encouraged and supported, including coordination to provide timely public notices of gate closures.

**Waste Transfer Station:** The waste transfer station should be operated and maintained in a manner to avoid the introduction of debris into the east branch affecting scenic quality, environmental quality, and/or navigation. Opportunities for enhancing use and operation of the transfer station through use of waterborne transportation should be evaluated and to the extent feasible pursued.

**Czescik Park and Marina:** Czescik Park and marina should be managed and maintained as a focal point and central facility for public boating activities in Stamford Harbor. The park should be utilized to its full potential as a waterfront park providing opportunities for safe and enjoyable boating access to the harbor and Long Island Sound. Enhancement of the park's water-dependent facilities is encouraged and supported, in accordance with a comprehensive, duly prepared and adopted City plan for park and marina operation and management. Opportunities for improving boating access to the harbor and Long Island Sound from the park and marina, including access by trailered boats, should be evaluated and, to the extent feasible, pursued.

**East Branch:** Special attention should be given to maintaining and improving water quality in the enclosed and constricted East Branch waterway through reduction or elimination of nonpoint sources of pollution and other appropriate actions as necessary to attain the highest reasonably attainable water quality. A regular program of water quality monitoring should be maintained to identify any existing and potential sources of pollution and to establish and maintain a data base of information to support water quality improvement efforts. The ecological functions and values of intertidal resources in the east branch, including tidal wetlands and intertidal flats, should be conserved and, to the extent feasible, enhanced.

Continued operation of water-dependent industrial operation in the upper portion of the east branch is encouraged and supported, consistent with all other applicable provisions of the Master Plan, Stamford Harbor Management Plan, Stamford Zoning Regulations, and the Connecticut Coastal Management Act. In the lower portion of the east branch, well-designed and beneficial facilities for pedestrian access to coastal resources are encouraged and supported, including facilities that would provide functional linkages between existing and any future public water access areas.

**Magee Avenue Wetland Restoration and Public Access Area:** The Magee Avenue wetland restoration and public access area adjoining the east branch and Czescik Marina should be maintained free of debris and otherwise protected from disturbances that would diminish its ecological value. Pedestrian linkages between this facility and other areas providing public access to coastal resources is encouraged and supported.

**Wastewater Treatment Plant:** Operation, maintenance, and upgrading as necessary of the City's wastewater treatment plant should proceed in accordance with best available technology and management practices. Special attention should be given to ensuring that the plant is operated and maintained according to its design standards and that adequate space is available for any future expansion needs. City and state agencies and officials with water quality authorities and responsibilities should be promptly notified of any acute and cumulative adverse impacts on coastal water quality caused by operation of the plant; those impacts should be promptly corrected.

**Emergency Services Facilities and Equipment:** Suitable on-land and in-water facilities should be established and maintained to support efficient access to Stamford Harbor for emergency response and law enforcement purposes by the Stamford Police Department, Stamford Fire Department, and other duly authorized law enforcement and emergency service agencies.

## **Cove-East Side and Shippan**

Within the designated Coastal Boundary Area, the Cove-East Side and Shippan neighborhoods are bounded on the west by Stamford Harbor, on the east by the Stamford/Darien municipal boundary in Holly Pond, and on the south by Westcott Cove, Cove Island Harbor, and Long Island Sound. While residential land-use is predominant in both neighborhoods, the Cove-East Side neighborhood also has Stamford's two largest waterfront parks—Cummings Park and Cove Island Park. The parks provide swimming and boating facilities used by neighborhood residents and persons from all parts of Stamford. Shippan Point is a peninsula, a relatively high, glacially sculpted promontory supporting a stable residential community comprised almost exclusively of single family homes. The Cove-

East Side and Shippan shorelines include stretches of sandy beach areas, rocky shorefronts, and modified bluffs and escarpments subject to the ongoing, perpetual process of coastal erosion. As a result, shore protection structures, including seawalls and groins have been applied extensively in efforts to fortify the coast.

The following facilities and locations within the Cove-East Side and Shippan coastal neighborhoods are considered opportunity areas for advancing Stamford's Coastal Vision.

**Cummings Park:** Cummings Park, including Cummings Park Marina and West Beach, should be managed and maintained as a focal point and central facility for public water access activities on the Stamford shoreline. The park should be utilized to its full potential as a waterfront park providing opportunities for safe and enjoyable access to Westcott Cove and Long Island Sound, including access for swimming, fishing, shellfishing, and boating, as well as opportunities for special in-water and waterfront events. Access to the park by neighborhood residents should be encouraged and facilitated.

Water access facilities to be maintained for public use and enjoyment should include swimming beaches, waterfront picnic areas, pedestrian facilities for enjoying views of Westcott Cove and Long Island Sound, boat launching facilities, a public fishing pier, a public marina with facilities for accommodating visiting boaters, and other amenities. Enhancement of the park's water-dependent facilities is encouraged and supported, in accordance with a comprehensive, duly prepared and adopted City plan for park operation and management prepared with input from neighborhood stakeholders.

The level of facility maintenance and city resources allocated for that maintenance should be commensurate with the status of Cummings Park as one of the City's principal waterfront parks and beach recreation areas.

Well-designed facilities for pedestrian access should be provided to connect all activities within the park and to link existing and any future public water-access facilities in the park with other parks and areas of the City.

**Cummings Park Marina:** Cummings Park Marina should be managed and maintained as a focal point and central facility for public boating activities on the Stamford shoreline. The marina should be utilized to its full potential as a public boating facility providing opportunities for safe and enjoyable boating access to Long Island Sound. Enhancement of marina facilities is encouraged and supported, in accordance with a comprehensive, duly prepared and adopted City plan for marina operation and management. Opportunities for improving boating access to Long Island Sound from the marina, including opportunities for establishing a public landing to serve visiting and resident boaters, should be evaluated and to the extent feasible pursued. Preparation and implementation of an effective plan to manage sand on beaches nearby the marina's navigation channel is encouraged and supported for the purpose of reducing and avoiding the alongshore movement of sand into the channel and the resulting need for maintenance dredging.

An effective, ongoing program of water quality monitoring in the vicinity of the beach recreation area and in the marina area is encouraged and supported to identify any existing and potential sources of pollution and to establish and maintain a data base of information to support water quality improvement efforts.

Continued use and enhancement of the West Beach boat launching area to enable safe and enjoyable access to Westcott Cove and the SHMA for recreational boating and emergency services purposes is encouraged and supported, including access by motorized and sail- and hand-powered vessels.

**Cummings Park Lagoon:** Special attention should be given to maintaining and improving water quality in the enclosed and constricted Cummings Park lagoon through reduction or elimination of nonpoint sources of pollution and other appropriate actions as necessary to attain the highest reasonably attainable water quality classification. A regular program of water quality monitoring in the vicinity of the beach recreation areas and in the lagoon should be maintained to identify any existing and potential sources of pollution and to establish and maintain a data base of information to support water quality improvement efforts.

**Cove Island Park:** Cove Island Park, including the Cove Island Marina, should be managed and maintained as a focal point and central facility for public water access activities on the Stamford shoreline. The park should be utilized to its full potential as a waterfront park providing opportunities for safe and enjoyable access to Long Island Sound, including access for swimming, fishing, shellfishing, and boating, as well as opportunities for special water and waterfront events. Access to the park by neighborhood residents should be encouraged and facilitated.

Water access facilities to be maintained for public use and enjoyment include swimming beaches, waterfront picnic areas, pedestrian facilities for enjoying views of Holly Pond and Long Island Sound, a boat launching area, public fishing areas, a public marina with facilities for accommodating visiting boaters, and other amenities. Enhancement of the park's water-dependent facilities is encouraged and supported, in accordance with a comprehensive City plan for park and marina management prepared with input from neighborhood stakeholders. Opportunities for improving public access to Long Island Sound from the park should be evaluated and to the extent feasible pursued. Well-designed facilities for pedestrian access should be provided to connect all activities within the park and to link existing and any future public water-access facilities in the park with other parks and areas of the city.

The level of facility maintenance and city resources allocated for facility maintenance should be commensurate with the status of Cove Island Park as one of the city's principal public boating and beach recreation areas.

**Cove Island Marina:** Cove Island Marina, including the boat launching area, should be managed and maintained as a focal point and central facility for public boating activities on the Stamford shoreline. The marina should be utilized to its full potential as a public boating facility providing opportunities for safe and enjoyable boating access to Long Island Sound. Enhancement of marina facilities is encouraged and supported, in accordance with a comprehensive City plan for marina management. Opportunities for improving boating access to Long Island Sound from the marina,

including opportunities for establishing a public landing to serve visiting and resident boaters, should be evaluated and to the extent feasible pursued. Preparation and implementation of an effective plan to manage sand on beaches nearby the marina's navigation channel is encouraged and supported for the purpose of reducing and avoiding the alongshore movement of sand into the channel and the resulting need for maintenance dredging.

An effective, ongoing program of water quality monitoring in the vicinity of the beach recreation area and in the marina area is encouraged and supported to identify any existing and potential sources of pollution and to establish and maintain a data base of information to support water quality improvement efforts.

**Cove Island Wildlife Sanctuary:** This area should be managed as a natural area providing protected wildlife habitat and opportunities for wildlife observation and public views of Cove Island Harbor and Long Island Sound, consistent with the natural capacity of the area to support such passive recreational use in a safe and environmentally sound manner.

**Noroton River and Watershed:** Initiatives to improve water quality in the Noroton River and Holly Pond that are planned and implemented, to the extent practical, on a watershed-wide basis involving collaborative efforts with the Town of Darien are encouraged and supported, including preparation and implementation of a duly approved watershed-based plan to reduce nonpoint sources of pollution affecting the river, Holly Pond, and Long Island Sound. An effective, ongoing program of water quality monitoring in the watershed is encouraged and supported to identify any existing and potential sources of pollution and to establish and maintain a data base of information to support water quality improvement efforts. Restoration of Noroton River riparian habitat and aquatic resources historically lost or degraded is encouraged and supported.

**Holly Pond:** Fish and wildlife habitat associated with Holly Pond should be preserved and enhanced to the extent feasible. Tidal circulation to support viable intertidal habitat should be maintained, including circulation between the pond and Long Island Sound through Cove Island Marina; stormwater runoff into the pond should be properly managed to avoid undue pollution and sedimentation. Restoration of degraded coastal resources on, in or contiguous to the pond, including intertidal and sub-tidal resources, should be encouraged and supported. Restoration should follow specific plans prepared in accordance with all applicable local, state, and federal laws and regulations concerning work in coastal waterways. The feasibility of available restoration techniques should be thoroughly evaluated, including but not limited to, any opportunities for excavating/dredging accumulated sediment to restore intertidal elevations necessary to support a healthy tidal wetlands ecosystem. Feasibility evaluations and restoration plans should be developed through a collaborative effort involving local, state, and federal agencies and neighborhood residents for the purpose of improving water quality, scenic quality, and fish and wildlife habitat, and to otherwise enhance the pond's ecological, scenic, and recreational values.

The traditional public view of Holly Pond from Weed Avenue should be preserved; means and measures for safe pedestrian and bicycle access along Weed Avenue to facilitate the enjoyment of scenic views and maintain public safety should be designed and implemented with input from neighborhood stakeholders.

To the extent possible, the City should coordinate coastal resource planning and management initiatives with the Town of Darien to address common interests that may affect the pond, including interests for protection and restoration of coastal resources and water quality, regulation of water-based recreational activities, and inspection and maintenance of the Cove Island dams at the pond's outlet.

**Beach and Shoreline Resources:** Natural coastal resources associated with the shoreline, including but not limited to, beach, bluff, and dune resources, should be managed and protected to ensure their ecological and recreational values. Planning for flood and erosion control measures should take into consideration that shoreline erosion is a natural and ongoing process and that structural measures to stabilize the shoreline should be carefully planned and constructed to avoid adverse impacts on ecological functions and on properties adjoining and nearby the established measures.

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