

Pomfret, Connecticut

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## Branding Strategy

July 2019

*“When we moved to Pomfret several years ago, we looked at all the Quiet Corner towns. And for us, it really came down to the quality of the schools, the nearby restaurants, and the overall beauty of the town. It quickly became obvious that Pomfret was the best choice for us.”*

Community Survey Respondent

This document was prepared by the Northeastern Connecticut Council of Governments (NECCOG) - which facilitated the branding strategy for the Town of Pomfret.

NECCOG is a regional council of governments consisting of sixteen member towns: Ashford, Brooklyn, Canterbury, Chaplin, Eastford, Hampton, Killingly, Plainfield, Pomfret, Putnam, Scotland, Sterling, Thompson, Union, Votuntown and Woodstock.



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## Introduction

Incorporated in 1713, Pomfret is a rural town. It is beautifully quintessential New England in appearance with rolling hills, forests, farms, trails, eateries and historic structures. The Town, which historically developed around the villages of Abington, Elliotts, Pomfret, Pomfret Center and Pomfret Landing covers 40.6 square miles, (approximately 0.73 percent of Connecticut's total land area) located in Windham County in northeastern Connecticut.

The Town's economic development commission, in coordination with the First Selectman decided to develop a branding plan as a first step to developing a comprehensive economic (community) development strategy for Pomfret. The town engaged the Northeastern Connecticut Council of Governments to facilitate the planning process to develop the branding plan.

Community branding is about crafting a message regarding the special offerings of a town that will resonate or appeal to persons and businesses inside and outside a community. It is fundamental to understand that a branding strategy is NOT a marketing plan. The two are different and serve different purposes. Community branding's goal is to capture *"the enduring essence of a community, including its reputation and the thoughts, values and expectations that form a competing promise enabling people to choose that community over another."*<sup>1</sup> A marketing strategy consists of the strategy and tactics to sell a community — including the *"activities, institutions and processes involved in creating, communicating and delivering value in a manner that propels a community toward its goals."*<sup>2</sup> It is important to understand that community branding is not about pretending to be something you're not, creating a catchy logo or unique slogan for the town. Branding is about revealing, packaging and promoting awareness about what the community is and how that can be beneficial.

## Why Brand Pomfret?

A branding strategy is fundamental to protecting the town's sense of place and important to developing its economic standing. Communities typically develop branding strategies for the following reasons<sup>3</sup>:

- Putting your community on the regional and national map
- Increasing a sense of local identity, well-being and pride
- Attracting new businesses, industries, investments and high profile events
- Drawing in new populations and a diversity of skills and talents

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Community branding's goal is to capture "the enduring essence of a community, including its reputation and the thoughts, values and expectations that form a competing promise enabling people to choose that community over another."

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COMMUNITY BRANDING AND  
MARKETING - Federation of Canadian  
Municipalities Tool for Local Economic  
Development

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When you cultivate a sense of place, not only will citizens spend their dollars at home, you'll attract tourists as well. They'll have a good time. And because you're giving them something to talk about, they'll come back—and they'll generate great word of mouth that makes others want to visit, too.

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August 21, 2018  
by Quint Studer, Strong Towns

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<sup>1</sup> University of Wisconsin Cooperative Extension System

<sup>2</sup> IBID

<sup>3</sup> COMMUNITY BRANDING AND MARKETING - Federation of Canadian Municipalities Tool for Local Economic Development

- Increasing tourism
- Developing and maintaining a clear and consistent sense of community identity and messaging for the outside world
- Supporting coherent local development efforts overall as physical, social, economic and cultural sectors come together to deliver your community's brand promise.

To many, creating a brand suggests a blank slate, a point where the town begins the process of establishing who "we" are - such an assumption is wrong. While Pomfret does not have a formal brand — it nonetheless is branded. *"Every citizen in a city, region and nation has a perception of that place. Through their actions and beliefs they express the brand. Complex brand perceptions about place are created over time and through functionality and experience. For cities, that means looking at the livability (i.e., functionality) and quality of life (i.e., citizen experience) of our cities, and understanding how that shapes our citizens' perception and what they believe to be true about place."*<sup>4</sup> Pomfret has a long history and people have impressions (a form of branding) of the town. It is not like the launch of a new product where no one has any notion as to what the product is or could be. Pomfret has history - the town was incorporated in 1713. The town can't escape from what it is, and has been. However, how people will perceive it can change through meaningful action, but its past and current perceptions cannot be glossed over. If town policies are not incentivizing and protecting the communities brand, the brand is at risk. Protecting and enhancing the brand can and should be supported by the community.

The **goal of this plan** is to craft a message about the special offerings of the town that will resonate or appeal to persons and businesses outside of Pomfret to both visit and locate in the town.

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"A sense of place is a unique collection of qualities and characteristics – visual, cultural, social, and environmental – that provide meaning to a location. Sense of place is what makes one ... town different from another, but sense of place is also what makes our physical surroundings worth caring about."

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Edward T. McMahon, The Distinctive City

## The Planning Process

The planning process involved four meetings - each noticed in full compliance with Connecticut's Freedom of Information Act and open to the public. The four parts of the study involved:

- **Explaining community branding** and how it could help Pomfret
- Providing an **overview of the community** in terms of demographics, finances, regulatory environment and business climate
  - ▶ Conducting an **initial SWOT** (Strength Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) **assessment**
- Conducting an online **Community Survey**
- **Map workshop** - utilizing aerial mapping of the Town to gain community perspective on elements of the Town in terms of likes and dislikes
- **Final SWOT Assessment**

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<sup>4</sup> Federation of Canadian Municipalities

- The Brand

## Community Branding

The initial meeting was used to explain what community branding is (and is not), review some basic facts and figures about Pomfret to place it in perspective and to conduct an initial SWOT (Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis. At this meeting It was explained that while Pomfret does not have a formal brand - it nonetheless it is branded. That the process of developing a branding strategy does not begin with a “blank slate” - the town has multiple centuries of existence.

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“Your Brand is what Other People Say About You When You’re Not in the Room.”

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Jeff Bezos, CEO and Founder of Amazon

*“That is, the meaning of cities to people can develop independently of conscious ... Rather, a range of uncontrollable or organic factors such as history ..., education, literature, the arts ... and media mould city brand meaning .... Therefore, unlike corporate brands, city brands are not launched in the strictest sense ... Accordingly, city brand management essentially aims to adjust what cities already mean to people ... Adding further complexity and uncontrollability however, the meaning of cities continues to evolve constantly ..., and organically, irrespective of city brand management attempts.”<sup>5</sup>*

Pomfret's long history and the people who reside, visit and work there result in impressions (a form of branding) of the town that are both positive and negative. It is not like the launch of a new product where no one has any notion as to what the product is or could be. Towns are places with a history and on-the ground realities; which means—like it or not—Pomfret already is branded. **The town can't escape from what it is and how people perceive it.** However, this can change through meaningful action, but it cannot be glossed over.

Also discussed was that if town policies are not incentivizing what the town wants and penalizing what it does not then you can't sell vision; you can't sell community. Along with history comes image. Image is anchored in the present and represents the visible impression people in and outside the town have of the town. This is a critical element in branding the town because that present image is either what we are seeking to enhance or change to effectively brand the community.

The initial meeting emphasized that a branding strategy is NOT a marketing plan. A branding strategy is the first step — defining the brand and actions related to it to reinforce the brand — the marketing strategy is the next step. “Once you define those characteristics and experiences, a place marketing campaign can be developed to share the place brand story in a way that relates to your key audience/stakeholders. Sharing the brand story supports attracting investment, tourism, and changing citizens' perceptions.”<sup>6</sup>

A central questions was asked of the participants:

- Consider people who don't live in Pomfret - what impressions do they have? Positive? Negative? The wrong impressions or none at all?

Persons outside (and even new residents) of the community lack residents knowledge and personal experience with the community, they make decisions based on what they see, read, hear or learn

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<sup>5</sup> <https://research-repository.griffith.edu.au/bitstream/handle/10072/142342/GreenPUB2681.pdf?sequence=1>

<sup>6</sup> Federation of Canadian Municipalities

through chance encounters. Numerous positive impressions create one mindset; negative impressions or no impressions foster another. **“The key is whether or not their perceptions and brand image align with your community's desired brand identity.”**

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## Community Overview

Located in Connecticut's so-called "Quiet Corner" and part of the Quinebaug and Shetucket National Rivers Heritage Corridor - one of 55 Congressionally designated National Heritage Areas in the United States<sup>7</sup> - it is approximately one hour from Hartford, Providence, Worcester and New London. Boston can be reached in less than two hours and New York City is about three hours from the town. The Town has a population of 4,167<sup>8</sup> which is just 3.6 percent of Windham County's population and .12 percent of Connecticut population. With just 103.3 persons per square mile, compared to a state average of 741

(460.8 median) persons per square mile - Pomfret is by any definition: rural. In fact, Pomfret ranks as the 147th most rural town compared to Connecticut's 169 towns. Looking ahead - the University of Connecticut projects that Pomfret will have a population of 4,764 by the year 2030 - about 600 more persons than the current population. Housing permits, which are a reflection of growth, are small - with no more than eight in any year since 2013. Of greater significance is that the median age of 43.6 is well above the Connecticut median of 40.6.

Attracting new and younger residents to the Town will be a significant challenge to Pomfret. Otherwise the property tax burden will fall more and more on residents at or near retirement when increasing property taxes are particularly burdensome.

The Town is boarded by the towns of Eastford, Woodstock, Putnam, Killingly, Pomfret and Hampton. Pomfret's location affords residents ample employment, retail and entertainment options nearby. The location also provides multiple millions of persons residing or visiting New England with easy access to Pomfret's many destinations. According to Niche ([niche.com](http://niche.com)), "Pomfret is the number one place to raise a family in Windham County"<sup>9</sup> That assessment was based on a comprehensive review of livability factors.

A few quick facts about the Town:

- **139th most populated town** with 4,149 (2016)
- **147th most densely populated** town with 102.9 persons per square mile compared to a state average of 738.6 or a state median of 459.7 (2016)
- **77th wealthiest town** at \$42,427 per capita compared to \$39,906 for the state (2016)
- **31 percent below the "ALICE" level** "Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed (2016)

<sup>7</sup> "National Heritage Areas (NHAs) are designated by Congress as places where natural, cultural, and historic resources combine to form a cohesive, nationally important landscape. Through their resources, NHAs tell nationally important stories that celebrate our nation's diverse heritage. NHAs are lived-in landscapes. Consequently, NHA entities collaborate with communities to determine how to make heritage relevant to local interests and needs." - <https://www.nps.gov/articles/what-is-a-national-heritage-area.htm>

<sup>8</sup> Connecticut Department of Public health estimate for 2017

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.niche.com/places-to-live/search/best-places-to-live/s/connecticut/?page=5>

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"The Town of Pomfret desires to promote a balance between economic growth and development, at the same time maintaining and respecting the Town's rural history and character."

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Pomfret POCD

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"Pomfret is the number one place to raise a family in Windham County based on a comprehensive review of livability factors."

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Niche.com

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Pomfret's location affords residents ample employment, retail and entertainment options. The location also provides multiple millions of persons residing or visiting New England with easy access to Pomfret's many destinations.

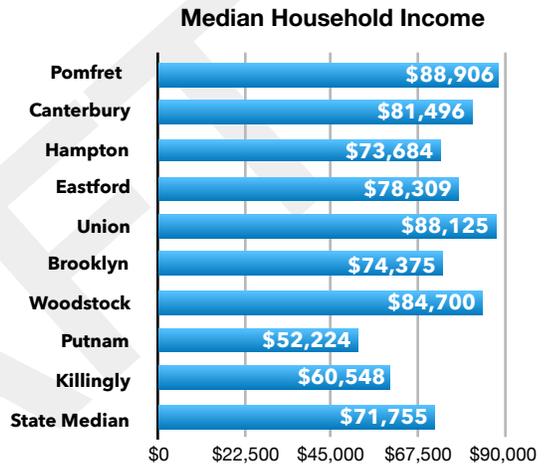
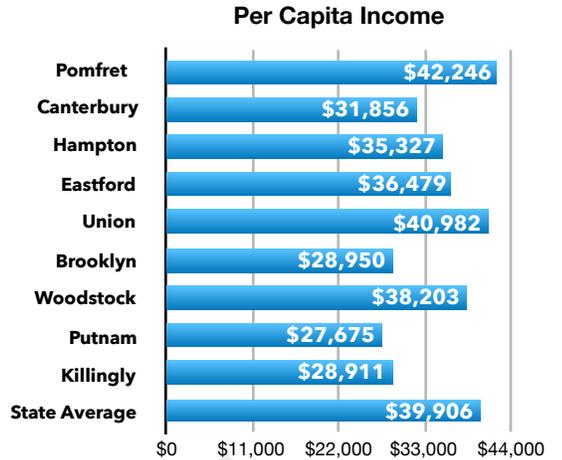
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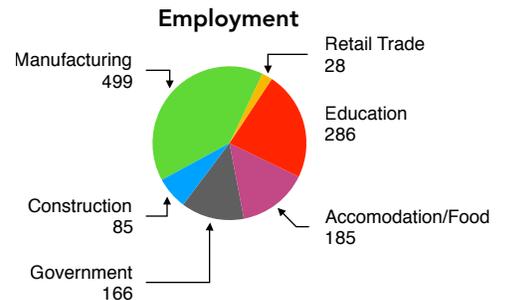
"Preserving the scenic beauty and rural character of Pomfret's valleys, hillsides, and ridgelines remains the primary goal of this Plan[ POCD]. "

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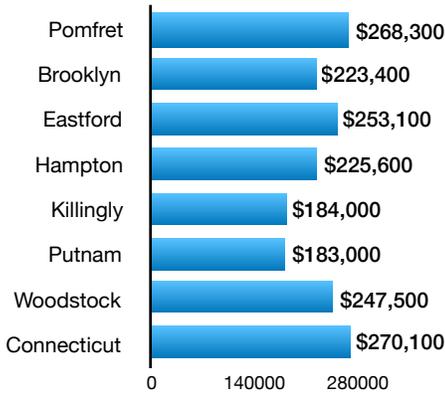
- **65th wealthiest town** at \$88,125 median household income compared to a statewide average of \$71,755 (2016)
- **76th in bonded debt** at \$1,777 per capita compared to a state average of \$2,480 and a median of \$1,612 (2016)
- **157th in unemployment rate** of 3.4% compared to a state average of 5.1% and a state median of 4.3% - Source: State of CT, Dept. of Labor (2016)
- **17th in terms of Intergovernmental Revenues** as a % of Total Revenues at 37.7% compared to a state average of 23.2% for the state and a median of 20.3% (2016)
- **127th lowest Equalized Mill Rate** at 17.50 compared to a state average of 18.98 and a median of 19.95 (2016)
- **143rd lowest Equalized Net Grand List per Capita** at \$90,795 compared to a state average of \$151,307 per capita and a state median of \$134,857 (2016)
- **77th highest Net Current Education Expenditures per Pupil** at \$16,902 compared to a state average of \$16,245 per capita and a state median of \$16,657 (2016)
- **92nd lowest rate of TANF recipients** as a percentage to population at 0.17% compared to a state average of 0.86% - Source: State of CT, Dept. of Social Services (2016)
- **45th in terms of Tax Collection** at 99.1% compared to a state average of 98.6% and a median of 98.7% (2016)
- **137th lowest Current Year Adjusted Tax Levy per Capita** at \$2,127 compared to a state average of \$2,872 and a median of \$2,783 (2016)
- **124th in Property Tax Revenues** as a % of Total Revenues at 66.9% compared to a state average of 72% and a median of 76% (2016)



Pomfret, like most towns in Connecticut and New England, operates under a Representative Town Meeting form of government. In this system of government each qualified resident is a potential legislator – making this system the most participatory (potentially) of any type of governmental structure. Pomfret is a “statutory town” meaning that it derives all its authority from state statute (Section 7-148 (Chapter 98)). As a municipal government the Town performs a wide range of functions and services. Some of these functions or services are optional and others are mandatory. The First Selectman, as the Town’s chief-executive officer, is charged with the day-to-day operations of the Town. The First Selectman works closely with each Town office, board (especially the Board of Finance), and commission to ensure the proper function of the Town. The major town government administrative offices are First Selectmen’s Office, Assessor, Recreation Department, Highway Department, Building Land Use Office (Building Official and Planner/ZEO), Town Treasurer, Tax Collector, and Town Clerk. Policy bodies include: Board of Selectmen, Board of Finance, Planning and Zoning Commission, Inland



**Median Home Value**



Wetlands and Watercourses Commission, Agricultural Commission, Recreation Commission and Economic Development Commission. Collectively, these boards/commissions and administrative offices make the Town run on a day-to-day basis and set longer term policies.

Pomfret currently contains 1,575 housing units (74 percent owner occupied, 22 percent renter occupied and 6 percent vacant). Eighty percent of the homes are single-family and 18 percent multi-family. Housing growth, similar to most of the region is slow but prices are rebounding. The median home value (2018) was \$289,100 and the median gross rent was \$850. For owner occupied homes the median income was \$108,922 and for those with a mortgage it was \$115,417 and \$87,750 for those without a mortgage. Property taxes from residential housing accounts for 72.4 percent of the Grand List. A total of 48 housing units in Pomfret are considered

“assisted” meaning that there is some type of state or federal assistance provided - this type of housing

accounts for 2.9 percent of the Town’s total housing stock. According to research done by the Connecticut Partnership for Strong Communities and based on the most recent Census data, 17 percent of the owner occupied housing units (255) spend more than thirty-percent of their income on housing and 7 percent (104) that are renting are spending more than 30 percent on housing. The general rule is that anytime a household spends more than thirty percent of their income on housing that they may be vulnerable in terms of the ability to cover other necessary costs - food, transportation, utilities, etc. According to the Partnership the 2017 hourly wage needed to afford a two bedroom rental is \$18.06 - compared to Connecticut which was at \$24.72. The Partnerships report goes on to state:

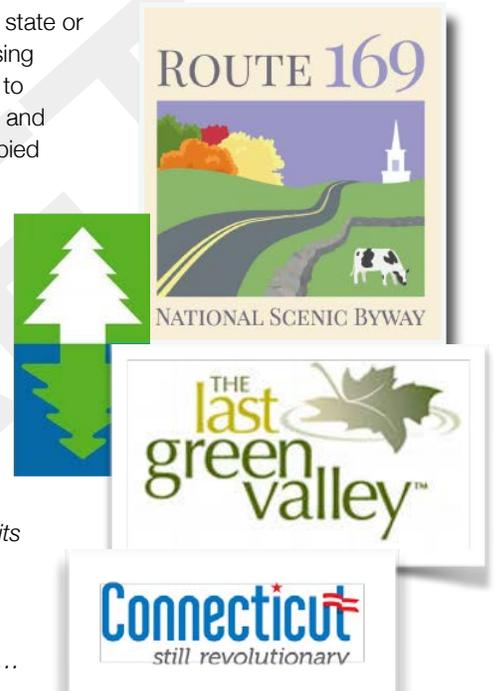
*“Pomfret is one of the many Connecticut municipalities that could see a decline in school enrollment through 2030...At the same time, its population is getting much older, with a projected increase of 28% in the 65+ population from 2020 to 2030...Pomfret is one of 118 Connecticut municipalities with single-family home dominating its housing stock (80%) and little modest or multi-family housing to offer...*

*mostly because many of those towns built the bulk of their homes after 1970 (64% in Pomfret) to accommodate the needs of new Baby Boomers... Now in their 60s, those families are seeking more modest homes...[However] few young families can afford to move to those towns, flattening median sales prices and stunting growth of Grand Lists... From 2006 through 2008, 150 towns experienced negative growth in real property values...The total real property Gand List in Pomfret declined by 3 % from 2008 through 2016,”<sup>10</sup>*

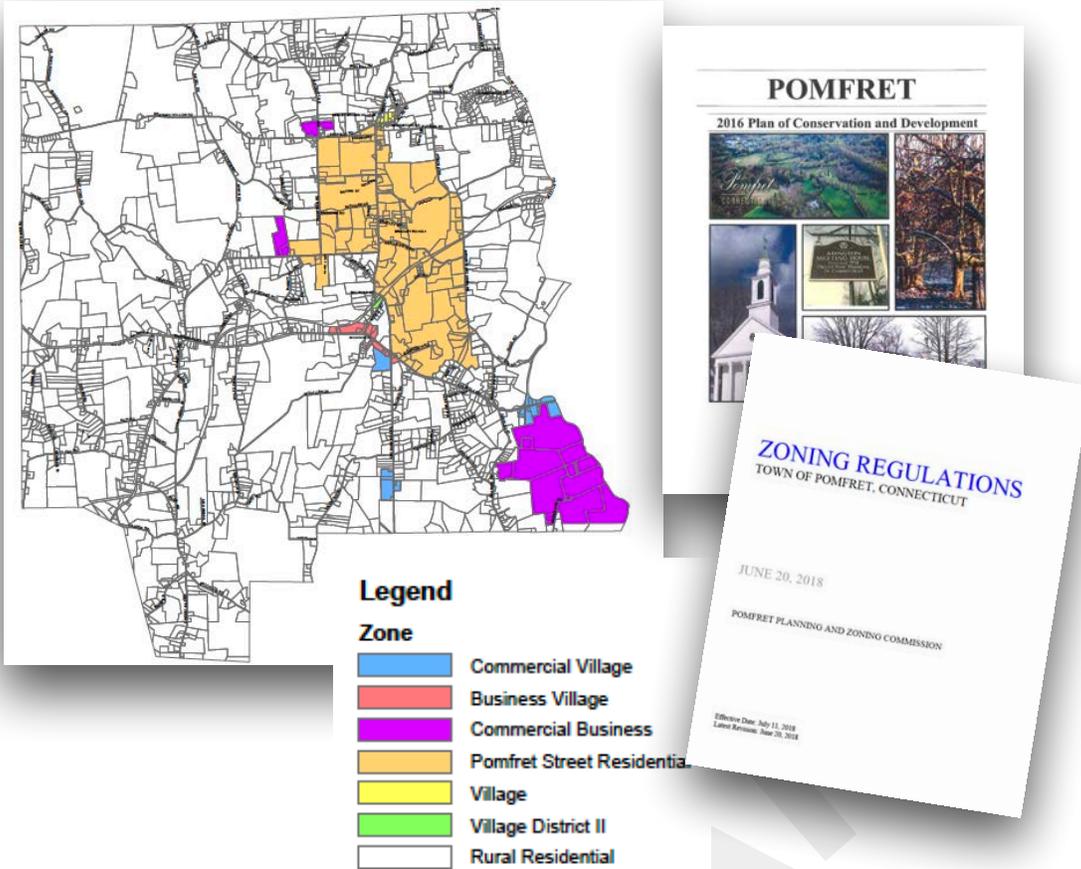
**“The Town of Pomfret desires to promote a balance between economic growth and development, at the same time maintaining and respecting the Town’s rural history and character.”**

Pomfret POCD

Despite this high percentage dependance on residential property tax, Pomfret tax levy per person was the 143rd lowest in Connecticut in 2017 at an average \$2,107 (compared to \$2,932 statewide). Pomfret was only the 134th most dependent town on the property tax in Connecticut. In terms of mill rate (2017), Pomfret ranked 124th when compared to all other 169 towns.

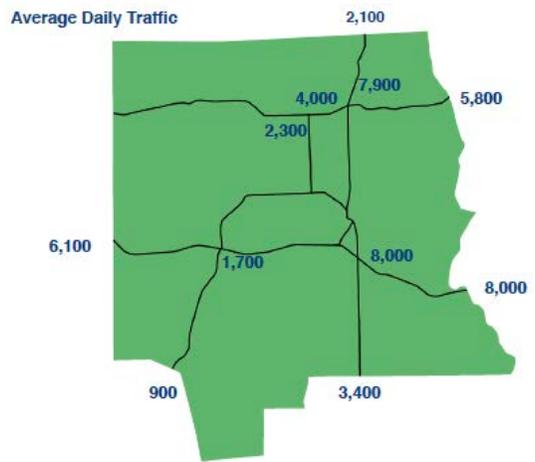


<sup>10</sup> Partnership For Strong Communities, Housing Data Profiles - 2018



Noteworthy, the Town is highly dependent on the State for revenue; the 32nd most dependent with 34.3 percent coming from Connecticut.

Pomfret is a community committed to the preservation and protection of open space and related natural resources. The Town has now protected more than 1,800 acres. Most of this work has been accomplished through the Town voting (overwhelmingly) to authorize \$4 million in Town funds to purchase or assist in protecting valued lands. The Town is also home to Mashamoquet State Park, Wolf Den State Park and the Airline State Park Trail. Pomfret is also part of the Route 169 National Scenic Byway (which bisects the Town north to south); one of only two such roadways designated in Connecticut and 150 nationally. The Town contains a National Historic District: "The Pomfret Street Historic District." "The district contains 184 resources, of which 162 (88 percent) are contributing... The variety of building styles, types, and materials found in the district represents more than 250 years of development."<sup>11</sup> Complementing these resources are extensive open



2,372,500 vehicle trips that pass annually by the Bean intersection  
2,920,000 vehicle trips that pass annually through the 101/169 intersection

space holdings by non-profit land trusts. The Connecticut Audubon Society Conservation Center-Baffin Sanctuary was ranked 4th in 2018 by the Huffington Post in their 15 **Perfect Spots in Northeast USA to Commune With Nature**<sup>12</sup>

-“Almost 700 acres of rolling hills, scrubland, grassland and woodland, managed by the Connecticut Audubon Society, is open to the public thanks to one Louis Orswell, who sold off her valuable art collection to purchase the four dairy farms that abutted her Baffin Estate. Take a walk on over 10 miles of trails and count the number of bird species you spy. Over 210 have been sighted here.”

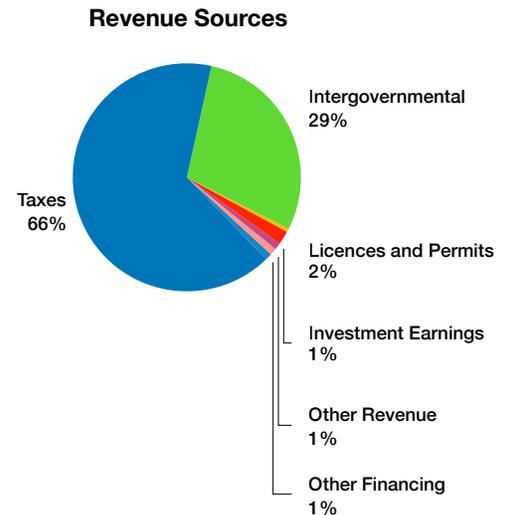
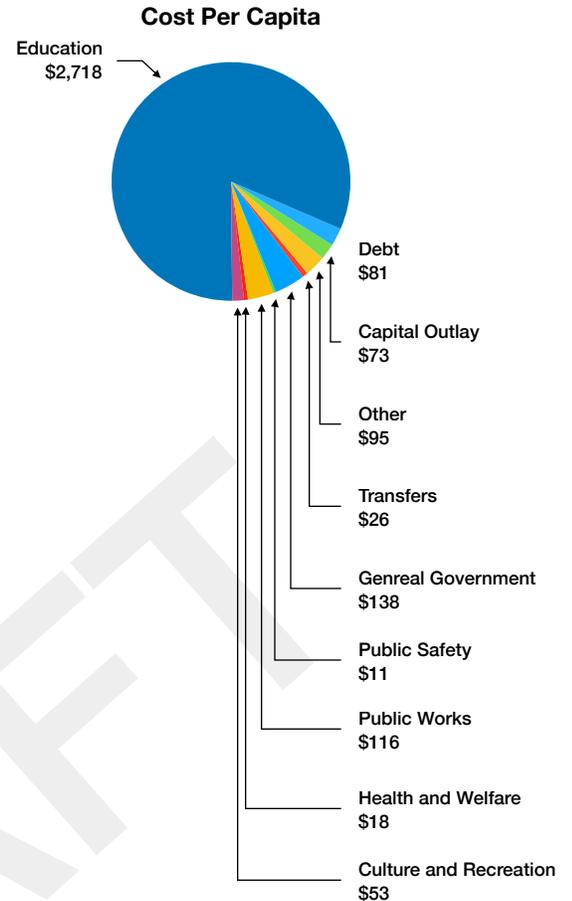
Interestingly, Pomfret was one of the last towns in Connecticut to adopt zoning (there are just two towns still without zoning). The regulations, adopted in 2003, are clearly intended to foster a rural community that respects its historic and cultural resources - consistent with the Town’s Pan of Conservation and development (POCD). The POCD identified multiple “areas of focus”, including:

- *“Preserving the scenic beauty and rural character of Pomfret’s valleys, hillsides, and ridgelines remains the primary goal of this Plan[ POCD].”*
- *“establishing opportunities for local residents to live, work and recreate within the community; enhancing and expanding the Town’s existing agricultural base;” and*
- *“balance growth throughout the town while encouraging particular commercial entities that will serve an emerging residential component to locate within or in close proximity to existing commercial areas along major state routes/roads.”*

Currently the Town’s zoning regulations divide Pomfret into seven districts,

- (RR) Rural Residential District.
- (PSR) Pomfret Street Residential District
- (V) Village District.
- (V-II) Village District II.
- (BV) Business Village District.
- (CV) Commercial Village District.
- (CB) Commercial Business District.

almost all are in place to **“to foster development that is compatible with the design and historic character of the existing development.”** and **“encourage a more efficient compact development pattern that respects the areas historic**



<sup>12</sup> [https://www.huffpost.com/entry/15-perfect-spots-in-northeast-usa-to-commune-with-nature\\_b\\_5a58e881e4b01ccdd48b5bb0](https://www.huffpost.com/entry/15-perfect-spots-in-northeast-usa-to-commune-with-nature_b_5a58e881e4b01ccdd48b5bb0)

**New England nomenclature.** “ The stated intent of the regulations is fully consistent with the Town’s recently updated Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) - which articulates the communities blueprint fo future growth and development.

Compared to other “rural” communities, the Town has a significant number of zones. While multiple zones are not in and of themselves a problem, simplicity is always preferred. Importantly, there are multiple zones with no significant differences as to what is permitted and the zones and their permitted uses appear to be more the result of what was in place at the time the regulations were developed than what the desired uses may have been.

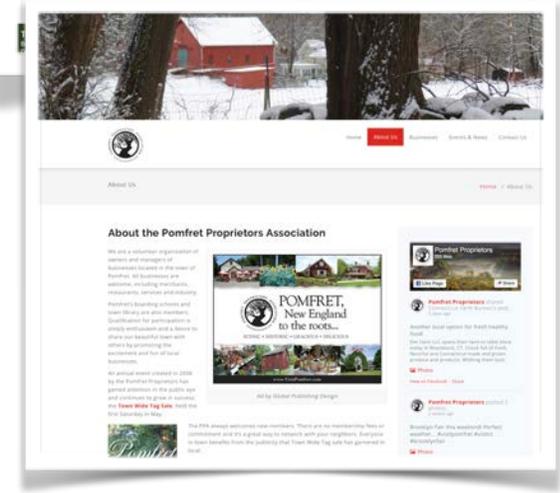
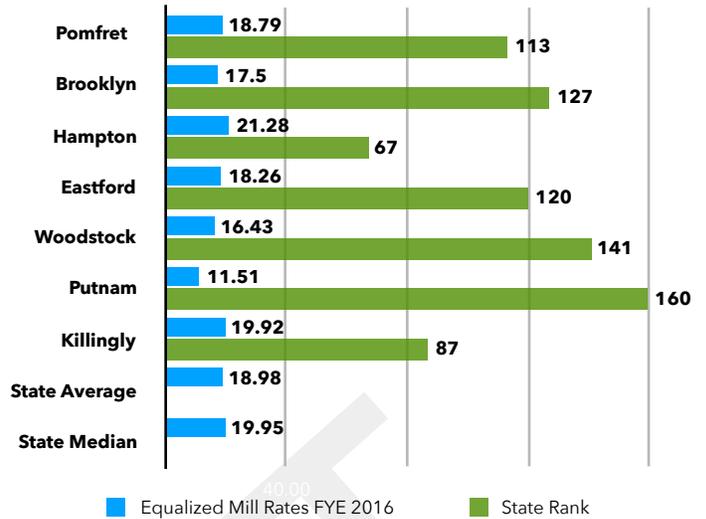
The current structure of the regulations are not “user friendly.” For example, Section 10 (Dimensional Requirements) which covers all required density, setbacks, etc. for each zone. However, such an approach is not convenient for the applicant. A person seeking to conduct a use in a given zone only cares about the dimensional requirements for that zone - not the other six. Another example is Section 12 (Supplementary Regulations) which contains requirements on each of the seven zones - requiring a person to “hunt” for applicable language and the risk of missing required items. Another area of concern is how the regulations address agriculture which the POCD states very clearly that a primary focus of the Town is: **“enhancing and expanding the Town’s existing agricultural base.”** However, the regulations use a narrower definition of agriculture than the State uses (which the Town’s Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission is obligated to use):

*“Agriculture: The cultivation of ground, including the harvesting of crops, rearing and management of livestock, tillage, husbandry, farming, horticulture, and forestry, but not including forestry-related industries, such as sawmills or lumber yards. The term “agriculture” as used in these Regulations shall not include Commercial Agricultural Buildings as defined in these Regulations.”*

and defines a “Commercial Agricultural Building” as

*“Commercial Agricultural Building: Any building used for intensive farming and farming-related activities that involve: the processing or packaging of horticultural, non-animal products or by-products produced on the premises in buildings greater than 5,000 square feet; shelter for more than 200 cattle or 500 fowl; workplace for more than five non-family employees; retail sale of products raised, grown, or processed on the premises,*

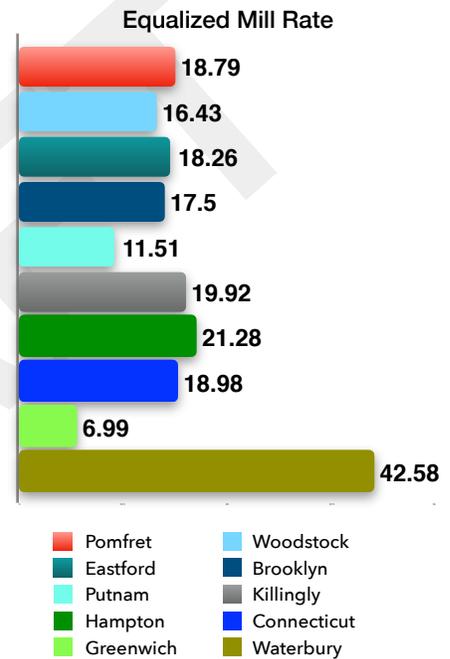
**Equalized Mill Rates**



other than in a seasonal farm produce stand; and/or warehousing of products that were raised on the premises and that are to be sold off the premises.”

Connecticut’s definition of agriculture (Section 1-1(q)), which the Town’s Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission must use, is:

“Except as otherwise specifically defined, the words “agriculture” and “farming” shall include cultivation of the soil, dairying, forestry, raising or harvesting any agricultural or horticultural commodity, including the raising, shearing, feeding, caring for, training and management of livestock, including horses, bees, poultry, fur-bearing animals and wildlife, and the raising or harvesting of oysters, clams, mussels, other molluscan shellfish or fish; the operation, management, conservation, improvement or maintenance of a farm and its buildings, tools and equipment, or salvaging timber or cleared land of brush or other debris left by a storm, as an incident to such farming operations; the production or harvesting of maple syrup or maple sugar, or any agricultural commodity, including lumber, as an incident to ordinary farming operations or the harvesting of mushrooms, the hatching of poultry, or the construction, operation or maintenance of ditches, canals, reservoirs or waterways used exclusively for farming purposes; handling, planting, drying, packing, packaging, processing, freezing, grading, storing or delivering to storage or to market, or to a carrier for transportation to market, or for direct sale any agricultural or horticultural commodity as an incident to ordinary farming operations, or, in the case of fruits and vegetables, as an incident to the preparation of such fruits or vegetables for market or for direct sale. The term “farm” includes farm buildings, and accessory buildings thereto, nurseries, orchards, ranges, greenhouses, hoophouses and other temporary structures or other structures used primarily for the raising and, as an incident to ordinary farming operations, the sale of agricultural or horticultural commodities. The term “aquaculture” means the farming of the waters of the state and tidal wetlands and the production of protein food, including fish, oysters, clams, mussels and other molluscan shellfish, on leased, franchised and public underwater farm lands. Nothing herein shall restrict the power of a local zoning authority under chapter 124.



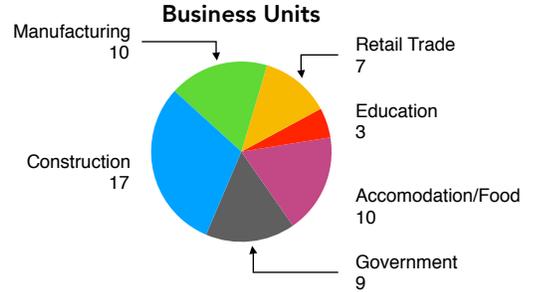
Towns in the region, state and nationally are expanding to include “Complementary Agricultural Uses”:

- Agricultural Ancillary Entertainment-Based Activities
- Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Operation
- Complementary Products.
- CSA Market and Distribution Area
- Energy-Related Activities
- Farm-Based Recreational Activities
- Farm Market
- Off-Site Direction Signage
- On-Farm Direct Marketing
- On-Farm Direct Marketing Activity
- On-Farm Direct Marketing Event

- On-Farm Direct Marketing Facility
- Pick-Your-Own (PYO) Operation
- University Spin-Offs from Research and Development

The regulations further have specific conditions on the keeping of horses. The rationale for this limitation and what constitutes “sound management practices” is not articulated in the regulations or the POCD, which may or may not have a basis in sound farm management.

Finally, the procedural elements contained within the regulations are, compared to other communities, confusing and lacking in detail that could result in the possibility that applicants, commission members and the public being confused as to the precise requirements and the application review procedures.



### Grand List Comparisons

Town	Residential	Commercial/Industrial	Motor Vehicle	Personal	Other
Pomfret	73.6%	7.4%	9.2%	6.9%	3.2%
Brooklyn	65.9%	13%	10.4%	7.9%	2.8%
Woodstock	78.8%	4.6%	9.2%	4.5%	2.9%
Hampton	72.1%	1.4%	11.3%	11.9%	3.3%
Eastford	71.1%	5.9%	9.8%	9.9%	3.2%
Putnam	49.2%	24.2%	10%	14.2%	2.4%
Killingly	32%	20.6%	6.2%	39.1%	2.1%
State Average	67.9%	17.5%	6.5%	6.7%	1.3%

Pomfret is a rural community with excellent schools and a regionally high standard of living. The Grand list is not well balanced and is heavily skewed toward a dependence on property taxes from residences. The Town is highly dependent on state revenues for both general government and education. This makes the uncertainty of the state budget process a very real factor each year in estimating the Town budget. According to the Connecticut Economic Resource Center, there were 130 business units in place in 2016 with a total employment of 1,566. The largest employment sector was in manufacturing with 499 jobs - followed by education with 286. In 2017, the top five Grand List contributors were: Connecticut Light and Power, Loos and Company, Pomfret School, Romacovi Pomfret, Inc.,. The major employers for the Town were: Loos and Company, Pomfret School, Rectory School, Fiberobtics Technology and the Town of Pomfret. The Town is also home to numerous eateries, small retail businesses, farms and home-based enterprises.

Attracting visitors to the Town to dine at one of the several restaurants or to visit one of the many local businesses or farms is important to Pomfret. Through the Pomfret Proprietors Association they have an excellent listing (more than 35) of all types of business in Town and have links to several organizations directly engaged in tourism: The Last Green Valley (TLGV), Visit NECT, The Putnam Traveler, Connecticut East Magazine, Northeastern Connecticut Chamber of Commerce

and Connecticut Eastern Regional Tourism. Notably, there is no link to the Department of Economic and Community Development's CT tourism website - which does have extensive features about Pomfret. The DECD site is the primary portal used to attract and inform potential visitors about Connecticut - especially when one considers the prohibitive costs for a place like Pomfret to try and advertise or market in the New York or Boston markets.

While Pomfret's fiscal health is currently sound, the future is uncertain. A small change in payments from the State and the continued aging of the population could place a strain on the property tax as the Town's primary source of revenue. Taxes and Revenues and Expenses are summarized as follows:

**Expenses, 2018 - Total Expenditures: \$13,808,289**

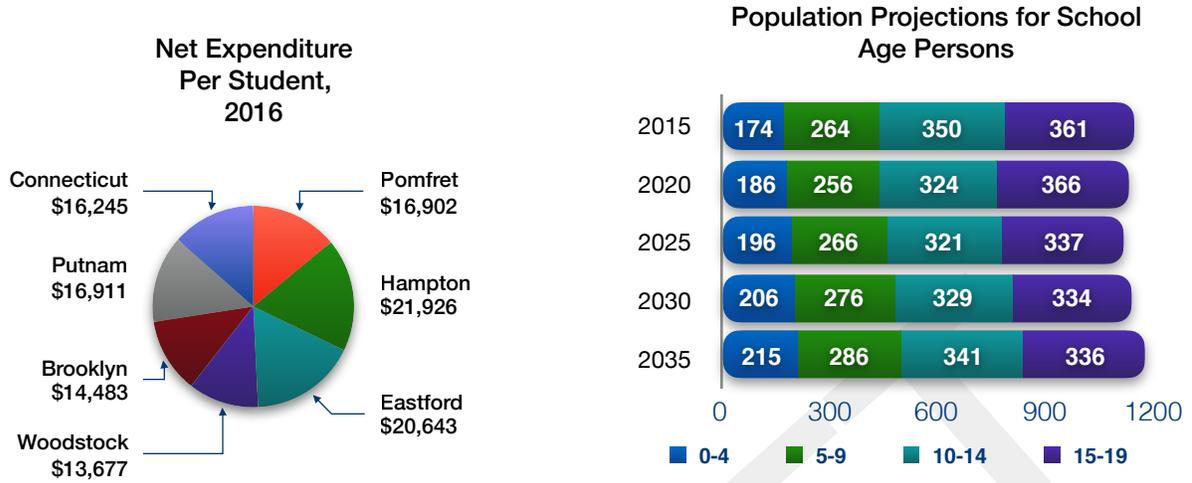
- **General Government** - \$573,206 Total Expenses **4% Overall Expenses** - Expenses for activities related to public administration (e.g. Town Hall, Elections, Accounting) for activities related to maintenance of recreation services (e.g. Libraries, Parks, Museums)
- **Public Safety** - \$47,423 Total Expenses - \$1,176 Per Sq. Mile - **< 1% Overall Expenses** - Expenses for activities related to public safety (e.g. Police, Fire, Ambulance)
- **Public Works** - \$483,011 Total Expenses - \$5,293 Per Road Mile - **3% Overall Expenses** - Expenses for activities related to public works projects (e.g. Highways and Streets, Snow Removal)
- **Public Health** - \$75,006 Total Expenses - **1% Overall Expenses** - Expenses for activities related to resident health and welfare
- **Culture and Recreation** - \$218,616 Total Expenses - **2% Overall Expenses** - Expenses for activities related to maintenance of recreation services (e.g. Libraries, Parks, Museums)
- **Education** - \$11,276,429 Total Expenses - **82% Overall Expenses** - Expenses for activities related to public education
- **Debt Service** - \$332,525 Total Expenses - **2% Overall Expenses** - Expenses related to payments on debt (e.g. principal and interest)
- **Capital Outlay** - \$302,400 Total Expenses - **2% Overall Expenses** - Expenses for activities related to capital improvements not classified elsewhere
- **Other** - \$392,554 Total Expenses - **3% Overall Expenses** - Expenses for activities not elsewhere classified
- **Transfers** - \$107,119 Total Expenses - **1% Overall Expenses** - Transfers

**Revenues, 2018 - Total Revenue: \$13,769,772**

- **Taxes** - \$9,188,426 Total Revenue - **67% Overall Revenue** - Revenues from Tax Levies (e.g. Real Estate, Personal Property and Motor Vehicles Taxes) services being performed (e.g. Legal, Zoning, Private Duty Police/Fire)
- **Licenses and Permits** - \$294,061 Total Revenue - **2% Overall Revenue** - Revenues from license and permitting fees (e.g. Liquor, Health, Building Permits)
- **Intergovernmental Revenues** - \$4,002,777 Total Revenue - **29% Overall Revenue** - Revenues from other governmental entities
- **Charges for Services** - \$39,590 Total Revenue - **< 1% Overall Revenue** - Revenues derived from
- **Investment Earnings** - \$79,190 Total Revenue - **1% Overall Revenue** - Revenue from short-term and long-term investments
- **Other Revenues** - \$71,465 Total Revenue - **1% Overall Revenue** - Revenues from all other sources not elsewhere classified
- **Other Financing Sources** - \$91,805 Total Revenue - **1% Overall Revenue** - Revenues from other financing sources (e.g. Transfers, Proceeds from Sale, Bond Issuance)

The Town is known, and for good reason, for its excellent educational assets - public and private. The Pomfret Community School and multiple public high school options coupled with the presence of the Pomfret School and the Rectory School make Pomfret an attractive place to locate for

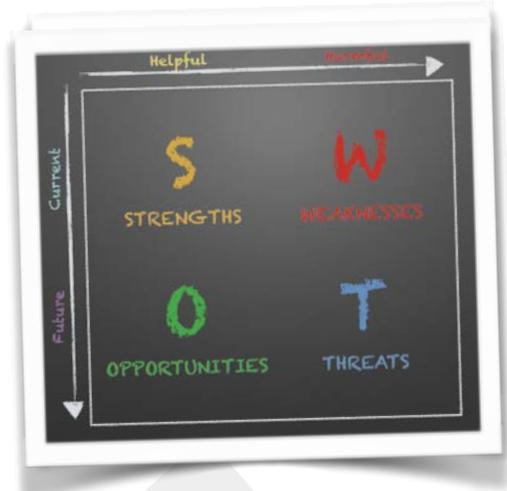
growing families. Presently, costs are on par or lower than neighboring communities. As stated earlier, declining enrollment could raise these costs - as could reductions from the state.



## Initial SWOT Analysis

At the beginning of the planning process, participants asked to conduct a SWOT (Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) Analysis of the town. This exercise was repeated toward the end of the planning process and the list has been modified. A SWOT analysis is a tool to identify issues; it is not a process that necessarily offers solutions or necessarily prioritize issues. According to the Economic Development Administration:

*“A SWOT analysis ... should answer the question, ‘Where are we now?’ by using the relevant data and background information to help identify the critical internal and external factors that speak to the [towns] unique assets and competitive positioning. The SWOT is a strategic planning tool used by organizations to ensure that there is a clear objective informed by a comprehensive understanding of a [towns] capabilities and capacity. A SWOT analysis identifies the [town’s] competitive advantages—those indigenous assets that make the [town] special or competitive in the national and global economies—juxtaposed against those internal or external factors that can keep a [town] from realizing its potential. Determining and analyzing what the [town] already possesses that could be leveraged better to build the capacity for growth, including competitive cultural, economic, technological, intellectual and physical assets, is critical to developing the strategic direction and implementation plan to promote [the towns] economic vitality. Leveraging assets refers to using the activities and engagement of business, government leaders and other stakeholders to maximize the economic potential of a [town].*



*In addition, the SWOT analysis should consider economic resiliency. Specifically, what factors and/or elements are in place (or need to be put in place) to ensure the long-term success, viability, and durability of the [town] economy? SWOT analysis elements are commonly understood in the following terms:*

- **Strengths** are a [town’s] relative competitive advantages (e.g., industry supply chains and clusters, extensive port, rail, and broadband assets, specialized workforce skills, higher education levels, collaboration among stakeholders) and often are internal in nature;
- **Weaknesses** are a [town’s] relative competitive disadvantages (e.g., a risk-averse or change-resistant regional culture), also often internal in nature;
- **Opportunities** are chances or occasions for [a town’s] improvement or progress (e.g., expansion of a biosciences research lab in the region), often external in nature; and
- **Threats** are chances or occasions for negative impacts on the [town] or decline (e.g., several companies in the [town] considering moving to lower-cost areas of the state), also often are external in nature.”

The initial SWOT analysis resulted in the following:

### Strengths:

- |                 |                                 |                               |
|-----------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| • Open Space    | • “Litchfield of the Northeast” | • History                     |
| • Little League | • Memorial Day                  | • Great Historic neighborhood |
| • Restaurants   | • Public Land                   | • Tiffany Glass               |
| • Winery        | • Ice Cream                     | • 4-H Camp                    |
| • Distilling    | • Interesting people            | • Real Estate Values          |
| • Equestrian    | • Library                       | • Pomfret Times               |

### Weakness:

- |           |                        |                  |
|-----------|------------------------|------------------|
| • Commute | • Relationship between | Town and Private |
|-----------|------------------------|------------------|

*Schools*

- *No Bed and Breakfasts*
- *Adverse Business*
- *Climate*

- *Lack of Town Center*
- *Ability for Kids to be Mobile*
- *Accessibility*

- *Volunteering*
- *Sense of Community*

**Opportunities:**

- *Airline Trail*
- *Pomfret Horse Trail*
- *State Forest*
- *Mashamoquet Park*
- *Walktober*

- *Outdoor Recreation*
- *Educational Facilities*
- *Science and technology*
- *The Arts*

- *Hospital*
- *YMCA*
- *Agriculture*

**Threats:**

- *Chain Stores*
- *Resources*
- *State Funding*

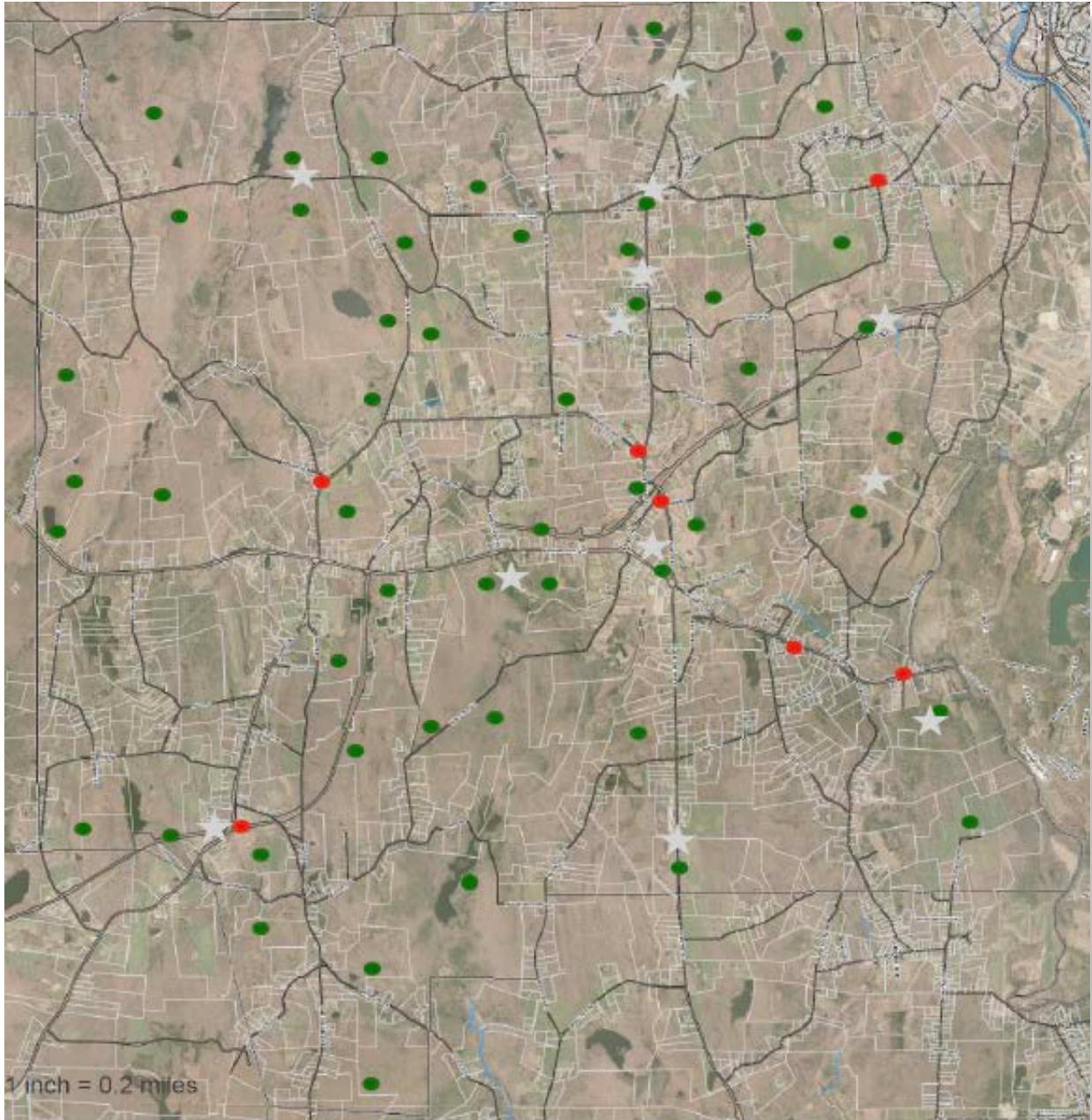
- *Pomfret's Funding from the State*
- *Property Taxes*

- *Demand for Services*
- *Ambulance Services*

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## Interactive Map Workshop

The second meeting on the planning process involved a map workshop. At this workshop multiple large maps (42" x 96") covering the entire town were placed on tables. These maps contained the most recent aerial photography for the town. Participants were asked to place green dots on places of positive significance, red dots on places of negative significance and silver stars for places of outstanding significance. The results of this exercise were overwhelmingly in favor of the green dots and silver stars. In fact, most participants identified intersections as the red dot locations. The map that follows is a compilation of the workshop - demonstrating that these participants value the rural character and natural beauty of the town.



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## Online Community Survey

An online survey was prepared early in the process and posted on the Town's website. The purpose of the survey was to further solicit community views on the Town. In total the survey asked twenty questions:

1. Which of the following best describes you? (Please check all that apply)

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I work in The Town of Pomfret.                    | <input type="checkbox"/> I am employed by The Town of Pomfret.                               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I live in The Town of Pomfret.                    | <input type="checkbox"/> I serve on a board, commission or committee in The Town of Pomfret. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I live in the Pomfret area.                       | <input type="checkbox"/> I am visiting The Town of Pomfret.                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I am a The Town of Pomfret property owner.        | <input type="checkbox"/> I have never been to The Town of Pomfret.                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I am a business owner in the Town of Pomfret.     | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please specify below)  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I am an elected official for the Town of Pomfret. |  |

How long have you lived in Town?

2. When friends and family visit you, where do you take them while they're visiting? (the "must see" or "must do" activities - other than staying at home.)
3. Where do YOU go to "hang out" during the evening or on weekends (other than home)?
4. What are Pomfret's three best assets (other than the people)? Please name them in order.
6. What do you think the three biggest challenges, or negatives, are about Pomfret? Please name them in order.
7. What could or should be done in Pomfret to get people to spend more time and money here?
8. What do YOU think Pomfret should be known for? What image would YOU like people in the area to have of Pomfret?
9. Think about your favorite Pomfret experiences. What three descriptions immediately come to mind?
- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic, Small Town, Charming, Quaint, Walkable      | <input type="checkbox"/> Rural Character, Natural, Beautiful Surroundings |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neighborly, Friendly, Down to Earth, Community Spirit | <input type="checkbox"/> Clean, Well Kept, Safe                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Casual, Laid Back, Quiet, Peaceful, Slower Pace       | <input type="checkbox"/> Evolving, Positive Momentum, Great Potential     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Energetic, Fun, Entertaining, Eventful, Exciting      | <input type="checkbox"/> Convenient location                              |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> Affordable, Family Friendly Lifestyle            |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)                           |
10. If you were going to describe the "personality" of Pomfret, what positive words come to mind?
- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic, Old, Classic, Traditional             | <input type="checkbox"/> Down to Earth, Easy Going         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Low Key, Quiet, Sleepy                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Beautiful, Appealing              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reserved, Shy, Understated                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Steady, Proud, Patriotic          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sweet, Friendly, Welcoming, Outgoing            | <input type="checkbox"/> Caring, Generous, Helpful, Giving |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Eccentric, Quirky                               | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bustling, Boisterous, Vivacious, Energetic, Fun |  |
11. Is there a famous person, whose "personality" is similar to, or reminds you of Pomfret? Why?
12. What are the five greatest assets of Pomfret?
13. What are the biggest challenges Pomfret currently faces? (Please limit to three selections)
- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Attracting Retail Business          | <input type="checkbox"/> Regulation, Town                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Attracting Restaurant Business      | <input type="checkbox"/> Regulation, State                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Attracting Commercial/Industrial    | <input type="checkbox"/> Property Tax                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Employment Opportunities            | <input type="checkbox"/> Protecting Rural Character          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More Partnerships and Collaboration | <input type="checkbox"/> Growing, as in embracing the future |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)              |  |
14. What is the one thing Pomfret is famous or well known for?

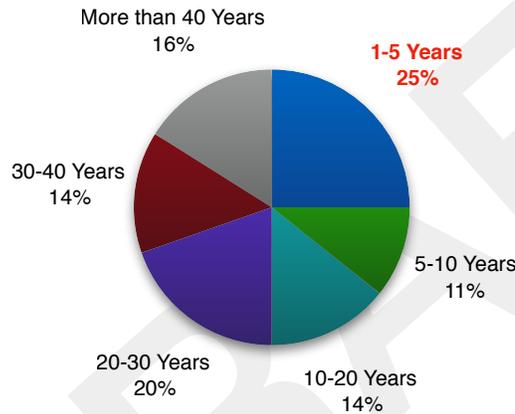
15. How would you describe your emotional feelings that you experience in Pomfret?
- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Comfortable, Cozy      | <input type="checkbox"/> Invigorated, Motivated      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Like Family, at Home   | <input type="checkbox"/> Excited about Opportunities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Loyal, Faithful        | <input type="checkbox"/> Bored                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Relaxed, Content       | <input type="checkbox"/> Concerned                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Feel Safe              | <input type="checkbox"/> Afraid                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community Pride        |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) |  |
16. What, in your opinion, are the best things about Pomfret that attract visitors?
- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Scenic Beauty                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Unique Dining Options       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Outdoor Recreational Opportunities | <input type="checkbox"/> Special Events              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historical Sites                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Arts/Cultural Opportunities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Unique Shopping Options            | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)      |
17. What suggestions or ideas do you have for making Pomfret a place for you to visit more frequently?
18. What makes Pomfret better or different from other places?
19. Is there anything about Pomfret that prevents more people from moving to or visiting the area?
- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not enough selection         | <input type="checkbox"/> Limited hours of business             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Needs more shopping options  | <input type="checkbox"/> Doesn't have what they're looking for |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Needs more dining options    | <input type="checkbox"/> There's nothing to do                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Needs more entertainment     | <input type="checkbox"/> Needs more employment opportunities   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Taxes                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Housing                               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Needs more activities        | <input type="checkbox"/> Schools                               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Needs a signature attraction | <input type="checkbox"/> Zoning Regulations                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please specify below) |  |
20. If you could change or do something to positively affect the future of Pomfret over the next ten to twenty years, what would it be?

## Survey Results

### 1. Which of the following best describes you? (Please check all that apply)

- I work in The Town of Pomfret - 55% (33)
- **I live in The Town of Pomfret** - 86.7% (52)
- I live in the Pomfret area, not in town - 3.3% (2)
- I am a Pomfret property owner - 55% (33)
- I am a Pomfret business owner - 16.7% (10)
- I am an elected official in Pomfret - 8.3% (5)
- I am employed by The Town of Pomfret - 5% (3)
- I serve on a board, commission or committee in The Town of Pomfret - 20% (12)
- I am visiting The Town of Pomfret - 0%
- I have never been to The Town of Pomfret - 0%
- Other 3% (2), Member of the Pomfret Vol. Fire Dept., I lived in Pomfret last year

### How long have you lived in Town?



### 21. When friends and family visit you, where do you take them while they're visiting? (the "must see" or "must do" activities - other than staying at home.)

- **Mashamoquet State Park**
- **We Lik It ice cream**
- **Sharpe Hill Vineyard**
- **Audubon**
- **Lapsley Orchard**
- **Black Pond Brews**
- **Hiking in the park**
- **Vanilla Bean**
- **Grille 37**
- **Walking Airline Trail**
- Walk on my own property
- local shops and eateries
- None
- Pink House
- Bradley
- Scenery in general
- **Views near the Amaral Farm**
- Putnam - restaurants and antique stores
- Neighboring towns, other cities out of state
- Go to Boston, Providence, Worcester, Hartford museums
- We stay home -that's why they come to visit
- Bigelow hollow
- Connecticut National Golf course
- Library
- Pomfret Spirits
- Stay at Home
- Clark Chapel at Pomfret School
- Pomfret School
- Anya
- Baker's
- Sharpe Hill
- No Where Special in Pomfret
- Rectory school
- Martha's Herbarry
- Mostly just the local places to eat
- **Conservation Areas and Trails**
- Wolf Den
- Hazelwood
- Area farms
- Scenic Roads
- Mystic, Sturbridge
- Our House
- Abington Congregational Church
- Abington Social Library
- A walk in the woods near our house (Natchaug)
- Pizza 101
- Ride along the back (Town) roads

- Wyndham LT property

**3. Where do YOU go to "hang out" during the evening or on weekends (other than home)?**

- |                              |                              |   |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|---|
| • Downtown Putnam or Norwich | • None                       | • Dayville  |
| • Black Pond Brews           | • Home                       | • Pomfret School campus                               |
| • 85 Main                    | • Sturbridge, MA area        | • Mostly restaurants and the houses of nearby friends |
| • Bean                       | • Airline Trail              | • Roseland Park                                       |
| • Grille 37                  | • <b>We don't "hang out"</b> | • Mashamoquet   |
| • Mansion                    | • Work                       | • Worcester or Providence                             |
| • Anya                       | • Fire Department            | • Coffee Shop   |
| • Providence                 | • Ben's Beans                |   |
|                              | • Thai place                 |   |

**4. What are Pomfret's three best assets (other than the people)? Please name them in order.**

**Third Place:**

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| • Proximity to I-395                                | • Local Government  | • Pizza 101                                |
| • <b>Rural, Agricultural Character</b>              | • Trails  | • New England Forestry Foundation          |
| • Restaurants                                       | • Orchards  | • <b>Peace and quiet</b>                   |
| • <b>Close to Local cities - but still secluded</b> | • Pomfret School  | • Protected land                           |
| • Airline Trail                                     | • Pomfret Community School  | • locally owned cottage-type businesses    |
| • Bean  | • Not a lot of traffic  | • <b>Quiet</b>                             |
| • Ease of Living                                    | • <b>Good School System</b>   | • <b>library</b>                           |
| • <b>Beautiful</b>                                  | • Audubon Center  | • a few high quality dining establishments |
| • <b>Open Space</b>                                 | • lack of strict regulations  |  |
| • Cleanliness                                       | • Outdoor activities, horses, hiking, X-county skiing opportunities |  |
| • Mashamoquet Park                                  | • Small Businesses  |  |

**Second Place**

- |                                     |  |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|
| • Cheap Land                        | • <b>Nice sense of hometown</b>          | • Quality homes, historic ones, few "developments"                               |
| • Airline Trail                     | • Mashamoquet                            | • the local businesses   |
| • <b>Open Spece</b>                 | • <b>Small town feel</b>                 | • <b>Great country setting with proximity to Hartford, Providence and Boston</b> |
| • <b>Agriculture</b>                | • Coffee Shops                           | • Low cost of living compared to Boston  |
| • Senior Center                     | • Lack of noise                          | • Safe community   |
| • <b>Rural Charm</b>                | • Pomfret Rec Park                       | • High quality educational institutions  |
| • Pomfret School                    | • Lapsley Orchard                        | • The libraries  |
| • No Traffic                        | • <b>Beautiful, quiet country living</b> |  |
| • <b>Serene</b>                     | • relatively low property taxes          |  |
| • low population                    | • Close enough but far enough away       |  |
| • housing                           | • Restaurants                            |  |
| • Absence of over-commercialization |  |  |

**First Place:**

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| • <b>Open Space</b>                           | • <b>rural</b>                               | • Audubon Center  |
| • <b>Simplicity</b>                           | • <b>Farms</b>                               | • <b>Quality of life</b>  |
| • <b>Parks/Trails</b>                         | • <b>Small Community</b>                     | • <b>Essentially unspoiled</b>  |
| • <b>Lack of Over Development</b>             | • None Really                                | • Location, close to Boston   |
| • <b>Schools</b>                              | • <b>Peaceful and beautiful surroundings</b> | • <b>Natural beauty (lots of "Thank you, God" moments just while driving on routine things)</b> |
| • Local Governments                           | • <b>Beautiful scenic roads</b>              |   |
| • <b>Rolling Countryside, Scenery, Trails</b> | • Mashamoquet State Park                     |   |
| • <b>Quiet</b>                                | • low population                             |   |
|   | • pomfret school                             |   |

6. What do you think the three biggest challenges, or negatives, are about Pomfret? Please name them in order. In order from worst to less

**Most Worst**

- **No real Business Center, no Industrial Park**
- Lack of living wage employment options
- **Keeping taxes at bay**
- racism
- funding issues
- making people feel welcome
- limited financial resources
- very few inexpensive dining options
- lack of stuff to do
- keep the town small
- no variety in food
- **Unfriendly to business, especially home-based**
- no town dump
- lack of local stores
- lack of a really cool nearby town
- Confederate flags while driving in rural CT
- Proximity to urban areas
- 1 hour drive to everything
- Lack of diversity
- **Lack of nearby high-quality job opportunities**
- No Downtown/Town Center;
- **Have to Drive Everywhere**
- no choice for gas
- taxes
- **It doesn't feel like there is a town center**
- Board of Education budget always increases, taxes are too high
- fast cars on country roads
- lack of a transfer station
- Connecticut
- Keeping the mill rate down
- **zoning regulations**
- partisan politics
- Pathetic support of local farmers
- people don't know how close we are to where ever they are
- so small
- Lack of condominiums or other maintenance free living areas
- **No town center**
- **limited tax base**
- **Lack of business/ industry**
- Maintaining without development
- trying yo lower taxes by bringing in business ..it doesn't work
- **snooty, elitist, too expensive**
- over regulation of landowners

**Second Worst**

- **No Downtown, with restaurants, shops, etc**
- Property care / managing trees around our houses, roads, and driveways
- Preserving open space
- homophobia
- Lack of interest in the town by some residents
- old timers are set in the old ways
- Environmental preservation
- No town common
- **Too expensive**
- Do not promote the schools
- Only a few things to do
- High property taxes despite declining values
- Well water
- One sub par coffee shop
- lack of Ethnic food
- **Lack of sidewalks**
- Very limited retail
- **Isolated**
- **Not much to do**
- **lack of municipal services**
- not many recreation options
- no grocery or general store
- Needs more events for families / activities
- not enough jobs
- increase population
- There aren't too many negatives I can think of
- Not taxing the private schools appropriately, especially when their personnel send their children to our public schools
- **several very dangerous intersections**
- public works
- keeping open space
- no shot of commercial space
- land off tax rolls; owned by private schools;
- lack of support by private schools
- Mini signs pushing peoples causes along the roads
- Very spread out
- Lack of high speed internet
- Not enough business to help ease property tax burden
- No desire for industry
- **Limited supporting infrastructure**
- High taxes of Connecticut
- more business NEVER lowers taxes. The more people come in the more they want and the bigger government gets.
- Snowplow's lack of respect for personal property
- Tick-borne diseases
- Diminishing State revenues
- People power

**Least Worst**

- Access to affordable healthcare
- Bringing in new small cottage industry businesses
- Food desert
- **Lack of local businesses**
- Aging population
- Library too small
- Too far for basics
- live with in our means
- **Elitist attitudes**
- Speeding
- Doesn't offer any entertainment
- Diversity is only with class not race
- Very limited dining
- lower income/lower education
- Power outages last forever
- No real village center
- **Lack of sidewalks**
- No where for guests to easily stay in town
- Not enough money for the school
- Lack of public transportation
- Will need a new town hall
- No multifamily zone
- Too many non-profit entities
- Need more bulky waste days
- Restrictive Zoning
- Renewable energy
- Increasing light pollution
- Some scary conservative folks
- **No real center of town**
- Pomfret is a great town
- **Not enough affordable housing**
- No parking at post office
- Taxes
- Developing the Murdock property into something that generates revenue
- Negatives about senior center
- Too liberal no room for other ideas

**7. What could or should be done in Pomfret to get people to spend more time and money here? Do we want that?**

- We do want people to spend time and money here. Pomfret is one of the biggest towns in the State by area, with only 4,000 people. We could easily triple in size without compromising our rural charm. We should relax key zoning/subdivision regulations to encourage more growth and business.
- **Increases employment options.** Pomfret's character would not benefit from consumer revenue. We would most benefit by promoting the right type of B2B companies to move into Pomfret.
- Another good restaurant or two, additional small businesses such as the new vodka distillery
- yes and no, great for 169 and local shops to keep doors open, but losing the charm with high populations
- More establishments
- Yes, we want that! More "tourist draw" type businesses.
- **I think the town is perfectly happy the way things are**
- There could be more business in Pomfret to bring in more people. Additional restaurants, galleries, etc. Does the town want that? I think that is a question for voters.
- Better Parking, more cost effective options.
- No one wants to buy knick knacks.
- Have a city center
- **Nothing, no**
- More start up and local businesses that are locally owned. Farm to table restaurants and boutique feel hidden gems that do not commercialize it too much.
- **Where would you have them spend their money, every-time I've been at a meeting where someone has tried to open a home based business that are shut down or buried in regulations or excessive permitting fees**
  - A better cup of coffee. A quality bakery.
  - A small local store. Maybe a farmers market.
  - I don't think the people of the town really want that
- **Encourage more artist and farmers markets in town. Help surrounding towns to thrive and it will help Pomfret. Woodstock is fine, but Killingly and Putnam could use help. Putnam is on the verge of being a cool place - help it somehow. Killingly needs more outreach from our community.**
- **It's fine as is**
- Dining, retail
- Engage businesses and opportunities that encourage people to spend time and money in Pomfret after visiting the Airline Trail
- Open more quality, small businesses and restaurants.
- **Monetizing outdoor recreational opportunities would be a good place to start.** We have amazing natural resources here but no real economy built around them. We are an easy drive for the relatively affluent professionals who live in Boston and Providence and Hartford, but they would

need a reason to come... whether that is a weekend camping or fly fishing or hot air balloons or whatever. When we moved to town a few years ago, I was initially excited to buy from local farms. And I was surprised to learn just how little opportunity there is to support the local agricultural economy in the Town of Pomfret. We have the wineries and a few farm stands, which is a start. But I think a more centralized, concerted effort could really help.

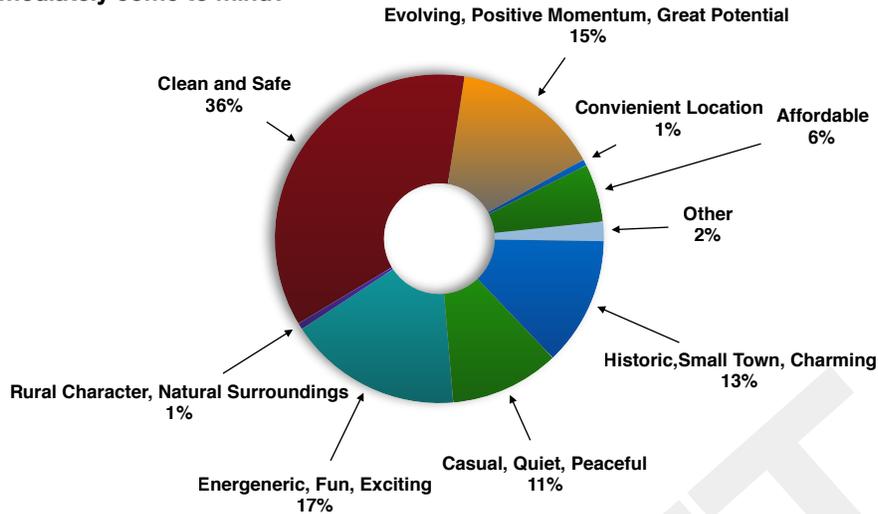
- **More recreation options** (a town center where small businesses could open would really help). YES!
- reasonable growth of retail
- Incentive the construction of restaurants, cafes and shops in the area.
- **You need things that draw younger people in..** breweries, fun restaurants, or activities for families. Not a lot just one or two really good ones that make Pomfret a destination!
- Community events
- **LEAVE THINGS AS THEY ARE,**
- Encourage unique businesses to be within walking distance of one another, then make it pedestrian friendly. For example the new distillery and the Airline grille are close to one another and that encourages people to visit an area and go to more than one business in the same trip. If the speed limit was reduced and a safe cross walk was added this would do that even more. If a couple of more businesses were added to that area and access to the airline trail was somehow incorporated it would become even more of a destination. I would be all for this kind of development if the businesses were not chains. **Pomfret has a unique character that should be preserved and celebrated.** We do not need Dun-kin Donuts, strip malls, etc, those places are in every other town.
- Not necessary to have people spend more time or money here. Curb the unnecessary spending, especially in the public school.
- A shopping center/movie theater. I do not want that.
- Have just a few more conveniences, such as a well-stocked food mart on 44, possible a movie theater or drive-in. If there was a way to have people spend more money than time here, that would be fine.
- **Eco tourism**
- **Pomfret needs to be a destination.** There's nothing here that can't be accomplished with a "day trip." We should want that If you come here, it's easy to want to be here.

- More parking for trails, more bed and breakfasts, more retail shopping, crafts, art galleries, town directory and map, welcome sign and information
- I don't know. Connecticut is expensive. I actually think that we don't want that. We have a lot of out of town folks come through on weekends. Do we need more? I don't think so.
- Make the people proud to live here. Support the farms and small businesses. the business owners need to support the Pomfret Proprietors and get involved as volunteers
- We want that, build up Mashamoquet.
- Offer more of what people want, what ever that is. I am not sure we want that.
- Restaurants, small shops, and B&Bs
- **Leave the town alone**
- Recreation and eateries
- Loosing of zoning regulations to spur business development. We need to diversify our tax base from just residences. Development of a town center
- A town pool and teen center
- Promote small businesses.
- **It's fine the way it is**
- I'd like to **keep the rural character**, but perhaps one big event a year could bring \$\$ in. It could be an annual event or a different one every year, preferably outside.
- More restaurants, but I prefer not to look for more "tourists" in town.
- **I like it the way it is.**
- Encourage small business, home-based, etc. - promoted as upscale-type country get-away for day or weekend.
- Not so much, although it would be nice to not to have to travel to Danielson for good vegan, gluten food and a second-hand bookstore if we had a similar restaurant and second-hand shop.
- Nothing
- More places to stay overnight, and promote the few that exist already. Tourists? Sure. Intrusive industry, no (e.g., no power plant or industrial park. BTW, Loos should turn down their lights.
- Offer more options for dining, shopping, lodging. I think it's a win-win, bring in tax dollars, get more tourists to come and stay and spend \$\$
- You are doing it by creating a brand. Co-brand with The Last Green Valley.
- I don't want that.

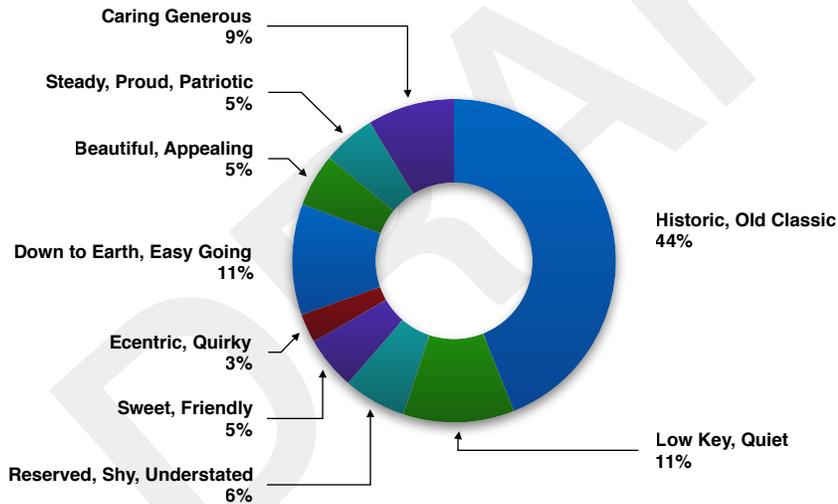
**8. What do YOU think Pomfret should be known for? What image would YOU like people in the area to have of Pomfret?**

- *I think Pomfret should be known for its rural charm and high end restaurants, shops, etc. I think Pomfret has a bit more of an upscale vibe compared with Putnam, Thompson, etc. which is nice.*
- Great schools, family oriented community, agricultural and manufacturing character, progressive social values
- **Remaining rural**, arts, culture, food, nature/parks/trails
- bird sanctuary and habitats, local farms
- Education and Schools
- **Quiet town** in New England, but with things to do!
- I don't know what the image is, maybe the **capital of open space**
- A historic and cultural center in NECT
- **Classic and quiet New England Town.**
- Hiking, nature
- nothing different from the other surrounding towns.
- **Scenic**
- Farmland, farm stands, small restaurants, antique stores / boutiques, microbreweries, B&B's, scenic beauty / gardens
- **Peaceful, rural, tolerant**
- A **quiet, safe community** with access to nature.
- **Country living**
- Apples, trees, and trails! Nature and goodness.
- Picturesque place. Small population
- Not sure - peace and quiet, perhaps but that won't lure people here
- rural, peaceful, safe
- Kind community, neighborly vibe, GREEN and environmentally conscious
- **A small town with a rural feel.** A place of natural beauty where everyone knows everyone. A relatively affluent place, but not overly gentrified. A place where you can raise a family. Almost a throwback to a different time.
- **Intellectual, safe, pleasant to visit.** I want them to think of it as a destination, not just the town next to Woodstock.
- **A rural town growing with a plan in place for sensible development which does not compromise the beauty of our open spaces**
- **Natural beauty** and schools
- Green space and a standout brewery
- Open space.
- **Rural beauty**
- Hiking
- SMALL LITTLE TOWN
- **Bucolic agriculture and funky individualism.**
- We care about our quality of life. I don't really care what others think.
- **Well educated, hard working, innovative and creative people. Bucolic farmland, peaceful, friendly attitudes. Natural beauty.**
- Pomfret is most known for the school, by the rest of the state. It's ok to be known for open space and rural setting as well.
- Rural but close to other things
- Outdoor activities, nature, trails
- lifestyle destination
- **Green, environmentally progressive**, open space, user friendly trails, home based business friendly, safe, low crime rate, excellent education system, user friendly / helpful boards and commissions, spends tax dollars wisely
- **Rural, friendly. Keep it a "back in time" style town.**
- Taxation, greed, and beauty is what our neighbors think. We should change and support ourselves, be the first town to give back on taxes
- the schools, the countryside, a safe place to visit
- Nice people, scenic locations, good schools
- Rural, open space, nice place to take a walk or hike. Nice place to live.
- **Beautiful town with lots of open space and excellent school system.**
- **Quiet.**
- Good government, open and to residential growth (less restrictive), good schools.
- Our image is quite stuffy and that we are difficult to deal with in the area. The town should look to lead with innovative businesses.
- Home Sweet Home
- Has anyone ever heard of The Quiet Corner.
- **Rural community** with outdoor activities, local restaurants and small businesses.
- **Authentically country.**
- **safety, peace and quiet**

9. Think about your favorite Pomfret experiences. What three descriptions immediately come to mind?



10. If you were going to describe the “personality” of Pomfret, what positive words come to mind?



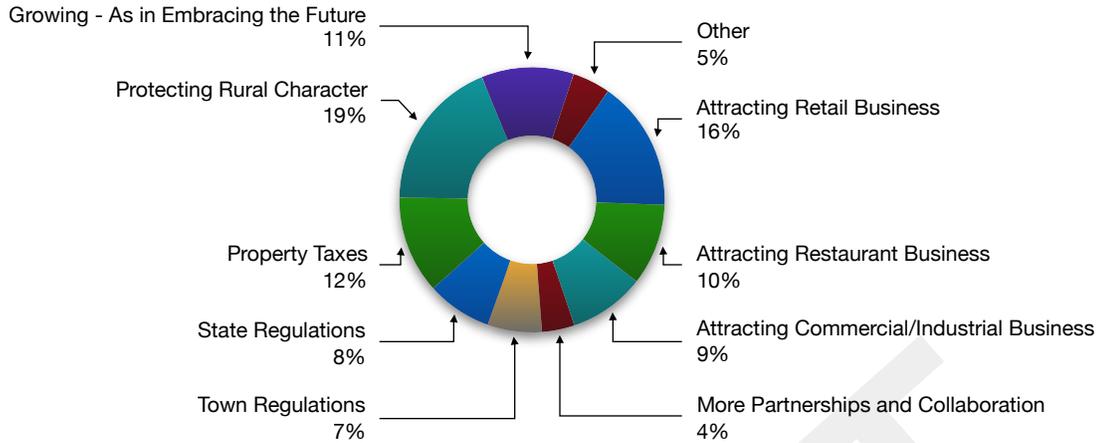
11. Is there a famous person, whose “personality” is similar to, or reminds you of Pomfret? Why?

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Daniel Day Lewis</li> <li>• <b>Mr. Rogers - Warm and inviting</b></li> <li>• Morgan Freeman</li> <li>• <b>Walt Hinchman (maybe he is not famous yet - but he personifies Pomfret)</b></li> <li>• Michael Caine</li> <li>• Paul Newman</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not that I know of</li> <li>• Audrey Hepburn</li> <li>• Mark Twain</li> <li>• Kevin Bacon</li> <li>• Gomer Pyle</li> <li>• Would like it to be like honest Abraham Lincoln</li> <li>• Alec Guinness</li> <li>• Israel Putnam</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Augustus Sabin Chase</li> <li>• Jimmy Carter (former President)</li> <li>• No, other than characters in "Northern Exposure".</li> <li>• As to non-famous, Walter Hinchman, Betty Cartier, or Elaine Nelson.</li> </ul> |
|---|--|---|

12. What are the five greatest assets of Pomfret?

Five Greatest Assets	
<b>One</b>	<i>Education, Scenery, Location, People, It's Quiet, Great Schools, Airline Trail, Roads, Open Space And Rural, Scenic Beauty, Local Government, Its People, Nature, Pomfret School, Rural Character And Outdoor Opportunities, Audubon, Beautiful Properties, Conserved Land,, Trails, State Land, Most People Are On The Same Page About Saving Open Space, History, Location, Rural Countryside, Farm Lands, Quiet, Mashamoquet</i>
<b>Two</b>	<i>Cheap Land, The Airline Trail, Community Events, Schools (Public And Private), Proud History, Audubon/Wyndam Trust, High Quality Restaurants, Low Population, Vanilla Bean, Its People, Its Ruralness, Quiet, Wholesome, Historic Homes, Good People, Small Town Community, Mashamoquet, Small Rural Feel, Green Space, State Forests, No Large Scale Franchise Businesses Are Here, Business Zoned Areas, Audubon, Relatively Low Taxes, Trails, People, PCS, Rectory, Pomfret Schools And Lta, State Park, Audubon, Airline Trail All Offer Trails To Hike, Farms, Scenery, Open Space, Audubon, State Parks And Forests, Location - Proximity, Availability Of Land, Small, Easy Access To Highways, Wolf Den, Mashamoquet, Rural, Protected Open Space, Route 169</i>
<b>Three</b>	<i>Sharpe Hill Vineyard, Wolf Den / Mashamoquet State Park, Quiet, Government, Rural Nature, Car Shows, Money, Beautiful Setting, Historic Charm, Eateries Like Vanilla Bean, Grill 37, And We-Li-Kit, Views From The Hill, The Small Businesses, Great Public Schools, No Chain Restaurants, Hidden Gems-People With Interesting Skills, Willingness To Accept People For Who They Are, Walkable Hill Top Town / Historic Neighborhood, Scenic, Trails Parks., Offerings For A Small Town, Limited Business And Related Traffic, Quiet, Horse And Trail Association, Safe, Esp. For Children, The Libraries, The Concern Of Neighbors For Each Other, Beautiful Views, Roads, Architecture, Great Schools - Pcs/Woodstock Academy, Agricultural Operations</i>
<b>Four</b>	<i>Proximity to I-395, Audubon, PCS, Library, Beautiful countryside, Schools along 169, quiet corner of CT, Volunteer fire, department, Trees, Peaceful, Scenic views, Agriculture, Country roads, The private schools: Beautiful campuses and added in-town events, State Parks, No big box stores, people, Friendliness, restaurants, Being close to anything else we might need. Grocery, Hardware stores etc., Rural, Airline Trail, Safety, Caring Government, Not to many businesses, Engaged leadership, New England Forestry Foundation, back roads for walking, biking, relatively quiet, Close to everything in southern New England, Publicly accessible open space</i>
<b>Five</b>	<i>Mashamoquet State Park, Vanilla Bean Cafe, Interesting People, Facilities, Lack Of Traffic, Location, It's Public And Private Schools, Safety, Friendly, Pomfret Recreation Fields, Calm Way Of Life, Housing Is Affordable (Compared To Nearby Metro Areas), Small, Central Location For Commuters, Wonderful People, Easy Access To Our Leaders, Sunny Patch Farm, Near Bigger Places, Backroads, Open Mindedness, Volunteers, Town Employees, And Elected Officials, Lots Of Older Long Time Citizens With Old Fashioned Values To Keep Us On Track, Unique Small Businesses, Civic Engagement, Ct Audubon Center, Farms, Citizens Like Quiet, Safety, Not Many Traffic Lights, Easy Access To Larger Communities/Cities, It's Beauty Hasn't Gone To Its Head, People Love Living Here, When You Get To Know People, They Are Friendly &amp; Generous, Open Space, Bank - Convenient</i>

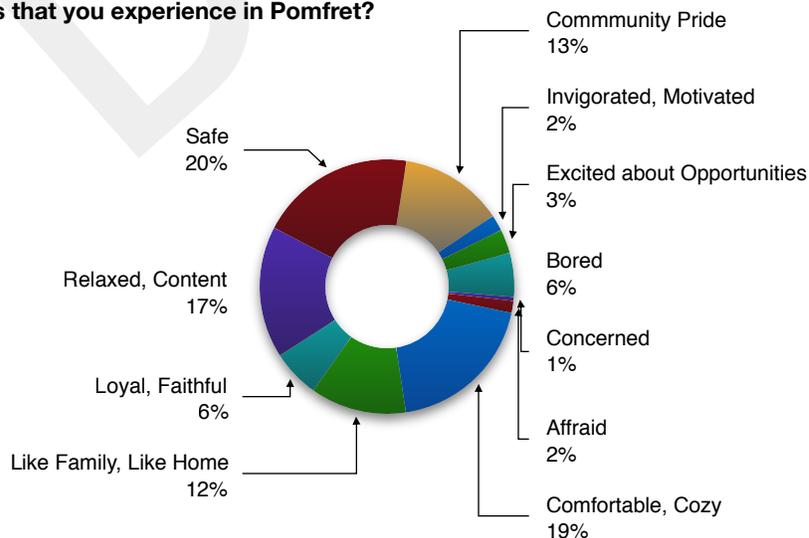
**13. What are the biggest challenges Pomfret currently faces? (Please limit to three selections)**



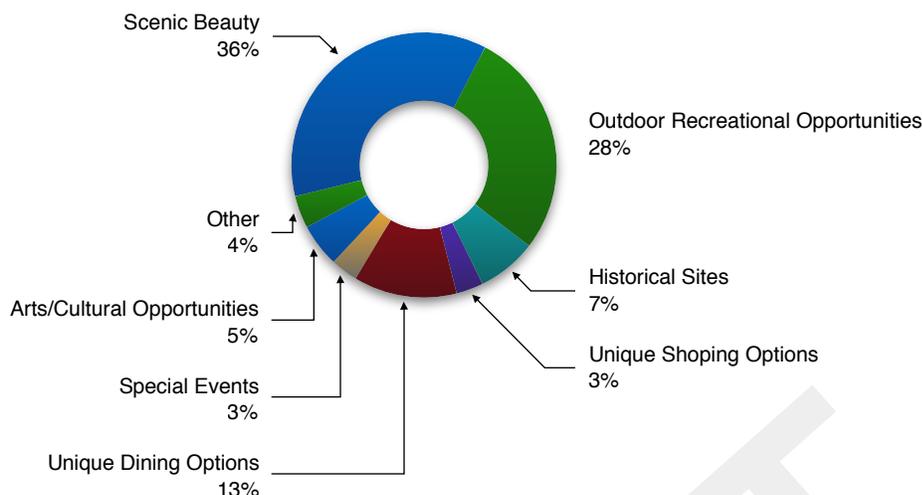
**14. What is the one thing Pomfret is famous or well known for?**

- Schools and restaurants for rich people
- Pomfret Prep High School
- Israel Putnam and the Wolf Den!
- Being next to Putnam
- **Pomfret School**
- **Vanilla Bean**
- None
- Everyone in the surrounding towns considers Pomfret to be full of snobs.
- Community
- **Beautiful nature**
- **State parks**
- Last green valley
- Being a quiet town
- **The Audubon Center**
- **Conserved land**
- **Air Line Trail**
- **Rural, residential setting**
- **Farm lands**
- **Rural town**
- **Rural character**
- It isn't, and that's fine. Too bad Whistler's connection to the town was so tenuous. Israel Putnam, maybe, but I don't know that his Pomfret connection is all that well-known or impressive to those from outside. I'd guess natural beauty and lack of large-scale development. Maybe agriculture, which should certainly be supported and promoted.
- **Ice cream**

**15. How would you describe your emotional feelings that you experience in Pomfret?**



**16. What, in your opinion, are the best things about Pomfret that attract visitors?**



**17. What suggestions or ideas do you have for making Pomfret a place for you to visit more frequently?**

- *Continue to attract high end restaurants, shops, farms, etc*
- *Utilize the airline trail for a marathon or half marathon. (Putnam to Willimantic)*
- *Highlighting farms and arts, and continuing community events which combine these*
- *They should open a museum of artifacts from the Pomfret School. Create something similar to Old Sturbridge Village*
- *Bring in more businesses and have more lodging options in the town*
- *none*
- *Increase the opportunities for them to visit - restaurants, shops, etc.*
- *Finish the sidewalk on 169 to go all the way to Vanilla Bean*
- *More to do*
- *Building a quaint town center with diverse restaurants*
- *Allow home base businesses / B&B's. Have some gardening events. Plant flowering trees like in DC so we have spring as well as fall foliage to view.*
- *Annual, multi-location film festival or music festival.*
- *Need to add more businesses*
- *Art venues - find ways to support the arts more. What about making it a little like Ashland Oregon - or help one of the local towns to be like this. Supporting the arts in some way that brings tourists to the area from Boston, Worcester, and Providence.*
- *A more diverse, welcoming spirit*
- *Retail and dining*
- *maybe a brewery?*
- *Capitalize on the Airline Trail and attempt to draw businesses or activities around that*
- *More town traditions, especially around the holidays, more restaurants and cafes to meet with friends and family*
- *More reasons for people to come--especially in the winter.*
- *Restaurants, cafes, bars, shops*
- *Like I said, something that involves the outdoors but also food/ beer. It would engage a younger generation*
- *Community activities. Arts*
- *The legalization of marijuana is eminent in our state. Pomfret has the reputation of being an upscale, unique community that is very closely tied to agriculture. The town could leverage that reputation and work with small local farms to help Pomfret become known as a town that grows the highest quality marijuana in the state. Pomfret could become to marijuana what Napa Valley is to wine. Secondary businesses like restaurants would see increases in their customer base if Pomfret became a destination for marijuana in the state. The trend would look very similar to what is currently being observed with microbreweries. It may sound like a far fetched idea but it is a serious opportunity worth considering.*
- *I don't care if people come to visit our town.*
- *Movie theater, a centralized craft market/coop.*

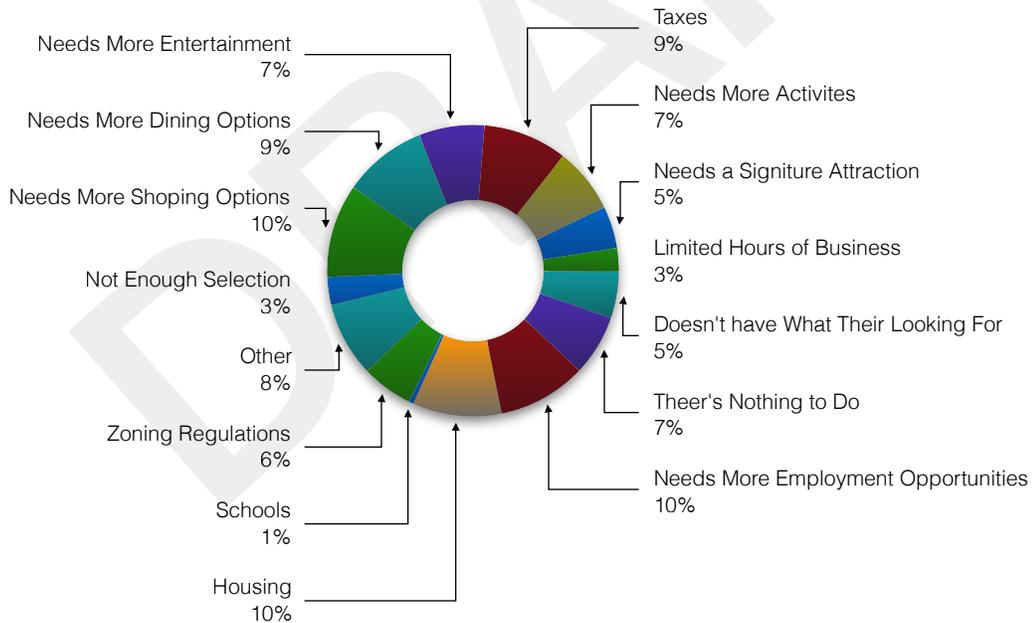
- Wine country passport. Publicize the walking trails. More Equestrian events
- Welcome signs, maps, directory to attractions, geocaching on town trails, **better information at Air Line Trail trail-head about Pomfret and local attractions.**
- Bike paths, sidewalks
- Bring back the charm of Pomfret. It's been fouled by the greed of some from Politicians to the pomfret school. ...there are truly wonderful people here. Support farms which are the foundations to good communities. The farmers in this town give back more than any person can imagine. Yet our surrounding towns offer much greater tax abatements. Why just do a little when we can do a lot of good and actually help from the ground up. Don't band aid the problem. Fix the root of the problem and the town will prosper.
- More stuff, better roads/ highways to get in and out
- within a few hours drive or bundle with attractions that have overnight lodging. People overnight in Killingly, spend a day at Mystic Seaport, a day at Sturbridge Village and a day hiking in Pomfret.
- Since there is very little in overnight lodging, we have to look at day visits from people that live within a few hours drive or bundle with attractions that have overnight lodging. People overnight in Killingly, spend a day at Mystic Seaport, a day at Sturbridge Village and a day hiking in Pomfret.
- Need more events - concerts, art exhibits, speakers, etc. Need B&Bs or places for visitors to stay Need more small shops and restaurants
- **Leave the town the way it is.**
- Restaurants, boutique shops, recreation (trails, other)
- We need to encourage development to attract talent and younger folks to consider the area.
- I don't want people visiting here more frequently. I like the peace and safety and think that would be compromised
- Develop a special events program - perhaps even monthly.
- **There are too many people already**
- Special events (outdoors)
- Magazine articles about events, things to do here
- Not sure
- Don't want
- Let people know it exists. We should not be lumped into the state tourist board's "Mystic Country", and we'd never want to acquire NJ's "what exit" problem.
- **Promote the historic district somehow.**
- work together not just focus on one aspect but all the good things about town, offer incentives for more retail & dining, offer town support (financial or personnel) to help biz be successful
- Some kind of event that attracts people. Like the Town Wide Tag Sale.
- better trail signage

## 18. What makes Pomfret better or different from other places?

- We don't have to lock our doors when we leave the house.
- Generations of families that continue to live in town
- not sure
- The people here have the ability to make things comfortable for visitors.
- very rural
- It feel uniquely untouched. There is not "downtown" area one can easily point to that is a walkable epicenter.
- **Rural, but quaint, still.**
- Smaller
- our rural character
- Very clean, well kept and quiet
- Nothing at the moment
- Citizens, government and beauty
- Not much other than nature
- Rural surroundings
- Great outdoor opportunities
- Pomfret Community School
- It's a nice place to live and you generally know everyone in your neighborhood.
- **When we moved to Pomfret several years ago, we looked at all the Quiet Corner towns. And for us, it really came down to the quality of the schools, the nearby restaurants, and the overall beauty of the town. It quickly became obvious that Pomfret was the best choice for us.**
- It's quiet here.
- Green space
- Great schools
- There is a great school system. It is a quiet and safe town and relative to the western part of the state, property is affordable.
- It's Pomfret.

- Great school system and it is not too crowded.
- no mall here, yea!
- What I have stated already
- **We're no where, but close to everywhere.**
- We don't promote our assets as much as other towns do that have less to promote.
- Understanding the importance of Open Space.
- High taxes
- So small, nestled far from major highways makes it hard to get here
- Lots of open space that is open to the public.
- Open space, school system, beauty, and the residents
- No town center
- Not much screwed up, other than Zoning.
- This question is an example of one of the "problems" with Pomfret.
- My family lives here
- Not crowded
- Rural character yet close to major highways.
- It's quiet rural character
- feeling safe, lots of natural beauty
- **strong sense of community**
- Small town environment with **eclectic mix of people** and small business.
- All of the good things above.
- **Has a good combination of positives. The Quiet Corner is one of the nicest parts of CT and Pomfret is one of the nicest towns here. But maybe not enough going on for tourists.**
- Rural living
- with easy access to southern New England
- I know it.

**19. Is there anything about Pomfret that prevents more people from moving to or visiting the area?**



**20. If you could change or do something to positively affect the future of Pomfret over the next ten to twenty years, what would it be?**

- **Attract new industry that coalesces with our agricultural and manufacturing heritage.**
- Affordable housing, affordable and healthy food access, daily full time early childhood programming for all preschoolers regardless of ability or income

- I would become more involved in trying to get more businesses to invest in the area.
- Create something unique that is only found in Pomfret.
- Make the shoulder bigger on the main roads that go through Pomfret. Dangerous. Improve the draw for PCS so that more people with young kids come.
- Turn the Putnam mill into an apt. complex.
- protect and promote the protection of open space and keep us rural and beautiful
- Develop a Main Street that doesn't distract from historic feel and keeps the integrity of the towns safety and quietness
- **Create a reason for our children to stay.** Right now they graduate and move because they can't find work that would allow them to buy a home here or anywhere else in our over taxed over regulated state.
- More interesting restaurants.
- Attract more business.
- I would only change the surrounding towns - **Pomfret is incredible the way it is.** If the local towns were better then more people could and would move to Pomfret to live.
- Diversify and add more businesses
- Increased attractions
- Continue to maintain good education Promote **Pomfret as a weekend destination area with some activities and dining options**
- **Get more young families to move in**
- Create a town center around a decent attraction -- things will come along with that.
- Not sure
- **PRESERVE MORE LAND**
- I would find grant money to make the recreation park better than it is by adding a public pool there. It would be a place for local kids to spend their summer days and be active. The town that I grew up in had a town pool at their recreation park and I have amazing memories of it. I would love it if my children had the same opportunity.
- **Prevent overbuilding.**
- Put a pool at the Rec Park, put better signs stating a slower speed limit on the side roads. Add more events at the Rec. Park, it is such a great and underused space.
- Not much. but I would try to figure out a way to make motorists obey the speed limits on the back roads.
  - Reduce taxes
  - Straighten out our state
  - Create a signature location that would attract the largest and most diverse group of people.
- Over 50 independent housing would make it possible to stay in town after kids are grown and bring in people with disposable incomes needing services and enjoying our outdoor activities
- emphasize local, state and national history in schools, as well as basic principles of economy. Teach civics.
- Stop looking to the future. Fix what is broken now and amazing things will happen. Get rid of the bad. I am sure a good noble town planner could be an asset for this town rather than its current problem.
- Not move away!
- Build up facilities at scenic areas, request more faster highways to get in and out easier
- Increase the availability of condominiums.
- Build a new town hall and community center
- Work harder to develop the Murdock property for industrial/commercial use to gain non-residential tax revenue to offset the rising expenses based on state budget projections reducing aid to education and the town.
- Relax Zoning regulations, while keeping rural setting. After all, we are a small town.
- Have the vision to create a town center, possibly at the Murdock Property, where a "historic New England" center could be built. It could include retail, residential, and a placed for those to age-in town.
- **Help/volunteer my time to save town costs.**
- Support local businesses
- **Stop progress. Leave it the way it is. That's why we're here**
- Develop a signature attraction or event.
- Get a regular Bolt or Megabus to go from Killingly Commons to NYC and Boston Get a vaccine for Lyme and other tick-borne diseases Prevent the building of a fracked gas power plant in Killingly Preserve more open space Encourage more farming Bring back the railroad on the airline trail
- I'd volunteer more.
- Make the airline trail a good biking/hiking trail from Pomfret to Putnam

- *Continue to promote open space while encouraging reasonable growth to tax base in specified areas of town.*
- *Transition to 100% Renewable Energy.*
- *Hopefully nothing*
- *Keep it rural while offering small-scale opportunity.*
- *I'm a pretty good cheerleader right now!*  
*Stay involved.*
- *Attract more businesses that can function in a rural area that has easy access to Southern New England. And can be easily accessed from SNE.*

The survey, while not statistically valid, provides significant insight into the Town. The sixty respondents provided a great deal of detail which re-enforced the Town survey recently conducted as part of the update of the plan of conservation and development and was a direct reflection of the participants attending the multiple branding planning meetings. Clearly, the people who call Pomfret their “home” - love their town and the elements (nature, history, architecture, places to eat, recreation options, town government and especially people) that constitute the Town.

DRAFT

## Final SWOT Analysis

### Strengths

- Natural Beauty
- History
- Sense of Place/Rural Character (Quiet/Peaceful)
- Community Pride and Engagement
- Local/Private Education
- Parks and Trails
- Preserved/Protected Lands
- Proximity to local Needs and Employment
- Agriculture
- POCD

### Weaknesses

- Agriculture
- Lack of a True Town Center
- Zoning Regulations
- For most actions/activities - vehicle transport is needed
- Volunteers for Boards and Commissions
- No Real Commercial Center
- Limited Tax Base
- Lack of Nearby High-Quality Job Opportunities
- Multiple Dangerous Intersections

### Opportunities

- Tourism Related Business
- Outdoor Recreation
- Agriculture
- Rural-Based Business Development
- Cooperative, Shared Regional Agreements to Offset Costs and Improve Services
- Alternative Energy
- High Speed Internet

### Threats

- Aging Population
- Housing Affordability
- Cost to the Town to provide Needed Services -Property Tax
- State Assistance
- Non-Compatible Development

### Strengths

- Pomfret's **natural beauty** is abundant with significant open space, water and forests
- Pomfret was founded in 1713 - its **history** is spread across the Town. History
- The community survey and our meetings revealed/confirmed a **strong sense of place/rural character as a quintessential New England town** with stone walls, red barns, waterways and lakes, a classic town green, farms and rolling hills with great fall foliage make it a terrific destination.
- Pomfret has **multiple community events** and a **higher than average participation** level for meetings and voting call contributing and emblematic of their community pride and engagement.
- The Pomfret Community School, Pomfret School and Rectory School provide the Town with a **solid local/private education** base that attracts families to locate or relocate in the Town
- The Airline Trail, Audubon Baffin Sanctuary, Mashamoquet Brook State Park, Pomfret Recreation Park, Route 169 National Scenic Byway and the Quinebaug and Shetucket National Rivers Heritage Area are some of the **outdoor recreation** available in Pomfret.
- Pomfret is a **state leader in taking the initiative to preserve/protect lands** of open space and agricultural value.

- The Town's **proximity** to local needs and employment make it a solid location to locate a business or a residence. Major metropolitan areas are within easy commuting distance - as are retail/food options.
- Pomfret still contains **multiple production agriculture operations** and has a commitment to assisting them remain in place.
- The **Town's plan of conservation and development** (POCD) is current and clearly, based on the work in developing the branding strategy and reflected in the zoning regulations.

### Weaknesses

- While the Town does contain multiple production agriculture operations, there are not as many as the landscape implies and the **Town's land-use rules do not necessarily enable non-traditional agriculture**.
- The survey revealed that many residents consider **not having a true town center** as a weakness in terms of the Town's identity
- Two weakness related to the **zoning regulations** were revealed (1) while the intent of various provisions are clear - they may not be consistent with state law and (2) many participants at our meetings and in the survey believe that the application of the regulations is inconsistent and at times anti-development.
- Pomfret, like most rural towns, is **spread out in terms of where people live** - but with no particular concentrations of people resulting in a reality that people must use vehicle transport to activities and events
- Like most communities and despite a better than average commitment by residents - **volunteers for boards and commissions is an ongoing and growing challenge**
- Developing **a more diverse Grand List** in a rural town - the number and scale of non-residential development would most certainly impact the characteristics that the Town holds special
- Pomfret is a rural residential community with **limited commercial development** and lands set aside for commercial development - where the property tax covers the majority of expenses - resulting in a limited tax base.
- While Pomfret is in reasonable commuting distance to metropolitan areas with a diversity of well paying employment - there is a **lack of nearby high-quality job opportunities** in the Town and immediate area
- During the map exercise and in the survey, the issue of **dangerous Intersections** was raised by multiple persons who noted that in addition to safety, these intersections detract from the rural nature of the community

### Opportunities

- Pomfret boasts **multiple destinations** in terms of recreation options and is home to a large section of the Route 169 National Scenic Byway. The Town also has several restaurants and farms that attract persons from outside the Town and the region. There is significant upside in marketing the existing destinations and developing new tourism related business.

- With the Airline Trail, Connecticut Audubon Society Bafflin Sanctuary as a centerpiece, Mashamoquet Brook State Park, Pomfret Recreation Park, Route 169 National Scenic Byway and the Quinebaug and Shetucket national Rivers Heritage Area **outdoor recreation** has many possibilities
- Pomfret could, through its land use rules make the Town more attractive to agricultural development by **embracing sustainable - consumer driven agriculture**.
- A trend in Connecticut is **rural-based business** development where an individual may develop a business in the traditionally residential agricultural areas of a town - without compromising the rural character of the Town.
- The **costs of operating government** seldom go down and assistance from state/federal sources are becoming more unpredictable. That said, residents still require certain basic services and have limited ability to absorb increased costs through their property tax as Connecticut is one of the most property tax reliant states in the nation. One alternative to the status quo is to embrace cooperative, shared or regional agreements to offset costs and improve services.
- The Town already has welcomed a large solar project and has embraced it at the Community School with solid results for the tax base. Additional opportunities to replicate these **alternative energy successes** are available.
- High Speed Internet

#### Threats

- Pomfret, as a community, is **getting older** and is in fact much older than most Connecticut towns. This aging population needs to be offset with new residents as a means to cover taxes, volunteer and maintain the community in general
- The Town has solid home prices and are the most expensive in Windham County. While this is good news if you own a home, it is not so good if you are trying to move into town. **Housing affordability** complicates attracting the next generation to Pomfret and it is in the best interest of the Town to find ways to make the Town more affordable to all income levels.
- **Dependance on the property tax** to cover town services is significant. Alternative means to finance those services are not truly options at this time. For some the costs are too much and their ability to remain in the Town are compromised.
- Connecticut has a significant and seemingly long-term budget crisis that could at any time impact Connecticut's 169 towns - including Pomfret. The **uncertainty of the state budget** and the Town's significant dependence on state assistance - makes local budgeting difficult to predict.
- Pomfret has a certain "look", "feel" and "personality" that is not currently captured in any regulation or guidance. The approach now is - 'we know it when we see it and when we don't - 'we don't like it.' **The possibility exists today that development could occur that is not compatible with what makes the Town special - with little recourse without change to the current system of development controls.**

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## The Pomfret Brand

**What is the enduring essence or elements of Pomfret that differentiates it from others? What can it offer potential residents, investors, tourists and others to choose Pomfret over other locations?** Four words stood out during this study that captured the essence or special qualities of Pomfret: **Beauty, Charm, History** and **Proximity**.

- **Beauty** - During the course of the study, map workshop and especially through the Town survey, the Town's inherent beauty (natural, historic, architectural and cultural) consistently was expressed as a Town strength. Participants spoke with passion about the natural features of Pomfret (forests, fields, stonewalls, trails and wildlife) and the need to protect these resources. Similarly, people expressed great pride and appreciation for the architectural features of the Town.
- **Charm** - This quality is difficult to define universally in terms of agreement - but for Pomfret it comes down to a community that is civil in its discourse over issues that often divide, demonstrates charity to the community and its members. ***"the standouts [small towns of charm] tend to share a handful of qualities: an embrace of local traditions; a commitment to maintaining long-standing structures and landmarks; and a genuine affection for local characters. It's these charms, along with a slower pace, a welcoming air, and an abiding sense of familiarity that draw visitors to the storied small towns.<sup>13</sup>"***
- **History** - Pomfret has more than 350 years of history as a place - that alone is unique and something to celebrate, preserve and build on economically and culturally.
- **Proximity** - As shown during this study, Pomfret is well within reach of major employment centers and conversely well within reach of more than 20 million people. Additionally, virtually all everyday needs (food, gas, pharmacy, medical and retail) needs are in close proximity to the Town.

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Remember, community branding is not about pretending to be something you're not, a logo or a catchy phrase. It's about revealing, packaging and promoting awareness about what the community is and how that can be beneficial.

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The Pomfret Brand offers both people and businesses a special place to live, grow a business and visit where you can enjoy a true rural lifestyle.

- The brand will be used to represent and sell the Town's rural lifestyle that emphasizes the high quality of life Pomfret offers.
- The brand will be used to promote Pomfret as a business friendly place to start and expand a business.
- The brand will be used to entice people to visit the town to enjoy (as well as spend money) at the multiple destinations.
- The brand will be used to foster and enforce a sense of place and pride for the residents of Pomfret - protecting its' special resources.

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<sup>13</sup> <https://www.atlantamagazine.com/southbound-articles/small-town-charm/>

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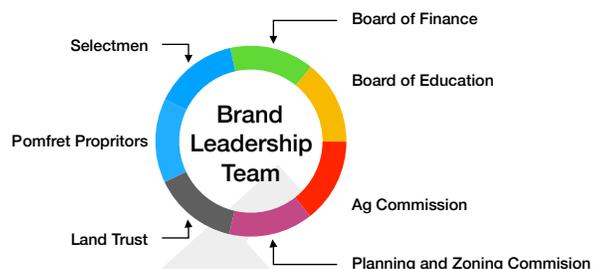
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## Recommendations

- **Establish a Leadership Team** as a means to promote, protect and monitor the brand. Key to this will be getting buy-in from local business, town government and civic organizations.

The goal/purpose of the leadership team is to ensure that the town's brand is cultivated and successful. Community branding is not a static activity. It requires ongoing attention and refinement to ensure that the brand is cultivated and cared for. If town policies or regulations are not protecting and enhancing the brand, then change must occur.

The Brand Leadership Team's will serve as the brand liaison to the business community, boards and commissions, non-profits, educational institutions and public liaison as a key point of contact promote, protect and monitor the brand. The Brand Leadership Team should, to the extent possible, not be political or driven by the current political or fiscal environments. The leadership team will be the champion of the Town brand and the facilitator to ensure that actions are taken for needed initiatives to effectuate those changes.



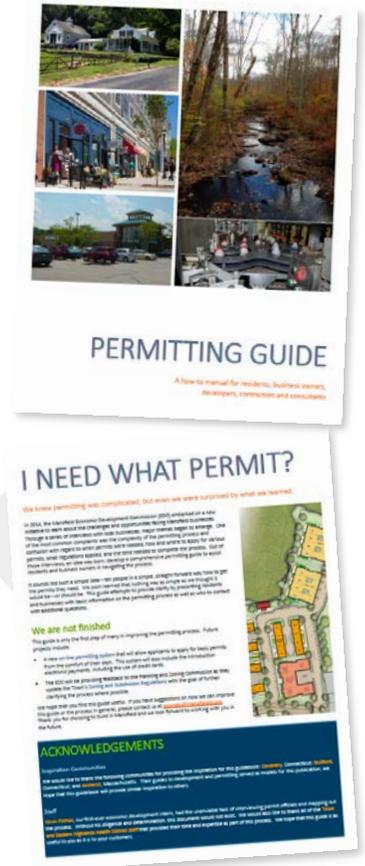
- Adopt a town ordinance establishing the brand leadership team and their roles and responsibilities. The Town could designate the Economic Development Commission or perhaps the First Selectman for this role. However, there needs to be broad representation to ensure that the varied interests of the community are engaged.
- Develop a comprehensive guide of the respective steps involved in starting a business in the town — including explaining the towns' permitting processes for development.
- Each member of the Brand Leadership Team should be given a copy of the POCD, Town Budget, Regulations and this plan in advance of the first meeting.
- This group should receive training from the Cooperative Extension at UCONN on how land use decisions are and should be made.
- This group should form a relationship with DECD and avail themselves of their resources to foster intelligent development for Pomfret consistent with the Town brand.

- **Zoning Regulations**

The goal is to have in place legally defensible zoning regulations that are logical in terms of zones, easily understood by both applicants and commission members and one that promotes both residential and commercial development while protecting the brand characteristics of the town.

- Secure an **independent legal review of the zoning regulations** to insure that the intent of the POCD, stated intent(s) of the Zoning Regulations and the Brand are backed up by legally defensible regulations
  - Make whatever corrections/modifications are warranted constant with the Brand and POCD
- Modify regulations to **enable rural business development.**

- **Develop and set of design guidelines** that are understandable and consistent with the Town’s history, architecture and natural setting.
  - Modify regulations to **allow for consumer driven alternative/sustainable agriculture** - as well as complementary agricultural activities.
  - Explore simplifying the regulations in terms of the number of zones.
  - Make clearer and less subjective the application process in terms of what is required.
  - Put in place a guidebook (Similar to Mansfield CT) to assist persons and businesses — making the town more business and resident friendly.
- ❑ **Partner with neighboring towns**, perhaps through NECCOG - to cooperatively market the 169 Byway and Airline Trail as an economic driver
  - ❑ Work with the **State Office of Tourism** at the Department of Economic and Community Development to enhance Pomfret’s presence on their site and by extension the greater marketplace
  - ❑ **Develop and Implement a Marketing Plan** with the emphasis on Social Media - Create a new website devoted to enforcing the town brand.



As stated earlier in this plan, a branding plan is not a marketing plan and the town will need a marketing plan to complement the branding effort. According to the University of Tennessee Cooperative Extension:

*“Marketing should always begin with a thorough marketing plan, which allows you to evaluate the market potential for your products or services and develop strategies to meet that potential. A complete, written marketing plan contains seven main components: 1. Market research and analysis: The first component of a marketing plan allows you to gather pertinent information about the potential market for your product(s) and/or service(s), evaluate strengths and weaknesses, and identify a target audience. 2. Marketing and financial goals and objectives: This component of a marketing plan consists of defining your marketing and financial goals and objectives. The goals and objectives will help you focus and evaluate your marketing efforts. 3. Marketing mix: The marketing mix component of a marketing plan describes the specific strategies you will implement to reach your target audience, entice the target audience to spend their money, and create a desire in them to return to your enterprise. Strategies covering the 4 P’s of marketing (product, price, place, and promotion) are developed. 4. Marketing budget: This component of a marketing plan consists of developing a marketing budget, which will allow you to plan for marketing expenditures. 5. Monitoring and evaluating market response: This component of a marketing plan describes the strategies you will use to monitor and evaluate the market response to your marketing strategies. Evaluating the effectiveness of your marketing plan will allow you to make adjustments to meet your goals. 6. Contingency plan: The contingency plan describes possible adjustments to make to your strategies if your marketing tactics are more or less effective than originally planned. 7. Marketing plan checklist: The final component of your marketing plan is a marketing plan checklist. This checklist allows you to summarize the tasks that need to be accomplished to put your plan into action.”*

The goal is to put in place a marketing plan with an emphasis on the use of a social plan that enhances the economic standing of the town and reinforces the Town's brand.

The reality is that more and more people are communicating via social networking and not traditional means of communication. In order for the town to remain understood and relevant — it must be able to be heard. Tapping into social media provides for a cost effective means for the Town to accomplish this goal. Additionally, cost is always a factor and traditional marketing is simply not a realistic option for Pomfret. The town must now join the growing trend and go directly to potential visitors via social media.



Pomfret currently has no marketing strategy or social media plan - thus the Town has little social media presence.. Pomfret's town website and that of the Pomfret Proprietors are quite attractive and complement the brand - but they could do more to promote the town. The days of the direct mail brochure are over. Pomfret needs to do the up front work to more fully understand its current and potential audience and how they communicate. Only after this is completed should the town move forward to creating social media material/approaches to move its brand forward.

Sarah Durham in her article, How to Create a Winning Brand Strategy (and Why It's Critical for Nonprofits) wrote: ***"Branding is, first and foremost, about perceptions. Your nonprofit has a brand whether or not you have a fancy logo, a snappy tagline or a style guide. In every interaction, you're shaping perceptions, deliberately or accidentally....Branding (or rebranding) an organization involves proactively and deliberately trying to shape or influence perceptions. Doing so requires understanding how you're perceived, defining how you want to be perceived, clarifying how you communicate to make sure it's heading in the right direction, and communicating consistently. Branding isn't a one-time proposition. It's an ongoing process...The strongest brands in any sector are consistent, authentic to the work itself, and reflected not just in marketing materials, but in just about everything the organizations do."*** (emphasis added)

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**"Your website is the single most important investment you can make in your brand and in your marketing overall."**

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**Actions:**

- Hire a qualified firm to work with the town to develop the marketing strategy.
- Make modifications to the Town's website devoted to enforcing the town brand and marketing the town
- Create a social media plan. Initially, the town needs to do the following to get moving forward on its social media plan. To accomplish this, the Town should engage a firm with the expertise to develop such a plan. Social Media Plan Objectives:
  - ▶ What does the town expect to accomplish through social media marketing (promotional objectives, service objectives, retail objectives, research objectives, donations, followers)?
  - ▶ Gather insight into target audience
  - ▶ Which segments should the town select to target with social media activities?
  - ▶ What are relevant demographic, psychographic, and behavioral characteristics of the segments useful in planning social media strategy?
  - ▶ What are the media habits, and especially the social media habits of the segments?

- ▶ Select social media zones and vehicles that will be best to accomplish the town's objectives within the resources available?

To be successful this plan must be continually reviewed for content (value to the target audience) and for usage (is the plan be used by the targeted audience or others). Tools to be employed by the town will include Facebook Reviews, Surveys (conducted by the organization directly to our audiences), Google Blog Search, Twitter Search, Google Alerts and Google Trends. For the website in general the town should employ various analytic tools (Google Analytics and/or Website Optimizer, Yahoo Web Analytics and Facebook Analytics and Insights).

□ **Foster Outdoor Recreation**

The town, as has been noted in this plan, has significant outdoor recreation venues. The town also has opportunities to expand these opportunities - especially as it relates to trails. Trails, especially in the context of Pomfrets's economic profile, are quite important.

*"Communities are realizing the economic potential of trails as highly desirable destinations that bring dollars into the places they serve. In addition to preserving critical open space and providing important transportation options, trails and greenways attract visitors from near and far—visitors who facilitate job growth in tourism-related opportunities like restaurants, local stores and lodging...Trails can be powerful tools for economic development. The New York Times recently noted a National Association of Homebuilders study that found that trails are the number one amenity that potential homeowners cite when choosing a new community. By consciously linking trails and businesses, and by providing new desirable housing choices along trails, communities around the country are building vital, economically stable neighborhoods that are truly sustainable.<sup>14</sup>"*

Actions:

- Perform a gap analysis and prioritize which gaps should be addressed first
- Develop funding options

- Professional Assistance/Staffing - there must be someone charged with leading the effort
  - **Investigate a location for a new Town Hall/Community complex** with opportunities for complementary functions (post office, library, community garden and retail) as a means of developing a true town center
  - **Remain engaged in the region** in terms of policies and initiatives that will address the identified weaknesses and threats

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<sup>14</sup> <https://www.railstotrails.org/resourcehandler.ashx?id=4620>