

## Chapter 3. Land Use and Zoning

### Land Use

Brookfield Town covers approximately 13,000 acres (20 square miles). Of this area, approximately 500 acres are large water bodies, including Lake Lillinonah, Candlewood Lake, and the Housatonic River. Approximately 1,100 acres of the land area are dedicated to roads. The remaining approximately 11,400 acres of Brookfield's area is parceled land. Table 1 provides a tabulation of different land uses in Brookfield, and Figure 1 illustrates the location of each land use. Single family housing is the most common land use in Brookfield, accounting for approximately 58% of parceled land in the town. The second most common land use is open space, accounting for 14% percent of parceled land, followed by vacant land accounting for 8% of land in Brookfield.

Table 1. Land Use Categories and Size

Land Use Category	Area (acres)	Area (percent of total land)
Single Family Residential	6,578	57.7%
Two- or Three-family Residential	31	0.3%
Multi-Family Residential	593	5.2%
Mixed-Use	41	0.4%
Commercial	375	3.3%
Industrial	291	2.6%
Institutional	353	3.1%
Transportation and Utilities	487	4.3%
Recreational	93	0.8%
Open Space	1,572	13.8%
Agriculture	5	0.0%
Parking	11	0.1%
Vacant	912	8.0%
Unclassified	57	0.5%
Total Parceled Land	11,398	100.0%

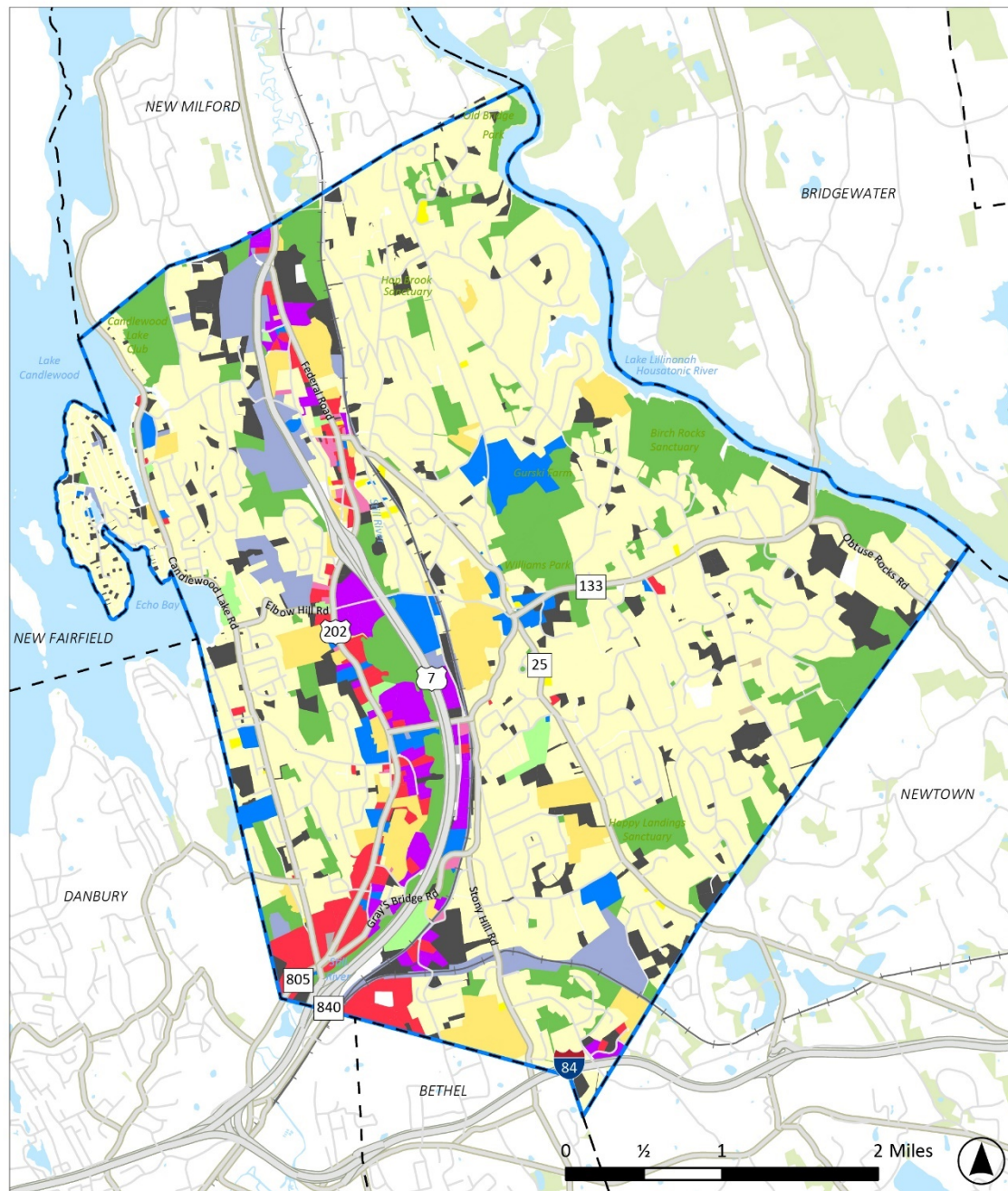
Source: Town of Brookfield, BFI Planning

### Residential Land Use

As described above, residential is the most prevalent land use type in Brookfield, with over 7,000 acres dedicated to this use (64% of parceled land). Density varies from neighborhood to neighborhood, with single family housing being the most common use throughout the town. As shown in the land use map below, concentrations of multifamily housing can be found throughout the town in low-density condominium developments, as well as in the Town Center District along Federal Road where higher density mixed-use multi-family housing is more prevalent. Two-and-three family housing is uncommon in Brookfield, accounting for just 31 acres. (0.27 percent of the total area).

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Figure 1. Existing Land Use



### Land Use

Single Family Residential	Institutional
2 and 3-Family Residential	Transportation and Utilities
Multi-Family Residential	Recreational
Mixed-Use	Open Space
Commercial	Agriculture
Industrial	Parking
	Vacant

Sources: Brookfield Town, CT DEEP, CT DOT, BFJ Planning

### *Commercial Use*

Commercial uses cover approximately 375 acres (3% of parceled land) in Brookfield, and are primarily located along the Federal Road corridor, illustrated in red in Figure 1. In the Four Corners area near the intersection of Federal Road and Station Road, commercial uses include neighborhood-scale businesses such as restaurants, gas stations, and ground-floor retail in mixed-use buildings. Along the southern portion of Federal Road near Exit 11 on Route 7, commercial uses are characterized by regional scale businesses such as warehouses, big box stores and national-chain retailers. Office park uses are primarily located along Park Ridge Road near the boundary of Bethel and Danbury.

### *Mixed-Use*

Mixed-Use development, including either a mix of residential and commercial or industrial uses, covers approximately 41 acres in Brookfield (less than 1% of parceled land). As commercial areas including the Federal Road and Four Corners promote mixed-use development as a smart growth strategy, this land use category has grown.

### *Industrial Use*

Industrial uses, which make up about 3% of Brookfield's parceled land (291 acres), are primarily found along the US-7 corridor, with concentrations along Commerce Road, Federal Road, and Vail Road. Industrial uses in Brookfield include manufacturing, industrial warehousing, truck and auto servicing, and industrial supply. The industrial area along Vail Road coincides with the Brookfield Junction of the Housatonic Railroad, while the Commerce Road industrial area aligns with the Berkshire Line of the same service.

### *Institutional Uses*

Institutional uses, which cover another 3% of parceled land (353 acres) can be found throughout Brookfield, particularly in the Brookfield Center area at the intersection of Whisconier and Obtuse Hill Roads, and at the intersection of Federal Road and Junction Road. Institutional uses in Brookfield Center include Center Elementary school, the Brookfield Library, the Brookfield Department of Parks and Recreation, the Brookfield Historical Society, Brookfield Vounteer Fire Station 2, Saint Joseph Church, the Congregational Church of Brookfield, and Saint Paul's Episcopal Church. Institutional uses at Junction Road and Federal Road include the Greenknoll Branch of the Western Connecticut YMCA, Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, and Christian Life Academy.

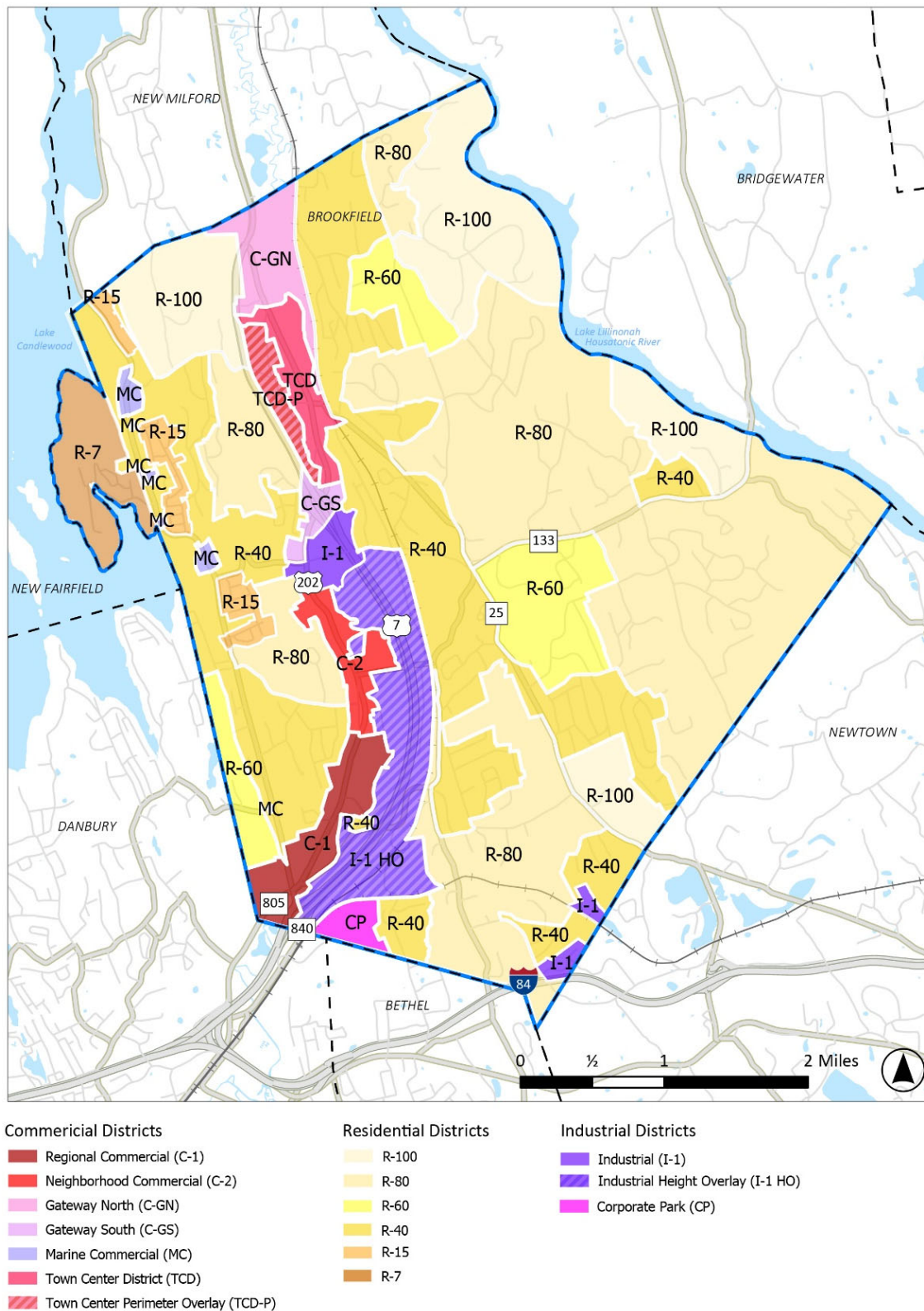
## **Zoning**

Figure 2 illustrates the distribution of the Town's residential, commercial, and industrial zones as well as special districts. This section summarizes each district in Brookfield. For full details about each zoning district, refer to the most recent version of the Zoning Regulations of the Town of Brookfield.



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Figure 2. Zoning Districts



Sources: Brookfield Town, CT DEEP, CT DOT, BfJ Planning

### Residential

Brookfield has six residential zoning districts (R-7, R-15, R-40, R-60, R-80, and R-100), all of which allow for conservation and agricultural uses as-of-right, single-family homes and short-term rentals by zoning permit, and a broader range of residential, community, and institutional uses allowed by special permit (see Table 2). Residential districts in Brookfield are differentiated by the minimum lot dimensions, maximum building coverage, and maximum impervious coverage on each property (see Table 3). R-7 represents the highest density zone in Brookfield, with a minimum lot area of 7,000 square feet and the highest maximum lot coverage, while R-100 is the lowest density zone with a minimum lot area of 100,000 square feet (about 2.5 acres) and the lowest maximum lot coverage. Generally, less dense residential zones are found in the eastern portion of the town, particularly along the Housatonic River, while the denser residential zones are found in the west side of town, particularly near Candlewood Lake.

Table 2. Schedule of Uses – Residential Districts

Zone	As-of-Right	Permitted by Zoning Permit <sup>1</sup>	Permitted by Special Permit <sup>2</sup>
Uses applicable to all residential zones: (R-7, R-15, R-40, R-60, R-80, R-100)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Conservation</li> <li>· Agriculture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Single-family dwellings</li> <li>· Rooms for board to not more than two people</li> <li>· Short-term rentals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Conservation subdivisions</li> <li>· Multi-family dwellings</li> <li>· Planned Age Restricted Community</li> <li>· Licensed group day care home</li> <li>· Schools and colleges</li> <li>· Child care</li> <li>· Religious uses</li> <li>· Social clubs</li> <li>· Libraries, museums and auditoriums</li> <li>· Hospitals, sanatoriums or other philanthropic institutions</li> <li>· Fire, police, municipal buildings</li> <li>· Water, sewer, electrical facilities</li> <li>· Parks and recreational facilities</li> <li>· Cemeteries</li> <li>· Antennas</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> Zoning Permits are issued by the Zoning Enforcement Officer (ZEO) following the procedures described in section 8.2 of the Brookfield Zoning Regulations. Generally, a change of use, construction, or reconstruction require a Zoning Permit. If the ZEO determines that the application complies with the regulations, it will make its best effort to issue a permit within 30 days.

<sup>2</sup> Special Permits are issued by the Commission in accordance with the procedures listed in section 8.5 of the Brookfield Zoning Regulations. Generally, special permits require a public hearing and have several more approval criteria, including but not limited to consideration of the POCD, environmental protection and conservation, neighborhood compatibility, and adequate public utilities and services.

Table 3. Area, Dimensional and Building Height Requirements (2024)

	R-100	R-80	R-60	R-40	R-15	R-7
Minimum Lot Area	100,000 sf	80,000 sf	60,000 sf	40,000 sf	15,000 sf	7,000 sf
Minimum Lot Width	200 ft		150 ft		100 ft	50 ft
Minimum Side Yard	50 ft		30 ft		15 ft	10 ft
Minimum Rear Yard	50 ft		30 ft		15 ft	10 ft
Minimum Front Yard	50 ft		40 ft		30 ft	20 ft
Minimum Building Separation (1-2 floors)	20 ft					
Minimum Building Separation (> 2 floors)	50 ft					
Maximum Building Coverage	10%				20%	25%
Maximum Impervious Coverage	30%		40%		50%	65%

### Commercial and Industrial Districts

There are eight different commercial or industrial districts in Brookfield, separated into five categories: commercial gateway districts (CG-N and CG-S), regional and neighborhood commercial districts (C-1 and C-2), industrial districts (I-1), corporate park districts (CP), Town Center District (TCD), and marine commercial districts (MC). While the MC district is focused on the shores of Candlewood Lake, the rest of the commercial and industrial districts in Brookfield run north and south through the center of the town along Route 7 and Federal Road. Dimensional requirements for these districts are listed in Table 4.

Table 4. Dimensional Requirements (Commercial, Industrial and Special Districts)

	CG-N	CG-S	C-1	C-2	MC	I-1	CP	TCD
Minimum Lot Area (sf)	40,000	20,000	80,000	40,000	10,000	40,000	40,000	10,000
Minimum Lot Width	150 ft	75 ft	200 ft	150 ft	50 ft	150 ft	150 ft	50 ft*
Minimum Front Yard Setback	25 ft		50 ft		20 ft	50 ft*	50 ft	6 ft*
Minimum Rear Yard Setback	30 ft	20 ft	50 ft	30 ft	10 ft	30 ft*	30 ft	10 ft*
Minimum Side Yard Setback	30 ft	20 ft	50 ft	30 ft	10 ft	30 ft*	30 ft	0
Maximum Impervious Coverage	75%							80%
Maximum Building Height	30 ft*						45 ft	42 ft
Setback from Residential District Line*	100 ft		100 ft*	100 ft	0 ft	100 ft		0 ft

\*Additional conditions are outlined in section 4.3 of the Brookfield Zoning Code.

### Commercial District (C-1 and C2)

The C-1 and C-2 commercial districts are located along Federal Road in the southern portion of Brookfield. The C-2 district is intended to allow for neighborhood-scale commercial uses, while the C-1 zone is intended for regional-scale, primarily retail-oriented commercial uses. Reflecting this differentiation, single-family homes are allowed in the C-2 district with a site plan, while they are not an allowable use in the C-1 district. General retail uses larger than 7,500 square feet are permitted in the C-1 district with a site plan, while this use requires a special permit in the C-2 zone.

### Commercial Gateway District (CG-N and CG-S)

The commercial gateway districts are located to the north (CG-N) and south (CG-S) of the Town Center special district (see below) and create a commercial transition to the Four Corners neighborhood along Federal Road. The commercial gateway districts were established as a part of the new zoning regulations adopted in 2018. While these two districts permit the same uses, they differ in dimensional requirements, with the CG-N district requiring larger lot sizes.

### Marine Commercial (MC)

The MC district is a specialized zone found along the coast of Candlewood Lake which allows for water-based recreational and commercial uses in primarily residential zones. For example, this is the only commercial district which allows for the construction of marinas, docks and slips with a special permit. In keeping with the residential nature of the MC district, many of the uses allowed under other commercial districts are not permitted under the MC district, such as retail, office, industrial, indoor recreation, and mixed uses.

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### *Town Center District (TCD)*

The Town Center District (TCD) encompasses the Four Corners neighborhood between Route 7 and the Still River. This district is intended to facilitate the creation of a residential and commercial “downtown” destination in Brookfield, allowing for a wide range of uses including mixed-use and multi-family development up to three stories. In addition to the land use standards outlined in the zoning code, development within the TCD must abide by architectural design standards outlined in the TCD Design Guidelines, adopted in July of 2019.

### *TCD Perimeter Overlay Zone (TCD-P)*

The TCD-P zone covers much of the western portion of the Town Center District surrounding Laurel Hill Road. This district is intended to increase local residential density in support of commercial uses in the TCD zone, allowing multifamily and planned age restricted community (PARC) developments not permitted within the underlying TCD zone.

### *Industrial District (I-1)*

The industrial district is located along Route 7, extending from the southern Town boundary north to the Federal Road interchange. This district permits many of the same uses as other commercial districts in Brookfield, with a focus on Industrial use. For example, manufacturing, publishing and printing, research laboratories, warehouses and wholesale are all permitted with a site plan while these uses all require a special permit in other commercial zones. Similarly, this is the only zone in Brookfield where truck and bus terminals are permitted. Several uses permitted in other commercial zones are not permitted in the industrial zone including alcohol sales, garden and nursery centers, gasoline sales, personal services, drive-thru facilities, several types of restaurants, and mixed-use development.

### *Industrial Height Overlay (I-1 HO)*

Most of the I-1 zone is included under the Industrial Height Overlay District (I-1 HO) except for the area between the Still River and the US-7/Federal Rd. interchange. Within the I-1 HO overlay, the maximum permitted building height is increased to 45 feet.

### *Corporate Park District (CP)*

The CP district can be found at the southern boundary of Brookfield, applying to the properties surrounding Park Ridge Rd. As described by its name, this district is intended to encourage the development of corporate park style industrial and commercial uses such as professional offices and manufacturing as opposed to retail or services which are restricted in this district.

### *Special Districts*

Brookfield has four special districts in addition to the residential, commercial, and industrial districts described above. These include the Residential-Rental Housing Opportunity/Workforce Zone (R-RHOW), the Brookfield Aquifer Protection District (APD), Floodplain Districts (FP), and the Watershed Protection District (WPD). Each of these zones is outlined below, and specific details of each special district can be found in Article 5 of the Town of Brookfield Zoning Regulations.



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### *Residential-Rental Housing Opportunity/Workforce Zone (R-RHOW)*

The R-RHOW district is a specialized, time-limited zone covering the area within 1,600 feet of the intersection of Federal Road and Station Road with the purpose of encouraging mixed-use commercial and residential rental housing in proximity to existing infrastructure and services. Applications for developments which qualified under the R-RHOW zone were only accepted between July 2016 and July 2021.

### *Aquifer Protection District (APD)*

There are two distinct and overlapping APDs in Brookfield: the Meadowbrook Aquifer Protection Area, located to the south of Limekiln Brook, and the much larger Brookfield Aquifer Protection Area which extends from the northern boundary to the southern boundary of the town within the Still River Drainage Basin. With the intent of protecting Brookfield's groundwater resources, several uses are prohibited within this zone such as road salt storage, manufacturing, storage, or disposal of hazardous materials, truck or bus servicing facilities, waste disposal facilities, contractor's yards, motor vehicle service stations, and automotive and boat sales. Properties within an APD are also subject to additional regulations related to stormwater management, wastewater discharge, drainage, hazardous materials, and storage of waste.

### *Floodplain Districts (FP)*

Floodways and areas of Brookfield falling within Zones A and AE according to the most recent FEMA FIRM maps are within the Floodplain District. Properties within the FP zone are subject to additional review by the Inland Wetlands Commission, use regulations, and building code.

### *Watershed Protection District (WPD)*

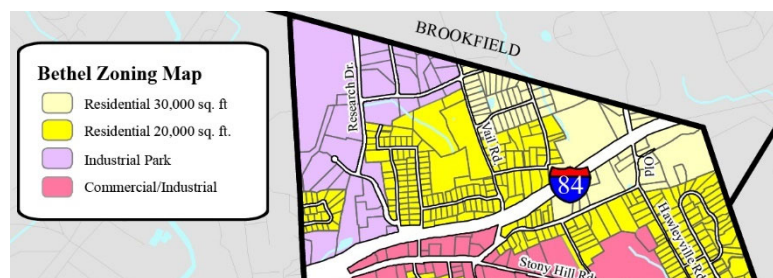
Brookfield's WPD zone is overlaid on all properties within the Candlewood Lake Watershed in the western portion of the Town. The purpose of this district is to protect the water quality of Candlewood Lake, an important local and regional natural resource. This district is similar to the APD and shares the same use restrictions. New construction within the WPD must complete a stormwater management plan and share related data for review by the Town. The Brookfield Zoning Code also provide a menu of best management practices to be included in stormwater management plans.

## *Surrounding Municipalities Zoning*

Brookfield shares land boundaries with New Milford to the north and Danbury, Bethel, and Newtown to the south. Bridgewater is across the Housatonic River to the east of Brookfield and New Fairfield is across Candlewood Lake to the west of Brookfield.

### *Bethel*

Bethel maintains an Industrial Park (IP) zone contiguous with Brookfield's CP zone, with the similar purpose of encouraging larger scale park-style corporate facilities near Park Ridge Road and



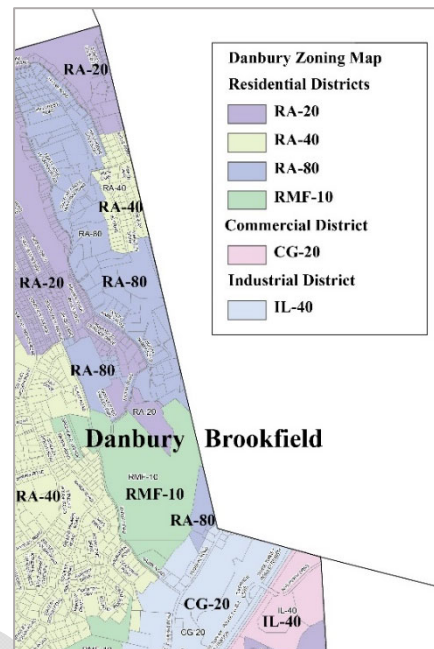
Bethel Zoning Map. Image adapted from Bethel's official zoning map

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Research Drive. To the east of the industrial zone, is an R-30 (30,000 sq ft residential) zone bordering R-40 and R-80 zones in Brookfield.

### Danbury

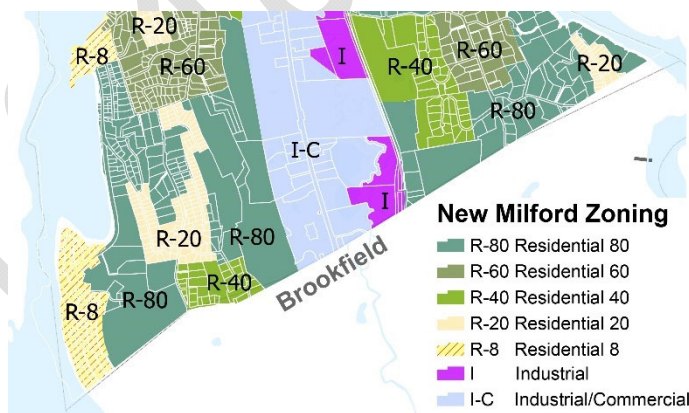
Danbury borders Brookfield to the southeast from Candlewood Lake to the boundary of Bethel. Like Brookfield, Route 7 in Danbury is surrounded by commercial (CG-20) and industrial zoning (IL-40) with residential districts to the east and west along the border with Brookfield (RA-20, RA-40, RA-80, RMF-10). Along Candlewood Lake, Danbury is zoned residential with minimum lots sizes of one-half acre or 2 acres (RA-20 and RA-80).



Danbury Zoning Map. Image adapted from Danbury's official zoning map.

### New Milford

Brookfield's northern border is the boundary with New Milford, stretching from Candlewood Lake to the Housatonic River. The commercial/industrial core along Route 7 and Federal Road in Brookfield continues north into New Milford with Industrial (I) and Industrial/Commercial (I-C) districts. The remaining border areas in New Milford are zoned with various single-family residential districts with comparable requirements to Brookfield's Corresponding zones.



New Milford Zoning Map. Image adapted from New Milford's official zoning map.

### Newtown

Newtown borders Brookfield to the southwest, with the boundary between the Towns extending from the Housatonic River to the boundary with the Town of Bethel. On the Newtown side, are single-family residential districts with one- to three- acre minimum lot sizes, which is comparable to Brookfield's neighboring one- to two-acre single-family zoning districts.