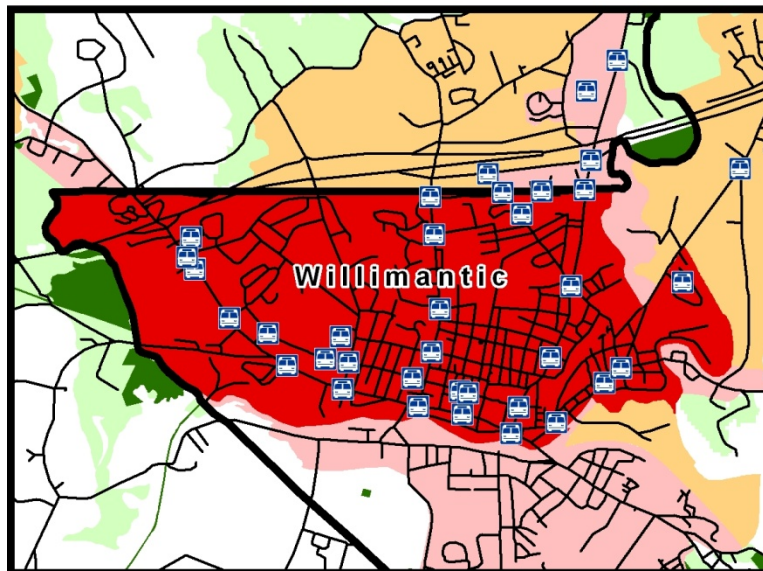


Title: Town of Windham Incentive Housing Overlay Zone

Description: The Town seeks to implement its Plan of Conservation and Development by promoting dense housing in the urbanized parts of town via an Incentive Housing Overlay Zone. With a technical assistance grant, the town would hire WINCOG to: 1) prepare a housing assessment, 2) prepare a market analysis and strategy for downtown housing, 3) prepare an incentive housing overlay zone regulation including design guidelines and a zone boundary map and 4) organize public outreach and advocacy on housing needs and responsible growth.

Project Plan: The approximate area under consideration for an Incentive Housing Overlay Zone is the former city of Willimantic. Willimantic is a small urban area and census-designated place covering approximately 10% of the Town of Windham. It is designated as a Regional Center on the *State of Connecticut Conservation and Development Policies Plan Locational Guide Map* as well as in the *Windham Region Land Use Plan*. Willimantic has the highest population density in the Windham Planning Region and is served by public water and sewer. The Windham Region Transit District operates several bus routes in the Willimantic area as well as routes connecting Willimantic with nearby Storrs, Danielson and Norwich.



Potential Area for Incentive Housing Overlay Zone

In order to investigate and promote incentives to create housing for economic development and to create zoning strategies that foster such incentives, the following tasks will be performed by key town officials and staff, specifically the Zoning Commission, Town Planner, and the Director of Economic Development, in cooperation with WINCOG staff and a housing market subconsultant:

- A. Prepare a housing assessment using the American Housing Survey and similar data as well as locally-collected housing information. The housing assessment shall detail the number, type, condition and density of the existing housing supply in Willimantic.
- B. Prepare a housing market analysis and strategy. Building on the housing assessment, the market analysis shall identify current and projected housing demand for all age groups, abilities, family sizes and income levels. The market analysis shall use market information such as local and comparable sales and rent levels. The analysis shall include interviews with a cross-section of stakeholders such as developers, property owners, financial institutions, those seeking housing and current householders. The housing strategy shall make specific recommendations on the types of housing that would best serve the needs of the community and the goals of the *Windham Plan of Conservation and Development*. The strategy shall include specific recommendations on how a Housing Overlay Zone might include incentives and how this may be marketed to all stakeholders.
- C. Research and create a draft Incentive Housing Overlay Zone for inclusion in the Zoning Regulations. The overlay zone should be based on the information in the previous two reports, the Plan of Conservation and Development, commission dialogue and public input. The overlay zone text shall be accompanied by an updated zoning map with overlay zone boundaries. Design guidelines shall be prepared specifically for the incentive zone(s) and said guidelines shall be fully integrated into existing design guidelines. If necessary, corresponding changes to the subdivision regulations will be included.
- D. Prepare and implement a public outreach strategy to inform the public and the development community of the proposed zone and to solicit input from key partners and interested citizens. The outreach strategy may include engaging the local media, holding a charrette and/or public information session, creating a website and attending public hearings for the proposed zone.

The intended result of these tasks is the creation of urban housing choices that will attract residents and ultimately serve to redevelop and revitalize the economic, social, and physical environment of Willimantic.