

*Town of Preston  
Plan of  
Conservation and Development*

Prepared by  
Preston Planning and Zoning Commission  
September 2014



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# Town of Preston Plan of Conservation and Development

This plan, prepared in accordance with Section 8-23 of the Connecticut General Statutes, provides an analysis of the town's past, present and future development trends, sets a vision and creates short- and long-term goals and objectives to meet the vision. It also provides an implementation program to guide the community into the next decade.

## Planning and Zoning Commission

Thank you to the Planning and Zoning Commission for their tireless effort and all the stakeholders involved, including the Conservation Commission that assisted in preparing the conservation, open space and natural resource sections of the Plan, Jean Pillo who prepared the Poquetanuck Cove section, Board of Selectmen, Board of Finance, Redevelopment Agency, Amos Lake Association, Preston Historical Society, Senior Affairs, Library, Housing Authority, Parks and Recreation and of the General Public in particular Andy Depta who attended almost every workshop held by the Planning and Zoning Commission. Lastly, we would like to thank the Preston Historical Commission for providing the many historic photos that have been included in the Plan. This plan has been a truly collaborative effort.

### **MEMBERS**

Arthur Moran, Jr. Chairman  
Richard Chalifoux, Vice Chairman  
Christopher Doyle, Secretary  
Thomas Fenton  
Anne Sabrowski  
Daniel Sperduto  
John Farrell  
Blaze Faillaci  
Denise Beale  
Charles Raymond

### **Town Staff**

Kathy Warzecha, Town Planner  
Kathleen Nichols, Town Planner Assistant



## Background Research

- U.S. Census/American Fact Finder
- CT General Statutes
- Conservation and Development Policies: The Plan for Connecticut, 2013 to 2018
- Regional Plan of Conservation and Development
- Connecticut Economic Resource Center
- Connecticut Department of Labor
- Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development
- State of Connecticut, Municipal Fiscal Indicators, 2007 to 2011
- Preston Building Department
- Preston GIS
- Southeastern CT Council of Governments
- United States General Statutes
- The section of the plan regarding the Poquetanuck Cove was completed in association with Jean Pillo, CPESC, Watershed Conservation Coordinator, Thames River Basin Partnership Coordinator, Eastern Connecticut Conservation District

## Acronyms

Acronyms	Definition
<b>AFDC</b>	Aid to Families with Dependent Children
<b>AADT</b>	Average Annual Daily Traffic
<b>ALA</b>	Amos Lake Association
<b>ALC</b>	Avalonia Land Conservancy
<b>AOC</b>	Area of Concern
<b>BOS</b>	Board of Selectmen
<b>CAC</b>	Conservation and Agricultural Commission
<b>(CAP)</b>	Conservation Action Planning
<b>CCMA</b>	Connecticut Coastal Management Act
<b>CEDS</b>	Connecticut Economic Development Strategy
<b>CERC</b>	Connecticut Economic Resource Center
<b>CGS</b>	Connecticut General Statutes
<b>ConnDOT</b>	Connecticut Department of Transportation
<b>DECD</b>	Connecticut Department of Community and Economic Development
<b>DEEP</b>	Department of Energy and Environmental Protection
<b>ECCD</b>	Eastern Connecticut Conservation District
<b>EDC</b>	Economic Development Commission
<b>EMS</b>	Emergency Management Services
<b>FEMA</b>	Federal Emergency Management Agency

<b>Acronyms</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>GIS</b>	Geographic Information System
<b>HS</b>	Historical Society
<b>IWWC</b>	Inland Wetland Watercourses and Commission
<b>LID</b>	Low Impact Development
<b>NDDB</b>	Natural Diversity Database
<b>NEMO</b>	Nonpoint Education for Municipal Officials
<b>NPU</b>	Norwich Public Utilities
<b>P&amp;R</b>	Parks and Recreation
<b>PCFD</b>	Preston City Fire Department
<b>PCVD</b>	Preston City Village District
<b>PFD</b>	Poquetanuck Fire Department
<b>PHA</b>	Preston Housing Authority
<b>POCD</b>	Plan of Conservation and Development
<b>PPWC</b>	Preston Plains Water Company
<b>PRA</b>	Preston Redevelopment Agency
<b>PW</b>	Public Works
<b>PZC</b>	Preston Planning and Zoning Commission
<b>SCCOG</b>	Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments
<b>SCRRA</b>	Southeastern Connecticut Resource Recovery Authority
<b>SEAT</b>	Southeastern Area Transit
<b>SNAP</b>	Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program
<b>SSURGO</b>	Soil Survey Geographic (database)
<b>TANF</b>	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
<b>TNC</b>	The Nature Conservancy
<b>USDA</b>	United States Department of Agriculture
<b>USFWS</b>	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services
<b>ZBA</b>	Zoning Board of Appeals

## Introduction

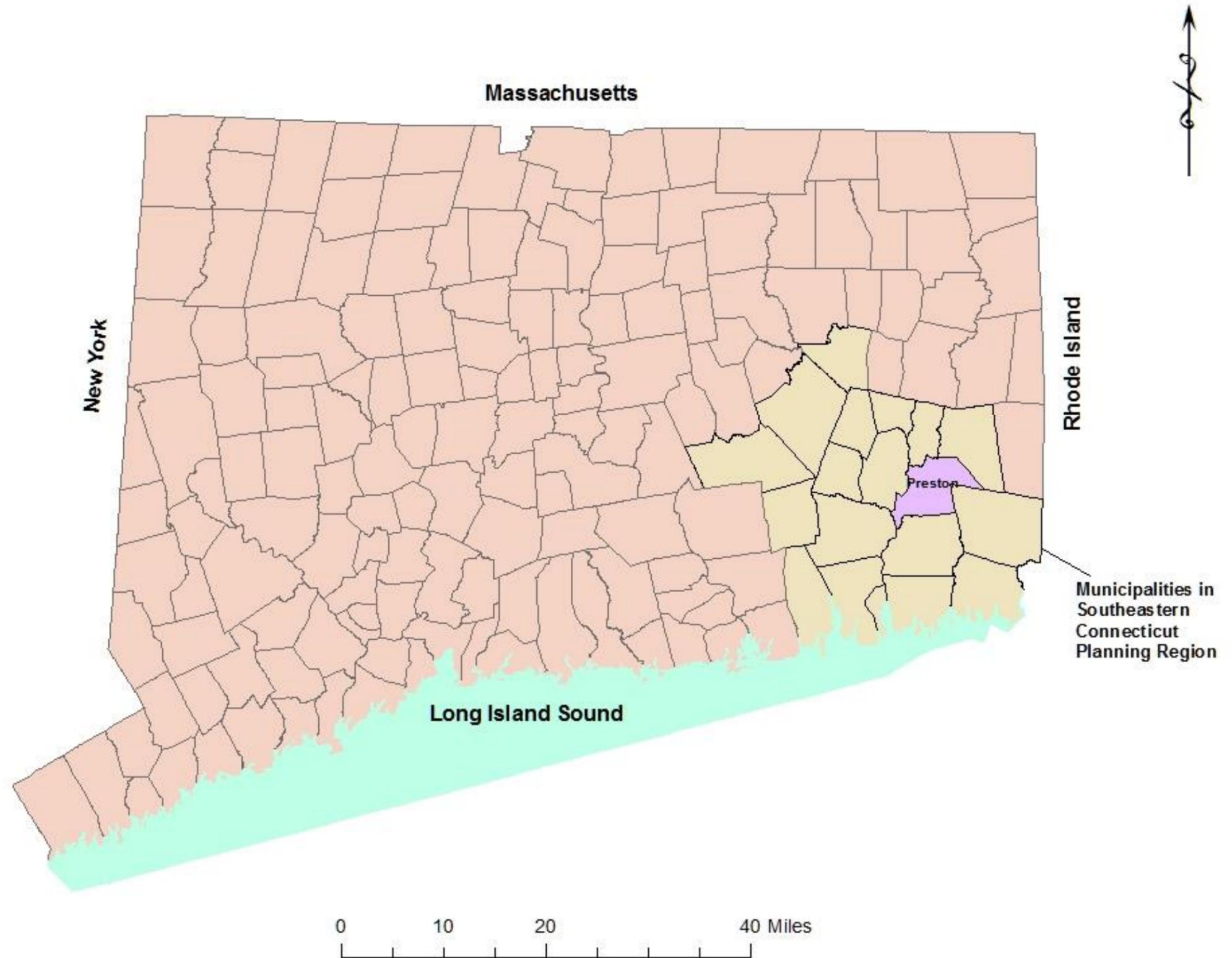
A Plan of Conservation and Development analyzes a town's past and present and where it may be heading in the future. Based on this information, the town sets a vision and creates short- and long-term goals to meet the vision. Pursuant to the Connecticut General Statutes (CGS), the Planning and Zoning Commission is responsible for creating and adopting the Plan. The statutes require a Commission to review the Plan every ten years, and update it as necessary. CGS Section 8-23 specifies issues that the Commission must or may consider in its plan. The Plan's recommendations are advisory. Five Preston Plans predate this one: 1964, 1972, 1981, 1993, and 2003.

The Commission began collecting and analyzing information for background studies in June 2013. Information was collected from town Departments (such as the First Selectman and Building Office), from residents (from public input at meetings), and from other town commissions. Their input, in addition to various documents, maps, and data sources helped to compile the background studies. This information led to the formation of the goals, objectives, actions and the Plan Map.

Preston is a rural town of approximately 4,700 persons according to the 2010 census, located in the Southeastern Connecticut planning region (see Map 1).

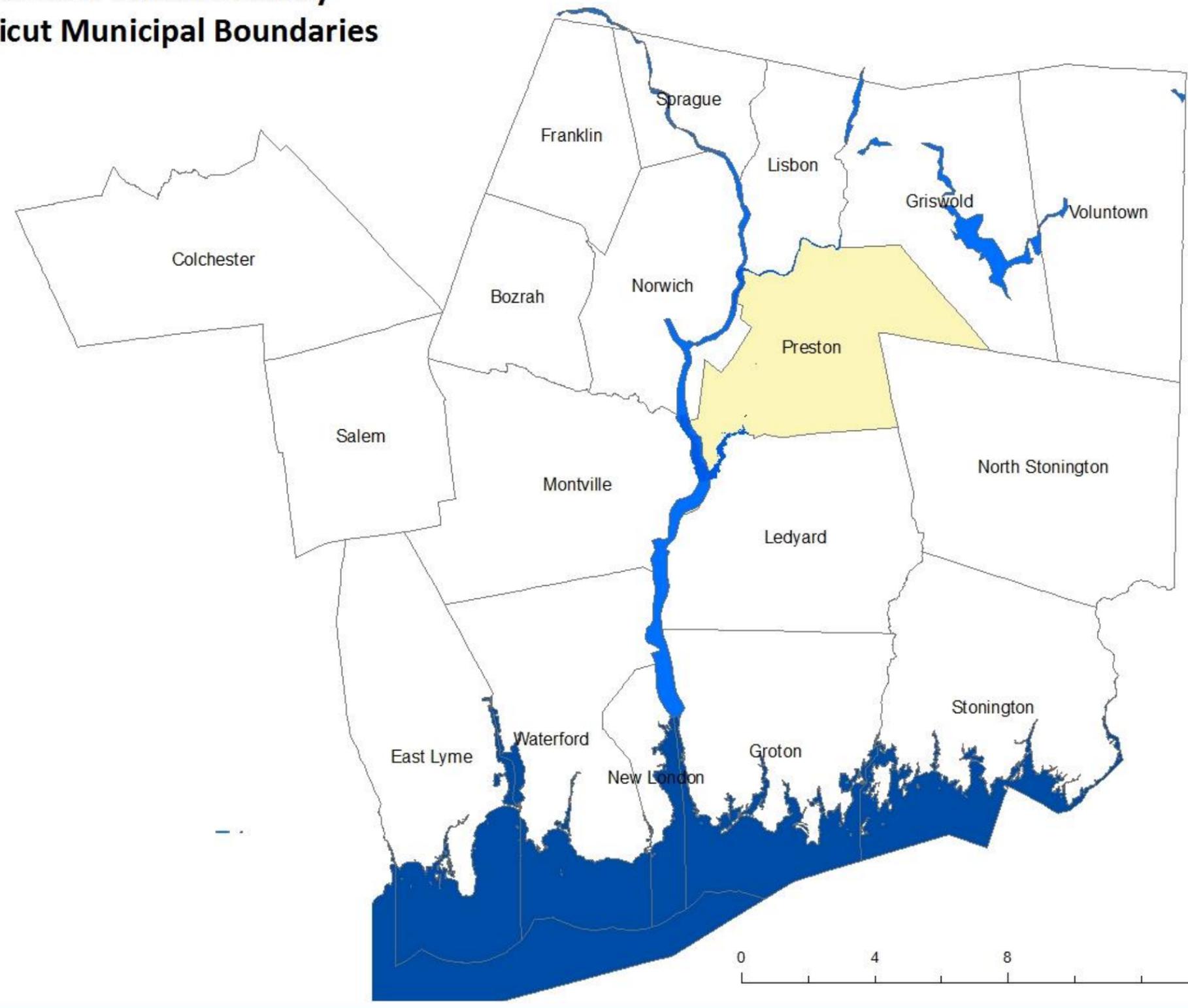
Preston is bordered to the north by the Quinebaug River and Griswold; to the east by Griswold and North Stonington; to the south by Ledyard, and to the west by the Thames River, Shetucket River, and Norwich. Preston's land area is approximately 20,000 acres, and is predominantly undeveloped (See Map 2).

# Map 1: Connecticut Municipal Boundaries





**Map 2: New London County  
Connecticut Municipal Boundaries**



**STATE REQUIREMENTS FOR A PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

In preparing such plan, the commission shall consider the following: (1) The community development action plan of the municipality, if any, (2) the need for affordable housing, (3) the need for protection of existing and potential public surface and ground drinking water supplies, (4) the use of cluster development and other development patterns to the extent consistent with soil types, terrain and infrastructure capacity within the municipality, (5) the state plan of conservation and development adopted pursuant to chapter 297, (6) the regional plan of conservation and development adopted pursuant to section 8-35a, (7) physical, social, economic and governmental conditions and trends, (8) the needs of the municipality including, but not limited to, human resources, education, health, housing, recreation, social services, public utilities, public protection, transportation and circulation and cultural and interpersonal communications, (9) the objectives of energy-efficient patterns of development, the use of solar and other renewable forms of energy and energy conservation, and (10) protection and preservation of agriculture.

**The Planning and Zoning Commission has considered all of the above while preparing this new Plan of Conservation and Development**

<b>The Plan Shall:</b>	<b>The Plan May Show Recommendations For:</b>
(A) be a statement of policies, goals and standards for the physical and economic development of the municipality,  ADDRESSED	1) conservation and preservation of traprock and other ridgelines,  ADDRESSED
(B) provide for a system of principal thoroughfares, parkways, bridges, streets, sidewalks, multipurpose trails and other public ways as appropriate,  ADDRESSED	2) airports, parks, playgrounds and other public grounds,  ADDRESSED
(C) be designed to promote, with the greatest efficiency and economy, the coordinated development of the municipality and the general welfare and prosperity of its people and identify areas where it is feasible and prudent (i) to have compact, transit accessible, pedestrian-oriented mixed use development patterns and land reuse, and (ii) to promote such development patterns and land reuse,  ADDRESSED	3) the general location, relocation and improvement of schools and other public buildings,  ADDRESSED
(D) recommend the most desirable use of land within the municipality for	4) the general location and extent of public utilities and terminals, whether publicly or privately owned, for water, sewerage, light, power, transit and other purposes,  ADDRESSED  5) the extent and location of public housing projects,

---

**The Plan Shall:**

residential, recreational, commercial, industrial, conservation, agricultural and other purposes and include a map showing such proposed land uses,

ADDRESSED

- (E) recommend the most desirable density of population in the several parts of the municipality,
- (F) note any inconsistencies with the following growth management principles: (i) Redevelopment and revitalization of commercial centers and areas of mixed land uses with existing or planned physical infrastructure; (ii) expansion of housing opportunities and design choices to accommodate a variety of household types and needs; (iii) concentration of development around transportation nodes and along major transportation corridors to support the viability of transportation options and land reuse; (iv) conservation and restoration of the natural environment, cultural and historical resources and existing farmlands; (v) protection of environmental assets critical to public health and safety; and (vi) integration of planning across all levels of government to address issues on a local, regional and state-wide basis,

ADDRESSED: THE PLAN IS CONSISTENT WITH THE GROWTH MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES

- (G) make provision for the development of housing opportunities, including opportunities for multifamily dwellings, consistent with soil types, terrain and infrastructure capacity, for all residents of the municipality and the planning region in which the municipality is located, as designated by the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management under section 16a-4a,

---

**The Plan May Show Recommendations For:**

ADDRESSED

6) programs for the implementation of the plan, including (A) a schedule, (B) a budget for public capital projects, (C) a program for enactment and enforcement of zoning and subdivision controls, building and housing codes and safety regulations, (D) plans for implementation of affordable housing, (E) plans for open space acquisition and greenways protection and development, and (F) plans for corridor management areas along limited access highways or rail lines, designated under section 16a-27, TO BE COMPLETED AT A LATER DATE

(7) proposed priority funding areas, and

ADDRESSED

(8) any other recommendations as will, in the commission's or any special committee's judgment, be beneficial to the municipality. The plan may include any necessary and related maps, explanatory material, photographs, charts or other pertinent data and information relative to the past, present and future trends of the municipality.

ADDRESSED

---

**The Plan Shall:**

**The Plan May Show Recommendations For:**

---

ADDRESSED

(H) promote housing choice and economic diversity in housing, including housing for both low and moderate income households, and encourage the development of housing which will meet the housing needs identified in the state's consolidated plan for housing and community development prepared pursuant to section 8-37t and in the housing component and the other components of the state plan of conservation and development prepared pursuant to chapter 297. In preparing such plan the commission shall consider focusing development and revitalization in areas with existing or planned physical infrastructure.

ADDRESSED

(I) be consistent with the municipal coastal program requirements of sections 22a-101 to 22a-104, inclusive,

THIS PLAN IS CONSISTENT WITH THE MUNICIPAL COASTAL PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

(J) made with reasonable consideration for restoration and protection of the ecosystem and habitat of Long Island Sound, and

ADDRESSED

(K) designed to reduce hypoxia, pathogens, toxic contaminants and floatable debris in Long Island Sound.

ADDRESSED

**The Preston Plan of Conservation and Development is consistent with the State of Connecticut Plan of Conservation and**

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**The Plan Shall:****The Plan May Show Recommendations For:**

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Development. It is noted that there are areas that have been classified by the State Conservation and Development Locational Guide Map as conservation area. In the Preston Plan the areas have been noted as a commercial fringe area or a commercial node. It is noted that in these areas, the Preston POCD indicates that development shall be designed to consider the special environmental issues that exist in the areas. In addition, the State's Plan stipulates a process and conditions for growth related projects to be located in those areas as stated in the State's LGM classification administrative requirements associated with CGS Section 16-35d.

Source: Connecticut General Statutes,  
Section 8-23

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# Land Use





## Land Use

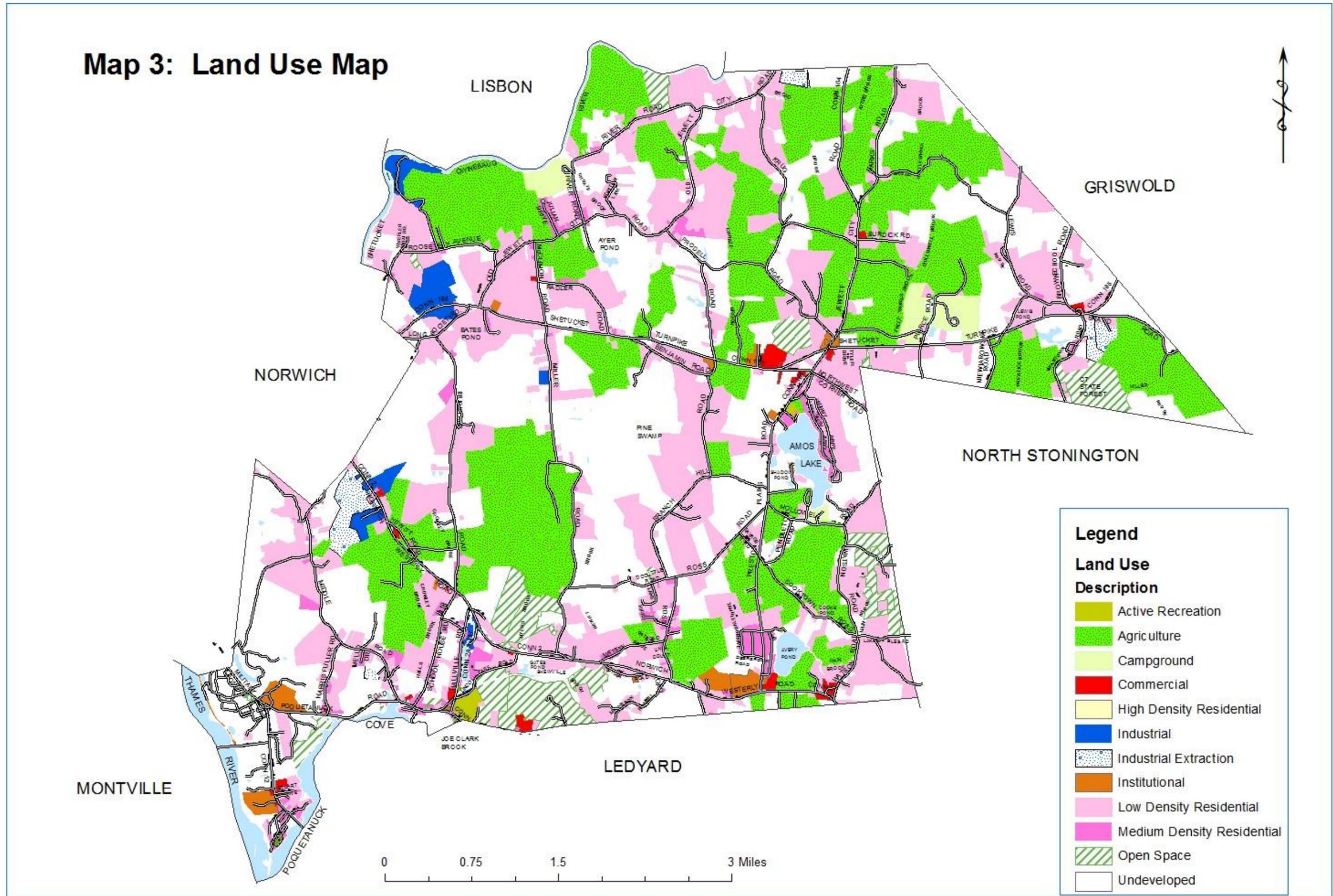
Preston's land use patterns characterize a rural community. Preston remains predominantly undeveloped with almost 67 percent of its land either being undeveloped, open space, or agriculture. Of the developed land, the highest percentage is attributed to low/very low density residential. For the purpose of this analysis, Preston is divided into eleven land use categories, plus transportation and utilities: undeveloped land, agriculture, low/very low density residential, medium-density residential, industrial, industrial extraction (mining sand and gravel) commercial, institutional, open space, and active recreation. (See Map #3)

(Table 1)

Land Use		
Total Acres	19,698	100%
Undeveloped	7078	36%
Agriculture	5110	26%
Low and Very Low Density Residential	5087	26%
Medium Density Residential	454	2%
Industrial	226	1%
Mining/Sand and Gravel	176	>1%
Commercial	101	>1%
Institutional	183	>1%
Transportation, Communication and Utility (TCU)	215	1%
Open Space with Cemeteries	803	4%
Active Recreation	38	>1%
Campgrounds	227	1%

Source: Preston GIS

# Map 3: Land Use Map



**Legend**

**Land Use Description**

	Active Recreation
	Agriculture
	Campground
	Commercial
	High Density Residential
	Industrial
	Industrial Extraction
	Institutional
	Low Density Residential
	Medium Density Residential
	Open Space
	Undeveloped

# Residential



Mains Way and Young Court were constructed in 2005 and were part of an 18 lot subdivision.

Approximately 28 percent of Preston, or 5,541 acres of land is used for residential purposes. According to the Preston Building Department, an estimated 142 new residential units have been constructed from 2003 to 2013.

During early 2000, the creation of new lots through the subdivision of

land and new housing starts were booming; however, in 2007, there was a substantial reduction in the number of new housing starts and new subdivision lots, resulting from the "Great Recession". According to the U.S. Department of Labor, the "Great Recession" officially lasted from December 2007 to June 2009. Although, the economic recovery for Connecticut and New London County was and continues to be slower, with the state and region maintaining higher than national unemployment rates in 2012, 2013 and part of 2014 (January to March of 2014). This continues to impact the residential market.

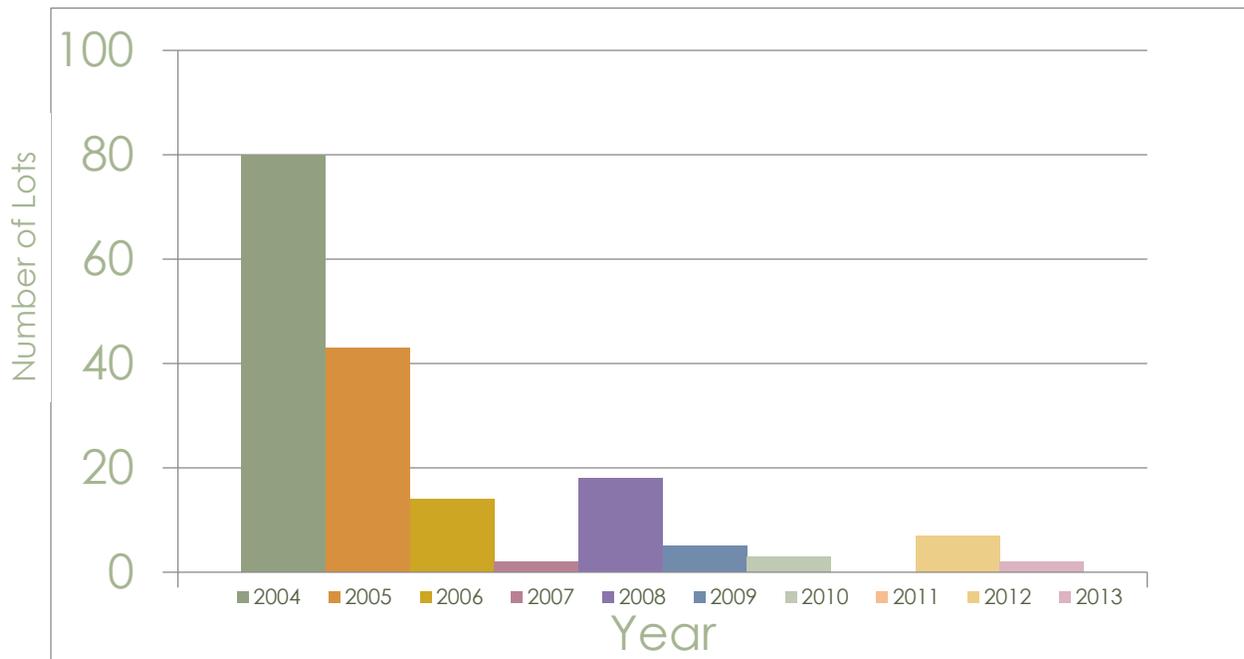


Seven new roads were constructed between 2004 and 2013: Wilderness Acres, Tyler Drive, Mains Way, Young Court, Puddleby Road, Winger Drive, and Kimble Farm. Kimball Farm was constructed in 2011, although the subdivision was approved in 2008.

About 175 new building lots were created from 2004 to 2013. The peak subdivision year was 2004 and the least number of lots were created in 2007 and 2011. New lots created from 2007 to 2013 were primarily *family subdivisions* which is when lots are created for and given to family members.

## New Subdivision Lots 2004 to 2013

(Table 2)



## Commercial



New Hilton Gardens Hotel opened in February 2013. According to the building permit, the facility cost \$13,000,000 to construct.

Commercial land uses comprise less than one percent of Preston's total land area, or 101 acres and are located primarily along Route 2, Route 2A, Route 12, Route 165 and in Preston City, with smaller commercial establishments scattered around the town either as a nonconforming use, bed and breakfasts, or as a home occupation. Twenty seven home occupations were created from 2000 to 2013. There were 28 active home occupations in 2013 (some remain from before 2000). A

home occupation is when a home owner conducts their business within their home in compliance with the home occupation section of the Zoning Regulations.

Since 2003, only seven commercial site plan applications have been approved and involved the construction of one hotel, two gas stations, one ice cream shop, expansion of a campground, and two wineries. Hilton Gardens Hotel, convenience store/gas stations, Dunkin Donuts are the primary uses along Route 2. Two wineries, one on Miller Road and one on Route 164 add to the commercial development, other commercial developments are scattered throughout the town and includes campgrounds, numerous auto-related businesses, and wireless telecommunications towers.

## Industrial

One percent or 226 acres of Preston's land use are committed to industrial activities. These uses include manufacturing, sand and gravel excavations, junk yards, and a waste to energy plant. Concentrated industrial uses are present along the western section of Route 2 and entail primarily construction operations or vehicular junk yards. These type of industrial uses are more prominent due to the lack of public sewer and water and direct access to limited-access highway.

## Open Space

803 acres (or 4 percent of Preston) are classified as open space. Open space land uses in Preston include a portion of State Forest, the Rose Hill Wildlife Management Area, the land being acquired by the town located off of Route 2 along the Pequot Trail, and the Pappalardo Conservation Area located adjacent to the state Amos Lake boat launch, and other areas scattered throughout the town. (See Map 3A)

The Connecticut General Statutes allow municipalities to receive, from a subdivision developer, open space or recreation areas for all subdivisions, except family subdivisions, or to receive a fee in lieu of open space. In December 1999, the Commission created a policy that would provide developers with guidance for the dedication of open space or fee in lieu of



Land acquired along the Pequot Trail

since so much of the land dedicated to the town for these purposes until that time was unusable. The policy's intent is to provide usable open space for the enjoyment of the future residents of the subdivision and to aid in the preservation of significant natural or archaeological resources for public education purposes. Criteria for the dedication of open space or the payment of the fee in lieu of open space are as follows: the land dedicated cannot be less than 80,000 square feet and shall not have steep slopes or wetland areas, it may be to protect natural, archaeological, agricultural or scenic resources. Applicants of subdivisions that cannot meet the criteria for the dedication of open space may be required to pay fee in lieu of open space dedication.

As part of the open space requirement for subdivisions, about 18 acres of land was donated to Avalonia Land Conservancy (ALC) since 2004. The donated land is the southernmost edge of the Pawcatuck Borderlands Forest and part of the "Green Necklace" as defined by the Conservation Commission that encompasses 180 acres stretching from Northwest Corner Road to Lake of Isles Road. In addition to this land, from 2000 to 2013 nearly \$275,000 in fee in lieu of open space has been collected. This fee may be used to acquire land outright or acquire development rights for open space or agriculture lands, such as with the acquisition of the 155 acres of open space along the Pequot Trail and the Pappalardo Conservation Area.

The Preston Conservation Commission has recommended the creation of five corridors or areas that should be protected, with land that could be acquired through outright purchase or the acquisition of development rights or conservation easement. The particulars of these resources are also discussed in other sections of this plan. Noted below is a list of the recommended protected areas.

1. **Agricultural**

**Alley:** This area is along Route 164 north of Route 165. It is an area with scenic views because of the open farmland. Its rolling topography with open fields and scattered farm buildings dictates the need to preserve this scenic corridor.



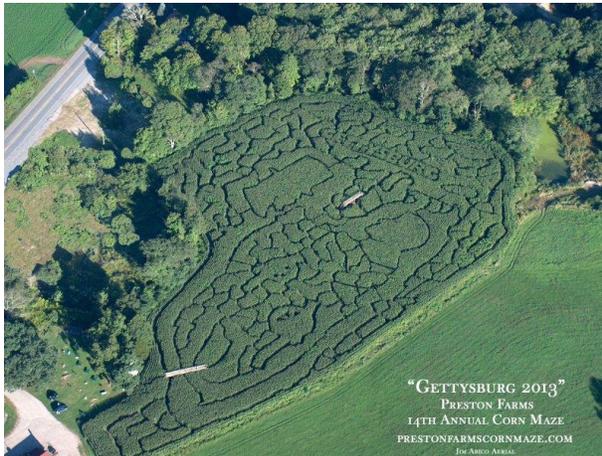
Property within Agricultural Alley

The corridor contains several farms for which development rights have been purchased; however, with the aging farmers, the possibility of development of the farms along the corridor could be looming in the near future.

2. **Brickyard/Miller Road Greenway:** The greenway begins at the southern border of the town where it abuts the state owned Rose Hill Preserve. It extends to the northern border of Preston where it connects to the Quinebaug River Corridor. To the east lies the Great Cedar/Pine Swamp and Hewitts Brook, to the west is Brickyard Road. The southern portion provides watershed to the Poquetanuck Cove via Shewville Brook, Myers Brook, Hewitts Brook and Crowley Brook. This is also part of the Pequot Trail. There is a diversity of resources ranging from scenic farms with beautiful vistas, to vast woodland areas and the incredibly significant Great Cedar/Pine Swamp. Historic features within the corridor area include Halls Mill, Hallville Pond and the fish ladder, Long Society Meetinghouse, and several historic cemeteries.
3. **Quinebaug/Shetucket Rivers Corridor:** This rivers corridor is located at the northwest section of Preston at the Preston/Norwich town line. The scenic rivers corridor is flanked by farms and wooded areas and is a mecca for wildlife habitat.
4. **Preston's Green Necklace:** This corridor is located in the area of Watson Road, east of Route 164. It contains a portion of the Pawcatuck Borderlands Forest, one of the last intact forests in New England, and includes land owned by the Avalonia Land Conservancy as follows: the Mitchell Preserve, Greenfalls Open Space, Gibson McKain Songbird Preserve and the Greenwood Preserve. Mains Brook flows through the area. This is a significant aquifer area with many wetland areas scattered throughout. There are vistas of old farms with beautiful stonewalls.
5. **Broad Brook Streambelt Corridor:** Located north of Route 165 and in the area of Route 164, this corridor encompasses Broad Brook and its associated floodplain and wetland areas.
6. **Miller Road Ridgeline Agricultural Area:** This area consists of rolling hills and farmland with frontage along Miller Road that provide sweeping views of the area.
7. **Quinebaug Agricultural Area:** farmland along the Quinebaug River.
8. **Krug Road Agricultural Ridgeline:** This is the ridgeline along Krug Road that contains several scenic farms.



# Agriculture



Preston Farms Corn Maze is an example of complementary agricultural uses



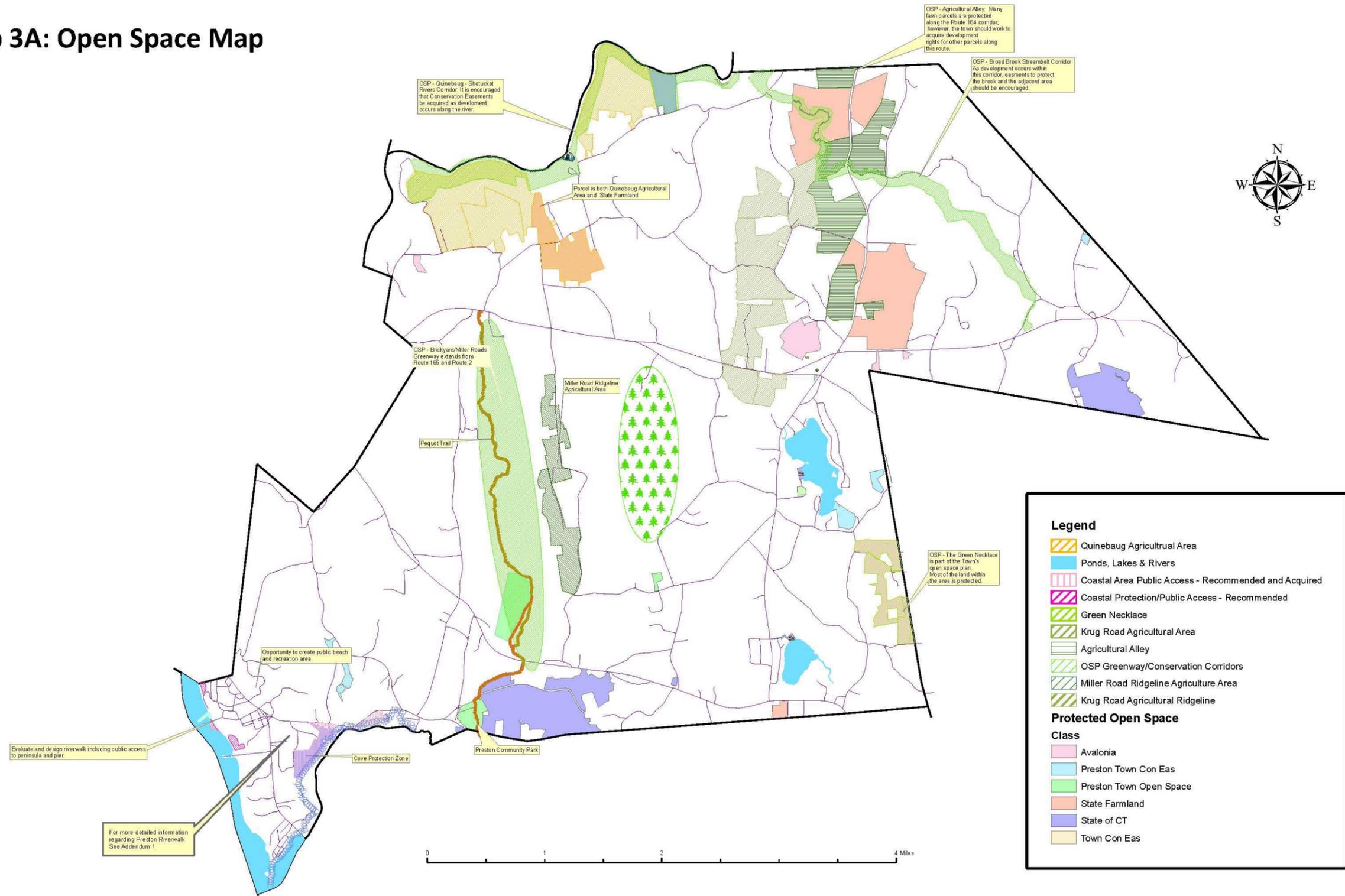
Preston Ridge Winery, a Large Acreage Vineyard and Winery, opened in the fall of 2013.

Agricultural activities continue to characterize Preston's rural landscape; in fact, agriculture is the largest land use with 5,110 acres or twenty-six percent used for such purposes. Agricultural land includes cropland, orchards, farms for dairies and other livestock, and Christmas tree farms. The Zoning Regulations were amended in 2004 "Farm Wineries" which must be a minimum of 5 acres or Large Acreage Farm Vineyards and Wineries" which must have at least 50 acres, and allows larger public and private events, such as weddings. It is evident that the Commission has been supportive of farmers that are expanding uses to include new types of agricultural businesses, such as the corn maze, hydroponics, and wineries. It has been the Commission's opinion that these complementary uses will help sustain the farms; however, understanding that care must be taken in determining alternate agricultural uses or level of complementary uses to ensure that such uses do not become solely commercial, i.e. restaurant does not become the primary use of the agricultural property.

## Undeveloped Land

Approximately 36 percent (or 7,078 acres) of Preston is currently undeveloped and is the largest land use. This means that 36 percent of the raw land in Preston is available for future development. This does not include any land currently being used for agricultural purposes. This figure is relatively accurate based on Preston's Geographic Information System (GIS) and viewing the air photos for actual land uses. However, for comparison purposes to look at relationship of Preston to other nearby rural communities using like data is necessary. The SCCOG Land Use Study identified various land uses for Preston and surrounding towns. For comparison purposes, data from SCCOG Land Use Study was used for Preston and the abutting rural communities. Preston had 58% undeveloped land. The percentage of undeveloped land in Preston's neighboring towns are: Griswold (43%), Ledyard (43%), North Stonington (45%), and Lisbon (56%).

# Map 3A: Open Space Map



Evaluate and design riverwalk including public access to peninsula and pier.

For more detailed information regarding Preston Riverwalk See Addendum 1

Opportunity to create public beach and recreation area.

Cove Protection Zone

Preston Community Park

OSP - Brickyard/Miller Roads Greenway extends from Route 165 and Route 2

Miller Road Ridgeline Agricultural Area

Pequot Trail

Parcel is both Quinebaug Agricultural Area and State Farmland

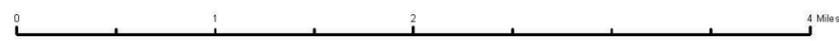
OSP - Quinebaug - Shetucket Rivers Corridor. It is encouraged that Conservation Easements be acquired as development occurs along the river.

OSP - Agricultural Alley. Many farm parcels are protected along the Route 164 corridor; however, the town should work to acquire development rights for other parcels along this route.

OSP - Broad Brook Streambelt Corridor. As development occurs within this corridor, easements to protect the brook and the adjacent area should be encouraged.

OSP - The Green Neckline is part of the Town's open space plan. Most of the land within the area is protected.

- Legend**
- Quinebaug Agricultural Area
  - Ponds, Lakes & Rivers
  - Coastal Area Public Access - Recommended and Acquired
  - Coastal Protection/Public Access - Recommended
  - Green Neckline
  - Krug Road Agricultural Area
  - Agricultural Alley
  - OSP Greenway/Conservation Corridors
  - Miller Road Ridgeline Agriculture Area
  - Krug Road Agricultural Ridgeline
- Protected Open Space**
- Class**
- Avalonia
  - Preston Town Con Eas
  - Preston Town Open Space
  - State Farmland
  - State of CT
  - Town Con Eas

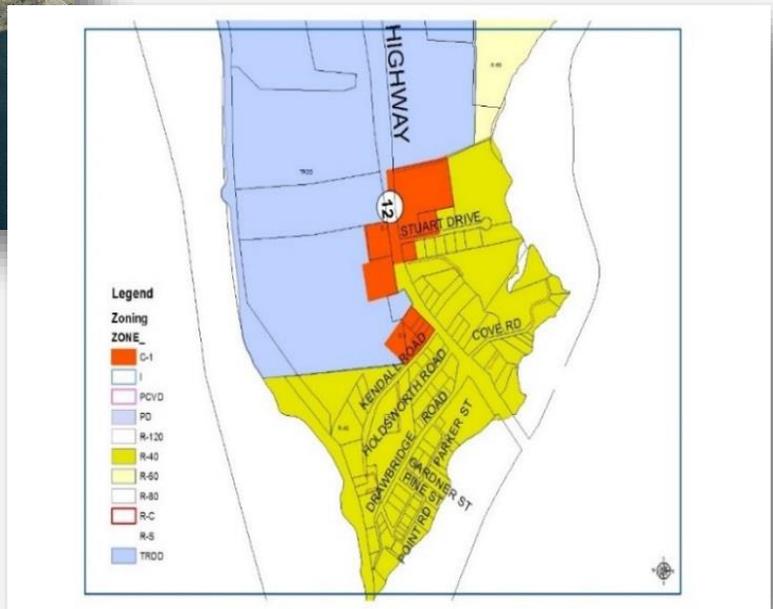


# Zoning

Preston adopted its first zoning regulations in 1964. The zoning districts respected the land uses that were in existence at that time as well as the natural resources, soils, geologic conditions, topography, and other environmental constraints. As in the past, the town continues to be predominantly zoned for residential use, with minimum lot sizes ranging from 40,000 square feet to 120,000 square feet. The lowest density districts (R-120) are located along the Norwich border, where environmental factors reduce development capabilities, and south of Ross Road, where the town's transfer station (the former landfill) is located. The R-40 districts (higher densities) are located in Happyland and Poquetanuck Village. (Map 4)

Commercial districts are scattered along each state highway. A Resort Commercial district extends along Route 2 in the eastern part of the town and includes the southern part of Route 164. The Resort Commercial district is intended

to allow tourist-type developments such as hotels, recreational amenities, and services such as grocery stores and offices. The Preston City Village District allows mixed business and residential uses, provided certain design criteria is met. In March 2014, the Commission revised the zoning for Preston Riverwalk in anticipation of its redevelopment to Thames River



District. This allows flexibility through incentive zoning but requires that any development be sensitive to the natural resources within the area and the rural character of the community.

The above air photo shows how the land actually looks with the individual residential and commercial lots. The map to the below shows how the land is actually zoned.

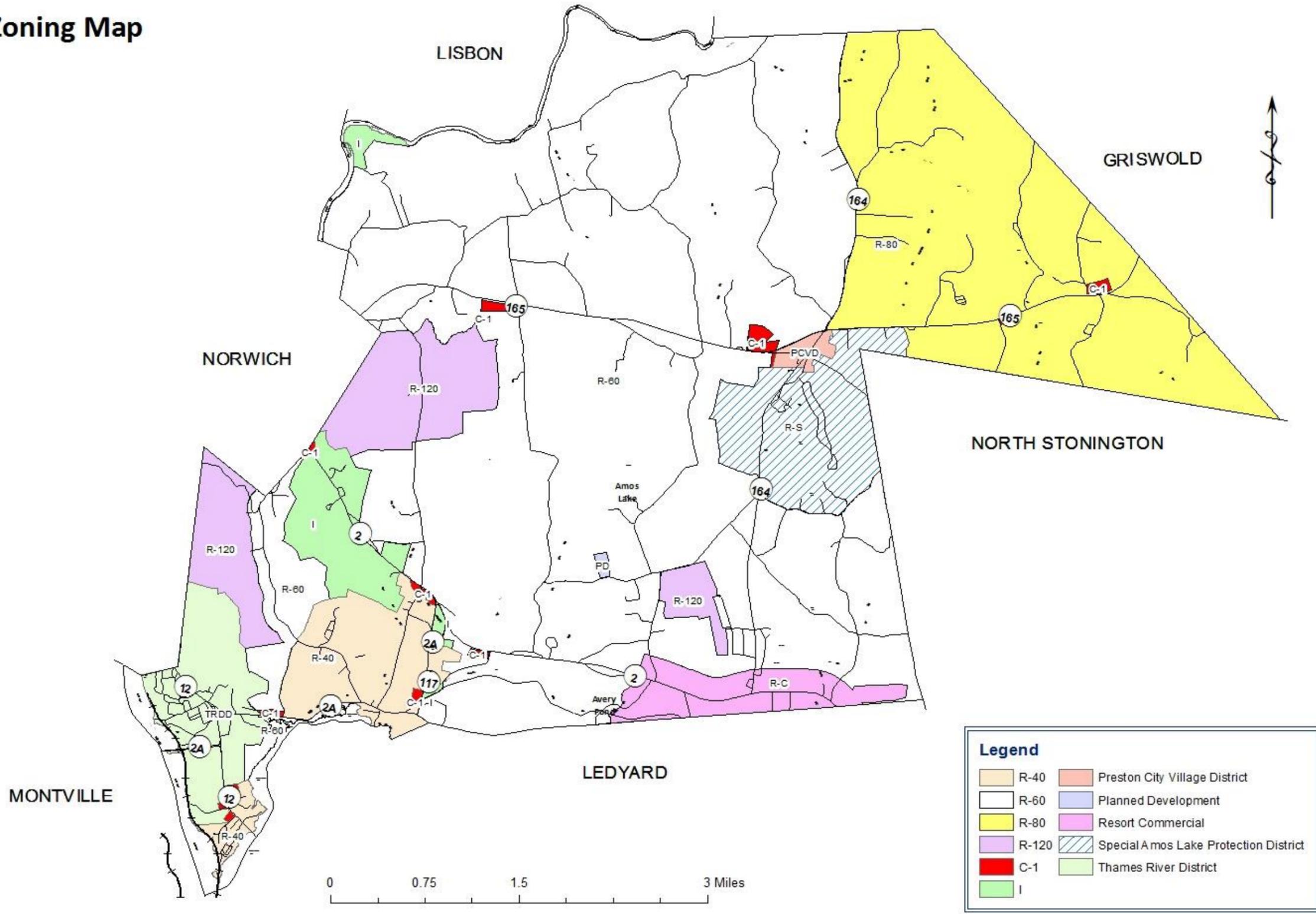
## Zoning Chart

(Table 3) Acreage is approximate

Zoning District	Acreage	Percentage of Preston's Total Area
R-120 Residential (120,000 sq. ft. minimum lot size)	1160	6%
R-80 Residential (80,000 sq. ft. minimum lot size)	3543	18%
R-60 Residential (60,000 sq. ft. minimum lot size)	11288	57%
R-40 Residential (40,000 sq. ft. minimum lot size)	801	4%
Special Amos Lake Protection District (60,000 sq. ft. minimum lot size)	905	5%
C-1 Commercial	99	<1%
Industrial	556	3%
Planned Development District	12	<1%
Thames River District	690	4%
Resort Commercial	450	2%
Preston City Village District	63	<1%



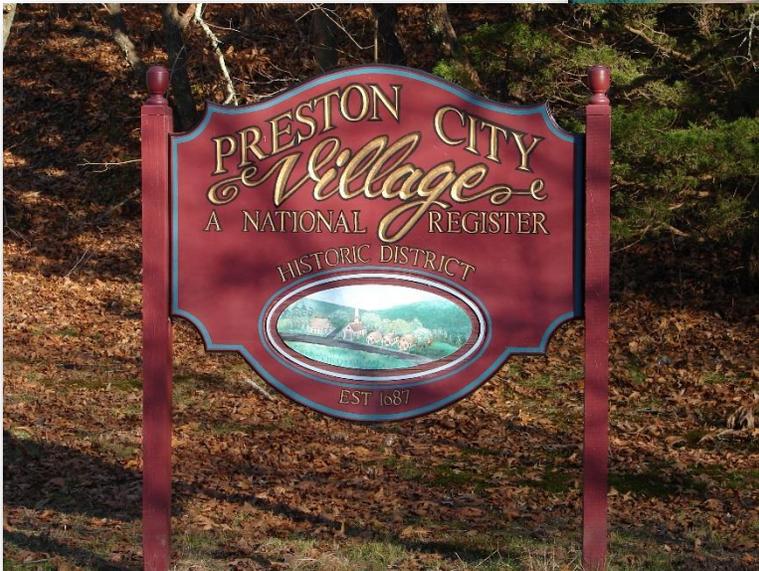
# Map 4: Zoning Map



# Areas of Special Interest

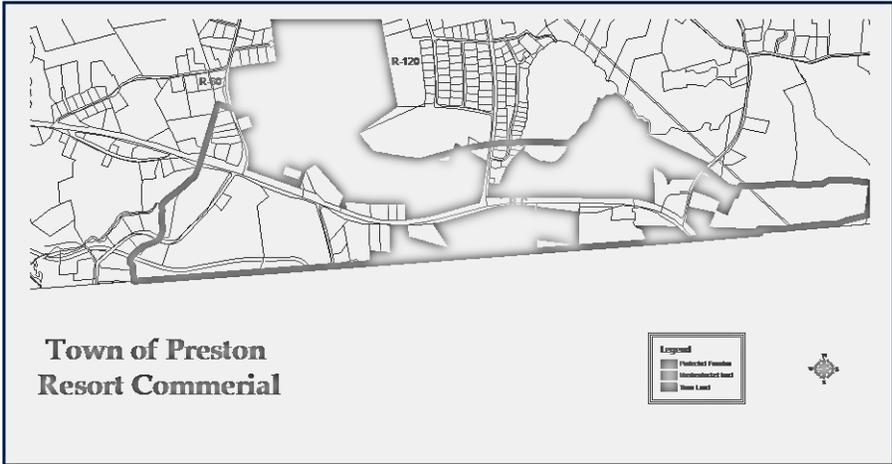


Route 2 Corridor  
Preston City Village  
Poquetanuck Village Hallville Mill Village  
Quinebaug Shetucket Rivers Valley National  
Heritage Corridor  
Preston Riverwalk — additional information is found in Addendum 1





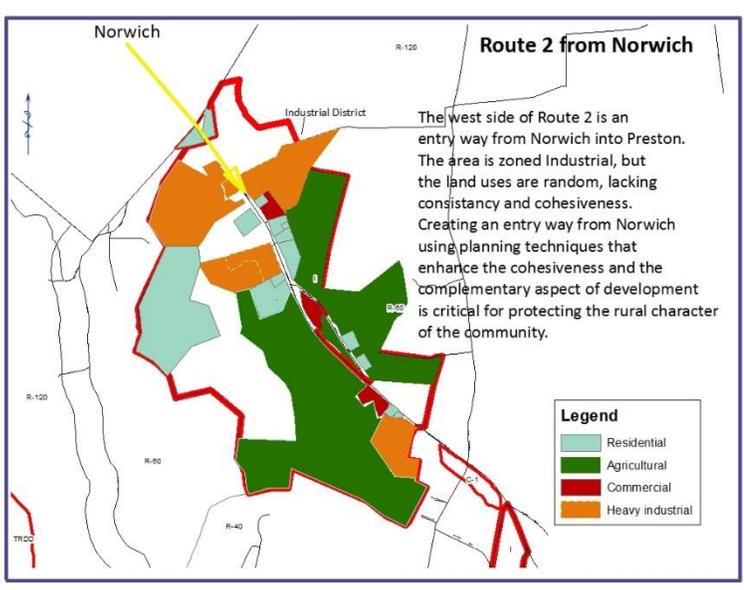
# Route 2 Corridor



Although there is a large area zoned for commercial use along the eastern section of Route 2, (about 450 acres), 30 percent or 133 acres of the commercially ZONED land is owned by the Mashantucket Pequot Tribe, and

remains vacant. Fifty two acres are owned by the Town of Preston, and are developed for municipal facilities, about 10 acres are under the farmland preservation program and about 35 acres are designated roads. Over 50% of the land is either, Mashantucket, Town of Preston, roads or protected farmland. This fact has substantially reduced the amount of land that may be developed commercially along Route 2.

The western section of Route 2 is an entry way to Preston from Norwich. There is a great deal of tourist traffic driving to either the beach or the casinos. Creating a positive image along this route is critical. The area lacks cohesiveness and character. Consideration should be given to changing the western portion of Route 2 to Resort Commercial (RC) especially since development within the RC district is limited, or at least to amend the regulations to create a more industrial park type setting by requiring better screening and oversight for landscaping. Creating visual cohesiveness along the Route 2 corridor will improve the likelihood of investment into the community.



# Preston City Village



Preston City includes an area that surrounds the intersections of Routes 164 and 165 and Old Shetucket Turnpike (Route 605). A portion of the area is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Historically, Preston City served as a social, business, and agricultural center, but lacks cohesiveness and activities that generally exists in a town center. The area was rezoned to "Preston City Village District" (PCVD) in 2001. Although only two neighborhood businesses have been incorporated into the district, the need to retain the district is critical and will allow flexibility within the area to provide a mixed use village. The PCVD incorporates various development tools that includes property inventory, historic and locational ratings and architectural design standards. The design standards

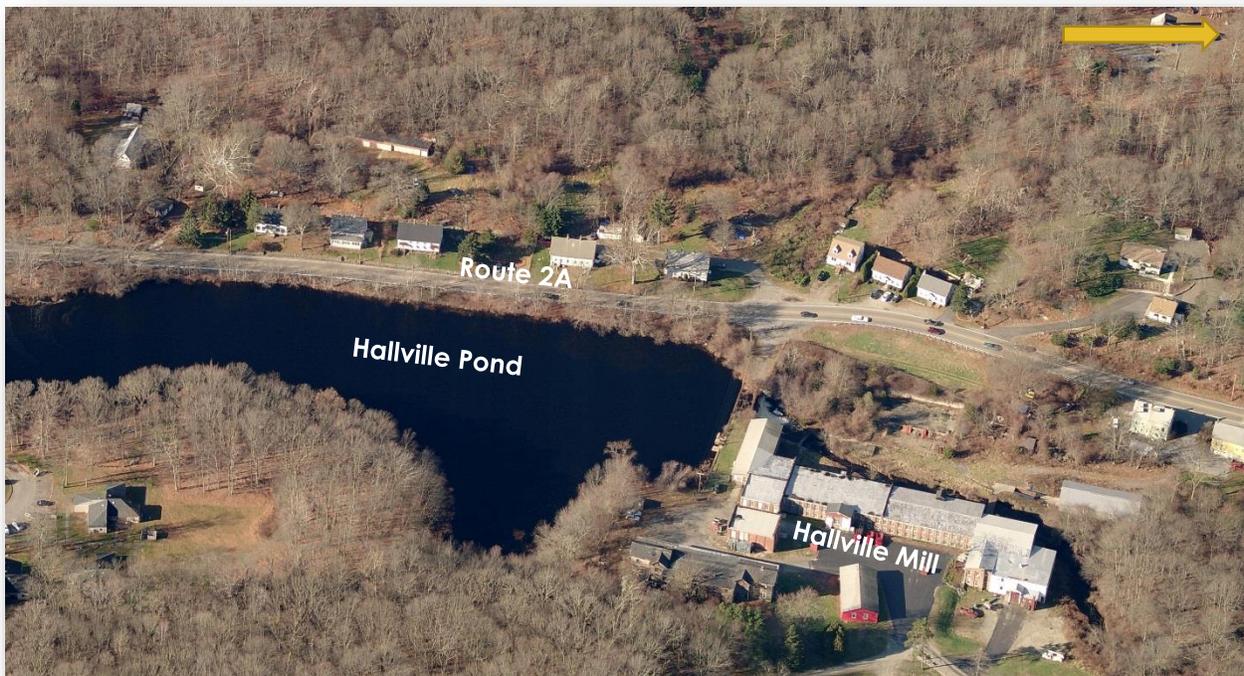
address scale, architecture, proportion, and sign design. The property rating system identifies the significance of each property's location and architecture.

## Poquetantuck Village



Poquetanuck Village is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Similar to Preston City, Poquetanuck Village has traditionally housed a mixture of land uses at a higher density. The village, settled in in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, was the site of early settlement with coastal trading, lumber production, iron making, and ship building, as the major industries. The village generally encompasses a winding portion of Route 2A that extends from the bridge over Halls Brook to the intersection with Route 117 with 2 intersecting roads, Brickyard Road and Cider Mill Road. There are minimal building setbacks, and although the village has somewhat of a pedestrian setting, there are no sidewalks to promote the pedestrian character of the area. The village is bordered by the sensitive natural and archaeological resources of Poquetanuck Cove. The state highway cuts the village in two pieces with its fast moving traffic, as a result, its quaintness has been compromised. However, the area has more of a village character than that of Preston City simply because of the proximity of buildings to each other and the fact that most of the structures are historic. Creating a village district designation along with streetscape improvements that slows traffic could help mitigate the impact on the character if the village from the fast moving traffic along Route 2A.

## Hallville Mill Village



Hallville Mill and the associated mill village of workers' housing are located on 30 acres to the south of Route 2 and includes both sides of Indiantown Brook and Hallville Mill Pond. The impoundment of Indiantown Brook creates the manmade Hallville Pond. The village is representative of a small-scale 19<sup>th</sup> century mill village. Hallville Mill, a former woolen mill, was one of the major employers in Preston in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Its current use is an electric contractor. Similar to Poquetanuck Village, the residential area along Route 2A/Route 117 has fast

moving traffic that has impacted the quality of the village. Creating a village district may be feasible; however, this area should remain primarily residential (except the mill). Implementing streetscape improvements could help mitigate the impacts of the traffic.

## Preston Riverwalk

The Preston Riverwalk Plan of Conservation and Development (PRPOCD) was adopted by the Planning and Zoning Commission in 2013. The Preston Redevelopment Agency (PRA) is the town's development authority for the property in accordance with Section 8-126 of the Connecticut General Statutes (CGS). The



PRPOCD outlines some ideas for land use and development concepts. Supplementing the plan noted below are priorities for the redevelopment at the site. The first priorities are as follows:

- 1) Complete the environmental cleanup at the site.
  - a) Abatement and / or demolition the remaining buildings on the site.
  - b) Abate Hazardous materials at the pier and removal of removal of abandoned oil and steam piping.
  - c) Abate any "Areas of Concern" (AOC) in compliance with the State of Connecticut Remediation Standard Regulations.
- 2) Site Infrastructure:
  - a) Inspect and design / repair of the dam at Hospital Pond.
  - b) Replace / upgrade the "at grade" railroad crossing.
  - c) Locate and remove all abandoned subgrade infrastructure. (Sanitary sewers, steam conduits, water mains, inactive storm sewers, electrical conduit, manholes, etc.)
  - d) Install water mains and hydrants along the west side of Route 12.
- 3) Other:
  - a) Prepare marine survey of the pier.
  - b) Loam and seed all areas disturbed during demolition.

#### 4) Master Planning.

In order to market the site in smaller parcels and create a planned approach that will enable a sustainable economic development project, the PRA may desire to prepare a master development plan that includes infrastructure improvements and their design and the subdivision of the parcel. Subdivision approval is not required for municipal subdivision; however, at such time a site is to be developed by an investor, approval will be required of the lot and their plans. This will allow a subdivision of the parcel conceptually, but will allow lots to be tweaked to meet the needs of the developer. The master plan could also address the following issues:

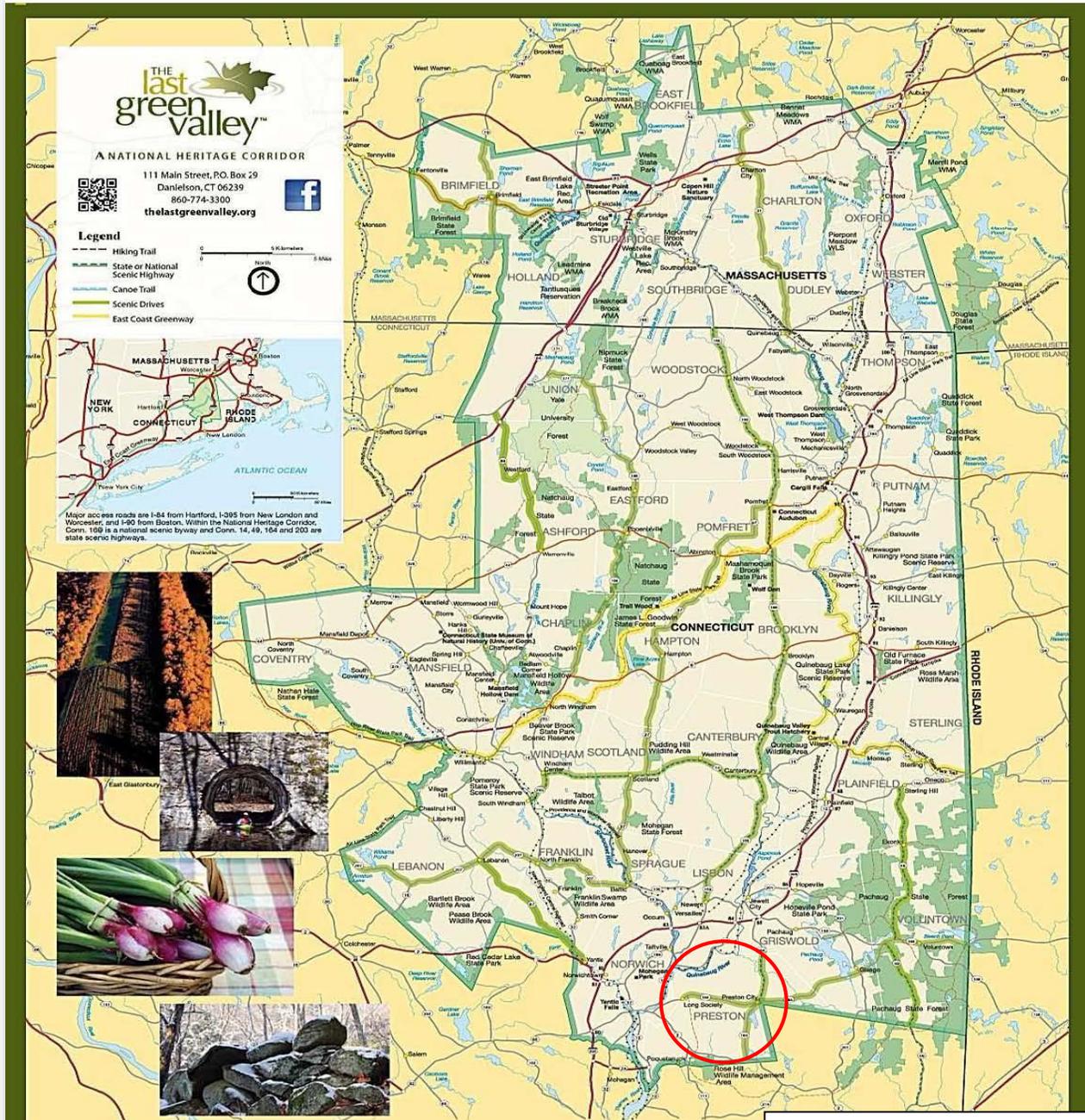
- a) Evaluate and if appropriate, design a waterfront Riverwalk including public access to the peninsula and pier.
- b) Design a new pier for public use.
- c) Design open spaces, public parks, walking trails, river access, and a memorial park at the Hellcat crash site, etc.
- d) Design the necessary infrastructure and streets for individual parcels.
- e) Evaluate, and if appropriate, design, and create a "Revolutionary War Frigate Shipbuilding Center" complete with time period structures.
- f) Construct, as appropriate, Infrastructure and streets for individual parcels, including pedestrian access and connections.
- g) Full restoration of the Administration Building for reuse. The structure could be utilized for Town Offices, a 'site museum / historical center' or an office building for sale or lease by the Town.

After such time the plans are completed, public improvements should be made and should include the creation of the waterfront park, if feasible, a new pier for public use, and the public park and recreation areas that could include the enhancement of the archaeological, historic, and natural resource areas and the linear pedestrian connection of the open space areas with various resources.

#### 5) Marketing.

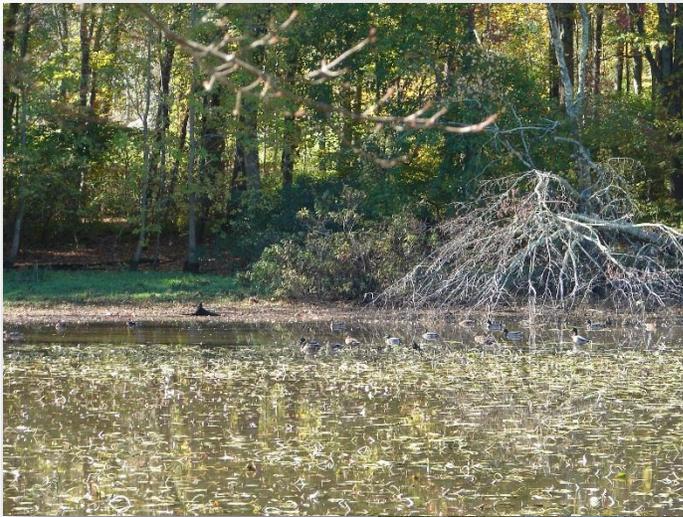
If the PRA's current marketing approaches do not result in near-term success in revitalizing the site, a more aggressive long-range marketing campaign will be required. As the Agency continues to significantly progress the final stages of demolition and remediation, they should shift their focus from 'clean up' to economic development. At that time, the PRA and their real estate broker will be ready to declare "Preston Riverwalk is Now Open for Business". This effort will require the aforementioned land planner, their broker and the Agency working together to create a package allowing them to initiate local, statewide and/or national ad campaigns.

# Quinebaug Shetucket Rivers Valley National Heritage Corridor – Last Green Valley



Map 5  
 Source: Last Green Valley

1994, the Quinebaug and Shetucket Rivers Valley was officially designated by Congress as a National Heritage Corridor. This designation recognizes the unique historic and natural assets of the 26 Connecticut and nine Massachusetts municipalities within the corridor. The corridor, of which Preston is a part, includes municipalities in their entirety. Preston is the southern-most town within the corridor. It is the mission of Quinebaug-Shetucket Heritage Corridor, Inc. also known as *The Last Green Valley*, to conserve, celebrate and enhance the significant historical, cultural, natural and scenic resources of *The Last Green Valley* while promoting quality of life based on a strong, healthy economy compatible with the region's character. The heritage corridor designation provides a coordination and economic synergy for the region through agencies marketing efforts and grants to improve or promote the mission of the Agency.



# Environmental Features





## Environmental Features

This section discusses Preston's natural resources and issues facing their protection. A healthy environment not only ensures the continuation of integral life processes, but also offers economic, quality-of-life, educational, and recreational benefits.

### Topography and Geology

Preston is located in Connecticut's Eastern Uplands. It formed thousands of years ago as glaciers passed over New England with glacial deposits of gravel, sand and boulders. As a result of the glacier, the town's topography varies, with elevations peaking at just over 350 feet above sea level. The higher elevations, scattered throughout Preston, are located in areas such as east of Brown School Road, east of Amos Lake, and Prospect Hill. The lower lying lands, which are generally less than 100 feet above sea level, are found along the Thames River, Poquetanuck Cove, and along other river and stream beds. The bedrock underlying most of the town consists mainly of crystalline metamorphic rocks known as gneisses and schists. However, the Preston Gabbro underlies the northeast corner of Town near its border with Griswold and North Stonington. Gabbro is a dark-colored, iron and manganese rich rock that originated as molten material.

Segments of the Honey Hill Fault and Lake Char Fault either border or is located in proximity to Preston's southern and eastern boundary, respectively. The faults separate two very different geologic terranes known as the Avalon Terrane and Iapetus Terrane. Except for a sliver along its southern border, the Town is underlain by bedrock of the Iapetus Terrane comprised of gneisses and schist of an ancient ocean environment compared to the much older granitic gneisses of the Avalon Terrane to the south and east, which is continental rock. Both faults are tectonically inactive.

Due to its rural setting, Preston residents derive drinking water from the ground water resources underlying the Town. The highest percentages of well owners in Town rely on drinking water that is extracted from bedrock drilled water wells that intersect cracks and fractures filled with water. Bedrock wells in Town generally afford home owners with sufficient volumes of water and generally satisfactory drinking water quality. Well water derived from the gneiss and schist rock in some cases may yield elevated levels of iron or manganese or may be characterized by low pH and hardness levels all of which may, depending on concentrations, require water treatment to improve overall taste, minimize staining of light colored laundry and plumbing fixtures, and the corrosive nature of the water.

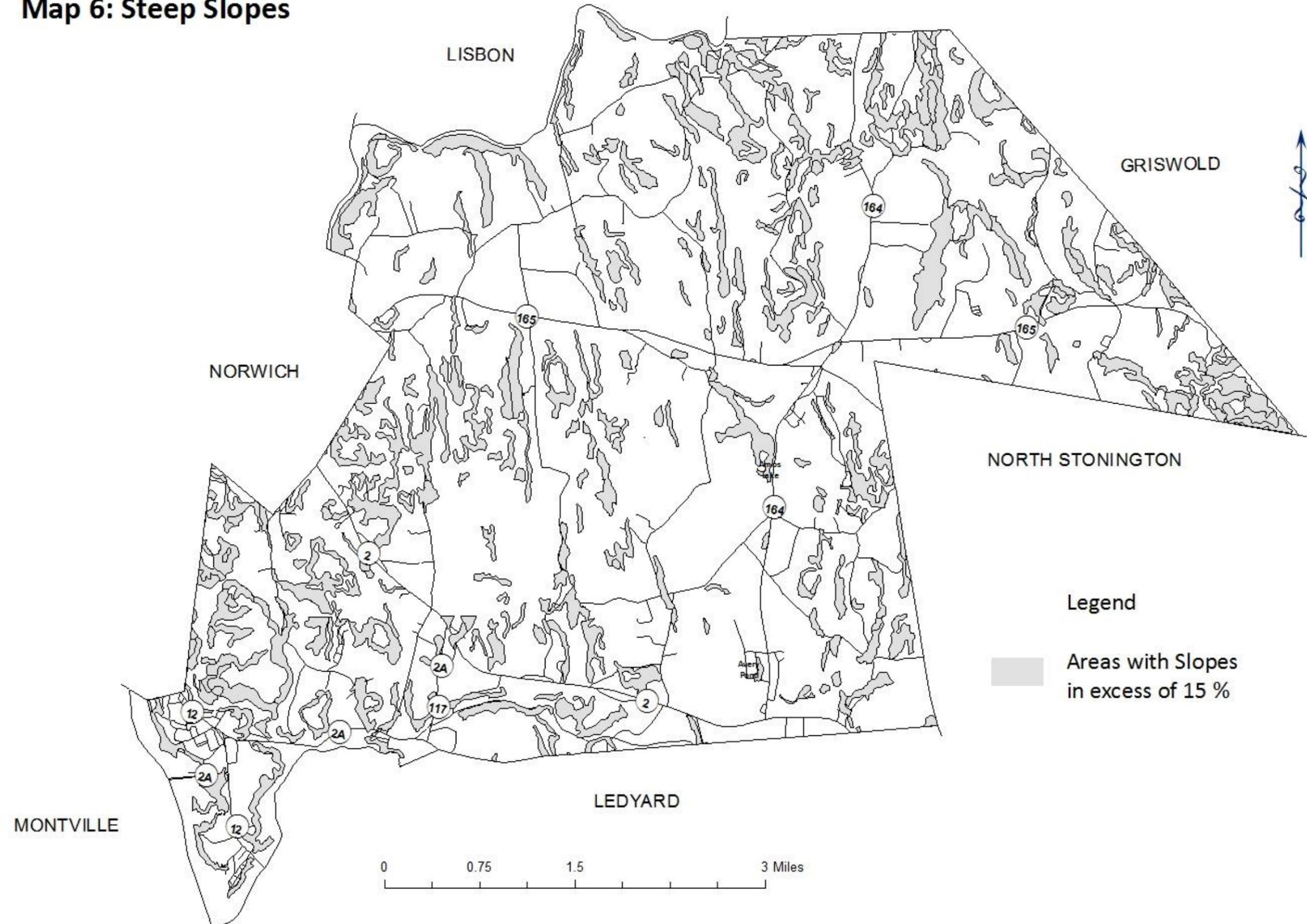
Steep slopes, especially those over 15 percent, pose limitations to the construction of roads, buildings, and septic systems. GIS data approximates that 4,513 acres of

Preston consists of slopes over 15 percent which accounts for 21% of the town. (See map 6 Steep Slopes)

## Watersheds

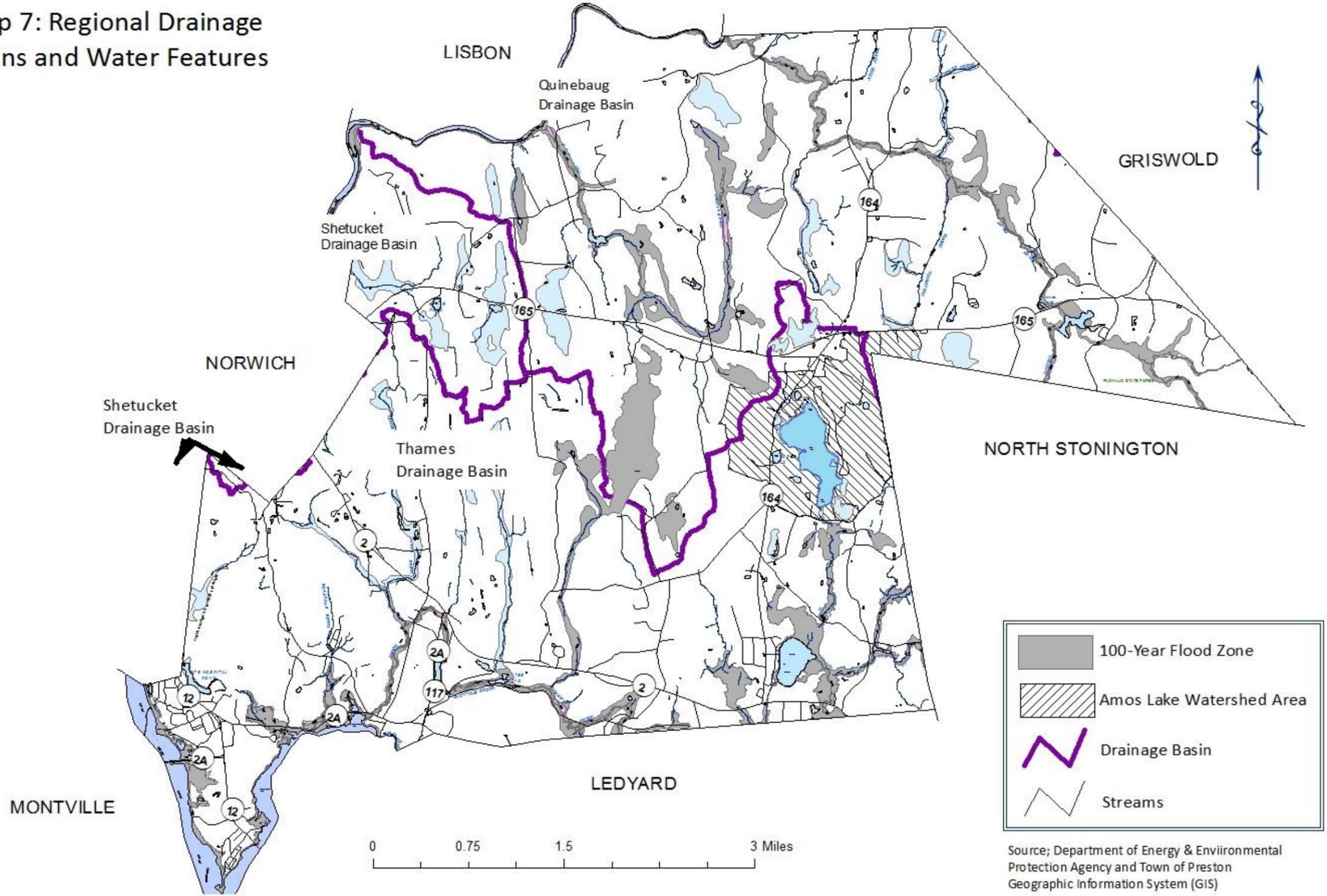
All of Preston is located within the Thames River drainage basin. Preston's topography further divides the town into regional and subregional drainage basins. Regional drainage basins include the Thames River, the Quinebaug River, the Shetucket River, and the Pachaug River. Most of the southern portion of the town (9,900 acres) is located in the Thames River regional drainage basin. Part of the northwest corner of Preston (1,300 acres) is a part of the Shetucket River regional drainage basin. Approximately 9,200 acres, which encompasses most of the northern part of Preston, is part of the Quinebaug River drainage basin. One acre of land that is located along the North Stonington border is a part of the Pachaug River drainage basin. (Map 7 Regional Drainage Basins and water features)

**Map 6: Steep Slopes**





Map 7: Regional Drainage Basins and Water Features



	100-Year Flood Zone
	Amos Lake Watershed Area
	Drainage Basin
	Streams

Source; Department of Energy & Environmental Protection Agency and Town of Preston Geographic Information System (GIS)



## Soils

Since the glaciers deposited materials, climate and living organisms have been continually modifying the materials, resulting in the soils that currently characterize Preston. The following generalized soil associations comprise Preston:

**Canton-Charlton:** these soils run north and south through the center southeast and east of Preston. These loamy soils are usually gently sloping to steep, well- drained or somewhat excessively well-drained and are found on glacial till uplands.

**Hollis-Chatfield:** these soils are associations are found in the central - western area of Preston. This association is a loamy soil, usually gently sloping to very steep, and somewhat excessively drained to well-drained. These soils are also found on glacial till uplands.

**Hinkley-Merrimac-Agawam:** these soils are found scattered throughout Preston. This soil occurs on outwash plains and terraces, ranges from level to steep, and is excessively drained to well-drained. This association consists of sandy and loamy soils.

**Paxton:** these soils characterize a path of land in the eastern part of Preston. Along Broad Brook the soils range from nearly level to steep, are well-drained to moderately well-drained. These are loamy soils with a compact substratum that are found on drumloidal glacial till uplands.

Source: The Soil Survey Geographic (SSURGO) database for the State of Connecticut. Note the SSURGO assesses features for each soil type. The soil survey is not site-specific, but indicates broad patterns.

## Farmland

The Federal Farmland Protection Policy Act of 1981 and 1995 sets the framework for identifying soils types that are important for agricultural purposes. The Act concerns Federal actions that may contribute to the unnecessary and irreversible conversion of farmland to nonagricultural uses. There are three categories of farmland soils: *Prime Farmland*, *Farmland of State Importance*, and *Locally Important Farmland*. According to the Act:

**Prime Farmland:** Land that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops and is also available for these uses. It has the soil quality, growing season, and moisture supply needed to produce economically sustained high yields of crops when treated and managed according to acceptable farming methods, including water management. In general, prime farmlands have an adequate and dependable water supply from precipitation or irrigation, a favorable temperature and growing season, acceptable acidity or alkalinity, acceptable salt and sodium content, and few or no rocks. They are permeable to water and air. Prime farmlands are not excessively erodible or saturated with water for a long period of time, and they either do not flood frequently or are protected from flooding. [SSM, USDA Handbook No. 18, October 1993]

**Farmland of state importance:** Soils that fail to meet one or more of the requirements of prime farmland, but are important for the production of

food, feed, fiber, or forage crops. They include those soils that are nearly prime farmland and that economically produce high yields of crops when treated and managed according to acceptable farming methods. (Connecticut Environmental Conditions Online, Complete Resource Guide).

**Locally Important Farmland Soils:** Soils that are not prime or statewide importance but are used for the production of high value food, fiber or horticultural crops. This land may be important to the local economy due to its productivity or value.

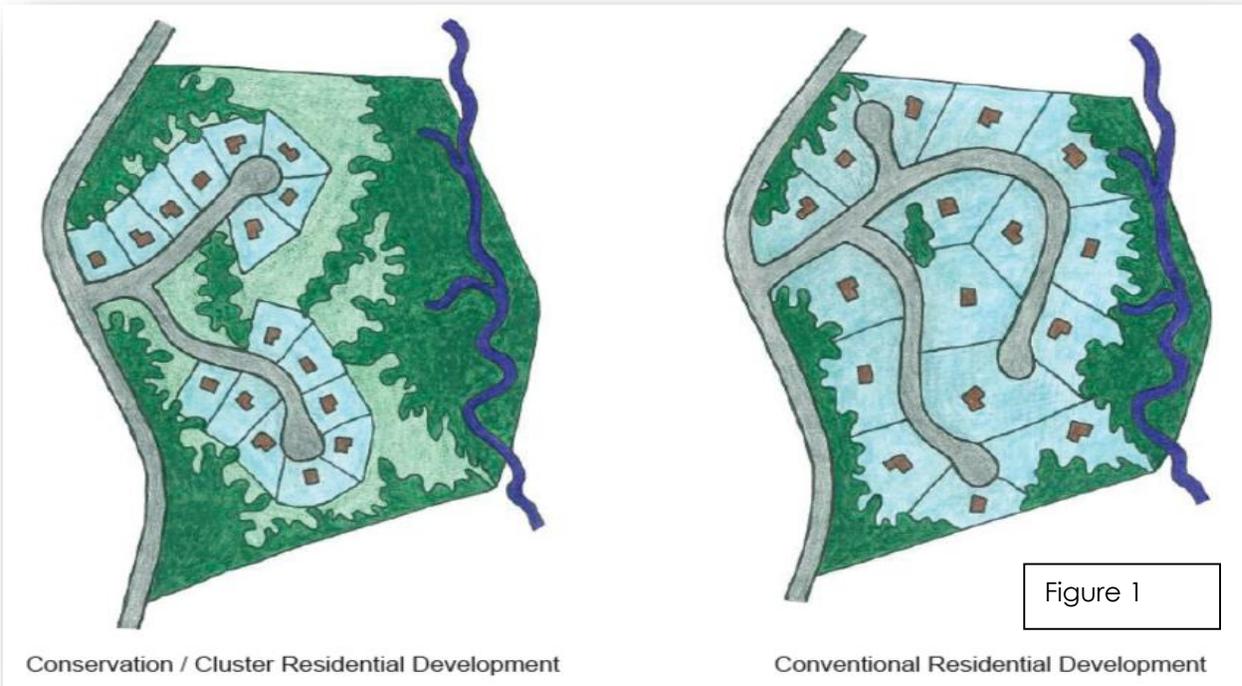
There are currently no Locally Important Farmland Soils in Preston. Recognizing the value of local soil resources helps the town become eligible for the federal Farmland Protection Program. These categories do not necessarily imply that the soils are currently being farmed, but identify those areas that are most suitable for farming activities.



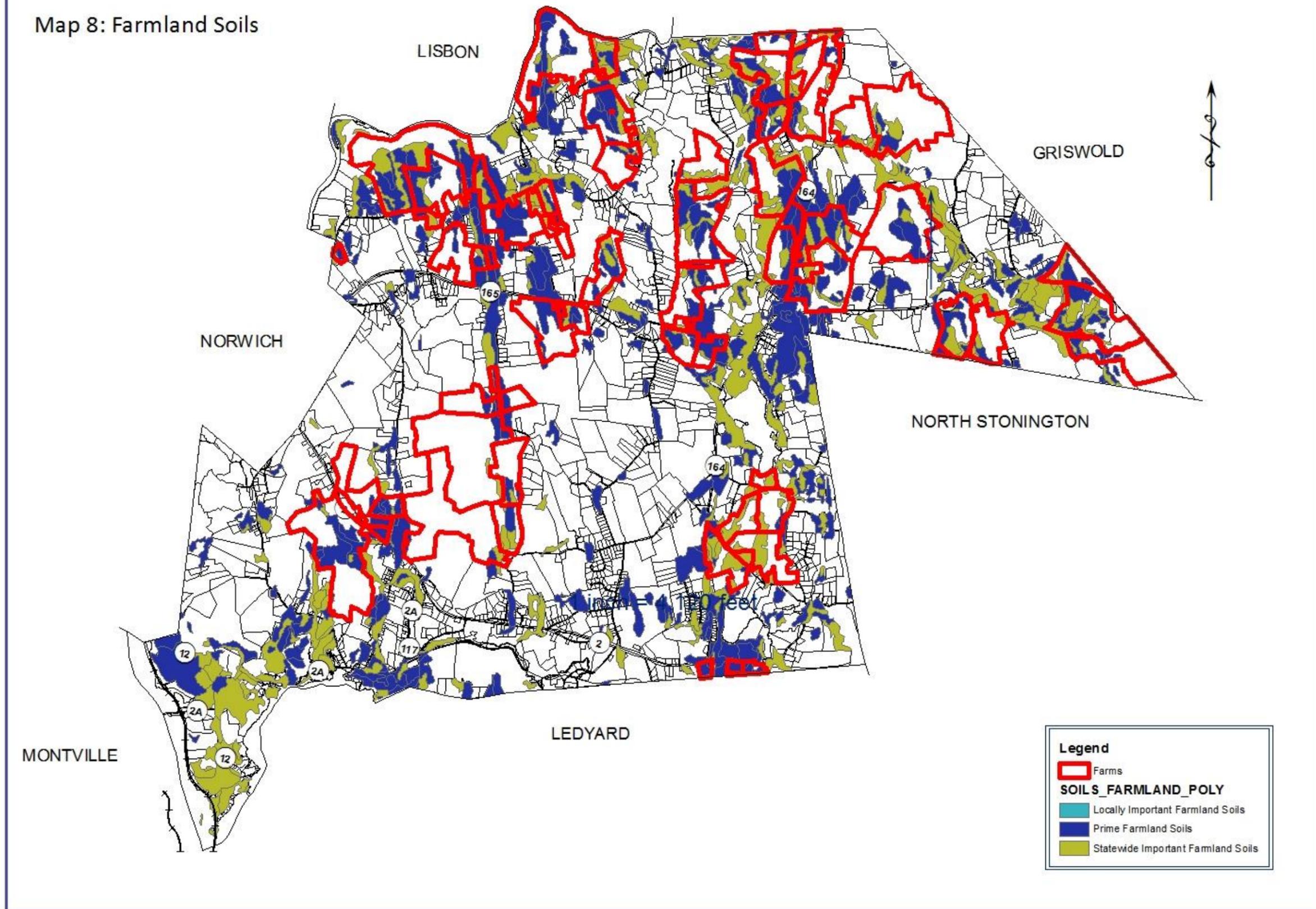
Most of the agricultural soils are found in the northern and eastern parts of Preston, and many are currently being used for agricultural purposes. Happyland and the land at and around Preston Riverwalk have soils appropriate for farm use, but are developed for other uses. (See Map 8 Farmland Soils)

A prime agricultural area, entitled "Agricultural Alley" begins in Preston City and continues north along Route 164 to the Griswold town line. It is bordered by Follyworks Brook and Park Road to the east and by Krug Road to the west. This section of Route 164 is a designated "Scenic Road" in accordance with the Connecticut General Statutes Sections 13b-31c-1 to 13b-31c-5. A variety of agricultural uses are present within the area, notably hay and corn fields, perennial fruits, field crops and herbs. There are six separate parcels for which the State Department of Agriculture has acquired agricultural development rights. (See map 9 Protected Farms) The town and the state could partner with other

farmers within the area to acquire additional development rights for other parcels. The land on the west side of Route 164 is zoned R-60 and the land on the east side of Route 164 is zoned R-80. Rezoning this west side of Route 164 from R-60 to R-80 could aid in protecting the agricultural uses. In addition, implementing conservation subdivisions could be a mechanism to retain farmland or other significant resources. This type of subdivision may have a more compact development area, but there is less paving making the infrastructure up keep and expenditures to a minimum and preserves open spaces and resources. Noted in Figure 1 is an example of a conventional subdivision and a conservation subdivision taken from the Olathe, Kansas Comprehensive Plan.

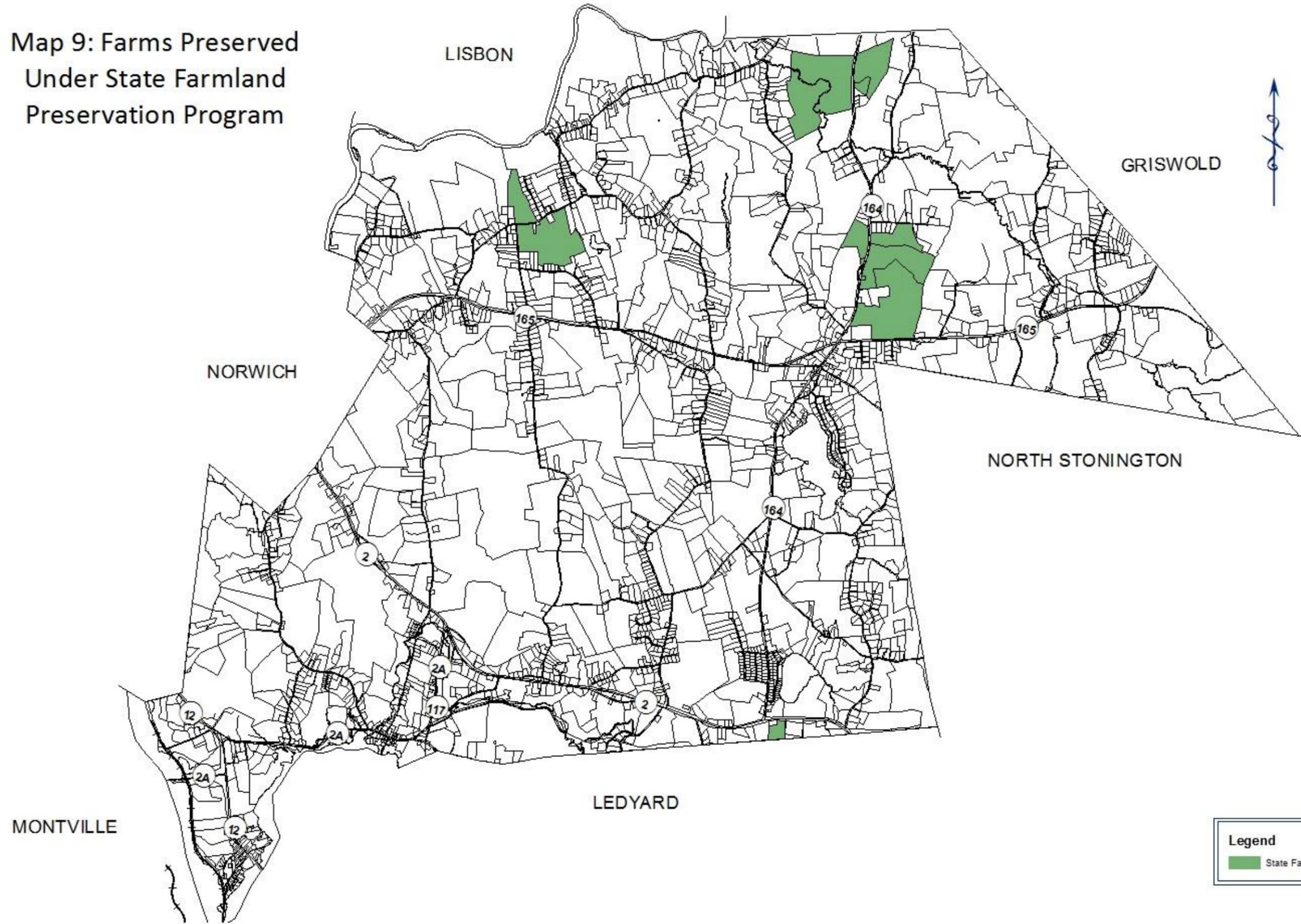


Map 8: Farmland Soils





Map 9: Farms Preserved Under State Farmland Preservation Program



## Water and Coastal Resources

Preston's water resources include coastal resources, surface waters, wetlands, and groundwater. Common threats to water quality include failed septic systems, polluted runoff from lawns and stormwater systems, agricultural practices, and construction that does not employ best management practices (BMPs).

Preston is one of 36 municipalities in Connecticut that is governed by the Connecticut Coastal Management Act (CCMA), and contains approximately 5.4 miles of coastline along the Thames River and Poquetanuck Cove. CCMA regulatory controls provide some level of resource protection. Connecticut General Statutes, Section 22a-92 provides specific standards relating to the protection of coastal resources and fostering coordination and consistency among various levels of government. The CCMA requires that the Plan of Conservation and Development be consistent with the coastal management policies and standards set forth in the state legislation. In general the policies relate to the protection of coastal resources, the promotion of public access to coastal areas, and the assurance that water-dependent uses take precedence over non-dependent land use. Approximately 800 acres of Preston are located within the Coastal Boundary

The CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) Office of Long Island Sound Programs has jurisdiction over activities affecting tidal wetlands. According to DEEP, no permits for coastal wetlands disturbances in Preston were issued from 2003 to 2013. There was one Coastal Site Plan application reviewed by the Planning and Zoning Commission in that same period. The Long Island Sound Program details how the states, federal agencies, and local partners address efforts to improve water quality, restore habitats, and protect fish and wildlife. The program also addresses several Coastal Management Themes, as follows: Waters and Watersheds, Habitats and Wildlife, Sound Communities, and Science and Management. Each Theme recommends outcomes, objectives and Strategies.

Map 10 shows the location of Connecticut coastal towns and Map 11 shows Preston's coastal area and Map 12 visually identifies the significant resources and their spacial relationship.

## Poquetanuck Cove

Poquetanuck Cove is a two mile long cove of the Thames River, located within the Towns of Preston and Ledyard, Connecticut. It has been described by officials from the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (CT DEEP) as the best remaining example of a high quality brackish water tidal marsh wetland system in the Thames River watershed. Designation as a bird sanctuary

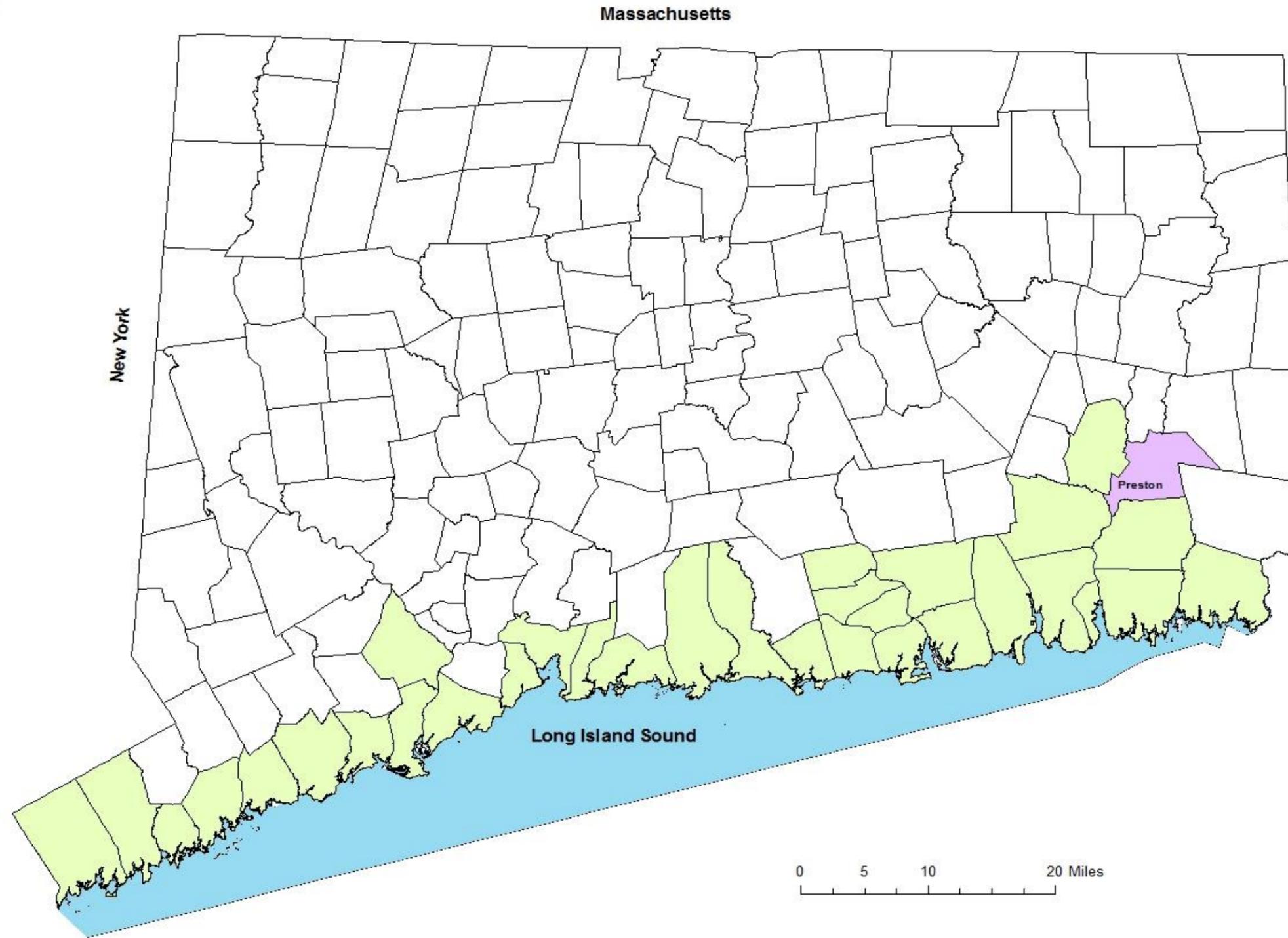
in 1969, was the beginning of a long history of conservation focus on the cove. Significant portions of the shoreland and upland areas are under protected status which helps support a rich diversity of birds, fish and marsh vegetation found in the cove. Landowners with cove frontage include The Nature Conservancy (TNC), Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (CT DEEP) and Avalonia Land Conservancy, Inc. (ALC). Two public car top boat launches are available on the Ledyard side of Poquetanuck Cove.

Fish from the Atlantic Ocean pass through the cove on their way to their freshwater breeding habitat upstream. In 2013, a fishway installed at the Hallville dam in Preston restored access to historic habitat for the first time in over 150 years. The cove is a popular recreational destination for canoes and kayaks. Fishing and blue crabbing attract many



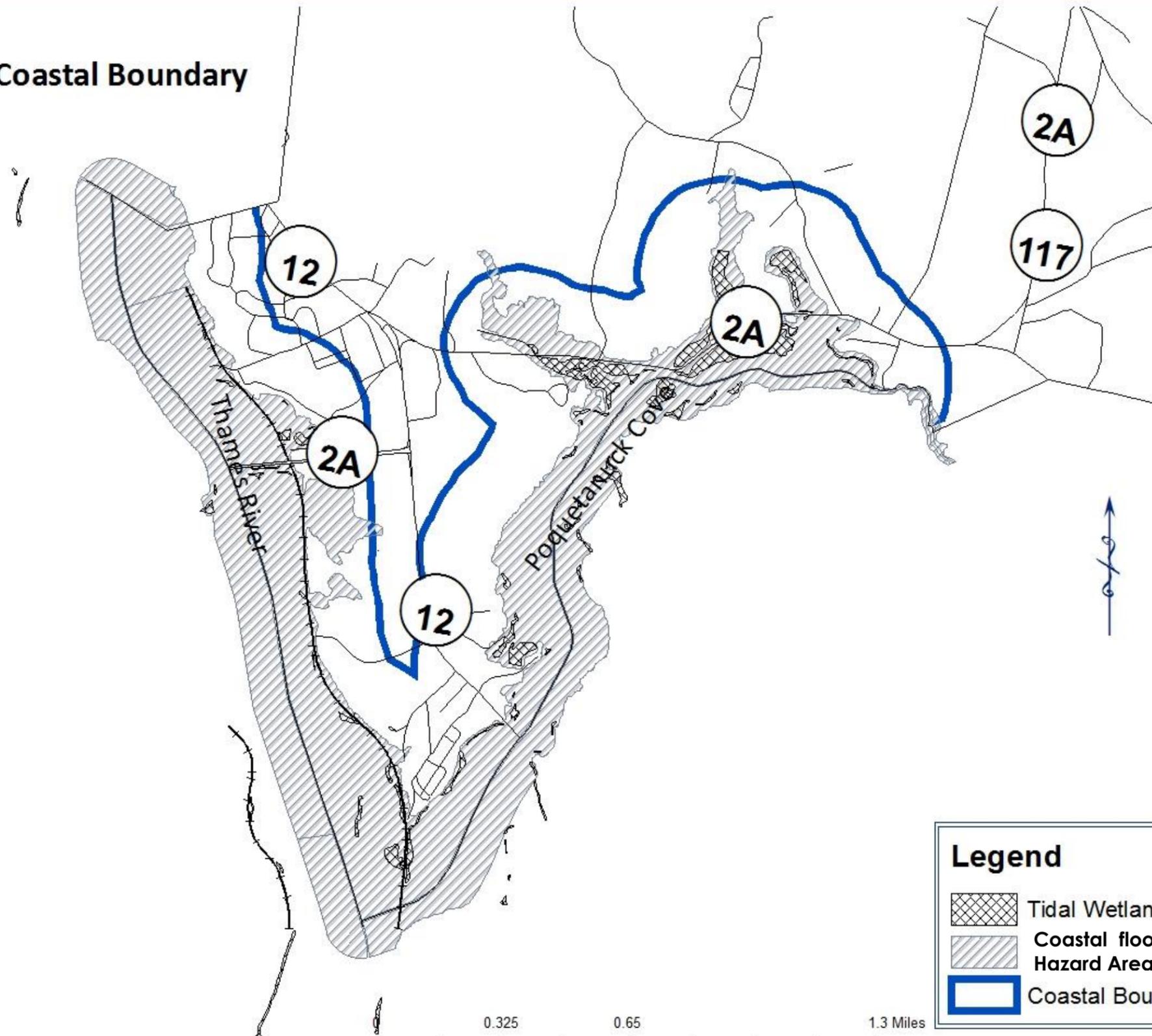
cove visitors, humans and birds alike. Several easy hikes and bird watching opportunities are also available around the cove. Beautiful scenic vistas are offered to those just passing by. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) *Northeast Coastal Study* lists the cove as a regionally significant fish and wildlife habitat. However, the health of the cove is in jeopardy. While significant portions of the coastal area upland of the coastal boundary are permanently protected from development, existing residential and transportation development along the cove, and an outdated storm water infrastructure threaten to degrade the habitat in the cove. Land development in the watershed and sediment laden water carried in with the tide are changing the characteristics of the cove. Rising sea levels and more frequent storm events threaten some of the important marsh areas.

# Map 10: Connecticut Coastal Towns





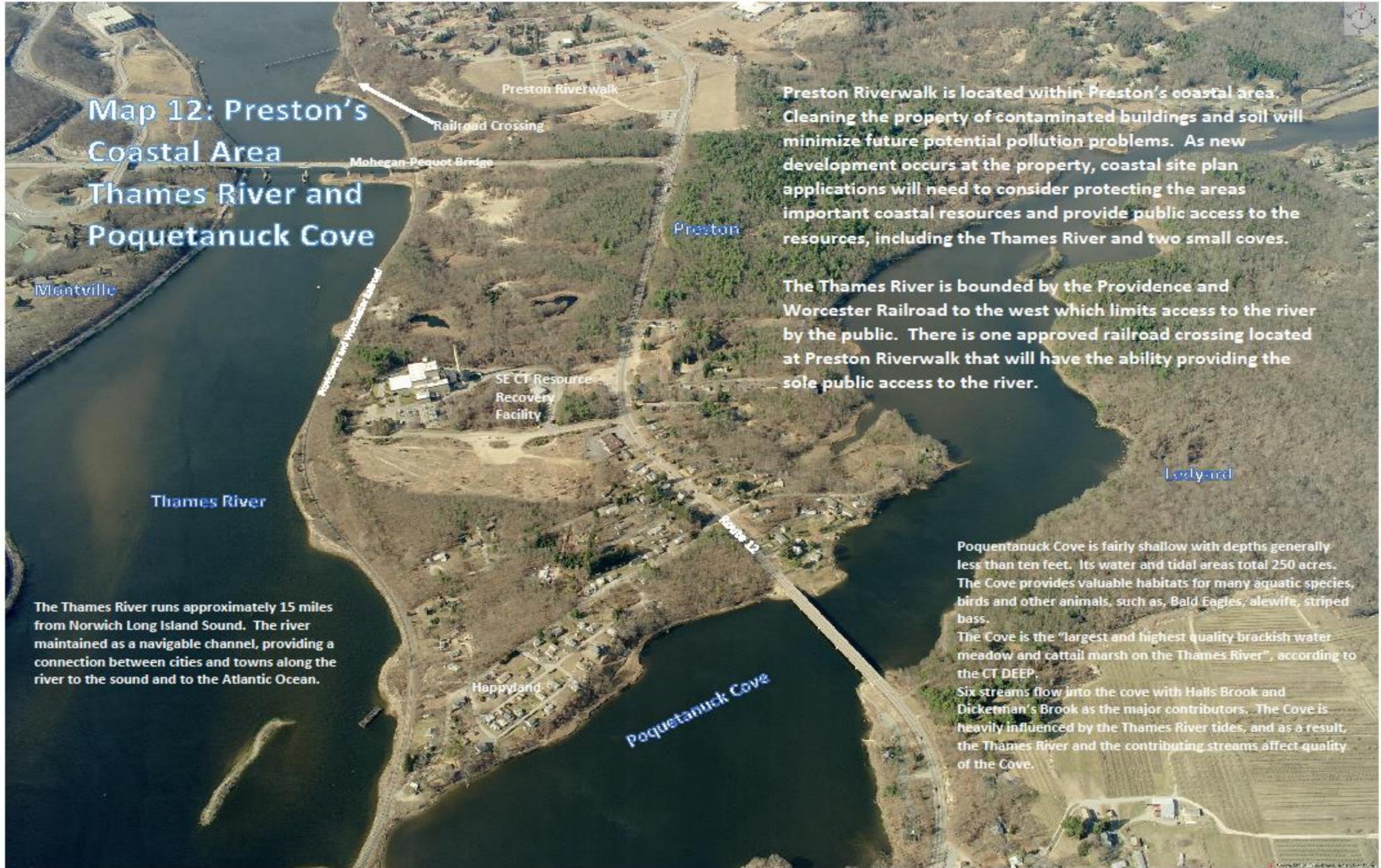
**Map 11: Preston's Coastal Boundary**



**Legend**

-  Tidal Wetland
-  Coastal flood Hazard Area
-  Coastal Boundary





## Map 12: Preston's Coastal Area Thames River and Poquetanuck Cove

The Thames River runs approximately 15 miles from Norwich Long Island Sound. The river maintained as a navigable channel, providing a connection between cities and towns along the river to the sound and to the Atlantic Ocean.

Preston Riverwalk is located within Preston's coastal area. Cleaning the property of contaminated buildings and soil will minimize future potential pollution problems. As new development occurs at the property, coastal site plan applications will need to consider protecting the areas important coastal resources and provide public access to the resources, including the Thames River and two small coves.

The Thames River is bounded by the Providence and Worcester Railroad to the west which limits access to the river by the public. There is one approved railroad crossing located at Preston Riverwalk that will have the ability providing the sole public access to the river.

Poquetanuck Cove is fairly shallow with depths generally less than ten feet. Its water and tidal areas total 250 acres. The Cove provides valuable habitats for many aquatic species, birds and other animals, such as, Bald Eagles, alewife, striped bass. The Cove is the "largest and highest quality brackish water meadow and cattail marsh on the Thames River", according to the CT DEEP. Six streams flow into the cove with Halls Brook and Dicketman's Brook as the major contributors. The Cove is heavily influenced by the Thames River tides, and as a result, the Thames River and the contributing streams affect quality of the Cove.

In 2012, the Eastern Connecticut Conservation District (ECCD) led stakeholders through a series of three workshops using a Conservation Action Planning (CAP) process developed by TNC and World Wildlife Fund to accomplish the following objectives:

1. Identify conservation targets and assess their condition.
2. Identify and rank the primary threats to the overall condition of Poquetanuck Cove.
3. Define strategies to specifically address threats and restoration needs in the Cove.
4. Create a shared plan to assign specific strategies, actions and measurable outcomes and review progress over time.



Photo courtesy of CT DEEP – Poquetanuck Cove



Poquetanuck Cove

To prioritize implementation of on-the-ground conservation efforts, workshops were held involving local land use officials, other local stakeholders, and conservation and management professionals from many disciplines. During the CAP process, participants learned from each other

about the important relationships between healthy ecological systems and impacts from human activity and changes in the environment. The workshops addressed the need to protect a healthy ecosystem made up of a diverse coastal habitat for the plants, animals, and fish in the cove, and the people that rely on them.

Poquetanuck Cove's water quality is threatened by increased siltation and from septic runoff in the dense neighborhoods of Happyland and Aljen Heights (in Ledyard). While some of the increased sediment loads are due to activities in Preston, past studies have determined that the tides from the

Thames River are primarily responsible for the cove's siltation. While some siltation is part of a natural cycle, human activities can adversely accelerate the process. Clearly, Preston alone cannot ensure the viability of its coastal resources. In October 2013, the town entered into an intermunicipal agreement with the Town of Ledyard to protect voluntarily balance conservation and economic growth around the cove.

**CAP Results:** In June of 2012, thirty CAP workshop participants collaborated to identify a vision for the Cove and develop a set of conservation targets critical to the continued health of Poquetanuck Cove.

**Project Vision:** Conserve and manage the resources of Poquetanuck Cove to ensure continued integrity of diverse plant, animal and fish communities, clean water and safe access for all people to enjoy the beauty and richness of the Cove.

The Conservation Targets for Poquetanuck Cove determined to be most important were:

- Natural Plant and Animal Communities
- Land and Riverside Habitat Corridors
- Healthy Mosaic of Habitats
- Clean Water
- Land and Water Based Recreation

In August 2012, twenty-seven CAP participants ranked a list of critical threats to conservation targets and identified the following top concerns:

Critical Threats to Poquetanuck Cove:

- Incompatible transportation infrastructure
- Incompatible residential and commercial development and activities
- Impacts from climate change and severe weather
- Invasive species

## Fresh Surface Waters and Rivers

Preston's surface Waters include rivers, streams, lakes, and ponds. In addition to providing aesthetic and recreational values, surface waters recharge groundwater, provide fish and wildlife habitat, and can serve as receiving waters for industrial discharge or stormwater runoff. In addition to the Thames River, there are two other rivers in Preston: the Quinebaug River and the Shetucket River, both are located in the northerly section of the town.

## Quinebaug/Shetucket Rivers



The name "Quinebaug" is derived from the southern New England Native American term meaning "long pond". The river originates from Brimfield Lake and ponds northwest of Sturbridge, Massachusetts. The river joins Aspinnook Pond in Jewett City and then continues to the Shetucket River northeast. The River then flows to the

Thames River and continues to Long Island Sound. The Quinebaug River watershed covers 850 square miles, extending into western Rhode Island. It is home to numerous fish species including trout, bass and shad. The Shetucket River originates in Willimantic at the confluence of the Willimantic River and the Natchuag River. It is about 20 miles long and has a 45 square mile watershed. Approximately 4 miles northeast of Norwich, the Quinebaug River flows into the Shetucket River.

Land use abutting the rivers include farms, as well as a hydroelectric plant and residential properties. Conservation easements have been dedicated to the town for several parcels along the rivers. In addition, in 2004, 41 acres were acquired by the State of Connecticut DEEP along the Quinebaug River. The Quinebaug/Shetucket river corridor is an asset to the community and the protection and acquisition of conservation easements along the river should be continued.

## Streams

Preston's streams can be divided into those that flow northerly and those that flow southerly. In general, the streams located north of Route 165 run northerly, emptying into either the Shetucket River or Quinebaug River. These streams include Bates Pond Brook, Choate Brook, Broad Brook, and their tributaries. The southerly running streams, found south of Route 165, include Dickerman Brook, Shewville Brook, Halls Brook, and their tributaries. The southerly flowing streams generally drain into either Poquetanuck Cove or directly into the Thames River.

Water's path of travel from the smaller tributary streams to larger streams and to larger water bodies is an important factor to consider in land use planning. Activities along a smaller stream may affect larger streams and rivers. For example, increasing impervious surfaces upstream (e.g., paved areas and buildings) increases the quantity and velocity of water entering the stream by minimizing the amount of rainfall that seeps into the ground. Careful planning during construction of new development is important to ensure that increase in volume and velocity does not occur or impact downstream properties.

## Broad Brook Streambelt

Broad Brook originates at the outlet of Lewis Pond Dam near where Lewis Road meets Route 165. It continues northwest for 4.73 miles passing beneath Route 164. Before emptying into the Quinebaug River, it is joined by Hollowell Brook, Ayers Brook, and Sheep Barn Brook. Primarily, it borders forested and agriculture land. Most sections of Broad Brook are listed as environmentally sensitive areas due to the significant natural resources within its proximity such as wetland soils, 100 year floodplain, and aquifers. The brook is stocked annually by the CT DEEP with brook and brown trout. The CT DEEP has determined that a portion of Broad Brook is impaired for recreation use due to elevated bacteria levels. In order to protect the brook it is recommended that the area west of Route 164 and north of 165 be rezoned from R-60 to R-80, if development occurs in close proximity of the brook, conservation development techniques should be implemented, such as, low impact development techniques, Best Management Practices, buffers or conservation subdivisions; in areas where there are agricultural uses, work with farmers to minimize their impacts to the brook. Lastly the town should look to purchase land along the brook or acquisition of development rights. (See Map13 Broad Brook Streambelt)

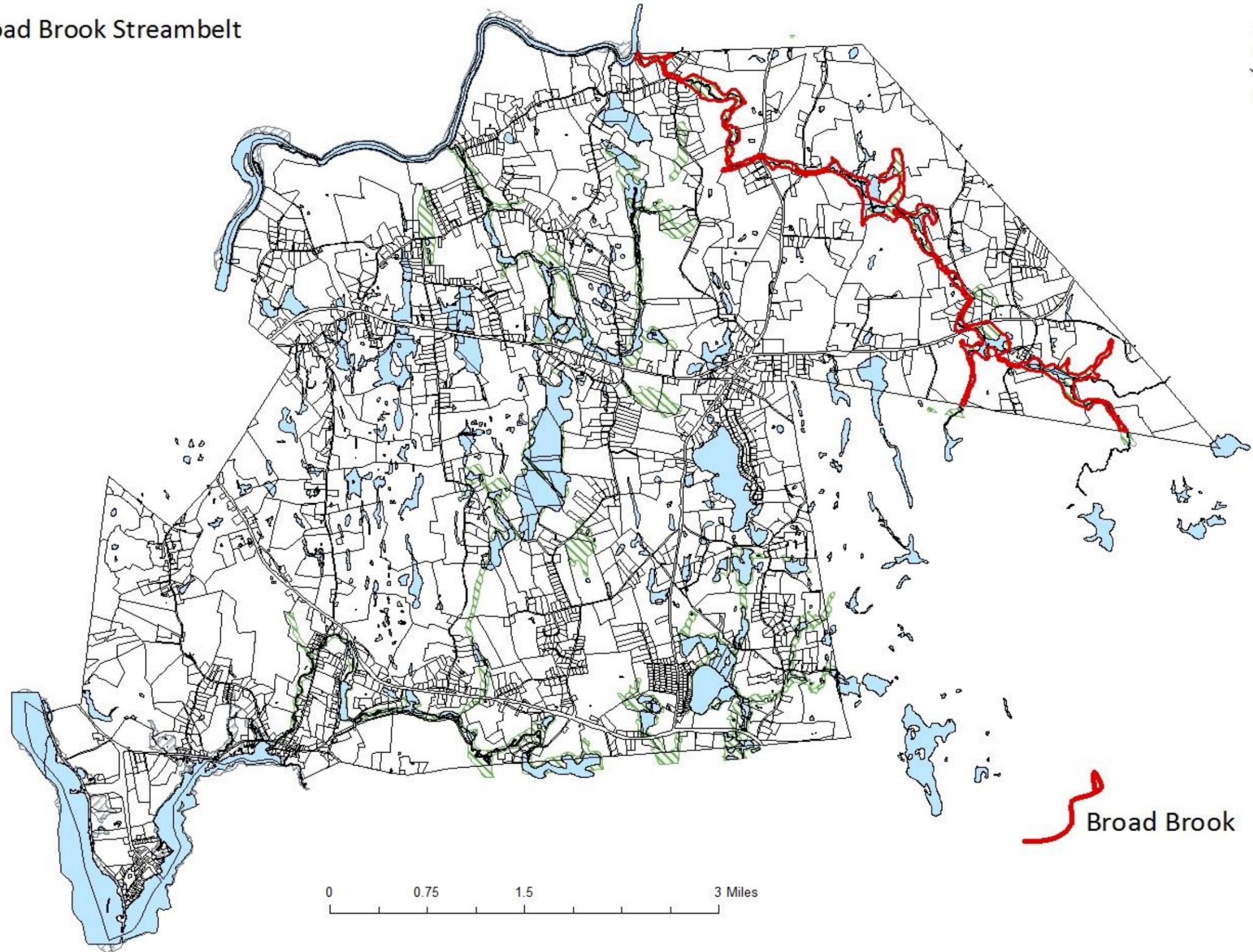
## Lakes and Ponds

Preston has seven ponds with a surface area of five acres or greater: Amos Lake (105 acres), Avery Pond (50 acres), Hallville Pond (20 acres), Hospital Pond (15 acres), Ayer Pond (10 acres), Cooks Pond (6 acres), and Gates Pond (5 acres).

### Amos Lake

Amos Lake is a natural glacial lake; however in 1836, James Cook, who had purchased the Lake's water rights, built a dam to raise the level of the Lake. The Lake was named after Hugh Amos, one of Preston's first surveyors. Amos Lake has become a recreational focal point within Preston for swimming, fishing, and boating. The CT DEEP has a boat launch on the west side of the lake. In early 2014, the Town acquired a 30 acre parcel abutting the boat launch.

Map 13: Broad Brook Streambelt



Amos Lake is Preston's largest lake. It has a maximum depth of over 40 feet according to the Connecticut DEEP, and a 920-acre watershed and has problems due to phosphorus loading which is a result of the densely populated area surrounding the lake. The lack of sewers combined with presence of sandy soils in the area continues to threaten the lake, as does waste from waterfowl.

According to the CT DEEP, there are impairments to the lake resulting from algae and nutrients most likely from the waterfowl and septic systems. The Amos Lake Association has taken an active role in maintaining, protecting and enhancing the quality of the lake by working with the DEEP and other conservation groups to prepare studies and plans for the lake's protection. They have created educational brochures to assist in informing the residents of the area of conservation techniques that the residents can carry out to aid in the protection of this resource. In addition, the Eastern Connecticut Conservation District has been working with the Amos Lake Associates to prepare an abbreviated Watershed Based Plan.



Amos Lake

## Avery Pond



Avery Pond

Avery Pond, according to DEEP, is 36 acres, (some documents say 26 acres) and has been developed with homes on the western side. The pond can be accessed by a state boat launch and has no outboard motor restrictions, although an 8 mph speed limit is enforced. The pond is relatively shallow averaging about 8 feet deep.

# SURFACE WATER QUALITY ASSESSMENT

(Table 4)

Water Body	Classification	Goals for Uses
Thames River	SB	Saline waters; Habitat for certain marine fish, shellfish, and wildlife; commercial shellfish harvesting; recreation; navigation; industrial water supply; other appropriate uses.
Shetucket River (lower reach)	SB	Habitat for certain fish and wildlife; certain recreation; industrial water supply and other appropriate uses.
Shetucket River (upper reach)	B	Cold-water fisheries; recreation use; habitat for fish and wildlife; agricultural and industrial water supply; other appropriate uses.
Quinebaug River	B	Cold-water fisheries; recreation use; habitat for fish and wildlife; agricultural and industrial water supply; other appropriate uses.
Poquetanuck Cove	SB	Habitat for certain marine fish, shellfish, and wildlife; commercial shellfish harvesting; recreational boating; industrial uses; other appropriate uses.
Poquetanuck Brook, Crowley Brook, part of Shewville Brook	A	Potential drinking water supply; fish and wildlife habitat; recreational uses; agricultural and industrial supply; other appropriate uses.
Hallville Pond	A	Potential drinking water supply; fish and wildlife habitat; recreational uses; agricultural and industrial supply; other appropriate uses.
Gates Pond	A	Potential drinking water supply; fish and wildlife habitat; recreational uses; agricultural and industrial supply; other appropriate uses.
Amos Lake	AA	Potential drinking water supply; fish and wildlife habitat; recreational uses; agricultural and industrial supply; other appropriate uses.

Source: CT DEEP

Noted above is the surface water quality assessment of Preston's ponds and Rivers. A,AA inland water classifications; SB coastal marine surface waters

## Wetlands

In Connecticut, inland wetlands are defined by soil type. The purpose of sections 22a-36 to 22a-45, inclusive, of the Connecticut General Statutes is:

*"To protect the citizens of the state by making provisions for the protection, preservation, maintenance and use of the inland wetlands and watercourses by minimizing their*



*disturbance and pollution; maintaining and improving water quality in accordance with the highest standards set by federal, state or local authority; preventing damage from erosion, turbidity or siltation; preventing loss of fish and other beneficial aquatic organisms, wildlife and vegetation and the destruction of the natural habitats thereof; deterring and inhibiting the danger of flood and pollution; protecting the quality of wetlands and watercourses for their conservation, economic, aesthetic, recreational and other public and private uses and values; and protecting the state's potable fresh water supplies from the dangers of drought, overdraft, pollution, misuse and mismanagement by providing an orderly process to balance the need for the economic growth of the state and the use of its land with the need to protect its environment and ecology in order to forever guarantee to the people of the state, the safety of such natural resources for their benefit and enjoyment and for the benefit and enjoyment of generations yet unborn." CGS 22a-36*

Based on Preston's GIS, Preston contains approximately 3,500 acres of wetlands, accounting for approximately 18 percent of Preston's land area.

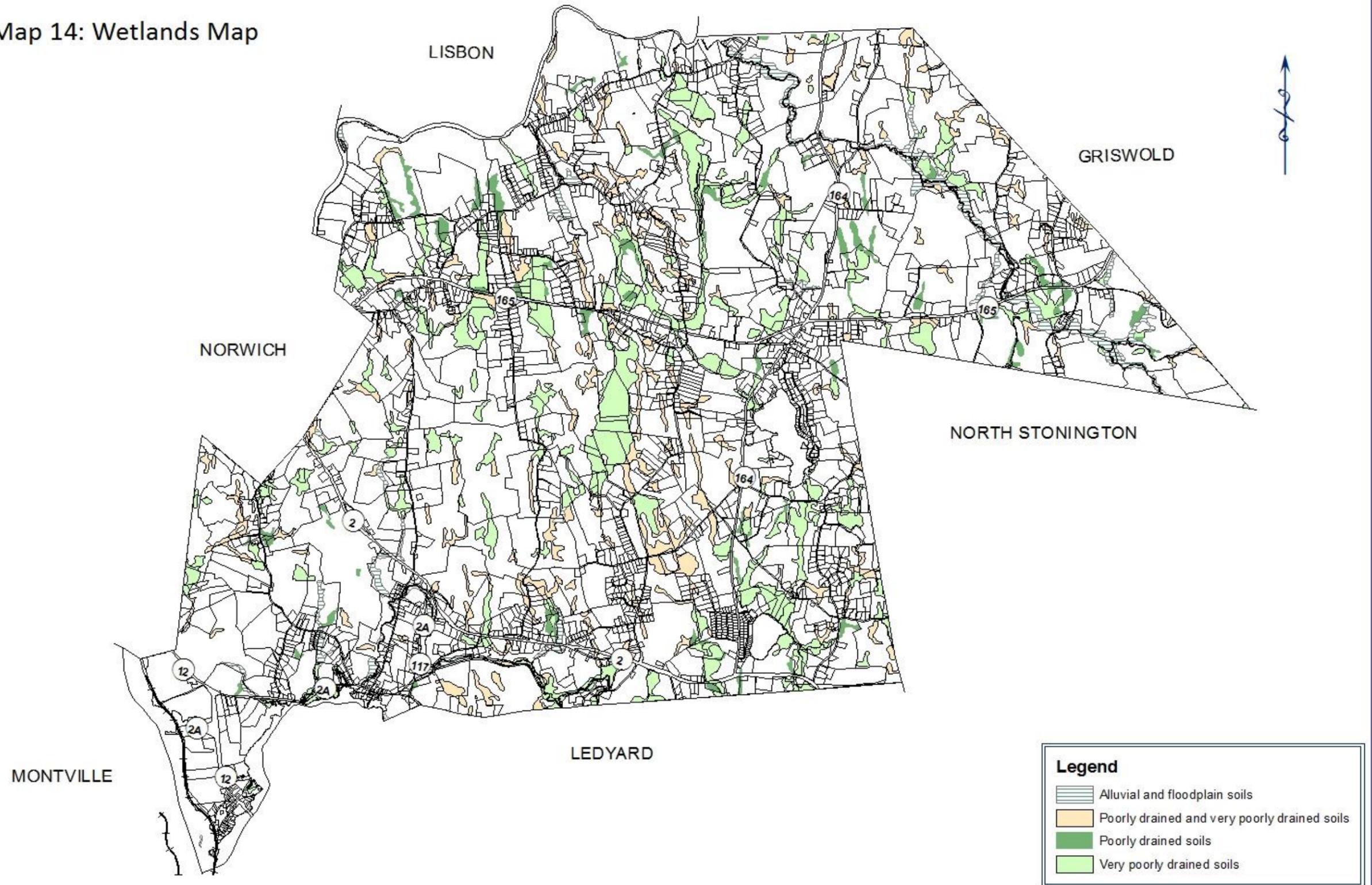
Wetland functions and values:

- Groundwater recharge/discharge
- Floodflow alteration
- Fish habitat
- Sediment / toxicant / pathogen retention
- Nutrient removal / retention / transformation
- Production export

- Sediment / shoreline stabilization
- Wildlife habitat
- Recreation
- Educational / scientific value
- Uniqueness / heritage
- Visual quality / aesthetics
- Threatened or endangered species habitat

From 2003 to 2013 there were 278 wetland applications. These applications included any work within a wetland, work within 100 feet of a wetland and subdivision review. Peak years for applications were from 2003 to 2006. (See Wetland Map 14)

Map 14: Wetlands Map



## Aquifers

Aquifers are geologic formations found in the lowlands and valleys that are capable of yielding high amounts of water. Preston's aquifers are composed of bedrock and of unconsolidated sediments deposited by glaciers. Bedrock holds water in its cracks and fissures, but such aquifers are very difficult to delineate since the water flow through the cracks is difficult to predict. Aquifers with coarse-grained stratified drift that are at least 10 feet thick are considered capable of producing high amounts of water. These aquifers are located in numerous areas in Preston, including along the Thames River, along portions of Halls Brook and Broad Brook, north of Amos Lake, between Amos Lake and Avery Pond, and near the Shetucket River. Fine-grained stratified drift deposits have lesser yields, but support individual wells and are often important contributors to adjacent coarse-grained aquifers. (See Aquifer Map 15)

## Groundwater

Groundwater availability (in terms of quality and quantity) depends upon geology, topography and land uses within the watershed. Common threats to the water quality of an aquifer are produced by the land uses above the aquifers. The land over aquifers often faces development pressures since the same features that are favorable for water supplies are favorable for development and for sand and gravel extractions. Land above the coarse-grained aquifers in Preston is zoned for numerous uses including residential, commercial and industrial. Existing land uses over these same areas include low- and medium-density housing, churches, a school, gas stations, farms, a sand and gravel operation, a winery, an incinerator, and other businesses.

Land uses and activities above the aquifers can pose water quality threats in numerous ways. Accidental spills and leaks are a leading cause of contamination, whether it is from a leaking underground or above-ground storage tank, or from spills on roadways and driveways. Residents and farmers may use excessive fertilizers or pesticides, which find their way into the groundwater. Public safety practices, such as the application of road salt and de-icing agents in winter months also pose threats.

## Flood Hazard Area

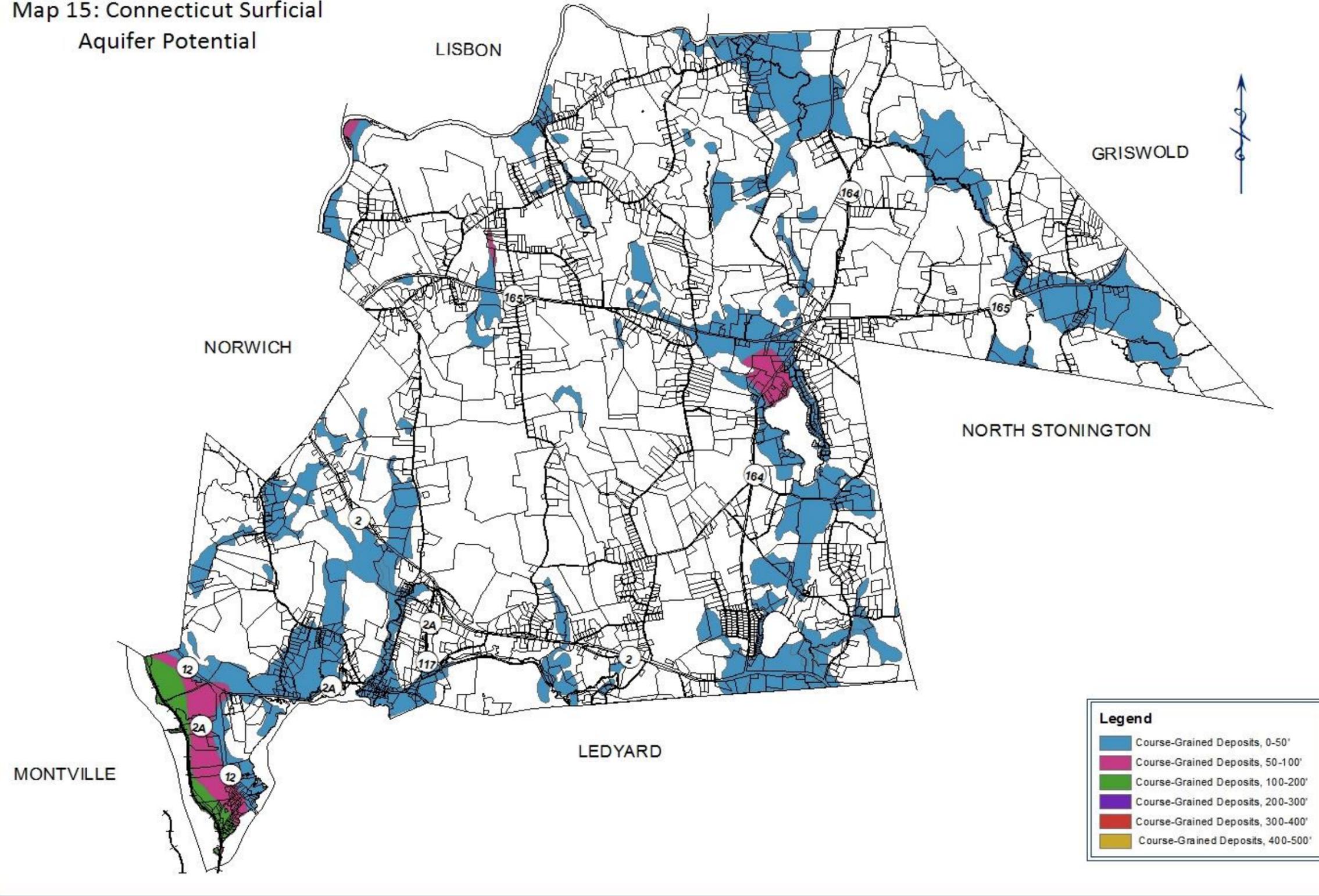
The Flood Insurance Rate Maps delineate those areas located within the 100-year floodplain and the floodway. Flood Maps were updated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in 2009. A 100-year flood has a one percent chance of occurring in a given year and a 500 year flood is two percent chance of flooding in one year. A floodway comprises a portion of the floodplain; it encompasses the stream channel and those areas that must remain undeveloped to accommodate the 100-year flood. Roughly 2,600 acres of Preston are located within the 100-year floodplain, but there are only a few properties that have buildings within the floodplain area. Filling or building in floodplains increases the chance of flood hazards and thus increases the threats

to human safety. From 2003 to 2013 there have been no floodplain applications.  
(See Flood Hazard Map 16)

Krug Road flooding during Hurricane Sandy

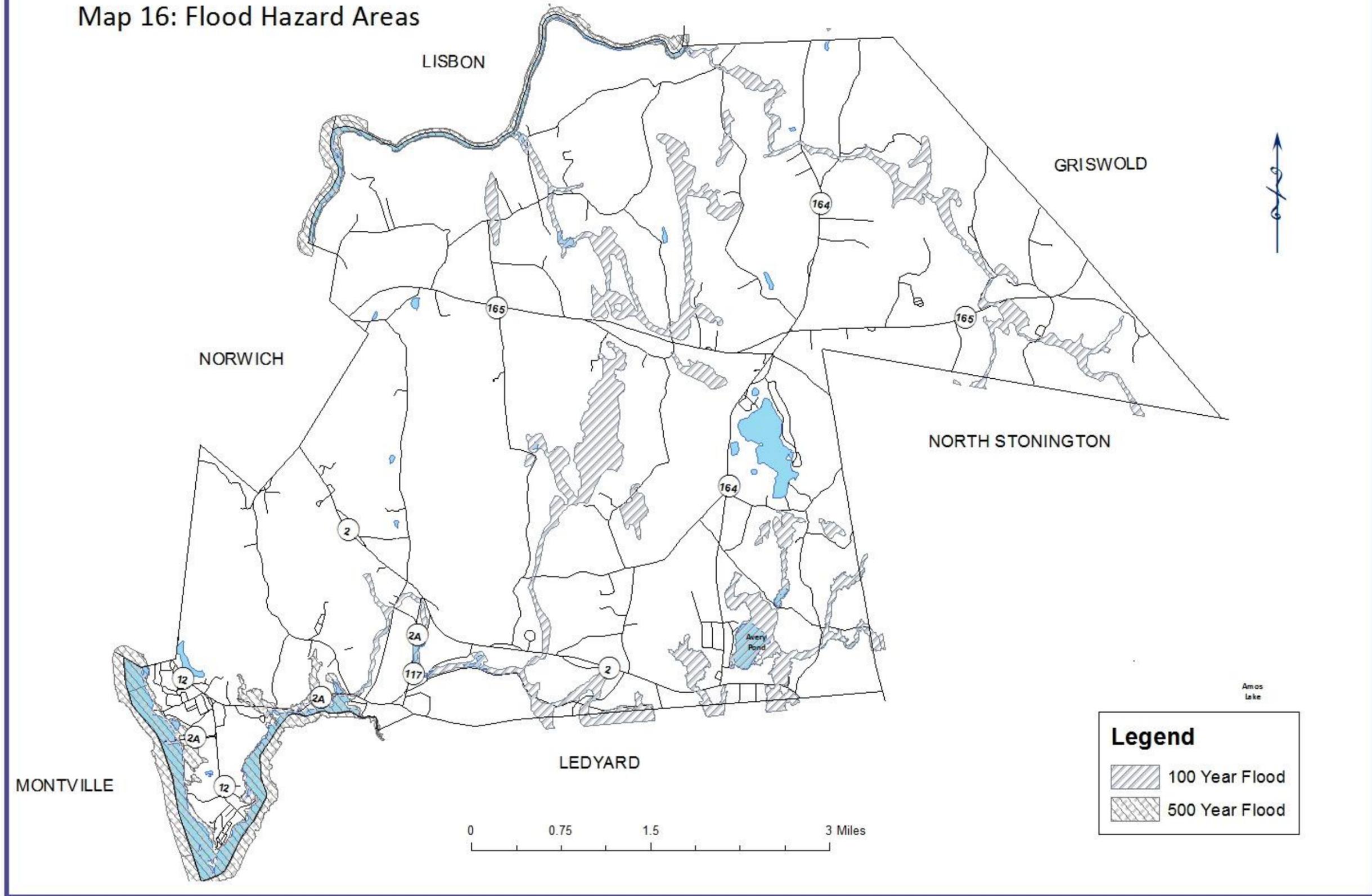


Map 15: Connecticut Surficial  
Aquifer Potential

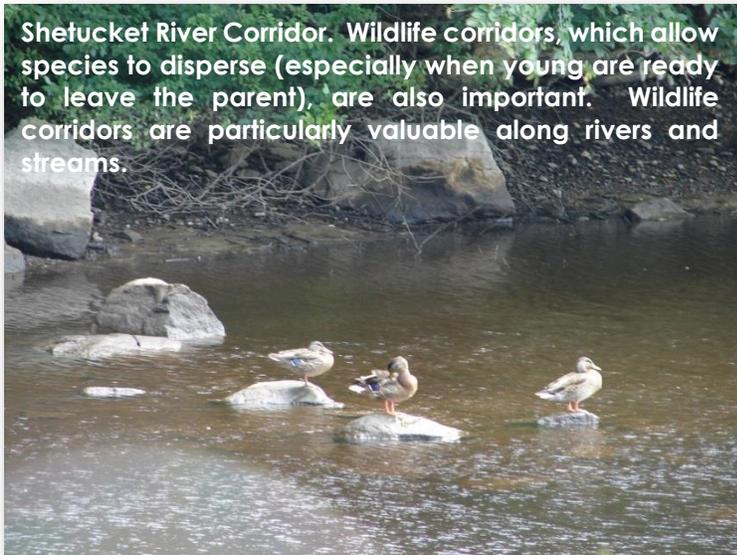




Map 16: Flood Hazard Areas



## Natural Habitat



Shetucket River Corridor. Wildlife corridors, which allow species to disperse (especially when young are ready to leave the parent), are also important. Wildlife corridors are particularly valuable along rivers and streams.

Virtually all of the forest is second-growth, as most of Preston was cleared for farming at some time. Deciduous forests, generally oak-dominated, are most evident. Smaller patches of coniferous forests are scattered in Preston, including the Great Cedar/Pine Swamp, hemlock slopes, and white pine stands. Shrub communities are also found in Preston, particularly around old fields that were once

farmland. Non-forest habitats play an important role for numerous species of wildlife. Non-forested habitats include wetlands and water bodies, fields, orchards, ledges, and even structures such as abandoned buildings.

## Wildlife Species

With its abundant habitats, numerous species have been documented in



Coyote's and Bobcats are two mammals found in Preston.

Preston or are likely to occur based on natural features. Highlights include:

- Various species of fish including American eel, alewife, trout, perch, and bass;
- Reptiles and amphibians, including snapping turtles, various snake and salamander species;
- Roughly 150 species of birds are typical of Preston for breeding or wintering; and

- At least 40 species of mammals are likely found in Preston.

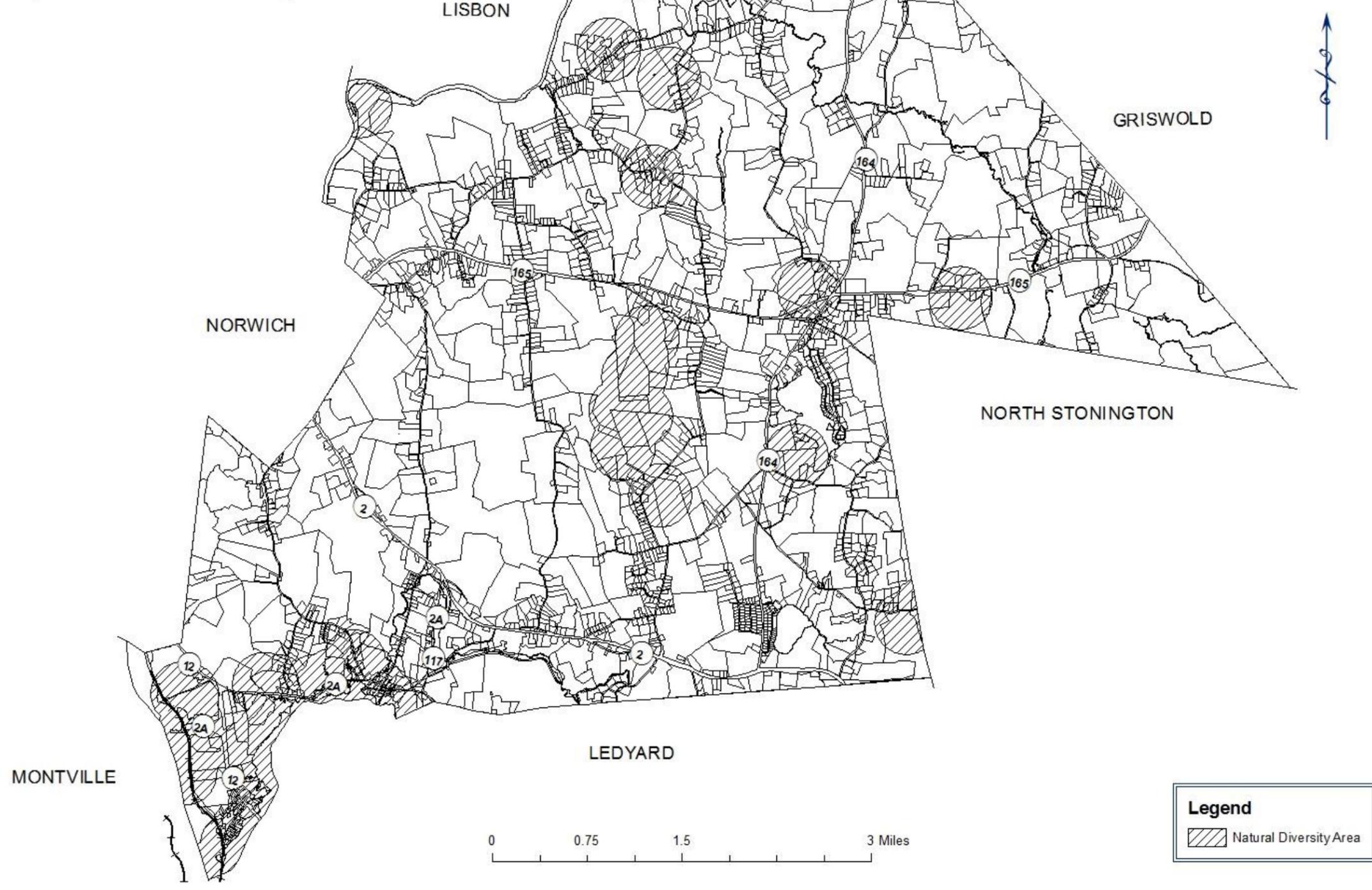
## Connecticut's Natural Diversity Database (NDDB)

The database includes areas that contain state-listed plant and animal species (Endangered, Threatened, or Special Concern) and significant natural communities. To protect the species and natural communities, the NDDB indicates only a general location and a buffer around that location and does not release specific information about species within the NDDB unless a development project or protection strategy is imminent and warrants a review (See Map 17 NDDB)

## Development Challenges

Map 18 illustrates areas that have development challenges or conditions that require special consideration and/or design if developed. The map shows the areas that have: Maximum slope of 15 percent or greater; wetlands, shallow depth to bedrock, seasonal high water table.

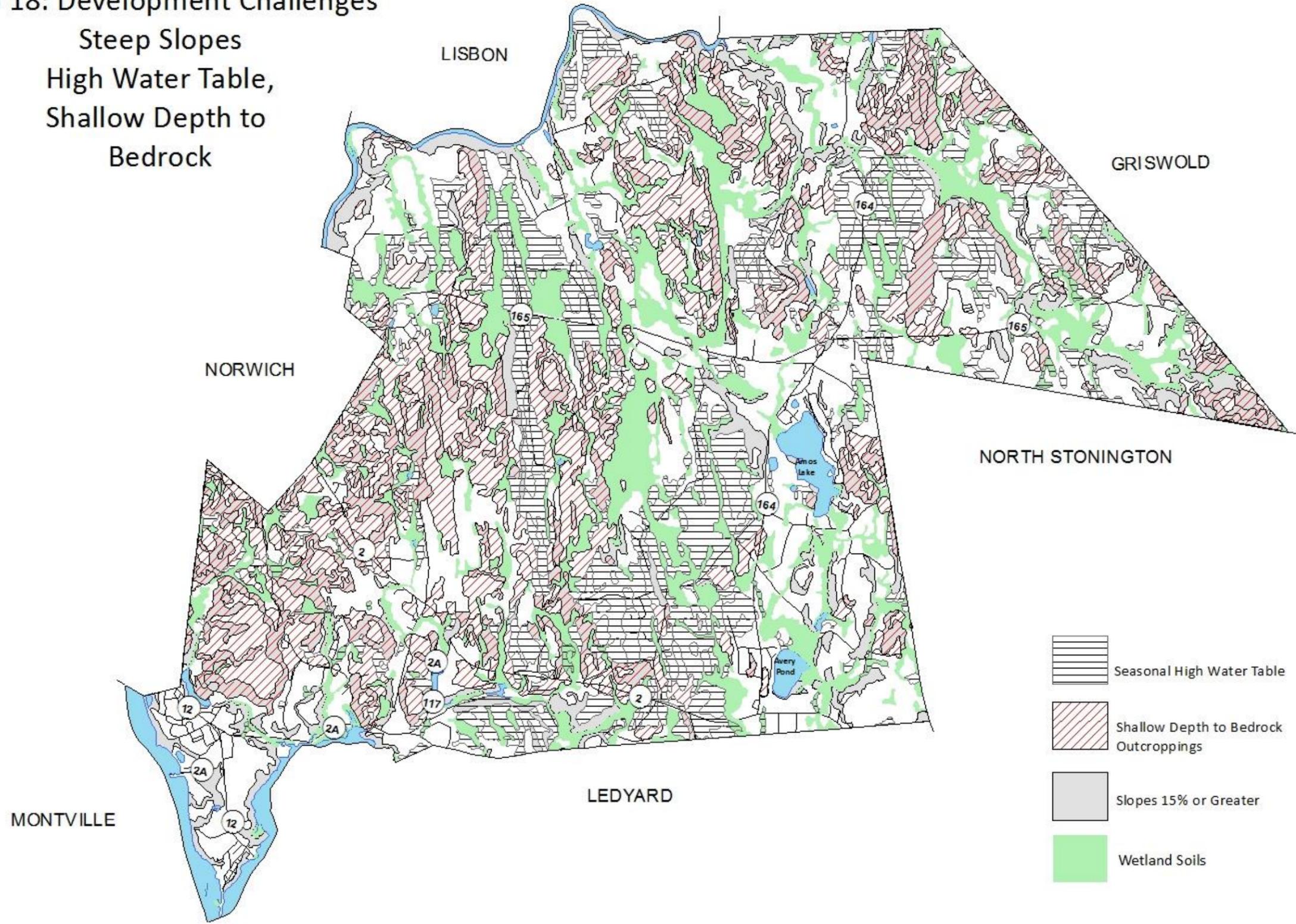
Map 17: Natural Diversity Database Map





# Map 18: Development Challenges

Steep Slopes  
High Water Table,  
Shallow Depth to  
Bedrock



- Seasonal High Water Table
- Shallow Depth to Bedrock Outcroppings
- Slopes 15% or Greater
- Wetland Soils



# Population Characteristics



# Population

This section reviews both the general characteristics of Preston's population as well as Preston's workforce. Population projections are provided at the end of this section. The primary source of the data supporting this section is available from the 2010 Census. However, in some cases, state agencies or the town have provided updated information.

The 2010 Census places Preston's population at 4,725 persons. These figures indicate that Preston's population increased by 37 persons since 2000, or by 0.8% percent. A population increases when the number of births plus the number of persons who immigrate exceeds the number of deaths plus the number of persons who move out. A population change due to births or deaths is called "natural" while a change due to persons moving is called "migration".

## Population change from 1960 to 2010 (Table 5)

Year	Population	Number	Percent	Natural Increase	Net Migration
1960	2,520	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
1970	3,593	1,073	43%	344	729
1980	4,644	1,051	29%	152	899
1990	5,006	362	38%	-16	378
2000	4,688	159 <sup>1</sup>	3.5%	N/A	N/A
2010	4725	37	.8%	N/A	N/A

1. Change based on 1990 population without Norwich Hospital patients (4,529).

N/A - Not available.

Sources: U.S. Census, 1960, 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000, and 2010.

Preston's population increased at varying rates each decade from 1960 to 2010. Growth has slowed in the last two decade, with only 4.3 percent increase in population from 1990 to 2010, compared to increases of 67 percent between 1970 and 1990. Natural increases played a limited role between 1970 and 1980, but in 1990, the number of deaths exceeded the number of births. No additional data was found to update natural increase and net migration figures for on a local level since 1990.

Table 6 notes Preston's growth from 2000 to 2010 compared with nearby rural or suburban towns. The table indicates that Preston's growth was the lowest of its neighboring towns.

# Comparison of Regional Rural Town Population Change, 2000 to 2010

(Table 6)

Town	2010	2000	Change	Percentage
<b>Voluntown</b>	2,603	2,528	75	3%
<b>North Stonington</b>	5,297	4,991	360	6%
<b>Griswold</b>	11,951	18,807	1,144	10%
<b>Ledyard</b>	15,051	14,687	364	2%
<b>Preston</b>	4,725	4,688	36	1%

Sources: U.S. Census, 2010 and 2000

## Average Household Size

### Change in Average Household Size 1970 to 2010

(Table 7)

Source: U.S. Census, 2010

Year	Average Household Size (persons)	% Change
1970	3.48	
1980	3.01	-14%
1990	2.75	-9%
2000	2.55	-8%
2010	2.44	-5%

Preston's average household size decreased from 3.01 persons in 1980 to 2.75 persons in 1990. By 2010, the average household size was 2.58 persons. Such a decrease reflects a national trend of smaller household size.

## Age Composition (US Census)

The largest segment of Preston's population, age wise, is in the 45 to 64 age group, which is a change from the 2003 plan, when the largest group was 15 to 44 years old. This illustrates that Preston has an aging population and many of the younger people are moving out of the community, compared to the previous decade when younger families were moving into the region. This may also be a reflection of the reduction of job opportunities in the region, especially the casinos. The casinos were new to the region and provided a large number of new jobs in the previous decade (Table 8).

## Age Composition

(Table 8)

Age Range	1990	2000	2010
65 +	13%	14%	17%
45 to 64	26%	23%	38%
15 to 44	45%	42%	34%
14 and Under	17%	21%	16%

## Racial Composition

In 2010, 97.4% percent of Preston's population selected one race and the remaining 2.6% selected two or more races. Preston's racial profile is as follows: white (91.9 percent), 2.4 percent of the population is Hispanic or Latino, Asian (2.1 percent), black or African American (1.4 percent), American Indian (1.3 percent), and other (0.7 percent).

## Educational Attainment

The majority of Preston's population has at least a high school diploma, while less than a quarter of the population has completed a Bachelor's degree.



Noted below is the Educational Attainment for the town:

(Table 9)

Educational Attainment	Persons Age 25 +	Percentage of Persons Age 25 +
Less than 9 <sup>th</sup> grade	135	3.8%
9 <sup>th</sup> to 12 <sup>th</sup> no diploma	296	8.3%
High School Graduate	1173	33%
Some College No Degree	832	23.4%
Associates Degree	335	9.4%
Bachelor's Degree	382	10.8%
Graduate or Professional Degree	400	11.3%

Source: US Census 2010

## Household Income

The 2010 median household income in Preston was \$77,377. The median household incomes for nearby towns are shown below. Preston's median household income was higher than New London County and the state. Only a very small percentage of Preston's population receives financial assistance from the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program (TANF; formerly known as Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC)). Approximately 0.4% of Preston's population, in the 2011 fiscal year, were AFDC / TANF recipients. This percentage is the same as in 1998 as noted in the 2003 POCD.

## Median Household Income

(Table 10)

Town	1989	2010
Ledyard	\$49,811	\$85,321
North Stonington	\$47,070	\$88,869
Preston	\$42,823	\$77,377
Lisbon	\$38,192	\$77,872
Griswold	\$32,907	\$59,295
New London County	\$37,488	\$65,419
Connecticut	\$41,721	\$67,740

Source: CT Department of Labor Statistics

## Work/Labor Force

The Connecticut Department of Labor provides labor force data for each municipality in Connecticut. In 2010, 8.4 percent of Preston's workforce was unemployed. In 2010, the unemployment rate grew substantially due to the economic conditions within the state and country.

## Number of People in the Labor Force

(Table 11)

	Preston	New London County	Connecticut	United States
Labor Force (no. persons)	2,681	147,124	1,879,452	154,975,000
Employed (no. persons)	2,457	133,656	1,722,394	142,469,000
Unemployed (no. persons)	401	12,468	157,058	12,506,000
Unemployment Rate	8.4%	8.5%	8.4%	8.1%

(Connecticut Labor Department)



Joyce Steffenson and David Savage 1979

Preston's labor force is employed in either educational services, health care or social assistance. Other primary occupations for Preston residents are entertainment or retail.

## Occupations

(Table 12)

Occupation	No. of Residents	Percentage of Total Employed
Agricultural, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	47	2%
Construction	186	8%
Manufacturing	267	11.5%
Wholesale trade	24	1%
Retail trade	386	16.6%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	76	3.3%
Information	51	2.2%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	78	3.3%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	131	5.6%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	580	24.9%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	329	14.1%
Public Administration	119	5.1%
Other services, except public administration	56	2.4%

Source: U.S. Census 2010

# Public/Private Labor Force

(Table 13)

Employment Sector	No.	Percentage of Total Employed
Civilian employed population 16 and over	2330	N/A
Private wage and salary workers	1,968	85%
Government workers	259	11%
Self-employed	103	4%
Unpaid family workers	0	0%

Source: U.S. Census 2010

The Census (2010) reports whether workers are employed in the public or private sector. The majority (84.5 percent) of Preston’s employed residents work in the private sector.

## Work Location

According to the 2010 Census, almost all of Preston’s workers travel to work in private automobiles; 94 percent drive to work alone, whereas only 2.8 percent car pool. Less than one percent use public transportation, and .5 percent walk to work. The mean travel time for a Preston resident to get to work is 26.8 minutes, which reflects the



distance from Preston to the region’s major employment centers. The majority of Preston’s labor force works in Norwich, Groton Ledyard, Montville, and Preston. The largest employers within the town are Strawberry Park Campground, Preston School System, Hilton Garden Inn and Southeastern Area Transit.

## Work Location

(Table 14)

Place of Employment	No. of Preston Residents
Norwich	295
Groton	292
Montville	153
Preston	149
New London	97
Waterford	85
Stonington	82
Hartford	82

## Population Projections

Connecticut Data Center publishes population projection for each municipality in the state. These projections are created based upon several datasets and while these estimates are developed based on multiple data sources, actual population changes may vary from these projections. To assist in planning, analysis, and decision making, the population projections have been developed based on state and locally derived fertility rates.

The population projections for Preston show a reduction of the population; however, projection for the state and region show only a slight increase in population. Actual population growth and projections are very dependent upon the economy, in 2003, the population project for Preston was between seven and thirteen percent increase in population by 2020, but the economy was in much better condition in 2003.



# Percentage Estimates for Population Change

(Table 15)

Year	Population <sup>1</sup>	Preston % Change	New London County % Change	State of CT % Change
2010	4725			
2015	4,737	Less than 1%	2%	2%
2020	4,698	- 1%	1%	2%
2025	4,629	-1%	1%	1%
Change from 2010 to 2020		-1 %	3%	4%
Change from 2020 to 2025		-2%	2%	5%





# Housing



## Housing Characteristics and Trends

Based on the American Fact Finder, there were an estimated 2, 016 housing units in Preston according to the 2010 census. The number of housing units in Preston increased by 24 percent (1,361 units) from 1980 to 1990, and ten percent from 1990 to 1999. The increase from 2004 to 2013 in the number of housing units was 7 percent. The lack of new housing starts from 2007 to the present day is evident of the poor economic conditions.

### Housing Trends

(Table 16)

Year	Net Number of New Housing Units	Total Number of Housing Units
2004	33	1898
2005	40	1931
2006	22	1971
2007	14	1993
2008	4	2007
2009	8	2011
2010	7	2016
2011	6	2025
2012	12	2037

Source: American Fact Finder

### Affordable Housing

Connecticut's Affordable Housing Appeals Act was passed in 1989, as amended, to encourage the development of affordable housing. The Act created a special appeal process from a town's denial or modification of a proposed affordable housing project. When a municipality's decision is appealed, the burden of proof is placed on the municipality to demonstrate that a denial or modification is necessary to protect substantial public interests. When ten percent of a municipality's housing stock is classified as "assisted," the municipality is exempt from the provisions of the Affordable Housing Appeals Act. "Assisted" units are government-assisted housing (through mortgages or rent) or deed-restricted units. The percentage of Preston's housing units that are affordable falls well below the ten percent threshold. Table 17 shows the number of each type of affordable units. Table 18 compares Preston with the other municipalities in the southeastern Connecticut region.

The Preston Housing Authority, which is an entity separate from the town, is responsible for Preston's governmentally assisted units. Through the Authority, 40

housing units are available to qualifying elderly or disabled persons at Lincoln Park. As of September 2012, 39 of the units were occupied. These units allow Preston's elderly or disabled to remain in Preston. However, the units also are available to non-residents. The Authority receives its funding through grants and revenues.



## Preston Affordable Housing Units

(Table 17)

2012 Estimate of Housing Units	2019 Units
No. Governmentally Assisted Units	40
No. CHFA / FHA Mortgages	36
No. Deed Restricted Units	0
Total Assisted	80
Percent of Total Housing Units	3.96%

# Affordable Housing 2012, Southeastern Connecticut

(Table 18)

Municipality	Total Units	% Government Assisted
<b>Towns exceeding ten percent affordable housing</b>		
Groton	17,978	20.39%
New London	11,840	19.90%
Norwich	18,659	16.89%
<b>Towns with less than ten percent affordable housing</b>		
Colchester	6,182	7.89%
Griswold	5,118	6.57%
Voluntown	1127	3.99%
Montville	7,407	4.21%
Lisbon	1730	2.61%
Ledyard	5987	3.44%
Stonington	9467	3.86%
Sprague	1248	4.8%
East Lyme	8458	5.31%
<b>Preston</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>3.96%</b>
Waterford	8634	4.03%
Bozrah	1059	2.17%
Franklin	771	2.20%
Salem	1635	1.77%
North Stonington	2306	.95%

## Housing Stock

In 2012, Preston's housing stock included 48 mobile homes and 99 multi-family units. Although new mobile homes are not permitted, Preston's zoning regulations do allow options for low- to moderate-income households and the elderly. Specifically the regulations allow for accessory apartments, multi-family housing units, and elderly housing projects. The regulations also allow residential structures to be converted into two-family units. According to the Connecticut Economic Resource Center, in 2012, 95% of housing in Preston was single family, 69% in New London County was single family and 64% in the state were single family.

# Distribution of Sales Prices

(Table 19)

Town	Total Sales		Sold for <\$100,000		Sold for \$200,000 +	
	2010	No.	% of Total	No.	% of Total	
Preston	27	0	0%	7	26%	
Griswold	64	14	22%	20	31%	
Ledyard (2009)	121	3	2%	55	45%	
Lisbon	22	0	0%	5	23%	
North Stonington	23	3	13%	6	26%	
New London County	1346	157	12%	377	28%	
Connecticut	17157	1114	6%	4614	27%	

The distribution of sales prices in Preston, neighboring towns, New London County, and the state are provided in Table 19. None of the units sold in Preston in 2010 were sold for less than \$100,000, while only 7% sold for \$200,000 or greater. While the percentage of units sold for less than \$100,000 in Preston was less than for the county or state, the percentage that sold for more than \$200,000 was close to the county or state. During 2007 to 2009, 5 units sold for less than \$100,000.

## Home Prices Versus Income

Housing sales data from 2009 to 2010 were analyzed to determine the average sale price for single-family houses in Preston and to determine affordability. Based on this data, the average sale price in Preston for that two-year period was \$205,725; the median household income for 2010 was \$77,377. Ironically, the median home price is less than the New London County and the state, but the median household income is more than New London County and the state.

Table 20 depicts sales data from 2010 to compare Preston's average sale price with the neighboring towns, New London County and the state. The 2010 average sales price of a home in Preston was \$182,450, lower than that of New London County (\$215,000) and the state (\$246,000).

## Preston's Home Prices

(Table 20)

Town	Average Sales Price		% Change
	2007	2010	2007-2010
Preston	\$309,000	\$182,450	- 41%
Griswold	224,000	\$175,000	- 22 %
Ledyard	\$280,000	\$235,000 (2009)	- 20 %
Lisbon	\$252,000	\$199,250	- 21 %
North Stonington	\$297,500	\$262,500	-12%
New London County	\$265,000	\$215,000	- 19 %
Connecticut	\$295,000	\$246,000	- 17 %

## Actual Purchasibility of Homes in Preston

Preston has taken other steps to meet the needs of low- to moderate- income homeowners. Preston has received grant money from the Small Cities Program to assist low-income homeowners with housing repairs. This program provides low- or no-interest loans to homeowners within a defined income range, allowing the homeowner to make necessary improvements. Taking all these data and calculations into account demonstrates that, in reality, the purchasability of Preston's housing stock is greater than the 3.96 percent calculation used by the state to establish affordability.

## Future Housing Issues

Due to environmental constraints and the lack of public sewer systems throughout most of Preston, it is not realistic to expect that Preston could reduce its minimum lot sizes to make lots more affordable. However, as mentioned above, Preston's zoning regulations allow alternative housing options throughout much of the town. It is most likely that any affordable or elderly housing will be located within the Thames River District because of the availability of public sewer and water.

Section 8-336 (f) of the Connecticut General Statutes allows municipalities to form a local housing partnership program. Such a program entails coordination with the state Department of Economic and Community Development and other state agencies to solve local housing issues. The program is adopted by ordinance by the Board of Selectmen. Should this become an issue in the future,

formation of a local housing partnership gives a town priority status for certain funding programs that are administered by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, such as open space and water quality programs. This incentive helps to mitigate fears that the encouragement of housing opportunities contradicts efforts to protect environmental quality.



# Economic Characteristics





## Economic Development

Appropriate economic development provides a positive balance for the community and can improve or enhance the quality of life. It provides employment, wealth, goods and services, and can relieve the tax burden on residents, providing jobs, and providing services to residents of Preston. However, development may bring new problems to an area, such as increase traffic, noise, aesthetically unpleasing structures, encroachment upon residential neighborhoods, decreased water quality, and environmental degradation. With appropriate planning, negative characteristics that may accompany economic development can be minimized or eliminated. A lack of certain businesses (such as banks, restaurants, and other services) can be burdensome for residents and for existing businesses, who have to travel to neighboring towns for these services.

Commercial and industrial development does not introduce more children into the school system, but does add the need for other services such as police and fire. To see what economic opportunities exist in Preston, larger trends within the regional economy must be examined. This section examines state and regional trends before looking at existing and potential economic development issues in Preston.

## State and Regional Trends

Economic diversification is crucial to a healthy economy and can help alleviate the impacts of a downturn in a specific industry. Today, the leading job sectors in southeastern Connecticut are marine research, inter-modal shipping, biotechnology, pharmaceuticals, defense manufacturing, tourism, entertainment, health-care, and post-secondary education.

## New London County

The Region's economic stability is dependent upon gaming, defense, and biotechnology. According to the 2011 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies (CEDS), the region has suffered large job losses, especially at the two casinos and Pfizer. Over 3,000 employees have been laid off, and casino expansion plans have been put on hold. To date, Pfizer has laid off about 2,700 people based on an article that appeared in *The Day* paper on February 11, 2013. The dependence of region on these large businesses has made the region extremely vulnerable. Headline of an article that appeared in *The Day* paper, states "Economists predict gloomy 2012 for region", citing layoffs at the four large employers and the approval of casinos in Massachusetts as a concern for the state and region, and according to an article dated February 5, 2012, the Norwich-New London area has been ranked the 9th worst labor market in the country. According to several articles in *The Day*, the total number of employees at both Foxwoods and Mohegan Sun was approximately 21,000 employees prior to the recession. However, today through attrition or layoffs, the total number of employees at the casinos is now approximately 12,300 employees. That is almost half the workforce (41%) at the casinos.

Listed in table below is employment for the Norwich-New London Labor Market area. The largest percentage of jobs is in the service producing industries versus goods producing industries.

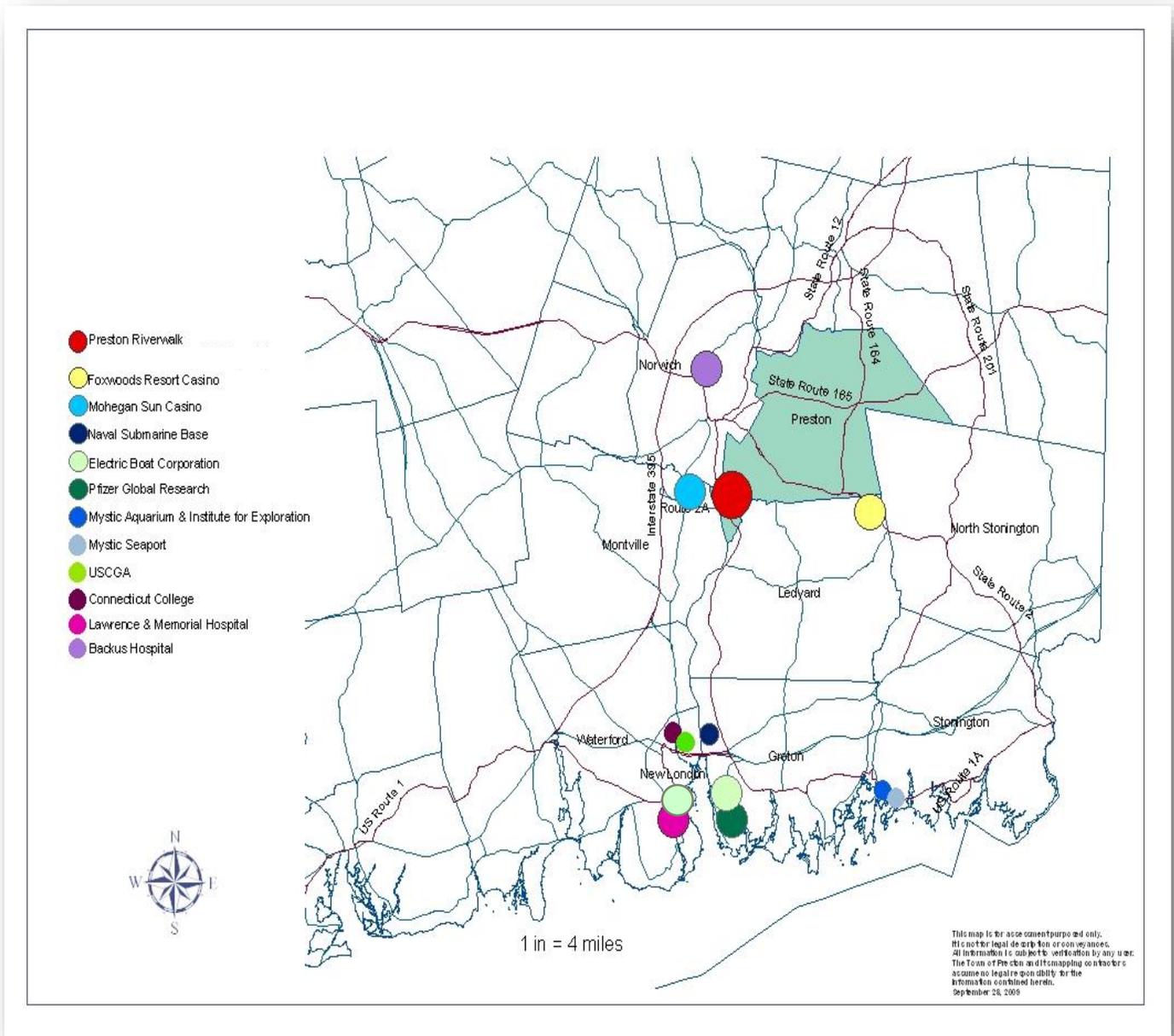
## Non-farm Employment 2013 Norwich - New London Labor Market Area

(Table 21)

Total Non-Farm Employment	<b>126,400</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Goods Producing Industries</b>	18,200	14%
Construction and Mining	4,000	3%
Manufacturing	14,200	11%
Durable Goods	11,100	9%
Non-Durable Goods	3,100	2%
<b>Service Producing Industries</b>	108,200	86%
Transportation, Communications, Utilities	5,000	4%
Trade	22,400	18%
Wholesale	2,700	2%
Retail	14,700	12%
Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate	3,100	2%
Services	36,000	24%
Government	36,800	27%
Federal	2,700	2%
State and Local	34,100	25%

New London County has several large regional employers, including Foxwoods and Mohegan Sun Casinos, Electric Boat, Pfizer, Mystic Aquarium, US Coast Guard, Mystic Seaport, and several others as shown below. Dependency on any one of these businesses could be devastating to the region if a company moves out of the region or closes. Creating business that complement existing businesses, spin off business or a business that will diversify the area will help strengthen the region's economy. Below is a map showing the location of these cluster businesses in relation to Preston and Preston Riverwalk. (Map 19)

# Regional Business Cluster Map



Map 19

## Agriculture and the Economy

While most economic data focus on nonfarm activities, agricultural activities are important to the state, region, and Preston from an economic perspective, in addition to its rural character attributes. In Connecticut, the number of farms decreased from 6,068 farms in 1964 to 4,916 farms in 2007. The average farm size also decreased during this time period from 119 acres to 83 acres. Based on the 2007 Census of Agriculture, there



are 793 farms in New London County encompassing 63,380 acres. Surprisingly, this represents an increase of the number of farms from 1997 when there were 610 farms covering 67,924 acres. In 2007 the average size of a farm in the county was 80 acres.

## Preston's Economy



Economic-related statistics that concern Preston's residents (such as income and unemployment) are contained in the Population section. Many of Preston's existing businesses prosper and serve markets that reach beyond the town boundary.

Establishments such as gas stations, convenience stores, and restaurants provide services for Preston's residents and for those passing through Preston. Commercial recreational establishments, specialty shops, and manufacturers offer unique

products and services and draw a regional customer base. Tourist services, such as bed & breakfasts, provide services to those visiting the region. The wineries add additional destinations within the town.

## Preston's Employment

(Table 22)

Industry	Employees	Percentage
Civilian employed population 16 years and over	2,309	100%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	58	2.5%
Construction	140	6.1%
Manufacturing	294	12.7%
Wholesale trade	28	1.2%
Retail trade	359	15.5%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	71	3.1%
Information	47	2.0%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	55	2.4%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	130	5.6%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	580	25.1%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	388	16.8%
Other services, except public administration	61	2.6%
Public administration	98	4.2%
		U.S. Census 2010

According to the Connecticut Economic Resource Center's town profile for 2012, Preston School District is the town's largest employer; other large employers are: American Ref-fuel, Overhead Door, Strawberry Park, and the Town of Preston.

## Total Sales

The Connecticut Department of Revenue Services compiles total sales for each municipality. In 2012, Preston's sales reached \$31,230,143. This figure accounts for all products sold, but excludes services rendered. Table 22 compares this figure with nearby towns. It indicates that Preston's total sales are substantially lower than sales generated in Ledyard but comparable to sales in North Stonington and Griswold.

## Local Towns – Total Sales

(Table 23)

Town	Total Sales
Ledyard	\$108,982,571
Preston	\$31,230,143
North Stonington	\$34,361,765
Griswold	\$86,920,909

\*Town of Lisbon has not been included because state figures appear to be in error.  
Source: Connecticut Department of Revenue Services, 2012.

## Place of Residence of Workers

(Table 24)

Town / City of Residence	No. that work in Preston
Preston	179
Norwich	113
Griswold	42
Montville	29
Waterford	20
Groton	23
Ledyard	24
Stonington	17
Plainfield	29
Waterford	20
Brooklyn	17

Noted in Table 24, according to the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development 2010 data, the highest percentage of people employed in Preston also live in Preston.

## Unemployment Percent Comparison

The Connecticut Department of Labor provides labor force data for each municipality in Connecticut. In 2010 and 2011, Preston and Southeastern Connecticut had a lower unemployment rate than that of Nation; however, that changed in 2012 when the State, the region, and even Preston had a higher unemployment rate than the Nation. The Great Recession occurred from the fall of 2007 to June 2009; however, the economic recovery for Connecticut and New London County was (and continues to be) slower, with the state and region retaining higher than federal unemployment rates in 2012, 2013 and (January to March of 2014). This is the longest period (annually) that the state and region's unemployment rate has been higher than the Nation since at least 1982.

## Unemployment Rates

(Table 25)

	Preston	Norwich/New London area	Connecticut	Federal
2010	8.6	8.6	8.9	9.6
2011	7.9	8.7	8.9	8.9
2012	8.4	8.6	9.3	8.1

## Opportunities for Economic Development

Numerous factors are important for business growth in a community. Many of these factors, such as a skilled labor force, inexpensive land, proximity to a specific market, and proximity to producers of specific goods or services may be outside a municipality's capability to influence. When some or all of these factors are present, they can be effectively promoted. Other factors, over which a municipality may have more discretion, can play a very important role in where a business will locate. These factors include: 1) the availability of public water and sewer, 2) transportation infrastructure, 3) zoning, and 4) taxes. Quality-of-life factors also play a role when attracting businesses. The quality of the school system, availability of open space and recreational facilities, ample housing stock, and cost of living can be selling points when trying to attract new businesses.

Preston is located a short distance from four major cities: New York, Boston, Hartford, and Providence. It is only a few miles from two major interstate highways (Interstates 95 and 395), and is located on a navigable river. A freight rail line runs through Preston and passenger rail service is located nearby. Public water extends down Route 12 and public sewer serves a portion of Route 12. Public sewer and water potentially could be extended from the Norwich border down Route 2. The Planning and Zoning Commission has zoned over 1,300 acres for commercial or industrial uses and allows economic opportunities in residential areas (i.e., home occupations). The town has a high achieving school system (Preston Plains School was a *School of Distinction* as identified by the CT Department of Education in 2013) and offers numerous recreational opportunities.

As mentioned previously, colleges and universities have an important presence in the region. These educational institutions, in addition to those in nearby Rhode Island and Massachusetts, provide intellectual capital for the region. In addition the region has a skilled labor force. But the two most important factors for development is the presence of public utilities and infrastructure and access to a non-access highway.

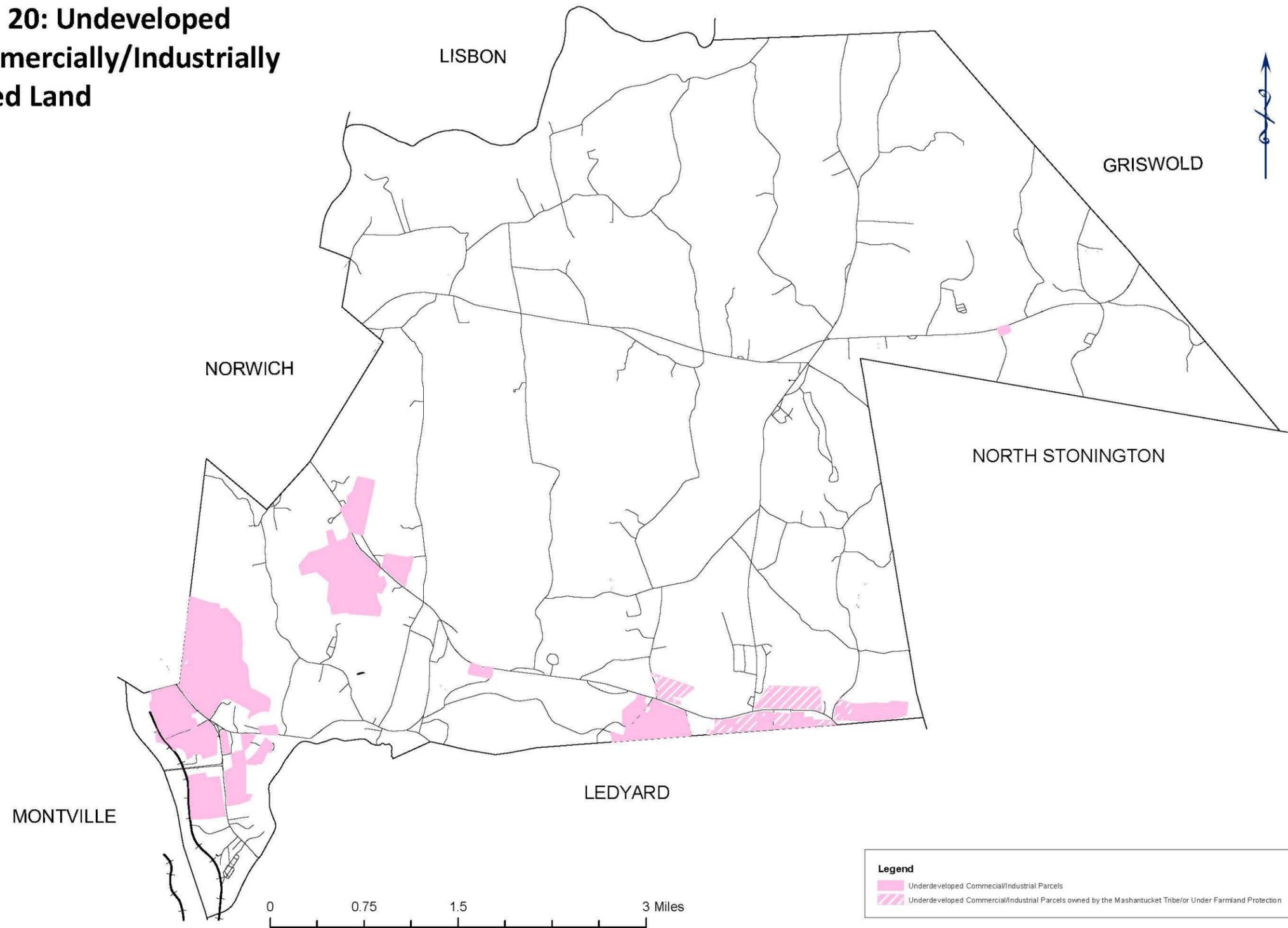
Despite the presence of these factors, without buildable land, economic development is not possible. Combining the results of the land use analysis with the current zoning map, undeveloped areas that are zoned for commercial or industrial uses in Preston were identified (see Map 20). Although Preston has the opportunity to create home occupations that can occur anywhere in the community, there is limited developable land for commercial purposes, with the exception of Preston Riverwalk. In addition, expansion of existing businesses is also an important factor, however there are few large businesses. Including the Thames River District, which is primarily Preston Riverwalk, the undeveloped commercial and industrial land is about 1,025 acres. For the most part this undeveloped land is relatively developable, with under ten percent or about 80 acres of the land being wetland soils. However, a large portion of the undeveloped industrial land is currently being farmed (close to 400 acres).

Noted below are the primary economic growth focus for Preston:

1. Preston Riverwalk: Given the size of Preston Riverwalk and its proximity to these large cluster businesses, location adjacent to infrastructure, various available traffic modes, the potential that exists for the redevelopment of the Riverwalk is most promising for commercial development; in fact, SeCTer, the regional economic development authority for the region, has identified the property as vital regional property. When developed, the property will economically impact not only the town but the region and will change the dynamics of the Preston's economy as we know it now.
2. Route 2 Corridor: This corridor has the potential to provide some scattered commercial activity if developed thoughtfully and by implementing some aesthetic improvements, and extension of public utilities.
3. Route 165, area of Fleming Center, east of Preston Memorial Veterans School: This commercial area is somewhat of an extension of Preston City. Commercial development in this area can be expanded, however, should complement the adjacent Preston City.
4. Agricultural Businesses: Permitting compatible accessory uses such as corn mazes, farm food dining, cheese tasting, wine tasting, maple syrup tasting and similar. If properly done, these types of accessory uses will complement the Preston's farm character.
5. Village District areas: Although these districts do not offer large areas for business development, they do offer areas for smaller retail, office or office uses that will serve the community at large. In addition, they promote the community's historic character as part of the economy.

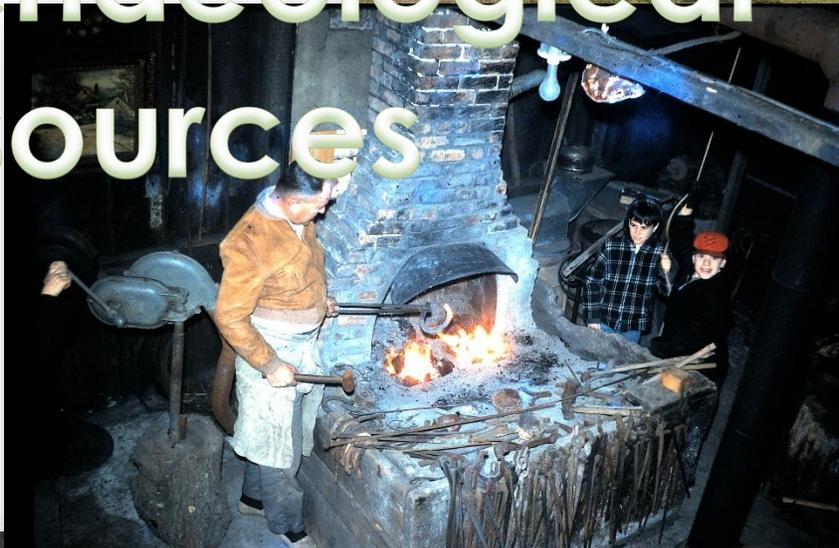
6. Home Occupations: These businesses are encouraged throughout the town, as long as they meet the zoning regulations and do not impact the residential character. These types of businesses offer a business startup location. When they expand to the point that they are too large to meet the zoning regulations, these uses can grow into larger commercial locations.

**Map 20: Undeveloped Commercially/Industrially Zoned Land**





# Historical and Archaeological Resources





## Historical Overview

This section provides a basic background of important events and influences in Preston and the surrounding region. These events help to create an understanding of the development patterns seen today.

### Native Americans

Prior to the colonization in New England, Native American tribes of the Algonquin Nation controlled most of the land in southern New England, with the Pequots controlling Eastern Connecticut and beyond. The Mohegans, who had broken away from the Pequots and the Nipmucks, also had a presence in Eastern Connecticut, but were subject to the Pequots.

### Colonial Development

Preston was a prime settlement area since the Thames River provided a transportation route for agricultural products. In 1686, 19 landowners presented a petition for incorporation to the Connecticut Legislature. The petition was granted and the Mohegans transferred land that would become Preston. Preston became

the 36<sup>th</sup> colony of Connecticut. The boundaries of the town changed many times since then. When originally incorporated, Preston included the land that is now Griswold and its western boundary ran through the middle of present-day Preston. In 1786, Preston annexed part of Norwich. Griswold broke off in 1815. By 1901, the present Norwich / Preston boundary was established. These boundary shifts help to explain Preston's dramatic population increases and decreases during that time.

### 1614 to 1780

During the Colonial Period, the colonists' economy focused on agriculture. Most settlements reflected a village pattern, with the church being the focal point of the settlements. Colonists utilized trade routes to the West Indies, the Canary Islands, southern Europe, and to other New England towns. They also began to lay out thoroughfares, including those, which connected Preston to Norwich, Groton, and Rhode Island. During this time ironworks and shipbuilding developed along Poquetanuck Cove.



## 1780 to 1850

During this period, the Preston and the region experienced the rise of textile manufacturing, with its factory system and mill villages. The textile industry required water, power, good transportation access, and a market. Agricultural practices became more sophisticated. Advanced agricultural practices, such as the use of fertilizer and technological advances, increased productivity.

## 1850 to 1940

Joseph Hall constructed Hallville Mills in 1857. The mill produced wool and cotton goods. It remained in operation into the 1960s. Shipbuilding and munitions were also important activities in the region. Immigration was bringing in new populations and this growth resulted in more residential and commercial development in Preston. Settlement in the western part of the United States, led to agricultural competition. To compete, farms in the region had to concentrate on certain products, such as fruit, vegetables, dairy, and poultry. Generally, poor economic conditions led to the abandonment of many farms. Abandoned farms altered the landscape by allowing the land to revert back to forest growth. The evidence of the abandoned farms can be seen throughout Preston today.

## 1940s to Present

Southeastern Connecticut, including Preston, saw drastic economical shifts as the textile industry collapsed, manufacturing declined, and defense-related industries grew. A trend of fewer, but larger farms emerged due to changing technology. Tourism economy has emerged on the heels of major gaming enterprises within the region conducted by the Mashantucket Pequots and Mohegan Nations. With gaming declining within the region due to the opening of new casinos outside of the region, it is obvious that diversifying our economy is even more critical.

## Historical Resources

The National Register of Historic Places, which was authorized by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, identifies cultural resources that are deemed worthy of preservation. Individual structures or groups of buildings that meet



Long Society Meeting House

federal criteria can be eligible for listing on the National Register. Preston has four districts and one site on the Register.

## National Historic Districts

Name District/Place	of Location	Description
Long Society Meeting House	Long Society Road	This meeting house was built from 1817 to 1818 and is one of the last meeting houses to remain in Connecticut. It was used for civic meetings and religious purposes. Adjacent to the meeting house is the Long Society Cemetery.
Hallville Mill Historic District	Hallville Rd., Hall's Mill Rd., Rt. 2A on Hallville Pond	Mill and mill village that portray the relationship between the workplace and housing during the nineteenth century.
Norwich Hospital District	Norwich Hospital Property, Norwich and Preston	This 500 acre district is the site of the former Norwich Hospital. Most Buildings on the Old Campus were constructed during the turn of the century. The new campus contains large structures built in the 1950s. These buildings are a non-contributing structures. All buildings are being removed, except the former Administration Building. The buildings have been documented by the State Preservation Office.
Poquetanuck Village Historic District	Route 2A between Rt. 117 and Middle Rd., and along School House and Cider Mill Rd.	Its structures date from 1720 to 1920 and include houses, stores, a cemetery, portions of two dams, and the Lucas mill.
Preston City Historic District	Amos and Old Shetucket Rds., North West Corner Rd., and Rt. 164	The district includes several pre-revolutionary, 18 <sup>th</sup> and 19 <sup>th</sup> century homes; in addition there are churches, library, blacksmith's shop, a store, and several barns. The town poorhouse has a portion of the building being constructed in 1733.

## State Register of Historic Places

The Connecticut Historical Commission maintains the State Register of Historic Places, which signifies that a feature is of state or local importance.

- Amos Place, Amos Road, 1733
- Avery Cemetery, Lynn Drive, founded in 1691
- Calvin Barstow house, Northwest Corner Road (formerly Geisthardt Road), 1785
- Blacksmith Shop, Old Shetucket Turnpike, c. 1871
- Caleb Fobes House, Prospect Hill Road, circa 1700
- David Kimball House, Brown School Road, 1749
- Long Society Meeting House, Old Shetucket Road, 1819
- John Meech House, Burdick Road, 1733
- William Meech-Elijah Starkwether House, Old North Road, 1738 - 1751
- John Morgan House, Northwest Corner Road (formerly Geisthardt Road), 1791
- Edward Mott House, Northwest Corner Road (formerly Geisthardt Road), 1767
- Parke House, Watson Road, 1752
- Preston Baptist Church, Route 164, 1812
- Stafford House, Lewis Road, 1818
- R.H. Smith House, Northwest Corner Road (formerly Geisthardt Road), 18<sup>th</sup> Century
- Elijah Stanton House, Lewis Road, 1747
- Town School (Old Town House), Long Society Road, 1744
- James Treat House, Northwest Corner Road (formerly Geisthardt Road), 1730 - 1768
- John Wight House, Eccleston Road, 1758
- Captain John Williams House, Middle Road, 1723
- Residence, Prospect Hill Road, 1820
- Residence, Preston City, 1785
- Residence, Pierce Road, 1780
- Residence, Route 164 (across from old library), early 19<sup>th</sup> Century

## Other Historical Resources

There are 62 structures in the Routes 2, 2A, and 12 corridors that are either potentially eligible for listing in the National Register or contribute to the historic integrity of Preston, including houses, churches, parks, monuments, and other features. Thirty of these structures are found within one of the four historic districts, while 32 are located outside of the districts.



Blacksmith Shop, Preston City / ca 1871

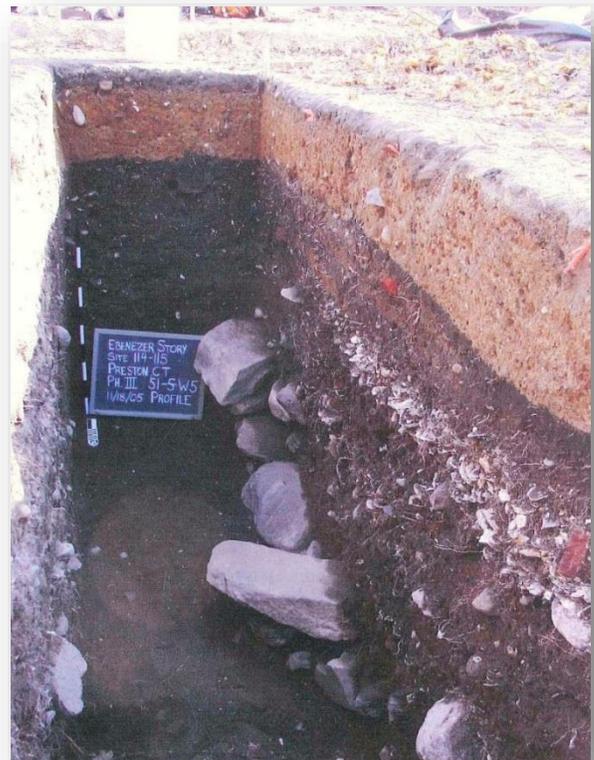
## Archaeological Resources

There are two archaeological preserves located in Preston, both at Preston Riverwalk: the World War II Hellcat Crash Site Preserve and the Ebenezer Story site. Ebenezer Story, in the year 1777 built his home on the banks of the Thames River. He leased some of his land for construction of the Continental frigate *Confederacy*. He also operated a tavern out of his home catering to the shipyard workers.



Hellcat Site

A piece of landing gear from a 1944 crash of a Navy F6-5N Hellcat night fighter.



Ebenezer Story House Site

## Other Archaeological Resources

Archeological resources tend to be discovered in areas that contain certain physical features due to the importance of these features for historic and prehistoric life needs. Variables include:

- Surface Water: Springs, streams, and rivers provided drinking water, food, and transportation.
- Land Forms: Level land was favorable for settlement. Overhanging rocks and caves provided shelter.
- Soil and Vegetation: Arable, well-drained soils were important for agriculture. Areas of high food production (for humans and game animals) were also favorable for human settlement.

Areas in Preston that have the highest archaeological sensitivity include land near Poquetanuck Cove, Dickerman's Brook, Hallville Pond, and Shewville Brook. Of these sensitive areas, artifacts have been discovered in many of them. Several Native American camp and village sites have been discovered in areas near Poquetanuck Cove and have been recorded in the Connecticut Archaeological Site Files and Maps. Discoveries of Native American artifacts also have been reported from the Preston Riverwalk eastward along Poquetanuck Cove and northward along Dickerman's Brook. Types of artifacts recovered from these sites include stone axes for felling trees and adzes for making dugout canoes from large logs. Remnants of larger village sites are also located in this area.

## Threats to Historic and Archaeological Resources

Historic and archaeological resources can be impacted directly or indirectly. Direct impacts are usually the result of demolition, new construction, earth disturbances, or reconstruction. Indirect impacts to historic resources can result when the surroundings are altered. It is the town's responsibility to be the stewards of the archaeological and historical resources. Once the resources are gone, they are lost forever.





## Municipal Facilities and Infrastructure

Municipalities provide many services to its residents. Some of these, such as emergency services, are an everyday necessity while others, such as recreational services, enhance a town's quality of life. Providing municipal services requires funding for capital needs (such as town vehicles and building facilities) and for operational needs (such as staff). Funding is provided through tax revenues, state and Federal monies, and through municipal bonds.

### The Preston Town Hall

Built in 1974, Preston Town Hall houses the First Selectman's office, Town Clerk, Treasurer, Tax Collector, Recreation, Assessor, Zoning Enforcement Office, Building Inspector, Sanitarians, Town Planner, Registrar of Voters, Resident State Trooper, Financial Agent, and Senior Affairs Agent. It has two conference rooms and storage space. The use of the facility has evolved rapidly over this short time (40 years). Few updates were completed during this time. The town should consider updating the facility to expand storage, add meeting and office space, and update each of the office suites so that wires for computers are not hanging in public view. In addition, addressing handicap needs is dire. Assessing handicap access to restrooms, meeting spaces, and town offices needs to be completed and necessary improvements made. This should be the town's first priority in completing improvements to the town hall.



### Public Works Facilities

Public works facilities include the maintenance garage, salt and sand storage facilities, and the transfer station. There is currently a need to expand the public works facilities as well. Anticipated expansion should include the addition of a three-bay garage.

## Public Library

Located adjacent to town hall, the library is open six days a week and serves Preston's residents and residents of other Connecticut towns who hold valid library cards from their home libraries. Internet access is available for all. The library holds 29,227 print items, 3,906 non-print items, has access to 29 databases as well as 33 magazine subscriptions. In addition to books and magazines, the library loans out movies on DVD and video, music on cd, books on tape and cd, and in playaway and mp3 formats. Other library resources and facilities include a public meeting room, reference services, Preston and Connecticut reference and historical files, and computers for internet use. The library provides interlibrary loan and Connecticut services, as well as access to ReQuest, the state-wide catalog. The library sponsors community activities including story time and summer reading programs for the children and author talks, book groups, and discussions and presentations for adults. The library anticipates its future needs to include a larger children's area and more community meeting space.



## Recreation Facilities and Programs

The Recreation Department provides programs for all ages including fitness classes, craft classes, homework help, soccer, basketball, and swimming. They

also co-sponsors league sports, the community newspaper and music instruction classes and have special events, such as the town picnic, Halloween haunt and concert series, among others.

## Recreation Facilities

(Table 26)

Recreation Facilities	Location	Amenities
Preston Community Park	13 Route 117	Sand Volleyball Court, Clay Infield Softball Diamonds, Playscapes, Playscape Shade Shelter Pavilion with Picnic Tables, Basketball Courts, Competition Horseshoe Pits, Tennis Courts, Baseball Diamonds, Walking Track, Seasonal Skating Pond, Gazebo with Bench Seating
Pavilion	13 Route 117	Standard Picnic Tables, Wheelchair Accessible Picnic Tables, Children's Picnic Tables, Accessible Restrooms, Refrigerator, Kitchen Sink with Hot & Cold Water, 20 Amp GFI Protected Outdoor Circuits, Garden Hose and Spigot
Preston Plains School	1 Route 164	Babe Ruth Baseball Diamond, Half Court Gymnasium /Auditorium, Soccer Field
Preston Memorial Veteran's School	325 Shetucket Turnpike	Walking Track (3 laps = 1 mile), Outdoor Basketball Court Full Court Gymnasium/Auditorium, Toddler and Youth Playscapes
Downer Doanne Park	Shetucket Turnpike	Swings and Picnic Table

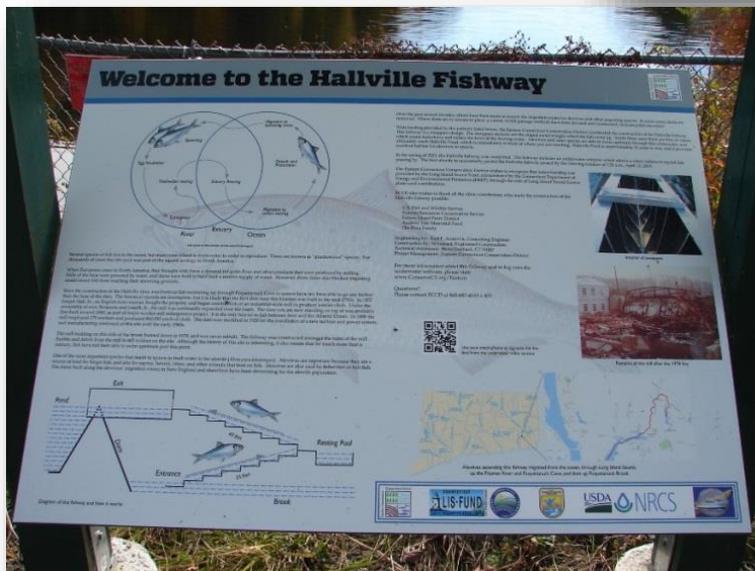


Above is the baseball field at Preston Community Park

## Other Recreational/Open Space Opportunities

Preston offers several passive recreation opportunities, as follows:

- **Pappalardo Conservation Area:** located on Route 164 adjacent to the State Boat Launch. Since this has recently been acquired, planning for this is necessary.
- **Pequot Trail and Conservation area:** The town land is approximately 155 acres and located off of Paster Road. The property is part of the Pequot Trail that runs from Preston to Ledyard.
- **Hallville Fishway:** Located adjacent to Hallville pond. This open space area is available for fishing etc.



- **Poquetanuck Cove:** Provides public access to the cove for fishing and kayaking.

- **Pryzborowski Conservation Area:** Provides access to the Shetucket River for fishing.

- **DEEP Open Space Fishing Area:** Adjacent to Preston Riverwalk, the DEEP retained this land along the Poquetanuck Cove.

- **DEEP State Forest:** This State Forest is over 100 acres and is located on Swantown Road.

## Senior Affairs, Facility and Housing

Seventeen percent of Preston residents are over 65 years old and 38% are between the age of 44 and 64. There has been a 20% increase in the elderly population since 2000. Trend for an aging population is expected to continue and the need for senior housing and services for the elderly will as well. The Senior Citizen Facility is located on Long Society Road.

The Senior Affairs Office has a 5 member staff; they offer assistance with the following:

1. Title 19, Medicaid Program
2. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Benefits
3. Energy Assistance
4. Elderly and Disabled Programs
5. Rental Assistance Program (RAP)

The Preston Housing Authority has forty housing units that serve the elderly and disabled. The facility is in the need for many upgrades including upgrades to the bathrooms and community center. In addition, it is expected as the population ages, there will be the need to provide additional housing to meet the needs of this population.

## Emergency Services

Preston has two volunteer fire departments, Poquetanuck and Preston City Fire Departments. Poquetanuck Volunteer Fire Department was founded in 1942 and Preston City Fire Department in 1943 in response to residents who felt that they needed to protect their neighborhoods. In fact, the volunteers actually built Preston's very first fire truck. Recently, there has been a nationwide trend to hire daytime paid fire fighters. Preston has also found the need to supplement the volunteers during the day, however the volunteers remain very active in their

respective departments and are extremely proud of service to the community.



Historic photo, Poquetanuck Fire Department

Emergency services are as noted below:

(Table 27)

<b>Fire Protection</b>	Fire protection is provided by a combination Fire Department from the Preston City Fire Department and the Poquetanuck Fire Department. The volunteers are supplement by a partially paid staff that work during the day Monday through Friday. Fire Equipment is as follows: 3 Engines, 2 Tankers, 2 Rescue Trucks, 2 Ambulances, 1 Special Service Vehicle, Brush Truck, and Command Vehicle.
Police Protection	Two Resident State Troopers are provided by the Connecticut State Police with office space in the town hall.
Ambulance	Both ambulances are housed at the PFD. Both PFD and PCFD provide the staff for Basic Life Support Services and Transport Services. American Ambulance and Mohegan Tribe provide Advance Life Support Services.

## Crime Report

(Table 28)

Number of Reported Crimes from 2005 to 2012								
Year	Burglary/ Larceny	Assault	Vandalism	DUI	Disorderly Conduct	Other	Total	% Change
<b>2005 - 2006</b>	48	16	25	22	2	44	157	~
<b>2006 - 2007</b>							0	Data not available
<b>2007 - 2008</b>	52	3	15	25	46	8	149	-5%
<b>2008 -2009</b>	53	14	21	34	32	10	164	10%
<b>2009 - 2010</b>	48	7	9	39	70	7	180	10%
<b>2010 - 2011</b>	35	1	12	40	74	10	172	4%
<b>2011 - 2012</b>	36	3	10	38	57	11	155	-10%
<b>2012 - 2013</b>	41	3	11	27	71	24	177	14%

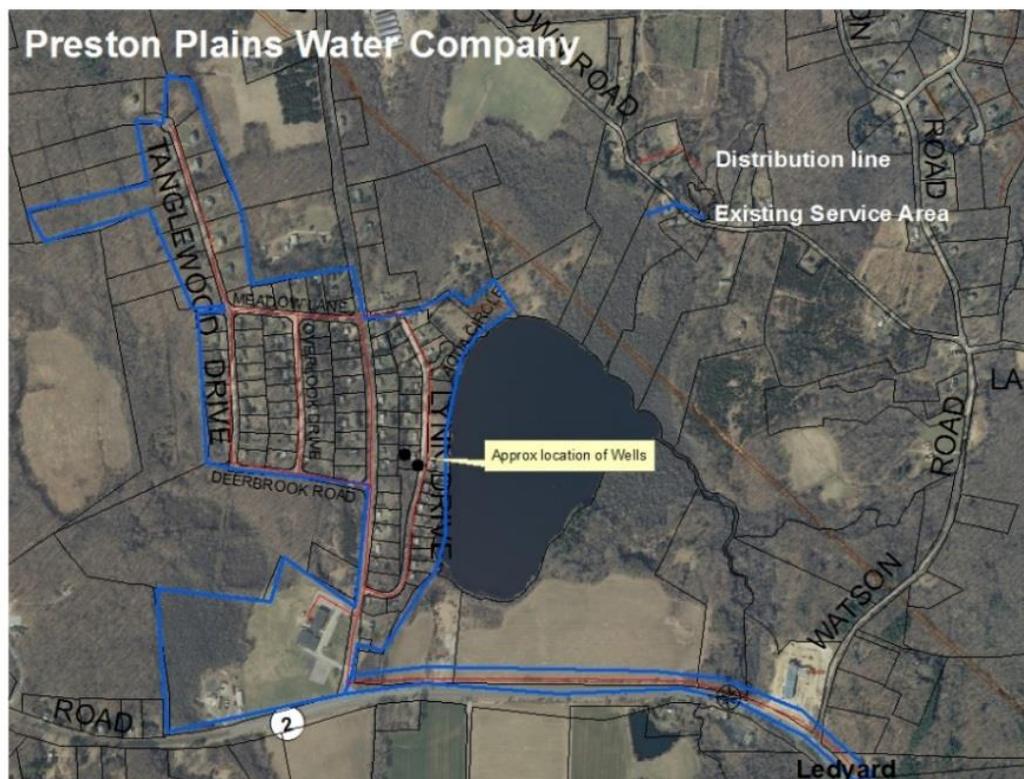
Noted above is the crime report prepared by the Resident State Trooper. Note that burglaries and larcenies were the highest during the recession.

## Water Resources

Residents, businesses, schools, and other facilities in Preston receive their drinking water from a variety of sources. The Norwich Department of Public Utilities (NDPU), Preston Plains Water Company, Lincoln Park, and Strawberry Park all provide water to various parts of Preston. In addition, various non-community wells are used in Preston. Non-community wells are wells that serve at least 25 persons at least 60 days per year, but exclude community or seasonal water systems. Non-community wells in Preston are used by churches, municipal buildings, and some commercial uses. The remainder of Preston is served by individual private wells.

Preston may have the opportunity to create a town owned and operated water system in Preston City because of the availability of a high yielding aquifer in the area. This could promote commercial expansion within the existing commercial district.

## Preston Plains Water Company



The Preston Plains Water Company (PPWC) provides potable drinking water to 102 single family homes and the Preston Plains School. The supply and distribution system includes two wells and storage tanks and pumping systems. PPWC is owned by the Pequot Holding Company, Inc. and is operated by the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation Utility Company. The PPWC has an Exclusive



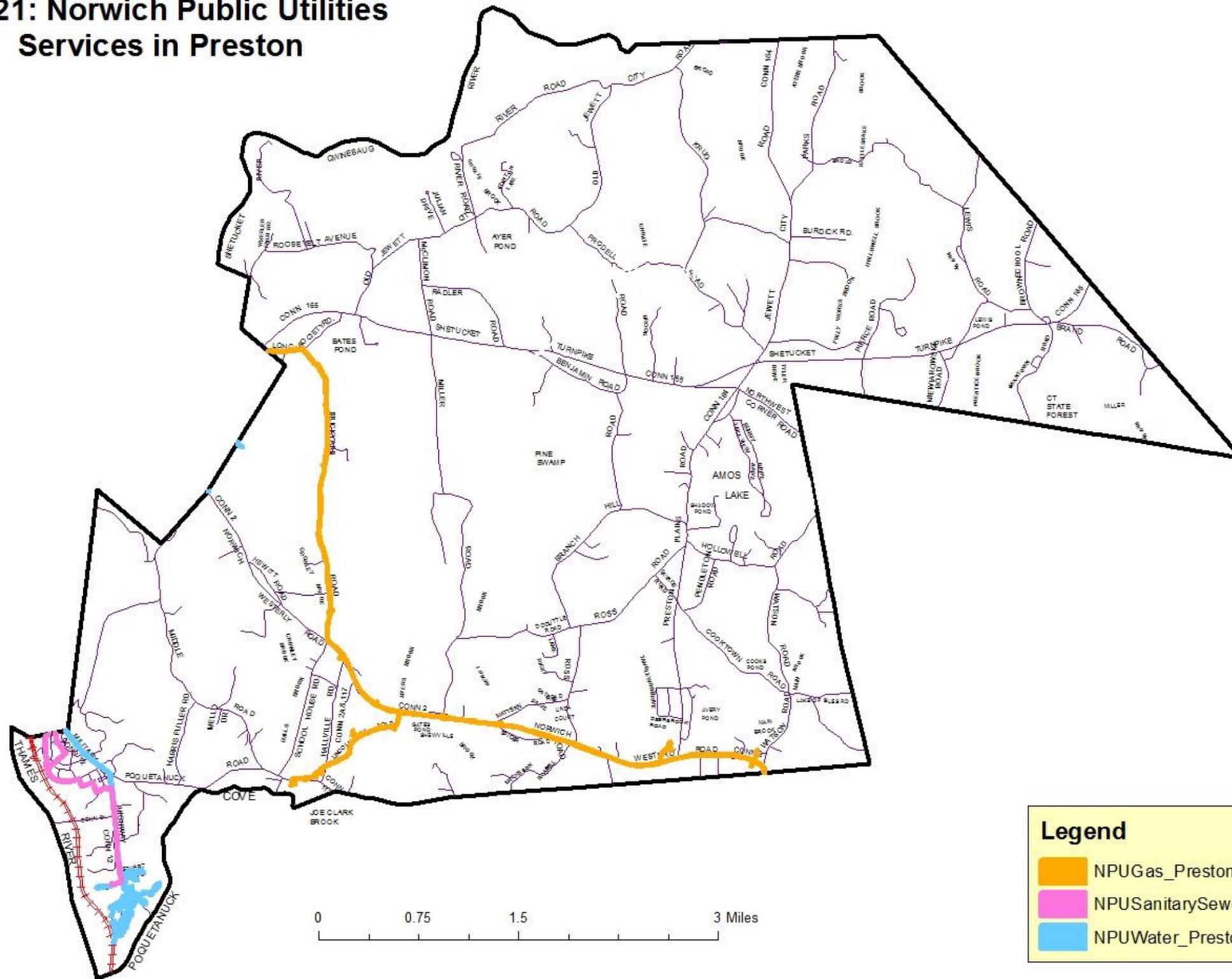
Watering Trough located in Preston City

Service Area that coincides with the existing service area, expansion areas are provided in the Water Supply Plan.

## Norwich Public Utilities

Norwich Public Utilities (NPU) serves the Southeastern Connecticut Regional Resources Recovery Authority (SCRRRA) and the area around Route 12. It also serves the residential area Happyland (See map 21).

**Map 21: Norwich Public Utilities Services in Preston**



## Waste Water Collection and Treatment

A portion of Route 12 in Preston is tied into the NPU public sewer system, while the remainder of Preston is served by on-site sewage disposal systems. Opportunities for connecting to the NPU system may exist in two areas: along the western portion of Route 2 where the Norwich interceptor reaches the Preston border; and along Route 12. The Preston Riverwalk property has sewage pump station, which connects to the Norwich system.

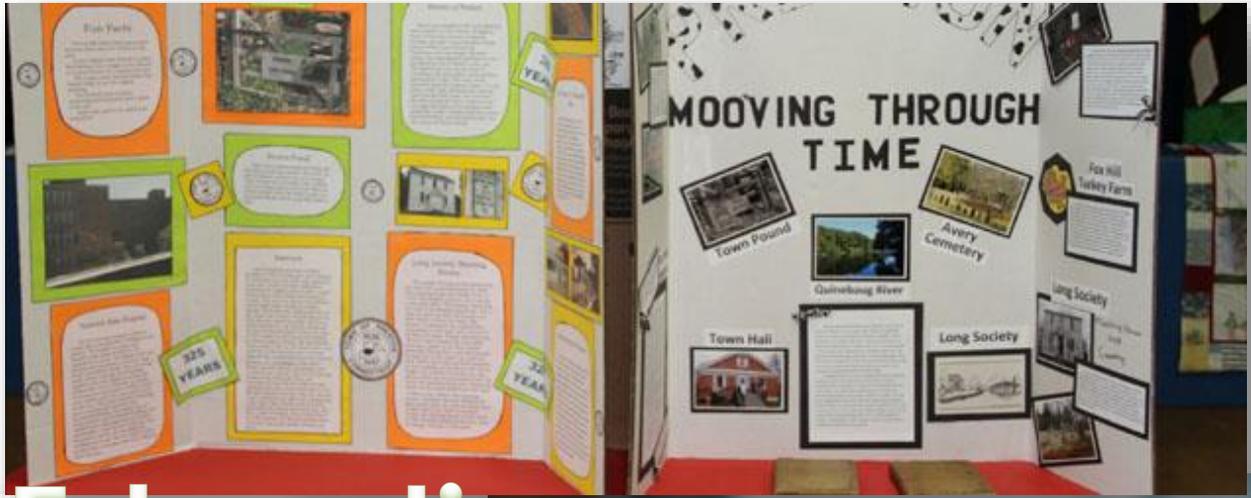
## Solid Waste and Disposal

The former landfill on Ross Road is now a solid waste transfer station that is operated by the town. Residents can bring household trash, bulky waste, and materials to be recycled. In addition, the town holds hazardous collection days and, for a fee, will dispose of tires. All of Preston's solid waste is taken to the SCRRRA incinerator, which produces steam to generate electricity, is designed to handle up to 690 tons of solid waste per day.

## Natural Gas

Natural gas is available on a portion of Long Society Road, the entire length of Brickyard Road, Route 2 from Brick Yard Road to the Preston town line and Lincoln Park Road. Anyone along the route may tie into the gas line. Only a handful of homes have tied into the line along the route. Both Preston Plains School and the Hilton Garden Inn are served by natural gas. Expansion of the gas line may occur to serve Preston Riverwalk. Preston is located in the Norwich Department of Public Utilities Gas Service area. All NDPU gas in Preston is high pressure and if Norwich Department of Public Utilities were asked to extend the line to serve the Riverwalk it most likely would be extended from Route 2A. There is a low pressure line in Norwich on Route 12, but it is low pressure. If the usage at the Riverwalk is low they could extend the line from Norwich, which may be closer, but most likely that it will come from the high pressure line on Route 2A because of the capacity of the service.





# Education





## Education System

In 2010, there were 495 school aged children in Preston.

- 430 attend Preston Public Schools
- 3 attend other public schools
- 28 attend Magnet schools
- 29 attend non-public schools
- 5 are home schooled

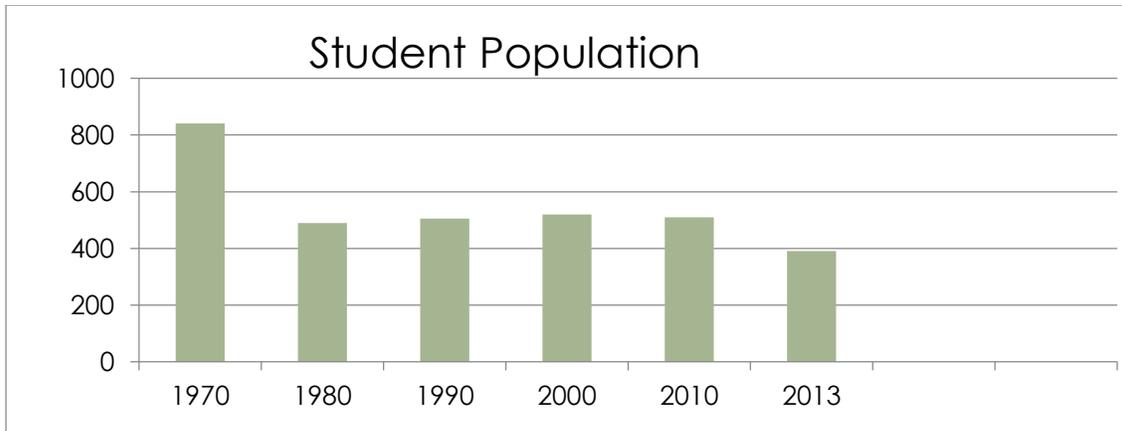
Preston schools are broken down into two Pre-K - 5 Preston Veterans and 6 to 8 Preston Plains.

Preston's student population has stayed relatively stable until recently. There was almost an 8 percent decrease in student population from 2010 to 2011 – the population went from 430 students in 2010 to 396 in the fall of 2011. According to the Preston Public Schools Enrollment Projected to 2023, prepared by Peter Prowda, October 9, 2013, the population at Preston Veterans there was a 16.6 percent decrease in the student population for the five year period from 2006 to 2011. Preston Plains School student population dropped 27.5 percent in that same period. This again, could be correlated with the recession and the loss of jobs within the region. According to Prowda, if universal pre-kindergarten is implemented, Preston Veterans School student population should grow slightly over the next ten years”.

## Preston Schools Enrollment

(Table 29)

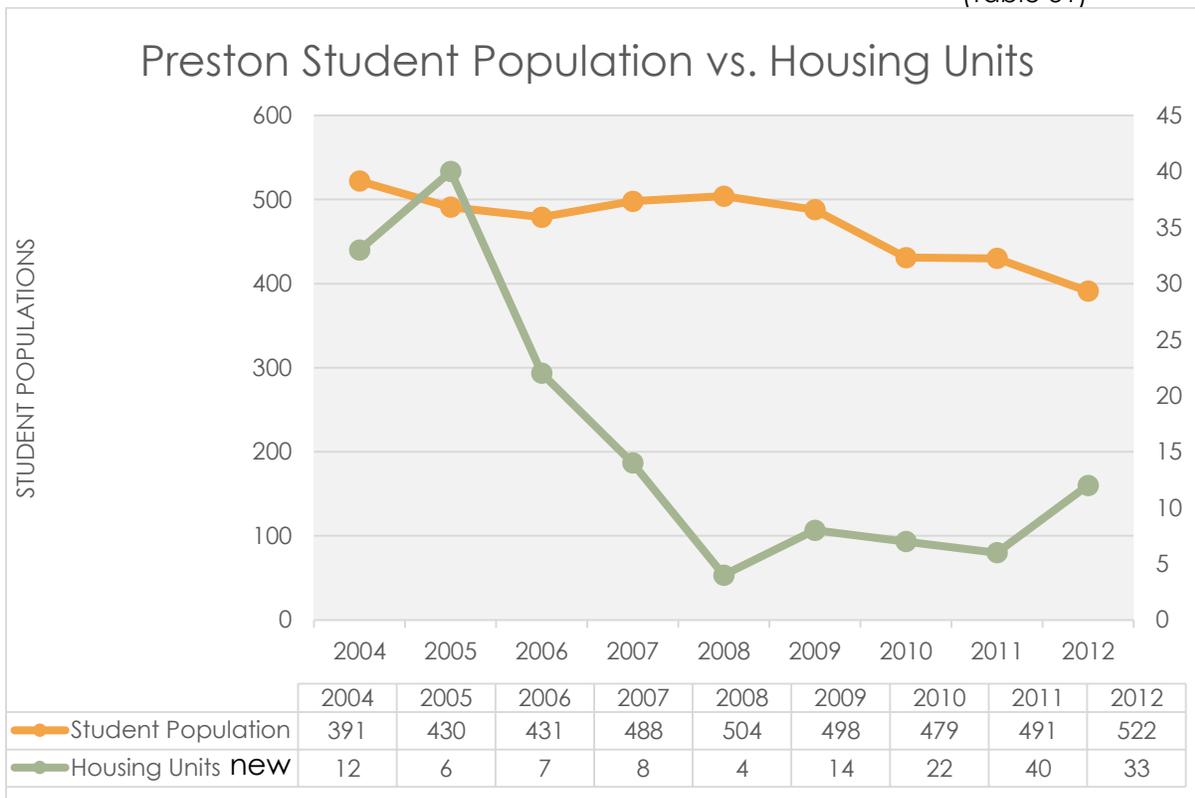
School	Grades	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
<b>Preston Plains School</b>	<b>6-8</b>	168	148	135	129	134	156
<b>Preston Veteran's School</b>	<b>PreK-5</b>	320	283	295	262	268	267
<b>Total</b>	<b>PreK-8</b>	488	431	430	391	402	423



(Table 30)

Interestingly, comparing the student population and new housing starts, there is within the time period from 2004 to 2012, little correlation between the new housing starts and the number of students, especially since in 2008 when new housing plummeted, the number of students increased slightly and at the height of the housing boom there was a slight decrease in the number of students.

(Table 31)



## Preston Schools – Enrollment Estimates (Table 32)

School	Grades	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
<b>Preston Plains School</b>	<b>6-8</b>	156	158	141	130	148	150	149	140	132	138
<b>Preston Veteran's Memorial School *</b>	<b>PreK-5</b>	255	264	261	265	254	257	262	258	270	279
<b>Total</b>	<b>PreK-8</b>	411	422	402	395	402	407	411	398	402	417

(Source Enrollment Forecast prepared by Dr. Peter Prowda for Preston Public Schools 2013)

\* In the Prowda study, Universal Pre-k estimates were used for the PVMS the student estimates; however; since the universal pre-k was cut in the 2014-15 budget, the estimated pre-k numbers were cut and an estimated 15 students were added for the mandatory pre-k program for each year. In the event that Universal Pre-k is provided, the estimates for the pre-k program are as follows, please note the estimate include the 15 students for the mandatory Pre-k program: 2014 - 39; 2015 - 26; 2016 - 37; 2017 - 35; 2018 - 35; 2019 - 35; 2020 - 35; 2021 - 35; 2022 - 36; 2023 - 36.

## Per Pupil Expenditures in Preston and Surrounding Towns

(Table 33)

Town	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010
Preston	\$13,531	\$15,029	\$15,681	\$15,046	\$16,747	\$19,928
Norwich	\$10,890	\$11,964	\$12,500	\$13,797	\$14,429	\$14,677
Lisbon	\$9,524	\$10,902	\$11,138	\$11,626	\$12,590	\$13,033
Montville	\$10,636	\$10,826	\$11,938	\$12,178	\$12,807	\$13,534
North Stonington	\$12,590	\$13,257	\$14,375	\$14,574	\$14,921	\$15,039
Ledyard	\$9,654	\$10,758	\$10,945	\$11,441	\$12,429	\$12,893
Griswold	\$9,776	\$10,062	\$10,652	\$11,098	\$11,729	\$12,854
State of Ct	\$11,011	\$11,590	\$12,172	\$12,757	\$13,607	\$14,031

Source: State of CT, Department of Education (These figures include high school placement expenditures)

In 2009-2010, out of 169 towns, Preston has one of the highest town for pupil expenditures with the State of Connecticut, and is 32% more than the second highest abutting town 42% more than the state average. In fact, the town's expenditures is almost 40% higher than 133 towns in CT. There was a 47% increase

in expenditures from 2004-2005 to 2009-2010. The State of Connecticut average increase from 2004-2005 to 2009-2010 was 25%. Preston has, between FY00-FY13 consistently ranked in the top third in the state relative to per pupil spending. Given the decreasing student population, consideration should be given to sharing services with other communities; however, caution should be taken before centralizing school services to Veteran's Memorial School especially if a large housing development occurs within town.

# TOWN TAXES

## Town Tax Base



Article published Feb 14, 2014

### The Preston grand list increased by 2 percent from October 2012 to October 2013

The town underwent a revaluation in 2012, causing last year's grand list to drop by 16 percent overall, reflecting the depressed real estate market in the region. Still using those values, the new net grand list - the total after removing exempt properties is \$392.5 million for real estate, personal property and motor vehicles, a 2 percent increase over last year's \$381.8 million total. No one major addition to the grand list caused the increase, but an audit of personal property likely helped the town calculate those values better, First Selectman Robert Congdon said. Assessor Mildred Peringer said she is still reviewing the numbers to determine reasons for the increase.

- The grand list increase means that 1 mill of taxes now would bring in an additional \$10,291 in tax revenue with the current rate of 23.93 mills.
- Preston's top 10 taxpayers and real estate assessments are:
1. Julia Tate Properties LLC (Hilton Garden Hotel): \$9.8 million
  2. Strawberry Park Properties LLC (campground): \$3.02 million
  3. Mashantucket Pequot Tribe: \$2.8 million
  4. Migliaccio, William and Margaret (campground): \$1 million
  5. Watson, Henry E.: \$831,400
  6. PAF Commercial Realty LLC (shopping center, Route 165): \$794,500
  7. Mashantucket Pequot Tribe: \$793,400
  8. Preston Business Park Inc. (excavation company, Route 2): \$728,000
  9. PAF Residential Realty LLC: \$721,700
  10. Bartha, Marcia A.: \$692,000
- Claire Bessette



## Tax Base

Preston has a Standard & Poor rating of AA+ for 2013. This is considered a “High Rating” and has been upgraded since 2012. As of 2011, Preston had a long-term debt of \$4,322,127. This compared to surrounding rural towns as follows: Griswold (\$20,270,000), Ledyard (\$14,562,550), Lisbon (\$4,372,864), and North Stonington (\$2,904,000). Source: OPM Municipal Fiscal Indicators; December 2012

## Grand List

Source: OPM Municipal Fiscal Indicators; December 2012

(Table 33)

\*Revaluation

Fiscal Year	Net Grand List	Mill Rate
2007	\$290,611,669	26.20
2008	\$294,990,129	26.19
2009*	\$441,044,838	17.98
2010	\$445,915,217	18.96
2011	\$449,648,242	19.24

## Expenditures

(Table 34)

Fiscal Year	Education Budget	Education Percentage Change	Operation Budget	Operation Percentage Change	Operation Budget Percentage of Total Town Budget
2007	\$10,401,301	n/a	\$3,259,935	n/a	23.86%
2008	\$10,547,934	1.41%	\$3,420,666	4.93%	24.49%
2009	\$11,137,380	5.59%	\$3,566,873	4.27%	24.26%
2010	\$10,865,208	-2.44%	\$3,420,873	-4.09%	23.95%
2011	\$10,843,392	0.20%	\$3,668,667	-7.24%	25.28%

## Percentage Breakdown of Grand List by Town (Table 35)

Town	Residential	Commercial / Industrial / Public Utility	Motor Vehicle	Personal	Other
Preston	77.6%	5.1%	7.5%	4.8%	5.0%
North Stonington	72.2%	10.2%	6.5%	4.4%	6.7%
Norwich	62.5%	22.0%	7.6%	5.5%	2.4%
Griswold	79.5%	6.4%	8.5%	2.3%	3.3%
Ledyard	77.0%	5.8%	8.8%	5.8%	2.7%
Lisbon	63.6%	19.6%	6.9%	5.8%	4.0%
State	70.8%	16.8%	5.5%	5.3%	1.7%



Traffic





## Traffic

Below is the list of State Highways and the linear miles of those roads within Preston.

### State Route Mileage, Preston (Table 36)

State Route No.	Mileage in Preston
2	5.11
2A	3.3
12	1.6
117	1.04
164	5.64
165	6.56
605	0.3

Source: Connecticut Department of Transportation (ConnDOT), 2012.

In the 2003 Plan, there were increases in traffic counts for the three points noted on Route 2 that were 103%, 128% and 319%; The same situation existed for Route 2A and Route 12, counts increased sharply. This was after the opening of the two casinos, but this plan shows stable counts or decreases. These decreases are driven by the casinos and the decline in the economy.

## Traffic Counts

Annually, ConnDOT publishes a report on average annual daily traffic volumes (AADT) for segments of state highways. AADT signifies the number of vehicles in both directions that pass through a segment of highway on an average day. The charts below show the annual traffic counts for Routes 2, 2A, 117, 164 and 165. It is noted that there have been changes on where the traffic counts are taken, with more detailed information starting after 2007.

# Routes 2 and 2A

(Table 37)

AVERAGE ANNUAL DAILY TRAFFIC ON STATE HIGHWAYS 2004 TO 2012, PRESTON										
Highway Segment	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	% Change 2004-2012
<b>Route 2</b>										
Norwich line to Rte. 2A & Rte. 117	11200	9000	8800	9000	10000	9900	9700	9800	9800	-13%
Rte. 2A & Rte. 117 to Rte. 164	19500	18100	17600	17900	18300	18300	17800	17900	17900	-8%
Rte. 164 to Ledyard line	25300	26000	25300	25700	20500	20600	19900	20800	20700	-18%
Norwich line to Schoolhouse								9200	9200	
Schoolhouse to Rte. 117 & 2A								9800	9800	
Rte. 2A to Mattern Rd.								17000	17000	
Mattern Rd. to Rte. 164								17900	17900	
Rte. 164 to Watson Rd.					24400	24500	23700	22900	22800	
Watson Rd. to Preston-Ledyard Line					20500	20600	19900	20800	20700	
<b>Route 2A</b>										
Montville line to Rte. 12	24200	27100	27200	27200	24600	24600	24600	23700	24400	1%
Rte. 12 S. junction to N. junction Rte. 12	<i>Overlap with Route 12</i>									
Rte. 12 to Rte. 117	13600	12700	12700	12700	12400	12300	12000	11500	11500	-15%
Rte. 117 to overlap	8400	9800	9800	9600	9200	9100	8900	8200	8200	-2%
Rte. 117 to Rte. 2	<i>Overlap with Route 117</i>									
Rte. 12 to Schoolhouse Rd.								13100	13100	
Schoolhouse Rd. to Rte. 117								11500	11500	
Rte. 12 to Middle Rd.		14600	14600	14500	13700	13600	13300			
Middle Rd. to Rte. 117		12700	12700	12700	12400	12300	12000			

# Routes 12 and 117

(Table 38)

Route 12	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	% change
Ledyard line to Rte. 2A	14700	14000	14000	14300	14500	14400	14100	13600	13600	-7%
S. junction Rte. 2A to N. junction Rte. 2A	21100	19500	19500	19500	20300	20100	19700	19600	19500	-8%
Rte. 2A to Norwich line	8300	7700	7700	7700	8000	7900	7800	7600	7600	-8%
Ledyard line to Drawbridge Rd.					12600	12500	12200	11700	11700	
Drawbridge Rd to Rte. 2A					14600	14400	14100	13600	13600	
<b>Route 117</b>										
Ledyard line to Rte. 2A	4200	4500	4500	4600	4300	4300	4200	4600	4600	10%
<b>Route 117 - continued</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>% change</b>
Rte. 2A to Lincoln Park Rd.	1200	1400	1400	1400	1200	1200	1200	1300	1300	8%
Lincoln Park Rd. to Rte. 2	9500	11000	11000	10900	900	9700	9500	8900	8900	-6%
Rte. 2A to Hallville					10300	10200	10000	9500	9500	
Hallville Rd. to Rte. 2	9500	11000	11000	10900	900	9700	9500	8900	8900	-6%

# Routes 164 and 165

(Table 39)

Route 164	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	% change
Rte. 2 to Rte. 605	10100	10200	10100	10200	9600	9500	9400	9600	9600	-5%
Rte. 605 to Rte. 165	9700	9500	9500	9500	9000	8900	8800	11600	11600	20%
Rte. 165 to Griswold Line	8800	9200	9200	9300	9400	9300	9200	8200	8200	-7%
Rte. 2 to Ross Rd.					10400	10300	10200			
Ross Rd. to Rte. 605					9600	9500	9500		11600	
Rte. 165 to Krug Rd								9700	9700	
Krug Rd to Griswold line									8200	

<b>Route 165</b>										
<b>Norwich line to Old Jewett City Rd.</b>	4800	4900	4900	4900	4800	4700	4700	4300	4300	-10%
<b>Old Jewett City Rd. to Rte. 605</b>	4400	4800	4800	4800	4100	4000	4000	3700	3700	-16%
<b>Rte. 605 to Rte. 164</b>	3000	3400	3400	3400	2600	2600	2500	2700	2700	-10%
<b>Rte. 164 to Lewis Rd</b>	3800	4000	4000	4000	3200	3200	3100	3300	3300	-13%
<b>Lewis Rd. to Griswold line</b>	3000	3200	3200	3200	2700	2400	2400	2200	2200	-27%
<b>Norwich line to Long Society Rd.</b>		4400	4400	4400	4300	4300	4200	3900	3900	
<b>Long Society Rd. to Old Jewett City Road</b>		4900	4900	4900	4800	4700	4700	4300	4300	
<b>Route 165-continued</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>% change</b>
<b>Old Jewett City Rd. to Enter Flemings</b>		4100	4100	4100				3700		
<b>Flemings to Rte. 605</b>		4800	4800	4800						
<b>Lewis Rd. to Brand Rd.</b>					2400	2700	2600	2600	2600	
<b>Route 605</b>										
<b>Rte. 165 to Rte. 164</b>	1400	1700	1600	1600	1400	1400	1400	1200	1200	-14%

## Traffic Accidents

By far, the largest number of accidents in Preston occurred on Route 2, with 363 over a six year period. Only one accident was reported for Route 605 during this same period. Table 41 highlights the stretches of the state highways with the highest number of accidents over the time period.

## Traffic Accidents

(Table 40)

State Route	Type of Accidents	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	TOTAL
<b>Route 2</b>	No. Accidents	68	66	67	52	57	53	363
	No. Accidents with Injuries	15	23	11	15	16	17	97
	No. Fatalities	0	2	3	1	0	0	6
<b>Route 2A</b>	No. Accidents	46	52	47	38	40	37	260

	No. Accidents with Injuries	13	9	12	8	9	6	57
	No. Fatalities	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Route 117</b>	No. Accidents	8	10	8	10	8	9	53
	No. Accidents with Injuries	2	2	3	1	1	1	10
<b>Route 12</b>	No. Accidents	19	25	19	23	18	17	121
	No. Accidents with Injuries	3	4	7	6	5	6	31
<b>Route 164</b>	No. Accidents	32	21	14	23	20	21	131
	No. Accidents with Injuries	10	5	1	5	6	5	32
<b>Route 165</b>	No. Accidents	12	12	8	11	8	17	68
	No. Accidents with Injuries	6	3	2	6	3	3	23
<b>Route 165 continued</b>	<b>Type of Accidents</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Route 605</b>	No. Accidents	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
	No. Accidents with Injuries	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
<b>Total</b>	No. Accidents	234	234	204	199	191	192	997
	No. Accidents with Injuries	49	46	37	41	40	38	251
	No. Fatalities	0	2	3	1	0	0	6
<b>CT Department of Transportation CT Preston State Troopers, 2014</b>								

Traffic accident data were provided by ConnDOT and the Preston resident state trooper. The ConnDOT data are for the period from January 2007 to December 2012 and include information for state highways only. There were 997 reported accidents on state highways in Preston from January 2007 through December 2012. Of these, 251 resulted in injuries. In addition, there were 6 fatalities (all on Route 2). The vast majority of accidents in Preston from 2007 to the end of 2012 were caused by driver error. Table 41 breaks down the accidents by year. In general the traffic accidents numbers either decreased or stayed somewhat the same.

## Locations with a High Number of Accidents

Intersections with the highest number of accidents during this time period were at Route 2A/Route 12 (Mohegan-Pequot Bridge), with 122 accidents, and the intersection of Route 2A / 117, with 75 accidents. Following these were the Route 2 / Schoolhouse Road intersection, with 27 accidents, and the Route 2A/12 intersection, with 24 accidents. These four intersections are signalized.

Map 21 depicts intersections with ten or more accidents between 2007 and 2012.

## Locations with a High Number of Accidents 2007 to 2012

(Table 41)

Route No. <sup>1</sup>	Segment	No. Accidents	Leading Cause of Accidents
2	Between Norwich Town Line and Routes 2A/117	173	Following too close (69% of total accidents)
2A	Between Rte. 2A Montville Line to Harris Fuller Road	136	Following too close (60%)
12	Between Ledyard town line and southern Route 2A intersection	67	Following too close (50%)
Route No	Segment	No Accidents	Leading Cause of Accident
164	From Route 605 to Griswold Town Line	74	Following too close (39%)
165	From Norwich Town Line to Route 605	37	Following too close (55%)

Source: ConnDOT, 2014 and Preston State Troopers.

The accident data in Table 43 stress the importance of access management techniques to ensure the safety of drivers that are entering and exiting residential driveways or other types of establishments in Preston. The data indicate that roughly 15 percent of all accidents on Route 2 occurred at commercial driveways. A large percentage (13 percent) of accidents on Route 165 also occurred at commercial driveways. Route 165 had the highest number of accidents (13, or 19 percent of total accidents on Route 165) occur at private driveways.

## Accidents at Commercial and Private Driveways 2007 to 2012

Route	Total Accidents	Accidents at Commercial Driveways		Accidents at Private Driveways	
		No.	% of Total	No.	% of Total
<b>2</b>	363	54	15%	12	3%
<b>2A</b>	260	0	0%	8	3%
<b>12</b>	121	14	12%	12	10%
<b>117</b>	53	0	0%	2	4%
<b>164</b>	131	5	4%	4	3%
<b>165</b>	68	9	13%	13	19%

No reported accidents at commercial or private driveways on Route 605. (Table 42)

Source: ConnDOT, 2014.

Conclusions about highway safety can be drawn from a comparison of roadways based on the number of accidents per road mile. For example, a large number of accidents over a large stretch of road may be less critical than a smaller number of accidents occurring on a shorter stretch of road. Table 33 divides the total number of accidents by the length of the state highway in Preston. By far, Route 2A experienced the most accidents per mile, with Route 2 not far behind.

## Total Accidents per state Highway Mile from 2007 to 2012

(Table 43)

Route	Total Accidents	Mileage in Preston	Accidents Per Mile
<b>2</b>	363	5.11	71
<b>2A</b>	260	3.3	79
<b>12</b>	121	1.6	76
<b>117</b>	53	1.04	49
<b>164</b>	131	5.64	29
<b>165</b>	68	6.56	10
<b>605</b>	1	0.3	3

Source: ConnDOT, 2007-2012

## Traffic Accidents Along Town Roads

<b>Benjamin Road - 2 accidents</b>
<b>Brickyard Road - 10 accidents</b>
<b>Branch Hill Road - 3 accidents</b>
<b>Brand Road - 1 accident</b>
<b>Brown School Road - 3 accidents</b>
<b>Cider Mill Road -4 accidents</b>
<b>Cooktown Road - 1 accident</b>
<b>Corning Road - 1 accident</b>
<b>Doolittle Road - 1 accident</b>
<b>Harris-Fuller Road - 4 accidents</b>
<b>Hallville Road - 1 accident</b>
<b>Holdsworth Road - 1 accident</b>
<b>Hollowell Road - 1 accident</b>
<b>Krug Road - 8 accidents</b>
<b>Lake of Isles Road - 1 accident</b>
<b>Lincoln Park Road - 2 accidents</b>
<b>Long Society Road - 5 accidents</b>
<b>Lynn Drive - 1 accident</b>
<b>Mathewson Mill Road - 4 accidents</b>

<b>Middle Road - 9 accidents</b>
<b>Miller Road - 3 accidents</b>
<b>Northwest Corner Road - 1 accident</b>
<b>Old Jewett City Road - 13 accidents</b>
<b>Parks Road - 4 accidents</b>
<b>Pierce Road - 3 accidents</b>
<b>Point Street - 1 accident</b>
<b>Prodell Road - 7 accidents</b>
<b>Ricky Lane - 2 accidents</b>
<b>River Road - 10 accidents</b>
<b>Roosevelt Street Ext. - 4 accidents</b>
<b>Ross Road - 7 accidents</b>
<b>School House Road - 9 accidents</b>
<b>Stanton Lane - 1 accident</b>
<b>Shewville Road - 2 accidents</b>
<b>Spicer Road - 1 accident</b>
<b>Swantown Road - 1 accident</b>
<b>Watson Road - 2 accidents</b>

Table 44

Not included in this list are miscellaneous accidents reported on private property, such as parking lots.

## SCENIC ROADS

A portion of Route 164 is designated as a Scenic Highway by the Commissioner of ConnDOT, in accordance with the program established by Public Act No. 87-280. The designated stretch extends 2.7 miles south from the Griswold town line through Preston City. The scenery along this roadway offers a combination of rolling hills, agricultural landscapes and a village center.

A scenic roadway designation recognizes the aesthetic value offered by the landscape and associated cultural and natural elements. The designation is a strategy to help maintain those features that contribute to the uniqueness of the roadway. This approach requires a balance between maintaining safety and maintaining the character along the roadway. Since these two features can be mutually exclusive, close cooperation between the town, ConnDOT and utility companies is necessary. It is important to stress that this scenic designation does not necessarily place additional land use restrictions on the land along the roadway.

Connecticut General Statutes Section 7-149 allows a town to designate local roads as “Scenic Roads”. To do such, a town must adopt an ordinance that establishes criteria for the selection of scenic roadways. The ordinance can regulate alterations or improvements along the designated road, including the removal of stonewalls and mature trees. The statutes require that certain criteria be listed in the ordinance, including the provision that a scenic roadway be free of “intensive commercial development and intensive vehicular traffic.” A town can delegate the power for designating scenic roads to its Planning and Zoning Commission.

## Other Modes of Transportation

### Bus service

The Southeast Area Transit (SEAT) currently provides bus service to nine towns in southeastern Connecticut. Unfortunately at this time, there is no SEAT bus services in Preston, although the SEAT garage is located in Preston. As Preston Riverwalk is developed, bus services could be expanded to serve the property.

### Rail Service

Providence and Worcester Railroad on the east side of the Thames River. The rail line runs from Groton to Worcester, Massachusetts. This rail line is used for private freight service for two round-trips per day. The existence of this line in Preston possibly could provide mass transit or new freight opportunities, especially in light of the future redevelopment of Preston Riverwalk.

### Bicycle

The long range regional transportation plan for FY 2011-2040 for southeastern Connecticut recommends bicycle and pedestrian routes in Preston. Although special bicycle facilities do not exist along these routes, traffic volumes are sufficiently low, making these roads well-suited to accommodate bicyclists.

1. From Norwich: Roosevelt Avenue to Old Jewett City Road to River Road to Old Jewett City Road to Krug Road to Route 164 to Route 165 (west) to Benjamin Road to Branch Hill Road to Ross Road to Route 2 (east) to Shewville Road.
2. From Griswold: Route 201 to Route 165 to Route 164 to Route 2 to Shewville Road to Ledyard.

## Future Transportation Issues

The potential for major developments within and beyond Preston, will require the town to continue to address transportation issues. These issues include:

1. Access to land uses along the heavily-traveled corridors, such as Route 2, Route 2A, Route 164 and Route 12/32 will the need to implement access management techniques.

2. Anticipated future problems include additional congestion, decreased safety, delays, access problems, and pedestrian conflicts. Considering the future development at Preston Riverwalk, the most important area for improvement will be the Route 2A Bridge and the intersection of Route 2A and Route 12/32. According to the Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments LONG RANGE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN FY 2011--2040 FOR SOUTHEASTERN CONNECTICUT Improvements to Routes 2, 2A, 32 including new Route 2A Bridge over the Thames River is one of the highest priority projects for the region.
3. The exploration and expansion of alternate modes including bus and rail.
4. Poquetanuck Village will continue to be adversely affected by through-traffic. While businesses along this stretch likely benefit from the additional traffic, safety and capacity concerns need to be addressed without deterring from the character or economic opportunity in this area.

# Survey Results



How long have you lived here?



What needs improvements?



What do you like about Preston?



Anything worth protecting?



# Community Survey

## Who responded?

A survey was conducted in the summer of 2013. Thirty-four percent of Preston residents responded. This is about the same percentage that responded for the

Question	2000	2013
Average years lived in Preston	24.9	27.4
Average Age	49.9	54.6
Average Household size	2.18	2.18

survey conducted in 2000. An interesting fact is that of those respondents, most of the people work in the defense industry. In the last survey, most of the respondents worked in Preston. Respondents like the residents are getting older and staying in Preston longer, but their household size is the same.



## What do you like about Preston?

More than 50% of the respondents agree that preserving Preston's character is important. They agreed that Country living is what they like most about Preston and would like to protect its historic areas and natural resources.

Questions	2000 %	2013 %
What do you like about Preston?		
Country Living	91	89
Extension of Public Sewer and Water	60	79
Likes idea of design standards	67	64
Commercial Development along Route 2	54	63
Preston City historically sensitive design	56	62
Poquetanuck Village historically sensitive design	61	61
Support Amos Lake watershed Protection	57	57
Control incremental costs of services and seek grants	57	50

To a lesser extent, respondents liked:

- Property tax rate 25%
- Close to Family 43%
- Sense of Community 35%
- Quality of School System 27%
- Historic Character 31%
- Living Close to employment 21%
- Convenient to shopping and other retail 29%
- Easy access to local government 17%

## What needs improvement?

Forty percent of the respondents agree that the roads in Preston need improvements. Less than 25% of respondents believe that the following services need improvement:

- All are satisfactory (23%)
- Police protection (19%)
- Adult recreation (18%)
- Public transportation (17%)
- Youth recreation (14%)
- Educational facilities/programs (11%)
- Health services (9%)
- Social services (8%)
- Library (8%)
- Ambulance service (7%)
- Fire protection (6%)



Less than 25% of the respondents would spend tax dollars on providing recreation opportunities such as a public pool.

## Residential

Most respondents would like to see more rural development, requiring lot sizes from 1 to over 2 acres. It appears that assisted living opportunities is not a great priority nor is having more densely developed areas, even if there is public sewer and water available. Below is the breakdown of the type of residential the respondents would like to see occur in Preston.

- Medium lot development (1-2 acres) - (42%)
- Large lot development (+2 acres) - (40%)
- Housing for assisted living in all areas of town - (22%)
- Smaller lots (1 acre or less) if public sewer and water are provided - (16%)
- Multi-family development in areas of town where public sewer and water are available - (9%)



Some Respondents would like to make public expenditures to preserve or protect public resources.

- Scenic farm areas - (38%)
- Historic resources - (24%)
- Archeological resources - (14%)

Most respondents would support implementing a watershed protection plan for Amos Lake and other pond, lake or aquifer resources.

- 57% Yes
- 21% No



Most respondents would like to seek commercial development to offset the incremental cost of government and education.

- Attract commercial/business development – 53%
- Seek grants – 50%
- Attract light industrial development – 37%
- Lessen potential for high and medium residential – 29%
- Reduce administration budget - 28%
- Reduce education budget - 21%

- Finance through bond issue, raise taxes, and reduce emergency services budget. All less than 15%.

## Fifty-two percent of respondents

Would like to have small scale specialty retail shops, bed and breakfasts, and restaurants in Preston for business development. Sixty-three percent would like to see commercial development on Route 2 and fifty-seven percent would like it on Route 12. Sixty-five percent would like design standards sensitive to the historic character of the areas.

It is evident that the people in Preston would like to retain its rural and historic character, protect its important natural resources, such as Amos Lake while promoting economic development that will be sensitive to community and in areas where commercial development is most appropriate.

Addendum 2 is a copy of the full survey.



# The Plan Goals and Objectives





# Economic Development Goals and Objectives

## ❖ **Goal #1: Economic development will contribute to and enhance the agricultural character and high quality of life in Preston.**

- **Objective.** The redevelopment of Preston Riverwalk is the highest priority for economic development in Preston, the region and the state. The future development of the Riverwalk needs careful planning to ensure that economic development and tax benefits are optimized and sustainable.
  - **Action.** BOS, PZC, and PRA should continue to be involved in the decision-making process for the redevelopment of Preston Riverwalk to ensure that development contributes to a diverse economy.
  - **Action.** PRA should continually assess economic development trends.
  - **Action.** PZC should periodically review the Thames River District with PRA to ensure that the regulations for the district remain viable and meet the evolving town goals for the property.
  - **Action.** PRA should complete the environmental cleanup at the site including the abatement and demolition of remaining buildings (except Admin and pump station), abate the pier and removal of abandoned oil and steam piping, abate any remaining areas of concern.
  - **Action.** PRA should inspect, design and/or repair the following site Infrastructure:
    - The dam at Hospital Pond.
    - Replace / upgrade the “at grade” railroad crossing.
    - Locate and remove all abandoned subgrade infrastructure. (Sanitary sewers, steam conduits, water mains, inactive storm sewers, electrical conduit, manholes, etc.)
    - Install water mains and hydrants along the west side of Route 12.
  - **Action.** The PRA should prepare an accurate survey creating a subdivision of the land that will include infrastructure improvements, such as roads, sewer, water, and their design. Subdivision approval is not required for municipal subdivision. The subdivision will become the master plan and will include the following:
    - Evaluate and as appropriate design and develop a waterfront Riverwalk including public access to the peninsula and pier.
    - Prepare a marine survey of the pier and design a new pier for public use.
    - Design open spaces, public parks, walking trails, river access, and a memorial park at the Hellcat crash site, etc.
    - Design the necessary infrastructure and streets for individual parcels
    - Evaluate, and as appropriate design and create a “Revolutionary War Frigate Shipbuilding Center” complete with time period structures.

- Infrastructure and streets for individual parcels, including pedestrian access and connections.
- Full restoration of the Administration Building for reuse. The structure could be utilized for Town Offices, a 'site museum / historical center' or an office building for sale or lease by the Town.
- After such time the plans are completed, public improvements should be made and should include the creation of the waterfront park, new pier for public use, and the public park and recreation areas that will include the enhancement of the archaeological, historic, and natural resource areas and the linear pedestrian connection of the open space areas with the various resources.
- **Action.** If the PRA's current marketing approaches do not result in near-term success in revitalizing the site, a more aggressive long-range marketing campaign will be required. As the Agency continues to significantly progress the final stages of demolition and remediation, they should shift their focus from 'clean up' to economic development. At that time, the Agency and their real estate broker will be ready to declare "Preston Riverwalk is Now Open for Business". This effort may require the aforementioned land planner, their broker and the Agency working together to create a package allowing us to initiate local, statewide and/or national ad campaigns.

❖ **Goal #2: In the collaboration with various regional and organizations, such as SeCTer, SCCOG, and CT DECD, Preston Riverwalk will be a leader within the region for innovative development concepts.**

- **Objective. Encourage quality (high paying) sustainable jobs.**
  - **Action.** The current Economic Development Commission has not been active. BOS should create an active Economic Development Commission (EDC) to assist with understanding regional development trends.
  - **Action.** PZC should update the Zoning Regulations, with input from the PRA and EDC, to ensure that the types of businesses that are desired are permitted.
  - **Action.** PRA, EDC and BOS should explore and possibly implement incentive mechanisms to attract and retain desired businesses.

❖ **Goal #3: Agricultural uses will continue to be an important component of Preston's economic growth.**

- **Objective. Encourage the continuation of working farms within the community.**
  - **Action.** Various town boards and commission (including PZC, IWWC, BOS, CC and EDC) should work with farmers and farmland owners to

- promote this goal by accommodating farmers with flexibility in regulations when it is to permit farm uses.
- **Action.** BOS should create a joint Agriculture Conservation Commission (ACC) to interact with other regional or state groups that actively promote farmland preservation and agricultural activities.
  - **Action.** BOS and PZC, with consultation from the ACC should apply for open space grants through the Connecticut DEEP (or other agencies) or Partner with the Connecticut Department of Agriculture to acquire development rights of farms that contain a significant amount of prime, state and locally important farmland soils.
- **Objective. Enter into a cooperative agreement with the Connecticut Department of Agriculture to become part of the Program for Community Farms Preservation.**
- **Action.** The ACC has inventoried all the farm resources, and the ACC should now establish criteria or a ranking system to identify farming priorities.
  - **Action.** The BOS in consultation with the ACC should apply for locally important farmland soils designation, as necessary.
  - **Action.** BOS should create a town agriculture preservation fund. The town may use the current open space fund for this purpose; however, the town must determine whether or not they would like to do so.
  - **Action.** BOF should investigate and consider bonding for the open space/Agricultural fund.
- **Objective. Ensure that farmland owners are aware of options for estate planning and land preservation.**
- **Action.** The ACC should help to promote and participate in programs and workshops that are sponsored by local, regional, and state entities regarding estate planning and land preservation.
  - **Action.** The ACC should continue to provide forums for local farmland owners who have successfully preserved their land to share their experience with other local farmland owners and to provide ideas on how to create a sustainable farm.
- **Objective. Create a Sustainable and Economically Viable Farming Community**
- **Action.** Through the Farmland Restoration Program, the ACC should attempt to restore state parcels of formerly farmed such as the former Pryzborowski land and other private overgrown agricultural land for use by a local farmers.
  - **Action.** The ACC, with assistance from the Town Planner, should apply for agriculture grants to assist in creating a sustainable farm community including assisting local farmers.
  - **Action.** Create a Preston Farm Link that could include a local farm trail that will promote local farms for which a map of the farms could be provided on the town web site.

❖ **Goal #4: Create a diverse business environment that will encourage a positive sustainable economy.**

- **Objective. Encourage businesses that have a higher tax rate to locate in Preston.**
  - **Action.** PZC and EDC should conduct research on the level of taxes that various types of economic development generate and revise the Zoning Regulations to encourage the desired use.
  - **Action.** PRA, EDC, PZC and BOS should continue a relationship with the Southeastern Connecticut Enterprise Region (seCTer) and Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments (SCCOG) in order to understand the evolving economic development trends.
  - **Action.** PZC should update the Zoning Regulations for home occupations to ensure that the diversity of types of occupations are permitted, and encourage growth of such occupations into larger business that can expand to other commercial locations in Preston. There will be a balance that will allow a small amount of growth at their home location while protecting the character of the residential area.
- **Objective. In areas other than Preston Riverwalk, encourage small-scale retail establishments, research / office parks, and tourism, manufacturing, and recreational facilities as the preferred types of economic development in Preston.**
  - **Action.** PZC, with input from EDC, should review the zoning regulations to ensure that they encourage the preferred types of development.
- **Objective. Establish Preston as a “business friendly” town.**
  - **Action.** BOS and EDC should ensure that town boards, commissions, and departments operate in a “business friendly” manner.
  - **Action.** EDC should integrate the importance and attractiveness of Preston’s historic resources into its business outreach efforts.
- **Objective. Encourage economic diversity in agriculture.**
  - **Action.** PZC should review and revise the Zoning Regulations to allow flexibility to the Farming Community to permit creative farming uses that will help create sustainable farms.

❖ **Goal #5: Priority areas for economic development in Preston will be those areas located on state highways that have access, visual exposure, environmental compatibility and remoteness from residential development.**

- **Objective. Promote appropriate economic development along the Route 2, Route 12, Route 165 and Route 164 corridors.**
  - **Action.** PZC and EDC should conduct a detailed inventory of existing commercial uses and vacant land that are zoned for commercial or

- industrial uses using the town's digitized parcel data in conjunction with the maps contained in this Plan.
- **Action.** PZC and EDC should work with landowners along these two corridors and with town residents to create corridor plans for both routes. Since Route 2 is a travel corridor to Foxwoods Resort and Casino, industrial land uses may not capitalize on the type of traffic along this Route.
  - **Action.** PZC should review and appropriately amend the zoning regulations and zoning map to reflect the corridor plans that help improve visual appearance along the routes (especially Route 2).
- **Objective. Extend public sewer, water and gas to specified areas in Preston to allow for controlled and environmentally responsible economic development, while ensuring that extensions do not spur inappropriate growth that strains human and natural resources and detracts from the town's character. The first priority is to investigate the need for further extensions along Route 12. The second priority area is along Route 2 in the Resort Commercial zoning district. The third priority area is along Route 2 near the Norwich town line.**
- **Action.** The Water Commission and BOS will continue its study of water needs and issues for Preston.
  - **Action.** The Water Commission and BOS should determine the feasibility of extending water and sewer lines, in terms of supply, demand, engineering, legal issues, cost, and funding.
  - **Action.** As development progresses at the Preston Riverwalk, the PRA should solicit funding from federal Economic Development Administration, USDA, and DECD for infrastructure improvements in the Preston Riverwalk area.
- **Objective. Ensure that existing economic development areas remain viable.**
- **Action.** PRA and EDC should identify challenges that existing businesses may face and communicate those challenges and potential solutions to BOS and PZC
- **Objective. Promote, through revisions to the Zoning Regulations, the expansion of existing businesses and creation of new businesses that would contribute to the town's tax base.**
- **Action.** The PZC should investigate adjusting such zoning lines to reflect land conditions.
  - **Action.** PZC should review location of non-conforming businesses and consider rezoning or adjusting district lines appropriately.
  - **Action.** The PZC should investigate potential changes to the Zoning Regulations that would encourage creative ways to achieve higher taxed development.

❖ **Goal #6: Preston City, and Poquetanuck Villages and possibly Hallville and Long Society will provide a mixture of business and social opportunities.**

- **Objective. Promote economic development in Preston City, Hallville and Poquetanuck Village that encourages historic preservation and restoration.**
  - **Action.** PZC should re-zone Poquetanuck and Hallville Villages as Village Districts, as enabled by Section 8-2j of the Connecticut General Statutes. The PZC should also investigate creating a village district at Long Society. The village districts can provide zoning incentives for projects that promote historic rehabilitation of buildings located within the Hallville and Poquetanuck villages.
  - **Action.** The PZC with input from the HS should use the HS's inventory entitled "Town-Wide Historical and Architectural Resources Inventory" and prepare a rating system, similar to what was done for the Preston City Village District for the structures in Hallville and Poquetanuck Villages and possibly Long Society and to be used as part of the Village regulations.
  - **Action.** PZC should ensure that landowners within the Village Districts are aware of the opportunities and requirements regarding the use of their land.

## Housing

### ❖ **Goal #1: Opportunities will exist in Preston for a variety of housing types to accommodate all ages and economic groups.**

- **Objective. Encourage the creation of affordable housing units.**
  - **Action.** PZC should consider requiring or offering incentives so that a set percentage of dwelling units in new subdivisions meets the state's definition of "affordable."
  - **Action.** PZC should ensure that regulations allow flexibility in subdivision design that, in turn, can reduce the cost of new housing. Consider cluster subdivisions and other planned developments which can be designed with reduced lot sizes and shorter roads, but protect valuable resources and retain the town's rural character.
  - **Action.** PZC should continue to allow diverse housing types for the elderly in certain residential areas.
  - **Action.** BOS should consider providing property tax credits to residential owners who sell or rent dwellings to low- or moderate-income families, as allowed by CGS 8-30g.
  - **Action.** PZC should investigate diversifying the housing stock by allowing a percentage of housing in commercial areas where there is public sewer and water.
- **Objective. The town should be aware of the affordability of its housing stock and re-investigate affordability on a regular basis and address the issue of growing elderly population and the future need for elderly affordable housing.**
  - **Action.** The Housing Authority should create a harmonious living environment for residents of Lincoln Park Housing complex.
  - **Action.** The Housing Authority should continue to upgrade the Lincoln Park Housing Development to meet the needs of the facility including providing an upgraded community room.

## Historic and Archaeological Resources

### ❖ **Goal #1: Preston's rich historical and archaeological inheritance will be protected and enhanced and will continue to contribute to Preston's high quality of life.**

- **Objective: Encourage rehabilitation and reuse of significant historic resources to promote economic development increasing property values, creation of jobs and increased heritage tourism.**
  - **Action:** HS and PZC should investigate and/or prepare a packet that outlines tax and other incentives that are available for historic rehabilitation for historic properties. This can also be used as part of the incentives for the created for the "Village Districts".
  - **Action.** The Building Department should ensure that owners of potential Certified Historic Structures and owners of certain structures within National Historic Districts are aware of Building Code relief from certain requirements in order to maintain a building's architectural integrity. This could be also part of the packet that lists tax incentives.
- **Objective. Prioritize the restoration and reuse of both publicly and privately owned historic buildings that are unique and significant to Preston's history. These may include the Old Preston Library and the Long Society Meeting House.**
  - **Action.** After ownership is given to the Historical Society of Long Society Meeting House, they should seek grant funding to rehabilitate and preserve the structure.
- **Objective. Ensure that Preston's historic cemeteries are preserved through proper maintenance.**
  - **Action.** HS should continue to report any problems to the BOS regarding maintenance needs for the town seek grant funding to rehabilitate cemeteries.
  - **Action.** HS and BOS should develop an action plan for maintaining the cemeteries and should identify potential funding opportunities.
- **Objective. Ensure that the land use approval process protects Preston's archaeological resources to the extent possible.**
  - **Action.** HS should continue to promote the existence and importance of the town's archeological resources to garner support for their protection.
  - **Action.** PZC should work with the State Archaeologist to develop an archeological resource map for Preston.
  - **Action.** Where archaeological resources may be located on a parcel that is under development review, PZC should work with developers to determine appropriate means to protect such resources.

- **Objective. Promote Preston's historic assets.**
  - **Action.** HS should continue to promote Preston's historic features, especially those that are listed on the state or National Register of Historic Places.
  - **Action.** HS, Board of Education, and the Preston Library should continue encouraging the participation of local groups and school children in the promotion of Preston protect such resources.

## Natural Resources

### ❖ **Goal #1: Preston's coastal waters, surface waters, wetlands, and ground water will be guarded against the degradation of their visual and ecological characteristics.**

- **Objective. Reduce impervious surfaces for new construction.**
  - **Action.** PZC should ask NEMO (Nonpoint Education for Municipal Officials) to assist with performing an impervious surface inventory of Preston.
  - **Action.** PZC should consider including LID provisions in both Zoning and Subdivision Regulations.
  - **Action.** PZC should encourage or require commercial uses to use alternative surfaces for overflow parking, such as grass pavers.
  - **Action.** The newly created Agriculture Conservation Commission (ACC) should investigate conservation subdivisions in particular areas of Preston.
- **Objective. Revise stormwater standards and practices to ensure that stormwater does not impact sensitive resources by using the State of CT Stormwater Guidelines.**
  - **Action.** PZC should require the maintenance of natural features that protect water quality and maintain natural drainage patterns.
  - **Action.** PZC should require stormwater infiltration in those areas where appropriate geologic conditions exist (land is not over an aquifer, does not have a high seasonal water table, and there is not a shallow depth to bedrock).
  - **Action.** PZC should ensure that new stormwater drainage utilities respect the existing drainage patterns by discharging into the same drainage basin as before development.
- **Objective. Continue to meet the goals of Connecticut Coastal Management Act.**
  - **Action.** Whenever activities occur or are proposed within or affecting Preston's coastal area, the PZC and ZBA should give reasonable consideration for the restoration and protection of the ecosystems and habitat of Long Island Sound, and require designs for structures and other features that reduce hypoxia, pathogens, toxic contaminants, and floating debris.
  - **Action.** PRA should work with the ACC to provide public access to various coastal resources within Preston Riverwalk and work with the CC to identify areas for public access.
- **Objective. Employ protection strategies for Poquetanuck Cove.**
  - **Action.** PZC should consider adopting a watershed management plan for the Poquetanuck Cove watershed.

- **Action.** BOS should seek to extend public sewer and water service to Poquetanuck Village and Happyland to alleviate pollutant loading into the Cove.
- **Action.** PZC/IWWC should require vegetated buffers along tributaries to the Cove, especially Halls Brook and Dickerman's Brook.
- **Action.** PW should increase the frequency of street sweeping and the maintenance of drainage facilities within the watershed.
- **Action.** PZC will adopt the Conservation Action Plan for Poquetanuck Cove as part of this plan and should continue to work with Ledyard to protect the cove.
- **Objective. Ensure that Amos Lake is protected for the enjoyment of future generations.**
  - **Action.** PZC should revise the zoning requirements in the Special Amos Lake Protection District. The regulations currently allow certain land uses that are known as having a high pollution potential. These uses should either be eliminated or specific performance standards should be adopted to govern these uses.
  - **Action.** ALA should continue to routinely monitor the lake's water quality, continue working with the Eastern Connecticut Conservation District on the watershed management plan, and keep the PZC informed of any issues related to zoning and land use.
  - **Action.** PZC should work with the Amos Lake Association (ALA) to prepare a watershed management plan for the Amos Lake watershed.
  - **Action.** PW should increase the frequency of street sweeping and the maintenance of drainage facilities within the watershed.
  - **Action.** The ALA should continue to prepare home owner informational packets regarding ways to protect the watershed and should continue to conduct workshops. Such information should be noted on the town web site.
- **Objective. Adopt protection measures for particular uses allowed in Preston that have the potential to result in environmental impacts.**
  - **Action.** PZC should identify those uses allowed in the zoning regulations (such as barber shops, beauty salons, dry cleaners, and automobile repair and rental businesses) that may warrant additional ground and surface water protection measures. Amend the Zoning Regulations to adopt performance standards to govern these uses.
- **Objective. Educate residents and business of environmentally-friendly practices that they can employ.**
  - **Action.** CAC should initiate a public education effort regarding household practices that can have negative impacts on water resources. Topics should include septic maintenance, fertilizer use, and disposal of household hazardous wastes.
  - **Action.** CAC should educate business owners and farmers about Best Management Practices.

- **Objective. Ensure that existing and future water supplies are adequately protected.**
  - **Action.** The town's water commission will continue to take the lead role in studying existing resources and analyzing options for future water demands.
  - **Action.** Once future needs and water sources are identified, PZC should amend the zoning regulations to protect those aquifers, which likely will be needed for water supplies.
  - **Action.** In the interim, PZC should consider adopting groundwater protection regulations for the land over the aquifer that serves the Preston Plains Water Company (in the vicinity of Avery Pond).
  - **Action.** PZC should consider adopting stream protection measures for Shewville Brook, which has been identified as a future potential surface water supply.

❖ **Goal #2: Maximized energy efficiency will be encouraged and the use of alternative and renewable energy systems will be considered.**

- **Objective.** Maximize the energy efficiency of new and existing town facilities.
  - **Action.** BOS should continue to inventory current energy practices and determine where upgrades can be made.
  - **Action.** BOS should ensure that all future projects are designed for energy efficiency.
- **Objective.** Encourage all development to maximize energy efficiency.
  - **Action.** PZC should begin to require subdivision applicants to maximize alternative energy solution for new subdivision lots and dwelling units.
- **Objective.** Encourage the use of renewable energy systems that have minimal impacts to the town and its rural character.
  - **Action.** PZC should review the zoning regulations to ensure that such alternative energy systems can be constructed and are properly regulated.

## Community Services

❖ **Goal #1: Preston will have an efficient and economical system of municipal services, including education, recreation, emergency services, social services, refuse disposal, the town road system, and general town management.**

- **Objective.** Ensure that future water supply needs are planned for adequately.
  - **Action.** The Water Commission should periodically update the water supply plan.
- **Objective.** Ensure that the Public Schools meet the needs of the changing community most economically.
  - **Action.** BOE investigate sharing resources from within the community and outside of the community when providing programs and services.

❖ **Goal #2: Municipal facilities will be expanded, improved, and maintained in a systematic manner, consistent with a long-range capital improvement program and maintenance schedule.**

- **Objective.** Ensure that Town Hall facilities and the Town Garage facilities are adequate to serve existing and future needs of the Town of Preston.
  - **Action.** The BOS should investigate creating additional meeting and storage space in the town hall. This could be coordinated with the Library and Senior Center so that shared needs can be met in a cost-effective manner. In addition, the BOS should consider updating town hall offices and address handicap accessibility.
  - **Action.** The BOS should investigate the needs of the town garage and update the facility as appropriate.
- **Objective.** Ensure that the library continues to offer Preston residents up-to-date resources.
  - **Action.** The Library should investigate potential options for expanding the Children's section and create additional meeting space.
- **Objective.** Ensure that adequate resources are allotted to emergency services in order to protect public safety.
  - **Action.** The BOS, ESAC, and Fire Departments should continue to explore options that address staffing issues.
  - **Action.** The BOS, as the redevelopment of the Riverwalk continues, will need to reassess emergency equipment needs to serve the town.
- **Objective.** Encourage new points of public access and retain existing public access along Preston's waterways.
  - **Action.** The CAC should inventory current public access areas to Poquetanuck Cove, Thames River, Amos Lake, Avery Pond, and

- Quinebaug and Shetucket Rivers and in conjunction with the Planning Staff create a public access map that will be available on the town web site and in the library and Town Clerk's Office.
- **Action.** The CAC should identify areas for potential public access to the Thames River, Poquetanuck Cove, and the Quinebaug and / or Shetucket Rivers, working with the PRA as necessary to identify areas at Preston Riverwalk.
  - **Action.** PZC should ensure that the redevelopment of the Preston Riverwalk includes public access to the Thames River as identified.
- **Objective. Maintain and enhance recreational opportunities for Preston's residents.**
- **Action.** P&R and CAC should investigate which areas of Preston may need neighborhood parks.
  - **Action.** P&R should investigate the need, feasibility, and cost for a community center and then make a recommendation to the BOS and PZC.

## **Addendum #1 - Survey**



**Town of Preston  
Plan of Conservation & Development  
Public Opinion Survey  
2013**

**1549 surveys were mailed to Preston residents. 530 surveys were received back. The following information, relative to the first section of the survey is an average of all survey's returned:**

**How long have you lived in Preston? 27.4 years**

**What is the age of person completing survey? 54.6 years**

**Household size 2.18 persons**

**Employed in:**

- Defense – **58**
- Tourism – **13**
- Gaming - **37**

**Work in Preston?**

**46 people**

**1. What features about Preston do you like the most?**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Country living <b>472</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Near to place of employment <b>110</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Close to family <b>180</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Quality of school system <b>144</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Historic character <b>167</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Farm character <b>320</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Property tax rate <b>135</b></li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Convenient to shopping and other commercial services <b>153</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Easy access to local government <b>88</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Low crime rate <b>274</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Sense of community <b>186</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> other</li> </ul> |
|---|--|

**Other Comments**

**Question 1**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Proximity to ocean, NY, Boston</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Needs to be lowered from commercial to residential</li> </ul> |
|--|--|

- Potential to plan our town
- Get rid of BOF
- Library
- Ambulance
- Corn maze
- People mind their own business

- Living on Poquetanuck Cove
- Low welfare
- Waterfront
- Privacy/quiet
- Need noise ordinance
- Poquetanuck park

**2. Which of the following community services do you feel need improvement?**

- Youth recreation **73**
- Adult recreation **96**
- Police protection **101**
- Fire protection **32**
- Ambulance service **35**
- Roads **212**
- Health services **48**

- Social services **42**
- Educational facilities/programs **59**
- Library **42**
- Public transportation **87**
- All are satisfactory – Comments (if any) **120**  
– **all satisfactory**

**Other Comments**

**Question(s) 2, 4**

- Ambulance service
- Bring in more businesses
- Bus service (3)
- Community activities i.e., Preteen/teen services, adult education, community center, parades, fairs, kayaking, hiking, biking trails, swimming, park improvements, municipal complex (30)
- Consider income for rent adjustment
- Difficult to contact Troopers (3)
- Improve plowing, roads, mowing, tree work, power

- outages, clean up trash (15)
- Improve senior center (15)
- Maintain library, Add more books to library (5)
- Middle School
- More “green” programs
- Noise ordinance
- Public works needs to be overseen more
- Route 2A bypass to casinos (2)
- Traffic speed – McClimon Road
- Walk-in clinic
- Protect Land Preserves

**3. Would you like to see Public Water and Public Sewer extended to areas of the town?**

**178 - Yes**

**278 - No.**

**If yes, where? (These areas of town were selected because of the feasibility of extending utilities to them)**

Route 2 **68**

Route 12 **49**

Route 165 **54**

Route 164 **46**

Route 2A **46**

**4. Are you willing to make public expenditures (municipal tax dollars, grants, or partial grants) to develop additional recreational resources, such as:**

Public pool **94**

Community center **149**

Other

**Other Comments**

**Question 4**

- Build senior center/community center, youth center (13)
- Library improvements

- Shuttle bus service
- Walking paths, swimming area(s), open space (18)

**5. Future residential development should entail:**

Large lot development for over 2 acres **222**

Medium lot development 1 – 2 acres **214**

Smaller lots 1 acre or less if public sewer and water are provided **83**

Housing for assisted living in all areas of town **118**

Multifamily development in certain areas of the town where public utilities are available **45**

**6. Are you willing to make public expenditures to preserve and protect the following?**

Historic resources (which resources?) **126**

Scenic farm areas (provide locations of scenic farm areas in

particular you would like to see preserved: **200**

Archeological resources  
**76**

**Question 6**

**Historic resources**

- Cemeteries
- Long Society Meeting House (7)
- Military memorial
- Old Library (4)
- Poquetanuck Village

- Preservation of old homes/landmarks/historic buildings (10)
- Stone fencing/foundations (6)

**Scenic Farm Areas**

- Route 164 (41)
- Route 165 (20)
- Ayer Farm
- All working farms (15)
- Watson Road (3)

- Hollowell Road (2)
- Pendleton Road
- Route 2 (4)
- Miller Road
- Roosevelt Avenue

**7. Are you willing to make public expenditures for the following?**

Additional open space / parkland areas **149**

Acquire land along the Shetucket and Quinebaug Rivers to

provide for public access.  
**181**

To provide public access along Poquetanuck Cove  
**157**

**8. Would you support implementing a watershed protection plan for Amos Lake and other pond, lake or aquifer resources?**

**304 - yes**

**113- no.**

**If yes, using which of the following techniques:**

Implement creative design techniques for installation of drainage and use of impervious surface rather than paving **140**

Prohibit conversion of seasonal residences **89**

Require outdated septic systems to be updated  
**201**

**9. How should we seek to fund or control incremental costs of town government and education?**

- Seek grants (the amount of grants may be minimal and may only cover some items) **266**
- Attract business/commercial development **282**
- Attract light industrial development **196**
- Lessen potential for high and medium density residential development **155**

- Minimize / reduce education budget **113**
- Minimize / reduce administrative budget **146**
- Minimize / reduce emergency services budget **32**
- Raise taxes as necessary **65**
- Financing through a bond issue **68**

**Should regulations be established to:**

- Designate scenic roads, protecting them from public improvements such as widening or removal of stone walls (please provide road names) - **90**
- Protect scenic vistas by minimizing the amount of ridgeline development (provide locations) - **61**

**Question 10**

**Designate scenic roads**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Amos Road</li><li>➤ Branch Hill Road</li><li>➤ Brickyard Road (3)</li><li>➤ Brown School Road</li><li>➤ Cider Mill Road</li><li>➤ Cooktown Road (5)</li><li>➤ Hollowell Road (5)</li><li>➤ Krug Road (5)</li><li>➤ Lake of Isles</li><li>➤ Long Society Road</li><li>➤ McClimon Road (3)</li><li>➤ Middle Road – needs widening in tight areas to stone walls (4)</li><li>➤ Miller Road (9)</li><li>➤ NW Corner Road (5)</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Ok to widen but keep stone walls</li><li>➤ Old Jewett City Road (4)</li><li>➤ Pendleton Road (4)</li><li>➤ Poquetanuck Village</li><li>➤ River Road (3)</li><li>➤ Roosevelt Avenue</li><li>➤ Ross Road (5)</li><li>➤ Route 164 (31)</li><li>➤ Route 165 (21)</li><li>➤ Route 2 (7)</li><li>➤ Route 2A (10)</li><li>➤ School House Road (2)</li><li>➤ Shingle Point</li><li>➤ Swantown Road – needs widening (3)</li><li>➤ Watson Road (9)</li></ul> |
|--|---|

**Protect scenic vistas**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Building on top of hill peaks goes against common sense – wind/drainage, etc.</li><li>➤ Burdick Road</li><li>➤ Cooktown Road</li><li>➤ Krug Road (3)</li><li>➤ Miller Road (7)</li><li>➤ Poquetanuck Cove</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ River Road (1)</li><li>➤ Route 164 (15)</li><li>➤ Route 165 (10)</li><li>➤ Use vistas to draw in visitors</li><li>➤ Watson Road</li><li>➤ Route 2</li><li>➤ Amos Lake</li><li>➤ Route 2A (3)</li></ul> |
|---|--|

**10. What type(s) of business development would you like to have in Preston?**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Small scale “local” retail stores <b>274</b></li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Medium sized shopping centers <b>152</b></li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Large grocery and department stores - <b>82</b></li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Office development including banks,</li></ul> |
|---|---|

accounting, doctor,  
attorney, etc. - **209**

- High tech / biotech /  
research industry - **168**
- Large hotels - **46**
- Manufacturing / Industrial  
- **89**

- Small scale tourism  
development – Bed &  
Breakfast, specialty retail  
shops, restaurants - **275**
- Tourism development,  
attractions, entertainment  
- **129**

**11. Are you in favor of commercial development along the following state roads?**

- Route 2 - **336**
- Route 12 - **304**
- Route 164 - **78**

- Route 165 - **97**
- Other locations as noted

**Other Comments**

**Question 12**

- Riverwalk (11)
- Route 165 to Norwich Line
- Commercial development  
should look to European  
design. Use passive design.
- Route 164 & 395 entrance (2)

- Keep commercial  
development in  
designated area.
- Preston City
- Route 2A (3)

**12. Would you prefer that all development have specific design standards?**

**Yes - 343**

**No - 95**

**13. Which of the following services would you like to see in Preston?**

- Banking - **150**
- Medical offices - **216**
- Groceries - **273**
- Hardware - **122**
- Dining - **245**

- Post office - **182**
- Clothier - **50**
- Construction material - **37**
- Other

**Other Comments**

**Question 14**

- Department store (4)
- Shopping center/groceries (4)
- Home Depot, Lowe's

- Pharmacy (8)
- Marine science/high tech  
research (2)

- Veterinarian
- Used car sales (2)
- Entertainment/bowling, GameStop, hobby store
- Pet store
- Bakery
- Ice cream shop

- Package store
- Dime Bank
- Dining – not pizza
- Dry cleaning (2)
- Anyone who wants to open a business should be welcome

**14. Which of the following uses should be permitted in Preston City?**

- Specialty commercial and office development - **152**
- Development sensitive to the historic character of the area - **332**
- Medium size commercial office development - **120**

- Residential development - **112**
- Large scale commercial development - 37
- Other

**Other Comments**

**Question 15**

- 55 and over residential
- Current businesses meet basic needs
- Develop Riverwalk for hotels and business (3)
- Keep Preston the way it is now (4)
- No residential

- Residential for seniors only. No low income housing
- Small grocery
- This is a low key special plan. Any development should be slow, carefully designed and ecologically sustainable should be a requirement

**15. Which of the following uses should be allowed in Poquetanuck?**

- Specialty commercial and office development - **121**
- Development that is sensitive to the historic

character of the area - **327**

- Residential development - **88**
- Other

**Other Comments**

**Question 16**

- Historic recognition w/statues, plaques
- minimal Poquetanuck Cove development due to rising cove water

- Small stores in Village. It could look like Mystic Seaport streets
- Too much traffic, trash & pollution along 2A & 12.

**Please provide other comments that you would like addressed by the Planning and Zoning Commission which were not included in this questionnaire.**

## **Other Comments**

### **Question 17**

- All volunteer boards/commissions should be publically thanked for their service.
- Allow small number of hens on property (6-8)
- Avoid cookie cutter subdivisions. Increase town building code to exceed current guidelines. Make Preston green. Give tax incentives for Passivhaus design (LEED is green washing) and only when built & designed by Passivhaus architect & builders. This will improve attraction for next generation. Focus on schools, give more money to them and reel in the 20-40 year olds which will boost everything else. Don't forget to encourage use of inert building materials.
- Bikeways/walking trails (6)
- Business development for tax base (4)
- Clean up junk cars at private homes in Poquetanuck/around town (4)
- Develop Riverwalk (44)
- Enforce wetland regulations
- Enforce zoning regulations, blight, roadside litter, noise ordinance, signs (5)
- Expand natural gas in town (2)
- Families who owned seasonal residences prior to a certain date should be able to convert.
- Get state curb stones done – not complete over highway
- I highly recommend that the Commission revisit the Preston City Village Commercial District. Since it was enacted, only one business has taken advantage of the zoning change from residential (and that business is no longer in business). The concept behind the change was to encourage small shops and offices in a walkable "village" atmosphere, after the traffic had been "calmed". The market demand for that concept evidently is not there, and there never was an attempt to "calm" the traffic. In fact, it is beyond extremely dangerous to walk on Rte. 164 (a Commission site walk may be worthwhile). The Village District concept came about as a proposed middle ground between 2 property owners asking for commercial zoning for their properties and most of the other property owners in the area asking that the area remain residentially zoned (the debate had gotten rather contentious). If safety is a consideration in the POCD, it may be in the neighborhood's interest and the town's interest to either "calm" traffic as originally proposed) and leave the zoning as it, or leave the traffic as is and change the zoning back to residential.
- Improve roads, tree trimming, trash, culverts (13)
- Mandate development along river front include public access

- Need a plan to exploit the history of Preston. Recommend establishing tours (i.e. Historical & farms) develop a volunteer group to conduct them. (2)
- New senior center (5)
- No large apartment buildings.
- No need for two schools and Superintendents. One school with one Superintendent/principal combo.
- No residential at Riverwalk (5)
- Protect rural farm character – no development (1)
- Put stop light at intersection of School House Road & 2A
- Recommend larger buffers between zones and a step down zoning from commercial to residential
- Reduce farm run-off/protect watersheds
- Restaurants – not pizza
- Specialty niche farming
- Sports complex for practice/tournaments
- The POCD that is referred to calls for additional regulations aimed at water quality protection for the Amos Lake Protection overlay. These regulations are long overdue. Adopt a watershed management plan for Amos lake and Poquetanuck Cove (2)
- There is not enough space on River Road for a car and the campers/trailers that come through to Hidden Acres. Either the road needs to be widened or Hidden Acres needs to have campers travel from Rte. 395 area to continue on Old Jewett City Road to the lower # house on end of River Road. I'm tired of fixing my front lawn from campers driving on it and tired of replacing my mailbox several times a year. Snow removal on River Road is subpar and pathetic. Someone needs to teach these people how to plow/salt and sand correctly
- Town should have a right to farm ordinance
- Transfer station hours need to be extended
- Update / create more Elderly Housing (2)

**Addendum #2 AMENDMENT TO THE PLAN  
OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT  
REGARDING PRESTON RIVERWALK**

# AMENDMENT TO THE PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT REGARDING PRESTON RIVERWALK



Connecticut Commission  
on Culture & Tourism

*The Town of Preston received support for this project from the Department of Agriculture and the Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism with funds from the Community Investment Act of the State of Connecticut.*



FUSS & O'NEILL

*This plan was prepared by Fuss and O'Neill; however, the Planning and Zoning Commission, as part of a typical review of a draft document, has reviewed the plan and made modifications. The modifications are noted at the end of this document.*

**Adopted by the Planning and Zoning Commission on September 24, 2013**



*The Town of Preston received support for this project from the Department of Agriculture and the Commission on Culture and Tourism with funds for the Community Investment Act of the State of Connecticut.*



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### Appendix End of Report

Appendix A	Land Use Equivalency Matrix
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### Referenced Documents Separately Bound

*Conceptual & Management Plan for the Redevelopment of Preston Riverwalk*, Prepared by Preston Redevelopment Agency, Dated April 2010

*Plan of Conservation and Development*, Prepared by The Town of Preston, Date unknown

*Utility Impact Review of the Norwich State Hospital*, Prepared by Clough, Harbour & Associates LLP, Dated May 1998



The Town of Preston received support for this project from the Department of Agriculture and the Commission on Culture and Tourism with funds for the Community Investment Act of the State of Connecticut.



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## Plan of Conservation and Development Preston Riverwalk

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*Historic and Archaeological Resources Management Plan*, Prepared by Archaeological and Historical Services, Inc., Dated March 30, 2006

*Peer Review Utopia General Traffic Analysis*, Prepared by Earth Tech, Dated April 4, 2006



*The Town of Preston received support for this project from the Department of Agriculture and the Commission on Culture and Tourism with funds for the Community Investment Act of the State of Connecticut.*



# 1 Executive Summary

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## 1.1 Background

On March 12, 2009, the Town of Preston purchased 393 acres of the abandoned Norwich State Hospital property from the State of Connecticut (a portion of the former hospital), and subsequently renamed it Preston Riverwalk.

Over the past 100 years, 140 acres of the 390+ acres were extensively developed as part of the Norwich Hospital due to its relatively flat plateau, gravelly base and stunning views of the Thames River and even some distant views of Long Island Sound. The hospital development consisted of widely spaced buildings along a series of concentric curving drives on the west side of Route 12, with walks lined with shade trees and broad areas of lawn between the various buildings. The center of the complex is the large 3 1/2-story French Gothic Administration Building. Tunnels connected many of the hospital buildings. Later development occurred in the 1950s and 1960s when several more contemporary structures were added.

This plateau has attracted human use throughout the ages. Although the hospital development is most apparent, the historical use of the site goes back many hundreds of years to its use as a gathering point for Native Americans and even as a pre-historic camp site as noted in the archaeological studies completed in 2006 by Archaeological and Historical Services, Inc.

### *Preston Riverwalk - Existing Conditions*

The site is a prime location across the river from Mohegan Sun Casino, on the direct route to Foxwoods Resort Casino, and situated as the epicenter of Southeast Connecticut Tourism Region (i.e. Mystic Seaport, Mystic Aquarium, US Naval Sub Base, US Coast Guard Academy, Connecticut College, New London ferries, and cruise ships). About twenty seven million people reside within a 3-hour drive to the site.

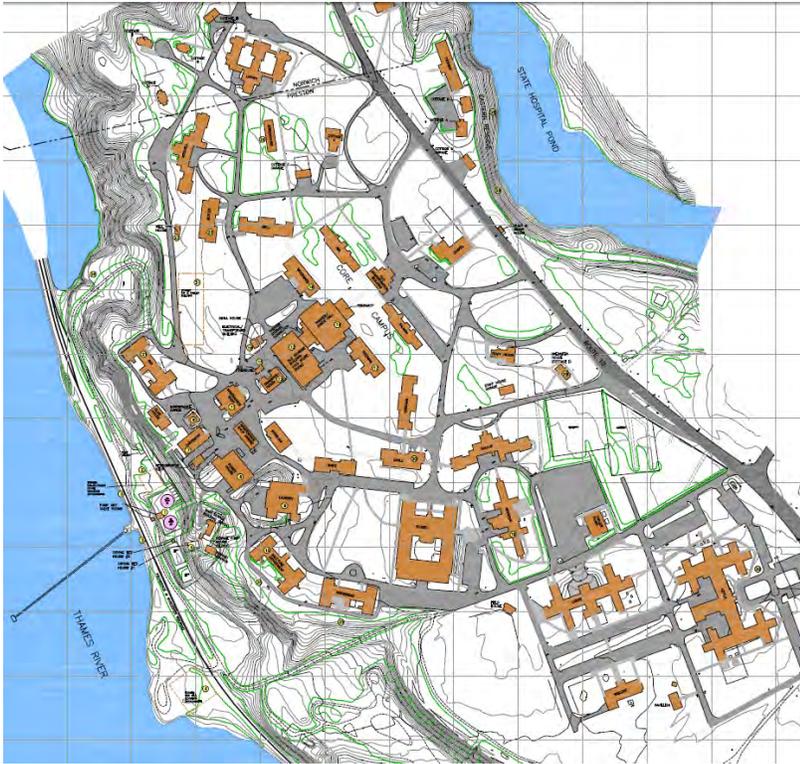
The site is well served by off-site utilities and transportation infrastructure, including electrical power, public water, public sanitary sewer, two natural gas lines, half-mile frontage on the Thames River, 500-foot deepwater pier, active railroad with two sidings, and an interstate highway connector. Therefore, from a development, infrastructure, and site-readiness vantage point, Preston Riverwalk is poised and ready to flourish (see *Figure 1*).

The buildings, facilities, and utility infrastructure on the site have deteriorated in the time since the closing of the Norwich Hospital and are unlikely to support redevelopment on the site. Most of the structures and buildings, including the access tunnels between facilities suffered decay of the structural systems, often as a result of holes in the roofs and water damage. Similarly, the utilities were quite old and in many cases lack of use and maintenance have left them in significantly deteriorated states not likely to be economically feasible to utilize them for redevelopment purposes. With the exception of the former Administration Building and the sewage pump station, all buildings, conduits and tunnels have been or will be removed.



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It has been determined through a structural analysis that the Administration Building is structurally sound and viable for adaptive reuse, and a sewage pump station is still operational. The location of the Administration Building is the natural focal point of the previous development on the site given the concentric ring pattern of the roadways radiating from the Administration Building to the river. The approximate layout of the road systems should be maintained because it provides the ability to maintain the mature trees along the existing road network to provide shade and character for the site, and these roadways match the terminal viewpoints from the site that resulted more from a response to

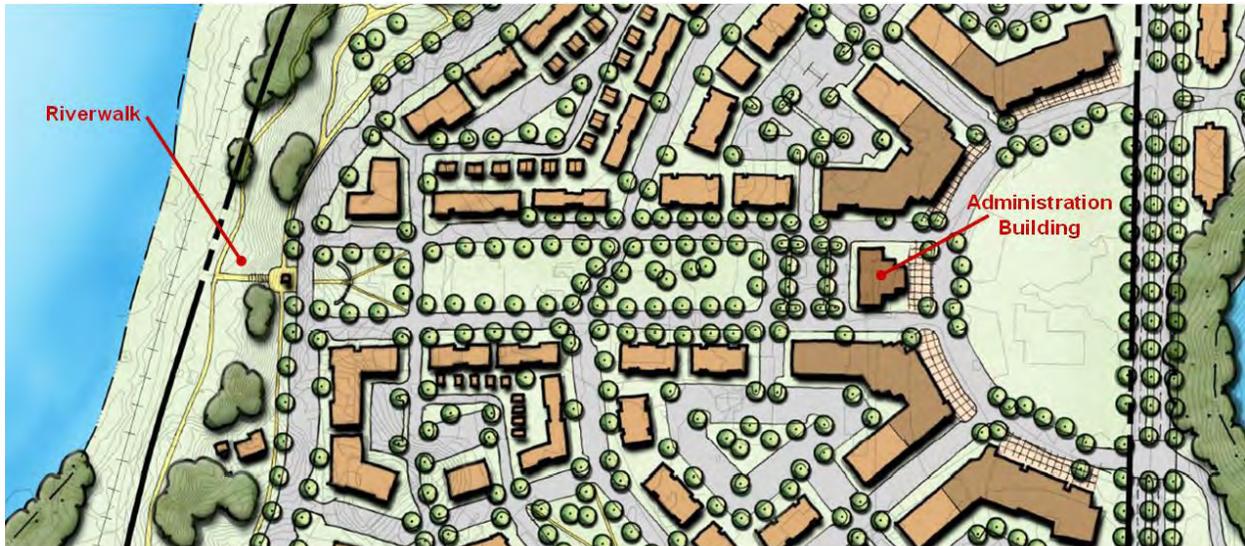
the natural fabric of the site than from arbitrary planning concepts.

The Town has no public access to the Thames River currently available from the site at this time. The ability of the Town to maintain use and access along the river corridor as an amenity for the public is essential. The selection of the name “Preston Riverwalk” is an indication of the significance of this issue to the Town. Redevelop options for the site should consider the potential impacts to maintaining the public nature of this area while balancing the desires and economic needs of any proposed development.



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*Preston Riverwalk – Conceptual Massing Plan Related to the Administration Building*

The *Historic and Archaeological Resources Management Plan*, dated March 30, 2006 was compiled by Archaeological and Historical Services, Inc. (AHS) for the State of Connecticut. This six volume comprehensive analysis of the site found several archaeological areas of concern. Preservation of these sites will need to be considered during the development process.

## 1.2 Purpose and Intent

The purpose of this study is to assist the Town of Preston and the Preston Redevelopment Agency (PRA) with the creation of an economically, environmentally, and socially sustainable redevelopment land use recommendation which would provide (a) a net positive of tax base versus Town service impact costs, (b) job opportunities to the regional work force and (c) serves as both a connection to and attraction for local and neighboring businesses and communities. The conclusions and development suggestions contained herein have been developed to:

- a. Create a productive center of sustainable mixed-use structures and facilities and activity that will provide the maximum economic benefit to the Town of Preston, neighboring communities, the region and the State.
- b. Insure that future development embodies sound ecological practices including renewable, sustainable energy, environmentally benign waste management, and efficient and effective transportation and communication infrastructures.
- c. Preserve, complement, and enhance the rural character of Preston as well as the natural beauty of the Site and its included areas of historic or cultural significance such as cemeteries and buildings of particular architectural significance.
- d. Provide public recreational areas, facilities, open space and access to the Site that contributes to the quality of life in Preston.
- e. Develop Preston Riverwalk responsibly and cohesively with the opportunity provided for a meaningful input from regional stakeholders and intended third parties.



The Commission recommended creating a public walkway extending along the cove located to the south of the property. The area is terraced from the cove to the plateau area above where the former baseball field is located. In addition, because there is a difference in elevation between the cove area and the top plateau, it could allow for waterfront shops and eateries at the lower elevation connecting into a development along the upper plateau. This area is shown on the diagram above as a no build zone; however, is being changed to allow for development within the area that will take advantage of water views and elevation differences.

In addition, the PZC recommended the use of cluster type development so to encourage more intensive use of more development suitable areas, while promoting the protection and public enjoyment of significant natural and historic resources, such as the Thames River and the Cove areas.

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## 1.4 Market Summary

Through extensive research and stakeholder interviews it was determined that, in general, the least viable land uses might include single uses such as large scale office, retail centers (two or more retail stores), and single family detached housing whereas the most viable uses may include mixed use of hospitality, year-round family attractions, medical offices, multi-family housing, destination retail, institutional and possible other commercial or light industrial options. In addition, the marketing team felt that the long term redevelopment of the sites would most likely be driven by several separate development entities rather than a single master developer.

### **Marketing Considerations:**

Consideration of the types of development that could occur at the site should relate to cluster uses within the region. These uses include the two casinos, the regional hospitals (Lawrence Memorial and William Backus Hospital), and Electric Boat. As part of any marketing program, all the “unknowns” need to be addressed and include:

- Environmental issues – list of reports and a status report should be available.
- Streamlining application process – given the site is a designated redevelopment area, which adds another layer of reviews; the development process should be coordinated with all boards and commission. A development flow chart should be created to address the process for investors that should include all agencies including the process with the Redevelopment Agency. Flowcharts have been developed for the land use process, but include only land use agencies such as the Planning and Zoning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals and Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission. This flowchart should be expanded to include any other requirements that are outside of the typical application process.
- Flexibility in uses and requirements – the market will drive the type of uses that will happen at the site. Flexibility will be important; however, knowing definitive requirements is also important.

- Up front expenses – knowing what improvements will be required at the site.
- Available utilities (which is a part of the plan)
- Potential financial or other incentives

## 1.5 Site Analysis and Development Diagrams

The different parcels of land that constitute the site were analyzed from the standpoint of accommodating physical development including limitations associated with steep slopes, flood plains, wetlands and infrastructure (see *Figure 2*). This analysis resulted in available developable land calculations and was the precursor to the assignment of potential land uses (also illustrated in *Figure 2*).

Potential development options were prepared for the two southerly parcels (1 and 2) (*Figures 3-5*). These options were to illustrate the impact of development constraints on the properties and to suggest the physical form which may occur, balancing town consensus, market feasibility and physical reality. They also represent very different, but equally valid approaches to balancing development and conservation of natural resources.

The recommendation for Parcel 5 is that it either be preserved or developed as low intensity “open space” in accordance with the Conceptual Management Plan. Parcels 3(b) and 6 have been designated a low development priority based on anticipated future traffic conditions related to the build out of other primary sites. Access to site 3B in particular will be severely impacted by future transportation volumes and associated mitigation improvements. The site may become virtually inaccessible. It is recommended that this site be held in reserve for a possible future land swap with CT DOT in exchange for additional buildable land on Site 3A. This swap would occur at the time substantial roadway and intersection improvements are implemented. These improvements are expected to mitigate future traffic conditions resulting from the phased development of Site 3A.

Parcel 3A (primary development site) is the former hospital (campus) site and occupies the most advantageous location for future redevelopment. During the visioning processes completed with the stakeholders, the Town, and the PRA, there was considerable discussion and positive sentiment for the possibility of creating a new town center on a portion of Site 3A. This could be comprised of a mix of uses interconnected by a pedestrian friendly walkable open space system.

Larger uses and tax base generators were also prime considerations. The sheer size of Parcel 3 could lend itself to accommodating both of these redevelopment scenarios. *Figure 6* illustrates how these land uses may be arranged on the parcel. The larger tax base generating uses will naturally prefer proximity to the region’s transportation infrastructure and require substantial land resources for program, building and parking systems. These uses are proposed in the southern section of Parcel 3, a similar arrangement to past development proposals. The proposed land use patterns are reduced in intensity toward the northerly portion of the site. The central and northern sections of the parcel might constitute a potential town center arrangement. Mixed use retail, residential and small office



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could be concentrated along Route 12 preserving the existing main open space and offering the opportunity for this area to be anchored by a re-use of the existing Administration Building, or a new structure on that site.

A residential component of a proposed town center arrangement is critical to support such a mixed use environment. The western section of the site might transition to multi-family neighborhoods with the possibility of additional retail and restaurant mixed uses overlooking the Thames River and Mohegan Sun Resort to maximize the public nature of the “riverwalk” area.

These residential neighborhoods may include but not necessarily be limited to combinations of townhomes, apartments, and duplexes and serve potential populations such as active adults and the elderly, young professionals, and local municipal employees. These mixed use and mixed income neighborhoods will be within walking distance of services and goods associated with the retail and commercial mixed uses as well as to jobs created from the successfully developed southern section of the parcel.

Full future build out of Parcel 3(a) will have community service impacts. In anticipation of the potential need for expanded community services, the plan also suggests the reservation of portions of the property as future community and municipal facilities such as schools, emergency services, expanded department of public works facilities, fire and police departments, etc.

The open space system of the site is intended to be a regional attraction. The realization of the recreational potential of the “riverwalk” was a prime driver in the development of recommended land use patterns and the establishment of public access to it in perpetuity is recommended. This linear riverfront system could include various recreational amenities both for the employees and residents of the site, and the public in general. This system should be integrated with the overall site development through a series of interconnected interior open spaces, the largest of which could be a green spine that connects the existing town green on Route 12 to the riverwalk. All open spaces should be further interconnected through the careful design and planning of a pedestrian friendly street network, where parking is relegated to behind the buildings and on the streets and walkability is encouraged through aesthetic experience and proximity.

There are many potential development arrangements which will meet the criteria established during this planning process. *Figure 7* illustrates one of these arrangements. This “Building Massing Diagram” highlights the relationships of land use and density to the proposed roadway network, building massing and open spaces. The general development of the roadway network illustrated follows the existing network of drives and parking areas. In addition to the preservation of historic context associated with this proposed arrangement, the likelihood of potentially saving some of the sites specimen trees is substantially enhanced.

Due to the archeological areas of concern and development of these areas will need to be sensitive to the archaeological resources. Methods can be implemented to address the sensitive areas such as constructing buildings with shallow foundations, using these areas for parking facilities, or mitigation. Development should be completed in association with the State Archaeologist and the State Historic Preservation Office. For example, the area of Site 3A depicted as potential athletic fields may be the site of significant archeological resources, and creative design for the area will be



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critical and can include designing around the more important remains, building structures with shallow foundations or using the sensitive areas for parking. If areas need to be disturbed, the area may be mitigated in accordance with the *Secretary of Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archaeology*. Capitalizing on the archaeological resources to create an attraction should be considered in the overall development of the public access component of the project.

This graphic also illustrates the possible DOT land swap mentioned earlier and depicts a likely river access scenario across the only deeded railroad crossing point on the site. *Figure 8* through *Figure 10* are cross sectional studies illustrating the potential relationship of the river to the “riverwalk” and development areas with an emphasis on maximizing the public use of the riverwalk and ensuring that the best attributes of this experience are carefully preserved and enhanced through future planning and design efforts.

The realization of future build scenarios on the riverwalk parcels will have a substantial impact on the region. These development proposals must be supported by both existing and proposed infrastructure programs. The remainder of this report seeks to investigate, quantify and in some cases suggest mitigations to the various infrastructure systems and their ability to support such redevelopment efforts. The purpose of the Carrying Capacity Analysis is to summarize information previously prepared by various parties and is intended as a guide for future development of the properties that comprise the Preston Riverwalk. For site boundary limits of the Preston Riverwalk, refer to *Figure 11*.

This analysis focuses on capacity and access and how it relates to the redevelopment or development of the individual parcels that comprise the Riverwalk (refer to *Figure 12*), as well as the holistic view of interdependent redevelopment impacts and the potential for preservation of existing facilities.

## 2 Site Information

### 2.1 Site Description and Physiographic Setting

The Preston Riverwalk (herein referred to as “the Site”) is located on the western and eastern sides of Military Highway/Route 12 in the southwestern corner of the Town. The Site consists of approximately 390+ acres and is comprised of six parcels as depicted in *Figure 12*. Providing spectacular views to the north and south along the river, Parcels 1 and 3 share common boundary lines of Military Highway/Route 12 to the east and the Thames River to the west.

Parcel 1 is located in the southwestern most section of the Site. The Thames River is its western boundary with Military Highway/Route 12 being its eastern boundary. Access to the property can be made from Military Highway. It is partially bounded by State owned and privately owned parcels to the north and a single privately owned parcel to the south. Parcel 1 is made up of approximately 31 acres of land and is currently undeveloped.



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Parcel 2 is approximately 25 acres of land and is located to the east of Parcel 1 on the opposite side of Military Highway. It is partially bounded by State and privately owned parcels to the north and northeast, as well as by multiple privately owned parcels to the south. A small portion of the parcel is bounded by Poquetanuck Cove to the east.

Parcel 3 is comprised mostly of the former Norwich State Hospital (campus) and is bounded to the east by Military Highway and to the west by the Thames River. The site is partially bounded by State and privately owned parcels to the south and the Town of Norwich (a continuation of the former hospital) to the north. This portion of Parcel 3 includes approximately 120 acres and includes most of the previous development, with over 50 severely deteriorated structures (many of which have been removed). Access to this property is available from Military Highway. Parcel 3 also includes two small portions of land on the eastern side of Military Highway. The first piece is located at the intersection of Military Highway and Poquetanuck Road (Route 2A). This parcel is made up of approximately seven acres of land and is currently undeveloped. Access to this property can be made from Military Highway or Poquetanuck Road. The other smaller portion of land that is included in Parcel 3 is located across Military Highway from the former Norwich Hospital site and is bounded by the City of Norwich to the north and a small pond to the east. This portion is made up of approximately twenty acres of land and currently has approximately seven severely deteriorated structures located on it. Access to the property is available from Military Highway. Total acreage of Parcel 3 being approximately 146 acres.

Parcel 4 is a small piece of land to the west of Parcel 3. It is bounded by the Thames River to the west and the Providence and Worcester Railroad Company railroad tracks to the east. The parcel is made up of approximately two acres and is currently undeveloped. Access to this parcel is made from Fort Point Road (River Avenue), located off of Military Highway. Fort Point Road is an access road available for public use to access the Thames River. Crossing rights are also provided to cross the railroad to access the parcel.

Parcel 5 is the largest of all the parcels and is located in the northeast corner of the Site. It is bounded by the City of Norwich to the west, Military Highway and Parcel 3 to the southwest and several private properties to the north and east. The parcel is made up of approximately 185 acres and is currently undeveloped. Access to the parcel is available from Military Highway.

Parcel 6 is located off of Poquetanuck Road (Route 2A) and is bounded by Poquetanuck Road to the north, several private properties to the west and State owned property to the east. The parcel is made up of approximately six acres and is currently undeveloped. Access to the parcel is available from Poquetanuck Road.



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## 2.2 Topography and Site Geology

Due to the size of the Site, the topography varies for each parcel. The topography ranges from steep slopes on some parcels to relatively flat ground on others. Shallow depth bedrock can be found on some parcels. Parcels with steep slopes and/or shallow bedrock can present practical and economic difficulties in regard to development, while areas that have less severe slopes can often be more economically developed. However, it should be noted that different type developments vary in their sensitivity to slopes and some may benefit from the associated views and grade separation between structures. Refer to *Figure 13*.

The topography of Parcel 1 generally slopes from Military Highway toward the Thames River. The majority of the site is comprised of very steep slopes toward small ponds, streams and brooks on the parcel. The parcel is currently undeveloped and is comprised nearly entirely of forested areas with two small ponds located within the interior of the parcel.

The majority of Parcel 2 slopes toward Military Highway with the highpoint being on the northern most part of the parcel. The change in elevation is approximately 70 feet. The eastern most portion of the site slopes toward the east in the direction of Poquetanuck Cove. The parcel is currently undeveloped and is comprised entirely of forest.

Parcel 3 consists of mostly flat land that has been previously developed. The Norwich State Hospital portion of Parcel 3 consists of nearly 100 acres of flat buildable land. This area slopes gradually from Military Highway toward the Thames River. The site does contain some areas of steep slopes which are located adjacent to and east of the railroad. The smaller portion of Parcel 3 located to the east of Military Highway and to the north on the site is fairly level ground with the exception of the area directly adjacent to the pond. This area has steep slopes that slope down toward the pond. A highpoint is located near the center of the parcel and the grade gradually slopes toward the pond, east of the parcel as well as west toward Military Highway. The other small portion of Parcel 3 located at the intersection of Poquetanuck Road and Military Highway consists of fairly level grade. The parcel gradually slopes from south to north and is entirely undeveloped open space.

Parcel 4 consists of relatively flat grades with a short steep embankment to the Thames River. The parcel is partially covered by forest with a large portion used for vehicular access and parking. This site has typically been used for access to the river.

The topography of Parcel 5 slopes toward the southwest in the direction of Military Highway. Steep slopes cover a considerable portion of the parcel making it difficult to gain access to more easily developed areas of the parcel. The vertical change in elevation for the parcel is approximately 240 feet. A long narrow pond runs along the southwest side of the parcel which limits access to the northern and eastern portions of the parcel. Two smaller ponds and streams within the interior of the parcel connect to the larger pond also limit access to the northern and eastern portions of the parcel. Along with the steep slopes, the majority of the site has shallow depth to bedrock or contains rock outcroppings making it potentially more difficult and expensive for development.



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The topography of Parcel 6 gradually slopes from the rear of the property toward Poquetanuck Road. The change in elevation is approximately 50 feet.

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## 2.3 Wetlands and Regulated Areas

The Town of Preston is one of 36 municipalities in Connecticut that is governed by the Connecticut Coastal Management Act (CCMA). This is because nearly 800 acres of the Town are located within the Coastal Boundary. The Coastal Boundary runs along the Thames River and extends up into Poquetanuck Cove which directly impacts the majority of Parcels 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 with minor impacts to Parcel 5 (see *Figure 14*). The Coastal Boundary is defined as being either the 100-year flood line, 1,000 feet landward from the mean high tide line, or 1,000 feet landward of the inland boundary of tidal wetlands (whichever is furthest inland). In this case, the boundary that extends inland the furthest is the 1,000 foot landward from the mean high tide line.

The 100-year floodplain greatly impacts a considerable amount of Parcel 1 with some minor impacts to Parcel 3 (see *Figure 14*). Inland wetlands in Connecticut are defined by soil type. Wetland soils are typically found along streams and brooks, ponds, lakes and in areas of low depression. The Town of Preston regulates activities, called Regulated Activities, located within 100 feet of a wetland or watercourse. A “Regulated Activity” is defined as being a structure or any type of use that will likely have an adverse effect on the wetlands and watercourses.

The 100-year floodplain is defined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) as being areas of land that have a one percent chance of flood occurring in a given year. The development of structures within this regulated area is permitted; however, must comply with special flood requirements. Parcel 1 is greatly affected by the 100-year floodplain as it extends well within the property. Parcel 3 has some of its areas within the 100-year floodplain but doesn’t directly impact the possibility of development as the limits of the floodplain are not within an area that would likely be developed due to the proximity of steep slopes and the railroad. Parcel 4 is entirely within the 100-year floodplain.

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## 2.4 Archaeological

The *Historic and Archaeological Resources Management Plan*, dated March 30, 2006 was compiled by Archaeological and Historical Services, Inc. (AHS) for the State of Connecticut. This six volume comprehensive analysis of the former Norwich Hospital site found several archaeological areas of concern as depicted on *Figure 15*.

Along the western border of Parcel 3 and east of Parcel 4 is a small archeological preserve which was home to the 18<sup>th</sup>-century Ebenezer Story house and tavern site. Parcel 5 also contains an archaeological preserve toward the northern portion of the parcel. It is in this location where two Navy planes crashed during a training exercise. Both of these areas of archaeological preserves are in locations of the parcels that can easily be avoided and should not interfere with future development.



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AHS has also designated other areas of the Site as areas that require additional archaeological study and recommends mitigation of impacts through Phase III Data Recover excavations. These areas that they have designated include the majority of Parcel 3 and several smaller locations within Parcel 5. Working with archaeologists to create a well thought out plan will avoid unnecessary delays.

## 2.5 Endangered Species

A survey of the National Diversity Data Base (NDDDB) was conducted to determine the proximity of the Site to any known NDDDB areas. As depicted in *Figure 16*, almost the entire property lies within designated NDDDB areas. These species can include rare plants, animals and significant natural communities. The purpose of the NDDDB program is to conserve, protect, restore and enhance state listed species populations and their habitats. The Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) has been contacted and their records indicate that the property contains *species of special concern*. “**Species of Special Concern**’ means any native plant species or any native nonharvested wildlife species documented by scientific research and inventory to have a naturally restricted range or habitat in the state, to be at a low population level, to be in such high demand by man that its unregulated taking would be detrimental to the conservation of its population or has been extirpated from the state.” The DEEP identified areas of sand barrens located adjacent to the river. The term “sand barrens’ is used to describe areas of dry, sandy soils with sparse or low growing vegetation, and is habitat for Pine Barrens Tiger Beetle, also known as Big Sand and Narrow-leaved vervain, which are species of special concern. In addition there is a historic record of Narrow-leaved vervain and are commonly associated with dry, gravelly soil. Although not required by the DEEP or the town (unless a project uses public funds or a state permit is required) if development is proposed within the sand barrens area, the DEEP should be contacted to help the town and/or developer to prepare a plan to protect these species to best extent possible.

## 3 Utility Assessment

In May of 1998, a *Utility Impact Review of the Norwich State Hospital* was completed by Clough, Harbour & Associates LLP for the State of Connecticut. Comprehensive reviews of the site utilities, as well as surrounding utilities supplying the site were reviewed. In April of 2010, the *Conceptual & Management Plan for the Redevelopment of Preston Riverwalk*, summarized the findings of the *Utility Impact Review* and also included more current data of the utilities that may provide services to future development of the Site.

We have assumed the existing sanitary sewer pumping station located on Parcel 3 and the necessary piping associated with the continuing operation of the pumping station would remain for use in the future development. All other site utilities located within the parcel should be considered for reuse when planning for future development in order to minimize impacts and reduce construction costs. Our analysis of the utilities below focused on the transmission and distribution systems within the adjacent streets right-of-ways.

The findings of the utility analysis for each parcel are provided below in a tabular format. A complete description of these findings is provided in subsequent sections.



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**Table 1  
Utility Infrastructure Capacity Analysis**

Utility	Parcel 1	Parcel 2	Parcel 3	Parcel 4	Parcel 5	Parcel 6
Sanitary Sewer (3.1)	□	□	□	□	□	○
Water (3.2)	□	□	□	□	□	○
Natural Gas (3.3)	□	□	□	□	□	□
Electric (3.4)	□	□	□	□	□	□
Telecommunications (3.5)	□	□	□	□	□	□

□ Sufficient Capacity    ◊ Limited Capacity    ○ Service Required

### 3.1 Sanitary Sewer

In 1986, a sanitary sewer pumping station for the Norwich State Hospital was installed in place of the primary clarifier at the onsite treatment facility. This pumping station has the capacity of pumping approximately 700 gallons per minute (1 million gallons per day (gpd)). Wastewater is pumped from this facility through a force main north and discharges into a Norwich Public Utilities manhole structure located approximately 1,800 feet north on Laurel Hill Road (Route 12).

The Southeastern Connecticut Regional Resources Recovery Authority (SCRRA) has a sewer agreement which allows them to discharge sanitary sewer to the City’s system via the pump station located on Parcel 3. This agreement also includes an easement for the SCRRA to maintain the lateral from the SCRRA site to the pumping station located on Parcel 3. Currently the SCRRA facility pumps approximately 28,800 gpd, providing sufficient available capacity to support redevelopment of the Site under most conceivable scenarios and use types.

Parcel 1 and Parcel 2 currently do not have provisions for future sanitary sewer service. A four inch sanitary force main is located within Military Highway that currently services the SCRRA. Since the SCRRA facility only pumps approximately 28,800 gpd, additional capacity within the four inch force main is available to provide service to Parcel 1 and Parcel 2. Sanitary sewer from Parcels 1 and 2 would require a pumping system and force main to the existing pumping station located in Parcel 3.

Parcel 3 currently has sanitary service by means of the pumping station located at the lowest portion of the site. The pumping station is located at the north end of Parcel 4 and to the east of railroad tracks. Development within Parcel 3 can be conveyed by gravity to the existing pumping station.

Parcel 5 is the highest portion of the site and any future development for the site will likely be accommodated via a new conventional sanitary sewer lateral service without the need of an



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additional pumping station. Wastewater from Parcel 5 could most likely be piped across the street to Parcel 3 to be pumped to the Norwich Public Utilities system by the existing pumping station.

Parcel 6 currently does not have sanitary sewer service located within the street on Poquetanuck Road. To connect the parcel to the pump station located on Parcel 3, a service main would have to be constructed within Poquetanuck Road and continued down the street to Parcel 3. Parcel 6 is located down gradient from Parcel 3, so a pumping station on Parcel 6 would be required to get wastewater to Parcel 3 where it can be connected to a gravity line and discharged to the pumping station. An alternative to the pumping station may be to provide an onsite subsurface wastewater disposal system for the site, if allowed by regulatory authorities. According to the Natural Resources Conservation Service Web Soil Survey, the site contains soils suitable for infiltration. The use of an onsite subsurface wastewater disposal system would potentially impact the redevelopment opportunities and provide constraints on both uses and build out capacity.

The existing pump station located within Parcel 3 and the associated available capacity should not significantly restrict redevelopment of the Site as long as it is well maintained and other conditions do not change.

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## 3.2 Water Supply

Norwich Public Utilities currently has two operating water mains in the vicinity of the Site. A 12-inch water main runs south from Norwich and extends down Military Highway and ends directly in front of Parcel 3. In 1990, Norwich Public Utilities installed a 24-inch water main that extends south from Norwich and continues past Parcels 1 and 2. This 24-inch water main was installed to service the SCRRRA waste incinerator. According to the *Utility Impact Review*, “information provided by the City of Norwich Department of Public Utilities, the new 24-inch water line can provide approximately 5,000 gpm @ 20 psi in the proximity of the hospital site.”

Parcels 1 thru 5 can all obtain water service from the 24-inch water main that runs along Military Highway. Service laterals to each parcel would be required to support new development. To supply Parcel 6 with water from the Norwich Public Utilities for its future development, a water main extension could be constructed in Poquetanuck Road or consideration could be given to installing a well to serve the site.

Groton Utilities also has water service close to the project area. Their water service ends south of the site in Ledyard, but can be extended north to the site to allow the Site to be serviced by multiple suppliers.

In general, the size, flow and capacity of a main with the flow characteristics indicated above should not significantly restrict development of the Site. However, some buildings (e.g. those with fire suppression systems, or high rises) may require fire pumps or booster pumps in order to provide adequate pressure.



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### 3.3 Natural Gas

There are two potential gas suppliers to the site, Northeast Utilities and Norwich Public Utilities. Northeast Utilities System currently provides natural gas service in the vicinity of the Site. A 12-inch high pressure natural gas main is located in Poquetanuck Road and ends at the intersection of Military Highway and Poquetanuck Road, directly across the street from the cemetery near Parcel 3. Parcel 6 should be able to access this main on Poquetanuck Road to obtain service. The 12-inch main could be extended to supply natural gas to Parcels 3 thru 5.

Development of Parcels 3 thru 6 should not be significantly restricted based on the size and capacity of the existing natural gas main.

A separate 12-inch elevated high pressure natural gas main runs along Military Highway adjacent to Parcels 1 and 2. These two parcels could access this natural gas main to obtain service. Development of Parcels 1 and 2 should not be significantly restricted based on the size and capacity of the existing natural gas main.

Norwich Public Utilities also provides natural gas service nearby. A six inch low pressure gas main terminates approximately 4,400 feet away to the north of the Site at the intersection of Woodland Drive and Route 12. This service can be extended south to the Site as well to provide development with multiple service suppliers.

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### 3.4 Electricity

Connecticut Light and Power (CL&P) currently provides service in the vicinity of the Site. In 1988 a 13.8KV switchgear system was installed adjacent to Military Highway to supply the chiller plant on Parcel 3. The *Utility Impact Review* which was conducted in 1998 describes the switchgear as being “well maintained” and in “excellent condition”. This switchgear also provides power to a smaller 2.4KV switchgear that supplies the remainder of the former Norwich Hospital campus with power. This switchgear is described as being “antiquated and approaching the end of its service life”.

CL&P provides service in the area of the entire Site and should not significantly restrict development on any of the Parcels based on access or capacity of their grid and circuits. The existing switchgear that currently supplies power to the chiller plant and the 2.4KV switchgear should be thoroughly examined to see if it is still economically viable as a supply point.

Norwich Public Utilities also currently provides service throughout Parcel 3. Overhead primary and secondary lines extend from the north on Route 12, southwest to the sanitary pump station and continue to the east of the Seymour building.

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### 3.5 Telecommunications

AT&T currently has service in the vicinity of the Site via overhead wires. Representatives of AT&T have stated that their system should be capable of supporting redevelopment of the Site without significant restrictions. Services may include a variety of types such as data, cable, and fiber-optic



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## 4 Traffic Assessment

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### 4.1 Existing Transportation Network

Access to the existing Norwich Hospital site is provided by Route 12 (Laurel Hill Road), which runs north/south, paralleling the Thames River. Route 12 provides access to the City of Norwich, approximately two miles to the north and the Town of Groton, approximately 11 miles to the south.

Route 2A provides access to Route 12 immediately south of the site. Route 2A is an east west roadway, terminating at Interstate 395 approximately two miles to the west and terminating at Route 2 approximately two miles to the east. The segment west of the site is a four lane limited access roadway between Interstate 395 and Mohegan Sun Boulevard. The roadway narrows to two lanes before crossing the Thames River, where it intersects Route 12 at a traffic signal. The majority of drivers traveling to and from the study area use this segment of Route 2A, as it provides direct access to Interstate 395 and the Mohegan Sun Resort/Casino.

The Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT) has identified the Route 2A bridge for improvements; however no source of funding has been identified to date to support these improvements. The improvements will include a second bridge over the Thames River to provide two additional lanes of capacity, carrying the four lane section of Route 2A from Mohegan Sun Boulevard east to Route 12.

Existing railroad tracks pass through the site adjacent to the river, however no passenger rail service is provided within the Town of Preston. Southeast Area Transit District (SEAT) has a bus route (Run #2) on Route 12 between Norwich and New London. The route provides service every two hours Monday through Saturday.

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### 4.2 Future Network Capacity

Several traffic impact studies have been performed for previous development proposals for the Norwich Hospital site. These studies were reviewed in order to determine what constraints exist with respect to traffic generation for the proposed site.

The studies all revealed that the limiting factor with regards to traffic is the existing two lane bridge carrying Route 2A over the Thames River. This bridge carries approximately 26,000 vehicles per day, with peak hour directional flows of 1,800 vehicles per hour. A review of the existing capacity indicates that the maximum directional peak hour flow on this roadway is approximately 2,000 vehicles per hour. It should be noted that these volumes are based on data collected several years ago, and therefore may no longer be accurate. Travel patterns may have shifted, and growth throughout the state has varied significantly, with some locations having decreased traffic volumes and some having increased traffic volumes.



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### 4.3 Build Program Trip Generation

A matrix of trip generation rates for potential land uses that may be included within the development is attached in *Appendix A*. The rates included in the matrix are based on industry standard empirical rates provided in the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) *Trip Generation Manual*, 8<sup>th</sup> edition, 2008. The matrix provides an intuitive comparison of how various uses compare with regards to the number of trips generated.

For example, the matrix indicates that 1,000 SF of Movie Theatre is approximately equal to 7.35 dwelling units of condominiums. Using this conversion, that would indicate that a 72,000 square foot movie theatre would generate approximately the same number of peak hour trips as 529 condominiums.

It is also important to note that developments with a large mix of uses within a single parcel or area typically generate trips at a much lower rate per unit than single use developments. Patrons are more likely to visit multiple businesses within the site if the uses are varied. These trips are defined as “internal capture” trips. Recent research has shown that captured trips can represent up to 25 percent of the total trips generated for developments with a strong mix of uses, including office, residential, retail, and dining.

It is expected that approximately two-thirds of the external trips will arrive and depart the site from Route 2A over the adjacent bridge, continuing to Mohegan Sun and Interstate 395. The remaining trips will arrive from various points north, south, and east of the site via Route 12 and Route 2A.

Under a low impact build scenario, roadway improvements are expected to be limited to minor intersection widening and signal improvements for the intersection of Route 12 at Route 2A. Once the roadway capacity of the existing Route 2A bridge is exceeded, much more significant improvements will be required. It is recommended that the Town pursue State and Federal funding opportunities to advance the previously proposed river crossing improvements, as the improvements are expected to be cost prohibitive for prospective developers.

Under a full build scenario for the entire site, more extensive roadway improvements will likely be necessary along Route 12 within the vicinity of the site. Improvements may include new traffic signals, replacement traffic signals, and major roadway widening. A full traffic impact study will be necessary in order to identify the full scope of required improvements for the selected build program.

It is recommended that the Town prepare a master plan level traffic study for the entire development in order to identify all required improvements over the various phases of the project. That will allow prospective developers to enter into a cost sharing agreement for the larger scale improvements, ensuring that later phases of the development are not hindered by large roadway improvement costs.

It is also recommended that the Town consider implementing a new ferry service across the Thames River, providing a direct connection between the Mohegan Sun Resort and the proposed mixed use



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development. This would enhance the value for developers within the site, increasing access and desirability to the proposed development while reducing vehicle trips over the critical bridge.

Longer range recommendations should include improvements to transit service through the Thames River corridor, connecting Norwich, Preston, and New London, providing alternatives to passenger vehicles. Rail transit service could be provided via an extension of the Shoreline East Service, utilizing the existing rail alignment adjacent to the river or via Express Bus service between Norwich and New London. Bus service should be improved through an expansion of the schedule for the existing SEAT Run #2 service which presently only runs every two hours. Such initiatives should be considered by CTDOT as the population of the region continues to grow, increasing the demand for transit service.

## 5 Summary

The 393 acres along the Thames River known as “The Preston Riverwalk” has great possibility for all types of development. The site is easily accessible from Route 2 and is directly between two resort destinations. Because the site has the opportunity to sustain all types of “uses” from a distribution center to a residential neighborhood or a destination attraction to a daycare or even a mixture of several “uses”, this Infrastructure Master Plan Conservation and Redevelopment Concept Carrying Capacity Analysis was developed to provide direction as to what the existing surrounding infrastructure can support without major investment to improve it as a result of your choice of development.

As described in detail above, with the exception of Parcel 6, the parcels that comprise the Site have access to all major utilities with sufficient capacity existing to support development. It is unlikely the existing utility infrastructure would become a limiting factor in development, but if it were, representatives of each utility company stated they would improve their service to provide sufficient capacity.

The proposed mixed use development will result in a significant volume of new trips entering and departing the area, with the majority of drivers accessing the site via Route 2A from the west over the Thames River Bridge. The existing bridge has very limited available capacity for additional trips, which will ultimately limit the amount of development that may happen on site without improvements to the river crossing. It is recommended that the Town pursue State and Federal funding opportunities to advance the previously proposed river crossing improvements, as the improvements are expected to be cost prohibitive for prospective developers.

It is recommended that any proposed developer prepare a master plan level traffic study for the entire development in order to identify all required improvements over the various phases of the project. Additionally, it is recommended that the Town and developer consider opportunities for providing a ferry service across the Thames River, providing direct, vehicle free access between the proposed development and Mohegan Sun.



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# Figures

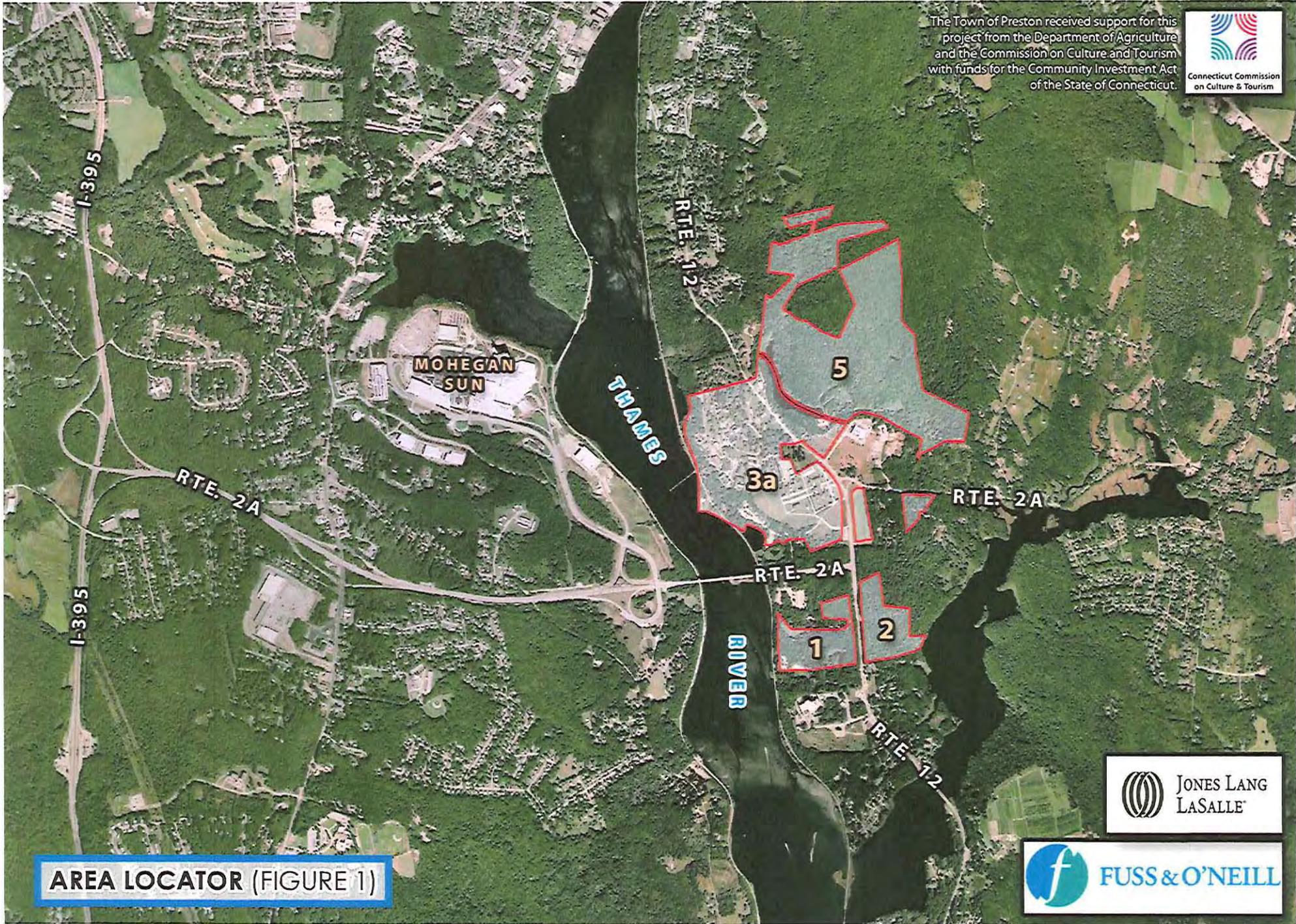
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The Town of Preston received support for this project from the Department of Agriculture and the Commission on Culture and Tourism with funds for the Community Investment Act of the State of Connecticut.

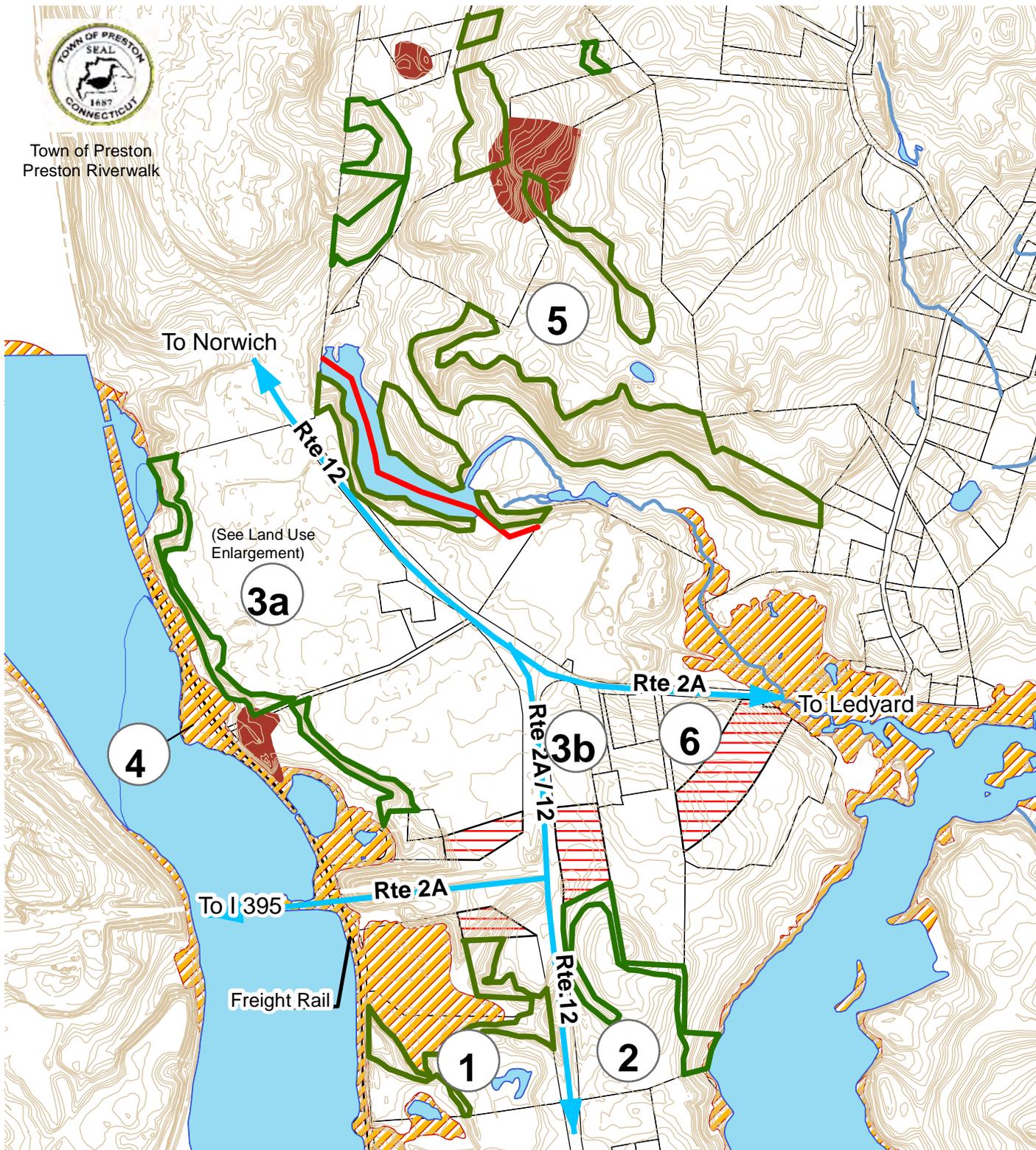


**AREA LOCATOR (FIGURE 1)**





Town of Preston  
Preston Riverwalk



### Legend

-  100 Year Floodplain
-  Rivers
-  Archaeological Preserves
-  Riverwalk
-  Cemeteries
-  DOT\_Proposed
-  Privately\_owned
-  Steep Slopes



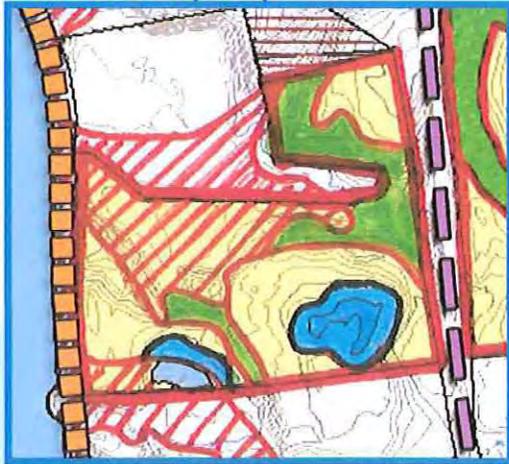
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	ACRES	USES	NOTES
1	31.0	Industrial / Commercial & Retail	
2	25.0	Industrial / Commercial Residential / Retail	
3a	140.0	Mixed Use / Recreation	See Enlargements
3b	7.0	None	Hold for future roadway alignments
4	6.0	Low Priority (Hold)	
5	185.0	Open Space	

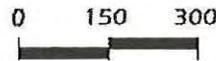
Land Use Map (figure 2)

**Land Use Key Map**



**Uses**

- Retail
- Commercial / Light Industrial



<u>Total Site Area</u>	<u>Total Building Area</u>	<u>Total Parking</u>
31 acres	28,000 sf	115 spaces

FIGURE 4 – Parcel 2 Concept Plan Option 1  
REMOVED

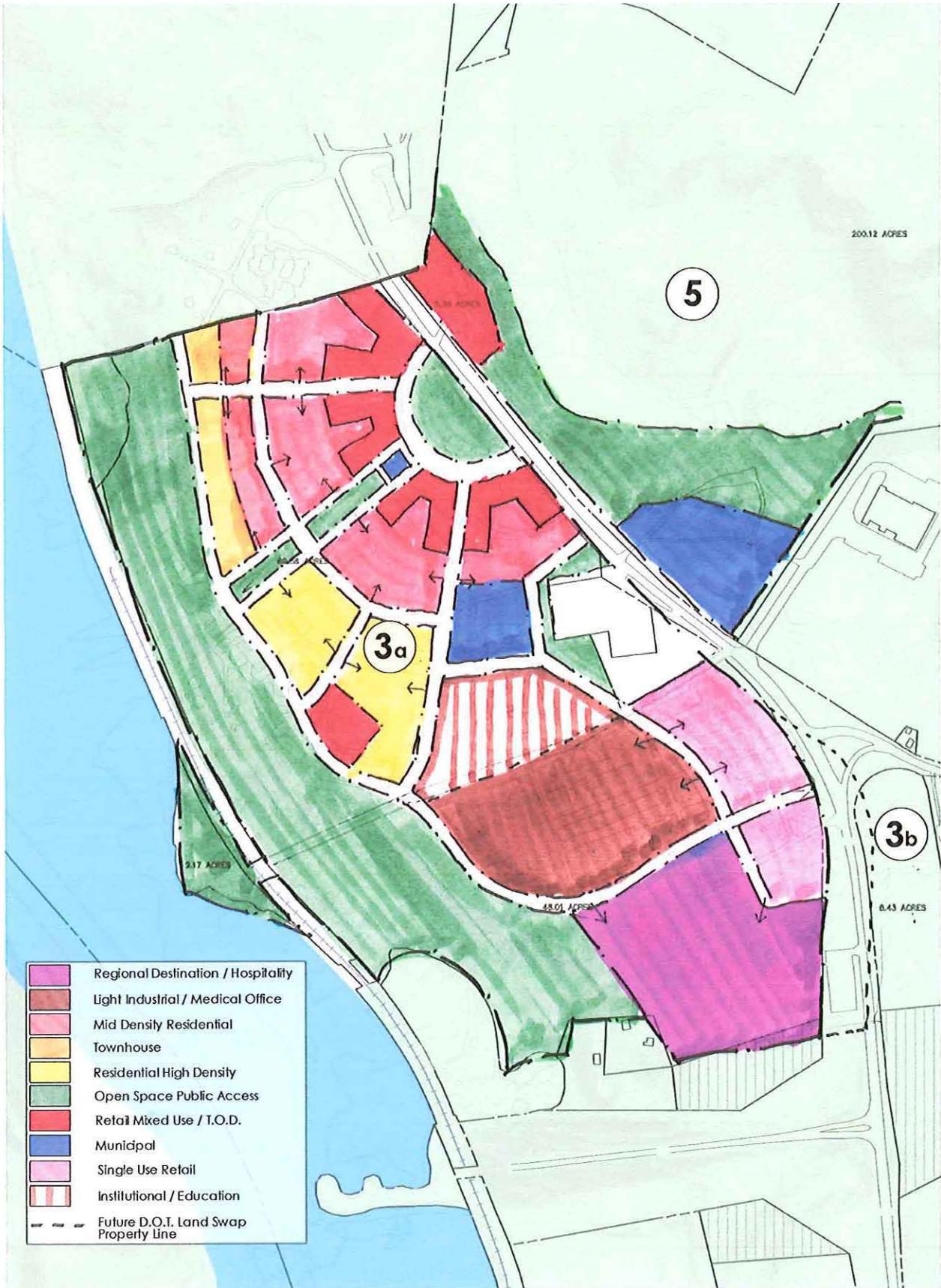
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<b>Total Site Area</b>	25 acres
<b>Total Building Area</b>	105,000sf
<b>Parking</b>	420 spaces

**Land Use Key Map**

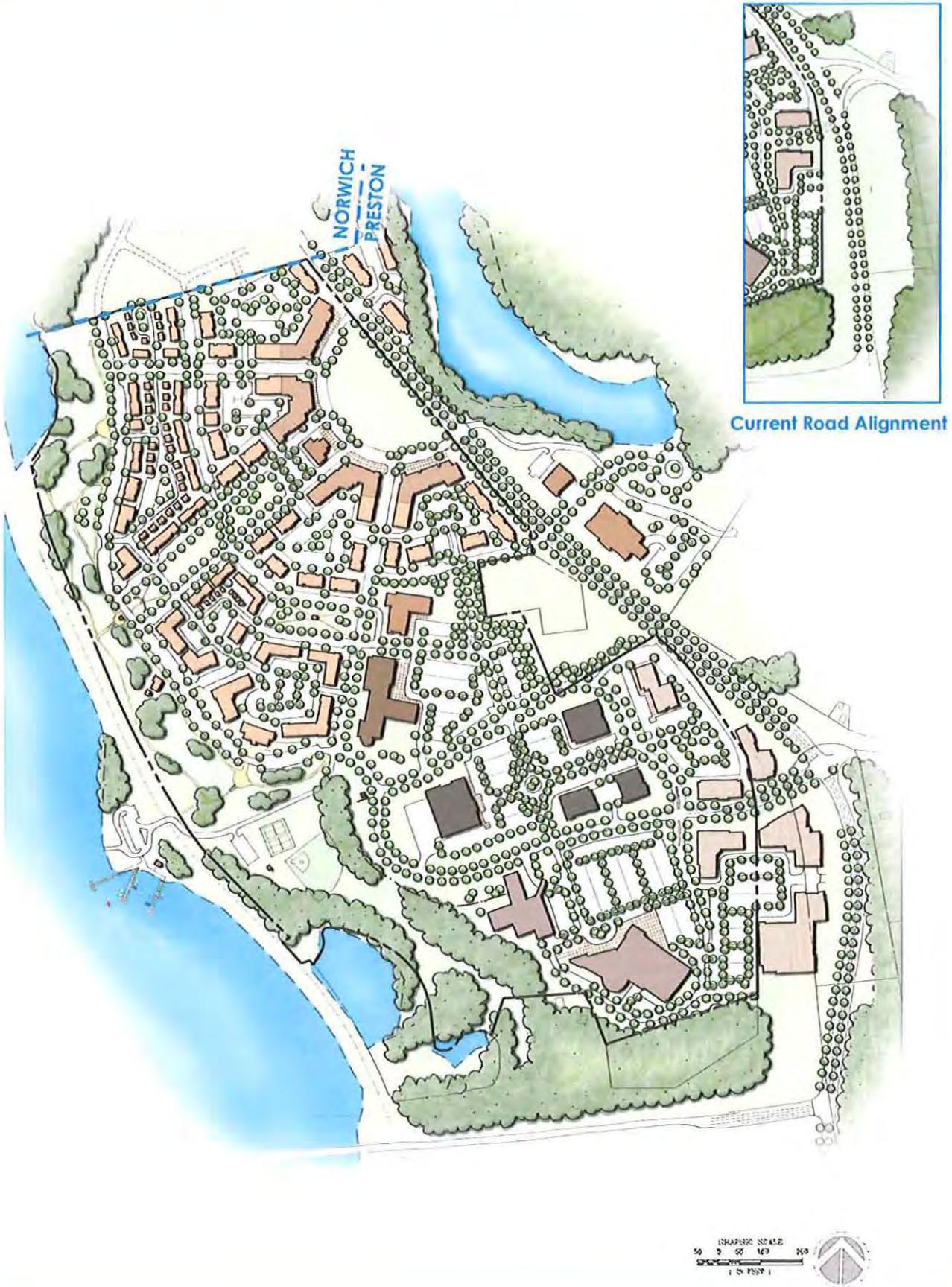


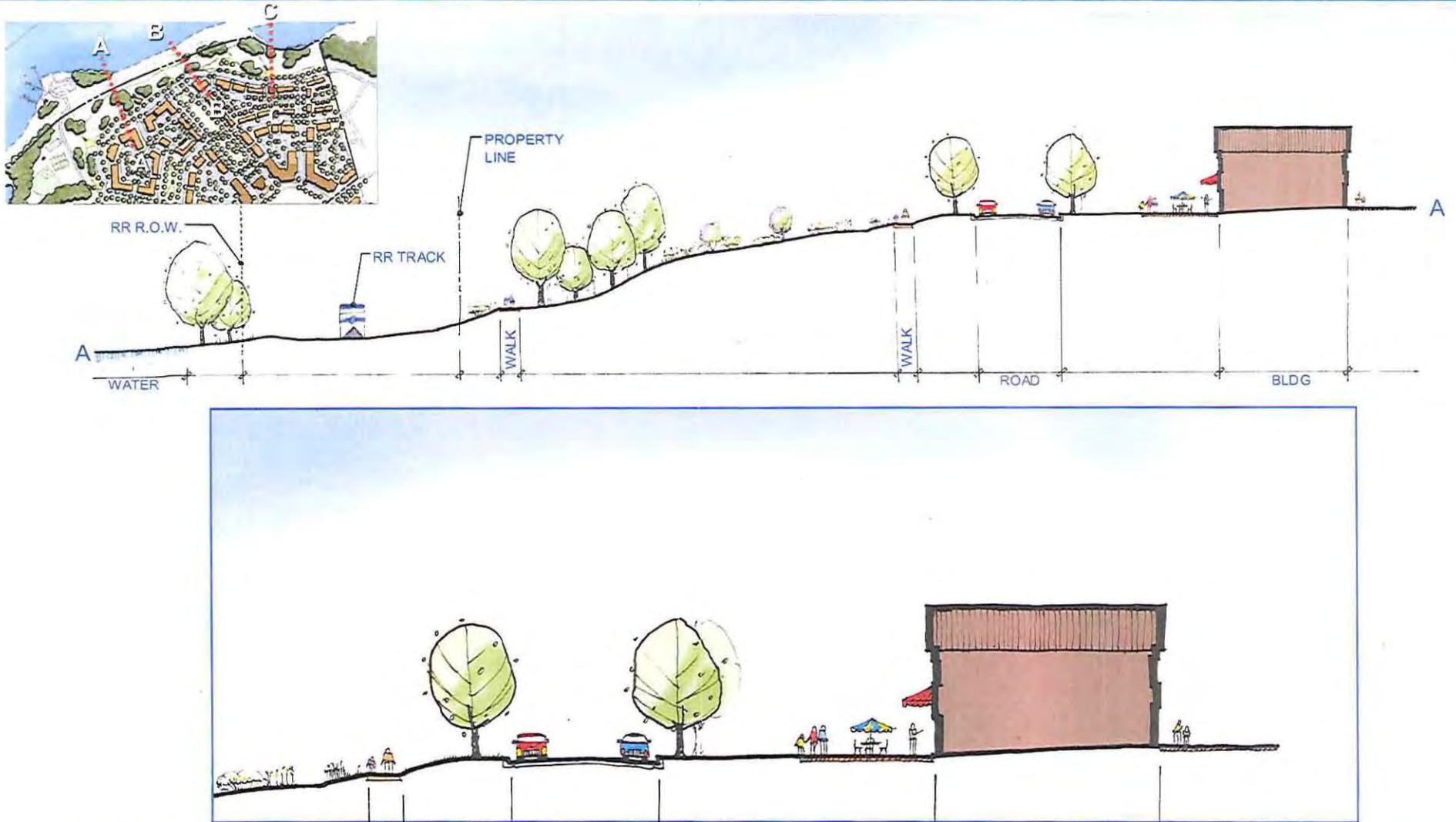
**Uses**  
-Retail  
-Commercial / Light Industrial

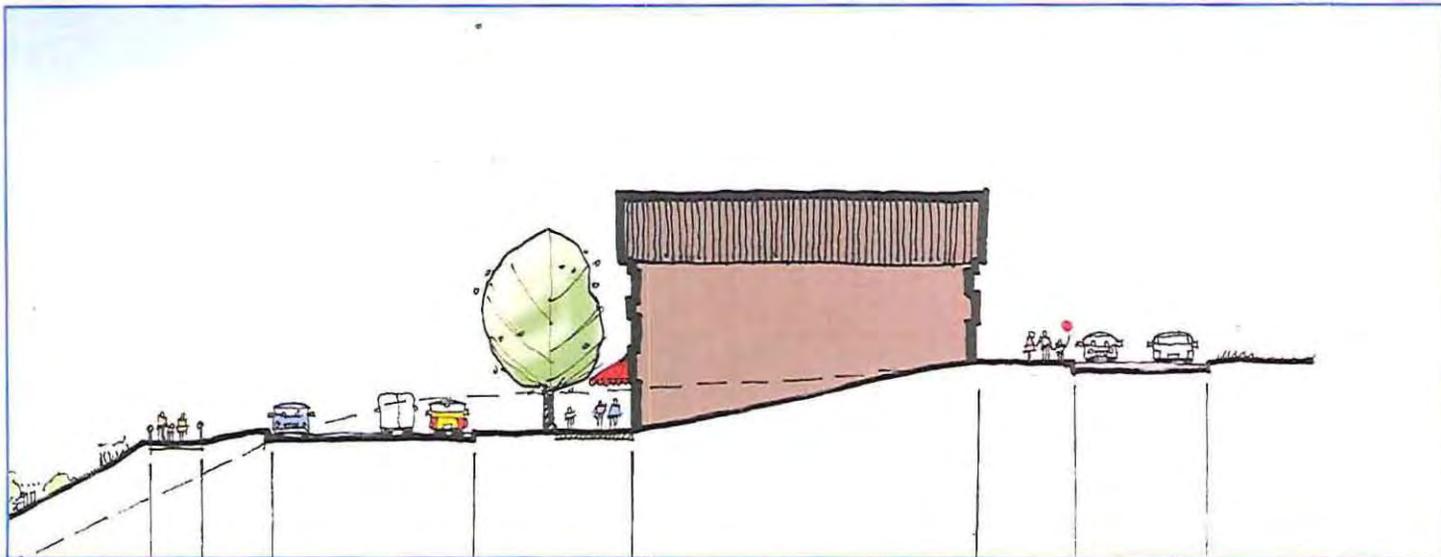
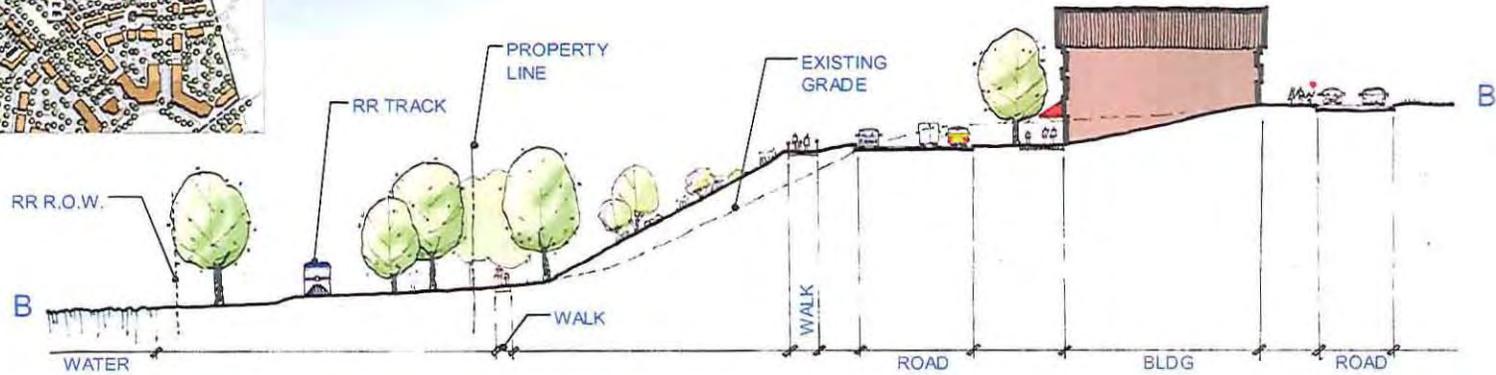


Parcel 3a Suggested Land Use (Figure 6)

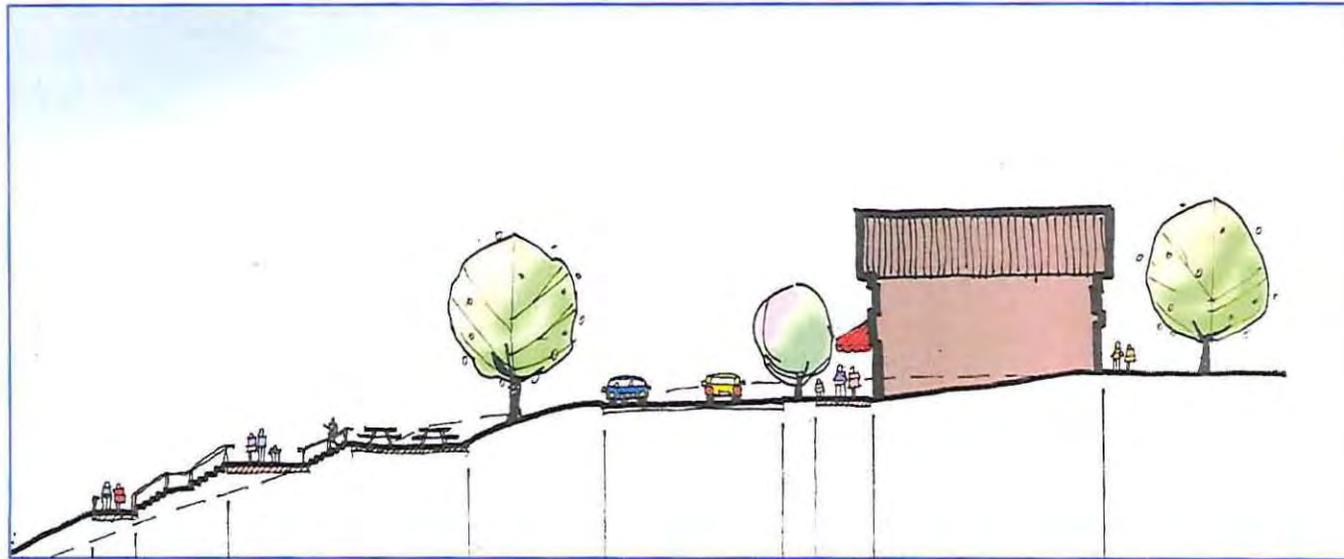
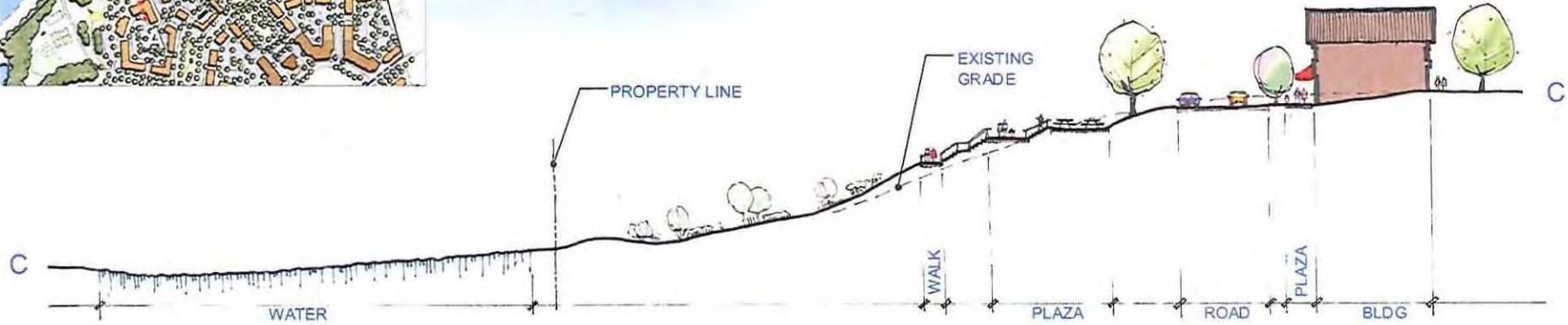
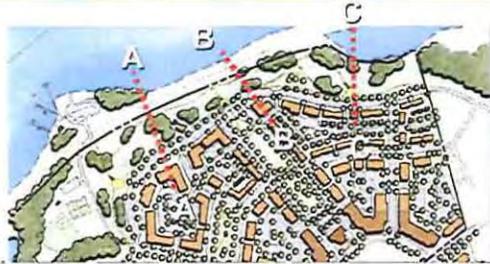
June 07, 2011





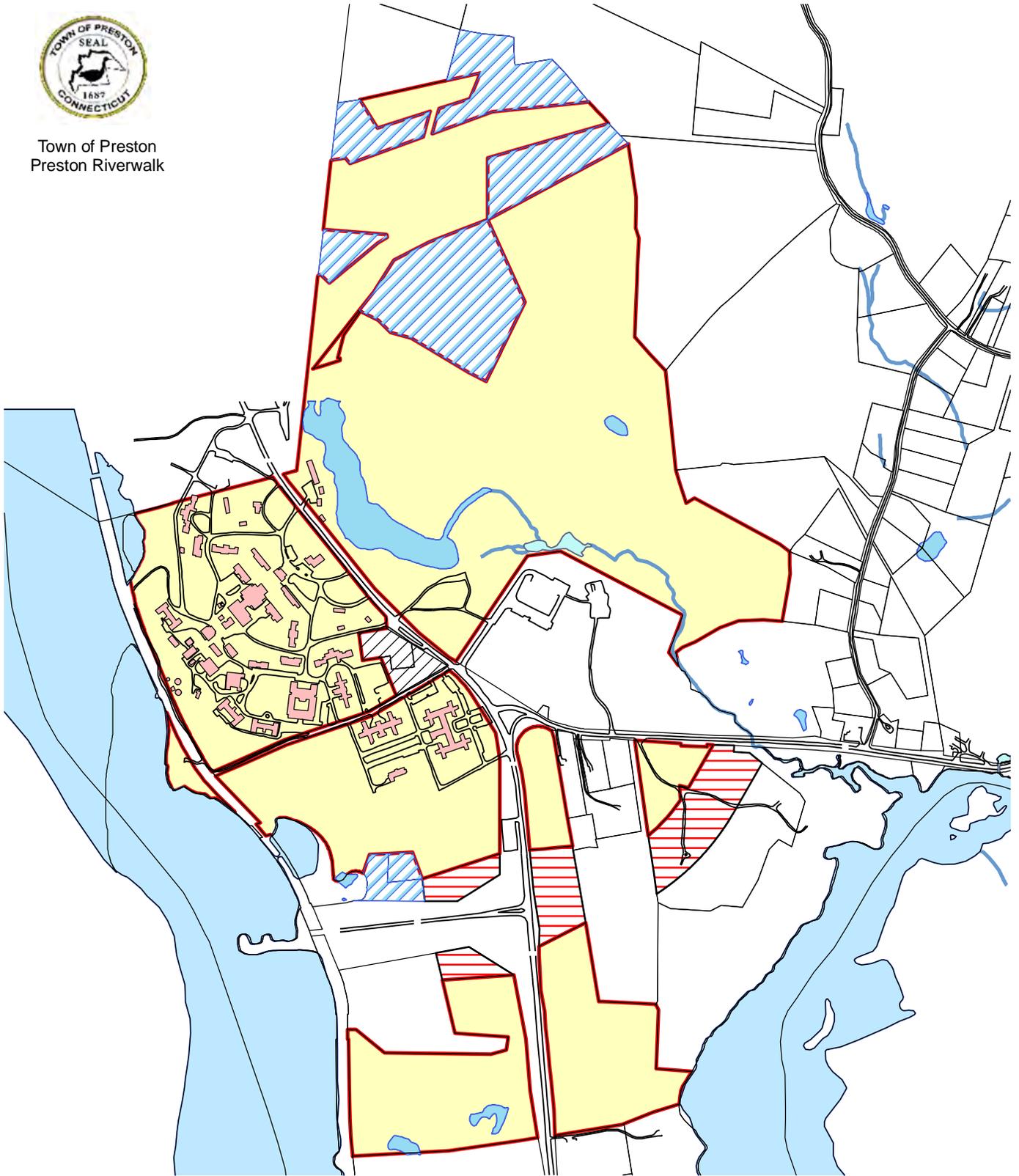


Riverwalk Section B (Figure 9)





Town of Preston  
Preston Riverwalk



Connecticut Commission  
on Culture & Tourism

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### Legend

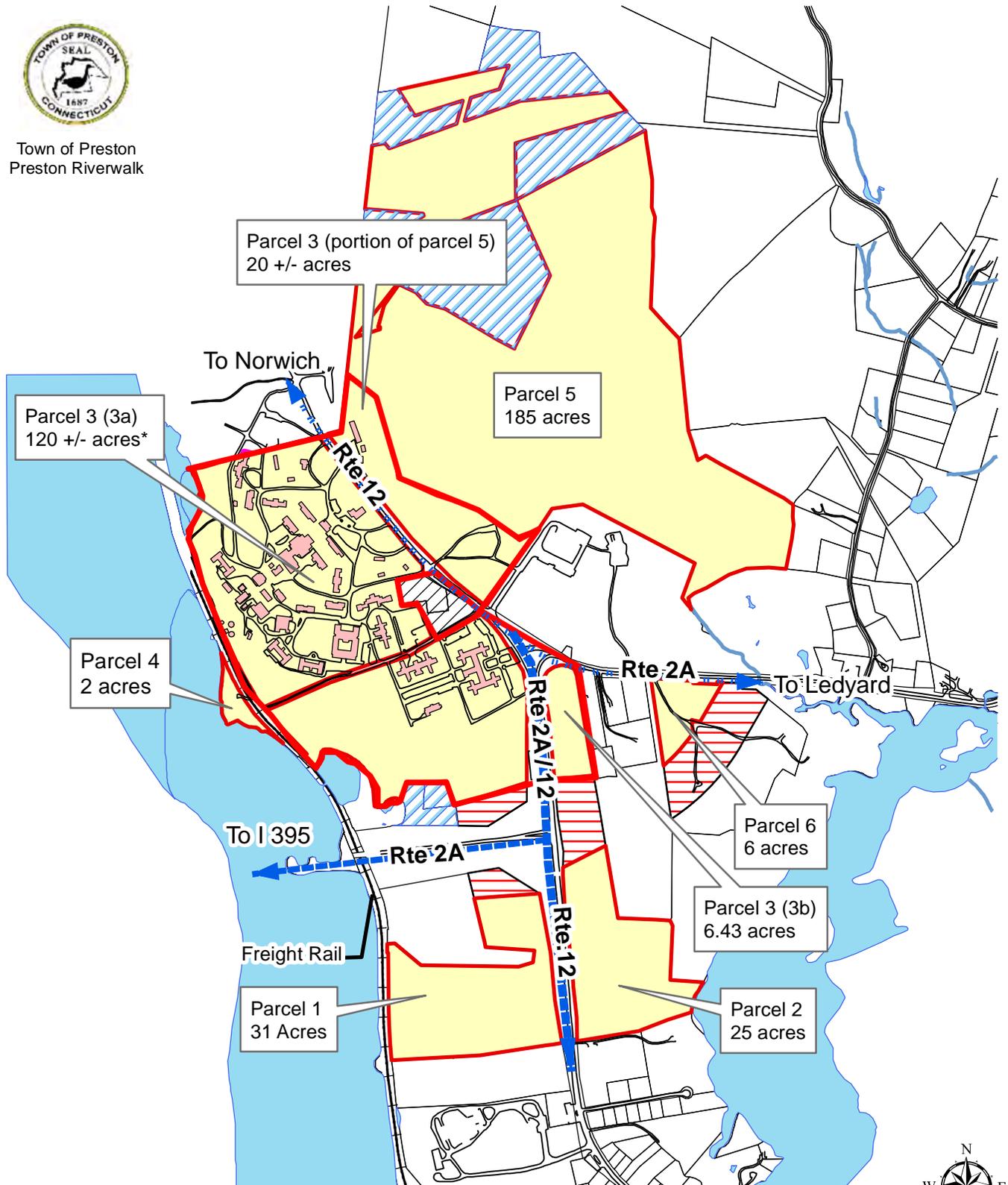
- Riverwalk
- Privately Owned
- DOT\_Proposed
- Cemeteries
- Paved Road



Site Boundary Limits (figure 11)



Town of Preston  
Preston Riverwalk



\*Parcel 3a & 3b and a portion of parcel 5 have been joined together for a total of 146 +/- acres and renamed Parcel 3.



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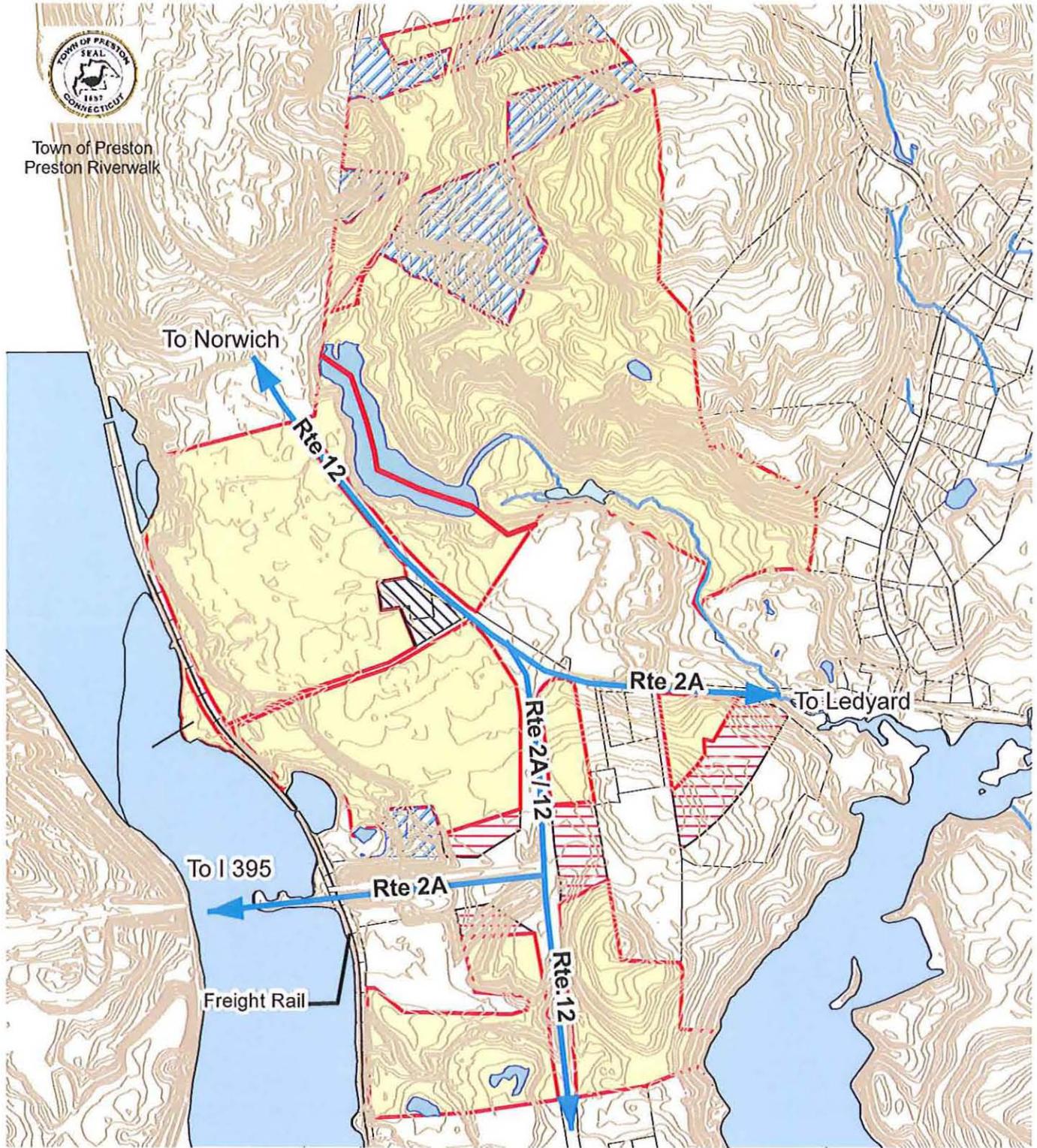
### Legend

- Riverwalk
- Privately Owned
- DOT\_Proposed
- Cemeteries
- Railroad

Site Parcels (figure 12)



Town of Preston  
Preston Riverwalk



- Riverwalk
- Privately\_owned
- Cemeteries
- DOT\_Proposed
- Contour
- Parcels
- Railroad



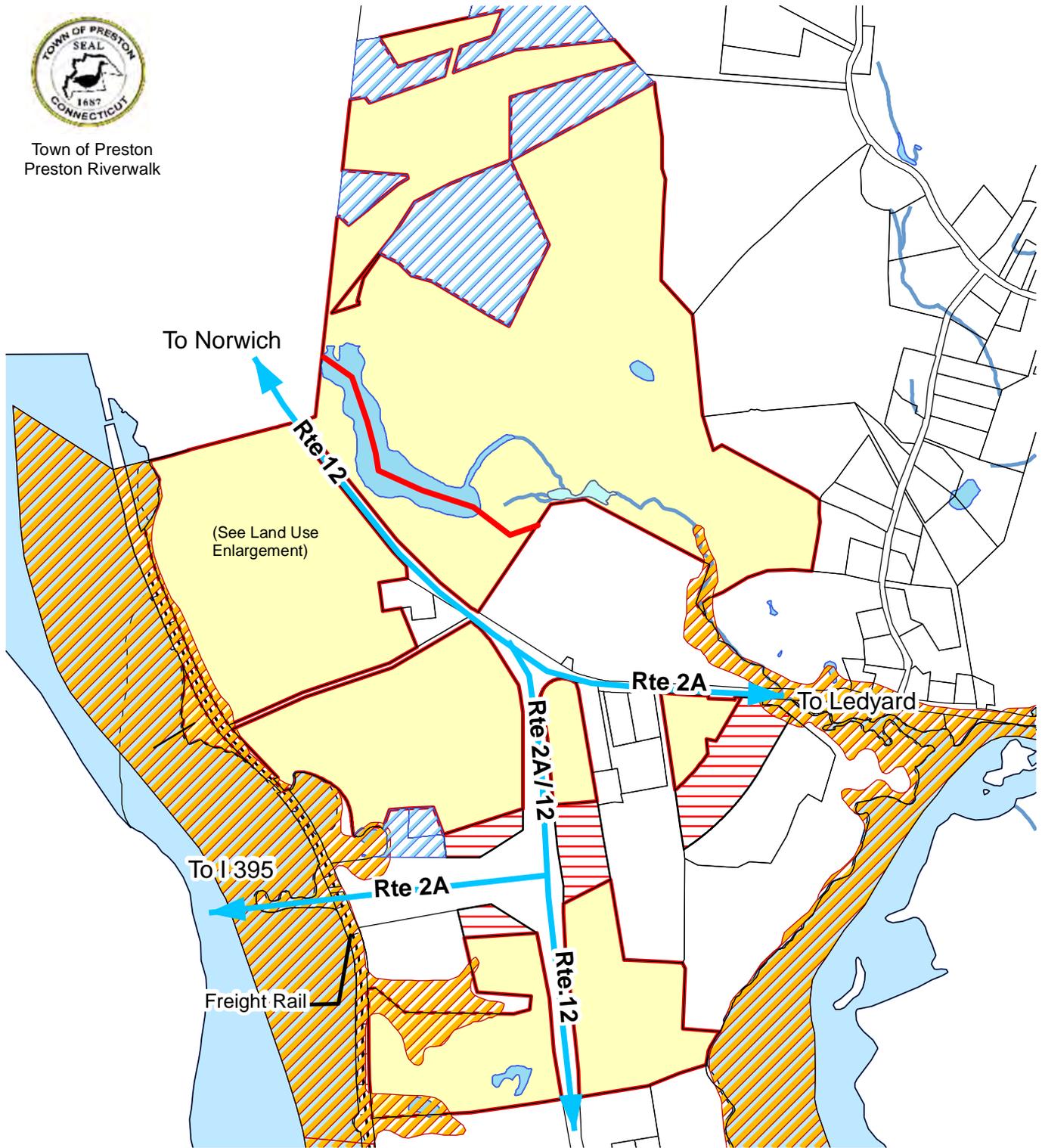
Connecticut Commission  
on Culture & Tourism

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Steep Slopes Map (figure 13)



Town of Preston  
Preston Riverwalk



-  Privately Owned
-  100 Year Floodplain
-  DOT\_Proposed
-  Riverwalk
-  Railroad



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Town of Preston  
Preston Riverwalk

Deeded  
Archaeological  
Preserves

To Norwich

Rte 12

Rte 2A

To Ledyard

To I 395

Rte 2A

Rte 2A/12

Rte 12

Freight Rail



**Legend**

Cemeteries

Archaeological\_Zones

Likely National Register Eligible

National Register Eligible

Possibly National Register Eligible

Recommended for State Archaeological Preserve

Riverwalk

Privately Owned

DOT\_Proposed

Parcels

Railroad

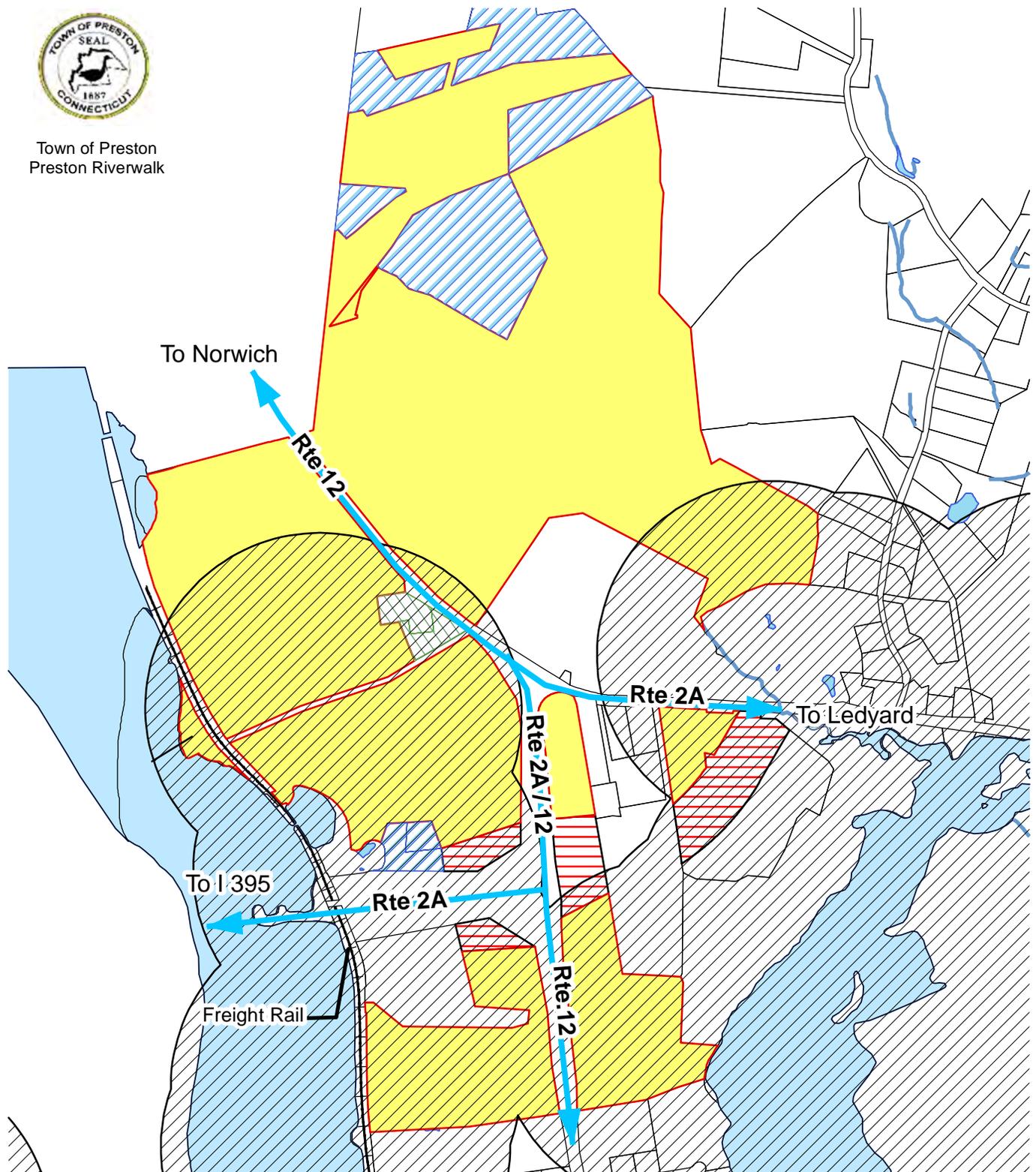


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Archaeological Features (figure 15)



Town of Preston  
Preston Riverwalk



- Natural Diversity Area
- Cemeteries
- Privately\_owned
- DOT\_Proposed
- Riverwalk
- Railroad



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Natural Diversity Database (figure 16)

# Appendix A

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## Land Use Equivalency Matrix



*The Town of Preston received support for this project from the Department of Agriculture and the Commission on Culture and Tourism with funds for the Community Investment Act of the State of Connecticut.*

**Land Use Equivalency Matrix  
Preston Riverwalk**

FROM	TO	Waterpark (parking spaces)	Industrial (KSF)	Movie Theater (KSF)	Shopping Center (KSF)	Specialty Retail (KSF)	Quality Restaurant (KSF)	Office Park (KSF)	Apartments (DU)	Condo/ Townhouse (DU)	Single Family Home (DU)
	ITE Code										
Waterpark (parking spaces)	414	1.00	0.38	0.07	0.07	0.10	0.04	0.19	0.45	0.54	0.27
Industrial (KSF)	110-140	2.61	1.00	0.19	0.19	0.27	0.10	0.49	1.18	1.40	0.72
Movie Theater with Matinee (KSF)	444	13.64	5.23	1.00	1.02	1.41	0.51	2.55	6.16	7.36	3.75
Shopping Center (KSF)	820	13.39	5.14	0.98	1.00	1.38	0.50	2.50	6.05	7.21	3.68
Specialty Retail Center (KSF)	814	9.68	3.71	0.71	0.72	1.00	0.36	1.81	4.37	5.21	2.66
Quality Restaurant (KSF)	931	26.79	10.27	1.96	2.00	2.77	1.00	5.00	12.10	14.40	7.35
Office Park (KSF)	750	5.36	2.05	0.39	0.40	0.55	0.20	1.00	2.42	2.88	1.47
Apartments (DU)	220	2.21	0.85	0.16	0.17	0.23	0.08	0.41	1.00	1.19	0.61
Condominiums/Townhouses (DU)	230	1.86	0.71	0.14	0.14	0.19	0.07	0.35	0.84	1.00	0.51
Single Family Homes (DU)	210	3.64	1.40	0.27	0.27	0.38	0.14	0.68	1.65	1.96	1.00

Land Use	Unit Size	Units	Rate
Water Park	1	KSF*	0.28 trips/space
Industrial	1	KSF	0.73 trips/KSF
Movie Theater with Matinee	1	KSF	3.62 trips/KSF
Shopping Center	1	KSF	3.75 trips/KSF
Specialty Retail Center	1	KSF	2.71 trips/KSF
Quality Restaurant	1	KSF	7.50 trips/KSF
Office Park	1	KSF	1.60 trips/KSF
Apartments	1	DU**	0.62 trips/DU
Condominiums/Townhouses	1	DU	0.52 trips/DU
Single Family Homes	1	DU	1.02 trips/DU

\*KSF = 1,000 square feet gross floor area

\*\*DU = Residential Dwelling Unit

**Example Application of Equivalency Matrix**

Convert a 72,000 SF Movie Theatre to Condominiums:  $72 \text{ KSF theater} \times 7.35 \text{ DU/theater KSF} = 529 \text{ condo or townhome units}$  OR  
 Convert a 50,000 SF Office Building to a Shopping Center:  $50 \text{ KSF office} \times 0.40 \text{ KSF/office KSF} = 20,000 \text{ SF Shopping Center}$



**Connecticut Commission  
on Culture & Tourism**

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## **After a thorough review by the Preston Planning and Zoning Commission of the draft document prepared by Fuss and O’Neill, the following modifications to the draft plan were made.**

The following maps were redrawn to create clearer more legible maps – not to alter the information provided on the maps. In addition, the lot numbering was changed to create consistency throughout the document.

1. Figure 2 – Land Use Map
2. Figure 4 - Delete
3. Figure 11 – Site Boundary Limits
4. Figure 12 – Site Parcels
5. Figure 13 – Steep Slopes
6. Figure 14 – 100 year Flood Plain
7. Figure 15 – Natural Diversity Database
8. Correcting errors in acreage and corrected other minor errors throughout the document.
9. *Section 1.1:* Noted that Administration Building and the sewer pump station will remain at the site and other buildings, tunnels and conduits will be removed.
10. *Section 1.1:* Clarify the need to provide public access to the waterfront.
11. *Section 1.1:* Clarify the need that the archaeological remains need to be considered when developing the site, not that they will impact the potential for redevelopment of the site.
12. *Section 1.2:* Add to the purpose and intent, the need to complement and enhance the rural character of the town rather than merely preserving it.
13. *Section 1.2:* Add to the purpose and intent, the need to expand on development opportunities that promote views of and access to the waterfront.
14. *Section 1.3:* Note that the Planning and Zoning Commission amended this document so that it could be used as part of the Preston Plan of Conservation and Development.
15. *Section 1.3:* Recommendation to create a public walkway extending along the cove located on the south side of the property and change the “no-build zone” to an area of terraced development.
16. *Section 1.3:* Recommendation to use cluster type development so to encourage more intensive use of land that is suitable for development and less intensive use of the land that is not so suitable for development.
17. *Section 1.4:* Added a section regarding marketing considerations.

18. *Section 1.5:* Corrected terminology identifying Conceptual Management Plan.
19. *Section 1.5:* Site Analysis and Development Diagrams – deleted wording that indicated that the archaeological resources which may impact redevelopment opportunities. This section was modified to address the archaeological resources in more depth.
20. *Section 2.3:* Correcting discussion regarding wetlands, 100 year floodplain.
21. *Section 2.4:* Delete the language that indicates that areas designated in Parcel 3 have the possibility to delay or impede development. Adding wording that indicates that working with archaeologists to create a well thought out plan will avoid unnecessary delays.
22. *Section 2.5:* The parcel indicates that almost the entire site lies within a National Diversity Data Base area, noting that a formal request to the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) would need to be made to determine whether or not there are species present at the site. Adding information that the DEEP has been contacted and the section describes what is present at the property.
23. *Section 3.2:* Water Supply – changing the wording that indicates that to supply parcel 6 with water, a waterline extension would have to be constructed to extension of the waterline could be extended or consideration could be given to installing a well.
24. *Section 3.3:* Natural Gas – Noting that there are two potential suppliers of natural gas to the site, Northeast Utilities and Norwich Public Utilities.